

**George Mason University  
College of Education and Human Development  
Prekindergarten – Third Grade Program**

**EDSE 791 Midpoint Portfolio (1:1:0)  
Spring 2011**

**7:20-10 PM Wednesdays on**

**January 26, Robinson Room A251**

**February 16, Robinson Room A251**

**7:20-10 PM Tuesdays on**

**March 8, Robinson Room A350**

**April 12, Robinson Room A350**

**May 3, Robinson Room A350**

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<https://courses.gmu.edu>

### **Course Description**

Opportunity for students to develop their portfolio. Serves as the vehicle to assess whether they are meeting the standards of their professional organization, the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC).

Note: EPK3 students will meet the standards for the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

### **Learner Outcomes**

- Students will discuss issues around teacher preparation portfolio development.
- Students will provide evidence of meeting professional standards.
- Students will articulate the principles that guide and will guide their practice, reflect on the program experiences that contributed to the development of these principles, and provide evidence that supports each of the guiding principles.
- Students will present this portfolio to program faculty.

### **Nature of Course Delivery**

This course will include in-class discussions, peer feedback, and the use of online tools, such as TaskStream, Blackboard, and e-mail.

## College of Education and Human Development Expectations and Resources

### Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University 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 must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### Campus Resources

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

Note: To determine whether the campus is closed due to inclement weather, call 703-993-1000 or go to [www.gmu.edu](http://www.gmu.edu).

## Course Requirements

### General Requirements

1. The completion of all readings assigned for the course is assumed. Because the class will be structured around discussion and small group activities, it is imperative that students keep up with the readings and participate in class.
2. Class attendance is important. If, due to an emergency, students will not be in class, they must call the instructor and leave a message.
3. The university requires that all pagers and cell phones be turned off before class begins. All in-class usage of electronic devices, which includes telephones, laptops, etc., must have approval of course instructor. Laptops and other electronic devices are to be used for educational and

learning purposes only and should not be used during class time to check email, surf the web, or communicate with people outside of the class unless part of the class activity.

4. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time (the beginning of the class in which they are due). However, it is recognized that students occasionally have serious problems that prevent work completion. If such a dilemma arises, students should speak to the instructor in a timely fashion.

### **Attendance**

Attendance in class is important to students' learning; therefore, students are expected to make every effort to attend class sessions. Absences, tardiness, and leaving early may negatively affect course grades. The following policy is from the university course catalog:

Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

### **Written Assignments**

All written assignments prepared outside of class will be evaluated for content and presentation. The American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their own ability to catch errors, they should have another person proofread their work. When in doubt, they should check the APA manual. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the Mason library web guide at <http://library.gmu.edu/resources/edu/>. Students may consult the Writing Center for additional writing support.

Students will

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.

### **Grading**

Students are graded Satisfactory, In Progress, or No Credit.

### **Grading Policy**

All CEHD undergraduate and graduate 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.

### Submission of Performance-Based Assessment

This course has a Program Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) that **MUST** be uploaded and submitted to Task Stream for evaluation when the assignment is due. Only PBAs posted to TaskStream will be graded. This means that NO final grades will be posted until all materials are on Task Stream.

### Specific Course Assignments

Assignments	Due Dates
Attendance & Participation	Ongoing
Introductory Personal Narrative	February 16
Revised Introductory Personal Narrative	March 8
Draft of Beliefs and Values Graphic Organizer	April 12
Program Critique	May 3

### Attendance and Participation (15 points)

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

- Students attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period.
- Students complete readings and prepare for class activities prior to class as is 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 learning experiences as is evidenced by (1) participating in all activities, (2) engaging in small and large group discussions, (3) completing written work related to the activities, and (4) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.
- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class and online discussions, activities, and written reflections.

### Relationship of Course to Program Goals and Professional Organizations

EDSE 791 is part of the Early Childhood Education Program for teacher licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia in Early Childhood Education (EPK3). The program aligns with the standards for teacher licensure established by NAEYC, the major early childhood education professional organization in the United States (see the NAEYC standards on the following website: [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)) and standards for teacher licensure established by CEC, the major special education professional organization in the United States (see CEC standards on the following website: <http://www.cec.sped.org>). This course addresses NAEYC standards, CEC standards and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) assessments.

## **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards**

1. Promoting Child Development and Learning
2. Building Family and Community Relationships
3. Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families
4. Teaching and Learning
5. Becoming a Professional

## **Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Standards**

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Foundations                                   | 6. Language                          |
| 2. Development and Characteristics of Learners   | 7. Instructional Planning            |
| 3. Individual Learning Differences               | 8. Assessment                        |
| 4. Instructional Strategies                      | 9. Professional and Ethical Practice |
| 5. Learning Environments and Social Interactions | 10. Collaboration                    |

## **Required Textbook**

Jones, M. & Shelton, M. (2006). *Developing Your Portfolio: Enhancing Your Learning and Showing Your Stuff*. New York: Routledge.

## **Midpoint Portfolio Requirement**

### ***NCATE Performance-Based Assessment System***

Teacher candidates will upload the required NCATE performance-based assessments (PBAs) to the *Directed Response Folio* on TaskStream. At the completion of the midpoint portfolio, they will have all PBAs from courses taken to date uploaded to TaskStream. Candidates will continue to upload PBAs as they complete PBAs for their courses. At final portfolio, they will have all required PBAs uploaded to the *Directed Response Folio* on TaskStream.

In addition to uploading PBAs to the *DRF*, teacher candidates will write an introductory narrative that will also be uploaded to the *DRF*. They will also create a *Resource Folio* and will write a *Program Critique*.

### ***Resource Folio***

Candidates will create a *Resource Folio* to organize their work from their courses into folders. Candidates are required to upload all coursework from courses that have been taken at Mason at the time of the midpoint portfolio. They are encouraged to add to the *Resource Folio* between the midpoint portfolio and the final portfolio. The *Resource Folio* will provide candidates with a way to store coursework that can later be selected as artifacts to support the Guiding Principles narrative they will write for their final portfolio.

***Introductory Narrative***

Candidates will write a reflection on why they decided to enter the program and what their goals are for when they complete the program. The *Introductory Narrative* will be uploaded to the *DRF* on TaskStream during the midpoint portfolio course and will be approximately 1 to 2 double-spaced pages in length.

***Beliefs and Values Exploration***

Candidates will begin to examine their evolving beliefs and values specific to teaching and learning through close examination of their personal experiences, observations and knowledge about education. Candidates will create a **graphic organizer** illustrating beliefs and values related to teaching and learning that they have encountered through their coursework, observations, resources, and class discussions that resonate with them. Candidates will upload their **Belief and Value Graphic Organizer** to the DRF on TaskStream during the midpoint portfolio course.

***Midpoint Portfolio Review***

Candidates e-mail the instructor when all PBAs have been uploaded to the *Directed Response Folio* on TaskStream. They will participate in a final class discussion on portfolio development.

***Program Critique***

Candidates will write a single-spaced critique of the program based on the information contained in the portfolio and the candidates' personal experiences. Candidates will discuss the components of the Mason program they found helpful and would suggest as experiences for other candidates in their specialty area. They will also suggest changes they view are needed in the Mason program. This will be anonymous and will be submitted separately from the portfolio. It will **not** be uploaded to TaskStream.

**Class Schedule**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>CLASS TOPICS</b>	<b>READINGS &amp; ASSIGNMENTS DUE</b>
January 26	Portfolio overview	Formulating ideas for writing an Introductory Personal Narrative
February 16	Portfolio Development Issues Performance Standards and Accountability Electronic Portfolios Phase I – Collecting and Selecting for Resource Folio Peer feedback on personal statement topics	Read Jones & Shelton Chapters 1-3 Bring a draft of the <b>Introductory Personal Narrative</b> to share with pees

March 8	Phase II – Evidence Connecting Standards to Portfolio Documentation Creating a Resource Folio on TaskStream	Read Jones & Shelton: Chapters 4-6 Bring copies of <b>revised Introductory Personal Narrative</b> Bring <b>beliefs/values topics</b> to discuss
April 12	Phase III -- Examples NCATE Assessment System Uploading PBAs to the Directed Response Folio on TaskStream	Read Jones & Shelton Chapter 7 Bring a draft of your <b>Beliefs and Values Graphic Organizer</b> to discuss
May 3	Wrap Up Discussion and Individual Sharing	Students will meet individually with instructor to review midpoint portfolio requirements on TaskStream  <b>Submit program critique</b>

## National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Initial Licensure Standards

### 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning

Candidates use their understanding of young children's characteristics and needs, and of multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning, to create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for all children.

### 2: Building Family and Community Relationships

Candidates know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children's families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families in their children's development and learning.

### 3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families

Candidates know about and understand the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment. They know about and use systematic observations, documentation, and other effective assessment strategies in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to positively influence children's development and learning.

#### **4: Teaching and Learning**

Candidates integrate their understanding of and relationships with children and families; their understanding of developmentally effective approaches to teaching and learning; and their knowledge of academic disciplines, to design, implement, and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for all young children.

#### **5: Becoming a Professional**

Candidates identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies.

### **CEC Initial Licensure Standards**

#### **1: Foundations**

Special educators understand the field as an evolving and changing discipline based on philosophies, evidence-based principles and theories, relevant laws and policies, diverse and historical points of view, and human issues that have historically influenced and continue to influence the field of special education and the education and treatment of individuals with exceptional needs both in school and society. Special educators understand how these influence professional practice, including assessment, instructional planning, implementation, and program evaluation. Special educators understand how issues of human diversity can impact families, cultures, and schools, and how these complex human issues can interact with issues in the delivery of special education services. They understand the relationships of organizations of special education to the organizations and functions of schools, school systems, and other agencies. Special educators use this knowledge as a ground upon which to construct their own personal understandings and philosophies of special education. Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the program is preparing candidates.

#### **□ 2: Development and Characteristics of Learners**

Special educators know and demonstrate respect for their students first as unique human beings. Special educators understand the similarities and differences in human development and the characteristics between and among individuals with and without exceptional learning needs (ELN). Moreover, special educators understand how exceptional conditions can interact with the domains of human development and they use this knowledge to respond to the varying abilities and behaviors of individual's with ELN. Special educators understand how the experiences of individuals with ELN can impact families, as well as the individual's ability to learn, interact socially, and live as fulfilled contributing members of the community. Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core

Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

### □ 3: **Individual Learning Differences**

Special educators understand the effects that an exceptional condition can have on an individual's learning in school and throughout life. Special educators understand that the beliefs, traditions, and values across and within cultures can affect relationships among and between students, their families, and the school community. Moreover, special educators are active and resourceful in seeking to understand how primary language, culture, and familial backgrounds interact with the individual's exceptional condition to impact the individual's academic and social abilities, attitudes, values, interests, and career options. The understanding of these learning differences and their possible interactions provide the foundation upon which special educators individualize instruction to provide meaningful and challenging learning for individuals with ELN. Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the program is preparing candidates.

### □ 4: **Instructional Strategies**

Special educators possess a repertoire of evidence-based instructional strategies to individualize instruction for individuals with ELN. Special educators select, adapt, and use these instructional strategies to promote challenging learning results in general and special curricula and to appropriately modify learning environments for individuals with ELN. They enhance the learning of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills of individuals with ELN, and increase their self-awareness, self-management, self-control, self-reliance, and self-esteem. Moreover, special educators emphasize the development, maintenance, and generalization of knowledge and skills across environments, settings, and the lifespan. Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the program is preparing candidates.

### □ 5: **Learning Environments and Social Interactions**

Special educators actively create learning environments for individuals with ELN that foster cultural understanding, safety and emotional well being, positive social interactions, and active engagement of individuals with ELN. In addition, special educators foster environments in which diversity is valued and individuals are taught to live harmoniously and productively in a culturally diverse world. Special educators shape environments to encourage the independence, self-motivation, self-direction, personal empowerment, and self-advocacy of individuals with ELN. Special educators help their general education colleagues integrate individuals with ELN in regular environments and engage them in meaningful learning activities and interactions. Special educators use direct motivational and instructional interventions with individuals with ELN to teach them to respond effectively to current expectations. When necessary, special educators can safely intervene with individuals with ELN in crisis. Special educators coordinate all these efforts and provide guidance and direction to paraeducators and others, such as classroom volunteers and tutors. Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

## □ 6: Language

Special educators understand typical and atypical language development and the ways in which exceptional conditions can interact with an individual's experience with and use of language. Special educators use individualized strategies to enhance language development and teach communication skills to individuals with ELN. Special educators are familiar with augmentative, alternative, and assistive technologies to support and enhance communication of individuals with exceptional needs. Special educators match their communication methods to an individual's language proficiency and cultural and linguistic differences. Special educators provide effective language models, and they use communication strategies and resources to facilitate understanding of subject matter for individuals with ELN whose primary language is not English. Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of language for and with individuals with ELN through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

## □ 7: Instructional Planning

Individualized decision-making and instruction is at the center of special education practice. Special educators develop long-range individualized instructional plans anchored in both general and special curricula. In addition, special educators systematically translate these individualized plans into carefully selected shorter-range goals and objectives taking into consideration an individual's abilities and needs, the learning environment, and a myriad of cultural and linguistic factors. Individualized instructional plans emphasize explicit modeling and efficient guided practice to assure acquisition and fluency through maintenance and generalization. Understanding of these factors as well as the implications of an individual's exceptional condition, guides the special educator's selection, adaptation, and creation of materials, and the use of powerful instructional variables. Instructional plans are modified based on ongoing analysis of the individual's learning progress. Moreover, special educators facilitate this instructional planning in a collaborative context including the individuals with exceptionalities, families, professional colleagues, and personnel from other agencies as appropriate. Special educators also develop a variety of individualized transition plans, such as transitions from preschool to elementary school and from secondary settings to a variety of postsecondary work and learning contexts. Special educators are comfortable using appropriate technologies to support instructional planning and individualized instruction. Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

## □ 8: Assessment

Assessment is integral to the decision-making and teaching of special educators and special educators use multiple types of assessment information for a variety of educational decisions. Special educators use the results of assessments to help identify exceptional learning needs and to develop and implement individualized instructional programs, as well as to adjust instruction in response to ongoing learning progress. Special educators understand the legal policies and ethical principles of measurement and assessment related to referral, eligibility, program planning, instruction, and placement for individuals with ELN, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Special educators understand measurement theory and practices

for addressing issues of validity, reliability, norms, bias, and interpretation of assessment results. In addition, special educators understand the appropriate use and limitations of various types of assessments. Special educators collaborate with families and other colleagues to assure non-biased, meaningful assessments and decision-making. Special educators conduct formal and informal assessments of behavior, learning, achievement, and environments to design learning experiences that support the growth and development of individuals with ELN. Special educators use assessment information to identify supports and adaptations required for individuals with ELN to access the general curriculum and to participate in school, system, and statewide assessment programs. Special educators regularly monitor the progress of individuals with ELN in general and special curricula. Special educators use appropriate technologies to support their assessments. Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

### □ **9: Professional and Ethical Practice**

Special educators are guided by the profession's ethical and professional practice standards. Special educators practice in multiple roles and complex situations across wide age and developmental ranges. Their practice requires ongoing attention to legal matters along with serious professional and ethical considerations. Special educators engage in professional activities and participate in learning communities that benefit individuals with ELN, their families, colleagues, and their own professional growth. Special educators view themselves as lifelong learners and regularly reflect on and adjust their practice. Special educators are aware of how their own and others attitudes, behaviors, and ways of communicating can influence their practice. Special educators understand that culture and language can interact with exceptionalities, and are sensitive to the many aspects of diversity of individuals with ELN and their families. Special educators actively plan and engage in activities that foster their professional growth and keep them current with evidence-based best practices. Special educators know their own limits of practice and practice within them. Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.

### □ **10: Collaboration**

Special educators routinely and effectively collaborate with families, other educators, related service providers, and personnel from community agencies in culturally responsive ways. This collaboration assures that the needs of individuals with ELN are addressed throughout schooling. Moreover, special educators embrace their special role as advocate for individuals with ELN. Special educators promote and advocate the learning and well being of individuals with ELN across a wide range of settings and a range of different learning experiences. Special educators are viewed as specialists by a myriad of people who actively seek their collaboration to effectively include and teach individuals with ELN. Special educators are a resource to their colleagues in understanding the laws and policies relevant to Individuals with ELN. Special educators use collaboration to facilitate the successful transitions of individuals with ELN across settings and services. Beginning special educators demonstrate their mastery of this standard through the mastery of the CEC Common Core Knowledge and Skills, as well as through the appropriate CEC Specialty Area(s) Knowledge and Skills for which the preparation program is preparing candidates.