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

ECED 505.600 Introduction to Early Childhood Special Education
3 Credits, Spring 2021
01/25/2021 – 03/13/2021, Thursdays/ 5:00pm – 7:40 pm
Online Hybrid

Faculty
Name: Kim Sopko, Ed.D.
Office Hours: By Appointment
Office Location: Thompson Hall 1100, Fairfax Campus
Office Phone: 703-828-4492
Email Address: ksopko@gmu.edu

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 a synchronous 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 January 25, 2021.

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:
- 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/

Expectations
- Course Week: Our asynchronous course week will begin Monday and finish on Sunday, with synchronous class meetings on Thursdays.
- 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 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. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Author. ISBN: 9781433832178
Gargiulo, R. M., & Kilgo, J. L. (2020). *An introduction to young children with special needs: Birth through age eight*. Washington, DC: Sage. ISBN: 9781544322063

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
Division for Early Childhood. (2014). *DEC Recommended Practices*. Retrieved from
https://divisionearlychildhood.egnyte.com/dl/tgv6GUXhVo
Division for Early Childhood. (2020). *Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators*. Retrieved from
https://d4ab05f7-6074-4ec9-998a-232c5d918236.filesusr.com/ugd/95f212_6e8952cda15f48b3935a7729dddcb50d.pdf.

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

Assignment	Due Date	Points
Attendance and Participation	Mar 13	**25**
Field Experience Documentation		**20**

• Field experience approval form	Jan 31	1
• Field experience documentation	Feb 14	4
• Field experience observation and reflection	Mar 7	15
Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues Paper	Feb 7	**10**
Individualized Education Program (IEP) Writing Group Project	Feb 28	**30**
Reflection on Practice and Lifelong Learning	Mar 13	**15**
Total		**100**

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

Field Experience (5 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 at their workplace.
- Students will need to have access to a preschool early childhood special education classroom setting or a prekindergarten through third-grade general education classroom setting.

Option 2
- Students may request a virtual placement in a preschool special education classroom setting or a prekindergarten through third-grade general education setting through the field placement office https://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf.
- The field placement office will arrange a virtual 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." They also 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).
  - o If students complete the field experience within their own setting, they will upload the *On-the-Job Placement Documentation Form* to Blackboard. This form requires verification from the principal or supervisor on site.
  - o If students attended a field placement other than where they work, they will upload the *Field Experience Documentation Form* to Blackboard. This form requires verification from the mentoring 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.

Part 2: Field Experience Observation (5 points)

Briefly describe the following in a paper, PowerPoint, Prezi, graphic organizer, audio or video file, or alternative format approved by the instructor:

Program observed:

- ECSE, ECCB, PAC, VPI, Head Start, etc.
- Inclusive or Self-Contained
- Ages of students (2-, 3,4-, or 5-year-old, or multi-age span?)
- Number of students
- Number of paraprofessionals / instructional assistants
- Related service personnel providing services within the classroom space
- Class schedule and daily routine

Environment

- Location of class
- Physical arrangement of class
- Learning centers
- Visual information
- Inclusion of culturally and linguistically responsive materials and practice

Learning

- Opportunities to develop cognitive, language, social and emotional, fine motor, gross motor, and adaptive/self-help skills
- Accommodations or adaptations used for children with disabilities
- Inclusive practices
- Behavior management practices

If your program has been operating in a virtual format, describe the following:

- the program
- schedule
- routine
- how you create an inclusive, culturally responsive environment online
- strategies used to develop cognitive, language, social and emotional, fine motor, gross motor, and adaptive/self-help skills
- any accommodations or adaptations used.

Part 3: Field Experience Reflection (10 points)

Students will use information gained through observation of an early childhood special education classroom to complete a reflection about ensuring a child with specific disability can access and participate in the class and effectively interact with adults and peers.

- Choose a disability (preferably one with which you are not familiar)
- Research disabilities and strategies used to support development and learning

- Describe how to support interaction, engagement, and learning for a child with the chosen disability in the classroom observed.
- Highlight changes needed in the classroom program, environment, or learning opportunities due to the characteristics of the chosen disability.

Students will share the information in a manner that is meaningful to them such as a paper, PowerPoint, Prezi, graphic organizer, audio or video file, or alternative format approved by the instructor. Remember to include a reference list with at least three references and cite appropriately using APA format.

Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues Paper (10 points)
The student will explain the historical, philosophical, and sociological foundations of special education by:
- Describing key elements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act,
- Identifying the professional ethical standards and practices that guide the field of special education, and
- Identifying three ways special education law influences their practice in the settings they currently or plan to work. Each of these should align with special education law.

Students will cite information from the course textbook, class discussions and handouts, and/or other relevant peer-reviewed sources to support the information they provide regarding special education legislation.

Students will choose from one of the following options and are welcome to email the instructor proposing an alternative option for assignment submission:
- write a three- to four-page, double-spaced paper, OR
- create a Power Point or Prezi, OR
- create a video or audio, OR
- create a detailed graphic organizer, OR
- submit an alternative option approved in advance by the instructor.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Writing Group Project (30 points)
Students will form IEP teams to write an IEP for a case-study child using the IEP form posted to Blackboard. Students should connect the first week of class to (a) determine their communication system and schedule and (b) complete a roles and responsibilities plan. Roles include (a) scribe (individual who will type), (b) submitter (individual who will submit the assignment and who will share feedback with group once graded), (c) facilitator (individual who will organize meetings and keep track of time). The IEP will include the following (see Gargiulo & Kilgo, 2020, pp. 103-107 and http://idea.ed.gov):
- case-study child's present level of performance that includes a detailed discussion of the child's family, medical history, previous early intervention and/or educational services, family's cultural and/or linguistic background, and the child's strengths and areas of need across the developmental domains,
- measurable annual goals with at least one goal addressing a behavior and/or social

emotional area of need,
- special education and related services,
- projected time frame for services,
- expected participation with children without disabilities and explanations of the extent to which the case study child is not participating with children without disabilities (least restrictive environment statement), and
- accommodations and modifications.

IEP team members will include their names on the front of the IEP form. Each student will submit the IEP through Blackboard.

Reflection on Practice and Lifelong Learning (15 points)
The [Division for Early Childhood's (DEC) Recommended Practices](#) are evidence-based guidance to support the development and learning of young children. Students will draw connections between their field experience observations and the DEC Recommended Practices. Students will
- identify the DEC Recommended Practice strands and specific practices, noting how elements of diversity are embedded
- provide a summary of their observations for at least five of the DEC RP strands (assessment, environment, family, instruction, interaction, teaming and collaboration, or transition) specifically identifying practices from those strands using the appropriate label (E2, INT3, etc.).
- identify three ways they will gain support in applying these practices within the early childhood environment they will work (e.g., peer observation and feedback, self-recording, taking data on practice),
- identify three ways they will continue to learn about DEC Recommended Practices and evidence-based practices (e.g., conferences, webinars, publications), and professional websites. and
- identify three ways they will disseminate recommended practices to colleagues (e.g., communities of practice, feedback).

Students will choose from one of the following options and are welcome to email the instructor proposing an alternative option:
- write a four- to five-page, double-spaced paper, OR
- create a Power Point or Prezi, OR
- create a video or audio, OR
- create a detailed graphic organizer, OR
- submit an alternative option approved in advance by the instructor.

- **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 are to be used 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.
- Students submit attendance and participation self-evaluation.

Written Assignments

All formal written assignments will be evaluated for content <u>and</u> 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. (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. 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 seeking Virginia initial teaching licensure must earn a C or better in all undergraduate licensure coursework.

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to always exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions. See
https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/.

Class Schedule

Date	Topics	Readings
Week 1 Jan 25 – 31 Class meeting Jan 28	Syllabus and Assignments Review Setting up the Field Experience Standards of professionalism, ethical standards, personal integrity Early Childhood Special Education: History and Legislation • Historical perspective • Philosophical and sociological foundations • Legislation and legal aspects Early Childhood Special Education: History and Legislation • Rehabilitation Act • PL 94-142, PL 99-457 • ADA • IDEA • Legislative and judicial mandates Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues in Practice • CEC standards • DEC recommended practices • NAEYC standards and developmentally appropriate practices *Forming IEP Teams*	Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 1, 2 CEC Documents (see Bb for links) DEC Recommended Practices (see Bb for links) **Due to Bb (1/31) – Field Experience Approval Form**
Week 2 Feb 1 – 7 Class meeting Feb 4	The Early Childhood Special Education Profession • Collaboration, co-teaching • Coordination • Inclusive practices and least restrictive environment • Lifelong learning IFSP and IEP • Team, meetings, and content	Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch. 3, 4 Additional readings on Bb **Due to Bb (2/7) – Foundational Knowledge Paper**

	- PLAAFP, summary of child - Functional assessment - Annual goals - Short-term objectives - Services and service delivery options - Least restrictive environment - Transition Current Regulations, Procedures, and the Special Education Process - Evaluation, assessment, and eligibility - IFSP and IEP - Functional behavior assessment (FBA) and behavior intervention plan (BIP) - Disciplinary practices, policies, and procedures - Alternative placements Curriculum Standards in ECSE - *Milestones of Child Development* - *Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards for Four-Year-Olds* - Other standards	
Week 3 Feb 8-14 Class meeting Feb 11	Overview of Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education: Service Delivery Pathways - Home-based services - Partnering with families - Resource services - Inclusive settings - Self-contained classrooms - Related services - Case management Instructional Methods - Service delivery options - Curriculum development - Tiered instruction	Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 4 Additional readings on Bb **Due to Bb (2/14) – Field Experience Documentation**
Week 4 Feb 15-21 Class meeting Feb 18	Assessment in ECSE - Identification - Eligibility - Progress monitoring - Functional assessment - Service delivery	Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 5 Additional readings on Bb

	• Program development/improvement Working with Paraprofessionals • Collaboration • Training • Managing • Monitoring	
Week 5 Feb 22 – 28 Class meeting Feb 25	Children with ADD/ADHD Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Children with Communication/Language Disorders Children who are English Language Learners • Nature and characteristics • Impact on social and emotional development • Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management • Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background • Instructional considerations in ECSE	Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 6, 7, 8 **Due to Bb (2/28) – IEP Group Project**
Week 6 Mar 1-7 Class meeting Mar 4	Children with Social, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders Children with Special Health Care Needs Children with Orthopedic and Neurological Impairments • Nature and characteristics • Impact on social and emotional development • Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management • Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background • Instructional considerations in ECSE	Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 8, 10 **Due to Bb (3/7) – Field Experience Observation and Reflection**
Week 7 Mar 8-13 Class meeting Mar 11	Children with Specific Learning Disabilities Children with Intellectual Delays and Disabilities Children who are Gifted and Talented Children with Hearing Impairments Children with Visual Impairments • Nature and characteristics • Impact on social and emotional development	Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 8, 9 **Due to Bb (3/13) – Reflection on Practice and Lifelong Learning** **Due to Bb (3/13) – Attendance and**

	• Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management • Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background • Instructional considerations in ECSE	**Participation Self-Evaluation**

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/VIA 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.