

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**Early Childhood Education**

ECED 504.001/P01 Engaging Families of Diverse Young Learners  
3 Credits, Fall 2017  
Tuesdays/ 7:20 – 10:00 pm  
Thompson Hall L014, Fairfax Campus

**Faculty**

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**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

None

**University Catalog Course Description**

Focuses on strategies for developing culturally appropriate family professional partnerships to benefit children, including children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and children with special needs. Explores theories and research supporting a family centered approach, including family and professional rights and responsibilities, especially in the special education process.

**Course Overview**

Not Applicable

**Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered using a lecture and discussion format.

**Learner Outcomes or Objectives**

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

1. Describe the historical, philosophical, and sociological foundations underlying the role, development and organization of public education in the United States.
2. Discuss the legal status of teachers and students, including federal and state laws and regulations, school as an organization/culture, and contemporary issues in education.
3. Discuss theories and research supporting a family-centered approach to early childhood education.
4. Discuss the role of cultural context in attitudes, beliefs, values, and child rearing practices.
5. Analyze personal values, beliefs, and cultural biases that influence their work with families.

6. Describe underlying principles and ways to work with families that are both effective and enabling.
7. Identify strategies that support and assist families to identify their priorities, resources, and concerns for their children, including children with special needs.
8. Create tailored opportunities for collaborating with families in the ongoing education of children, including children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and children with special needs.
9. Utilize family systems theory to describe and understand family perspectives.
10. Identify specific components of IDEA that support family voices in the special education process.
11. Adopt a strengths-based problem solving perspective when analyzing dilemmas related to partnering with families.
12. Demonstrate understanding of the theories and techniques of family-centered intervention, including issues related to families from diverse backgrounds and multicultural education.

**Professional Standards (Council of Exceptional Children and National Association for the Education of Young Children)**

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards:

**NAEYC Standard Elements**

*NAEYC 2a Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics*

*NAEYC 2b Supporting and engaging families and community through respectful, reciprocal relationships*

**Required Texts**

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author. ISBN: 9781433805615

Grant, K. B., & Ray, J. A. (2016). *Home, school, and community collaboration: Culturally responsive family engagement* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Sage. ISBN: 9781483347547 [white cover/ jacket]

Koralek, D. (2007). *Spotlight on young children and families*. Washington D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children. ISBN: 9781928896425

See Additional Course Readings list following the Class Schedule.

**Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Attendance & Participation	Ongoing	15
<i>Spotlight</i> Discussion	Ongoing	10
Home Visit Project		
• Part 1 Characteristics Memo	October 3	10
• Part 2 Families Analysis and Reflection	October 31	25
• Full Home Visit Project uploaded to	November 21	

Tk20 on Bb		
Online Family Resource	November 28	10
Family Story Presentation	December 5	5
Statement of Philosophy	Draft (November 14 & 21, Dec. 5) Final – Dec. 19	25
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

***Spotlight on Young Children and Families Discussion (10 points)***

Students, along with two or three of their peers, will be responsible for leading a discussion about an assigned chapter from the *Spotlight on Young Children and Families* text. Students are expected to lead a discussion (they may NOT use PowerPoint and should not just summarize the reading) and include one hands-on activity as part of the discussion. *A sign-up sheet will be provided on the first night of class.*

**Home Visit Project (35 points)**

This is the Key Assessment 7 Home Visit Project that shows evidence of meeting CEC and NAEYC Standards. This assignment must be submitted on Blackboard. See the assessment description and scoring rubric attached.

**Online Family Resource (10 points)**

Students will investigate, identify, and share a resource (e.g. a family service, an individual or particular service provider, a handbook or other written material, a local event, etc.) that would be of great use to the family (or a similar family) they chose for the Home Visitation Project. Students will search for appropriate resources and create and upload to Blackboard a one-page handout describing the resource with all relevant elements and contact information. Students will post their family resource in the discussion board, and bring enough copies to class to share with their colleagues. Students will present on their resource for one to two minutes during class.

**Family Story Presentation (5 points)**

Students will present what they have learned as a story. Each student presentation will be a total of eight minutes, with five to six minutes for the presentation of the family story and two to three minutes for peer/instructor questions and discussion. The presentation should not sound like a clinical case presentation. Students should be creative with their story presentation and consider how they would like their own story to be told.

**Statement of Philosophy for Working with Families and Communities (25 points)**

Students will use their experiences with the children and families in their setting, any community connections they have made, as well as course content including readings and discussion to create a **one- to two-page (single-spaced) statement of their philosophy** for working with families and communities. This will include not only why they believe it is important to engage with families and communities as a teacher/ practitioner but also the ways they believe are most effective for doing this. They will include academic, both research- and theory-based, literature as well as concrete examples from the readings. It is expected that experiential, empirical, and

theoretical (research- and theory-based from course readings) knowledge will be used in this paper. All course readings should be cited appropriately.

- **Other Requirements**

**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) completing written work related to the activities, and (4) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.
- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class and online discussions, activities, and written reflections.

**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 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.

Type the paper with double spacing, indented paragraphs, 1-inch margins all around, and 12-point Times New Roman font.

- **Grading**

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

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.

### Professional Dispositions

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

### Class Schedule

Class	Topics	Assignments & Readings Due
Aug 29	Intro to Course & Family Engagement	Welcome to ECED 504!  Family Box Activity - Bring Item
Sept 5	Defining Family Intro to Ecological Model and Family Systems Theory	Grant & Ray, pp. 31-46 See BB for additional readings
Sept 12	Contemporary Families: Demographics, Structures, and Functions	Grant & Ray, Ch. 4 Turnbull, Ch. 3 (Family Functions) Spotlight I on YC and Families, pp. 4-11 See BB for additional readings
Sept 19	Developmental Process of Parenting	Grant & Ray, Ch. 3 Spotlight II on YC and Families, pp. 16-19 See BB for additional readings
Sept 26	Implicit Bias & Sociocultural Perspective  <i>You Are What You Teach!</i>  <i>Melting Pot or Tossed Salad?</i>	Spotlight III on YC and Families, pp. 38-43 View: <i>The Danger of a Single Story</i> on BB See BB for additional readings
Oct 3	Family Diversity: Immigration, Low-Income Families, Single-Parent Families	Grant & Ray, Ch. 5 Spotlight IV on YC and Families, pp. 44-49  <b>DUE to Bb – Part 1 Diverse Family and Community Characteristics Memo</b>
Oct 10	<i>No Class – Monday Classes Meet on Tuesday</i>	

Oct 17	Family Diversity: Families With Children With Disabilities, Inclusion	Grant & Ray, Ch. 11 Spotlight V on YC and Families, pp. 28-37 <a href="#">See BB for additional readings</a> View: <i>NYT documentary from Poland</i>
Oct 24	Family Diversity: LGBTQI Families, Families in Transition	Grant & Ray, Ch. 6-8 Spotlight VI on YC and Families, pp. 24-27 <a href="#">See BB for additional readings</a>
Oct 31	Additional Family Theories & Tools for Understanding Diverse Families  Family Stress Theory: Reframing Family Resiliency; Hope and Strengths	Spotlight VII on YC and Families, pp. 20-23 Spotlight on YC and Families, pp. 4-11 (no student presentation)  <a href="#">See BB for additional readings</a>  <b>DUE to BB – Part 2 Understanding, Supporting, and Engaging Families Analysis and Reflection</b>
Nov 7	Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Partnering With Families,  <i>The Importance of Partnerships at all Levels: FEA, SEA, LEA</i>	Grant & Ray, pp. 1-16 & 46-59 Spotlight VIII on YC and Families, pp. 2-3 <a href="#">See BB for additional readings</a>
Nov 14	Family Engagement: Cultural Competence as an Ongoing Process  <i>Cultural Humility</i>	Grant & Ray, pp. 79-90 & Ch. 9 Spotlight IX on YC and Families, pp. 50-54 <a href="#">See BB for additional readings</a>  <b>DUE to Writing Partner – Statement of Philosophy Draft</b>
Nov 21	Family Engagement: Communication and Navigating Systems  Creating our Collective Class Story	Grant & Ray, Ch. 10 Spotlight X on YC and Families, pp. 12-15 <a href="#">See BB for additional readings</a>  <b>DUE to Tk20 on Bb – Home Visit Project (Parts 1 and 2 compiled)</b> <b>DUE to Writing Partner – Reviewed Statement of Philosophy Draft</b>
Nov 28	Family-Teacher Community Connections,	Grant & Ray, Ch. 12 or 13 Spotlight XI on YC and Families, pp. 55-57

	<i>Turnbull's Seven Principles of Trust</i>	<b>DUE: Poster Session: Family Resource</b> <b>DUE to BB – Family Resource</b>
Dec 5	<b>Student Presentations</b>  <b>Wrap-Up</b> <b>Lessons Learned</b> <b>Lessons-to-be-Learned</b> <b>Celebration!</b>	<b>DUE: Family Story Online</b> <b>DUE to Writing Partner – Statement of Philosophy</b>
Dec 12	<i>No Class Reading Day</i>	
Dec 19	<i>No Class – Finals Week</i>	<b>DUE to BB – Statement of Philosophy (final)</b>

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

### **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: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

### **GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

#### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

## Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>.

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/>.**

## Additional Course Readings

- Anderson, W., Chitwood, S., Hayden, D., & Takemoto, C. (2008). *Negotiating the special education maze*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.
- Bianchi, S. M., Robinson, J. P., & Milkie, M. A. (2006). *Changing rhythms of American family life*. New York: Russell Sage. (selected chapters)
- Bromer, J., & Henly, J. R. (2009). The work-family support roles of child care providers across settings. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 24*, 271-288.
- Dreby, J., & Adkins, T. (2012). The strength of family ties: How US migration shapes children's ideas of family. *Childhood, 19*, 169-187.
- Francis, G., Blue-Banning, M., Haines, S., Turnbull, A., Gross, J. (2016) Building "our school": Parental perspectives for building trusting family-professional partnerships. *Preventing School Failure, 60*, 329-336.
- Fuligni, A. J., & Fuligni, A. S. (2007). Immigrant families and the educational development of their children. In J. E. Lansford, K. Deater-Deckard, & M. H. Bornstein (Eds.). *Immigrant families in contemporary society* (pp. 231-249). New York: Guilford.
- Gates, G. (2008). Diversity among same sex couples and their children. In S. Coontz, M. Parson, & G. Raley (Eds.). *American families: A multicultural reader* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (pp. 394-399). New York: Routledge.
- Gonzalez-Mena, J. (2014) *50 strategies for communicating and working with diverse families* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Pearson
- Gonzalez-Mena, J. (2009) *Child, family, and Community: Family-centered early care and education* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Pearson
- Graue, & Hawkins (2010). "I always feel they don't know anything about us": Diverse families talk about their relations with school. In M. Miller-Marsh & T. Turner-Vorbeck (Eds.), *(Mis)understanding families: Learning from real families in our schools*. (pp. 109-125). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Halgunseth, L. C. (2009). Family engagement, diverse families, and early childhood education programs: An integrated review of the literature. *Young Children, 56-58*.
- Hanson, M. & Lynch, E. (2013). *Understanding Families: Supportive approaches to diversity, disability, and risk* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes
- Hernandez, S. J. (2013) *Collaboration in Special Education: Its history, evolution, and critical factors necessary for successful implementation*. US-China Education Review, (3) 6.

- Lareau, A. (2008). Excerpts from *Unequal Childhoods*. In S. Coontz, M. Parson, & G. Raley (Eds.). *American families: A multicultural reader* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (pp. 400-417). New York: Routledge.
- Lea, D. (2012). Cultural reciprocity as a transformative journey in research and practice. In M. Kalyanpur & B. Harry. *Cultural reciprocity in special education: Building Family-professional relationships* (pp. 119-136). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Lynch, E. W., & Hanson, M. J. (2011). *Developing cross-cultural competence* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Baltimore: Brooks Publishing. (selected chapters)
- Moore, K. A., Redd, Zakia, Burkhauser, M., Mbwana, K., & Collins, A. (2009). Children in poverty: Trends, consequences, and policy options. Washington, DC: Child Trends.
- Moreno, R. P., Lewis-Menchaca, K., & Rodriguez, J. (2011). Parental involvement in the home: A critical view through a multicultural lens. In E. M. Olivos, O. Jimenez-Castellanos, & A. M. Ochoa (Eds.), *Bicultural parent engagement* (pp. 39-57). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Riojas-Cortez, M. 2011. Culture, Play, and Family: Supporting Children on the Autism Spectrum. *Young Children* 66 (5): 94–99.
- Roggman, L., Boyce, L., Innocenti, M. (2008) *Developmental Parenting: A guide for early childhood practitioners*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes
- Sanders, K. E., Deihl, A., & Kyler, A. (2007). DAP in the ‘hood: Perceptions of child care practices by African American child care directors caring for children of color. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 22, 394- 406.
- Small, M. L. (2006). Neighborhood institutions as resource brokers: Child care centers, interorganizational ties, and resource access among the poor. *Social Problems*, 53(2), 274-292.
- Stewart, P. (2007). Who is kin? Family definition and African American families. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 15, 163-181.
- Turnbull, A., Turnbull, R., Erwin, E., & Soodak, L. (2011). *Families, professionals, and exceptionality: Positive outcomes through partnerships and trust* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Columbus, OH: Prentice Hall. ISBN: 9780137070480
- Vesely, C. K., Levine Brown, E., & Mehta, S. (2017) Developing cultural humility through experiential learning: How home visits transform early childhood preservice educators’ attitudes for engaging families. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 38:3, 242-258. doi: 10.1080/10901027.2017.1345805
- Vesely, C. K., & Ginsberg, M. R. (2011). Strategies and practices for working with immigrant families in early education programs. *Young Children*, 84-89.
- Weigel, D. J. (2008). The concept of family: An analysis of laypeople’s views of family. *Journal of Family Issues*, 29, 1426.
- Weiss, Lopez, & Rosenberg (2010). *Beyond random acts: Family, school, and community engagement as an integral part of education reform*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.
- Wlazlinski, M. L., & Cummins, J. (2011). Using family stories to foster parent and preservice teacher relationships. In E. M. Olivos, O. Jimenez-Castellanos, & A. M. Ochoa (Eds.), *Bicultural parent engagement* (pp. 39-57). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Wright, T. (2013) I keep me safe. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 95, 39-43.

## **Early Childhood Education Key Assessment 7 Engaging Families: Home Visit Project**

### **Description of Assessment**

Early Childhood Education Key Assessment 7 Engaging Families is the Home Visit Project that provides candidates an opportunity to apply their knowledge and learning of the influence of families, culture and schools on a child's learning while engaging families in respectful and reciprocal relationships. This assessment takes place in ECED 404/504 Engaging Families of Diverse Young Learners.

### **How the Assessment Aligns With the Standards**

#### **NAEYC Standard Elements**

*NAEYC 2a Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics*

*NAEYC 2b Supporting and engaging families and community through respectful, reciprocal relationships*

### **Description of Assignment**

Candidates will focus on developing culturally appropriate family professional partnerships to benefit children, including children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and children with special needs. Candidates will support and engage families through respectful, reciprocal relationships by conducting a home visit, including an interview with at least one of the primary caregivers, and a family observation during a family event with a family of a young child (birth-8 years old) whose family is marginalized by U.S. society based on the following: race, ethnicity, immigrant status, family structure, socioeconomic status, sexuality, child or parent's ability status or religion and whose perspective on early childhood education and parenting is likely to be different from their own. They will apply their knowledge and understanding of diverse family characteristics through their observations and interaction with the family during the home visit.

#### ***Part 1: Diverse Family and Community Characteristics***

Candidates will plan for their home visit by describing their rationale for selecting the family, including the following: (a) a description of the family selected and an explanation of the ways they think the families' experiences are different from their own; (b) a discussion of what they have observed about how society views or assumes about the child and their family (based on race, ethnicity, family structure, sexual orientation, religion, etc.); (c) and honest attempt to identify and describe any assumptions the candidate has about the family. Candidates will describe how they plan to introduce themselves by finding common ground with the family based on gender, work, education, experiences, etc. as these help with initial introductions. Finally, in this first part of the home visit process, candidates will brainstorm questions that they will ask the parents to learn about the child (e.g., likes, dislikes, interests, experiences, etc.) and about the parents and family (e.g., parents' experiences, perspective on their children, daily routines, etc.).

## ***Part 2: Understanding, Supporting, and Engaging Families***

Candidates will meet with the family to conduct an interview and a family observation. This may occur in one visit or over the course of multiple visits.

***Primary caregiver interview.*** Candidates should try to learn as much as possible through *meaningful* exchanges. Candidates should challenge themselves to understand how families make sense of the world and how the parents' and families' realities of the world are different from their own. The focus should be to engage respectfully with the family member on his or her own terms and turf (if possible), rather than conducting a formal interview. Candidates should meet with the parent in a relaxed framework. It is recommended that candidates "ask, ask, ask." They should ask the family for clarification or meaning when something is confusing or feels very different to them. Candidates should reflect on their own culture, experiences, and stories as they learn about their families' stories.

***Observation.*** At the end of this informal meeting, candidates should ask the family if they might be able to join them at a family event (e.g., birthday party, family gathering, etc.). Candidates will conduct an observation of the family and focal child at a family event. It can be a routine event or a special event. Candidates must spend at least an hour with the family. During this event, candidates will engage the family in an informal conversation to find out about the meanings of their actions, describing and making meaning of their learning experience with the family.

Following these meetings with the family, candidates will examine their previous assumptions about the family given new information garnered through the interview and family observation experiences. As such, candidates will include an analysis after the interview and family observation that includes the following:

- What they learned about the family in these interactions and which questions were most helpful in garnering this understanding,
- What they learned about themselves and their assumptions through coming to know this family, and
- What this experience might mean for them as an early childhood educator.

## Scoring Guide for the Assessment

<b>Early Childhood Education Key Assessment 7</b> <b>Engaging Families: Home Visit Project</b>				
	<b>Exceeds</b>	<b>Meets</b>	<b>Approaches</b>	<b>Does Not Meet</b>
<b>Part 1: Diverse Family and Community Characteristics</b>				
<b>NAEYC 2a</b> Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics	Candidate provided a description that met criteria and reflected an extensive knowledge and understanding of the child's family, community, life experiences, values and culture.	Candidate provided a description of a diverse family's characteristics and background that demonstrated an understanding of the child's family, community, life experiences, values, and culture.	Candidate attempted to provide a description of a diverse family's characteristics and background that demonstrated an understanding of the child's family, community, life experiences, values, and culture. However, candidate provided limited information about the family.	Candidate did not provide a description of a diverse family's characteristics and background that demonstrated an understanding of the child's family, community, life experiences, values, and culture.
<b>Part 2: Understanding, Supporting, and Engaging Families</b>				
<b>NAEYC 2b</b> Supporting and engaging families and community through respectful, reciprocal relationships	Candidate provided an analysis that met expectations and demonstrated an in-depth understanding of how this interaction with a family informs his/her ideas on developing relationships as an early childhood educator.	Candidate provided an analysis of his/her interaction with the family, including what the candidate learned about him/herself and how this understanding informs the candidate's ideas on developing relationships as an early childhood educator.	Candidate attempted to provide an analysis of his/her interaction with the family, including some understanding of what he/she learned. However, candidate did not explain how this understanding informed his/her ideas on developing relationships as an early childhood educator.	Candidate did not provide an analysis of his/her interaction with the family and did not show understanding of how to develop relationships as an early childhood educator.