

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

EDSE 790
Internship in Special Education (1-6:1-6:0)
Fall 2009

University Supervisor
Office phone
Office location
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Course Description

Supervised internships that apply university course work to instruction of children and their families in school and community settings.

Internship Experiences

ECSE students enroll in two 3-credit internships. One internship will be in an infant/toddler (ages 0-2) placement, and the other internship will be in a preschool (ages 3-5) setting.

3-credit internship 225 hours 6 – 8 weeks of full-time classroom experience

At least 150 hours of the two internships combined must involve direct teaching. During the internships, interns are required to work the teacher contract hours. Virginia Licensure Regulations for School Personnel (2007) stipulate that interns “must be in classrooms full time.” For detailed information about internship applications, procedures, and policies, go to <http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/intpract/>.

Placements

Interns will be placed by the Field Relations Support Specialist in all teaching internships unless an on-the-job internship has been approved. All teaching placements must be arranged through the Field Relations Support Specialist who works directly with the surrounding school districts to set up appropriate internships. The ECE program at Mason currently has relationships with a variety of internship sites.

Interns will be assigned to work at sites under the mentorship of a cooperating professional (CP) and a university supervisor (US).

Responsibilities

Student internships are regarded as a critical component of teacher education programs. The effectiveness of the internship experience depends upon the degree to which the whole team – **Student Intern, Cooperating Professional, University Supervisor, and Course Instructors** –

fulfill their responsibilities and establish a good working relationship. Open communication is extremely important. The program considers the intern to be “a work in progress.”

Student Interns (interns)

The student internship is a time to focus on the art of teaching and working with diverse young children and their families under the guidance and support of practicing professionals. Student interns must remain flexible in adapting to differences in school cultures, teaching styles, supervisor philosophies, and individual child/family needs. In particular, interns should do the following:

- ✦ Demonstrate initiative, responsibility, and resourcefulness.
- ✦ Become reflective practitioners, learning from other professionals, diverse young children and their families, and their own experiences, including mistakes.
- ✦ Ask for help, advice, feedback – and act on it as appropriate.
- ✦ Write detailed plans for daily activities and review them with the CP.
- ✦ Demonstrate high standards of ethics and professionalism in interactions with colleagues, children, and families.
- ✦ Plan to videotape their teaching and interactions with children several times over the course of the semester in order to engage in an in-depth analysis of their teaching practice.
- ✦ Be responsible for maintaining an Internship Notebook, which includes progress reports, an accurate log of hours, and other documentation requested by CP and US (see section on Internship Notebook for a detailed list of what should be included).
- ✦ Follow the schedule established by the CP and US during the semester.
- ✦ Share all syllabi with CP and plan for how assignments will be completed.
- ✦ Provide internship information to their CPs including the Internship Manual, CP Pay forms, and updated biographical information.

Cooperating Professional (CP)

Cooperating professionals (CPs) work in a variety of educational settings that serve culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse young children and their families. CPs have an important responsibility to be a mentor and instructor on issues specific to their workplace and the needs of the children and families that are served at that site. The intern benefits greatly from being able to learn from courses and apply the knowledge in the field. The program faculty believes that this integration of knowledge and classroom experience results in a better prepared and more confident educator, who is able to work in a multitude of settings and with diverse young children and their families. The CP, with the assistance of the university supervisor (US), must be willing to act as a mentor by providing support and guidance for the intern.

The following is a list of suggestions and responsibilities for the CP:

- ✦ Encourage student interns to find their own teaching style by permitting them to try their own techniques and approaches in order to learn from their successes and/or mistakes.

- ✦ Treat the intern as a colleague to increase the children and parents' level of acceptance. Confer regularly, especially about the rationale for educational decisions.
- ✦ Build confidence by having the intern gradually assume responsibility for guiding behavior and instruction. Be sure the intern is prepared to take full responsibility of the classroom for at least two weeks.
- ✦ Oversee intern's planning, monitor the intern's learning about the children and their families, and offer feedback on both.
- ✦ Review course syllabi for assignments and assist the intern in planning for site-related work.
- ✦ Conduct two formal observations, and write up observation reports to be shared with intern and US.
- ✦ Encourage reflection and self-analysis when giving feedback.
- ✦ Be open and honest about areas needing improvement; provide assistance as appropriate.
- ✦ Discuss any concerns or problems with the US on an on-going basis.
- ✦ Introduce the intern to the full range of your duties, to the available resources at the site, and to all appropriate staff.
- ✦ Complete weekly progress reports with the intern. The original should be given to the intern for inclusion in the notebook.
- ✦ Participate in two 3-way meetings with the intern and the US: one mid-point to discuss progress and one at the end of the internship to evaluate performance. Complete an evaluation profile as a team (Student Intern, Cooperating Professional, and University Supervisor).
- ✦ Provide the intern with a recommendation for employment, if warranted.
- ✦ Complete and return paperwork necessary to be reimbursed.

University Supervisors (US)

The University Supervisor (US) serves as a link between the school and Mason, providing support and guidance to both the student intern and the cooperating professional (CP). University supervisors (US) play a critical role in facilitating communication and in providing feedback, assistance, and evaluation for student interns. The following is a list of responsibilities for the US:

- ✦ Meet with the intern and CP to establish internship expectations, determine schedule, and review site-linked assignments. Clarify any questions or concerns about assignments with university faculty as soon as they come up.
- ✦ Be accessible to the intern and school or agency staff through regular visitations, email, and/or by phone.
- ✦ Encourage open communication and a collaborative approach to supporting and providing feedback to the intern.
- ✦ Provide guidance on policies and procedures for the internship. Check to ensure that they are followed.

- ✦ Conduct at least two formal observations for a two-credit internship and at least three formal observations for a three-credit internship. Follow each observation report with a conference to discuss the written report. Provide a copy of each observation report to the intern to be kept in the Internship Notebook. Include the reports in the intern's folder.
- ✦ Review copies of weekly progress reports and add to intern's folder.
- ✦ Guide development of teaching skills by promoting reflective practice through interactive supervision, reviewing the Internship Notebook, and encouraging self-analysis.
- ✦ Participate in ECE program staff meetings, when possible, and share major concerns or changes in a timely manner.
- ✦ Facilitate the record keeping and documentation necessary for program administration and licensure.
- ✦ Participate in two assessment meetings with the intern and the CP: one at mid-point to discuss progress and one at the end of the internship to evaluate performance. Complete an evaluation profile as a team (Student Intern, Cooperating Professional, and University Supervisor).
- ✦ Coordinate evaluation and grading of the intern's performance.
- ✦ Provide the intern with a recommendation for employment, if warranted.

Evaluation

The US will work with the CP and the intern to evaluate the intern's progress throughout the internship. Evaluation tools will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ✦ Weekly progress reports completed by the intern and CP
- ✦ Formal observation reports (by the CP and the US)
- ✦ Mid-point and final evaluation forms
- ✦ *NCATE 4 Internship* scoring guides

The Supervision Visit

The supervision visit is a critical part of the internship. It is important that the observation be carefully planned by the whole team. There will be no surprise formal observations. The purpose of the visit is not to pass judgment on the intern; rather, its purpose is to promote reflection and to set goals that support change where needed. There should be two scheduled formal observations for a two-credit internship and three scheduled formal observations for a three-credit internship. The mid-point three-way evaluation should take place with the intern, US, and CP about midway through the internship. And the final three-way evaluation should take place at or near the internship.

- ✦ Weekly Progress Reports are done by the intern and CP and should be turned in each time the US visits the site. Completing these forms and providing them to the CP on a **weekly** basis is the responsibility of the intern. The US must turn in completed and signed weekly progress reports when submitting the intern's final grade. These reports must be on record for a final grade to be posted.

- ✦ Copies of CP's observations should be emailed to the US after meeting with the intern but no later than the mid-point and final conferences. CPs may use the ECE observation form or any other observation format with which they are comfortable.
- ✦ Prior to a scheduled observation, the intern must contact the US, either by phone or email at least 24 hours in advance to confirm. Lesson plans should be emailed or faxed prior to the call or included as an attachment to the confirmation email. If emailing, the intern must allow enough time for the US to reply with questions and comments before the day of the visit.
- ✦ On the days the US visits, the intern should schedule a 30- to 45-minute lesson observation and time for a 30-minute post conference. After observing the lesson, the US will meet with the intern for about 30 minutes for a post conference. The CP does not need to be present during the lesson, but should take responsibility for teaching the class during the post conference. Interns will receive a copy of the Observation Report for each observation.
- ✦ Interns are expected to have their reflective journals and their internship notebooks available at each observation. The notebook should include the log of hours to date, daily schedule, detailed lesson plans, and weekly progress reports to date (see detailed list in Internship Notebook section).
- ✦ Prior to the mid-point and final conferences, CPs and interns independently fill out the Internship Evaluation. The evaluations will then be shared and discussed during the conferences.
- ✦ All paperwork must be turned in at the final conference. This includes log sheets with hours totaled and verified by the CP, all weekly progress reports, and CP observations. Failure to do so may result in an "incomplete" grade for the internship.

Internship Notebook

The Internship Notebook contains information related to the internship and documentation that the intern has met aspects of the Council for Exceptional Children (CE) standards. It is the program performance-based assessment for NCATE 4 Internship. It will contain the following types of information:

- ✦ Daily schedule and information about the school and classroom
- ✦ Log of hours
- ✦ Weekly progress reports signed by the intern and the CP, observation reports, and internship evaluations
- ✦ Notes taken by intern when observing
- ✦ Notes taken by intern when co-planning and co-teaching
- ✦ Plans, notes, and artifacts for conducting two-week thematic or project-based unit (preschool)
- ✦ Detailed lesson plans, notes, and artifacts
- ✦ Other relevant information

Lesson Plans

Interns will submit weekly lesson plans to their CP for approval prior to teaching independently. More detailed daily lesson plans using a lesson plan format approved by the US will be filed in the internship notebook and will be readily accessible to the CP and US. Daily lesson plans will be provided to the CP and/or US prior to scheduled observations.

Reflective Journal

Interns will maintain a reflective journal throughout the internship. The journal may be electronic, handwritten, or a combination of both. Interns should make the journal available to the US either electronically before the visit or in a hard copy during visits.

Log of Hours

The Virginia application for teacher licensure requires reporting the amount of time spent in certain activities during the student internship. The Mason state-approved licensure program requires more than the state's minimum requirements. Interns are responsible for maintaining this record as part of the Internship Notebook. Interns should record hours on the Log of Hours sheet each day. At the end of the internship, the log must be verified by the CP and reviewed by the US. It is the intern's responsibility to ensure that the log is current and verified/reviewed.

Interns must document total number of hours spent on site in the following activities:

Direct Teaching – This includes both co-teaching and independent teaching. Co-teaching includes shared responsibility for planning, instruction, assessment, and student supervision. It may involve team teaching an entire class or working with individuals or small groups. Independent teaching includes full responsibility for supervising and teaching an entire class according to plans developed by the intern and approved by the CP. Interns must take full responsibility of the classroom for at least two full weeks during their Infant/Toddler, Preschool, and K-3 internships.

Preparation/Collaboration – This is time spent on site developing lessons, preparing materials, working with specialists and other colleagues, and attending school staff meetings or professional development.

Observation/Assistance – This is time spent on site observing the CP and/or other teachers and specialists working with children. The intern may be called upon to assist with a lesson as a paraprofessional but would have little or no responsibility for planning or supervision of students.

Family & Community Activities – This is time spent on site interacting with families and the community. Activities may include writing or calling families, parent conferences or informal meetings, Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings, and attending site-based gatherings such as curriculum nights or other events.

Interns must also record the age and grade level of the children at their site, as well as the number of children receiving services for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Special Education. Using the Log of Hours form will ensure accuracy in the certification and licensure process.

Hours must be totaled by the Intern, verified and signed by the CP, and reviewed and signed by

the US. During the last visit by the US, the intern must submit all totals, which may require estimating for the final days at the site. The US will transfer these totals onto the form and submit it with the intern's file.

Internship Policies

Attendance

During the internship, student interns are required to work the teacher contract hours. Virginia Licensure Regulations for School Personnel (2007) stipulate that interns "must be in classrooms full time." Interns should maintain the same schedule as the CP, with the contract day as the minimum but not the norm. Interns should consult with ECE faculty to determine whether the Mason schedule or the school system holiday schedule will be followed. This will vary from semester to semester, depending on when scheduled breaks and holidays fall.

Absences

Student interns follow the site policy regarding notification of absences for illness. All other absences must be approved in advance by the CP and principal/director. The US must be notified of all absences within 24 hours. The log of hours should also show any absences. Time missed may need to be made up.

Substituting

Interns *are not* permitted to substitute during their internships.

Professional and Legal Responsibilities

Student interns are legally responsible for exercising "reasonable care" for students' welfare and for complying with federal, state, and local policy regulations. This is best accomplished through careful study of the teacher/employee handbook for the center, agency, or school where the intern is assigned. Special attention should be given to responsibilities and procedures for dealing with suspected child abuse.

Confidentiality of Records

School division and Mason policies regarding student records will be followed. An intern's evaluations may be shared with the CP, US, and responsible administrators until the US submits the intern's folder to the Office of Academic and Student Affairs (OASA). After that time, access will be in accordance with the Privacy Act. No materials will be released by OASA for employment purposes other than for verification of meeting licensure standards. In addition, all records of children and families that interns may have access to during internships, **MUST** be kept confidential.

Records Retention

Contents of cumulative folders will be retained for one year after completion of the internship. After that, the transcript and the Summary Form will be the only available record. Therefore, interns should keep their own copies of evaluations, observations, logs, summaries, and other records.

Professional Recommendations

Most prospective employers expect applicants to submit recommendations in some form from their CP and US. If a negative recommendation is warranted, the intern should be told.

Grading

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) has approved the following grading policy for EDUT internships:

1. The grading scale will be S (Satisfactory), NC (No Credit), or IP (In Progress) in accordance with Mason policy for internships.
2. Degrees of Satisfactory performance by an intern in Early Childhood Education will be documented on the Evaluation Profile by the CP and US.
3. The US shall determine the grade after consultation with CP. The US may also consult with the Program Coordinator and the Director of Teacher Education, especially when the intern may receive a No Credit or In Progress grade.
4. Interns who receive a No Credit grade will not be recommended for teacher licensure unless they repeat all or part of the internship with satisfactory performance. This may require re-enrolling and paying tuition for additional credit hours in a subsequent semester or paying a fee for extended supervision.
5. Interns whose performance cannot be evaluated at the end of the grading period will receive a grade of IP (In Progress). An IP grade shall be changed to Satisfactory or No Credit for interns upon completion of requirements – usually before the beginning of the next semester.
6. In some cases, a grade of No Credit may be accompanied by a recommendation that the student not be allowed to repeat the internship. In such cases, the intern will be counseled out of the licensure program, but not necessarily out of the program.

ECE Assessment System

The ECE program is accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and is a state-approved program. As part of the accreditation requirements, ECE program faculty developed an assessment system that meets the NCATE requirements and provides evidence that teacher candidates have met the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) standards.

One of the required NCATE assessments is NCATE 4 Internship (see below). To meet the requirements, interns must provide evidence in their Internship Notebooks that they have met the criteria for each of the identified standards. Interns will upload selected artifacts from the Internship Notebook at the completion of their internships. The selected artifacts should be representative of what is included in the Internship Notebook and should provide evidence of meeting the identified standards. For the full chart of NCATE Assessments, interns should refer to the Advising Information document, available at <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/earlychildhood/resources/>.

Early Childhood UTEEM Program Assessment System – NCATE 4 Internship

During their Infant/Toddler and/or Preschool internships, interns will upload artifacts that provide evidence of meeting CEC Standards 4, 5, and 9. Scoring guides can be found on TaskStream at www.taskstream.com. For additional information about TaskStream, interns should refer to the Advising Information document.

The following chart provides information on which standards interns must provide evidence of meeting during their various internships. The US will work in consultation with the CP to evaluate whether the intern has met the standard at an acceptable level, is developing toward meeting the standard, or shows no evidence of meeting the standard. The US will review the evidence that interns upload and submit to TaskStream and will complete the online scoring guide.

NCATE Assessment	CEC Standards	Performance-Based Assessment
4 Internship	4 Instructional Strategies 5 Learning Environments & Social Interactions 9 Ethics & Professional Practice	Internship Notebook: For each standard, upload three artifacts from your internships that provide evidence that you met the standard.

CEHD Syllabus Statements of Expectations

All students must abide by the following:

- Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See <http://gse.gmu.edu/facultystaffres/profdisp.htm> for a listing of these dispositions.
- Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#Anchor12> for the full honor code.
- Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/policy/newpolicy/1301gen.html>. Click on responsible Use of Computing Policy at the bottom of the screen.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See <http://www.gmu.edu/student/drc/> or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.