CHILDREN’S STUDIES CURRICULUM MATURES

Eastern launched its first Children’s Studies degree program in 2002. Since then, we have watched with pride as the children's studies movement has grown. Today, at least three other schools in North America offer degrees in children’s studies, including; Brooklyn College (where Children's Studies originated with Gertrude Lenzer), Rutgers Camden (which offers a Ph.D. in Children’s Studies), and York University in Toronto.

While our curriculum has been working well, and our students are succeeding (two years ago we had a 90 percent hire rate), in keeping up with the developments in Children's Studies, the Curriculum Committee has been working over the past two years to update the Children's Studies curriculum. As a result, we will unveil a revised curriculum for Fall 2010, while continuing to focus on the three concentration areas – Research, Program Development, and Early Childhood in children's studies. Please note: there will be a new Children’s Studies prefix, CDST and we will move from a 45-credit major (with a required minor), to a 60-credit major (with no required minor).

The new curriculum includes courses designed to strengthen the program’s core and its commitment to cultural diversity and global issues. For instance, Introduction to Children’s Studies (CDST 301), introduces the history and philosophy of the children’s studies movement, as well as the framework of the program at EWU. (Please note: Students choosing the Early Childhood concentration will still be able to take EDUC 306). Inequalities and Impacts on Educational Equity (EDUC 325), will meet the university’s culture and gender diversity requirement. Geography of Childhood (GEOG 357), will be a fun way to enhance your understanding of children and childhood around the globe, while Sociology of the Family (SOCI 370), focuses on children of diverse family backgrounds in the U.S.

The new curriculum is designed to provide depth, as well as breadth, for the program. Topics in Children’s Studies (CDST 439), will cover a range of issues depending on faculty research and interests. Current courses include: Play, Children’s Activism, Children’s Loss and Grief, Children’s Media, and Children and Health. Finally, Children’s Studies majors will have the option of a Children’s Studies Capstone (CDST 490), and they will be required to complete and present a senior exit portfolio (CDST 492).

NOTE: students who declared a Children’s Studies major before the 10th day of summer quarter 2010 have the option of completing the Children’s Studies degree requirements as listed in the 2009/10 catalog OR the new requirements. Students who declare after the 10th day of summer 2010 will complete the new degree requirements in the 2010/11 catalog.
2010 ANNUAL REVIEW

On May 6, 2010, the Children Studies Program hosted its annual review for graduating seniors and their guests, faculty, staff, community partners, and other EWU students. All guests were greeted by a strange, but fascinating character, Jerold the giraffe, who is a stuffed toy that stands about six feet tall and has participated in a variety of events. The room was decorated with many cozy round tables covered with white tablecloths, holding fanciful centerpieces made of clear glass jars with assortments of pencil bouquets. The menu consisted of wonderful refreshments, which included lemonade, iced tea and coffee, assorted fruit samplers, snacks, deserts and a beautiful cake.

The evening began with a relaxed atmosphere of graduates and guests poring over student portfolios, and immersed in conversations. The portfolios demonstrated their hard work of internships, service learning projects and thesis, partnerships with staff, community partners and community members. Faculty and community members present offered pleasant and informative insight for future directions. Networking with influential individuals helps seniors take the next steps in their careers. The portfolio presentations also provided examples and insight for attending undergraduate students, who were able to ask questions of the graduates about their ideas, careers, adventures and success.

John Hancock, of Deep Creek Consulting, presented the keynote talk for the evening, “The Clear-Eyed Vision of a Child’s World.” Built around a quote from the late Rachel Carson, this heartwarming speech supported the importance of children’s free expression and personal discovery and our work with children and their families. He inspired students to strive for their dream jobs and, once they are there, to learn the organization inside and out. In this way, our work influences the system to promote growth and progress toward child and family advocacy.

At the conclusion of the annual review, Children’s Studies alum John Michel helped award each attending graduate a Children’s Studies cord, while Professor Wright relayed the history and tradition of the cords and the children’s studies promise.

Congratulations to each of our 70 graduates this year, including students in all four of the options and at the Bellevue, Cheney, and Riverpoint programs. We hope you will join us for the Annual Review in 2011.

THREE STUDENTS PRESENT RESEARCH NATIONALLY

The National Conference on Undergraduate Research, NCUR, promotes “undergraduate research scholarships and creative activities done in partnership with faculty or other mentors as a vital component of higher education.” Eastern had the privilege of showcasing three Children’s Studies majors at NCUR in Montana this spring.


Next year, NCUR will take place at Ithaca College in New York from March 31-April 2. If you are currently working on or have ideas for an original creative activity or research project, please check out NCUR http://www.ncur.org/ and discuss the possibilities with a faculty mentor.
Throughout the months of April and May, the Children Studies Club has been supporting the “Pennies for Pencils” fundraiser. “Pennies for Pencils” was inspired by the work of Children’s Studies alum Anna Montgomery. Anna joined the Peace Corps after graduating and has been teaching in Rwanda for almost two years now, where she works to positively influence, teach, and support students in low resource environments. You can follow her work through her blog “Anna 4 Africa” on http://anna4africa.blogspot.com/.

The “Pennies for Pencils” project was created by Children’s Studies senior Kelly Altmaier to help provide the children Anna works with necessary school supplies. Altmaier thought that EWU students might have some pocket change that they would be willing to deposit for a good cause without missing it. She also devised a plan to create a competition in the residence halls, called “Dorm Penny Wars”, that asked of students to gather this money and the floor with the most pennies collected was pronounced a winner. However, for those who got caught up in the competition without the true goal in mind, there was a catch, and that is if one floor gives some change to a jar belonging to a different floor, then they lose that same amount from their own jar. This plan proved to be successful as it definitely has played on the competitive and ambitious side of young participants, resulting in Kelly being able to raised $180 for Anna’s work in Rwanda and her mission. Because the resources are so limited in many countries like Rwanda, a fresh supply of pencils, crayons, paper, and etc. truly goes a long way. Kelly offers her thanks to individuals for doing this seemingly small act of giving up their spare change, yet, in the process, blessing the lives of many children in Rwanda.

June 3 • Noon • 05 Hargreaves Hall
Children Studies Club meeting – Electing officers

June 8, 2010 • 9:00 - 11:15 AM
Graduation at Woodward Field

July 16 & 23
First Step & New Student Orientation

Summer 2010 • Core Classes
Child and Adolescent Development • CEDP 313-01
4 Credits
9:15-11:35 am MTWR • 124 WIL
Jul 19-Aug 13 with C. Cleanthous

The Learning Paradigm • EDUC 458-40
5 Credits
8:00 am-7:00 pm • FS SCLS Phase I 111
Jun 25/26, Jul 16/17, Aug 6 with C. Booth

Sociology of the Family • SOCI 470-40
5 Credits
5:00-9:00 pm F and 9:00 am-4:00 pm S, Riverpoint

Fall 2010 • Core Classes
Intro to Children’s Studies • CDST 301
2 credits • 12:12:50 pm TR with S. Wright

Child and Adolescent Development • CEDP 313
4 credits • 1-2:50 pm MTWR and 8:00 am TR

Inequalities and Impacts on Educational Equity • EDUC 325
4 credits • 10-11:50 am MW

Sociology of Children • SOCI 483
5 credits • 9-9:50 am M-F with S. Wright