

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

ECED 505.600 Introduction to Early Childhood Special Education
3 Credits, Fall 2023, Online Asynchronous
8/21/2023-12/13/2023

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 August 21, 2023.

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 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: Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on Monday and finish on Sunday.
- 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 two 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 self-paced. Students are expected to complete modules in order. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus.
- 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

Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Teaching Standards, Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators (EI/ECSE), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators, Virginia Professional Studies Endorsement Competencies, and Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies

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

Virginia Professional Studies Endorsement 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

Required Texts

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Author. ISBN: 9781433832178

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

Gargiulo, R. M., & Kilgo, J. L. (2020). *An introduction to young children with special needs: Birth through age eight*. Sage. ISBN: 9781544322063

Required Online Documents

Council for Exceptional Children Division for Early Childhood. (2020). *Initial practice-based professional preparation standards for early interventionists/early childhood special educators (EI/ECSE) (initial birth through age 8)*. Retrieved from https://d4ab05f7-6074-4ec9-998a-232c5d918236.filesusr.com/ugd/95f212_6e8952cda15f48b3935a7729dddc50d.pdf

Council for Exceptional Children. (2015). *What every special educator must know: Professional ethical and standards*. 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>

Course Performance Evaluation

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

Assignment	Due Date	Points
Attendance and Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-Evaluation	Ongoing Module 4	25
Annotated Bibliography Paper	Module 1	5
Virtual Field Experience Documentation	Module 4	15
Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues Paper	Module 2	10
Individualized Education Program (IEP) Writing Project	Module 3	30
Reflection on Practice and Lifelong Learning	Module 4	15
Total		100

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

Annotated Bibliography Paper (5 points)

Students will work independently to identify five peer-reviewed publications related to at least one of the course objectives. For each publication, students should provide a one paragraph annotation/summary including the purpose, summary, and implications of the study. All publications should be cited using APA formatting guidelines.

Field Experience Documentation (15 points)

This course requires a minimum of 15 hours of field experience. Students will use videos provided by the instructor and obtain placement in an early childhood special education (ECSE) environment which may include classrooms, early intervention programs, and experiences in family homes. As students watch the videos and observe in an ECSE environment, they will complete the field experience documentation charts provided on Blackboard by summarizing, in writing, what they observed in relation to the Division for Early Childhood's (DEC) Recommended Practices. Using the DEC Recommended Practices (RP) as a foundation, students will describe how their observations exemplify specific RPs, strategies for ECSE professionals to implement specific RPs in ECSE environments, and strategies for ECSE professionals to implement specific NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) in ECSE environments.

Upon completion of the field experience hours, students will write a three- to four-page reflection that summarizes how each of the seven topic areas of the DEC Recommended Practices were implemented in the ECSE environment. Students will describe evidence as it relates to specific topic areas. Students may propose an alternative method of reflecting on the field experience and must obtain permission from the instructor prior to completing an alternative method of field experience reflection.

Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues Paper (10 points)

Students will cite information from the course textbook, course materials and handouts, and/or other relevant peer-reviewed sources to support the information they provide regarding special education legislation. The student will explain the historical, philosophical, and sociological foundations of special education by doing the following:

- Describe key elements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, including citations from course materials;
- Identify the professional ethical standards and practices within that guide the field of special education; and
- Identify three ways special education law will influence their practice in the settings they currently or plan to work. Each of these should align with special education law.

Students will choose from one of the following options and are welcome to email the instructor proposing an alternative option:

- write a three- to four-page, double-spaced paper, OR
- create a video, OR
- create a detailed graphic organizer, OR

- submit an alternative option approved in advance by the instructor.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Writing Project (30 points)

Students will write an IEP for a case-study child using the IEP form posted to Blackboard. The IEP will include the following (see Diener, 2013, p. 113 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)
- Accommodations and modifications

Students will include a 1-page narrative describing the IEP meeting. This narrative should include a consideration of:

- Participants at the meeting
- Communication before, during, and after the meeting

Reflection on Practice and Lifelong Learning (15 points)

Upon reviewing the DEC practice videos and field experience, students will reflect on their observations and the Division for Early Childhood's Recommended Practices. Students will:

- Identify the DEC Recommended Practice strands and practices,
- Provide a summary of their observations of each strand including the setting in which it was observed,
- Specify the DEC practice strands and practices that include elements of diversity specific to families, cultures, and early childhood learning environments,
- Provide a summary of their observations of each of these practices including how diversity is embedded,
- Identify three ways they will continue to learn about DEC Recommended Practices (e.g., conferences, webinars, publications),
- 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), 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:

- four- to five-page report, OR

- presentation video with verbal description, OR
- graphic organizer/visual, OR
- alternative option approved in advance by the instructor.

- **Other Requirements**

Attendance and Participation (25 points)

Active participation and engagement are imperative for optimal learning. Therefore, students will prepare for and participate in in-class and online activities. Students will be expected to do the following:

- Attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period for all in-person and online synchronous class sessions.
- Complete all online asynchronous work by the due dates.
- Use laptops and personal devices for instructional purposes only during in-person and online synchronous class sessions.
- Complete readings and prepare for class activities prior to class as evidenced by the ability to discuss, write about, and engage in activities related to the concepts presented and examined in the texts.
- Complete participation activities across the semester that complement the scheduled course topic. *Note: Instructors will periodically collect artifacts from the activities.*
- Support the participation and learning of classmates. 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.
- Show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-person, online synchronous, and online asynchronous discussions, activities, and written reflections.
- Display professional dispositions at all times when interacting with the instructor, classmates, and other professionals.
- Submit an attendance and participation self-evaluation.

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. (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 enrolled in a CEHD Licensure Graduate Certificate program, however, must earn a B- or better in all graduate 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

Date	Topics	Assignments
Module 1	<p>Syllabus and Assignments Review</p> <p>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"> ● Collaboration, co-teaching ● Coordination ● Inclusive practices and least restrictive environment <p>Early Childhood Special Education: History and Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Historical perspective ● Philosophical and sociological foundations ● Legislation and legal aspects <p>Early Childhood Special Education: History and Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rehabilitation Act ● PL 94-142, PL 99-457 ● ADA ● IDEA ● Legislative and judicial mandates <p>Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues in Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CEC standards ● DEC recommended practices ● NAEYC standards and developmentally appropriate practices 	<p>Syllabus</p> <p>Review course website</p> <p>Bb Readings (CEC and DEC Documents)</p> <p>Deiner, Ch 1, 2</p> <p>Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 1, 2, 3</p> <p>Due to Bb (End of Module 1): Annotated Bibliography Paper</p>

<p>Module 2</p>	<p>Overview of Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education: Service Delivery Pathways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Home-based services ● Partnering with families ● Resource services ● Inclusive settings ● Self-contained classrooms ● Related services ● Case management <p>Assessment in ECSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluation, assessment, and eligibility ● Progress monitoring ● Functional assessment ● Service delivery ● Functional behavior assessment (FBA) <p>Curriculum Standards in ECSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Milestones of Child Development</i> ● <i>Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards for Four-Year-Olds</i> ● Other standards <p>Program development/improvement IFSP and IEP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Team, meetings, and content ● PLAAFP, summary of child ● Functional assessment ● Annual goals ● Short-term objectives ● Services and service delivery options ● Least restrictive environment ● Transition <p>Instructional/ Intervention Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Curriculum development ● Tiered instruction ● Embedded learning opportunities ● Universal design for learning ● Accommodations <p>Instructional/Intervention Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Functional behavior assessment and Behavior Intervention Plans 	<p>Bb Readings</p> <p>Deiner, Ch 3, 6, 7, 8</p> <p>Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 4, 5</p> <p>Due to Bb (End of Module 2): Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues Paper</p>
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Date	Topics	Assignments
Module 3	Children with Communication/Language Disorders Children who are English Language Learners Children with Specific Learning Disabilities Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Children with ADD/ADHD Children who are Gifted and Talented Children with Social, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 	Bb Readings Deiner, Ch 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15 Due to BB (End of Module 3): Writing and IEP Project
Module 4	Children with Orthopedic and Neurological Impairments Children with Special Health Care Needs Children with Intellectual Disabilities Children with Hearing Impairments Children with Visual Impairments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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 Working with Professionals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaboration ● Training ● Managing ● Monitoring Lifelong Learning	Bb Readings Deiner, Ch 14, 16, 17, 18, 19 Due to Bb (End of Module 4): Reflection and Practice on Lifelong Learning Due to Bb (End of Module 4): Field Experience Documentation Due to Bb (End of Module 4): Attendance and 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 VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. 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, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, 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 or support measures 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>.