



College of Education and Human Development

Early Childhood Education Program  
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<https://gse.gmu.edu/programs/earlychildhood/>

**ECED 522.001 (3:3:0)**  
**Developing Language, Literacy, and Communication in Young Children (3:3:0)**  
**Fall 2015**  
**Thursdays, 4:30-7:10pm**  
**Robinson Hall A 101**

**Instructor: Samita B. Arora, Ph.D.**

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**Office hours: By appointment**

**Course Description**

Examines strategies to develop language, literacy, and communication in young children with varying abilities. Explores the importance of adult-child interaction and the effect of bilingualism, cultural diversity, cognitive ability, and language disorders.

**Nature of Course Delivery**

This course utilizes a distributed learning format requiring timely and active participation of all students throughout the semester. Activities to support student achievement of the learner outcomes include instructor presentations, videos, student team presentations, collaborative student work in small groups in class and in on-line discussion groups, assigned readings, and projects leading to written products. Students engage in timely critical reflection and accountable talk related to the learning activities.

**Learner Outcomes**

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Summarize and reflect on current research on language delays and disorders and the ways children's exceptional learning needs interact with their use and development of language.
2. Describe typical and atypical language development.
3. Describe ways to support the early communication efforts of young children, including augmentative, assistive, and alternative technologies, in a culturally and developmentally responsive manner.
4. Select children's literature and design meaningful literacy activities that reflect and appreciate cultural, linguistic, and ability diversity.
5. Create and promote a print rich environment for diverse young children.

**Professional Standards**

This course is aligned with the standards established by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC).

## Required Text

- Bardige, B. S. (2009). *Talk to me, baby! How you can support young children's language development*. Baltimore, Maryland: Brookes Publishing Co.
- Bardige, B. S., & Segal, M. M. (2005). *Building literacy with love: A guide for teachers and caregivers of children birth through age 5*. Washington, DC: ZERO TO THREE.
- Shillady, A. (Ed). (2014). *Spotlight on young children exploring language and literacy*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

## 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 [See <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.
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 modules within the designated timeframe. Absences, tardiness, leaving early, and not completing online modules 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 deduction in their 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 guide 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  
B- = 80 – 82

A- = 90 – 94  
C = 70 – 79

B+ = 87 – 89  
F = < 70

B = 83 – 86

## 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.

### Specific Course Assignments

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Attendance & Participation	Ongoing	15
Children's Literature Resource List and Book Talk	Oct 8 <sup>th</sup>	25
Language Delays and Disorders Pamphlet and Presentation	Oct 29 <sup>th</sup>	20
Augmentative, Assistive, and Alternative Technology Exploration/Investigation	Nov 19 <sup>th</sup>	10
Language Analysis Project	Step 1 – Nov 12 <sup>th</sup> Steps 2 & 3 - Dec 3 <sup>rd</sup>	25
Language Analysis Project Class Presentation	Dec 17 <sup>th</sup>	5
TOTAL		100

### 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 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](http://www.gmu.edu).

### **Children's Literature Narrative and Book Talk (25 points)**

Students will create an in depth, annotated narrative of at least ten children's books that are culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate for diverse infants and toddlers and five books for children ages 3-5 years and their families, with at least one book in a language other than English. The narrative will include the following information:

1. Complete and accurate bibliographic information (title, author, illustrator, copyright date (no earlier than 2005), city of publication, and publisher)
2. Clear and concise descriptions of high quality books that include sufficient detail for readers to gain a clear understanding of the content of the book (such as genre, repetitive phrases, rhyme, etc.) including diversity, evidence of promoting social emotional relationships, and current issues relevant to the age group.
3. Culturally and developmentally appropriate examples of activities related to the book that families and teachers may do with children (at least two activities per book) and why you chose the activities.
4. Discussion about the representation of diversity as appropriate

Students will bring at least five books and the accompanying activities to class to share with classmates. In small groups, students will share their book, emphasizing an overview of the book, ways the book can be shared and enjoyed with infants and toddlers, and ideas for follow-up activities related to the book.

The narrative and book talk will be evaluated using a scoring guide based on the criteria listed above.

### **Language Delays and Disorders Pamphlet and Presentation (20 points)**

Students will work with a partner to create a pamphlet about what is known about the language development of children with a specific delay, disorder, or medical condition. The pamphlet will include a description of the medical condition or disability, background information and research, possible effects on language and literacy development, promising approaches to promoting language and literacy development, issues and controversies, and professional and support organizations. Students will include a complete and accurate reference list in APA style. The pamphlet will be presented in class. Please make copies for everyone.

### **Augmentative, Assistive, and Alternative Technology Investigation/Exploration (10 points)**

Students will explore a variety of assistive, augmentative, and alternative technology in the Kellar Library located in the Finley Building on the GMU Fairfax campus. Describe in a 2-3 page paper at least 3 pieces of assistive, augmentative or alternative technology, create at least two activities, and explain how the technology could be incorporated into a literacy activity with culturally, linguistically and ability diverse children, using course readings, class materials, and other appropriate sources to support assertions and conclusions.

**Language Analysis Project (30 points)**

Students will respond to each of the following steps and questions for the Language Analysis Project.

**Step One:** Collect information about a child's background and language and communication development. Students will do the following:

- Select a focus child, birth through age five, with an exceptional learning or dual language needs.
- Write a description of the focus child that includes pertinent background information (e.g., age, gender, family members, linguistic and cultural background, nature of the exceptional learning need, etc.)
- Explain how they assessed the child's language and communication development:
  - a. What approaches to assessment were used (e.g., observations, play-based assessment, assessment during instructional interactions, etc.)?
  - b. What information was gathered from others and from whom was it gathered (e.g., parent, caregiver, teacher, etc.)?

**Step Two:** Write an analysis of the child's language and communication development, including the impact of the interaction of culture and home language. Students will do the following:

- Describe and analyze the child's language development and communication based on the information gathered in Step One and using course readings, class materials, and other appropriate sources to support assertions and conclusions.
- Describe the impact of the interaction of culture and home language on the child's language development and communication based on information gathered in Step One and using course readings, class materials, and other appropriate sources to support assertions and conclusions.
- Discuss the ways in which exceptional conditions interact with the child's use of language and communication based on the information gathered in Step One and using course readings, class materials, and other appropriate sources to support assertions and conclusions.

**Step Three:** Explore and identify four appropriate education apps that support the child's language and communication development using course readings, class materials, and other appropriate sources to support the recommendation.

### Course Schedule, Readings, and Assignments

Date	Topics	Readings & Assignments Due
Sept 3	How social context support & shape language	Syllabus review
Sept 10	Communication & Culture	Bardige & Segal, Chapters 2 & 3 Bardige, Chapter 7 <i>Sign up for Book Talk Presentations</i>
Sept 17	Language & Cognition	Bardige & Segal, Chapter 7 & 8 Bardige, Chapter 1
Sept 24	Language as the Foundation for Literacy	Bardige & Segal, Chapter 4 Bardige, Chapter 6
Oct 1	Developing Language & Literacy through children's literature	Bardige & Segal, Chapter 6 Spotlight, "Snow on My Eyelashes" Language Awareness Through Age-Appropriate Poetry Experiences
Oct 8	Typical Language and Speech Development <b>Book Talk Presentations</b>	Bardige, Chapters 4 & 5 Spotlight, <i>Storybook Reading for Young Dual Language Learners</i> <b>DUE: Children's Literature Narrative and Book Talk</b>
Oct 15	Theories of Language Development	Bardige, Chapter 2 & 3
Oct 22	Developmental Disorders and Language Delays	Bardige & Segal, Chapter 11 Spotlight, <i>The Daily Dozen: Strategies for Enhancing Social Communication of Infants with Language Delays</i>
Oct 29	<b>Language Delays and Disorder Presentation</b>	<b>Language Delays and Disorder Presentation</b>
Nov 5	Dual Language Development	Spotlight, <i>Using Photo-Narration to Support the Language Development of All Learners</i> Spotlight, <i>Every Language is Special: Promoting Dual Language Learning in Multicultural Primary Schools</i>
Nov 12	Augmentative/Assistive/Alternative Technology Investigation/Exploration	Visit Kellar Library – Finley Building <b>DUE: Language Analysis Project, Step 1</b>

Date	Topics	Readings & Assignments Due
Nov 19	Supporting Language Development	Bardige & Segal, Chapter 5 Spotlight: <i>Vivian Paley's Storytelling/Story Acting Comes to the Boston Public Schools</i> <b>DUE: Augmentative, Assistive, and Alternative Technology Investigation/Exploration Paper</b>
Nov 26	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday</i>	<i>No class tonight</i>
Dec 3	Supporting Literacy Development	Bardige & Segal, Chapter 13 <b>DUE: Language Analysis Project, Steps 2 and 3</b>
Dec 10	Adult-Child Interactions & Language & Listening Development	Bardige & Segal, Chapter 9, 10 & 12 Spotlight, <i>Sagacious, Sophisticated, and Sedulous: The Importance of Discussing 50-Cent Words with Preschoolers</i>
Dec 17	Learning From Language Analysis Project/ <b>Final Presentations/Wrap up</b>	<b>DUE: Language Analysis Project Class Presentation</b>