



College of Education and Human Development

Early Childhood Education Program

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<https://gse.gmu.edu/programs/earlychildhood/>

ECED 405: Introduction to Early Childhood Special Education (3:3:0)

Spring 2012

Tuesday 4:30 pm - 7:10 pm

Robinson Hall A106

Instructor: Nadine Bolkhovitinov, NBCT, PhD

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Office hours: by appointment

Course Description

Surveys current knowledge about young children with disabilities within the context of human growth and development and learning expectations in the preschool years. Includes historical factors and legislation affecting service delivery.

Note: Field experience required.

Nature of Course Delivery

This course utilizes a distributed learning format requiring active participation of all students. Students are expected to complete all class readings prior to each session so as to engage in active dialogue, productive learning, and critical reflection. Activities will include instructor presentation, small-group discussions, student presentations, videos, and whole class sharing to support course content. In addition, a Blackboard online component of coursework is required.

Learner Outcomes

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Explore the philosophical, social, cultural and legal factors that have shaped and continue to affect education, and specifically early childhood special education, in the United States.
2. Describe the legal and historical development of the field of special education and in education in general.
3. Discuss issues and trends in special education, including legislation and litigation, including legislative and judicial mandates related to education and special education (e.g., the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, § 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Assistive Technology Act and use of innovative technology.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of evidence-based principles that influence education, including early childhood special education
5. Describe factors that place young children at-risk for disabilities.

6. Describe characteristics of major handicapping conditions.
7. Describe the role of assessment in identification, eligibility, and service delivery for young children and their families.
8. Describe current regulations and procedures governing special education to include individualized education program (IEP) development and individualized family service plan (IFSP).
9. Describe typical settings and service delivery models appropriate for work with infants, toddlers, and young children who are at-risk or who have disabilities and their families.
10. Demonstrate an understanding of models of interpersonal and inter-professional collaboration in working with families on behalf of their young children.
11. Demonstrate person-first respect and understanding of young children and their families.
12. Consider critically course topics and readings through the lens of services for children and families from diverse cultural and linguistic communities.
13. Explore social development issues related to major disabling and at-risk conditions.

Professional Standards

This course is aligned with the standards established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC).

Required Texts

Howard, V. F., Williams, B., & Lepper, C.E. (2010). *Very Young Children with Special Needs: A Foundation for Educators, Families, and Service Providers*. New York: Pearson. ISBN: 0123208088

Anderson, W., Chitwood, S., Hayden, D. & Takemoto, C. (2008). *Negotiating the Special Education Maze: A Guide for Parents and Teachers*. Woodbine House. ISBN: 1890627461

Recommended Texts

Mandlawitz, M. (2007). *What Every Teacher Should Know About IDEA 2004 Laws and Regulations*. New York: Pearson. ISBN: 0205505686

Teaching Tolerance Project & Paley, V.G. (2008). *Starting Small: Teaching Tolerance in Preschool and the Early Grades*. Montgomery, AL: Southern Poverty Law Center.

George Mason University Policies and Resources for Students

- Academic integrity (honor code, plagiarism) – Students must adhere to guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Mason Email – Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, division, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.

Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301ge.html>].

- Counseling and Psychological Services – The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops, and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- Office of Disability Services – Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor in writing at the beginning of the semester <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- The Writing Center (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- University Libraries (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Libraries provide numerous services, research tools, and help with using the library resources [See <http://library.gmu.edu/>].

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

Core Values Commitment: The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.

Collaboration

Collaboration is an important human activity that involves shared responsibility in promoting healthy, productive lives, and educational success. We commit ourselves to work toward these goals in genuine partnerships with individuals, families, community agencies, schools, businesses, foundations, and other groups at the local, regional, national, and international levels.

Ethical Leadership

In all professions represented by the college, leadership is an essential component denoting ability and willingness to help lead professional practice to higher levels. We commit ourselves to practice ethical leadership through deliberate and systematic attention to the ethical principles that guide all leaders in a moral society.

Innovation

We have a history of creating dynamic, innovative programs, and we are dedicated to continue creating innovative approaches in all areas of our work. We commit ourselves to seeking new ways to advance knowledge, solve problems, improve our professional practice, and expand on our successes.

Research-Based Practice

The best practice in any discipline is based upon sound research and professional judgment. We commit ourselves to basing our instruction, scholarship, and policy recommendations on well-established principles that, wherever possible, emerge from research and reflection on its implications for professional practice.

Social Justice

Social justice embodies essential principles of equity and access to all opportunities in society, in accordance with democratic principles and respect for all persons and points of view. We commit ourselves to promoting equity, opportunity, and social justice through the college's operations and its missions related to teaching, research, and service.

Course Requirements**General Requirements**

1. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities, it is imperative that students keep up with the readings and participate in class.
2. Attendance in class is important to students' learning; therefore, students are expected to make every effort to attend class sessions. Absences, tardiness, and leaving early may negatively affect course grades. If, due to an emergency, students will not be in class, they must call the instructor and leave a message or send an email before class. The following policy is from the university course catalog:

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

3. In line with Mason's policy that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious holidays, students shall be given an opportunity to make up, within a reasonable time, any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observations in advance of the class that will be missed. Notice should be provided in writing as soon as possible.
4. During face-to-face meetings, cell phones, pagers, and other communicative devices are not allowed in this class. Students must keep them stowed away and out of sight. Laptops or tablets (e.g., iPads) may be permitted for the purpose of taking notes only, but students must submit a request in writing to do so. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g. gaming, email, chat, etc.) will result in a significant deduction in their participation grade.
5. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time (the beginning of the class in which they are due). However, it is recognized that students occasionally have serious problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, students should speak to the instructor prior to the assignment due date (when possible). If the student does not communicate with the instructor, a late penalty will be applied.

6. Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the [Office for Academic Integrity](#) for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when responsible for a task, students will perform that task. When students rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, they will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind), students will ask for guidance and clarification.

Written Assignments

All written assignments prepared outside of class will be evaluated for content and presentation. The American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their own ability to catch errors, they should have another person proofread their work. When in doubt, they should check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the Mason library web guide at <http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/>. Students may consult the Writing Center for additional writing support.

Students will do the following:

1. Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)
2. Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.
3. Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)
4. Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.

Grading Criteria

A = 95 – 100	A- = 90 – 94	B+ = 87 – 89	B = 83 – 86
B- = 80 – 82	C = 70 – 79	D = 60 – 69	F = < 60

A+ is possible if work is of exceptional high quality above and beyond that required for the course.

Grading Policy

All CEHD undergraduate and graduate students are held to the university grading policies as described in the Academic Policies section of the current catalog, which can be accessed at <http://catalog.gmu.edu>. Those students enrolled in a CEHD Licensure Graduate Certificate program, however, must earn a B- or better in all licensure coursework. A degree-seeking graduate student will be dismissed after accumulating grades of F in two courses or 9 credits of unsatisfactory grades (C or F) in graduate courses. A 3.0 grade point average is required for completion of the graduate degree.

Submission of Performance-Based Assessment

This course has a Program Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) that **MUST** be uploaded and submitted to Task Stream for evaluation when the assignment is due. **Only PBAs posted to TaskStream will be graded.** This means that NO final grades will be posted until all materials are on Task Stream.

Specific Course Assignments

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Attendance & Participation	Ongoing	15
Website/Resources	Feb. 14	5
Pamphlet about a Disability	March 27	15
Reflection about field experience	April 17	5
Critical Issues Presentation	Ongoing	30
Take-home final examination	May 1	30
TOTAL		100

Attendance and Participation (15 points)

Because active participation and engagement are imperative for optimal learning, preparation for and participation in in-class activities will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Students attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period.
- Students complete readings and prepare for class activities prior to class as is evidenced by their ability to discuss and write about the concepts presented and examined in the texts as well as participate fully in related activities.
- Students are actively involved in in-class and online learning experiences as is evidenced by (1) participating in all activities, (2) engaging in small and large group discussions, (3) using laptops and other electronic devices only to support discussion and learning and not for non-academic uses during class time, (4) completing written work related to the activities, and (5) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.
- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class and online discussions, activities, and written reflections.

Note: To determine whether the campus is closed due to inclement weather, call 703-993-1000 or go to www.gmu.edu.

Websites / Resources (5 points)

Students will identify 5 websites and/or resources that describe federal legislation and/or state regulations relevant to special education and/or individuals with disabilities (e.g. Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the Assistive Technology Act). One of the websites must be user-friendly for parents—help parents understand legislation, shares related information and identifies additional resources for parents. For each website, student will provide the URL, the name/title of the website, and a brief summary of how the website is useful for understanding the field of early childhood special education.

Pamphlet About a Disability (15 points)

Students will develop a pamphlet that can be used by families as a resource for understanding the complex nature of a disability that a preschool child might have. They will include the following: 1) the defining features/characteristics of the disability; 2) how it is expressed from birth through age five across the main developmental areas (Social-Emotional, Language and Literacy, Cognitive, Physical, and Sensory Areas); 3) major services usually provided; 4) whether medicines are used, which ones, and why; 5) the typical specialists that serve these children; and 6) good sources for more information.

Students will post their pamphlet on the Blackboard site after correcting edits provided by instructor. They will be prepared to discuss their pamphlet in class and will bring enough copies for the class and the instructor. In addition to the pamphlet, students will prepare a brief (one-page) paper for the professor in which they 1) identify differing perspectives of disabilities by families from diverse cultural and language groups and 2) list references they found especially useful and will provide a brief annotation for each.

Reflection about field experience (5 points)

Respond to the following questions about the early childhood special education classroom setting you have observed during your field experience:

1. What is the classroom routine?
2. What is the classroom environment? Please include the following:
 - a. How is the room arranged?
 - b. What centers are present?
 - c. What visual information is present? Is it too little or too much?
3. How does the classroom provide opportunities to develop cognitive, language, social-emotional, fine motor and gross motor skills?

Critical Issues Presentation (30 points)

With a partner or small group, students will research a current topic/issue in the field of early intervention and early childhood special education. Group members will research the topic and prepare an in-class presentation to help the class better understand the nature of this issue and how it is currently being viewed. The session should be structured like a 'Parent Information Session' about the group's particular topic.

Students must send a detailed agenda for their presentation with a brief description of the activity, the power point presentation (if one is used), and any links to videos or other supporting materials by **5:00 pm the Tuesday BEFORE** their group presentation.

Students will **e-mail a teacher/parent friendly** article to instructors and classmates by **5:00 the Monday BEFORE** their group's presentation. All students are expected to read the article prior to the group presentation.

On the night of their presentation, students are to bring to class a handout that contains the following:

- 1) an agenda (for **ENTIRE class**)
- 2) an annotated resource list (ten references, which were reviewed by the GROUP-with 5 peer reviewed research based articles/book about research & 5 teacher/parent-friendly articles/books; the resource list must also be provided in digital form (may be emailed) to the instructor so it can be posted on Blackboard.

The presentation **MUST** be **ONLY 45 minutes** and structured to engage classmates in one **VERY** meaningful and memorable activity to help them better understand and remember the issue.

Topics include the following: Disproportional representation of African American and Latino children in special education; services to children whose home language is other than English; services for young children with autism; inclusive services in early education; challenging behaviors; RTI – response to intervention; transition; assistive technology.

Early Childhood Special Education Take-Home Final Examination (30 points)

This is the NCATE 1 Content-Based Assessment that shows evidence of meeting CEC Standards. This assignment must be submitted on TaskStream. *See the assessment description and scoring rubric attached.*

ECED 405: COURSE SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

Date	Topic	Readings & Assignments Due
January 24	Introduction to Early Childhood Special Education as a profession	
January 31	Foundations of education, including history of early childhood special education, legislation and policy	Howard et. al, Ch. 1
February 7	Bedrock principles influencing services to young children – the role of families, communication, collaboration/teams, and consultation	Howard et. al., Ch. 10 Howard et.al, Ch 2 (optional)
February 14	Development: Typical and atypical; sources of Risk for Young Children; defining disabilities	Howard et al., Ch. 3-5 Websites due

February 21	Assessment for eligibility and for planning and evaluation, legal decisions and developing IEPs and IFSPs, monitoring skill acquisition. Service delivery approaches and environments for effective service delivery.	Anderson et. al., Ch. 4, 7
February 28	Early Intervention for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities; appropriate practices and natural environments;	Anderson et al., Ch. 11 Howard et al., Ch. 9 (optional)
March 6	Defining curriculum and approaches to curriculum. Instructional strategies in early education/early childhood special education	Anderson et al., Ch. 8,9,10,12,13, 14 (optional reading)
March 13	George Mason University Spring Break	No classes
March 20	Defining Disabilities: Conditions affecting neurological function and inborn variations of development.	Howard et al., Ch 6 & pp. 330-341 Howard et.al, Ch 7 (optional)
March 27	Defining Disabilities: Sensory impairments and infections; types and characteristics of motor disabilities.	Howard et al, pp. 360-378 Howard et.al., Ch 8 optional Disability Pamphlet Due
April 3	Defining Disabilities: Types and characteristics of Social-emotional disabilities. Current Issue in ECSE: Autism	Howard, pp. 169-178 Critical Issues Group Presentation
April 10	Current Issues in ECSE: Disproportionality; Services for English Language Learners Teaching Tolerance	Critical Issues Group Presentation Reflection about field experience Due
April 17	Current Issues in ECSE: Challenging behaviors and positive behavior supports	Critical Issues Group Presentation
April 24	Response to Intervention (RTI); Disability Pamphlet Sharing	Final copy of disability pamphlet Critical Issues Group Presentation Final Exam will be distributed
May 1	Course wrap up and overview Final Exam Posted	MUST BE UPLOADED and submitted to TASKSTREAM by May 8 for grades to be released.

**schedule subject to change based on class needs and at discretion of the instructor*

Early Childhood Special Education NCATE Assessment 1 Content-Based Assessment ***Early Childhood Special Education Take-Home Final Examination***

Early Childhood Special Education NCATE Assessment 1 Content-Based Assessment is the Early Childhood Special Education Take-Home Final Examination in ECED 505 Introduction to Early Childhood Special Education. This assessment shows evidence of meeting CEC Standard Elements 1a, 1b, 1d, and 3a.

Assessment Overview

In this assessment, students will analyze and respond to questions about a selected case study to demonstrate understanding of philosophies and theories, laws and policies, diverse points of views, and human issues and their impact on educational services for and treatment of individuals with disabilities. Students will do the following:

- Review two case studies and select one to analyze
- Provide reactions to the case study and identify issues and important aspects to consider
- Discuss historical, philosophical, and legal issues
- Discuss developmental issues and expectations and the effects of the child's exceptional condition
- Discuss assessment, instruction, and classroom environmental issues to consider
- Discuss cultural and familial issues to consider
- Discuss contrasting perspectives, including views of the family, school, school system, and other agencies.
- Provide recommendations and next steps
- Reflect upon the case study exercise and how it affected and/or changed their view of special education, disabilities, culturally and linguistically appropriate services, and their role as an educator

CEC Standard Elements Assessed

CEC 1a Impact of philosophies, evidence-based principles and theories, relevant laws and policies, diverse and historical points of view, and human issues on the education and treatment of individuals with exceptional needs both in school and society

CEC 1b Impact of philosophies, principles, theories, laws, policies, points of view, and human issues on professional practice, including assessment, instructional planning, implementation, and program evaluation

CEC 1d Relationships of organizations of special education to the organizations and functions of schools, school systems, and other agencies

CEC 3a Effects that an exceptional condition can have on an individual's learning in school and throughout life

Students will respond to each of the following steps and questions for the Early Childhood Special Education Take-Home Final Exam.

Step One: Students will review two case studies and select one of the two cases (Raymondo or Carlos) to analyze.

Step Two: Students will provide an in-depth analysis of this case based on the information provided, course readings, course sessions, and individual and group presentations. Students may extend beyond what is written to what they might expect, based on their understanding of typically developing children, of disabilities, and of recommended practices. They will provide support with specific references to course readings, course discussions, course lectures, films, and the presentations of other students.

- **Section I: Reactions** Students will respond to the following:
 - a. What is their initial reaction to this case and why?
 - b. What do they see as the key issues?
 - c. If they were a new teacher and were going to be working with this child, what do they think is important to consider?

- **Section II: Discussion** Students will discuss this case in the light of larger issues in the field. (*CEC 1a, 1b, 1d, 3a*). In particular, they will address the following:
 - a. Historical, philosophical, and legal issues that may have affected or continue to affect educational services for this child in both a school setting and the community
 - b. Developmental issues and expectations and the effects of the exceptional condition on the individual's ongoing learning throughout school and life
 - c. Assessment, instruction, and classroom environmental issues that may need to be considered based on the individual's learning needs
 - d. Cultural and familial issues to be considered
 - e. Contrasting perspectives related to serving this child that might be representative of current issues in the field, being sure to consider a special education system/organization and a school, school system, and other agencies

- **Section III: Recommendations** Students will identify, based on their discussion of the issues, what they would recommend as an appropriate response and next steps in this case.

- **Section IV: Reflection** Students will identify issues that came up for them as they completed this assignment and respond to the following:
 - a. What do they see differently?
 - b. How did completing this exam affect their view of special education, of disability, of culturally and linguistically appropriate services, and of their role as an educator?

ECE PROGRAM OUTCOME STANDARDS (Aligned With State and CEC Standards)	Assessment Measure Descriptions			
	Exceeds Criteria	Meets Criteria	Partially Meets Criteria	No Evidence
Early Childhood Special Education NCATE ASSESSMENT 1 Content-Based Assessment Early Childhood Special Education Take-Home Examination ECED 505 Introduction to Early Childhood Special Education				
CEC 1a Impact of philosophies, evidence-based principles and theories, relevant laws and policies, diverse and historical points of view, and human issues on the education and treatment of individuals with exceptional needs both in school and society	Addresses impact of historical, philosophical, and legal issues that affect educational services and treatment of the selected case study individual and shows evidence of further understanding beyond the case study	Addresses impact of historical, philosophical, and legal issues that affect educational services and treatment of the selected case study individual	Provides discussion that partially addresses impact of historical, philosophical, and/or legal issues that affect educational services and treatment of the selected case study individual	Does not address historical, philosophical, and legal components
CEC 1b Impact of philosophies, principles, theories, laws, policies, points of view, and human issues on professional practice, including assessment, instructional planning, implementation, and program evaluation	Addresses impact of historical, philosophical, and legal issues on professional practice, including assessment, instructional planning, implementation, and program evaluation in relation to selected case study and shows evidence of further understanding beyond the case study	Addresses impact of historical, philosophical, and legal issues on professional practice including, assessment, instructional planning, implementation, and program evaluation in relation to selected case study	Provides discussion that partially addresses impact of historical, philosophical, and/or legal issues on professional practice, including assessment, instructional planning, implementation, and/or program evaluation in relation to selected case study	Does not address historical, philosophical, and legal components
CEC 1d Relationships of organizations of special education to the organizations and functions of schools, school systems, and other agencies	Discusses contrasts between special education system, school, school systems, and other agencies as case study information is analyzed and reflects upon the differences beyond the case study	Discusses contrasts between special education system, school, school systems, and other agencies as case study information is analyzed	Provides discussion that partially contrasts between special education system, school, school systems, and other agencies as case study information is analyzed	Does not consider or contrast education organizations and other agencies' relationships

<p>CEC 3a Effects that an exceptional condition can have on an individual's learning in school and throughout life</p>	<p>Discusses developmental issues, expectations, and effects of an exceptional condition on learning beyond the selected case study</p>	<p>Discusses developmental issues, expectations, and effects of an exceptional condition on learning based on selected case study</p>	<p>Provides discussion that partially addresses developmental issues, expectations, and effects of an exceptional condition on learning based on selected case study</p>	<p>Does not discuss the effects of an exceptional condition on learning</p>
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