

COURSE CATALOGUE FOR INCOMING ERASMUS+ STUDENTS

Study Programme: Preschool Teacher

Course title (EN) and code	Course type	Semester	ECTS	Short description
General Psychology 24.OVT114	<i>Compulsory</i>	1	3	The course introduces key areas of psychology, including cognition, emotion, personality, development, learning, motivation, and social behavior. Students gain an understanding of major psychological theories and their application to everyday life and professional practice.
Child Development 24.OVT214	<i>Compulsory</i>	2	4	Study of cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development of children from early age to preschool period.
Children's Rights 24.OVT215	<i>Compulsory</i>	2	3	This course provides an overview of the principles and legal frameworks related to children's rights. It examines international and national standards for the protection and promotion of children's rights, with particular emphasis on the rights of children in educational settings and the role of educators in ensuring their well-being, participation, and inclusion.
Early Childhood Learning 24.OVT315	<i>Compulsory</i>	3	4	Fundamental principles and processes through which young children (typically from birth to six years of age) acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The course examines key theories of learning in early

				development, the role of play and interaction in learning, and the importance of creating supportive, stimulating, and developmentally appropriate environments in early childhood settings.
Stage Arts and Puppetry 24.OVT413	<i>Compulsory</i>	4	4	Artistic expression through drama, performance, and puppetry as educational tools in early childhood education. The course focuses on developing creativity, communication skills, imagination, and emotional expression in children through theatrical activities. Special emphasis is placed on using puppetry and scenographic elements to support storytelling, learning through play, and the holistic development of the child in kindergarten settings.
Ethics and education 24.OVT414	<i>Compulsory</i>	4	4	Fundamental ethical principles that guide educational practice, with a focus on the moral responsibilities of educators, institutions, and learners.
Inclusive Education 24.OVT613	<i>Compulsory</i>	6	3	Educational approaches for children with developmental difficulties and inclusive practices in preschool settings.
Elective courses				
Developmental and Corrective Gymnastics 24.OVT124	<i>Elective</i>	1	4	Physical exercises designed to support the healthy growth and motor development of children, as well as to prevent and correct postural and movement

				irregularities
Ecology 24.OVT224	<i>Elective</i>	2	5	Explores the relationships between living organisms and their environment, with emphasis on understanding ecosystems, environmental processes, and human impact on nature.
Psychology of Children's Play 24.OVT423	<i>Elective</i>	4	4	Role of play in child development and pedagogical use of structured and free play activities.
Giftedness and Creativity in Preschool Children 24.OVT623	<i>Elective</i>	6	4	The course focuses on understanding different forms of giftedness, fostering creativity through play and learning activities, and designing educational environments that support individual potential.

Professional Practice 1 24.OVT216	<i>Compulsory</i>	2	3	Structured, field-based component of the study program in which students engage in direct work within preschool institutions. It enables them to connect theoretical knowledge with real educational practice through observation, participation, and reflection on children's learning, development, and everyday life in the kindergarten.
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Study program: Preschool Teacher
Course name: General Psychology
Teachers: Tamara Djordjevic, Ivana Petrovic
Type: compulsory
ECTS: 3
Course objectives:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1.To develop an understanding of the conceptual frameworks for constructing a “purposeful psychological theory” encompassing psychological knowledge, skills, and values relevant to the teaching profession in early childhood education. 2. To analyze and critically reflect on contemporary curricular approaches in preschool education, while strengthening students’ experiential and personal theories through insights from modern psychology. 3. To understand the theoretical and value-based foundations underlying the current Preschool Education Curriculum Framework. 4. To analyze and critically evaluate contemporary theories concerning the neuropsychological foundations of behavior, play, and learning in children and adults. 5. To understand personality as an integrated system and childhood as a sensitive developmental period characterized by optimal opportunities for learning and exploration, and to promote a holistic approach to child development and educational processes.To develop competencies for studying contemporary psychological literature and engaging in critical reflection within preschool educational practice.
Learning outcomes
<p>Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand various approaches to preschool education curricula, their theoretical foundations, and critically analyze them from the perspective of contemporary psychology. 2. Understand the theoretical and value-based principles underlying the current Preschool Education Curriculum Framework and critically reflect on contemporary findings in neuropsychology, including brain architecture and plasticity as key characteristics of brain development. 3. Promote humanistic, democratic, and inclusive values, as well as proactivity and participation. 4. Foster children's sense of security through relationships based on trust, predictability, and respect. 5. Empower children to cope with conflicts, stress, problems, and new situations and challenges. 6. Adopt a holistic understanding of personality development and childhood as a sensitive developmental period, recognizing the interconnectedness of care, nurturing, education, and upbringing, while supporting children's well-being, play, creativity, and overall development. 7. Study relevant psychological literature, critically analyze it, and engage in reflective professional practice. 8. Apply acquired knowledge, skills, and values in the context of preschool educational settings.

Course content*Theoretical instruction:*

1. Structuralism and post-structuralism in psychology; humanistic theories and values; democratic and inclusive values.
2. Contemporary neuropsychological research on brain architecture and its psychological implications in adulthood; brain plasticity as a key characteristic of development.
3. Childhood as a sensitive developmental period; the child as an active, interactive, creative, and competent being with rich potentials.
4. Play and exploration; creativity as an essential human characteristic.
5. Personality as an integrated system; identity and integrity of personality.
6. Contemporary theories of personality structure, dynamics, and development.
7. Holistic behavior and perception of the world; emotions and motivation; temperament and character.
8. Attitudes and values; critical thinking; verbal and non-verbal communication; nonviolent communication.
9. Frustration and conflict and strategies for their resolution.
10. Psychological processes underlying integrated learning, memory, and forgetting.
11. Self-esteem as a fundamental dimension of personality; security, trust, and respect.
12. Different curricular approaches to preschool education.
13. Children's well-being, relationships, and agency within the current Preschool Education Curriculum Framework; teachers' strategies for developing the real curriculum in preschool settings.
14. A holistic approach to care, nurturing, education, and upbringing in preschool institutions.

Practical instruction:

Practical sessions are designed to complement lectures and involve active participation and reflection by students and instructors on issues arising from empirical and practical research, examples of good practice in preschool institutions, and students' own childhood experiences, among other topics.

References

- Hock, R. R. (2004). *Forty Studies that Changed Psychology*. Naklada Slap, Jastrebarsko (selected chapters).
- Shonkoff, J. P., & Phillips, D. A. (Eds.) (2000). *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Woodhead, M. (2012). *Different Perspectives on Early Childhood: Theory, Research and Policy*. Belgrade: Institute of Pedagogy and Andragogy, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade; CIP – Centre for Interactive Pedagogy.
- Krnjaja, Ž. (2010). Play, creativity, and the open education system – what connects them? *Teaching and Education*, 59(2), 264–277.
- Miškeljin, L., Vranješević, J., Jovanović, O., Lazarević, M., Tomašević, T. (2021). *Guide for the Inclusion of Children with Developmental Disabilities in Preschool Education*. Belgrade: IPA.
- Nedimović, T., Đorđev, I., & Stojanović, A. (2022). Application of a holistic approach in practice from educators' perspective. *Innovations in Teaching*, XXXV(4), 13–27.
- OECD (2010). *Understanding the Brain: The Birth of a Learning Science*. Belgrade: OECD / Ministry of Education.
- Pavlović Breneselović, D., Krnjaja, Ž., & Backović, S. (2022). *Guide for Designing Preschool Spaces in Line with the "Years of Ascent" Curriculum Framework*. Belgrade: MPNTR.
- Pavlović Breneselović, D., Krnjaja, Ž., Jovanović, M., & Sjeničić, G. (2022). *Strategy for Joint Curriculum Development in Line with the Specificities of Child Age Groups: Developing a Real Curriculum in Preschool Education*. Belgrade: MPNTR.
- Pavlović Breneselović, D., & Krnjaja, Ž. (2017). *Kaleidoscope – Foundations of Diversified Preschool Education Programs*. Belgrade: IPA.

Contact hours of active instruction:	Theoretical instruction: 1	Practical instruction:1	
Teaching methods:			
Teaching is delivered through critical study and analysis of relevant literature and discourse-based methods. Learning activities include group analysis of students' observations and insights regarding teachers' practices and strategies, discussions on assigned topics, and critical reflection on students' group work and practical experiences in preschool settings. Students engage in solving practice-based situations, assuming different roles, and participating in group reflection. Research-oriented methods aimed at developing insight are employed, together with discussions, debates, case studies, critical analysis of existing practices, group projects, and the formulation of well-argued explanations. Particular emphasis is placed on the critical examination of professional values in early childhood education.			
Assessment and grading (maximum score: 100 points)			
Pre-examination requirements	70	Final Exam	Points 30
Attendance and participation	10	Written Exam	
Practical instruction	10	Oral Exam	30
Mid-term exam	30		
Seminars (practical assignment in a preschool institution)	20		

Study program: Preschool Teacher
Course name: Child Development
Teachers: Tamara Djordjevic, Ivana Petrovic
Type: compulsory
ECTS: 4
<p>Course objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To understand a holistic approach to early childhood development and learning, and the interdependence and interconnectedness of all developmental domains. 2. To develop a comprehensive understanding of the unity of care, nurturing, upbringing, and education in early childhood. 3. To understand children’s developmental needs, interests, abilities, and potentials, as well as to monitor, document, and reflect on children’s progress. 4. To support and promote children’s well-being, including support in everyday life situations, play and exploration, and planned learning activities. 5. To recognize significant developmental differences and specific characteristics of different age groups and treat them as fundamental assumptions and necessary prior knowledge for developing preschool education programs.
<p>Learning outcomes</p> <p>Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creatively apply knowledge of the holistic nature of child development and the interdependence of social, emotional, motor, and language development. 2. Observe and listen to children in order to identify and understand their potentials, developmental needs, interests, and abilities. 3. Systematically monitor children’s progress through shared documentation of activities, processes, and outcomes, as well as their interpretation. 4. Respect diversity and demonstrate commitment to an inclusive approach in education; recognize the need for additional support for children in the educational process and develop strategies to support their development and active participation. 5. Create an inspiring environment for children’s development and learning and design projects based on ongoing observation of children, grounded in inquiry-based learning.

Course content*Theoretical instruction:*

1. Holistic approach to child development and learning.
2. Integrated understanding of care, nurturing, upbringing, and education.
3. Interdependence of social, emotional, motor, and language development in early childhood.
4. Importance of interaction and communication.
5. Age-specific characteristics of child development.
6. Children's developmental needs.
7. Interests and developmental potentials.
8. Children's well-being as the overarching goal of the Preschool Education Curriculum Framework.
9. Play and exploration; everyday-life and planned learning situations – providing support for children.
10. Learning and development processes.
11. Democratic and inclusive values and approaches.
12. Vulnerable social groups – support and assistance.
13. Monitoring, planning, and documenting children's progress.
14. Child development in preschool institutions, family, and the wider social community..

Practical instruction:

Exercises are designed to follow lectures and involve active participation and reflection of both students and instructors on identified issues related to empirical and practical research, as well as examples of good practice in preschool institutions.

References

- Anning, A., Cullen, J., & Flear, M. (2004). *Early Childhood Education, Society & Culture*. London: Sage Publications; Dahlberg, G., & Moss, P. (details incomplete in source).
- Vasta, R., Haith, M. M., & Miller, S. A. (1998). *Child Psychology*. Naklada Slap, Jastrebarsko.
- Woodhead, M. (2012). *Different Perspectives on Early Childhood: Theory, Research and Policy*. Belgrade: IPA, CIP.
- Đuričić Matejić, Z. (2022). *Psychology of Early Childhood*. Belgrade: FASPER. (PDF available: https://www.fasper.bg.ac.rs/do2016/nastavnici/Matejic_DJ_Zorica/predavanja/Raz_senzomoto_funk/PSIR D.pdf)
- Vranješević, J. (2020). Children in participatory research: the zone of the next or future development of adults? Pedagogical (P)erspectives, National Scientific Conference "Encounters of Educators: Participation in Education", Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade.
- Jerković, I., & Zotović, M. (2010). *Developmental Psychology*. Futura Publications, Novi Sad.
- Krnjaja, Ž. (2010). Play, creativity, and the open education system – what connects them? *Teaching and Education*, 59(2), 264–277.
- Krnjaja, Ž. (2012). Play in early childhood. In A. Baucal (Ed.), *Standards for Development and Learning of Early-Age Children in Serbia* (pp. 110–132). Belgrade: Institute of Psychology, FFUB.
- Krnjaja, Ž., & Pavlović Breneselović, D. (2022). *Guide for Documentation: Pedagogical Documentation in the "Years of Ascent" Curriculum*. Belgrade: MPNTR.
- Manojlović, A., & Mladenović, U. (2001). *Psychology of Preschool Children*. DPS, Belgrade.
- Miškeljin, L., Vranješević, J., Jovanović, O., Lazarević, M., Tomašević, T. (2021). *Guide for Inclusion of Children with Developmental Disabilities in Preschool Education*. Belgrade: IPA.
- *Basics of Preschool Education Curriculum – Years of Ascent* (2019). Belgrade: Prosvetni pregled.
- Pavlović Breneselović, D., Krnjaja, Ž., & Backović, S. (2022). *Guide for Organizing Space in Preschool Institutions in Line with the "Years of Ascent" Curriculum*. Belgrade: MPNTR.
- Pavlović Breneselović, D., Krnjaja, Ž., Jovanović, M., & Sjeničić, G. (2022). *Strategy for Joint Curriculum Development in Line with the Specificities of Child Age Groups*. Belgrade: MPNTR.

Contact hours of active instruction:**Theoretical instruction: 2****Practical instruction: 1**

Teaching methods:

Critical study and analysis of literature; methods of systematic monitoring and documentation of child development; group analysis of students' observations and insights regarding educators' practices and strategies in professional settings; discussions on announced topics; critical reflection on group practical work in preschool institutions; planned reflection on students' practicum experiences; solving practice-based situations; role-taking activities; group reflection; discourse-based methods.

Research-oriented approaches aimed at developing insight; discussions and debates; case studies; critical analysis of existing conditions; development of group projects; presentation of well-argued explanations by students; and critical examination of professional values in the field of early childhood education.

Assessment and grading (maximum score: 100 points)

Pre-examination requirements	70	Final Exam	Points
Attendance and participation	10	Written Exam	
Practical instruction	10	Oral Exam	30
Mid-term exam	30		
Seminars (practical assignment in a preschool institution)	20		

Study program: Preschool Teacher
Course name: Children's Rights
Teachers: Ivana Manic
Type: compulsory
ECTS: 3
<p>Course objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of competencies for analyzing and generating knowledge about the contemporary concept of children's rights and the principles on which they are based, including the principle of the best interests of the child and the principle of participation. 2. Development of competencies for supporting children's well-being and potential, fostering a sense of community, belonging, active participation and contribution, and creating opportunities for diverse, authentic experiences and multiple forms of expression. 3. Development of competencies for reflective examination of knowledge, skills, and values, creative application of knowledge and skills, and addressing challenges and problem-solving in practice. 4. Development of competencies for a democratic and inclusive approach to practice that respects diversity and gives special attention to the inclusion of children from vulnerable groups. 5. Development of competencies for effective and efficient problem-solving in the development of the real curriculum and direct work with children.
<p>Learning outcomes</p> <p>Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creatively apply knowledge and skills in the field of children's rights in accordance with children's age and developmental characteristics. 2. Promote children's rights, as well as the rights of families and early childhood education, within the community. 3. Respect children's rights as citizens, exercised through their full participation in the social and cultural life of the community. 4. Develop children's social and cultural identity and a sense of belonging through participation in peer groups, preschool institutions, and the local community. 5. Develop a pedagogical framework in preschool settings that respects diversity (cultural, linguistic, health-related, social, etc.) and the right to equality.

Course content*Theoretical instruction:*

1. Program development with students – introduction to the themes of childhood, human rights, and children’s rights.
2. Discussion on the inherent and structural vulnerability of the child.
3. Critical study of literature: children’s rights in the most important international documents.
4. Critical study of literature: the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
5. General principles of children’s rights: non-discrimination, best interests of the child, the right to life, survival and development, and respect for the child’s views.
6. Discussion on a pre-assigned topic: the child’s right to identity.
7. Case-based problem solving: freedom of expression and access to information of the child, including civil and political rights.
8. Case-based problem solving: the child’s right to protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and discrimination.
9. Critical study of literature: forms of care for children deprived of parental care (foster care, adoption, etc.).
10. Discussion on a pre-assigned topic: the child’s right to health and social protection.
11. Discussion on a pre-assigned topic: rights of children in special circumstances.
12. Discussion on a pre-assigned topic: the right to education, leisure, recreation, play, and cultural activities.
13. Case-based problem solving: the child’s right to privacy – protection of privacy; forms of exploitation and manipulation of children.
14. Critical study of literature: supervision and oversight bodies in the protection of children’s rights.

Practical instruction:

The exercises are designed to follow lectures and involve active student participation in the analysis of various issues related to children’s rights and their (non-)realization in the country and worldwide.

References

- Vučković Šahović, N. (2001). Children’s Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Yugoslav Child Rights Center, Belgrade, 2000.
- Vučković-Šahović, N. (2000). Children’s Rights and International Law. Belgrade: Yugoslav Child Rights Center.
- Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF.
- Lansdown, G. (2012). Children’s rights, in: Tomanović, S. Sociology of Childhood (2004). Belgrade: Institute for Textbooks and Teaching Aids.
- Čović, A. (2017). Children’s Rights – Evolution, Realization and Protection. Belgrade: Institute of Comparative Law.

Contact hours of active instruction:**Theoretical instruction: 2****Practical instruction: 1****Teaching methods:**

Interactive lectures using modern video presentation tools. Exercises include interactive methods of practical teaching, seminar papers, work in small groups, comparative discussions, teamwork, as well as individual and group presentations.

Assessment and grading (maximum score: 100 points)

Pre-examination requirements	70	Final Exam	Points
Attendance and participation	5	Written Exam	
Practical instruction	10	Oral Exam	30
Mid-term exam	40		
Seminars (practical assignment in a preschool institution)	15		

Study program: Preschool Teacher
Course name: Early Childhood Learning
Teachers: Tamara Djordjevic, Ivana Petrovic
Type: compulsory
ECTS: 4
<p>Course objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of students' knowledge, skills, and values regarding how young children learn, including building a purposeful "learning theory" relevant to the teaching profession in early childhood education. 2. Development of an understanding of early childhood learning as a co-constructed process and an open system that enables active participation of children, peers, and adults (educators, parents, community members, students, and teachers). Encouraging students to view preschool institutions as learning communities where collaboration and exchange form the basis for learning, change, and development. 3. Encouraging students' further learning and an integrated approach to working with children in preschool settings. Development of students' intrinsic motivation for learning and key competencies for lifelong learning, as well as supporting children in developing competencies and dispositions for lifelong learning through participation in the real curriculum. 4. Development of competencies for critical thinking, reflection, and evaluation of learning processes in preschool education; supporting both students and children in becoming aware of their own learning processes through the development of perceptual and metacognitive reflective abilities. 5. Understanding the importance of play, everyday-life situations, and planned learning activities for early childhood learning.
<p>Learning outcomes</p> <p>Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understands how young children learn and has developed knowledge of different learning strategies used by children in preschool institutions, families, and the broader social community. 2. Understands the importance of play, everyday-life situations, and planned learning activities in the context of early childhood learning in preschool settings. 3. Creatively applies developed educator competencies in supporting children's learning. Supports and encourages children's initiatives and choices, play and exploration through appropriate provision of unstructured, semi-structured, and structured materials, enrichment of children's experiences, and equal participation with children in play. Creates a stimulating (physical and social) environment for learning and development. 4. Promotes a democratic, inclusive, and critically reflective approach to learning. 5. Views the preschool institution as a community of learning, change, and development.

Course content*Theoretical instruction:*

1. Neurocognitive foundations of the learning process.
2. Constructivism and co-construction of knowledge; the emergence of learning sciences.
3. How young children learn – learning strategies of early childhood children.
4. Integrated approach to early childhood learning.
5. Democratic and inclusive approach.
6. Critical-reflective approach to learning in preschool practice.
7. Factors influencing learning.
8. Development of learning dispositions in early childhood (perseverance, resilience, creativity, curiosity, openness, self-confidence).
9. Learning and exploration.
10. Play and learning.
11. Children's agency in play, everyday-life situations, and planned learning activities.
12. Viewing the preschool institution as a learning community.
13. Learning to learn (awareness of learning processes and development of perceptual and metacognitive abilities for reflection, self-examination, and self-regulation of learning).
14. Innate motivation to learn and explore; fostering intrinsic motivation for learning.

Practical instruction:

The exercises are designed to follow lectures and involve active participation and reflection of both students and teachers on identified issues related to empirical and practical research, examples of good practice in preschool institutions, students' childhood experiences, and similar topics, from the perspective of the science of learning.

References

- Delors, J. et al. (1996). Learning: The Treasure Within. Paris: UNESCO.
- Krnjaja, Ž., & Pavlović Breneselović, D. (2017). Kaleidoscope – Project-Based Learning Approach. Belgrade: IPA.
- Krnjaja, Ž., & Pavlović Breneselović, D. (2022). Guide for Developing Topics/Projects with Children: Integrated Learning Approach through Topics/Projects in Line with the "Years of Ascent" Preschool Curriculum Framework. Belgrade: MPNTR.
- Maxić, S. (2021). Truths and misconceptions about creative learning. Innovations in Teaching, XXXIV(1), 1–13. Institute for Educational Research, Belgrade.
- Maljković, M., Vukobrat, A., Radaković, I., & Petrović, R. (2020). Preschool teachers' attitudes toward the implementation of an integrated approach in their educational practice.
- Basics of Preschool Education Curriculum – Years of Ascent (2019). Belgrade: Prosvetni pregled.
- Pavlović Breneselović, D., & Krnjaja, Ž., Backović, S. (2022). Guide for Organizing Space in Preschool Institutions in Line with the "Years of Ascent" Curriculum. Belgrade: MPNTR.
- Pavlović Breneselović, D. (2015). What do we teach children about learning. In S. Dubljanin (Ed.), Pedagogical Contribution to Improving Teaching and Learning, Proceedings of the National Scientific Conference, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade.
- European Parliament and Council Recommendation (2006/962/EC) on key competences for lifelong learning.
- Rogoff, B., Goodman Turkkanis, C., & Bartlett, L. (Eds.) (2001). Learning Together: Children and Adults in the School Community. Oxford University Press.

Contact hours of active instruction:**Theoretical instruction: 2****Practical instruction: 1****Teaching methods:**

Interactive lectures using modern video presentation tools. Exercises include interactive methods of practical teaching, seminar papers, work in small groups, comparative discussions, teamwork, as well as individual and group presentations.

Assessment and grading (maximum score: 100 points)

Pre-examination requirements	70	Final Exam	Points 30
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Attendance and participation	10	Written Exam	
Practical instruction	10	Oral Exam	30
Mid-term exam	30		
Seminars (practical assignment in a preschool institution)	20		

Study program: Preschool Teacher			
Course name: Stage Arts and Puppetry			
Teachers: Zorica Dukovic			
Type: compulsory			
ECTS: 4			
Course objectives: To introduce students to the civilization significance and foundations of performing arts and their syncretic nature; to enable them for the creative application of theatrical and puppetry arts in educational work with preschool children.			
Learning outcomes Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Correctly interpret and analyze concepts of performing arts and puppetry; 2. independently use professional literature and critically evaluate stage and puppet performances for children; 3. design and apply different types of puppets in educational work; 4. independently apply acquired knowledge and creative abilities in the field of performing expression with children; 5. plan and implement stage projects. 			
Course content			
<i>Theoretical instruction:</i>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Performing arts – concept, types, and significance; historical development; genre characteristics. Child and performing arts; performing arts and children’s play. Acting as the foundation of performing arts. Forms of stage communication. Structure of dramatic text, dramatic characters, dialogue, and conflict. Fairy tales and fables as dramatizations and interpreters of human destinies. 2. Puppetry – definition and concept. Types of puppet theatre and their techniques. Puppetry in preschool settings. Basic types of puppets: glove puppets (Guignol), rod puppets, Javanese puppets, finger puppets, shadow theatre, and sock puppets. From idea to production. Animation and speech. Educator’s puppetry improvisation. Dramatisation. Puppetry dramaturgy and puppet scripts. 			
<i>Practical instruction:</i>			
Preparation and realization of student performances. Design and production of stage sets, masks, and costumes. Creation of various types of puppets and their animation. Writing puppet scripts and applying the method of dramatization.			
References			
Pokrivka, Vlasta: <i>Dijete i scenska lutka</i> , Školska knjiga, Zagreb, 1980			
Milovanović, Ana: <i>Folklorne lutke na štapu</i> , Viša škola za obrazovanje vaspitača Aleksinac, 2003			
Milovanović, Ana: <i>Antologija lutkarskih tekstova sa LUTKEF-a</i> , Kreativni centar, Beograd, 2008			
Čakić-Simić, Nataša: <i>Beleške lutkarskog pomoćnika</i> , Kreativni centar, Beograd, 2007			
Grant, Nil: <i>Istorija pozorišta</i> , Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, Beograd, 2006			
Varl, Breda: <i>Lutke knjige 1-6</i> , Međunarodni centar za usluge u kulturi, Zagreb, 2000			
Contact hours of active instruction:	Theoretical instruction: 2	Practical instruction: 1	
Teaching methods:			
Interactive lectures using modern video presentation tools. Exercises include interactive methods of practical teaching, seminar papers, work in small groups, comparative discussions, teamwork, as well as individual and group presentations.			
Assessment and grading (maximum score: 100 points)			
Pre-examination requirements	70	Final Exam	Points 30

Student theatre performances	20	Written Exam	
Practical instruction	40	Oral Exam	
Mid-term exam	10	Practical work: Puppet performances	30
Seminars (practical assignment in a preschool institution)	20		

Study program: Preschool Teacher
Course name: Ethics and Education
Teachers: Milos Agatonovic
Type: compulsory
ECTS: 3
<p>Course objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acquisition of knowledge about the fundamentals of ethics as a philosophical discipline. 2. Familiarization with the most important problems and perspectives in philosophical ethics. 3. Understanding the applicability of ethical theories in educational practice and in concepts of pedagogical theory. 4. Gaining insight into methods of moral education and their significance.
<p>Learning outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acquisition of knowledge and skills for independent ethical analysis from different theoretical perspectives. 2. Understanding of the most important ethical approaches and reflection on the possibilities of their application in educational practice. 3. Clear formulation of arguments related to issues in education based on ethical theories.
<p>Course content</p> <p><i>Theoretical instruction:</i></p> <p>The course Ethics and Education addresses fundamental problems, questions, and positions within philosophical ethics. It examines ethical perspectives of the most important philosophers throughout the history of philosophy, from antiquity to contemporary ethical and metaethical discussions. The focus is primarily on the significance of philosophical ethics for education, as well as ethical considerations of moral education.</p> <p><i>Topics:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ethics as a philosophical discipline 2. Ethics and philosophy of education 3. Virtue ethics and education: Plato 4. Virtue ethics and education: Aristotle 5. Kantian ethics and education 6. Utilitarian ethics and education 7. Contemporary ethics and education 8. Fundamental metaethical problems and education 9. Psychology of morality and education 10. Moral education and indoctrination. <p><i>Practical instruction:</i></p> <p>Exercises are designed to follow lectures and include active student participation in the analysis of key issues in the field of philosophical ethics related to education. Based on the analysis of original philosophical texts, students discuss different ethical perspectives and the significance of philosophical ethics for education, as well as other contents covered in the theoretical teaching.</p>

References

Aristotle (2013). *Nicomachean Ethics*. IK Zorana Stojanovića.

Williams, B. (2007). *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*. Plato.

Kant, I. (2020). *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Dereta.

Kant, I. (2017). *Critique of Practical Reason*. Dosije.

MacIntyre, A. (2002). *A Short History of Ethics*. Plato.

Plato (2002). *The Republic*. BIGZ.

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Contact hours of active instruction:

Theoretical instruction: 1

Practical instruction: 1

Teaching methods:

Types of instruction: lectures, exercises, consultations.

Forms of work: frontal and individual.

Teaching methods: monologic, dialogic, problem-based, analytical, synthetic, research-based, and demonstrative.

Assessment and grading (maximum score: 100 points)

Pre-examination requirements	50	Final Exam	Points
Attendance and Participation	20	Written Exam	
Practical instruction		Oral Exam	50
Mid-term exam			
Seminars	30		

Study program: Preschool Teacher
Course name: Inclusive Education
Teachers: Katarina Tomic
Type: compulsory
ECTS: 3
<p>Course objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of students to the basic principles and factors of inclusive education. 2. Development and fostering of an ecological approach in understanding the holistic nature of child development for children with developmental disabilities and special educational needs, as well as their needs within an inclusive preschool environment. 3. Familiarization with and mastery of methods and procedures of a personalized educational approach in accordance with children's individual characteristics, as well as procedures for providing additional professional support for the developmental, social, and emotional integration of children with disabilities in inclusive preschool groups. 4. Introduction to different types of developmental disabilities, as well as basic diagnostic and rehabilitation approaches. 5. Training students to implement inclusive programs in working with children with various developmental difficulties. 6. Acquisition of knowledge on methods of individualization and differentiation of educational approaches in the context of implementing inclusive programs. 7. Development of motivation for working with children with developmental disabilities.
<p>Learning outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize the importance of inclusive education for the overall development of the child; 2. independently identify and differentiate the type and level of disability in a child; 3. create an inclusive environment in a preschool group, enabling children with developmental disabilities to act independently, cooperate with peers and adults, and experience a sense of belonging to the group as a learning community; 4. understand the roles, responsibilities, and duties of the educator as a member of the professional inclusive education team in a preschool setting; 5. develop skills to prepare a pedagogical profile of a child with developmental disabilities and determine priority areas for inclusive intervention; 6. apply skills in developing an Individual Education Plan (IEP); 7. monitor and document child development based on the analysis of different perspectives; 8. understand the perspectives and needs of families of children with developmental disabilities; 9. develop competencies for effective partnership with parents as members of the inclusive team; 10. demonstrate reflective practice in working with children with developmental disabilities; 11. design and improve inclusive environments in accordance with children's needs.

Course content*Theoretical instruction:*

1. Early diagnosis and rehabilitation of developmental disorders.
2. Concepts of integration and inclusion.
3. Historical development of inclusive educational policy and practice. International and national legal documents as the foundation of inclusive education.
4. Material, technical, staffing, and organizational conditions for implementing inclusion.
5. Assessment of abilities and developmental level of children with disabilities. Individualization of work and differentiation of requirements in inclusive preschool groups.
6. Individual Education Plan (IEP).
7. Inclusive education team – composition, roles, and cooperation.
8. Material, organizational, and psychological barriers to the inclusive process.
9. Benefits of inclusive education for typically developing children, children with disabilities, and their parents.
10. The educator's role in designing and evaluating individualized educational programs.
11. Development and adaptation of functional teaching materials and the use of assistive technologies in inclusive practice.
12. Development of non-discriminatory attitudes toward children with developmental disabilities. Partnership with parents of children with disabilities throughout the inclusive education process..

Practical instruction:

Identification of the type and degree of developmental disability in children as a basis for designing an inclusive approach. Comparative analysis of integrative and inclusive approaches – critical reflection. Analysis of the coverage of children with developmental disabilities within inclusive education and identification of priorities in the development of inclusive policy and practice.

Analysis of conditions that facilitate or hinder inclusion. Competencies of educators in the inclusive process – measures for improvement. Assistive technologies in the inclusive context. Adaptation of methods, materials, and teaching techniques to the specific needs associated with different types of disabilities.

Development of a pedagogical profile of a child with disabilities. Development of an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Techniques for evaluating outcomes of inclusive education based on measurable goals. Competencies and responsibilities of the educator as a member of the inclusive team.

Modification of negative attitudes toward children with developmental disabilities and development of a non-discriminatory climate in the preschool group. Continuous professional development of educators in working with children with disabilities. Development of stimulating programs tailored to children's needs and abilities. Workshop-based approach in inclusive groups.

References

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- Mihić, I. (2018). Framework Model: Inclusion of Children with Developmental Disabilities in the Preschool Education System. Belgrade: UNICEF.
- Stojić, T., Radivojević, D., Jerotijević, M., et al. (2007). Guide for Improving Inclusive Educational Practice. Belgrade: Open Society Fund.
- Suzić, N. (2008). Introduction to Inclusion. Banja Luka: HBS.
- Tasić, I., & Raspopović, S. (2021). Inclusive education of children with developmental disabilities according to "Years of Ascent". *Krugovi detinjstva – Journal for Multidisciplinary Childhood Research*, 9(2).

Contact hours of active instruction:**Theoretical instruction: 2****Practical instruction: 1****Teaching methods:**

Ex cathedra lectures. Mentorship-based work. Work in small groups. Individual work. Interactive methods. Discussion. Dialogue. Independent research work. Action-oriented work (essays, topics).

Assessment and grading (maximum score: 100 points)

Pre-examination requirements	70	Final Exam	Points
			30

Attendance and Participation	10	Written Exam	
Practical instruction	15	Oral Exam	30
Mid-term exam	30		
Seminars	15		

Study program: Preschool Teacher		
Course name: Developmental and Corrective Gymnastics		
Teachers: Marija Djordjevic		
Type: compulsory		
ECTS: 4		
<p>Course objectives: Introduction of students to the importance and impact of developmental and corrective gymnastics on physical status. Familiarization with the physical status of preschool children. Training students to independently assess the postural status of preschool children. Development of skills and abilities for the independent implementation of preventive and corrective exercise programs.</p>		
<p>Learning outcomes Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the significance, influence, and effects of developmental and corrective gymnastics on the physical status of preschool children. 2. Define the physical status of preschool children. 3. Independently identify and describe functional deformities of the spinal column, thorax, legs, and feet. 4. Be familiar with different forms of programmed exercise aimed at prevention and correction. 5. Independently design appropriate exercise complexes for prevention and correction. 6. Independently apply appropriate exercise complexes for prevention and correction. 		
<p>Course content <i>Theoretical instruction:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corrective gymnastics – subject matter, aims, and objectives. Kinesiotherapy – subject matter, aims, and objectives. Principles of corrective gymnastics. Movement as the basic means and its characteristics. The spinal column – curves, joints, movements. Body posture and deviations from normal posture. 2. Means of corrective gymnastics. Methods of posture assessment. Anatomy of the spinal column. Spinal deformities – kyphosis, lordosis, scoliosis. Deformities of the legs and feet. Deformities of the thorax. 3. Application of physical exercises for prevention and treatment. Characteristics of exercises. Starting position and dosage of exercises. Methods of applying exercises for preventive and corrective purposes. <p><i>Practical instruction:</i></p> <p>Methods of postural assessment and examination. Evaluation of body posture. Deviations from normal posture. Forms of postural disorders. Application of movement in the prevention of poor posture and physical deformities.</p> <p>Corrective exercises for spinal deformities: lordosis (exercises for correcting lordosis), kyphosis (exercises for correcting kyphosis), and scoliosis (exercises for correcting scoliosis).</p> <p>Corrective exercises for lower limb deformities and foot deformities. Movement games used in the prevention and correction of physical deformities.</p>		
<p>References Živković, D. (1998). Theory and Methodology of Corrective Gymnastics. Niš: Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš. Milenković, S. (2007). Corrective Gymnastics: Theory and Exercises. Niš: SIA. Koturović, Lj. (1988). Corrective Gymnastics. Belgrade: NIP Partizan, Belgrade. Ulić, D. (1997). Basics of Kinesiotherapy. Novi Sad: SIA. Živković, D. (2009). Basics of Kinesiology with Elements of Clinical Kinesiology. Niš: Faculty of Sport and Physical Education, University of Niš.</p>		
Contact hours of active instruction:	Theoretical instruction: 1	Practical instruction: 2

Teaching methods:

Interactive lectures using modern video presentation tools. Exercises include interactive methods of practical teaching, discussion on pre-assigned topics, work in small groups, comparative discussions and debates, teamwork, individual and group presentations, and critical analysis of literature.

Assessment and grading (maximum score: 100 points)

Pre-examination requirements	60	Final Exam	Points
Attendance and Participation	10	Written Exam	
Practical instruction	10	Oral Exam	30
Mid-term exam	30		
Seminars	10		

Study program: Preschool Teacher			
Course name: Ecology			
Teachers: Nevenka Mihajlovic			
Type: elective			
ECTS: 4			
Course objectives: Students will become familiar with basic ecological concepts and phenomena, as well as the spatial and temporal organization of ecological macrosystems and microsystems.			
Learning outcomes Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to create a stimulating environment for the proper development of ecological awareness and responsibility in children, and to design, through an interactive approach, plans for marking important dates from the ecological calendar.			
Course content <i>Theoretical instruction:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Biosphere and biodiversity. Environment and ecosystem. Dynamics and stability of ecosystems. Ecological niche. Ecological factors – abiotic and biotic. 2. Ecosystem productivity. Food chain. Trophic pyramid. Primary and secondary productivity. Energy flow and matter cycling. 3. Development and evolution of ecosystems. Humans and nature; forms of environmental degradation – global changes, soil pollution, water pollution, and air pollution. 4. Protection of natural resources and endangered species in our country. <i>Practical instruction:</i> Programming and planning the marking of important dates from the ecological calendar. Ecological vocabulary. Ecology at the local, regional, and global level. Biogeochemistry, homeostasis, and population dynamics. Humans, plant, and animal world. Continental ecosystems. Freshwater ecosystems. Safe drinking water. Climate, climate change, and its impact on health. Motor vehicles and air pollution. Climate change and the greenhouse effect. Reduction of harmful impacts and beneficial use of waste materials. Recycling. International ecological calendar.			
References Krnjaja, Ž. (2019). Higher Education Institution and Preschool as Partners: From Training Site to Learning Community. Stojanović, Trajković (2008). The Living World Around Us. Dragon. Group of authors (2020). The Big Green Book. Laguna. Bellamy, D. (2018). 101 Ways to Save the Earth.			
Contact hours of active instruction:	Theoretical instruction: 2	Practical instruction: 1	
Teaching methods: Frontal teaching method, group analysis of students' observations and insights, problem-solving, critical analysis of existing conditions, and development of group projects.			
Assessment and grading (maximum score: 100 points)			
Pre-examination requirements	70	Final Exam	Points
Attendance and Participation	20	Written Exam	30
Practical instruction	20	Oral Exam	30
Mid-term exam	20		
Seminars	10		

Study program: Preschool Teacher
Course name: Psychology of Children's Play
Teachers: Tamara Djordjevic, Ivana Petrovic
Type: elective
ECTS: 4
<p>Course objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of students' competencies for understanding, comparing, and critically analyzing contemporary theoretical conceptions of play from the perspective of child psychology, including types of play and ways in which children approach play. 2. Development of knowledge about play as a creative transformation of reality, imagination in action, and a form of expression, serving as a foundation for the manifestation of all dimensions of child well-being. 3. Development of understanding of the importance of play for the comprehensive and holistic psychophysical development, learning, and exploration of preschool children. 4. Development of knowledge about what children are capable of in play (building identity and relationships, exploring and reconstructing meaning, creating symbols, experiencing enjoyment and joy). 5. Development of knowledge, skills, and values necessary for educators to support children in open, extended, and guided play.
<p>Learning outcomes</p> <p>Upon successful completion of the course, student:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understands, compares, and critically analyzes contemporary theoretical concepts of play. 2. Provides well-argued explanations of the need for a multidisciplinary theory of play, as defined in the Preschool Education Curriculum Framework, and understands play as a creative transformation of reality. 3. Advocates a holistic approach to the relationship between play and the child's overall psychophysical development. 4. Understands what children are capable of in play and applies acquired knowledge in preschool practice in line with curriculum implementation; recognizes the nature of children's abilities and potentials. 5. Supports children in open play by preparing an inspiring play environment, continuously providing accessible materials for exploration, reorganizing space, and ensuring sufficient time for play. 6. Observes, follows, and documents children's play in the context of developing a real curriculum; organizes and implements different types of play and creates toys and play materials. 7. Extends play through co-participation with children, inclusion of other children, taking on different roles, and using a repertoire of non-verbal communication accompanied by verbal labeling. 8. Supports children in guided play by initiating and participating in play, helping children form groups, and engaging in dialogue about play. 9. Understands the importance of traditional games in children's subculture and revitalizes them in accordance with the needs, interests, and potentials of contemporary children.

Course content*Theoretical instruction:*

1. Contemporary conceptual frameworks for understanding the nature of children's play and how children engage in play.
2. Theoretical foundations within the Preschool Education Curriculum Framework.
3. Children's potentials and capabilities in play.
4. Educator support in children's open, extended, and guided play.
5. Traditional children's games in our culture.
6. Revitalization of traditional children's games.
7. Imaginative and role-play games.
8. Cooperative children's games.
9. Constructive (building) games.
10. The impact of frustration on children's play activity.
11. Play and overcoming cognitive egocentrism in preschool children's thinking.
12. Diagnostic and therapeutic significance of children's play.
13. Play and the development of self-control of behavior.
14. The interweaving of play and exploration in the Preschool Education Curriculum Framework "Years of Ascent".

Practical instruction:

The exercises are designed to follow lectures and include active participation and reflection of both students and teachers on observed issues related to empirical and practical research, examples of good practice in preschool institutions, students' childhood experiences, and similar topics, from the perspective of contemporary child psychology of play.

References

- Duran, M. (2003). *Dijete i igra*. Jastrebarsko: Naklada Slap (selected chapters).
- Elkonin, D. B. (1994). *Psihologija dečje igre*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva (selected chapters).
- Colić, V., & Radovanović, T. (2021). Favorite ways of playing of preschool children. *Naša škola*, 1, 95–112. DOI: 10.7251/NSK2101095C.
- Krnjaja, Ž. (2012). Play as encounter: co-authored space in joint play of children and adults. *Ethnoanthropological Problems*, 7(1).
- Krnjaja, Ž. (2010). Play, creativity, and the open educational system – what connects them? *Teaching and Education*, 59(2), 264–277.
- Mitranić, N. (2016). Guidelines for social support of children's play. *Nastava i vaspitanje*, 65(2). DOI: 10.5937/nasvas1602411M.
- Preschool Education Curriculum Framework – "Years of Ascent" (2019). Belgrade: Prosvetni pregled.
- Pavlović Breneselović, D., Krnjaja, Ž., & Backović, S. (2022). Guide for arranging space in preschool institutions: space aligned with the Preschool Education Framework "Years of Ascent". Belgrade: Ministry of Education.
- Pavlović Breneselović, D., Krnjaja, Ž., Jovanović, M., & Sjeničić, G. (2022). Strategy for co-developing curriculum based on age-specific characteristics: developing a real curriculum in line with "Years of Ascent". Belgrade: Ministry of Education.
- Pulkkinen, A. (2008). *Child Development through Play*. Zagreb: Mozaik knjiga (selected chapters).
- Sutton-Smith, B. (1989). *Igračke i kultura*. Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva.

Contact hours of active instruction:**Theoretical instruction: 2****Practical instruction: 1**

Teaching methods:

Critical study and analysis of contemporary literature in the field of child psychology of play, and students' insights into educators' procedures and strategies for encouraging and supporting children's play. Discussion on pre-assigned topics, critical reflection on students' group practical work in preschool institutions focusing on strategies for supporting and extending children's play.

Planned reflections on students' practicum experiences in open, extended, and guided play, as well as on joint participation of children, students, and educators in play activities. Role-playing as a means of gaining insight and self-reflection on challenges in different types of play.

Discussions, debates, case studies, group project work, students' argumentative explanations, problem-based and discovery-based methods..

Assessment and grading (maximum score: 100 points)

Pre-examination requirements	70	Final Exam	Points
Attendance and Participation	10	Written Exam	
Practical instruction	10	Oral Exam	30
Mid-term exam	30		
Seminars	20		

Study program: Preschool Teacher
Course name: Giftedness and Creativity in Preschool Children
Teachers: Katarina Tomic
Type: elective
ECTS: 4
<p>Course objectives: Introduction of students to contemporary approaches in the study of giftedness, creativity, and talents in children. Training students to identify giftedness at preschool and school age and to work appropriately with gifted children. Familiarization with the structure and domains of giftedness. Presentation of basic pedagogical strategies for fostering children’s giftedness and creativity. Development of motivation for working with gifted and talented children. Training students to identify and modify factors that may negatively affect the development of giftedness, creativity, and talents in children.</p>
<p>Learning outcomes Upon successful completion of the course, student will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independently use methods and techniques of early pedagogical assessment of giftedness; they will develop skills in identifying early signs of giftedness in children; and recognize the structure and manifestations of intellectual, artistic, and psychomotor giftedness. 2. Independently design adapted educational materials for stimulating the development of gifted children, and will possess skills for creating flexible and creative developmental-educational approaches in working with gifted children in preschool groups. 3. Students will be trained for teamwork and cooperation with relevant professionals within and outside educational institutions, as well as with parents of gifted children. They will use effective strategies to encourage communication among children. 4. They will also be capable of reflective practice, critically examining and improving their own work with gifted children.

Course content*Theoretical instruction:*

The concept of giftedness, definition and terminology. Contemporary conceptions of giftedness. Intelligence and abilities. Structure and domains of giftedness. Early identification of giftedness.

Social and emotional needs of gifted children. Pedagogical strategies for fostering giftedness. Metacognition and its importance in the study of giftedness. Family as a factor in promoting giftedness. Teamwork in identifying and supporting giftedness.

Development of creativity in preschool children. Giftedness and motivation. Giftedness and underachievement. Early motor development and giftedness. Educational work with gifted children.

Practical instruction:

Attitudes toward giftedness across different cultures and historical periods. The work of Terman, Tannenbaum, Sternberg, and Gardner – critical review. Theories of intelligence and their practical implications. The concept of multiple intelligences and its significance for educational practice.

Methods of early pedagogical identification of giftedness – rating scales, checklists, and tests. Giftedness as stigma – social rejection and emotional difficulties of gifted children.

Methods and techniques for fostering artistic, linguistic, motor, and general intellectual giftedness in preschool children. Development of metacognitive strategies in preschool-aged children.

The role of parents in identifying and supporting giftedness. Members of professional teams for identifying and supporting giftedness – roles and models of cooperation. Structure and development of divergent thinking in children – practical implications for creativity development across different domains of activity.

Development of intrinsic motivation, goal orientation, and persistence in children. Factors of underachievement in gifted children – personal and social. The importance of early motor development for predicting potential giftedness.

References

Altaras, A. (2006). Giftedness and Underachievement. Belgrade: Institute of Psychology.

Gojkov, G. (2002). Early Identification of Giftedness. Vršac: Higher School for Early Childhood Educators.

Đorđević, J., & Đorđević, B. (2016). The Nature of Giftedness and Fostering Development. Belgrade: SAO.

Stojaković, P. D. (2022). Psychology of Giftedness and Creativity. Belgrade: SAO.

Stojaković, P. (2000). Giftedness and Creativity. Srpsko Sarajevo: ZUNS of the Republic of Srpska.

Contact hours of active instruction:

Theoretical instruction: 2

Practical instruction: 1

Teaching methods:

Ex cathedra lectures. Mentorship-based work. Work in small groups. Individual work. Interactive methods.

Discussion. Dialogue. Independent research work. Action research.

Assessment and grading (maximum score: 100 points)

Pre-examination requirements	70	Final Exam	Points
Attendance and Participation	10	Written Exam	
Practical instruction	15	Oral Exam	30
Mid-term exam	30		
Seminars	15		

Study program: Preschool Teacher
Course name: Professional Practice 1
Teachers: Tamara Djordjevic, Ivana Petrovic, Ivana Stamenkovic
Type: compulsory
ECTS: 3
Course objectives:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enabling integrated learning through the unity (synergy) of theory and practice, based on contemporary understandings of childhood, learning, and child development in early ages, as well as of the early childhood education profession; enabling experiential learning in the context of preschool institutions; encouraging inquiry and reflection; and establishing foundations for understanding the importance of professional practice for learning, professional development, further education, lifelong learning, and continuous professional growth. 2. Developing students' competencies necessary for the implementation of the current Preschool Education Curriculum Framework; strengthening readiness for active participation in the educational process; for creating an inspiring environment; for supporting (and extending) play and activities; for fostering peer community development; and generally for supporting children's personal, activity-based, and social well-being. 3. Encouraging reflection on practicum experiences, linking theory and practice, and building shared understanding through mutual support and shared responsibility among educators, students, and practitioners. Encouraging critical examination of preschool institutional structure and culture, the quality of relationships, and modes of action of children and educators. Promoting reflection on the preschool institution as a space of democratic and inclusive practice, on levels of cooperation with families and the wider community, on educators' strategies for developing the real curriculum, and on developing an integrated learning approach through themes/projects. 4. Involving students and educators in the process of reviewing and improving the quality of the real curriculum. Enabling "learning by doing" in professional practice, encouraging reflection on experiential and personal theories ("theorizing practice"), and supporting self-awareness.
Learning outcomes
Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understands the holistic approach to child development and is able to create a safe environment in which the child is psychophysically protected; focuses on supporting the child's well-being by enabling diverse forms of children's participation in the life of the preschool institution and the wider community. 2. Builds relationships of connection and trust with children; respects children's feelings, initiatives, developmental needs, interests, and abilities; and contributes to the development of their independence and self-regulation. 3. Takes a holistic view of the interconnectedness of care, nurturing, upbringing, and education. 4. Designs and organizes a stimulating learning environment and is oriented toward integrated learning and the development of a learning community. 5. Reflects on practice from multiple perspectives. 6. Works in a team (with educators, professional associates, parents, community representatives, and school lecturers) on identified problems within the preschool institution and contributes to team cohesion through group work and reflection..

Contents of professional practice:

1. Preschool children – needs, feelings and ways of expressing needs and emotions; potentials, dispositions, capacities, and skills.
2. Life in kindergarten – situations of joint participation and learning of children and adults.
3. Democratic and inclusive practice in kindergarten – situations of (non-)respect for diversity and children's and families' rights.
4. Care, nurturing, upbringing, and education – educators' approaches and procedures.
5. Integrated approach to learning and development – opportunities for learning through action and relationships.
6. Ways of supporting the development of competencies for successful human functioning, learning dispositions, and educational competencies for lifelong learning.
7. Evaluation and quality development in preschool education – areas, plans, strategies, and concrete actions.
8. Support for children's personal, activity-based, and social well-being – educators' approaches.
9. Relationships in the group – learning through relationships and educator approaches that support relationship building.
10. Children in play and educator support in play.
11. Children in life-practical situations and educator support in life-practical situations.
12. Children in planned learning situations and educator support in planned learning situations.
13. Preschool spaces – visibility of quality criteria; problems in space (re)organization and possibilities for overcoming them.
14. Creativity and creative expression of children and adults – inspiring examples.
15. Knowledge, skills, and values developed during professional practice – metacognitive reflection on experiential learning and one's own role during practice – group critical reflection.

Additional Contents:

Based on continuous collaboration between practitioners, students, and lecturers responsible for all compulsory and elective courses in the first year of the study programme, tasks will be formulated and assessed as part of the pre-exam requirements within each course. These tasks will be oriented toward experiential, integrated, and situational learning through the unity of theory and practice.

They will involve the examination of specific issues or problems (researching a particular topic or problem) at both theoretical and practical levels, either through documenting the current state (situations) in practice followed by critical reflection and analysis in relation to theoretical frameworks, or through joint planning of possible actions and solutions in relation to theoretical foundations, students' and educators' practices in preschool settings, and critical reflection.

References

1. Krnjaja, Ž. (2016). Where Quality Lives (3): Developing Preschool Practice. Belgrade: IPA.
2. Krnjaja, Ž., & Pavlović Breneselović, D. (2017). Kaleidoscope – Project-Based Learning Approach. Belgrade: IPA.
3. Krnjaja, Ž., & Pavlović Breneselović, D. (2022). Guide for Developing Topics/Projects with Children: Integrated Learning through Topics/Projects in line with the Preschool Education Curriculum “Years of Ascent”. Belgrade: Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.
4. Miškeljin, L., Vranješević, J., Jovanović, O., Lazarević, M., Tomašević, T. (2021). Guide for Including Children with Developmental Disabilities in the Preschool Education System. Belgrade: IPA.
5. Preschool Education Curriculum – “Years of Ascent” (2019). Belgrade: Prosvetni pregled.
6. Pavlović Breneselović, D. (2015). Where Quality Lives (2): Researching Preschool Practice with Children. Belgrade: IPA.
7. Pavlović Breneselović, D., & Krnjaja, Ž. (2017). Kaleidoscope – Foundations of Diversified Preschool Education Programs. Belgrade: IPA.
8. Pavlović Breneselović, D., Krnjaja, Ž., & Backović, S. (2022). Guide for Organizing Space in Preschool Institutions: Space in Line with the “Years of Ascent” Curriculum. Belgrade: Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.
9. Pavlović Breneselović, D., Krnjaja, Ž., Jovanović, M., & Sjeničić, G. (2022). Strategy for Joint Curriculum Development in Line with Children’s Age Specificities: Developing a Real Curriculum in accordance with the “Years of Ascent” Preschool Curriculum. Belgrade: Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.
10. Krnjaja, Ž., & Pavlović Breneselović, D. (2022). Guide for Documentation: Pedagogical Documentation and Documentation in the “Years of Ascent” Preschool Curriculum. Belgrade: Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development.

Number of Practice Hours

90 hours of professional practice in preschool institutions, carried out continuously throughout the first year of study (once a week, 4.5 hours over 20 weeks).

Teaching methods:

Critical study of literature and discourse-based methods; experiential learning in direct practice, taking on different roles and participating in various situations through research, play, and communication with children and educators. Reflection on the state and different situations in practice. Group analysis of students’ observations and insights regarding educators’ practices and strategies in the field; critical review of students’ group practical work in preschool settings (planned group reflections on students’ experiences during practice).

Assessment and grading: The practice is recorded as “completed” based on students’ (group) portfolio, the preschool mentor’s assessment of students’ engagement during the practice, and a group critical reflection on participation in the life of the preschool institution, including experiences, impressions, observations, (self-)knowledge, and (self-)insights.