

EE FOR EC
Environmental Education for Early Childhood
Winter 2011 SYLLABUS

Objectives

- Experience activities that will help your early learners use their natural curiosity to explore and make connections between the biotic (living) and abiotic (non-living) elements of their environment
- Discover strategies for helping young learners begin to comprehend and befriend the natural world and to start understanding their place in it
- Find correlations to standards that support your students' interest in science and the environment
- Prepare an activity from the free curriculum guides and complete a report at an online course site that describes your implementation of that activity with students

Course Description

"EE for EC" targets early learners in Pre-K through Grade 2. The course designers want to help teachers gain confidence in their ability to effectively integrate the natural world with the demands of early childhood guidelines and primary grade content standards. Participants can register for two topics and complete a culminating activity to earn one college credit. To earn two credits, participants must register for all four topics and complete two culminating activities. The four topics offered are described below with the titles of the free materials that will be issued to each participant.

Project WET

5 to 8 PM CDT, March 7 and March 14

Water Education for Teachers helps students learn about water, water resources, and water's vital role in their lives. They cannot care about something and conserve it if they don't know about it. The free curriculum and activity guide focuses on the relevance of water to every person's life and helps teachers share with students the importance of conserving this limited resource.

Free materials: *Project WET Curriculum & Activity Guide*

Project Learning Tree

5 to 8 PM CST, March 21 and March 28

Project Learning Tree (PLT) uses the forest as a "window on the world" to increase students' understanding of our complex environment. It is focused on plant life and ecosystems, is interdisciplinary and place-based, leading students to a better understanding of the natural world and where they fit. The PLT curriculum guide was the first environmental education activity manual in the country and has become the model for several others.

Free Materials: *Project Learning Tree: Environmental Experiences for Early Childhood*

Ag in the Classroom

5 to 8 PM CDT, April 4 and April 11

Ag in the Classroom is a grassroots program coordinated by the United States Department of Agriculture. Since kids today may not realize where their food and fiber products come from, South Dakota Agriculture in the Classroom offers this workshop opportunity to highlight our food & fiber system. You will be inspired to integrate agriculture into South Dakota reading, math, science and social studies content in a fun, interactive way.

Free Materials: *PreK-8 Project Seasons Curriculum*

Project WILD

5 to 8 PM CST, April 18 and April 2

Project WILD Students have an innate interest in animals, their varieties, their needs, and the places they live. Focusing on animals and their ecosystems is an efficient, effective, and energizing organizer for content integration. The curriculum guide is an instructional resource for educators who care about natural resources and the environment and who will help children recognize that the earth is home for both people and wildlife.

Free Materials: *Growing Up WILD: Exploring Nature with Young Children*

All of the activities you will experience were designed by teachers for teachers. The free materials give background information for each activity so that activity leaders will feel confident in their knowledge base. The activities are hands-on and easily integrated with other content areas.

EE FOR EC
Environmental Education for Early Childhood
Winter 2011 SYLLABUS

Course Requirements

Complete the registration form for this course, and return it to Kay via ground or email at one of the addresses at the bottom of the page. **Consider** these things:

- If you are a participant from Sioux Falls or a close town, I assume you will join the class at The Outdoor Campus. Please contact me if you have a request for attendance at another site.
- If you are joining the class from a far site via DDN, check with your technology coordinator before completing the registration form to be sure that nothing is already scheduled for the school building and DDN room that you indicate on your registration form.
- If you indicate on the registration form that you want college credit, you will receive a credit application form and tuition instructions after we receive your registration form.

Attend all of the sessions for which you registered if you want to receive college credit. That means that, **for one credit** you must participate in two topics of two sessions each for the total of 12 hours contact time (4 sessions X 3 hours each) and a culminating activity at an online course site. Fifteen hours of contact time is required to earn one credit. You may also earn **two college credits** if you register for and participate in all four topics offered. You will need to indicate all four topics on your registration form, and you will have to complete two culminating activities with students and two online reports. The tuition fee at the University of Sioux Falls is \$40 per credit hour. **If you need to miss a night of class**, please let me know, but understand that you will need to implement and report on **an extra activity** for the three-hour session that you miss.

Complete a culminating activity (assessment and evaluation)

1. Select an activity from the free curriculum materials that you will receive.
2. Prepare and direct that activity with students or a youth group.
3. Complete a report, describing your experience with implementing that activity, at an online website for this course and interact electronically with the other participants. Directions and access to the site will be provided.
4. Complete an evaluation form on the content of the learning experience and the value of the curriculum materials for you and your students.

Timeline

This four-topic course will start with Project WET on March 7 and end with the second session of Project WILD on May 9. **Participants will have until May 20** to choose, implement and report on the required number of activities and to interact online with other participants in the class. The class list will have to be delivered to the University of Sioux Falls on June 1.

Workshops and classes for all ages at The Outdoor Campus are sponsored by the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks through the sale of hunting and fishing licenses. Please thank the hunters and anglers that you know.