

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

ECED 405.DL1 Introduction to Early Childhood Special Education  
3 Credits, Fall 2019  
10/14 – 12/18, Fully Online

**Faculty**

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**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

None

**University Catalog 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. Notes: Field experience required.

**Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an asynchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on May 20, 2019.

**Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.**

*Technical Requirements*

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox is required (note: Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard).
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Windows Media Player:

- <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
- Apple Quick Time Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

### *Expectations*

- Course Week: Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on the first day listed for each module.
- Log-in Frequency: Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 4 times per week.
- Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues: Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload: Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support: Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette: The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations: Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

### **Learner Outcomes or Objectives**

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

1. Describe the nature and characteristics of major disabling and at-risk conditions for young children, including children with diverse cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
2. Describe the services and pathways for service delivery for children birth through age five with disabling and at-risk conditions, including methods for instructional services and programs, curriculum development, and tiered instruction.

3. Provide an overview of early intervention and early childhood special education programs.
4. Describe the historical perspective and philosophical and sociological foundations underlying the role, development, and organization of special education in the United States.
5. Discuss legislation and legal aspects associated with students with disabilities, 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 and the Americans with Disabilities Act) and legal decisions related to person with disabilities and explain how it intersects with current issues and influences professional practice.
6. Describe current regulations and procedures governing special education to include Individualized Education Program (IEP), Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA), and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) development.
7. Describe the development process of IEPs and IFSPs, including case management, collaboration, co-teaching, interagency coordination, inclusive practices, least restrictive environment, and transition.
8. Describe disciplinary practices, policies, and procedures, and alternative placements in schools in relation to young children with disabling conditions and at-risk conditions.
9. Describe the role of assessment in identification, eligibility, service delivery, and program development/improvement for young children and their families, including children and families with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
10. Describe effective strategies for training, managing, and monitoring paraprofessionals.
11. Exhibit standards of professionalism, ethical standards, and personal integrity with children, families, and professionals in the field experience setting (e.g., early intervention, home-based, school-based, community-based) and in interactions with classmates, the instructor, the field experience coordinator, and others.
12. Use writing as an instructional and assessment tool to generate, gather, plan, organize, and to communicate for a variety of purposes; integrate correct written conventions (i.e., grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling); and format using current APA style.

**Professional Standards** – Virginia Professional Studies Competencies, Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies, Virginia Early/Primary Education PreK-3 EPK3 Endorsement Competencies, Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards, Council of Exceptional Children (CEC) and Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Standards, and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards

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

**Virginia Professional Studies Competencies**

Supervised Clinical Experiences

**Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies**

Nature and Characteristics of Major Disabling and At-Risk Conditions

Foundations of Legal Aspects

Standards of Professionalism

Supervised Experiences

## CEC Standard Elements

*CEC 6.2 Beginning special education professionals understand how foundational knowledge and current issues influence professional practice.*

*CEC 6.4 Beginning special education professionals understand the significance of lifelong learning and participate in professional activities and learning communities.*

*CEC 7.2 Beginning special education professionals serve as a collaborative resource to colleagues.*

## NAEYC Standard Elements

*NAEYC 6a Identifying and involving oneself with the early childhood profession*

## Required Texts

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

Deiner, P. L. (2013). *Inclusive early childhood education: Development, resources, and practice* (6th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. ISBN: 9781111837150

## Required Online Documents

Council for Exceptional Children. (2015). *What every special educator must know: Professional ethical and standards*. Arlington, VA: Author. Retrieved from

<https://www.cec.sped.org/Standards/Ethical-Principles-and-Practice-Standards>

Council for Exceptional Children. (2012). *Initial preparation standards with explanation*.

Retrieved from

<https://www.cec.sped.org/~media/Files/Standards/Professional%20Preparation%20Standards/Initial%20Preparation%20Standards%20with%20Elaborations.pdf>

Council for Exceptional Children. (2017). *Initial specialty set early childhood special education and early intervention*. Retrieved from

<https://www.cec.sped.org/~media/Files/Standards/CEC%20Initial%20and%20Advanced%20Specialty%20Sets/Initial%20Specialty%20Set%20%20ECSE%20%20Revalidated%202017.pdf>

Division for Early Childhood. (2014). *DEC Recommended Practices*. Retrieved from

<https://divisionearlychildhood.egnyte.com/dl/tgv6GUXhVo>

## Course Performance Evaluation

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

Assignment	Due Date	Points
Attendance and Participation	Ongoing	25
Field Experience		20
• Field experience approval form	Oct 26	1
• Field experience documentation	Dec 7	4
• Field experience observation and reflection	Dec 7	15
Professional Practice Project		55
• Part 1: Foundational knowledge and current issues paper	Nov 2	10
• Part 2: Accessing professional resources	Nov 9	10

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part 3: Writing an Individualized Education Program (IEP)</li> <li>• Part 4: Reflecting on professional learning</li> <li>• Final upload to Tk20 (all three parts in one document)</li> </ul>	Nov 23	25
	Nov 30 Dec 13	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

**Field Experience (20 points)**

This course requires a minimum of 15 hours field experience in an early childhood special education classroom. To initiate this assignment, students will visit <https://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf> and complete the online “Field Experience Request Form.” On the form students will be asked to indicate how their placement will be arranged. Students have two options for fulfilling their field placement requirement.

**Option 1:**

- Students may arrange their own field experience if they are a full-time contracted school system employee and are able to complete their field experience in an early childhood special education classroom at their workplace.

**Option 2:**

- Students may request placement in an early childhood special education setting through the field placement office <https://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf>.
- The field placement office will arrange placement for students in a specific school with a specific teacher.

**Documenting the Field Experience (5 points)**

- Students will upload the **Field Experience Placement Approval Form**. In this form, they will provide a statement confirming that they have completed the online “Field Experience Request form” and they will provide information to the instructor about where and how they will complete the field experience (1 point).
- Upon completion of their field experience hours, students will provide documentation of their experience (4 points).
  - If they completed the field experience within their own setting (requires instructor approval), they will upload the **On-the-Job Placement Documentation Form** to Blackboard. This form requires verification from the assistant principal or principal on site.
  - If they completed a field placement other than where they work, they will upload the **Field Experience Documentation Form** to Blackboard. This form requires verification from the mentor teacher on site.

Students will exhibit standards of professionalism, ethical standards, and personal integrity throughout the Field Experience process with the instructor, field experience coordinator, classroom teacher, students, administrators, etc. Students will refer to Blackboard for CEC, DEC, and NAEYC standards in early childhood education and early childhood special education.

### **Field Experience Observation and Reflection (15 points)**

Students will develop a four- to five-page report that discusses the following questions about the early childhood special education classroom setting observed during the field experience:

- 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:
  - How is the room physically arranged?
  - What centers are present?
  - What visual information is present? Is it too little or too much?
- What is the classroom routine?
- How does the classroom provide opportunities to develop cognitive, language, social and emotional, fine motor, gross motor, and adaptive/self-help skills?
- What accommodations or adaptations are used for children with disabilities?
- What would you do similarly and differently as a teacher? Consider the following areas:
  - Classroom routine
  - Environment's arrangement
  - Provision of opportunities to develop skills across all the domains
  - Availability of accommodations/adaptations for children with disabilities
  - Inclusion of culturally and linguistically responsive materials and practice
  - Opportunity for inclusive practices

Students will cite current research from the course textbook, class discussions and handouts, and/or other relevant peer-reviewed sources to support the information they provide. They will use in-text citations and include a reference list.

### **Professional Practice Project (55 points)**

This is Key Assessment 8 Content Knowledge: Professional Practice Project that shows evidence of meeting CEC Standard Elements 6.2, 6.4, 7.2 and NAEYC Standard Element 6a. This assignment must be submitted to Tk20 through Blackboard for a final grade to be recorded. The assessment description and scoring rubric are attached.

- **Other Requirements**

### **Attendance and Participation (25 points)**

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

- Students attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period.
- Students use laptops and personal devices for instructional purposes only.
- 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 (a) participating in all activities, (b) engaging in small- and large-group discussions, (c) completing written work related to the activities, and (d) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.

- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class and online discussions, activities, and written reflections.
- Students display professional dispositions at all times while interacting with the instructor and other students.
- Students complete participation activities across the semester that complement the scheduled course topic. Instructors will periodically collect artifacts from the activities. Students in attendance and who actively engage in the learning experience will receive credit for their efforts. Graded participation activities are not announced and are implemented at the discretion of the instructor.

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

- **Grading**

A+ = 98 – 100   A = 93 – 97   A- = 90 – 92   B+ = 87 – 89   B = 83 – 86   B- = 80 – 82  
 C+ = 77 – 79   C = 73 – 76   C- = 70 – 72   D = 60 – 69   F = < 60

Incomplete (IN): This grade may be given to students who are passing a course but who may be unable to complete scheduled coursework for a cause beyond reasonable control.

All CEHD 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 seeking Virginia initial teaching licensure must earn a B- or better in all licensure coursework.

### **Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>.

## Class Schedule

Date	Topics	Assignments & Readings Due
<p><b>Week 1</b> Oct 14-20</p>	<p>Syllabus and Assignments Review Setting up the Field Experience</p> <p>Standards of professionalism, ethical standards, personal integrity</p> <p>The Early Childhood Special Education Profession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration, co-teaching</li> <li>• Coordination</li> <li>• Inclusive practices and least restrictive environment</li> <li>• Lifelong learning</li> </ul> <p>Early Childhood Special Education: History and Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical perspective</li> <li>• Philosophical and sociological foundations</li> <li>• Legislation and legal aspects</li> </ul> <p><i>Forming a Professional Learning Community (PLC)</i></p>	<p>Deiner, Chapter 1</p> <p>CEC Documents (see Bb for links)</p> <p>DEC Recommended Practices (see Bb for links)</p>
<p><b>Week 2</b> Oct 21-27</p>	<p>Early Childhood Special Education: History and Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitation Act</li> <li>• PL 94-142, PL 99-457</li> <li>• ADA</li> <li>• IDEA</li> <li>• Legislative and judicial mandates</li> </ul> <p>Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues in Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEC standards</li> <li>• DEC recommended practices</li> <li>• NAEYC standards and developmentally appropriate practices</li> </ul> <p><i>PLC: Collaboration</i> <i>PLC: Defining the PLC</i></p>	<p>Additional readings on Bb</p> <p><b>Due to Bb (10/26) – Field Experience Approval Form</b></p>

Date	Topics	Assignments & Readings Due
<p><b>Week 3</b> Oct 28-Nov3</p>	<p>Current Regulations, Procedures, and the Special Education Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation, assessment, and eligibility</li> <li>• IFSP and IEP</li> <li>• Functional behavior assessment (FBA) and behavior intervention plan (BIP)</li> <li>• Disciplinary practices, policies, and procedures</li> <li>• Alternative placements</li> </ul> <p>IFSP and IEP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team, meetings, and content</li> <li>• PLAAFP, summary of child</li> <li>• Functional assessment</li> <li>• Annual goals</li> <li>• Short-term objectives</li> <li>• Services and service delivery options</li> <li>• Least restrictive environment</li> <li>• Transition</li> </ul> <p>Curriculum Standards in ECSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Milestones of Child Development</i></li> <li>• <i>Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards for Four-Year-Olds</i></li> <li>• Other standards</li> </ul> <p><i>PLC: Collaboration</i> <i>PLC: Accessing Resources</i></p>	<p>Deiner, Chapter 5, 6, 7</p> <p><b>Due to Bb (11/2) – Professional Practice Project Part 1: Foundational Knowledge Paper</b></p>

Date	Topics	Assignments & Readings Due
<p><b>Week 4</b> Nov 4-10</p>	<p>Overview of Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education: Service Delivery Pathways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home-based services</li> <li>• Partnering with families</li> <li>• Resource services</li> <li>• Inclusive settings</li> <li>• Self-contained classrooms</li> <li>• Related services</li> <li>• Case management</li> </ul> <p>Assessment in ECSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification</li> <li>• Eligibility</li> <li>• Progress monitoring</li> <li>• Functional assessment</li> <li>• Service delivery</li> <li>• Program development/improvement</li> </ul> <p>Instructional Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service delivery options</li> <li>• Curriculum development</li> <li>• Tiered instruction</li> </ul> <p><i>PLC: Writing the IEP</i> <i>PLC: Sharing Resources</i></p>	<p>Deiner, Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5</p> <p>Additional readings on Bb</p> <p><b>Due to Bb (11/9) – Professional Practice Project Part 2: Accessing Professional Resources</b></p>
<p><b>Week 5</b> Nov 11-17</p>	<p>Children with ADD/ADHD Children with Communication/Language Disorders Children who are English Language Learners Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature and characteristics</li> <li>• Impact on social and emotional development</li> <li>• Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management</li> <li>• Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background</li> <li>• Instructional considerations in ECSE</li> </ul> <p><i>PLC: Presenting the IEP</i></p>	<p>Deiner, Chapter 10, pp. 236-248 Chapter 11, pp. 258-268 Chapter 12, pp. 278-286 Chapter 13, pp. 298-311</p>

Date	Topics	Assignments & Readings Due
<p><b>Week 6</b> Nov 18-24</p>	<p>Children with Specific Learning Disabilities  Children with Intellectual Delays and Disabilities  Children who are Gifted and Talented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature and characteristics</li> <li>• Impact on social and emotional development</li> <li>• Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management</li> <li>• Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background</li> <li>• Instructional considerations in ECSE</li> </ul> <p><i>PLC: Lifelong Learning</i></p>	<p>Deiner,  Chapter 8, pp. 179-195  Chapter 14, pp. 318-326  Chapter 15, pp. 335-344</p> <p><b>Due to Bb (11/23) –  Professional Practice Project  Part 3: Writing an IEP</b></p>
<p><b>Week 7</b> Nov 25-Dec 1</p>	<p>Children with Social, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders  Children with Special Health Care Needs  Children with Orthopedic and Neurological Impairments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature and characteristics</li> <li>• Impact on social and emotional development</li> <li>• Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management</li> <li>• Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background</li> <li>• Instructional considerations in ECSE</li> </ul> <p><i>PLC: Lifelong Learning</i></p>	<p>Deiner,  Chapter 9, pp. 205-221  Chapter 16, pp. 358-382  Chapter 17, pp. 389-405</p> <p><b>Due to Bb (11/30) –  Professional Practice Project  Part 4: Reflecting on  Professional Learning</b></p>

Date	Topics	Assignments & Readings Due
<b>Week 8</b> Dec 2-8	Children with Hearing Impairments Children with Visual Impairments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature and characteristics</li> <li>• Impact on social and emotional development</li> <li>• Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management</li> <li>• Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background</li> <li>• Instructional considerations in ECSE</li> </ul> Working with Paraprofessionals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Managing</li> <li>• Monitoring</li> </ul> <i>PLC: Lifelong Learning</i>	Deiner, Chapter 18, pp. 414-425 Chapter 19, pp. 433-444  Additional readings on Bb  <b>Due to Bb (12/7) – Field Experience Documentation Form</b>  <b>Due to Bb (12/7) – Field Experience Observation and Reflection</b>
Dec 11-18	Exam Period	<b>SUBMIT Professional Practice Project to TK20 through Bb (12/13)</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 <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- 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/students/>.**