



**EDUC 490 N (3 credits)
Seminar - Montessori
Fall 2015/ Winter 2016
Terms 1 and 2**

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This weekly seminar will provide teacher candidates with an opportunity to come together to think and talk about the Montessori approach. Through instructor- and student-generated questions, weekly focus topics, guest speakers, as well as an exploration into key Montessori elements, teacher candidates will construct and re-shape their newly emerging understandings over the course of the year. To promote connections, collaborations and a learning community, an inquiry stance will be encouraged. It is expected that students will continue to connect and collaborate with their peers as they work towards building a strong community of inquirers.

LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR EDUC 490 N

By the end of this course, teacher candidates will be able to:

- Identify key features within a Montessori classroom climate
- Construct lessons suitable for classroom implementation
- Create a model of a Montessori prepared environment
- Describe key educators in constructivist education theory
- Contribute to the ongoing development of their Montessori botany portfolio

ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. Attendance and Participation

As the majority of this seminar is based on discussion and collaboration, weekly attendance is mandatory and active participation is the expectation. Barring extraordinary circumstances, the instructor must approve absences in advance.



2. Lesson Preparation

Teacher candidates will develop an understanding of lesson planning and prepare lessons (non-didactic material based) within the context of the Montessori classroom. Creative and multimodal presentation styles and lessons are expected, including several different learning styles such as auditory, visual and kinaesthetic.

3. Classroom in a Box

The Montessori prepared environment plays an important role in student learning through its intentional design based on the science of child development. In the calm and ordered space of a Montessori classroom children are able to work on activities of their own choice at their own pace. Teacher Candidates will prepare a simulation of a Montessori classroom within a shoebox or similar type of construction. Accompanying the “classroom box” will be a 1-2 page summary of the underlying principles for preparing and setting up a Montessori classroom.

4. Constructivist Educator Study

Teacher candidates will work in pairs and prepare a 20-minute presentation on a constructivist educator who influenced Maria Montessori. Through a student-centered inquiry approach, teacher candidates will undertake a study of a different pedagogue (John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Jean-Marc-Gaspard Itard, Edouard Seguin, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Friedrich Froebel, Reggio Emilia) and steer their own learning by posing questions, guiding and leading discussions, challenging assumptions, and re-imagining the possibilities for education in the 21st century. It is expected that students will continue to connect and collaborate with their peers as they work towards building a strong community of inquirers. Criteria for this assignment will be co-created with teacher candidates and opportunities for in-class collaboration will be provided.

5. Montessori Portfolio

Teacher candidates will continue to document their learning into their Montessori Portfolio from the introductory course. In general, the portfolio will be comprised of four sections: Theory, Botany, Practicum Observations, and Personal Notes. It is expected that students will provide evidence of their learning through personal reflections, readings, discussions with peers, and partner/small group activities. The organization of the portfolio will be a combination of a hard copy and digital format.