ECED 801.001 Current Research and Trends in Early Education of Diverse Learners (3:3:0)
Spring 2014
Mondays, 4:30 – 7:10 pm
David King Jr. Hall 2054

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Course Description
Examines research and trends in the early education of children. Explores issues that influence the education of young children with special education needs and children from culturally linguistically, and economically diverse backgrounds. Examines practices appropriate for diverse young learners.

Prerequisite
Admission to doctoral program or post-master's status with permission of instructor.

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 and large-group discussions and work, 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. Analyze original research using different methodologies and list strengths and limitations of the research studies for practice.
2. Synthesize research on practices appropriate for diverse learners, indicating when there is enough research support for a particular practice.
3. Present knowledge of quantitative and qualitative methodologies relevant to diverse learners, emphasizing convergent evidence.
4. Construct issues surrounding research-based practices for diverse groups of learners.
5. Communicate knowledge of the presentation and publication process, including addressing various target audiences and target conferences/journals.

Professional Standards
This seminar is for students in a number of disciplinary concentrations such as early childhood education, early childhood special education, educational psychology, literacy, multicultural/multilingual education, and special education. Study includes the age range of birth through 8 years old. Research is examined across areas of early childhood education, early childhood special education, bilingual/ESL education, and multicultural education and international perspectives on early childhood education.

Required Reading

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication Manual* (6th ed.). Author: Washington, DC.

Pianta, R.C., Barnett, W.S., Justice, L.M., & Sheridan, S.M. (2012). *Handbook of Early Childhood Education.* New York, NY: The Guildford Press.

Recommended Reading

Goodwin, W.L., & Goodwin, L.D. (1996). *Understanding quantitative and qualitative research in early childhood education.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Additional articles, chapters and sections of chapters as indicated on the course schedule will be on the library website through e-reserves or e-journals or through blackboard.

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://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/].
- 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/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/].
- 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/].

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

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.

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

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 and/or online is important to students' learning; therefore, students are expected to make every effort to attend class sessions and/or complete online modules within the designated timeframe. Absences, tardiness, leaving early, and not completing online modules in the designated timeframe 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 and live online 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. 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. 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 formal written assignments 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://infoguides.gmu.edu/content.php?pid=39979. 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   F = < 70

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.

Specific Course Assignments

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Attendance & Participation	Ongoing	15
Blog Entry on Reading & Reflection	Ongoing	10
The Big Picture	2/3/14	10
Integrated Research and Practice Paper (IRPP)	IRPP 1	10
	IRPP 2	15
	IRPP 3	10
	IRPP 4	10
	IRPP 5	20
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.

Weekly Blog Entry on Reading & Reflection

You are expected to
- Post two questions on the Bb blog before class begins. One question should be on a point from the reading that truly excites you--that you are anxious to discuss with others. One question should be on a point from the reading that you find confusing, unclear. The goal is for you to think through your understanding of the reading by assessing what is interesting to you and what is confusing "to get a inkling of what you don't know." Include page numbers from reading in

blog so others can situate your question. Bring your blog entry (paper or electronically) to class as a reference. ***Due Weekly***.

- Write a weekly reflection at the end of each class that is reflective, integrative, and analytic. The overall purpose is to use informal journal writing as a means to think and reflect on the content of the course. In particular, the journal is a means for you to connect course material to your own experiences and to analyze the course readings critically. I expect that your reflections will support you in class as well as in all other assignments. ***Due Weekly***.

The Big Picture: Review of Current Research

Review 2013 and available 2014 research articles published in a major journal related to early childhood education that has peer review. Example journals are listed below.

> Asia-Pacific Journal of Research in Early Childhood Education
> Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood
> Early Childhood Development and Care
> Early Childhood Research and Practice
> Early Childhood Research Quarterly
> Early Education and Development
> Early Years: An International Research Journal
> European Early Education Research Journal
> International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education
> International Journal of Early Years Education
> Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology
> Journal of Early Childhood Literacy
> Journal of Early Childhood Research
> Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education
> Journal of Early Intervention
> Journal of Research in Childhood Education
> NHSA Dialog: A Research-to-Practice Journal for the Early Childhood Field
> Topics in Early Childhood Special Education
> Young Exceptional Children

You should review about 20 abstracts. Start with the latest volume available and work backwards reviewing issues until you locate about 20 articles. In a few cases there may be few published research articles so you might need to continue backward in time in your review, possibly articles published in 2011 or 2010. Please feel free to review more than 20 articles especially if published in 2013 and 2014. Read the abstracts and keep track of the topics of the research. Cut and paste the abstracts of the research articles and into 1 document and include an APA formatted reference for each. Picture these topics using a graphic or graphic organizer. Post copies of the abstracts and graphic on Blackboard before class #2.

Integrated Research and Practice Paper (IRPP)

Choose a topic of study that has particular interest to you. Explore and discuss potential topics during all classes. You will complete an integrated research and practice paper on the topic of your interest. The paper will focus on research on a specific educational practice, although background information may include research on related practices. Discuss the research findings and the strengths and limitations of the research you are using to support a particular practice. Include a written statement of the amount and type of convergent evidence needed to support a particular practice. This paper should be about 20-pages long (including title page and references). APA format is used.

There are five parts to this assignment, four that are completed before writing the paper. The actual paper is the fifth part.

IRPP 1. Literature Review
Do a literature review on your topic of interest. This can be completed with using PsycINFO or other appropriate databases. Keep track of key words used in your search. At a minimum summarize 10 research articles and include documentation of children and families studied, methodologies employed, questions asked, and findings. Pull together the information in a chart. Complete a synthesis graphic of the information reviewed. Post copies of the chart and graphic on Blackboard before class #4.

IRPP 2. Research Seminar on Individual Research Interests
Identify a date our class will discuss research topic in early childhood education that is of particular interest to you. Identify one chapter from the text and one research article from the literature review that are particularly important considering your research interests in the field of early education. These will be inserted as part of our required reading. Email instructor with chosen readings two weeks before your date of the seminar. Be prepared to take an active lead in the discussion.

IRPP 3. Draft Outline
Complete an initial outline for your paper. Attach at least 10 research article citations that are potential ones to be used in paper (most likely these will overlap with the research articles included in the **IRPPs' 1 and 2**. Post copy of the draft outline on Blackboard before Class # 7.

IRPP 4. Annotated outline
Revise your draft outline based on feedback and decide in which sections in the outline you will include particular research articles. Include the points of importance that were in the Literature Review (#1) and also more specific detail that is important to the discussion of convergent evidence you are making in you paper. You will include at least 10 research articles and they can overlap with previously identified articles. Post copy of the annotated outline on Blackboard before Class # 9.

IRPP 5. Integrated Research and Practice Paper (see detail in the beginning of this assignment)
Post copy of paper on Blackboard by 7:15pm on 5/12/14. (Let me know if you would like to shorten paper and submit to a Newsletter – this should be indicated on the paper you hand in)

Course Schedule

Date	Class Topics and Activities	Assignments & Readings Due
1/27	Class Organization, Requirements, Questions Discussion of Big Picture Discussion of Literature Reviews and Current Interests in Research in Early Childhood Education	Bring readings and notes from previous classes on completing literature reviews
2/3	Discuss Big Picture Discussion of Pianta et al Ch 1, Ch 2, Ch 3 Further Discussion of Literature Reviews	Blog Entry Pianta et al Ch 1, Ch 2, Ch 3 The Big Picture Reflection
2/10	Discussion of Pianta et al Ch 6, Ch 7, Ch 8 Further Discussion of Literature Reviews	Blog Entry Pianta et al Ch 6, Ch 7, Ch 8 The Big Picture Reflection
2/17		Blog Entry

		IRPP 1 due Readings to be Announced Reflection
2/24		Blog Entry Readings to be Announced Reflection
3/3	Research Seminar on Individual Research Interests	Blog Entry Readings to be Announced Reflection
Spring Break 3/10		
3/17	Research Seminar on Individual Research Interests	Blog Entry **IRPP 3** due Readings to be Announced Reflection
3/24	Research Seminar on Individual Research Interests	Blog Entry Readings to be Announced Reflection
3/31	Research Seminar on Individual Research Interests	Blog Entry **IRPP 4** due Readings to be Announced Reflection
4/7	Research Seminar on Individual Research Interests	Blog Entry Readings to be Announced Reflection
4/14	Research Seminar on Individual Research Interests	Blog Entry Readings to be Announced Reflection
4/21	Research Seminar on Individual Research Interests	Blog Entry Readings to be Announced Reflection
4/28	Research Seminar on Individual Research Interests	Blog Entry Readings to be Announced Reflection
5/5	Leftovers Submitting your paper to a Newsletter	
5/12	**IRPP 5**. Integrated Research and Practice Paper Due	