Master of Science in Child Development and Early Childhood Education

Sponsored by the Wheelock College Center for International Education, Leadership and Innovation

Background Information

The Singapore National Trades Unions Congress (NTUC) is a federation of unions in Singapore that looks after the interests of workers. It is also one of the largest providers of childcare in Singapore. NTUC also provides a number of secretaries such as youth, sports, culture, women’s programs, safety, occupational health, and childcare. NTUC is one of the largest providers of childcare for working parents in Singapore and has 15 centers which have served approximately 2,000 children.

NTUC and Wheelock College collaborate jointly to provide this Master of Science in Child Development and Early Childhood Education program in Singapore. This program was modeled after the Child Development and early childhood education curriculum, which is already in existence in the Wheelock College Graduate School. The primary focus of the program is to educate a team of trainers who in turn shall continue to educate other childcare workers throughout Singapore.

Courses and Course Descriptions

EDU 504 Child Development: The School-Age Child in Asian Context (3 graduate credits)
- Provides an in-depth overview of the cognitive, motor, socio-emotional, and language development in children ages 5 to 8.
- Explores the stages of human development from conception to adulthood in Asian society.
- Examines child development from three major perspectives: psychoanalytic theory, cognitive theory, and learning and behavior theory.
- Studies the work of Erik Erikson and his life cycle theory of human development in the socio-cultural context. Also compares theories of Erikson with the theories of Piaget, Freud, Skinner, Gardner, and others appropriate for the culture.
- Exposes the learner to culturally specific literature in human development.
- Helps the learner observe, record, and analyze the behavior of children ages 5 to 8 and their interactions with peers, adults, and in learning environments.
- Discusses mild to severe deviations and normal development in children ages 5 to 8. The focus is on the process of mainstreaming children in major disability areas that include mental retardation, autism, learning disabilities, emotional and behavioral disorders, language disorders, sensory impairment, and physical handicaps.

EDU 505 Child Development: The Early Years in an Asian Context (3 graduate credits)
- Provides an in-depth overview of the cognitive, motor, socio-emotional, and language development of children from infancy to 5 years of age.
• Examines child development from three major perspectives: psychoanalytic theory, cognitive theory, and learning and behavior theory.
• Studies the work of Erik Erikson and his life cycle theory of human development in the socio-cultural context. Also compares theories of Erikson with the theories of Piaget, Freud, Skinner, Gardner, and others appropriate for the culture.
• Exposes the learner to culturally specific literature in human development.
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EDU 612 Educational Environments for Children (3 graduate credits)
• Constructs a common definition of “Quality Care and Early Education for Children” and assists the learner in adapting the definition to individual cultures and countries.
• Assists the learner in designing, planning, implementing, and evaluating an environment that encourages the growth and active learning of young children with a focus on preschoolers and early elementary years.
• Presents principles of environmental design and possible plans for the implementation in settings for young children, indoors, and outdoors.
• Assists the learner in gaining practical experience in selecting, organizing, creating, and evaluating educational materials.
• Supports the learner to begin to understand the role of recycled materials as educational materials and tools.
• Assists the learner in the development of educational materials and instruments to be used in the on-going licensing, monitoring, and assessing of learning environments.
• Assists the learner in beginning to design learning environments for children such as playgrounds and parks.
• Assists the learner to reflect and analyze the connections between a learning environment and curriculum.
• Begins to develop and refine instruments and educational tools to use with a variety of audiences such as policy makers, parent-teacher groups, and others.

EDU 513 The Adult Learner (3 graduate credits)
• Explores what development means for adults, including research and theory about critical life issues, developmental tasks, periods of stability and transition, and stages of development.
• Draws heavily upon participant's own personal and cultural experiences to challenge, verify, and extend developmental theory.
• Focuses on understanding and facilitating the learning of adults who work with or on behalf of children, including parents, teachers, assistant teachers, social service workers, public officials, and others.
• Articulates characteristics of the appropriate settings and climates for adults learning, and how to plan, implement, and evaluate adult learning experiences.
• Helps each learner to teach others more about the process of curriculum development and refinement.
• Explores the roles of leaders in working with adults. Learners practice key interpersonal leadership skills such as listening and sharing reflectively.
EDU 725 Research Methods (3 graduate credits)
- Introduces the learner to an overview of different research designs, methods, data collection, sampling, instrumentation, and data analysis. Introduces the learner to research questions and the development of associated hypotheses. Other topics included are the sampling, selection of instruments, research ethics, data analysis and the presentation of findings.
- Supports the learner to compare observational techniques and their applications to the curricular problems and research issues that educators often experience.
- Develops beginning skills and assists the learner in acquiring knowledge to be a critical consumer of research studies. The course introduces the learner to the process involved in the development of a plan for the evaluation of programs.
- Engages the learner in one or more of the following activities: designing or replicating a study, collecting data, analyzing data, and writing about research results. Possible research topics include play, social development, cognitive development, children's art, and hospitalized children.
- Helps the learner to build on knowledge of research design, methods, and research experience to plan a study.

EDU 670 Field Study in Early Childhood (2 graduate credits)
- Gives the learner the opportunity to plan and implement an in-depth project of professional interest. The study must relate to a need of students in their specific country. Advisor and learner must agree on the design of the study and work out ways in which the study is to be implemented during the course of the year. The study is required to be completed in conjunction with and related to the internship.
- Supports the learner in engaging in a study that utilizes the theories and concepts acquired through coursework and relates to the practical situation. For example, the learner develops, implements, and evaluates a series of training sessions and programs in groups as well as individually.
- Learner must develop a learning contract to be approved by a Wheelock College Coordinator and/or appropriate Faculty.
- Learner is assigned an advisor. In addition, the Wheelock College Coordinator supports the advisors. Each learner develops a contract which has to be approved before the learner can proceed.

EDU 691 Practicum: Leadership in Early Childhood Education (2 graduate credits)
- Provides the learner with the opportunity to undertake an intensive year-long internship in a chosen work setting. Internship has to be done in the learner's culture and be in conjunction with and relate to the field of study.
- Provides the learner with on-going supervisory support in groups, provided via seminars.
- Assists the learner to develop a contract which must be approved by an advisor.
- Requires the learner to develop a plan to spend a period of time in another setting. The nature of this secondary setting may vary.
- Supports the learner to develop leadership skills by incorporating information from videotapes and observations.
- Learners work with an advisor.

EDU 613 Environments to Support the Growth of Infants and Toddlers (2 graduate credits)
- Assists the learner in designing, planning, implementing, and evaluating an environment that encourages the growth of infants and toddlers.
- Supports the learner to realize the various ways in which environmental design affects programming for infants, toddlers, and their families.
• Presents for the learner information in environmental design and its implications for space for infants and toddlers.
• Assists the learner to design and evaluate both indoor and outdoor environments for very young children by designing an on-site project.
• Assists the learner to develop new visions for designing learning environments for infants, toddlers, and parents.

EDU 601 Designing Curriculum for Early Childhood I (3 graduate credits)
• Supports the learner to examine psychological and philosophical ideas which have significantly influenced or influence early childhood education. Major emphasis is put upon current emerging theories.
• Presents the learner with a variety of program models. Articulates the philosophy, goals, and appropriate practices for children ages 3 to 8.
• Evaluates the current educational materials and curriculum in terms of current research and programs.

EDU 602 Designing Curriculum for Early Childhood Education II (3 graduate credits)
• Further assists the learner to design, implement, and evaluate curriculum materials and activities appropriate to the age, developmental state, special needs, and social, racial, and linguistic backgrounds of the children.
• Supports the learner to understand a developmental interaction approach. Examines the teacher’s role in helping the child recognize and integrate his/her experience. Focuses on children ages 3 to 8.
• Teaches the learner to analyze children’s thinking (scientific, social, mathematical, aesthetic).
• Explores how thinking is revealed in children’s interactions with the social, natural, and physical world in their language.

EDU 712 Staff/Personnel Development (3 graduate credits)
• Exposes the learner to consultant roles in child-related settings, such as schools, day care centers, and special programs. Learners examine the purposes and dimensions of consultation, its characteristic stages and the processes involved in short and long term consultations.
• Exposes the learner to the concept of staff development as an emerging concept in the field of early childhood. Considers issues of need assessments, in-service education, and staff communication and coordination.
• Participants design and partially implement a staff development plan.
• Discusses models and approaches to supervision and staff development. Participants receive training in staff appraisal evaluation and consider assumptions and implications for teachers, administrators, and childcare environments.
• Explores the interaction of human need with organizational structures, and practical and theoretical views of administration in educational programs serving young children.
• Exposes the learner to skills such as conducting a meeting, analyzing a budget, designing and implementing a “change” strategy, disciplining an employee, analyzing the power functions and structure of an organization, and choosing an appropriate decision making strategy.
• Each learner evolves and assesses his/her own administrative profile style.

EDU 567 Developing and Implementing Parent Programs (2 graduate credits)
• Exposes the learner to the nature of the family as a living dynamic system.
• Discusses for the learner the nature of the community as a significant environment for children and families.

• Focuses, for the learner, on current theories of family interaction; alternative patterns of family adjustment to internal and external stress; parent-child issues; child-rearing practices; varieties of parenthood experiences; parents’ involvement in their child’s learning; and approaches to promote parent involvement and collaboration in early childhood settings from a cross-cultural perspective.

• Teaches the learner about a range of parent programs that have been successful. Discusses the implication of these programs for various other groups and/or cultures.

Total: 32 Graduate Credit Hours