ECED 504.602 Engaging Families of Diverse Young Learners
3 Credits, Spring 2017
Thursday/ 5:00 – 8:40 pm
Fairfax High School

Faculty
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Prerequisites/Corequisites
None

University Catalog Course Description
Focuses on strategies for developing culturally appropriate family professional partnerships to benefit children, including children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and children with special needs. Explores theories and research supporting a family centered approach, including family and professional rights and responsibilities, especially in the special education process.

Course Overview
Not Applicable

Course Delivery Method
This course will be delivered using a lecture and discussion format.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives
This course is designed to enable students to do the following:
1. Describe the historical, philosophical, and sociological foundations underlying the role, development and organization of public education in the United States.
2. Discuss the legal status of teachers and students, including federal and state laws and regulations, school as an organization/culture, and contemporary issues in education.
3. Discuss theories and research supporting a family-centered approach to early childhood education.
4. Discuss the role of cultural context in attitudes, beliefs, values, and child rearing practices.
5. Analyze personal values, beliefs, and cultural biases that influence their work with families.
6. Describe underlying principles and ways to work with families that are both effective and enabling.
7. Identify strategies that support and assist families to identify their priorities, resources, and concerns for their children, including children with special needs.
8. Create tailored opportunities for collaborating with families in the ongoing education of children, including children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and children with special needs.
9. Utilize family systems theory to describe and understand family perspectives.
10. Identify specific components of IDEA that support family voices in the special education process.
11. Adopt a strengths-based problem solving perspective when analyzing dilemmas related to partnering with families.
12. Demonstrate understanding of the theories and techniques of family-centered intervention, including issues related to families from diverse backgrounds and multicultural education.

Professional Standards (Council of Exceptional Children and National Association for the Education of Young Children)
Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards:

CEC Standard Elements
CEC 6.3 Beginning special education professionals understand that diversity is a part of families, cultures, and schools, and that complex human issues can interact with the delivery of special education services.

NAEYC Standard Elements
NAEYC 2a Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics
NAEYC 2b Supporting and engaging families and community through respectful, reciprocal relationships

Required Texts
See Additional Course Readings list following the Class Schedule.
Course Performance Evaluation
Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Spotlight Discussion</strong></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Visit Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Part 1 Characteristics Memo</td>
<td>April 6</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Part 2 Families Analysis and Reflection</td>
<td>April 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Full Home Visit Project uploaded to Tk20 on Bb</td>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Family Resource</td>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Story Presentation</td>
<td>May 11 (comments due by May 17)</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statement of Philosophy</td>
<td>May 17</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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• Assignments and/or Examinations

**Spotlight on Young Children and Families Discussion (10 points)**
Students, along with two or three of their peers, will be responsible for leading a discussion about an assigned chapter from the *Spotlight on Young Children and Families* text. Students are expected to lead a discussion (they may NOT use PowerPoint and should not just summarize the reading) and include one hands-on activity as part of the discussion. A sign-up sheet will be provided on the first night of class.

**Online Family Resource (10 points)**
Students will investigate, identify, and share a resource (e.g. a family service, an individual or particular service provider, a handbook or other written material, a local event, etc.) that would be of great use to the family (or a similar family) they chose for the Home Visitation Project. Students will search for appropriate resources and create and upload to Blackboard a one-page handout describing the resource with all relevant elements and contact information. Students will post their family resource in the discussion board, and bring enough copies to class to share with their colleagues. Students will present on their resource for one to two minutes during class.

**Home Visit Project (35 points)**
This is the Key Assessment 7 Home Visit Project that shows evidence of meeting CEC and NAEYC Standards. This assignment must be submitted on Blackboard. See the assessment description and scoring rubric attached.

**Statement of Philosophy for Working with Families and Communities (25 points)**
Students will use their experiences with the children and families in their setting, any community connections they have made, as well as course content including readings and discussion to create a one- to two-page (single-spaced) statement of their philosophy for working with families and communities. This will include not only why they believe it is important to engage
with families and communities as a teacher/practitioner but also the ways they believe are most effective for doing this. They will include academic, both research- and theory-based, literature as well as concrete examples from the readings. It is expected that experiential, empirical, and theoretical (research- and theory-based from course readings) knowledge will be used in this paper. All course readings should be cited appropriately.

**Family Story Presentation (5 points)**
Students will present in online format what they have learned about their home visit family as a story. Each student presentation will be done in an online format that is creative. They will consider how they would like their own story to be told. The presentation should not sound like a clinical case presentation and should refrain from using basic PowerPoint or Prezi. Students will be graded on their creativity and how well they tell their family’s story as well as their discussion of what they learned in doing this visit. These will be posted in a discussion board forum.

- **Other Requirements**

**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) 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.

**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](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. 
Type the paper with double spacing, indented paragraphs, 1-inch margins all around, and 12-point Times New Roman font.

- **Grading**

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

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](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.

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

**Class Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Assignments &amp; Readings Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>Intro to Course &amp; Family Engagement</td>
<td>Wheatley- <em>Willing to be Disturbed</em> View: The Danger of a Single Story (posted in Bb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Defining Family Intro to Ecological Model and Family Systems Theory</td>
<td>Grant &amp; Ray, pp. 32-46&lt;br&gt;<strong>Choose One:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Stewart (2007)&lt;br&gt;Dreby &amp; Adkins (2012)</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 30</td>
<td>Contemporary Families: Demographics, Structures, and Functions</td>
<td>Gray &amp; Ray, Chapter 4&lt;br&gt;Turnbull, Ch. 3 (Family Functions)&lt;br&gt;Spotlight I on YC and Families, pp. 4-11&lt;br&gt;Casper &amp; Bianchi (2002)&lt;br&gt;Listen: <em>Taking a Closer Look at Grandparent Caregivers</em> (in Bb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Additional Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Family Diversity: Immigration, Low-Income Families, Single-Parent</td>
<td>Grant &amp; Ray, Ch. 5</td>
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<td>Families</td>
<td>Spotlight IV on YC and Families, pp. 44-49</td>
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<td>Vesely et al. (2013)</td>
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<td>Anderson (2003)</td>
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<td>April 20</td>
<td>Family Diversity: Families With Children With Disabilities, Inclusion</td>
<td>Grant &amp; Ray, Chapter 11</td>
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<td>Spotlight V on YC and Families, pp. 28-37</td>
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<td>Riojas-Cortez (2011)</td>
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<td>View: The Sibling Project (in Bb)</td>
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<td>Janice Fialka (<a href="http://www.danceofpartnership.com">http://www.danceofpartnership.com</a>), read the following journal articles</td>
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<td>(scroll to the bottom): The Dance of Partnership, Why do my Feet Hurt?; Working with</td>
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<td>Families: Rethinking Denial, Least Dangerous Assumption: Changing the Way We Think; A</td>
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<td>Word to Educational Professionals” and “Be Careful What You Wish For.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Family Diversity: LGBT Families, Families in Transition</td>
<td>Grant &amp; Ray (choose to read Ch. 6, 7, or 8)</td>
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<td>Spotlight VI on YC and Families, pp. 24-27</td>
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<td>Gates (2008)</td>
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<td>Moreno, Lewis-Menchaca, &amp; Rodriguez (2011)</td>
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<td>April 27</td>
<td>Additional Family Theories &amp; Tools for Understanding Diverse Families:</td>
<td>Spotlight VII on YC and Families, pp. 20-23</td>
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<td>Family Stress Theory, Family Resiliency Framework, Culturagram</td>
<td>Spotlight on YC and Families, pp. 4-11 (no student presentation)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DUE to Bb – Part 2 Understanding, Supporting, and Engaging Families Analysis and</td>
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<td>Reflection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Partnering With</td>
<td>Grant &amp; Ray, pp. 1-15 &amp; 46-59</td>
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<td>Families</td>
<td>Spotlight VIII on YC and Families, pp. 2-3</td>
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<td>Halgunseth et al (2009)</td>
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<td>Weiss, Lopez, &amp; Rosenberg (2010)</td>
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<td>May 4</td>
<td>Family Engagement: Cultural Competence</td>
<td>Grant &amp; Ray, pp. 79-100 &amp; Ch. 9</td>
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<td>Spotlight IX on YC and Families, pp. 50-54</td>
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<td>Vesely &amp; Ginsberg (2011)</td>
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<td>Case Study: What’s going on with Tomasito? (read through case before class)</td>
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|            |                                                                       | http://socialworkpodcast.blogspot.com/2008/12/visual-
Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

**Core Values Commitment**
The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: [http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/](http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/).

**GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

*Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see [http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/](http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/)).

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see [http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/](http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/)).

- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see [http://ods.gmu.edu/](http://ods.gmu.edu/)).

- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

**Campus Resources**

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|        | Family Engagement: Communication and Navigating Systems | Grant & Ray, Ch. 10
Spotlight X on YC and Families, pp. 12-15
Berrera & Corso (2003)
DUE to TK20 on Bb by May 7 – Home Visit Project (Parts 1 and 2 compiled)
DUE to Bb by May 7 – Online Family Resource |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Online | Family Story Presentations                             | View and comment on Family Story Presentations in assigned Discussion Board Forum by May 17
DUE to Bb May 17 – Statement of Philosophy (final draft) |
• Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/.

• The Writing Center 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/).

• The 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 Student Support & Advocacy Center staff helps students develop and maintain healthy lifestyles through confidential one-on-one support as well as through interactive programs and resources. Some of the topics they address are healthy relationships, stress management, nutrition, sexual assault, drug and alcohol use, and sexual health (see http://ssac.gmu.edu/). Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone at 703-993-3686. Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community by going to http://ssac.gmu.edu/make-a-referral/.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website https://cehd.gmu.edu/.
Additional Course Readings


Graue, & Hawkins (2010). “I always feel they don’t know anything about us”: Diverse families talk about their relations with school. In M. Miller-Marsh & T. Turner-Vorbeck (Eds.), (Mis)understanding families: Learning from real families in our schools. (pp. 109-125). New York: Teachers College Press.


