

Study guide

Early Childhood Education: Explorative Learning

First cycle, Full time, 6 credits

Course codes: UB308F

Spring semester, 2019

October 22nd – November 14th

Course leader and examiner	Emilie Moberg	Emilie.moberg@buv.su.se
Course administrator	Malin Håkansson	malin.hakansson@buv.su.se Phone: +46 8 1207 6246
Lecturer	Hedda Schönback	hedda.schonback@buv.su.se
Lecturer	Emilie Moberg	Emilie.moberg@buv.su.se

Department of Child and Youth Studies

Stockholm University
Dep of Child and Youth Studies
SE- 106 91 Stockholm

Visiting address Ph. +46-8-1207 6246
Frescati hagväg 24 e-mail: info@buv.su.se
www.buv.su.se

About the course

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 October 22nd in room 106, at the Department of Child and Youth Studies. Address: Frescati Backe, 21A. The course is a full-time course for four weeks of study. The course includes study visits to preschools, early childhood education settings and museums.

Schedule

An updated schedule is put on the course website and may also be reached at <https://schema.su.se>

Please look at the Schedule for time and place and note that in addition to the seminars there will be group assignments, not included in the schedule.

Registration for the course

We use web-registration for this course. All necessary information is found in your Welcoming letter.

You are also required to attend the first scheduled seminar for the course. If for whatever reason you miss the first seminar of the course, please contact the administrator by email to state that you still intend to participate.

Attendance

Students are expected to be present in class during lectures and seminars. Absences must be compensated, and students who miss a class shall hand in a reflective text (2-4 pages) about the assigned literature as a make-up assignment. There will be a specific folder for this purpose on the Mondo course site. The deadline to hand in the make-up assignment(s) is 14th of November 23.55.

Literature

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

Most of the literature is available on-line at Stockholm University Library. Some of these references are also put directly on the Mondo course site. Optional and additional literature may be chosen by students and teachers in collaboration.

The reference system in the course follows the Harvard system, and there are manuals available in Mondo.

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/admitted-students>

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

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 analyze 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.

Examination

The course is examined on the basis of:

Oral group presentation, 2 credits, (Pass/Fail)

Individual paper, 4 credits (A-F) and

An overview of the course

In the table below, you can follow the scheduled activities for the course. For each seminar, the required reading is also noted.

Autumn 2019	Content	Teacher	Literature
October 22 9.30-11.30	Seminar 1 Introduction, Preschools in Sweden	Emilie Moberg Hedda Schönback	Korpi, Barbara Martin (2007). <i>The Politics of Pre-school</i> Ärlemalm-Hagsér, Eva & Engdahl, Ingrid (2015).
October 22 13-15.30	Seminar 2 Explorative Learning	Hedda Schönback Emilie Moberg	Lenz-Taguchi, Hillevi (2006). <i>Reconceptualizing Early Childhood Education</i> : Skolverket (2010). <i>Curriculum for pre-school, Lpfö 98. Revised 2010</i>
October 24 13-15	Study visit: Planet kids preschool		See more information on the study platform Mondo.
October 29 9-16	Study visit TBA		See more information on the study platform Mondo.
October 31 9-11.30	Seminar 3 The Learning context, formal and informal learning	Hedda Schönback	Skolverket (2011). <i>Curriculum for pre-school , Lpfö 98. Revised 2010</i> Nordin-Hultman, Elisabeth (2004).
October 31 13-15	Study visit: The Swedish Museum of Natural History - Meeting point main entrance	Suzanne Axelsson	
November 1	Study visit: Pedagogiskt Centrum Österåker		See more information on the study platform Mondo.
November 4 9-11.30	Seminar 4 Ethics and children's rights within early childhood education	Hedda Schönback	Olsson (2012) United Nations (1989). <i>The UN convention on the rights of the child.</i>
November	Study visit		See more information on the study platform Mondo

5	Bonden preschool		
November 6	Study visit Optional museum		Study visit optional museum in study groups - see instructions in study guide and information in class during seminar 2.
November 11 9-11.30	Seminar 5	Hedda Schönbäck	Group presentations
November 12 9-11.30	Seminar 6 Observation and analysis	Hedda Schönbäck	All previous literature
November 12 13-16.00	Seminar 7 International comparisons, Presentations and group feed back	Hedda Schönbäck	Vallberg Roth, Ann-Christine. (2014). Nordic Comparative Analysis
November 14th	Individual paper to be handed in on Mondo in Word format (.doc or .docx) no later than 5 pm.		All literature

Study visits

During the course you are going to visit preschools, museums and other early childhood education settings etc. on several occasions. More information about the study visits will be published in MONDO.

We will make an organized study visit at The Swedish Museum of Natural History. You will also visit another museum, science center or similar institution together with your study group (see Oral group report). There is a link to museums in Stockholm under resources in Mondo. 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 during Seminar 5.

During the study visits at preschools/early childhood settings, your mission is to do observations, talk to the staff and collect information to be used in 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).

Examination

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 them as one's own is obviously also a form of 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.

Summative assessment

The course will be examined by two different tasks that will be graded with Pass (G) or Fail (U) () and with an A-F scale ().

Oral group report

The students in the study group present collaboratively, using ICT tools such as film, slide show etc., from a museum, science centre 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).

The study group collaboratively chooses a museum, science centre 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 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 group work will be presented during Seminar 5.

Individual paper

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

In this course you visit some Swedish preschools and other settings. During visits you are supposed to collect impressions and material which you can use when reflecting on and analysing the Swedish preschool context with special focus on explorative learning in comparison with the preschool situation in some other country.

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. Observe and take notes during the day so that you can use this documentation in your written individual paper. You are also expected to bring your experiences and reflections from the museum study visits into the writing of the paper. During your study visits, use the following questions as ways to structure your notes and documentation.

- What possibilities do the children have to engage in explorative activities?
- What possibilities do the children have to express their opinions and influence the everyday activities in the preschool?
- What possibilities do the children have to choose what they want to do during the preschool day?
- Where do the preschool activities take place – indoors/outdoors/outside the preschool area?
- How would you describe the preschool as a learning context – what learning (can) take place – formal and informal?
- What is the role of the teachers?

Instructions for writing the individual paper:

The individual paper should be 2000 – 2500 words long, written in Times New Roman 12 p.

Title – include information about the names of the countries discussed in the paper, Course (UB308F), autumn 2019, Name

The following parts must be included 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 most significant observations from the preschools and museums you have visited, including your own experiences, with special focus on the possibilities or lack of possibilities of explorative learning activities.

Comparison of preschools and of the governing documents – Compare the Swedish preschool with the preschool situation in another country, by also using course literature and notes from seminars. Reflect on similarities and differences between the two countries preschool contexts.

Discussion: Discuss the different preschool contexts with special focus on the possibility to engage in explorative learning and discuss your findings in relation to the course literature.

References: 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 Harvard system (see links in Mondo).

The paper (approximately 2000 – 2500 words) should be uploaded on MONDO/Assignments (via the content comparison database Urkund) in the folder Individual paper **not later than 14th of November at 5 pm.**

Grade for the whole course

To get a grade for the whole course, all examinations must be finished with at least the grades Pass (G) or E and all tasks presented in this Study guide as well as all make-up assignments must be fulfilled. The grade of examination Individual paper, where a criterion based scale from A-F is used, will also become the final grade for the course.

Re-examination and Fail

The rules for re-examination are found in the syllabus.

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 one 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.

There are two exam opportunities offered for all examinations during the relevant semester. The next opportunity to hand in a re-examination will be during the period December 16th 2019 until 5pm. January 7th 2020. On the 16th of December the folder Re-examination Individual paper will be opened on MONDO/Assignments. The re-examination should be uploaded **no later than 5 pm January 7th 2020.** The re-examination will be graded within 15 work days after the submission dead-line.

If you are a student who took the course during the spring semester 2019 or earlier you need to email the course administrator at the latest December 16th in order to be re-registered and to get access to the Mondo site where you will hand in the re-examination.

Assessment criteria

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.

Individual paper focusing on explorative learning

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

D. Satisfactory. Experiences from the study visits to Swedish preschools are reported and thoroughly described with special focus on 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 study 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 the study visits to Swedish preschools are reported and thoroughly described with special focus on explorative learning. Similarities and differences between Swedish preschools and the preschool situation in an individually chosen country are described and analysed using relevant curricula/governing documents, findings from the study 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 the study visits to Swedish preschools are reported and thoroughly described with special focus on explorative learning. Similarities and differences between Swedish preschools and the preschool situation in an individually chosen country are described and analysed using relevant curricula/governing documents, findings from the study visits to preschools and concepts in the course literature. The results from the study visits are analysed 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 the study visits to Swedish preschools are reported and thoroughly described with special focus on explorative learning. Similarities and differences between Swedish preschools and the preschool situation in an individually chosen country are described and analysed using relevant curricula/governing documents, findings from the study visits to preschools and concepts in the course literature. The results from the study are critically analysed 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: area of knowledge, references to course literature, in-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.

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.

Appendix

Course Literature

Korpi, Barbara Martin (2007). *The Politics of Pre-school - intentions and decisions underlying the emergence and growth of the Swedish Pre-school*. Stockholm: The Ministry of Education and Research. (88 p.)*

Lenz-Taguchi, Hillevi (2006). Reconceptualizing Early Childhood Education: Challenging Taken-for-granted Ideas. In Einarsdottir, Johanna & Wagner, Judith T. (Eds.) *Nordic Childhoods and Early Education. Philosophy, Research, Policy and Practice in Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing, pp. 257-287. (31 p.)

National Agency for Education. (2011). *Curriculum for the pre-school, Lpfö 98. Revised 2010*. Stockholm: Fritzes. (16 p.)*

Nordin-Hultman, Elisabeth (2004). *Pedagogiska miljöer och barns subjektskapande*. (Doctoral thesis, summary). Stockholm: Liber, pp. 202-206. (5 p.)

Olsson, Liselott Mariette (2013). Taking Children's Questions Seriously: the need for creative thought. *Global Studies of Childhood*, 3(3), pp. 230-253. (25 p.)*

United Nations (1989). *The UN convention on the rights of the child*. New York: United Nations. (15 p.)*

Vallberg Roth, Ann-Christine. (2014). Nordic Comparative Analysis of Guidelines for Quality and Content in Early Childhood Education. *Journal of Nordic Early Childhood Education Research*, 8(1), 1-30. (30 p.)*

Änggård, Eva (2011). Children's Gendered and Non-Gendered Play in Natural Spaces. *Children, Youth and Environments*, 21(2), pp. 5-33.*

Ärlemalm-Hagsér, Eva & Engdahl, Ingrid (2015). Caring for oneself, others and the environment: EfS in Swedish preschools. In Julie Davis (ed.), *Young children and the environment: Early education for sustainability*. 2 ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 253-265. (13 p.)

Additional course literature such as articles, reports etc. as assigned by the teacher (approximately 50 pages).

*Available as electronic resource