Study guide

Early Childhood Education

Explorative Learning

First cycle, 6 credits, Full time studies

Course code: UB308F

Spring semester, 2017

2017-03-07 – 2017-04-03

<table>
<thead>
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Welcome!

Welcome to the course, “Early Childhood Education: Explorative Learning”. In this study guide you will find information about the course, including schedule, literature lists, grading criteria, information about course assessment along with other details of a practical nature.

All courses at the Department of Child and Youth Studies have their own course website, where you will find all the information you need regarding the course; as e.g. the course syllabus, schedule, course literature and study guide. You can find the course web site here: www.buv.su.se/UB308F

This course will also be using Stockholm University's common digital collaboration and learning environment MONDO https://mondo.su.se/portal as a means of collective communication. On registering onto the course, you will be able to log onto the Mondo course site with your university username and password, browsing for the course code. It could take up to 24 hours after the web registration for MONDO to become accessible.

The course starts on March 7, 10-12.00 in room 107, at the Department of Child and Youth Studies. Address: Frescati Hage Huose 24. The course is a full-time course for four weeks of study 7/3 – 3/4 - 17. The course includes study visits to preschools, museums and science centres.

Literature

The course literature is listed on the course website, and in the end of this Study Guide. In addition recommended reading before lectures is shown in the schedule in the study guide.

The reference system recommended in the course follows the American Psychological Association APA. There is a manual available in Engdahl & Sandqvist, (2012), Writing a Thesis.*, or watch the tutorial at the APA style website http://flash1r.apa.org/apastyle/basics/index.htm?__utma=185732729.1059821654.1441365468.1441365468.1442571215.2&__utmb=185732729.10.10.1442571215&__utmc=185732729&__utmz=185732729.1441365468.1.1.utmcsr=(direct)|utmccn=(direct)|utmcmd=(none)&__utmv=-&__utmk=213931415

You can also follow the Harvard reference system if you wish. There is a short manual for the Harvard reference system available at Umeå University Library homepage http://www.ub.umu.se/en/write/references-writing-references-harvard

Additional information

Other important information about being a student at Stockholm University can be found at the following web site: http://www.su.se/english/study/student-life

You will find the short guide A Smooth Start for international and exchange students here: http://www.su.se/english/study/admitted-students/a-smooth-start-1.157668

We advise you to take some time to read the International Handbook, especially pages 17-28, about rules, regulations and services for you as a student at Stockholm University:
http://www.su.se/english/study/student-services/handbook-for-international-and-exchange-students-1.1627
Extra-curricular activity: International Café

Exchange students and local students at the different departments involved in Teacher Education are most welcome to a series of international cafés. The cafés are informal seminars where you listen to a presentation and then get the opportunity to reflect and discuss together with other local and international students. At the cafés there will also be some tea/coffee and a light snack. More information regarding the content of each international café will be posted on your study platform Mondo.

Read more and sign up here: www.buv.su.se/IC

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding the International Café, please contact international coordinator Malin Håkansson at international@buv.su.se

Evaluation

Students are invited to participate in discussions about the course and are free to bring up suggestions for changes during the course. An on-line evaluation form will be distributed to all students at the end of the course.

Early Childhood Education: Explorative Learning

Course content

Early Childhood Education: Explorative Learning is given at The Department of Child and Youth Studies, Stockholm University for 6 ECTS.

This course provides an introduction to the learning environments and explorative approaches of Swedish preschools. Children’s first-hand experiences, play and situated learning are important concepts in the course.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to be able to:
- give an account of Swedish preschools’ social duty, with a focus on the concepts of exploration, learning, play and care
- discuss and reflect on the pedagogical implications of children’s influence and participation, as well as the preschools’ core values
- discuss and analyse different ways of using locations, rooms and materials in learning contexts in order to enable children to explore;
- discuss the environment’s practical-aesthetic significance for children’s opportunities to explore and play.

Schedule

There is an up-dated schedule on the course web site www.buv.su.se/UB308F

In the schedule below you will find the literature you are suggested to read to prepare for the lectures.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Literature</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7/3</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Emelie Moberg</td>
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<tr>
<td>13/3</td>
<td>Field trip</td>
<td>Emelie Moberg</td>
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<tr>
<td>15/3</td>
<td>Study visit preschool</td>
<td>Hedda Schönäck</td>
<td>Schedule and details will be presented in the beginning of the course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16/3</td>
<td>Study visit preschool</td>
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<td>Schedule and details will be presented in the beginning of the course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17/3</td>
<td>Study visit preschool</td>
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<td>Schedule and details will be presented in the beginning of the course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>22/3</td>
<td>Study visit at Pedagogue Center</td>
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<td>Details and directions will be presented on Mondo.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>Emelie Moberg</td>
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Study visits/Field work
During the course you are going to visit preschools, museums etc. on several occasions. More information about the study visit will be published on MONDO.
During the course you will do several study visits at preschools/early childhood settings. Your mission is to do observations, talk to the staff and collect information to be used in EXA2, the individual paper where you write about the Swedish preschool in relation to how preschools are organized in some other country with special focus on explorative learning (more information below).
During this course we are also going to visit museums and other institutions open to the public. Friday 13/3 we make an organized study visit at The Swedish Museum of Natural History. More information about the study visit will be published on MONDO. You are also supposed to visit another museum, science center or similar institution together with your study group (see EXA1). The study group choose collaboratively which museum/science center/institution you are going to visit, organize the study visit together and present the outcomes of the visit orally 3 of April (more information below).

Examination

EXA1: Oral group report (2 cr)
The students in the study group present collaboratively, using ICT tools as film, slide show etc a museum, science center or other institution open to the public, focusing on the possibility for children to explore and experience. The oral presentation is graded according to the scale Fail/Pass (G/U)

EXA2: Individual paper (4 cr)
Individually written paper where early childhood education in Sweden is compared to early childhood education in another country, with special focus on exploratory learning. The written examination is graded according to a criterion referenced seven-point scale: A-F

Instructions and assessment criteria
Examination instructions

EXA1: Oral group report
The study group chooses collaboratively a museum, science center or some other institution open to the public, and make a visit there together. The visit is documented using text and photos/film with special focus on the possibilities for children to explore and experience. The study group present the museum/institution orally in combination with ICT tools such as film, photos etc at the seminar 3/4. The presentation of the museum/institution should include/take into account:

- A brief description of the place - motivate why you choose to visit it!
- Which age groups is this museum/institution suitable for – are there special parts/departments more suitable for preschool children than others?
- How do we get there? What do we have to take into account when planning a visit for a group of young children?
- Plan your visit – what would you like to do/see together with a group of children? How would you like to spend your day at the museum?
- What possibilities are there for children to explore and experience? What do you think would interest them the most?
- Online resources – does the museum/institution have pedagogical material on the web-site? Would you like to use this material before/after your visit? How?

The oral group presentation takes place at the final seminar 3/4.
EXA2: Individual paper focusing on explorative learning
In this course you visit some Swedish preschool – both when making common field trips with the class and as individually chosen field work. During visits in preschools you are supposed to collect impressions and material which you can use when reflecting over and analyzing the Swedish preschool context with special focus on explorative learning in comparison with the preschool situation in some other country.

**Field trip** – The field trip to Swedish preschools will give you some examples on different ways the preschool can be organized in Sweden. Observe and take notes during the day so that you can use this documentation in your analysis (see below).

**Field work** – Choose two days (see the schedule) for doing field work on your own. During the field work you are supposed to observe what the children are doing and the everyday activities in the preschool. You also have the opportunity to talk to the preschool teachers and ask about the working practices. Reflect upon the following questions during your field work days: What possibilities have the children to engage in explorative activities? What possibilities have the children to express their opinions and influence the everyday activities in the preschool? What possibilities have the children to choose what they want to do during the preschool day? Where do the preschool activities take place – indoors/outdoors/outside the preschool area? What is the role of the teachers?

**Comparison** – Compare the Swedish preschool with the preschool situation in another country, as a suggestion your own country, or some other country that you are well acquainted with. Use the Curriculum for the Preschool (Lpfö 98 Revised 2010) and the governing documents from the country you have chosen (curriculum, syllabuses etc – search your chosen countries’ National Agency for Education web page and see what you can find…). Reflect on similarities and differences between the two countries preschool contexts and discuss the different preschool context with special focus on the possibility to engage in explorative learning. (If you choose to compare with a country that has no governing documents for the preschool look for instance at the curriculum for the early school years.)

**Instructions for writing the individual paper**
The individual paper should be approximately 1500 words long, written in Times New Roman 12 p. The title page following should include information about:

- **Title** – include the names of the countries discussed in the paper
- **Course (UB308F)**
- **Spring 2017, EXA2**
- **Name**

*The following parts must be found in the paper:*

**Introduction** – A short introduction presenting the country you have chosen to compare the Swedish preschool system with.

**Exploration in preschool** – Describe the preschools you have visited (field trip and your individual field work) and report on your experiences with special focus on explorative learning activities.

**Comparison of preschools and of the governing documents** – Compare the situation in the Swedish preschools you have visited with the situation in the country you have chosen to study/compare with. Compare the curricula and other governing documents and discuss similarities and differences.

**Discussion**: Discuss your findings in relation to the course literature.
Be sure to make references in your text to the course literature. It is important that you do this in a scientific and correct way and that you add a reference list at the end of your work. The reference system recommended in the course follows the American Psychological Association APA http://www.apastyle.org/ or Harvard

The paper (approximately 1500 words) should be uploaded on MONDO (via the content comparison database Urkund) in the folder EXA2: Individual paper focusing on explorative learning under the label Assignments not later than 6/4, 5 pm.

Examination dates

- EXA1: Oral group report (2 cr) April 3.
- EXA2: Individual paper (4 cr) uploaded on MONDO in the assignment folder not later than April 6.

Plagiarism and regulations for disciplinary matters

As a student you have to be conscientious about clearly accounting for the material used in the texts that are submitted for examination. To use other people’s expressions or ideas without stating where they are from is plagiarism. To translate and/or change some words in someone else’s text and present it as one’s own is obviously also a form of plagiarism. The teachers in the course may use the web-based tool Urkund to check your text for plagiarism.

Plagiarism is considered to be cheating and if discovered in an exam or paper, the exam or paper will immediately be failed and disciplinary measures may be taken. Any student who is caught cheating or disrupting academic activities can be suspended from lectures and exams for a period of up to six months. The Vice-Chancellor or the Disciplinary Council decides whether the student is to be subject to any disciplinary measures.

Assessment criteria

EXA1: Oral group report

G. Pass. The oral group report is presented by all the study group members in collaboration. The presentation is fulfilled in accordance with the instructions and includes use of ICT tools such as for example film or slide show.

F. Fail. The oral group report is not presented in accordance with the instructions.

EXA2: Individual paper focusing on explorative learning

E. Adequate. Experiences from field trips/visits to Swedish preschools are reported with special focus on the possibility for children to engage in explorative learning. Similarities and differences between Swedish preschools and the preschool situation in an individually chosen country are described using relevant curricula/governing documents and findings from the field trips/visits to preschools. The text is written in accordance with the instructions and with use of a reference system.

D. Satisfactory. Experiences from field trips/visits to Swedish preschools are reported and thoroughly described with special focus on the possibility for children to engage in explorative learning. Similarities and differences between Swedish preschools and the preschool situation in an individually chosen country are described using relevant curricula/governing documents, findings from the field trips/visits to preschools and concepts in the course literature. The text is written in accordance with the instructions and with satisfactory use of a reference system.
C. Good. Experiences from field trips/visits to Swedish preschools are reported and thoroughly described with special focus on the possibility for children to engage in explorative learning. Similarities and differences between Swedish preschools and the preschool situation in an individually chosen country are described and analyzed using relevant curricula/governing documents, findings from the field trips/visits to preschools and concepts in the course literature. The text is written in accordance with the instructions and with consequent use of a reference system.

B. Very Good. Experiences from field trips/visits to Swedish preschools are reported and thoroughly described with special focus on the possibility for children to engage in explorative learning. Similarities and differences between Swedish preschools and the preschool situation in an individually chosen country are described and analyzed using relevant curricula/governing documents, findings from the field trips/visits to preschools and concepts in the course literature. The results from the study visits are analyzed and discussed in relation to central concepts in the course and to the course literature. The text is written in accordance with the instructions and with consequent use of a reference system.

A. Excellent. Experiences from field trips/visits to Swedish preschools are reported and thoroughly described with special focus on the possibility for children to engage in explorative learning. Similarities and differences between Swedish preschools and the preschool situation in an individually chosen country are described and analyzed using relevant curricula/governing documents, findings from the field trips/visits to preschools and concepts in the course literature. The results from the study are critically analyzed and discussed in depth in relation to central concepts in the course and to the course literature. The text is written in accordance with the instructions and with correct and consequent use of a reference system.

Fx. Insufficient. The paper has one or several shortcomings, but the shortcomings are regarded possible to be attended to within two weeks. Shortcomings include: the area of knowledge, references to course literature, the paper does not show adequate command of the English language, and/or does not have a satisfactory reference system.

F. Fail. As Fx, but the shortcomings are regarded too extensive to be attended to. The student must hand in a new text.

Grade for the whole course
To get a grade for the whole course, all EXA1 must be finished with at least the grades G. The grade for the whole course is based on the grade of EXA2.

Re-examination and Fail
A student who has received a grade of E or higher may not take a re-examination for a higher grade. In addition, a registered passing grade may not be altered to Fail.

A student who receives the grade Fx once has the possibility of complementing the exam within two weeks after receiving the grade. If improvements are not done in the time allotted, the student is required to retake the examination.

A student who has received the grade of F, Fx or U twice on a given examination and by the same examiner may apply and be granted a new examiner. The application should be addressed to the director of studies.
The next opportunity for re-examination will take place on May 18. Students who want to re-take the examination shall contact the course administrator before May 11, 2017

**Course Literature**


Tovey, Helen (2007). *Playing outdoors. Spaces and places, risk and challenge*. Maidenhead: Open University Press. (150 p.)