College of Education and Human Development

ECED 505.603
Introduction to Early Childhood Special Education (3:3:0)
Spring 2016
Online 2/1-5/20

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Course Description

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

Prerequisite(s)

Notes: 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 and large-group discussions and work, videos, and whole class sharing to support course content. In addition, a Blackboard (Bb) 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. 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).
3. Demonstrate an understanding of evidence-based principles that influence education, including early childhood special education.
4. Describe factors that place young children at-risk for disabilities.

5. Describe characteristics of major handicapping conditions.
6. Describe the role of assessment in identification, eligibility, and service delivery for young children and their families.
7. Describe current regulations and procedures governing special education to include individualized education program (IEP) development and individualized family service plan (IFSP).
8. Describe disciplinary practices, policies, and procedures and alternative placements in schools.
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. Explore the role of students' own personal, social, and cultural experiences and perspectives in their professional decision making.
12. Demonstrate person-first respect and understanding of young children and their families.
13. Consider course topics and readings through the lens of services for children and families from diverse cultural and linguistic communities.
14. Explore social development issues related to major disabling and at-risk conditions.
15. Explain the standards of professionalism related to serving young children with disabilities and at-risk conditions.
16. Analyze current research in the field.

Professional Standards

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

Required Text

Deiner, P. L. (2013). *Inclusive early childhood education: Development, resources and practice, 6th edition.* Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, Belmont, CA. ISBN-13: 978-1-111-83715-0, ISBN-10: 1-111-83715-5.

Required Articles

Division for Early Childhood [DEC]. (2007). *DEC code of ethics.* Retrieved from http://dec.membershipsoftware.org/files/Position Statement and Papers/Member Code of Ethics.pdf

Division for Early Childhood. (2014). *DEC recommended practices in early intervention/early childhood special education 2014*. Retrieved from http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices

National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC]. (2003). *Code of ethical conduct and statement of commitment.* Retrieved from http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements

GMU Policies and Resources for Students
   a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/].
   b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/].
   c. 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, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
   d. 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/].
   e. 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 [See http://ods.gmu.edu/].
   f. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
   g. 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/].

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

Core Values Commitment
The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles [http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/].

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

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 and/or online is important to students' learning; therefore, students are expected to make every effort to attend class sessions 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 <u>and</u> 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.

ECED 505 Course Assignments

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Online Participation	Ongoing	15
Article Critique	February 19	10
Professional Ethics Paper	Mar 10	10
Current Research Project	April 14	20
Disability Fact Sheet	April 28	10
Reflection of Field Experience	May 12	10
Early Childhood Special Education Take-Home Final Examination	May 19	25

Online 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 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 evidenced by (1) participating in all activities, (2) engaging in small and large group discussions, (3) not using laptops and other electronic devices during class time except as approved to support learning within the current class activity, (4) completing written work related to the activities, and (5) supporting the participation and learning of classmates on-line and face-to face.
- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class and online discussions, activities, assignments, 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.

Article Critique (10 points)

Students will select one topic strand from the DEC Recommended Practices (Assessment, Environment, Family, Instruction, Interaction, Leadership, Teaming and Collaboration, or Transition) and identify one peer-reviewed evidence-based article related to that selected topic. Students will read the article and summarize it in a no more than two-page critique including the following information:

- the article reference in APA style
- the selected DEC Recommended Practice topic strand
- a brief summary of the article
- a brief discussion about how this article provides a strong evidence-base for the DEC Recommended Practices
- a brief discussion on how this article improved their understanding of the field of early childhood special education and the implications for an early childhood special educator's practice

Professional Ethics Paper (10 points)

Students will review the GMU CEHD Professional Dispositions, NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and DEC Code of Ethics to familiarize themselves with professional ethical principles. Students will select a case study to examine, and integrate class readings, class discussions, and their own knowledge about children, families, instruction, and early childhood practices to respond to the questions provided below. Students will prepare a three page paper, using APA style, to respond to the following:

1) Briefly describe the primary ethical dilemma in this case study.
2) Identify at least three professional principles from the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and DEC Code of Ethics that were considered as you made decisions about the case study.
3) Explain how the ethical dilemma supports or conflicts with DEC Recommended practices.
4) Summarize the professional decision you made regarding the case study.

Current Research Project (20 points)

Students will select from a list of topics/issues in the field of early intervention/early childhood special education and conduct a literature review on the topic. The literature must be current (within the last 10 years/preferably within the last five years); include a minimum of 10 resources that includes at least 5 resources from peer-reviewed research based journals or books. Students will summarize the relevant information and draw linkages to current regulations and procedures governing special education. Some examples: if researching inclusive practices, consider how inclusive practices are reflected in IDEA regulations and procedures such as the IEP, service settings and service delivery, etc. If researching preschool expulsion, consider components of IDEA that play a role in that topic such as the IEP, service settings, due process, etc.

Students will present the information in a manner that is parent-friendly and may write a paper or blog, prepare a power point presentation, create a poster, make a video or other appropriate method approved by the instructor.

Topics may include:

- developmentally appropriate practice
- culturally and linguistically appropriate practice
- inclusive practices and programs
- family engagement
- preschool expulsion

Disability Fact Sheet (10 points)

The purpose of this assignment is to ensure all students have basic knowledge and understanding of early development. The target audience for this Fact Sheet is all early childhood education and care professionals. The Fact Sheet should include all of the following:

- Identification of the disability
- Identification of the IDEA category of disability through which the child would receive services if found eligible
- Causes, symptoms, signs of the disability
- Long-term implications for the disability
- Educational interventions for infants, toddlers, and young children having the disability
- Resources for parents and professionals
- References

Students are encouraged to use readings and peer-reviewed resources to support this work, remembering that they must list all supporting references in APA format in the fact sheet.

Reflection of Field Experience (10 points)

Students are expected to complete a 15 hour field experience in an early childhood special education classroom early in the semester. Please visit https://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/internships-field-experience to register for field experience. Upon completion of the field experience, students will provide a written, video/audio, or slide presentation response to the following questions:

1. What is the classroom routine?
2. What is the classroom environment (e.g. special education students only, inclusive classroom, 3 year olds, 4 year olds, multi-age?) Please include the following:
   a. How is the room physically 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?
4. What accommodations or adaptations are used for children with disabilities?

5. What would you do differently as a teacher? Consider the following areas: the classroom routine, the environment's arrangement, the provision of opportunities to develop skills in all the domains and in the availability of accommodations and adaptations for children with disabilities?

Students will support their response with class readings, discussions, and peer-reviewed literature, as needed, using APA style. Students will also submit the required field experience documentation form available at (https://cehd.gmu.edu/assets/docs/forms/Field%20Experience%20Documentation%20Form.pdf)

Final Exam (25 points)

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 how they will deliver educational services to young children with disabilities. Students will do the following:

- Review two case studies and select one to analyze.
- Provide reactions to the case.
- Discuss issues and perspectives that may influence the case.
- Provide recommendations and next steps.

Section I: Reactions. Students will discuss the following:
   a. What are the key educational issues?
   b. What are important familial and cultural issues to consider?
   c. What should new teachers consider when working with this child?

Section II: Foundations. Students will describe larger issues and practices in the field that might influence the selected case, specifically addressing the following:

   a. Describe the historical, philosophical, and legal issues that may have or continue to affect educational services for this child in both a school setting and the community.
   b. Identify any developmental issues and the effects of the exceptional condition on the individual's ongoing learning throughout school and life.
   c. Describe the identification and evaluation process in which the child and family would participate, if the child were found eligible for special education services.
   d. Describe any assessment, instructional, and classroom environmental considerations that should be addressed based on the family's priorities and the child's learning needs.

Section III: Perspectives. Students will consider and discuss the perspectives of organizations and individuals that may support the selected case, addressing the following at a minimum:

a. Describe the professional and ethical practices that will drive their interactions with this family.
b. Discuss the family's priorities and expectations for the child's development and learning.
c. Describe two organizations that could support this child, and what role the teacher would play in these organizations.
d. Discuss the contrasting perspectives of these two special education organizations' approaches to supporting the selected child and his family, as well as interrelationships with the school, school system, and other agency requirements needed to provide resources and services.

Section IV: Recommendations. Students will identify, based on the discussion of reactions, foundations, and perspectives, what recommendations are appropriate as next steps in this case related to working with the family. Students will include the following in their recommendations:

a. Two or more appropriate considerations for working with this child and family;
b. One or more guiding ethical or professional practice(s) related to identified considerations;
c. One or more identified area(s) related to the case where it is important for the student to seek additional knowledge or training;
d. One or more resource(s) in local or national learning communities that will help the student gain skills and perspectives to effectively work with the case child and his family.

ECED 505: Course Schedule and Topics*

Class	Class Open Date	Topics	Readings** and Assignments Due
1	Feb 1	Introduction and Syllabus Assignments Early Childhood Special Education and Early Intervention: History and Legislation	Deiner, Ch. 1
2	Feb 8	Collaboration in ECSE / EI	Deiner: Ch. 2
3	Feb 15	Evaluation, Assessment, and Eligibility	Deiner: Ch. 3 **DUE Feb 19: Article Critique**
4	Feb 22	Professional Ethics and Evidence Based Practice	DEC Code of Ethics NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct
5	Feb 25	Intervention Process Curriculum and Standards in Inclusive Settings IFSP and IEP: Team, Meetings, Content, Outcomes, and LRE	Deiner: Ch. 4
6	Mar 2	IDEA: Discipline, Procedural Safeguards, Due Process Individualizing Planning	Deiner: Ch. 5 **DUE Mar 3: Professional Ethics Paper**
7	Mar 14	Prenatal development: Typical and Atypical Infants and Toddlers At Risk Early Intervention Transitions Current Research Issues	Deiner: Ch. 6, 7
8	Mar 21	Children with Specific Learning Disabilities Children with Social Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Deiner: Ch. 8, 9

Class	Class Open Date	Topics	Readings** and Assignments Due
9	Mar 28	Children with Comm/Language Disorders Children who are English Language Learners	Deiner: Ch. 11, 12
10	Apr 4	Children with ADD/ADHD Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders	Denier: Ch. 10, 13
11	Apr 11	Children with Intellectual Delays and Disabilities Children who are Gifted and Talented, or Twice-Gifted	Denier: Ch. 14, 15 **DUE April 14: Current Research Project**
12	Apr 18	Children with Special Health Care Needs Children with Orthopedic and Neurological Impairments	Deiner: Ch. 16, 17
13	Apr 25	Children with Hearing Impairments Children with Visual Impairments	Denier: Ch 18, 19 **DUE Apr 28: Disability Fact Sheet**
14	May 2	Course Wrap Up	**DUE May 12: Field Experience Reflection & Documentation Form** **DUE May 19: ECSE Final Exam posted to Blackboard by 11:59 PM EST**

Schedule subject to change based on class needs and at discretion of the instructor.

*** Additional readings may be posted to blackboard*