



College of Education and Human Development

Early Childhood Education Program

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<https://gse.gmu.edu/programs/earlychildhood/>

ECED 804.001 Family Research and Practice in Early Childhood Education (3:3:0)

Spring 2015

Mondays, 4:30 – 7:10 pm

Thompson Hall L018

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Course Description

Explores the relationship between families and professionals in providing appropriate early care and education, birth through grade 3, including children with special education needs and those from culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse backgrounds. Includes in-depth study, analysis, and discussions of original research as well as syntheses of findings.

Prerequisite(s): Admission to the PhD in Education program or post-master's status and approval of course instructor

Nature of Course Delivery

This course utilizes a seminar format. Seminars will include instructor- and student-led discussions, reflective activities, and student presentations that will take place during class meetings as well as online. Students are expected to complete all class readings prior to each session so as to engage in active dialogue and sharing of ideas. Learning activities will also include independent research and study.

Learner Outcomes

At the completion of this course, students will be able to do the following:

1. Show knowledge of family systems, family functioning, family coping and adaptation, and infant mental health.
2. Show knowledge of current research and limitations of that research related to families from diverse cultural communities.
3. Show knowledge of effective practices to promote family-professional collaboration.
4. Demonstrate the ability to synthesize and critically analyze current family literature from the perspective of diverse cultural communities.
5. Demonstrate the ability to integrate theory, research and recommended practices in developing an original project related to better understanding families of culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse young children.

Professional Standards

This seminar is for students in a number of disciplinary concentrations such as early childhood education, early childhood special education, educational psychology, literacy, multicultural/multilingual education, and special education. Study includes the age range of birth through 8 years old. Research is examined across areas of early childhood education, early childhood special education, bilingual/ESL education, and multicultural education and international perspectives on early childhood education.

Required Texts

Chaudry, A. (2004). *Putting children first: How low-wage working mothers manage child care*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Lareau, A. (2003). *Unequal childhoods: Class, race, and family life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Required Articles

Additional readings listed in course schedule and for student-led presentations will be posted in Blackboard.

George Mason University Policies and Resources for Students

- Academic integrity (honor code, plagiarism) – Students must adhere to guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>].
- Mason Email – 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, division, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- Counseling and Psychological Services – 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/>].
- Office of Disability Services – 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 <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- The Writing Center (Optional Resource) – 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/>].

- University Libraries (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Libraries provide numerous services, research tools, and help with using the library resources [See <http://library.gmu.edu/>].

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

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.

Collaboration

Collaboration is an important human activity that involves shared responsibility in promoting healthy, productive lives, and educational success. We commit ourselves to work toward these goals in genuine partnerships with individuals, families, community agencies, schools, businesses, foundations, and other groups at the local, regional, national, and international levels.

Ethical Leadership

In all professions represented by the college, leadership is an essential component denoting ability and willingness to help lead professional practice to higher levels. We commit ourselves to practice ethical leadership through deliberate and systematic attention to the ethical principles that guide all leaders in a moral society.

Innovation

We have a history of creating dynamic, innovative programs, and we are dedicated to continue creating innovative approaches in all areas of our work. We commit ourselves to seeking new ways to advance knowledge, solve problems, improve our professional practice, and expand on our successes.

Research-Based Practice

The best practice in any discipline is based upon sound research and professional judgment. We commit ourselves to basing our instruction, scholarship, and policy recommendations on well-established principles that, wherever possible, emerge from research and reflection on its implications for professional practice.

Social Justice

Social justice embodies essential principles of equity and access to all opportunities in society, in accordance with democratic principles and respect for all persons and points of view. We commit ourselves to promoting equity, opportunity, and social justice through the college's operations and its missions related to teaching, research, and service.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.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 and on-line.
2. Attendance in class and/or online is important to students' learning; therefore, students are expected to make every effort to attend class sessions and/or complete online tasks within the designated timeframe. Absences, tardiness, leaving early, and not completing online tasks in the designated timeframe may negatively affect course grades. If, due to an emergency, students will not be in class, they must call the instructor and leave a message or send an email before class. 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.

3. In line with Mason's policy that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious holidays, students shall be given an opportunity to make up, within a reasonable time, any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of any intended absences for religious observations in advance of the class that will be missed. Notice should be provided in writing as soon as possible.
4. During face-to-face and live online meetings, cell phones, pagers, and other communicative devices are not allowed in this class. Students must keep them stowed away and out of sight. Laptops or tablets (e.g., iPads) may be permitted for the purpose of taking notes only. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g. gaming, email, chat, etc.) will result in a significant reduction in the participation grade.
5. It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time. 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 prior to the assignment due date (when possible). If the student does not communicate with the instructor, a late penalty will be applied.
6. Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? Essentially this: when responsible for a task, students will perform that task. When students rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, they will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind), students will ask for guidance and clarification.

Written Assignments

All formal written assignments 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 at <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/content.php?pid=39979> 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.

Grading Criteria

A = 95-100 A- = 90-94 B+ = 87-89 B = 83-86
 B- = 80-82 C = 70-79 F = < 70

Grading Policy

In addition to meeting all university and College grade requirements, Ph.D. in Education students must also meet the following requirements:

1. Ph.D. in Education students must have at least a B average in all courses below the 900-level on their approved programs. Any C grade must be offset by an A grade.
2. No more than three credits of C in a student's Ph.D. in Education Program of study may be counted toward degree requirements. Students may not accumulate more than a total of two C grades in their programs of study. Students who do so are dismissed from the program. All components of the program are important because they are interrelated. All require serious commitment and study and a level of performance appropriate to doctoral study. This requirement seeks to ensure such performance.
3. Courses in which students receive less than a C final grade must be repeated and passed with a C or better to meet program graduation requirements.
4. In addition to the policies stated in 1, 2, and 3 above, University policy states a graduate student is dismissed upon accumulating either an F in two courses, or upon accumulating nine hours of unsatisfactory grades in graduate level courses.

Specific Course Assignments

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Attendance and Participation	ongoing	15
Weekly Questions and Reflections	ongoing	10
Research/ Policy Brief	3/23/15	15
Research Paper- Annotated Bibliography	3/30/15	15
Student-Facilitated Seminar	varied	20
Research Proposal	5/8/15	25
TOTAL		100

Specific Course Assignments

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 post at least two questions related to the readings on Blackboard before class.
- 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 and online learning experiences as is evidenced by (1) participating in all activities, (2) engaging in small and large group discussions, (3) using laptops and other electronic devices only to support discussion and learning and not for non-academic uses during class time, (4) completing written work related to the activities, and (5) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.
- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class and online discussions, activities, and written reflections.

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

Weekly Questions and Reflections (10 points)

Students will post two questions on the Bb course blog prior to each class. These questions will come from their engagement with the course readings and will contribute to stimulating and

thought-provoking class discussions. After each class, students will post weekly reflections related to the readings, discussion, and activities. **DUE: questions, Sunday evening; reflections, Tuesday evening**

Research & Policy Brief (5 pages) (15 points)

Write a short research and policy brief based on the topic the student is investigating for her final paper or a topic of her choice related to families, communities and schools. This brief should include: Background (what is the problem?), Research Findings* (summarize and integrate at least 3-5 peer-review journal articles), and Policy Implications. Students should include on the final page of the brief a list of 3 places she plans to submit the brief. Examples of briefs and ideas for submission sites will be provided upon request. **Students may create a research brief based on findings from her own individual research. Students should work with the instructor to complete this type of brief.* **DUE: 3/23/15**

Annotated Bibliography (15 points)

Students will develop an annotated bibliography that includes at least 2 books and/or book chapters, 10 research articles, and 3 other types of resources (e.g., essays, white papers, videos, websites, etc.) on a family topic of interest. Entries will include the following:

- 5- to 10-sentence annotation about each source including:
 - reflective note (e.g., connections, implications, questions that arise, etc.)
 - accurate bibliographic information presented in APA style
 - a summary of the argument or thesis, the results, and the conclusions
 - an analysis of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the article

Students will submit their annotated bibliography on Blackboard discussion board. They will then read their classmates' annotated bibliographies and respond on Blackboard. **DUE: 3/30/15**

Student-led Seminar on Diverse Families in Early Childhood (20 points)

Students will facilitate a 30-35 minute seminar on a topic related to families and early childhood diverse young learners. To prepare for the seminar, students will read extensively. As they read, they will prepare an annotated bibliography (see above assignment) that will include at least 2 books and/or book chapters, 10 research articles, and 3 other types of resources (e.g., essays, white papers, videos, websites, etc.). The bibliography will include references in APA style, a 5- to 10-sentence annotation about each source, and a reflective note (e.g., connections, implications, questions that arise, etc.). During the seminar development process, students will provide face-to-face and online help and feedback to classmates.

Students will select two to three research articles for their classmates to read prior to the seminar and will email information on how to access the articles at least two weeks before the seminar. On the evening of the seminar, students will introduce the topic, present relevant background information using audio and/or visual aids, facilitate the discussion, and close the discussion with a summary and some future questions and thoughts to explore. They will provide handouts to support the learning and discussion. They will post their annotated bibliography on Blackboard for their classmates' reference. In addition, students will post feedback for each facilitator on Blackboard after the seminar and prior to the next class session. **DUE: 4/13, 4/27, 5/4**

Research Paper: Literature Review and Short Proposal (25 points)

The student will conduct a review of the literature on a topic of their choice related to the connections between families and early childhood programs. This paper should critically review the literature from the perspective of culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse children and families. It should link to course themes, and it should discuss limitations as well as implications. Specifically, this paper should cover the following: (1) critical review of the literature (student needs to include 12-15 empirical articles), which includes theoretical approach, the major findings and whether there are inconsistencies, methodological, design, and measurement issues, and an integrative statement regarding findings (10-12 pages) (2) issues not addressed by the research to date: what do we know, what are the gaps in the literature (3 pages) (3) implications for future research, policy, and practice (3 pages); and, (4) a short proposal (5 pages) of a possible future study to begin to fill these gaps. **DUE: 5/8/15 (Fri.)**

Course Schedule

Week of:	Topic	Readings (* optional)
1/26/15	Introduction to the Course: Lenses for Understanding Contemporary Families	1. Women's Rights and Economic Change (2004) - <i>Intersectionality- A tool for gender and economic justice</i> 2. Hill Collins (1998)- <i>It's all in the family: Intersections of gender, race, and nation</i> 3. Ingoldsby, Smith, & Miller (2004) <i>Family Systems</i> (Ch. 7) 4. White & Klein (2002)- <i>Family Systems</i> (Ch. 5) (Read 1, 2, AND 3 or 4)
UNIT 1: Contemporary Families: Demographics & Experiences		
2/2/15	Defining Families in the Context of Changing Families	1. Stewart (2007) - <i>Who is kin?</i> 2. Dreby & Adkins (2012)- <i>The of family ties: How US Migration shapes children's ideas of family</i> 3. Weigel (2008) - <i>The concept of family</i> 4. Peters (1999)- <i>Redefining Western families</i> 5. Casper & Bianchi (2002) - Ch. 1 6. Webb (2005) - pp. 101-102 (Read 1 or 2 AND 3 or 4 AND 5 or 6)
2/9/15	Diverse Family Forms	1. Lareau, Ch. 1-2 2. Anderson (2003) - <i>The diversity, strength, and challenges of single-parent households</i> 3. Gates (2008) - <i>Diversity among same sex couples and their children</i> 4. Green (2009)- <i>Single custodial fathers and mothers meeting the challenge</i> (Read 1 AND 2, 3, or 4)
2/16/15	Global Families	1. Lareau, Ch. 3-4 2. Vesely, Goodman, & Scurlock (2014)- <i>Turning points and transitions: The role of families in women's immigration experiences</i> 3. Riojas-Cortez (2011)- <i>Culture, play, and family- Supporting children on the autism spectrum</i> 4. Fuligni & Fuligni (2007) - <i>Immigrant families and the educational development of their children</i> (Read 1, 2, AND 3 or 4)
2/23/15	Low-income Families	1. Lareau, Ch. 5 2. Chaudry, Ch. 1 3. Roy, Tubbs, & Burton (2004) - 'Don't have no time' - <i>Daily rhythms and the organization of time for low-income families</i> 4. Small (2006) - <i>Neighborhood institutions as resource brokers: Child care centers, interorganizational ties and resource access among the poor</i> 5. Parish et al (2008)- <i>Material hardship in US families raising children with disabilities</i> (Read 1, 2, and 3, 4, or 5) Preliminary paper topic DUE
3/2/15	Parenting, Mothering, and	1. Lareau, Part 2 2. Bianchi, Robinson, & Milkie (2006) - <i>Parenting: How has it</i>

	Fathering	<p><i>changed?</i></p> <p>3. Roy (2004) - <i>Three-block Fathers: Spatial perceptions and kin-work in low-income African American neighborhoods</i></p> <p>4. Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila (1997) - <i>'I'm here, but I'm here': The meanings of Latina transnational motherhood</i></p> <p>5. Ellingsen et al (2014)- <i>Resilient parenting of preschool children at developmental risk</i></p> <p>(Read 1, 2, and 3, 4, or 5)</p>
SPRING BREAK (3/9-3/13)		
3/16/15	Families with Children with DisAbilities	<p>1. Lareau, Ch. 6-7</p> <p>2. Roper et al. (2014)- <i>Caregiver burden and sibling relationships in families raising children with disabilities and typically developing children</i></p> <p>3. Hartley et al. (2014)- <i>Division of labor in families of children and adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder</i></p> <p>(Read 1 AND 2 or 3)</p>
UNIT 2: Frameworks, Theories & Methods for Understanding Contemporary Families		
3/23/15	Ecological Theories	<p>1. Chaudry, Ch. 2, 3</p> <p>2. Garcia Coll et al. (1996)- <i>An Integrative Model for the Study of Developmental Competencies in Minority Children</i></p> <p>3. Weisner (2002)- <i>An Ecocultural understanding of children's developmental pathways</i></p> <p>4. Super & Harkness (1986)- <i>The developmental niche</i></p> <p>(Read 1 AND 2,3, or 4)</p> <p>Research/ Policy Brief DUE</p>
3/30/15	Family Stress and Family Resiliency Frameworks	<p>1. Chaudry, Ch. 4</p> <p>2. Walsh (2003) – Ch. 15</p> <p>3. Ingoldsby, Smith, & Miller (2004) – <i>Exploring Family Theories</i> (Ch. 6)</p> <p>(Read 1, 2, 3)</p> <p>Annotated Bibliography DUE</p>
4/6/15	Methods for Understanding Families' Experiences	<p>1. Lareau- Appendix A</p> <p>2. Chaudry- Appendices B, C</p> <p>3. Small, M. (2009) - Appendices A, B, C</p> <p>4. Bianchi, Robinson, & Milkie (2006) - Ch. 2</p> <p>5. Hansen, K. (2005) - Ch. 1</p> <p>6. Roy et al (2015)- <i>Sampling richness and qualitative integrity: Challenges for research with families</i></p> <p>(Read 3 of the above selections)</p>
UNIT 3: Student Facilitated Seminars on Families		
4/13/15	Student Seminar 1-3	Readings: TBD by seminar facilitators
4/20/15		Online class (AERA)
4/27/15	Student Seminar 4-6	Readings: TBD by seminar facilitators
5/4/15	Student Seminar 7-9	Readings: TBD by seminar facilitators