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

ECED 691.B01 Policy Perspectives in Early Childhood Education
3 Credits, Summer 2020
6/01/2020 – 7/25/2020, Fully Online

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Faculty

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Prerequisites/Corequisites
Admission to the Early Childhood Education program or approval of course instructor.

University Catalog Course Description
Explores historical and current trends and issues involving legislation and policy in early childhood education, multilingual education, early childhood special education, and multicultural education. Focuses on historical role of social advocacy, development of advocacy skills, and collaboration and consultation with other professionals and staff in early childhood education of services and context of service delivery.

Course Overview
Not applicable

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 June 1, 2020.

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 standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers
To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see
https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems

- 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 will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool.
- 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:
  - o Adobe Acrobat Reader: https://get.adobe.com/reader/
  - o Windows Media Player: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player
  - o Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

- Course Week: Because asynchronous courses do not have a "fixed" meeting day, our week will start on Monday, and finish on Sunday.
  Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- 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 ensure 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 legislation and policy-making process related to culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse young children and their families; Describe the continuum of services and the fiscal and regulatory context of service delivery at the local, state, and national levels; Describe the administrative aspects and legal mandates for early childhood programs.
2. Analyze a current policy issue related to the lives of culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse young children and their families.
3. Describe the historical role of social advocacy and the role of educators in advocating for young children to ensure equity and access in service delivery; Identify characteristics of advocates/leaders and analyze own leadership skills; Plan and implement an appropriate awareness/advocacy/leadership response.
4. Demonstrate the ability to implement actions through collaboration and consultation with professional peers and staff.

Professional Standards (Council for Exceptional Children and National Association for the Education of Young Children**)**
Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards: Not Applicable

Required Texts
American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
Levine, S. (2008). *School lunch politics: The surprising history of America's favorite welfare program*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. ISBN: 9780691146195
Rose, E. (2010). *The promise of preschool: From Head Start to universal pre-kindergarten*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780199926459

Recommended Texts
Anyon, J. (2014). *Radical possibilities: Public policy, urban education, and a new social movement.* New York, NY: Routledge. ISBN: 9780415950992
Chaudry, A., & Morrissey, T. (2017). *Cradle to kindergarten: A new plan to combat inequality.* New York, NY: Russel Sage. ISBN: 9780871545572

Garcia, O., & Kleifgen, J. (2010). *Educating emergent bilinguals: Policies, programs, and practices for English Language Learners*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press. ISBN: 9780807751138

Santa Ana, O. (2004). *Tongue-tied: The lives of multilingual children in public education*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. ISBN: 9780742523838

Zigler, E., Gilliam, W., & Barnett, W. S. (2011). *The pre-k debates: Current controversies and issues*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes. ISBN: 9781598571837

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*	**25**
Reading Log	*July 24*	**15**
Discussion Board Posts	*Ongoing*	**10**
Policy Issue Final Project		**50**
Part 1: Research a Critical Issue in ECE	*June 28*	15
Part 2: Policy Brief	*July 5*	15
Part 3: Group Presentation	*July 12*	10
Part 4: Advocacy Letter	*July 19*	10
TOTAL		**100**

*Assignments are due by 11:59pm ET on the day listed.

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

Reading Logs (15 points)

The readings for this course are divided into three groups. "Required Readings" are listed first in the schedule. These are readings that everyone will complete prior to discussions held on Thursday. "Additional Readings" are posted in the week's course content folder. Students may choose from these which to read (or listen or watch, as some will be videos and/or podcasts). "Self-Selected Readings" will begin halfway through the course. These readings are meant to correspond to the policy issue they choose for their final project, and may be book chapters, research or news articles, podcasts, documentaries, or other forms of high-quality media.

What this means is that reading for this course is going to look different for everyone, and thus, it will be students' responsibility to track their reading across the semester with a reading log (template will be provided) and submit it at the end of the course.

Discussion Board Posts (10 points)

In at least four of the first five weeks of class, students should post a discussion thread based on the week's theme, course readings, or discussion questions posted for that week. In the last week, students will post a discussion thread based on their final project for others to read and respond. This means at least five substantive posts (at least two paragraphs each) are required over the semester. Please note, however, that responding to other students' threads as well as the instructor's posts is also required and counted as class participation points.

Small-Group Policy Issue Final Project (50 total points)
A major portion of the grade for this course involves a team project-based learning assignment that covers a broad policy topic area and a team-identified critical issue related to culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse young children and their families. Within the first week of class, students will select a broad topic to be the focus of a project-based learning assignment designed to learn about the various components of policy.

Over the course of the semester, working individually and as a collaborative team, students will become novice policy analysts in their broad policy topic. Teams will meet online via Blackboard Collaborate or another virtual platform, but not in person.

Teams will be created around a shared interest in a critical policy issue relevant to culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse children and families and will collaborate on a series of assignments leading up to a final group presentation. As the semester progresses, teams can refine or reframe this issue to garner broad understanding and agreement. As a team, students will build a case to support the issue. Each student is responsible for participating in all parts of the project, but individuals may take leads on different parts.

Part 1: Research a Critical Issue in ECE (15 points)
Research a critical issue in ECE and enacted and/or proposed policy/legislation/regulation that addresses this critical issue (approximately 5-7 pages, double-spaced). Part 1 will include the following:
- Summary of issue (10 points)
  - Share own experiences with this critical issue (in the classroom/school where they teach, in their own education) (Each group member shares an experience)
  - Summarize research or reporting that describes the depth and breadth of this problem
- Resource list – Include a reference page and a list of additional reading and/or resources (5 points)

Part 2: Policy Brief (15 points)
Students will write an overview of an existing policy related to their critical issue, and make policy recommendations for better addressing the critical issue (approximately 7 pages). Students will do the following:
- Identify a policy related to this critical issue and the level of government where it was created.
- Include the history of the policy (influential court decisions, changes to the policy), key definitions, challenges, relevant research, etc.
- Write a policy position statement that identifies how they think this policy should be changed (amended, abolished, or new policy)
- As a separate piece, write a strong counter argument for this issue (What do the critics say?). They will locate and appropriately cite relevant research that provides evidence for counter argument (approximately 2 pages, double-spaced).

Part 3: Group Presentation (10 points)
Groups will submit a <u>10- to 15-minute presentation</u> on their critical issue and policy recommendation, to be viewed asynchronously by other classmates. Groups will do the following:
- Present information in the form of choice (a Prezi, Powerpoint with recorded audio, video, or podcast) that will be posted on Blackboard with the group's Policy Brief.
- Use visuals and integration of multi-media (relevant video, graphics, audio), keeping in mind that creativity is encouraged!
- Include an overview of the critical issue, the policy relevant to this issue, a policy position statement, and additional resources.
- Include how members of the group are impacted by this policy in their classroom, school, or own educational experiences.
- Include instructions for how to be an advocate for this issue (Who could you write a letter to? What events could you participate in? What organizations could you support or contact for more information?).
- Create a discussion thread on Bb for your critical issue, and respond to classmates' and professor's questions.

Part 4: Advocacy Letter (5 points) (Individual)
Students will write a convincing sample letter to a decision-maker or letter to the editor supporting the group's argument (approximately 1 page single-spaced, formal letter format). Alternatively, students can write an advocacy letter on a different policy topic covered in the semester that they feel passionate about. Students must identify a person and include his/her position and mailing address to which to send the letter.

Attendance, Participation, & Professional Dispositions (25 points)
Because active participation and engagement are imperative for optimal learning, preparation for and participation in class activities will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
- Students attend to class lectures, resources, and discussion boards posted on Blackboard.
- Students complete readings and prepare for class activities such that they are able 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 by responding to their discussion posts (at least two per week).
- 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, Seventh 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. 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. 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 = 95-100   A- = 90-94   B+ = 87-89   B = 80-86   C = 70-79   F = < 70
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 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.
See https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/.

Class Schedule
This course runs for 8 weeks, from June 1-July 25th, with Monday as the first day of the week. However, instead of meeting twice a week, as the class was originally designed, you will be able to access resources and participate in discussions at your own pace during each week.
- **On Mondays,** I will post the content for each week's themes, including a lecture, slides, and other resources posted on Bb. It is also best that readings are done at the beginning of the week, or Wednesday at the latest.
- **On Thursdays,** there will be a discussion/extended learning day where I will host a live discussion via Webex at 7:30pm (our original class time) to discuss and answer any questions related to the lecture, course readings and assignments. For these discussions,

you may submit questions via Bb on a discussion board thread for each week, or live by joining the meeting (attendance is optional, but participation in the ongoing discussion will be noted). If you are not able to join, a recording will be posted at the end of Thursday, and you'll be able to participate in the thread until the end of the week.

- **On Sundays,** the last day of each week, assignments are due by 11:59pm.

While you will need to find your own weekly rhythm to manage course readings, lectures, discussions, and assignments, generally you will want to follow the schedule below.

Date	Topics and Themes	Readings & Assignments Due (Readings should be done by the middle of the week. Assignments are due on Sundays, the end of each week)
Week 1 June 1-7	**Class Introduction** Why study policy? Why be an advocate? **Policy Focus:** Public Education and Civil Rights in a Democracy **Advocacy Focus:** Your values and positions as an advocate for children and families	**Required Readings:** *Advocating for Young Children: A Preservice Teacher Education Project* **Additional Readings:** Choose three articles posted on Blackboard **Assignments:** Post on our Discussion Board introducing yourself and the issues you wish to advocate for.
Week 2 June 8-14	**Policy Focus:** School Curriculum and Standardized Testing **Advocacy Focus:** Finding information on your position from researchers, authors, and journalists, and reading critically.	**Required Readings:** *Rose, Ch. 1-3* **Additional Readings:** Choose three articles posted on Blackboard **Assignments:** Sign up on our Google Doc for policy topic for group project on Google Doc. **Due to Bb – Discussion Board Posts and/or Replies**
Week 3 June 15-21	**Policy Focus: Preschool Education** Historic Factors Affecting Early Childhood Education Current Policy Context, Challenges, and Opportunities	**Required Readings:** *Rose, Ch. 4-5* **Additional Readings:** Choose three articles posted on Blackboard

	Head Start Targeted vs. Universal Preschool Policy Approaches **Advocacy Focus:** Locating other advocates	**Due to Bb – Discussion Board Posts and/or Replies**
Week 4 June 22-28	**Policy Focus:** School Choice and Charter Schools Accountability, School Choice, Charter Schools, and Public School Debate **Advocacy Focus:** Engaging in Personal Advocacy	**Required Readings:** *Levine, Ch. 1-2* **Additional Readings:** Choose three articles posted on Blackboard, or supplement with self-selected readings **Assignments:** **Discussion Board Posts and/or Replies** **Submit Final Project Part 1 (Group submits 1)**
Week 5 June 29- July 5	**Policy Focus:** The National School Lunch/School Breakfast Programs Health and Wellness National School Lunch and Breakfast Program Block Grant Funding for Child Nutrition Programs Alternative Programming to Address Child Nutrition Crisis in U.S. (Farm-to-School, School Gardens, etc.) **Advocacy Focus:** Engaging in Public Advocacy	**Required Readings:** *Levine, Ch. 3-5* *How School Lunch Became the Latest Political Battleground, McNamee, 2010* **Additional Readings:** Self-selected **Assignments:** **Discussion Board Posts and/or Replies** **Part 2: Policy Brief (Group submits 1)**
Week 6 July 6-12	**Policy Focus: TBD** Preparing for Final Group Presentations in Class **Advocacy Focus:** Engaging in Private Advocacy	**Required Readings:** *none* **Additional Readings:** Self-selected **Assignments:** **Discussion Board Posts and/or Replies** **Part 3: Group Presentation**

Week 7 July 13-19	Policy Focus: TBD + Group projects Final Group Presentations in Class Advocacy Focus: Writing persuasive letters	Required Readings: Additional Readings: Choose three articles posted on Blackboard Assignments: • **Discussion Board Posts and/or Replies** • **Part 4: Advocacy Letter**
Week 8 July 20-25	*No class*	Assignments (due by July 24th) • **Reading Log**

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 https://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://ds.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 or https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard

should be directed to https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/.

- For information on student support resources on campus, see https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus.

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Responsible Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

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