

South Plains College

Course Syllabus

“South Plains College improves each student’s life.”

Course Title: **CDEC 1323-271 ~ Observation and Assessment** Office Hours: M & T 3:00-6:00 W & Th 1:00-4:00

Semester: Spring 2026

Friday by appointment [Booking Page Link](#)

Class Times: Tuesdays 6:00 to 8:50, Room 128

Phone: 806.716.4619

Instructor: Cherri Stallings

Email: cstallings@southplainscollege.edu

Office: Lubbock Career and Technical Center, Rm 125 I

General Course Information

Course Description

This course is a study of observation skills, assessment techniques, and documentation of children’s behavior. Concurrent enrollment in CDEC 2167.

Learning Outcomes

Demonstrate an understanding of appropriate assessment skills

Develop skills in observing, recording, and interpreting children's behavior

Define and compare assessment tools

Develop individual plans based on assessment

NAEYC Standard: Standard 3. Child Observation, Documentation, and Assessment

Course Objectives

1. Differentiate between various observation and assessment tools according to their purpose and validity.
2. Demonstrate basic formative and summative assessment techniques.
3. Apply knowledge of development and other influencing factors to interpret observations and assessments.
4. Use standardized observation and assessment tools to evaluate quality in environments, interactions, and curriculum.
5. Discuss logistical challenges, biases, and preconceptions about observing and assessing children.
6. Demonstrate how observation and assessment are used to plan for and adjust learning experiences.
7. Describe legal and ethical responsibilities in relation to observation, assessment, documentation, and recordkeeping.
8. Discuss the role of partnerships with families and other professionals in utilizing interpretations of observational and assessment data.

Academic Integrity

It is the aim of the faculty of South Plains College to foster a spirit of complete honesty and a high standard of integrity. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own, any work which he or she has not honestly performed, is regarded by the faculty and administration as a most serious offense and renders the offender liable to serious consequences and possibly suspension.

Cheating: Dishonesty of any kind on examinations or on written assignments, illegal possession of examinations, the use of unauthorized notes during an examination, obtaining information during an examination from the textbook or from the examination paper of another student, assisting others to cheat, alteration of grade records, and illegal entry or unauthorized presence in an office are examples of cheating.

Plagiarism: Offering the work of another as one's own, without proper acknowledgement, is plagiarism. Therefore, any student who fails to give credit for quotations or essentially identical expression of material taken from books, encyclopedias, magazines and other reference works, or from the themes, reports or other writings of a fellow student, is guilty of plagiarism. This includes copying information from the text materials and related websites. A student's written work **MUST** be in his/her own words.

Exams: In this course the instructor reserves the right to require exams in a proctored setting, should it be deemed necessary to maintain the integrity of the coursework.

SCANS and Foundation Skills

Basic Skills	Personal Qualities	Information	Systems
Thinking Skills	Resources	Interpersonal	Technology

Evaluation Methods

1. Regular class attendance
2. Participation in class discussion and activities
3. Weekly written assignments
4. Key Assessment – Child Portfolio

Verification of Workplace Competencies- Capstone Experience

Students will complete a *portfolio assessment of an individual child with a narrative summary*. A copy will be included in the students' Professional Portfolio during the CDEC 1292 capstone course.

Specific Course Requirements

Text and Materials

Textbook and all reading material will be provided for you on Blackboard.

Computer Requirements

Students are responsible for making sure they have computer access and skills needed for this class. Buying a personal computer is not required, but students do need regular access to one that meets course requirements. Computer labs are available for student use on the Levelland campus and at the Lubbock centers.

For this course, students will need: **Microsoft Word and Adobe Reader**

Additional Resources: [Instructional Technology](#)

Blackboard is an online learning platform that will be used throughout this semester. It allows students to access course materials, submit assignments, and communicate with the instructor and classmates.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be punctual and to attend all classes. Attendance will be taken at each class session using a digital sign-in process. It is the responsibility of the student to sign in during each class. More than three absences from class may result in withdrawal of the student from class.

Two incidents of arriving late and/or leaving early will be counted as 1 absence. Attendance records will be considered in the computation of final grades. The last drop date for the college is **April 30, 2026**.

Assignment Policy

All assignments will be completed and/or submitted on Blackboard.

Assignments are due on the dates specified in the course calendar, before 11:59pm.

Late work is only accepted with prior approval from the instructor.

- To request approval, students must send a written request through Blackboard messages at least 48 hours before the assignment is due.
- Approval is at the instructor's discretion.
- If approved, late submissions will incur a 10% deduction of the total points available per week late.
- Late work cannot be submitted more than two weeks past the original due date.
- No late work will be accepted after Week 14 of the semester to allow time for final grading.
- Unauthorized late work will not be accepted.

Grading Policy

Attendance/Class Participation	400 points
Weekly Activities	500 points
<u>Child Portfolio</u>	<u>100 points</u>
	1000 points

Final Grades		
900-1000 points	90-100%	A
800-899 points	80-89%	B
750-799 points	75-79%	C
700-749 points	70-74%	D
699 points & below	(69%)	F

A grade of C or above is required for course to be applied to certificate or degree in Child Development.

Communication Policy

Primary communication between instructor and students in this course should take place through **Blackboard Messages**.

Students may expect instructor responses to email messages within 48 hours.

Student Conduct

Students are expected to follow the standards of student conduct as defined in [SPC Student Guide](#).

Course Syllabus Statements

All students are required to review the official South Plains College syllabus statements, which provide important information regarding college policies and student resources. These include statements on intellectual exchange, accessibility services, non-discrimination, pregnancy and parenting accommodations, campus safety, COVID-19 procedures, appropriate use of artificial intelligence, and more.

These policies apply to all courses and are available at the following link:

<https://www.southplainscollege.edu/syllabusstatements/>

Course Outline

1. Historic and current tools of observation and assessment
 - a. National
 - b. State
2. Link between child development theory and research to observation and assessment
3. Observation techniques
 - a. Subjective and objective data collection
 - b. Formal and informal
4. Documentation
 - a. Types
 - b. Purposes
5. Impact of situational factors
 - a. Related to the child
 - b. Related to the environment
 - c. Related to the observer
6. Use of observation and assessment
 - a. Curriculum
 - b. Teaching strategies
 - c. Environments
 - d. Referral and intervention
 - e. On-going cycle of curriculum development
7. Collaboration with families and professionals
 - a. Use of assessment data
 - b. Promoting family involvement
 - c. Referral processes
8. Legal and ethical responsibilities
 - a. Confidentiality
 - b. Identification of personal biases and expectations
 - c. Recordkeeping
 - d. Rights of children and families

Scans Competencies

RESOURCES

C-1 **TIME** - Selects goal - relevant activities, ranks them, allocates time, prepares and follows schedules.

C-2 **MONEY** - Uses or prepares budgets, makes forecasts, keeps records and makes adjustments to meet objectives.

C-3 **MATERIALS AND FACILITIES** - Acquires, stores, allocates, and uses materials or space efficiently.

C-4 **HUMAN RESOURCES** - Assesses skills and distributes work accordingly, evaluates performances and provides feedback.

INFORMATION - Acquires and Uses Information

C-5 Acquires and evaluates information.

C-6 Organizes and maintains information.

C-7 Interprets and communicates information.

C-8 Uses computers to process information.

INTERPERSONAL–Works With Others

C-9 Participates as members of a team and contributes to group effort.

C-10 Teaches others new skills.

C-11 Serves Clients/Customers–works to satisfy customer’s expectations.

C-12 Exercises Leadership–communicates ideas to justify position, persuades and convinces others, responsibly challenges existing procedures and policies.

C-13 Negotiates–works toward agreements involving exchanges of resources; resolves divergent interests.

C-14 Works With Diversity–works well with men and women from diverse backgrounds.

SYSTEMS–Understands Complex Interrelationships

C-15 Understands Systems–knows how social, organizational, and technological systems work and operates effectively with them.

C-16 Monitors and Corrects Performance–distinguishes trends, predicts impacts on system operations, diagnoses systems performance and corrects malfunctions.

C-17 Improves or Designs Systems–suggests modifications to existing systems and develops new or alternative systems to improve performance.

TECHNOLOGY–Works with a Variety of Technologies

C-18 Selects Technology–chooses procedures, tools, or equipment, including computers and related technologies.

C-19 Applies Technology to Task–understands overall intent and proper procedures for setup and operation of equipment.

C-20 Maintains and Troubleshoots Equipment–prevents, identifies, or solves problems with equipment, including computers and other technologies.

Foundations Skills

BASIC SKILLS–Reads, Writes, Performs Arithmetic and Mathematical Operations, Listens and Speaks

F-1 Reading – locates, understands, and interprets written information in prose and in documents such as manuals, graphs, and schedules.

F-2 Writing – communicates thoughts, ideas, information and messages in writing and creates documents such as letters, directions, manuals, reports, graphs, and flow charts.

F-3 Arithmetic – performs basic computations; uses basic numerical concepts such as whole numbers, etc.

F-4 Mathematics – approaches practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques.

F-5 Listening – receives, attends to, interprets, and responds to verbal messages and other cues.

F-6 Speaking – organizes ideas and communicates orally.

THINKING SKILLS–Thinks Creatively, Makes Decisions, Solves Problems, Visualizes and Knows How to Learn & Reason

F-7 Creative Thinking – generates new ideas.

F-8 Decision-Making – specifies goals & constraints, generates alternatives, considers risks, evaluates & chooses best alternative.

F-9 Problem Solving – recognizes problems, devises and implements plan of action.

F-10 Seeing Things in the Mind’s Eye – organizes and processes symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, and other information.

F-11 Knowing How to Learn – uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills.

F-12 Reasoning – discovers a rule or principle underlying the relationship between two or more objects and applies it when solving a problem.

PERSONAL QUALITIES–Displays Responsibility, Self-Esteem, Sociability, Self-Management, Integrity and Honesty

F-13 Responsibility – exerts a high level of effort and perseveres towards goal attainment.

F-14 Self-Esteem – believes in own self-worth and maintains a positive view of self.

F-15 Sociability – demonstrates understanding, friendliness, adaptability, empathy and politeness in group settings.

F-16 Self-Management – assesses self accurately, sets personal goals, monitors progress and exhibits self-control.

F-17 Integrity/Honesty – chooses ethical courses of action.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators

Standard 1. Child Development and Learning in Context

1a: Understand the developmental period of early childhood from birth through age 8 across physical, cognitive, social and emotional, and linguistic domains, including bilingual/multilingual development.

1b: Understand and value each child as an individual with unique developmental variations, experiences, strengths, interests, abilities, challenges, approaches to learning, and with the capacity to make choices.

1c: Understand the ways that child development and the learning process occur in multiple contexts, including family, culture, language, community, and early learning setting, as well as in a larger societal context that includes structural inequities.

1d: Use this multidimensional knowledge – that is, knowledge about the developmental period of early childhood, about individual children and about development and learning in cultural contexts – to make evidence-based decisions that support each child.

Standard 2. Family-Teacher Partnerships and Community Connections

2a: Know about, understand and value the diversity of families.

2b: Collaborate as partners with families in young children's development and learning through respectful, reciprocal relationships and engagement.

2c: Use community resources to support young children's learning and development and to support families, and build partnerships between early learning settings, schools, and community organizations and agencies.

Standard 3. Child Observation, Documentation, and Assessment

3a: Understand that assessments (formal and informal, formative and summative) are conducted to make informed choices about instruction and for planning in early learning settings.

3b: Know a wide range of types of assessments, their purposes, and their associated methods and tools.

3c: Use screening and assessment tools in ways that are ethically grounded and developmentally, ability, culturally, and linguistically appropriate in order to document developmental progress and promote positive outcomes for each child.

3d: Build assessment partnerships with families and professional colleagues.

Standard 4. Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices

4a: Understand and demonstrate positive, caring, and supportive relationships and interactions as the foundation of early childhood educators' work with young children.

4b: Understand and use teaching skills that are responsive to the learning trajectories of young children and to the needs of each child, recognizing that differentiating instruction, incorporating play as a core teaching practice, and supporting the development of executive function skills are critical for young children.

4c: Use a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically relevant, anti-bias, evidence-based teaching skills and strategies that reflect the principles of universal design for learning.

Standard 5. Knowledge, Application, and Integration of Academic Content in the Early Childhood Curriculum

5a: Understand content knowledge – the central concepts, methods and tools of inquiry, and structure – and resources for the academic disciplines in an early childhood curriculum.

5b: Understand pedagogical content knowledge – how young children learn in each discipline – and how to use the teacher knowledge and practices described in Standards 1-4 to support young children's learning in each content area.

5c: Modify teaching practices by applying, expanding, integrating, and updating their content knowledge in the disciplines, their knowledge of curriculum content resources and their pedagogical content knowledge.

Standard 6. Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator

6a: Identify and involve themselves with the early childhood field and serve as informed advocates for young children, families, and the profession.

6b: Know about and uphold ethical and other early childhood professional guidelines.

6c: Use professional communication skills, including technology-mediated strategies, to effectively support young children's learning and development and to work with families and colleagues.

6d: Engage in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice.

6e: Develop and sustain the habit of reflective and intentional practice in their daily work with young children as members of the early childhood profession.