

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

ECED 504.600 Engaging Families of Diverse Young Learners  
3 Credits, Spring 2018  
Thursdays/ 5:00 – 7:40 pm  
NET: 3/22 – 5/17  
Face-to-Face Sessions: 3/22, 4/5, 4/12, 4/19, 4/26, 5/3, 5/10  
Woodson High School Rm G111

**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. Offered by Graduate School of Education. May not be repeated for credit.

**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:

#### **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**

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author. ISBN: 9781433805615

Grant, K. B., & Ray, J. A. (2016). *Home, school, and community collaboration: Culturally responsive family engagement* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Sage. ISBN: 9781483347547 [white cover/ jacket]

Koralek, D. (2007). *Spotlight on young children and families*. Washington D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children. ISBN: 9781928896425

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).

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Attendance & Participation	Ongoing	15
<i>Spotlight</i> Discussion	Assigned	10
Home Visit Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part 1 Characteristics Memo</li> <li>Part 2 Families Analysis and Reflection</li> <li>Full Home Visit Project uploaded to Tk20 on Bb</li> </ul>	April 12 April 26 May 5	10 25
Family Resource and Poster Session	May 3	10
Online Family Story	May 10	5
Statement of Philosophy	May 10	25
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>

- **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.*

**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.

**Family Resource and Poster Session (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. Additionally, students will present their resource as an in-class Poster Session. More details to follow.

**Family Story Online (5 points)**

Students will develop a one-page story about their family. The story should not sound like a clinical case presentation. Students should be creative with their story and consider how they would like their own story to be told.

### **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 **two-page (double-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 and other references should be cited appropriately according to your APA manual.

- **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 (a) participating in all activities, (b) engaging in small- and large-group discussions, (c) completing written work related to the activities, and (d) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.
- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class and online discussions, activities, and written reflections.
- Professional dispositions are to be displayed at all times while interacting with the instructor and other students. **Cell phones are not to be used during class. Laptops are to be used for instructional purposes only.**

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

- **Grading**

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

Incomplete (IN): This grade may be given to students who are passing a course but who may be unable to complete scheduled coursework for a cause beyond reasonable control.

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.

**Professional Dispositions**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>.

**Class Schedule**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Assignments &amp; Readings Due</b>
Week 1 March 22	Intro to Course & Family Engagement	Grant & Ray, Ch. 1 <b>DUE: Family Box Activity – Bring item to share with the class</b> (see description on BB under the Assignments tab)
Week 1 Online	Defining Family Intro to Ecological Model and Family Systems Theory	Grant & Ray, Ch. 2 Readings on BB (Week 1 folder)  View Video: The Danger of a Single Story (see BB Week 1 folder)

Class	Topics	Assignments & Readings Due
Week 2 April 5	Contemporary Families: Demographics, Structures, and Functions  Developmental Process of Parenting	Grant & Ray, Ch. 3, 4 Koralek, pp. 2-11 Readings on BB (Week 2 F2F folder)  <b>DUE: Group Presentation/Spotlight on Young Children and Families – Understanding Families: Applying Family Systems Theory to Early Childhood Practice</b>
Week 2 Online	Family Diversity: Immigration, Low-Income Families, Single-Parent Families	Grant & Ray, Ch. 5 Readings on BB (Week 2 Online folder)
Week 3 April 12	You Are What You Teach!  Melting Pot or Tossed Salad?  Implicit Bias & Sociocultural Perspective	Readings on BB (Week 3 F2F folder)  <b>DUE: Group Presentation/Spotlight on Young Children and Families – Closing the Gap: Culture and the Promotion of Inclusion in Child Care</b>  <b>DUE: Home Visit Project Part 1 (Diverse Family and Community Characteristics Memo)</b>
Week 3 Online	Family Diversity: Families with Children with Disabilities, Inclusion	Grant & Ray, Ch. 11 Readings on BB (Week 3 Online folder)
Week 4 April 19	Family Diversity: LGBTQI Families, Families in Transition	Grant & Ray, Ch. 6, 7, 8 Readings on BB (Week 4 F2F folder)  View video: NYT documentary from Poland  <b>DUE: Group Presentation/Spotlight on Young Children and Families – Creating Safe, Just Places to Learn for Children of Lesbian and Gay Parents</b>

Class	Topics	Assignments & Readings Due
Week 4 Online	<p>Additional Family Theories &amp; Tools for Understanding Diverse Families</p> <p>Family Stress Theory: Reframing Family Resiliency; Hope and Strengths</p>	<p>Readings on BB (Week 4 Online folder)</p>
Week 5 April 26	<p>The Importance of Partnerships at all Levels: FEA, SEA, LEA</p> <p>Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Partnering with Families</p>	<p>Reading on BB (Week 5 F2F folder)</p> <p><b>DUE: Group Presentation/Spotlight on Young Children and Families – Family Involvement in an International School: Piloting a Parent-Teacher Reading Group</b></p> <p><b>DUE: Home Visit Project Part 2 (Understanding, Supporting, and Engaging Families Analysis and Reflection)</b></p>
Week 5 Online	<p>Family Engagement: Communication and Navigating Systems</p>	<p>Grant &amp; Ray, Ch. 10</p> <p>Readings on BB (Week 5 Online folder)</p>
Week 6 May 3	<p>Cultural Humility</p> <p>Family Engagement: Cultural Competence as an Ongoing Process</p> <p>Creating our Collective Class Story</p>	<p>Grant &amp; Ray, Ch. 9</p> <p>Reading on BB (Week 6 F2F folder)</p> <p><b>DUE: Group Presentation/Spotlight on Young Children and Families – Leave No Parent Behind: Three Proven Strategies</b></p> <p><b>DUE: Family Resource and Poster Session</b></p>
Week 6 Online	<p>Turnbull’s Seven Principles of Trust</p> <p>Family-Teacher Community Connections</p>	<p>Grant &amp; Ray, Ch. 12, 13</p> <p>Readings on BB (Week 6 Online folder)</p> <p><b>DUE to Tk20 Home Visit Project (Parts 1 and 2) May 5</b></p>

Class	Topics	Assignments & Readings Due
Week 7 May 10	Lessons Learned Presenting Statements of Philosophy	<b>DUE: Family Story Online</b> <b>DUE: Statement of Philosophy</b>

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/>.

### GMU Policies and Resources for Students

#### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <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/>).
- 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*

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto: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/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>.

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website: <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.**



## Additional Course Readings

- Anderson, W., Chitwood, S., Hayden, D., & Takemoto, C. (2008). *Negotiating the special education maze*. Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.
- Bianchi, S. M., Robinson, J. P., & Milkie, M. A. (2006). *Changing rhythms of American family life*. New York: Russell Sage. (selected chapters)
- Bromer, J., & Henly, J. R. (2009). The work-family support roles of child care providers across settings. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 24*, 271-288.
- Dreby, J., & Adkins, T. (2012). The strength of family ties: How US migration shapes children's ideas of family. *Childhood, 19*, 169-187.
- Francis, G., Blue-Banning, M., Haines, S., Turnbull, A., Gross, J. (2016) Building "our school": Parental perspectives for building trusting family-professional partnerships. *Preventing School Failure, 60*, 329-336.
- Fuligni, A. J., & Fuligni, A. S. (2007). Immigrant families and the educational development of their children. In J. E. Lansford, K. Deater-Deckard, & M. H. Bornstein (Eds.). *Immigrant families in contemporary society* (pp. 231-249). New York: Guilford.
- Gates, G. (2008). Diversity among same sex couples and their children. In S. Coontz, M. Parson, & G. Raley (Eds.). *American families: A multicultural reader* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (pp. 394-399). New York: Routledge.
- Gonzalez-Mena, J. (2014) *50 strategies for communicating and working with diverse families* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Pearson
- Gonzalez-Mena, J. (2009) *Child, family, and Community: Family-centered early care and education* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Pearson
- 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.
- Halgunseth, L. C. (2009). Family engagement, diverse families, and early childhood education programs: An integrated review of the literature. *Young Children, 56-58*.
- Hanson, M. & Lynch, E. (2013). *Understanding Families: Supportive approaches to diversity, disability, and risk* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes
- Hernandez, S. J. (2013) *Collaboration in Special Education: Its history, evolution, and critical factors necessary for successful implementation*. US-China Education Review, (3) 6.
- Lareau, A. (2008). Excerpts from *Unequal Childhoods*. In S. Coontz, M. Parson, & G. Raley (Eds.). *American families: A multicultural reader* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (pp. 400-417). New York: Routledge.
- Lea, D. (2012). Cultural reciprocity as a transformative journey in research and practice. In M. Kalyanpur & B. Harry. *Cultural reciprocity in special education: Building Family-professional relationships* (pp. 119-136). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Lynch, E. W., & Hanson, M. J. (2011). *Developing cross-cultural competence* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Baltimore: Brooks Publishing. (selected chapters)
- Moore, K. A., Redd, Zakia, Burkhauser, M., Mbwana, K., & Collins, A. (2009). Children in poverty: Trends, consequences, and policy options. Washington, DC: Child Trends.

- Moreno, R. P., Lewis-Menchaca, K., & Rodriguez, J. (2011). Parental involvement in the home: A critical view through a multicultural lens. In E. M. Olivos, O. Jimenez-Castellanos, & A. M. Ochoa (Eds.), *Bicultural parent engagement* (pp. 39-57). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Riojas-Cortez, M. 2011. Culture, Play, and Family: Supporting Children on the Autism Spectrum. *Young Children* 66 (5): 94–99.
- Roggman, L., Boyce, L., Innocenti, M. (2008) *Developmental Parenting: A guide for early childhood practitioners*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes
- Sanders, K. E., Deihl, A., & Kyler, A. (2007). DAP in the ‘hood: Perceptions of child care practices by African American child care directors caring for children of color. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 22, 394- 406.
- Small, M. L. (2006). Neighborhood institutions as resource brokers: Child care centers, interorganizational ties, and resource access among the poor. *Social Problems*, 53(2), 274-292.
- Stewart, P. (2007). Who is kin? Family definition and African American families. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 15, 163-181.
- Turnbull, A., Turnbull, R., Erwin, E., & Soodak, L. (2011). *Families, professionals, and exceptionality: Positive outcomes through partnerships and trust* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Columbus, OH: Prentice Hall. ISBN: 9780137070480
- Vesely, C. K., Levine Brown, E., & Mehta, S. (2017) Developing cultural humility through experiential learning: How home visits transform early childhood preservice educators’ attitudes for engaging families. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 38:3, 242-258. doi: 10.1080/10901027.2017.1345805
- Vesely, C. K., & Ginsberg, M. R. (2011). Strategies and practices for working with immigrant families in early education programs. *Young Children*, 84-89.
- Weigel, D. J. (2008). The concept of family: An analysis of laypeople’s views of family. *Journal of Family Issues*, 29, 1426.
- Weiss, Lopez, & Rosenberg (2010). *Beyond random acts: Family, school, and community engagement as an integral part of education reform*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.
- Wlazlinski, M. L., & Cummins, J. (2011). Using family stories to foster parent and preservice teacher relationships. In E. M. Olivos, O. Jimenez-Castellanos, & A. M. Ochoa (Eds.), *Bicultural parent engagement* (pp. 39-57). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Wright, T. (2013) I keep me safe. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 95, 39-43.