

EDHD 5260: Child Study and Observation

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Credits: 3

Resource: <http://bjspt2014.weebly.com/>

You will select one child in your class to study for the duration of the Fall 2018 semester. The purpose of this experience is to focus attention on how observation can be used to *understand* how children learn and develop. On a weekly basis you will observe this child in numerous situations, record and analyze these observations, and develop theories and hypotheses about this child's learning and development that will then be used to drive future questions and observations. Additionally, you will make connections to research and theories of learning and child development that serve to deepen your understanding about what you are observing from your child, that will in turn be used to deepen your understanding of these resources. The experience of honing in on one child will impact the ways that you think about and interact with all children.

Course Days & Times:

We will meet on Wednesdays beginning August 15, 2018 through December 12, 2018 from either 10:45am-12:00pm or 3:45pm-5:00pm.

Course Objectives:

At the end of the semester you can expect to:

- Understand that students are constantly changing and development takes place over time.
- Understand how to engage in a meaningful process of close and careful observation of students and how to successfully organize time for observations throughout the day.
- Understand how observations and analysis of observations can be used to develop questions for research and how to use these questions to guide and frame observations.
- Identify, develop an awareness of, and critically examine assumptions, biases, and judgements about students.
- Critically analyze and reflect upon observations in order to extract themes and patterns.
- Use a variety of observation tools for gathering and collecting data to help inform research questions.
- Apply knowledge and understandings developed through the close observation and analysis of one student to all students.
- Generate several hypotheses to help explain student's thinking and actions that can be used as the basis for understanding and further research.
- Incorporate the cyclical process of practice and theory into your daily life as an educator.
- Become successful in using a variety of avenues for accessing resources (books, Internet, Online library) to help inform questions about students and examine these resources in a critical way.

Assignments:

Agendas for weekly assignments and material to prepare for class are shared using Google Drive every Wednesday by 8pm. Assignments are due at 7:00 am the following Wednesday. Late work will not be accepted and you must submit work on time in order to receive an “A” in this course. The breakdown of Assignments for this course are as follows:

1. Child Study Selection
2. Weekly Observations and Analyses of Observations
3. Research Reviews
4. Synthesis of Learning Paper
5. Informal Communication with the Family & Mentor(s)/Co-Teacher(s)

1. Child Study Selection Process (due September 5):

You will want to give close and careful consideration to the child you select to study over the course of the semester. A process of examining your general questions about children and child development will provide one avenue for selecting your child. Additional criteria for selecting your child *may* include - a child you are immediately drawn to, a child with whom you would like to develop a closer connection, a child about whom you have several questions (i.e., why does this child do what he does?), a child you are hoping to better understand, a child who appears to be approaching a particular growth spurt (i.e., in language development, in physical development, in social development, etc.). If applicable, it is a good idea to select a child whose hours at school are similar to your own. Do not select a child for the purpose of “fixing” or “changing” in some way.

(Please note that you must receive permission from the child's parents before conducting the child study.)

2. Weekly Observations & Analysis of Observations

(Weeks 6, 7, 9, 10, 13 & 14):

The learning you take away from this experience will depend heavily on your ability to effectively and diligently observe, record and interpret weekly observations of your child. You will be required to submit a ***minimum of two observations each week*** and are encouraged to do more. Questions that drive your observations should reflect a quest for understanding as opposed to changing a child’s behavior/impacting their development or identifying where they are at in development in comparison with peers or developmental charts. Questions to drive your observations could look like: *Who is this child? How does this child navigate the world? What is this child’s perception of self and others? Who is this child in relationship with others? What is this child curious about? How does this child approach learning? What does this child’s process of development look like? What is this child motivated to do?*

How to submit weekly observations & analyses:

Submit weekly observations and any accompanying pieces of documentation (i.e., photos, videos, etc.) into the relevant folder for the week (Week 06 September 19 Analysis Templates & Documentation, Week 07 September 26 Analysis Templates & Documentation, etc.) located within your “EDHD 5260: Child Study and Observation” folder in Google Drive. You will submit the following components on appropriate weeks into these folders:

- Two completed Analysis Templates on the two observations you conducted from the respective week.
- Artifacts (i.e., notes, photo essays, video, sketches, samples of work, charts, etc.) from the two observations that accompany each Analysis Template. You are encouraged to explore different ways of documenting observations each week. (Note: These observations of your child must be documented during the day.)

[Click here](#) to view examples of completed Analysis Templates

Weekly Scoring Rubric

**The following rubric will be used to communicate with you the ways you are meeting expectations for this assignment each week. Note, expectations will be based on the individual competencies of each student.

1	2	3	3+
Expectations are not met	Expectations are met with support	Meeting expectations	Exceeding expectations

Final Scoring Rubric:

**The instructor will use the rubric below as a general guide for grading but reserves the right to make decisions about grading based on the individual learning experience of the student.

15 points	16 points	18 points	20 points
Several Analysis Templates are incomplete and lack thoughtfulness and care in your process of analysis, articulating clear connections between supporting resources and observations, and formulating relevant questions about where	You are not addressing instructor feedback AND/OR artifacts for observations are not submitted AND/OR one or more of your Analysis Templates are incomplete AND/OR the content of your Analysis Templates scratches the surface, presenting a superficial	You are not addressing instructor feedback OR artifacts for observations are not submitted on a particular week OR at least one Analysis Template was incomplete, however your templates still reflect the high expectations stated in the column to the right OR	Artifacts for each observation are submitted. Your Analysis Templates are complete and build on each other each week reaching more and more depth over time. They reflect care in analysis, a deep level of critical thinking, curiosity about your child study, identification of

<p>to go next.</p> <p><i>**If you receive a 15 you will be required to do extra work to make up the points in order to pass the class.</i></p>	<p>understanding of your child and the resources used to enhance your understanding of your child AND/OR your Analysis Templates tend to explore only one train of thought without checking your own biases and other possible interpretations.</p>	<p>your Analysis Templates tend to explore only one train of thought without checking your own biases and other possible interpretations.</p>	<p>biases, multiple interpretations of data, and a developing grasp of child development and research used to enhance understanding of your child study. There is a clear connection between resources used and observations of your child study. Additionally, your templates address feedback for growth when provided by the instructor in weeks that follow.</p>
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Classroom Observation Plan:

Communication about your observation plan with your Mentor/Co-Teachers is key. The following are a few ideas for organizing time with your Mentor and Co-Teachers:

- Have a plan each week or each day for what you are hoping to observe and communicate this plan to your Mentor/Co-Teachers (via email, classroom planning calendars, conversations, etc.)
- Perhaps you are interested in observing something specific, such as how your child navigates conflicts with other children – let your Mentor/Co-Teachers know that if this situation arises that day you would like the opportunity to observe it more closely, so that you and your Mentor/Co-Teachers can organize yourselves in the moment so you can step out and observe
- In the morning, plan with your Mentor/Co-Teachers how and when you might offer a small group during the day that includes your child in an activity you are hoping to observe (i.e., painting)

3. Research Reviews (due October 3 & October 24)

At different points during the semester you will conduct a review of research for the purpose of deepening your understanding of your child study, which will in turn deepen your understanding of information gleaned from the resources. You are encouraged to research recommendations from the course instructor and TAs located on your “Weekly Suggestions” document, however you are free to research and explore other areas of interest you believe will accomplish the same purpose. Your review will involve the following:

1. Conduct research for at least 3 different Weekly Suggestions OR theories/concepts/topics/questions you wish to pursue if you are not pursuing the Weekly Suggestions. If your research is around a general topic/concept/theory/question, especially a google search of such, you must thoughtfully browse at least 3 sources to help inform your understanding. However, if the Weekly Suggestion was a specific chapter/article you only need to refer to that resource and do not need to seek out other information.
2. Write a brief summary for each of the 3 selected choices of research above that includes the following:
 - An APA Reference list of the resources you cite in your review. (Note, information from the course website, the Early Learning and Development Guidelines and other developmental checklists are not acceptable resources for your reviews.)
 - What you learned from your research.
 - How what you learned has provided insight into your understanding of your child study/How you found the information connecting to your child study.
 - Examples from observations of your child study that speak to the concept/theory/research/phrase for which you conducted research.

[Click here](#) to view examples of Research Reviews from past students.

**The instructor will use the rubric below as a general guide for grading but reserves the right to make decisions about grading based on the individual learning experience of the student.

7 points	8 points	9 points	10 points
<p>Several requirements are missing and your review lacks thoughtfulness and care in your process of research and compiling information from the resources you tapped into. Little to no connections are made to your child study.</p> <p><i>**Anything that receives</i></p>	<p>You have not addressed instructor feedback AND/OR your review is missing one of the requirements listed above AND/OR the information compiled by the resources you tapped into consists of a superficial gathering of information. There is not a clear connection</p>	<p>You have not addressed instructor feedback OR your review is missing one of the requirements listed above, however it still reflects the high expectations stated in the column to the right</p>	<p>Your Research Review reflects thoughtful reviews of literature/research and critical thinking about insights gleaned from your research. There is clear evidence of how the information you accessed connects to observations of your child study and has brought forth new understandings. Your</p>

7 points must be revised and resubmitted in order to pass the class.	between information accessed and your child study or attempts to make connections are not strong.		review is free of typos and grammatical errors, and adheres to APA rules and guidelines. Additionally, your review addresses feedback for growth when provided by the instructor.
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4. Synthesis of Learning Paper (due December 12)

At the end of the semester you will have the opportunity to evaluate and critically examine your assumptions about what you think you have learned about your child, child development and yourself as a teacher. A draft of the paper will be due on Wednesday, December 5 and the final draft will be due the following Wednesday, December 12. Basic requirements for the paper are as follows:

General Checklist

<u>Maximum</u> of 12 pages (Note: 1 point will be taken off for each page you go over)	
12 pt. font	
Double spaced	
Standard margins	
APA format <i>*A paper that does not reflect APA format and style will only be eligible for a B+ grade</i>	
A <u>minimum</u> of 6 references total (at least 4 need to be scholarly) for the entire paper	

The body of your paper will address the following two sections:

Part I: What have you learned about your child? This is an opportunity for you to process your current theories and assumptions about your child based on observations, analysis of observations, and information gathered from resources, families and mentors/co-teachers.

Part I Checklist (in addition to the General Checklist above):

Articulate 2 <u>Macro Observation</u> statements about your child (i.e. “___ loves reading books,” “___ is still learning how to enter play successfully,” “___ is a mathematical thinker,” etc.).	
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Identify the significance (“ so what ”) of each Macro Observation as it relates to the child’s learning and development.	
Provide evidence for each Macro Observation using specific Micro Observations related to each Macro Observation. A <u>minimum of 3 Micro Observations</u> is considered sufficient evidence for a Macro Observation. (Note: Micro Observations refer to the specific observations you have made weekly of your child.)	
Identify assumptions made about the child and what you have observed that may have influenced your identification of Macro Observations.	
Generate 2-3 alternative ways of interpreting your data and if applicable, modifications of initial Macro Observation statements.	
Develop new questions that could be used to further explore the validity of your Macro Observations and/or guide future observations.	
Connect to resources that helped you better understand the child - be explicit in how these resources specifically enhanced your understanding of the child.	

Part II: What have you learned about child development? This is an opportunity for you to consider ways that what you have learned studying one child over the semester has been and can be applied to a larger context of children and teaching. For this section you will go back through all your observations starting from the beginning of the semester through now and assess your child’s growth and development along with your own growth and development as a teacher.

Part II Checklist (in addition to the General Checklist above):

Assess your child’s growth and development from over the course of 3 months addressing the following questions: <i>What stands out? What has this experience been like to observe growth and development of one child over a 3-month period? What did you learn about how a child grows and develops over time that you did not realize before? What is the role of observation in understanding how children learn and develop?</i>	
Assess your growth as a teacher over the course of 3 months addressing the following questions: <i>What have you learned about yourself as a teacher through this child study process? How has this experience observing one child translated into your experience with all children in the classroom? How has the learning you gained</i>	

<p><i>from your child study impacted your actions, interactions, responses, decisions, intentions, etc. with other children in your classroom? Provide 2-3 very specific examples. What have you learned about yourself through the process of weekly observations and analysis?</i></p>	
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****The instructor will use the rubric below as a general guide for grading but reserves the right to make decisions about grading based on the individual learning experience of the student.**

19 points	21 points	23 points	25 points
<p>Several requirements are missing and there is a general lack of thoughtfulness and care in your process of formulating, arguing and supporting your points.</p> <p><i>**Anything that receives 19 points must be revised and resubmitted in order to pass the class.</i></p>	<p>More than one requirement is missing from above AND/OR the flow of ideas is disjointed and unclear AND/OR assessments of data from observations of your child study and yourself are superficial AND/OR connections to resources are arbitrary and do not reflect deep ties to your child study.</p>	<p>Your paper is missing at least one requirement listed above OR the paper simply meets the requirements without evidence of depth in thinking.</p>	<p>In addition to meeting <u>all requirements</u> listed above, your paper includes: a clear and cohesive flow of thoughts and ideas; meaningful and pertinent connections to resources that clearly demonstrate how they were used to enhance your understanding of your child study; critical analyses of self, observations, and theories; rich, detailed examples from your practice; no spelling or grammatical errors; and strong adherence to APA rules and guidelines.</p>

5. Informal Communication with the Family & Mentor(s)/Co-Teacher(s) (throughout the semester):

Families are invaluable resources in the process of developing an authentic understanding of your child. The family’s unique knowledge of their child outside of school offers rich insights and nuggets of information that will enhance your overall understanding of the child’s thinking and interactions at school. Since we cannot require families to provide

information about their child, your responsibility is to simply share information with them throughout the semester (insights about the child, favorite stories from observations, gratitude for what you have learned from their child, etc.) with the primary intent being to give back to the family what they have given to you - the wonderful privilege to be close with their child. You are encouraged to find ways to informally connect with the family (face-to-face, email) throughout the semester. **You will compile a brief questionnaire that you send to the family by September 26 as an opportunity to learn more about the child and the child's family.**

Mentors/Co-Teachers are also an invaluable resource in your process of developing an authentic understanding of your child. Like the family, your Mentor(s)/co-teachers have a unique and different perspective to offer. You will be responsible to informally share observations of your child study with your mentor teacher throughout the semester.

You will note insights you receive from the family and your Mentor(s)/Co-Teacher(s) on your weekly Analysis Templates when relevant.

Instructor Assessment of Student Growth & Learning:

At the end of the semester I will assess the same criteria above in light of what you have submitted and contributed to the class. I will use the following point structure to guide my assessment:

- Quality and thoughtfulness of work submitted throughout the semester (5 points)
- Demonstration of growth (5 points)
- Energy and effort to acquire new learning (5 points)
- Attendance and participation in class (5 points)

Missed Class Policy:

You must email the instructor when you miss class. A make-up assignment will be emailed to you the following day that reflects content missed and work equal to the amount of class time. You are expected to complete the make up assignment by the following Thursday. Not submitting make up work on time the following Thursday will count as a late submission and impact your grade. You are still expected to submit Wednesday's homework on the day you will be missing class.

Communication with the Instructor:

Please email me if you have a question or need clarification about any aspect of the course. Catching me right before/after class or out and about in the school is not preferred because it is important to me that I give your question the time and space it deserves to thoughtfully

process and respond appropriately. I will respond to email communication within 24 hours. I am also happy to meet with you at any time during the semester - if you feel that this would benefit your learning experience in the course, please reach out to me through email to set up a time and day that works for both of us.

Feedback on Assignments:

Weekly Observation & Analysis: For these submissions you can expect feedback from either the course instructor or one of the TAs for the course. Our primary goal is to connect you with outside resources we believe have the potential to deepen your understanding and inform observations of your child study. Additionally, the instructor will offer further points of reflection, inquiry, and suggestions for how to improve your competencies in the areas of observation and analysis. You can expect a week turn around on feedback from both the instructor and TAs on these submissions.

Research Reviews: The main purpose of this assignment is to provide time and space for you to be able to go deeper into the literature and resources related to observations and questions about your child study. Because of this, feedback will be minimal and only offered as needed, focusing on the assessment of APA rules and guidelines as well as ways you can improve reciprocity between what you are taking away from resources and what you are observing/attempting to understand about your child study. You can expect a week turn around on feedback from the instructor.

Synthesis Paper: For this assignment you can expect feedback that further supports and/or extends the ideas developed in your paper that reflect your capacity for observation and analysis. Feedback on these papers can range anywhere from a lot to very little depending on what comes up for the instructor while reading your paper. Keep in mind that a lot of feedback is not a bad thing - it means you've caused me to think about a lot! You can expect a week turn around on feedback from the instructor.

Other: There will be a few assignments here and there throughout the semester that are designed to help prepare you for the bigger assignments. Minimal feedback will be offered on these assignments unless the instructor has insights or questions she thinks can propel your thinking forward. You can expect a week turn around on feedback from the instructor.

Student Conduct & Etiquette:

As graduate students you are expected to submit all work on time that is of quality, reflecting high level thinking and attempts to grow in your understanding around course material. You are expected to engage in learning throughout the semester and be open to the learning experiences offered through course assignments and material even if at first you may not connect with them. Part of the graduate student experience is the opportunity to engage with unfamiliar material whose relevance has yet to be discovered, that has the potential to

contribute to your growth and learning in unexpected ways. If you are having a hard time connecting with course material or feel that the assignments are not challenging your thinking, you are expected to reach out to the instructor so the two of you can collaborate around strategies to support your experience in the course. You are expected to maintain professional behavior at all times with peers and the instructor - this means treating peers and the instructor with respect - particularly in your online communication, receiving feedback from the instructor and peers as opportunities for growth and learning, contributing in valuable ways to small group discussions, and reflecting a high regard for course material and assignments in your discussions. If at any point you feel that you are not receiving the same level of professionalism from others that is expected of you, please reach out to the course instructor. For further information on University policies Student Code of Conduct please refer to the following links: [Student Code of Conduct](#) [Student Honor Code](#)

Breakdown of Submissions:

Below you will find a basic outline for submission of all general requirements listed here in the syllabus. In addition to these general requirements there will be other assignments throughout the semester that serve to support the development of these general requirements. As the instructor I reserve the right to make changes to these assignments/deadlines as I see fit.

Date:	Assignment:
Wednesday, September 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Child Study Selection
Wednesday, September 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Artifacts and Analysis Templates for 2 observations
Wednesday, September 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Artifacts and Analysis Templates for 2 observations
Wednesday, October 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research Review
Wednesday, October 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Artifacts and Analysis Templates for 2 observations
Wednesday, October 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Artifacts and Analysis Templates for 2 observations
Wednesday, October 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research Review
Wednesday, November 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Artifacts and Analysis Templates for 2 observations
Wednesday, November 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Artifacts and Analysis Templates for 2 observations
Wednesday, December 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Draft of Synthesis of Learning Paper
Wednesday, December 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Final Synthesis of Learning Paper

Friday, December 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Watershed Event 5:30pm-9:00pm (in place of class on Wednesday, December 19)
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