

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Early Childhood Education for Diverse Learners

ECED 505.001 Introduction to Early Childhood Special Education
3 Credits, Fall 2021
8/23/2021–12/15/2021, Tuesdays/ 7:20–10:00 pm
Thompson Hall 2021, Fairfax Campus

Faculty

Name: Heather Walter, EdD
Office Hours: By Appointment
Office Location: Thompson Hall 1801, Fairfax Campus
Office Phone: 703-993-3844
Email Address: hwalter2@gmu.edu

Prerequisites/Corequisites

None

University Catalog Course Description

Surveys current knowledge about young children with disabilities within the context of human growth and development and learning expectations in the preschool years. Includes historical factors and legislation affecting service delivery. Notes: Field experience required.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a lecture/discussion format and Blackboard (Bb).

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

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

1. Describe the nature and characteristics of major disabling and at-risk conditions for young children, including children with diverse cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
2. Describe the services and pathways for service delivery for children birth through age five with disabling and at-risk conditions, including methods for instructional services and programs, curriculum development, and tiered instruction.
3. Provide an overview of early intervention and early childhood special education programs.
4. Describe the historical perspective and philosophical and sociological foundations underlying the role, development, and organization of special education in the United States.
5. Discuss legislation and legal aspects associated with students with disabilities, including legislative and judicial mandates related to education and special education (e.g., the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, § 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act) and legal decisions related to person with disabilities and explain how it intersects with current issues and influences professional practice.
6. Describe current regulations and procedures governing special education to include Individualized Education Program (IEP), Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA), and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) development.

7. Describe the development process of IEPs and IFSPs, including case management, collaboration, co-teaching, interagency coordination, inclusive practices, least restrictive environment, and transition.
8. Describe disciplinary practices, policies, and procedures, and alternative placements in schools in relation to young children with disabling conditions and at-risk conditions.
9. Describe the role of assessment in identification, eligibility, service delivery, and program development/improvement for young children and their families, including children and families with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
10. Describe effective strategies for training, managing, and monitoring paraprofessionals.
11. Exhibit standards of professionalism, ethical standards, and personal integrity with children, families, and professionals in the field experience setting (e.g., early intervention, home-based, school-based, community-based) and in interactions with classmates, the instructor, the field experience coordinator, and others.
12. Use writing as an instructional and assessment tool to generate, gather, plan, organize, and to communicate for a variety of purposes; integrate correct written conventions (i.e., grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling); and format using current APA style.

Professional Standards – Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards, Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Professional Preparation Standards, National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Professional Standards and Competencies, and Virginia Professional Studies Competencies

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards:

Virginia Professional Studies Competencies

Supervised Clinical Experiences

Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies

Nature and Characteristics of Major Disabling and At-Risk Conditions

Foundations of Legal Aspects

Standards of Professionalism

Supervised Experiences

Required Texts

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Author. ISBN: 9781433832178

Deiner, P. L. (2013). *Inclusive early childhood education: Development, resources, and practice* (6th ed.). Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. ISBN: 9781111837150

Gargiulo, R. M., & Kilgo, J. L. (2020). *An introduction to young children with special needs: Birth through age eight*. Sage. ISBN: 9781544322063

Required Online Documents

Council for Exceptional Children Division for Early Childhood. (2020). Initial practice-based professional preparation standards for early interventionists/early childhood special educators (EI/ECSE) (initial birth through age 8). Retrieved from <https://d4ab05f7-6074->

[4ec9-998a-](#)

232c5d918236.filesusr.com/ugd/95f212_6e8952cda15f48b3935a7729dddc50d.pdf

Council for Exceptional Children. (2015). *What every special educator must know: Professional ethical and standards*. Author. Retrieved from

<https://www.cec.sped.org/Standards/Ethical-Principles-and-Practice-Standards>

Division for Early Childhood. (2014). *DEC Recommended Practices*. Retrieved from

<https://divisionearlychildhood.egnyte.com/dl/tgv6GUXhVo>

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy).

Assignment	Due Date	Points
Attendance and Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none">Attendance and Participation Self-Evaluation	Ongoing 12/13	25
Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues Paper	9/7	10
Individualized Education Program (IEP) Writing Group Project	10/26	30
Annotated Bibliography Project <ul style="list-style-type: none">Annotated Bibliography PaperAnnotated Bibliography Presentation	11/9 11/30	5 3 2
Field Experience Documentation and Reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none">Field Experience Approval FormField Experience Documentation FormField Experience Observation and Reflection	8/31 11/30 11/30	15 1 4 10
Reflection on Practice and Lifelong Learning	12/13	15
Total		100

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

Field Experience (15 points)

This course requires a minimum of 15 hours field experience. Students will complete their field experience in an early childhood special education classroom. To initiate this assignment, students will visit <https://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf> and complete the [Online Field Experience Registration](#). On the form, they will be asked to indicate how their placement will be arranged. Students have two options for fulfilling their field placement requirement.

Option 1:

- Students may arrange their own field experience if they are a full-time contracted school system employee and are able to complete their field experience in an early childhood special education classroom at their workplace.

Option 2:

- Students may request placement in an early childhood special education classroom setting through the field placement office <https://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf>.
- The field placement office will arrange placement for students in a specific school with a specific teacher.

Documenting the Field Experience (5 points)

Students will upload the ***Field Experience Placement Approval Form***. In this form, they will provide a statement confirming that they have completed the [Online Field Experience Registration](#) and they will provide information to the instructor about where and how they will complete the field experience when the information is provided by the field experience placement office (1 point).

Upon completion of their field experience hours, students will provide documentation of their experience (4 points).

- If they completed the field experience within their own setting (requires instructor approval), they will upload the ***On-the-Job Placement Documentation Form*** to Blackboard (Bb). This form can be found on Bb and requires verification from the assistant principal or principal on site.
- If they completed a field placement other than where they work, they will upload the ***Field Experience Documentation Form*** to Bb. This form can be found on Bb and requires verification from the mentor teacher on site.

Students will exhibit standards of professionalism, ethical standards, and personal integrity throughout the field experience process with the instructor, field experience coordinator, classroom teacher, students, administrators, etc. Students will refer to Bb for DEC Professional Preparation Standards and NAEYC Professional Standards and Competencies.

Field Experience Observation and Reflection (10 points)

Students will develop a five- to seven-page report that discusses the following questions about the early childhood special education classroom setting observed during the field experience:

- What is the classroom environment (e.g., special education students only, inclusive classroom, 3-year-olds, 4-year-olds, multi-age)? Please include the following:
 - How is the room physically arranged?
 - What centers are present?
 - What visual information is present? Is it too little or too much?
- What is the classroom routine?
- How does the classroom provide opportunities to develop cognitive, language, social and emotional, fine motor, gross motor, and adaptive/self-help skills?
- What accommodations or adaptations are used for children with disabilities?
- What would you do similarly and differently as a teacher? Consider the following areas:
 - Classroom routine
 - Environment's arrangement
 - Provision of opportunities to develop skills across all the domains
 - Availability of accommodations/adaptations for children with disabilities
 - Inclusion of culturally and linguistically responsive materials and practice
 - Opportunity for inclusive practices

Students will cite current research from the course textbook, class discussions and handouts, and at least five relevant peer-reviewed sources to support the information they provide. They will use in-text citations and include a reference list.

Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues Paper (10 points)

Students will cite information from the course textbook, class discussions and handouts, and/or other relevant peer-reviewed sources to support the information they provide regarding special education legislation. The student will explain the historical, philosophical, and sociological foundations of special education by doing the following:

- Describe key elements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, including citations from course materials,
- Identify the professional ethical standards and practices within that guide the field of special education, and
- Identify three ways special education law will influence their practice in the settings they currently or plan to work. Each of these should align with special education law.

Students will choose from one of the following options and are welcome to email the instructor proposing an alternative option:

- Write a three- to four-page, double-spaced paper, OR
- Create a video, OR
- Create a detailed graphic organizer, OR
- Submit an alternative option approved in advance by the instructor.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Writing Group Project (30 points)

Collaboratively, students will conduct a mock IEP meeting and write an IEP for a case-study child with their peers using the IEP form posted to Blackboard. Students will write the IEP together in a virtual meeting with their group while also using a checklist to act out a typical IEP meeting. Students should connect the first week of class to (a) determine their communication system and schedule, (b) decide how they will record their IEP meeting, and (c) complete a roles and responsibilities plan. Roles include (a) scribe (individual who will type), (b) submitter (individual who will submit the assignment and who will share feedback with group once graded), (c) facilitator (individual who will organize meetings and keep track of time). Additionally, students should decide the roles each group member will take during the “IEP Meeting” (e.g., parent/legal guardian, educator, etc.) The IEP will include the following (see Deiner, 2013, p. 113 and <http://idea.ed.gov>):

- Case-study child’s present level of performance that includes a detailed discussion of the child’s family, medical history, previous early intervention and/or educational services, family’s cultural and/or linguistic background, and the child’s strengths and areas of need across the developmental domains,
- Measurable annual goals with at least one goal addressing a behavior and/or social emotional area of need,
- Special education and related services,
- Projected time frame for services,
- Expected participation with children without disabilities and explanations of the extent to which the case study child is not participating with children without

- disabilities (least restrictive environment statement), and
- Accommodations and modifications.

Group members will include their names on the front of the IEP form. Each student will submit a link to their google document containing the IEP and video link.

Reflection on Practice and Lifelong Learning (15 points)

Upon reviewing the DEC practice videos, students will reflect on their observations and the Division for Early Childhood's Recommended Practices. Students will:

- Identify the DEC Recommended Practice strands and practices,
- Provide a summary of their observations of each strand including the setting in which it was observed,
- Specify the DEC practice strands and practices that include elements of diversity specific to families, cultures, and early childhood learning environments,
- Provide a summary of their observations of each of these practices including how diversity is embedded,
- Identify three ways they will continue to learn about DEC Recommended Practices (e.g., conferences, webinars, publications),
- Identify three ways they will gain support in applying these practices within the early childhood environment they will work (e.g., peer observation and feedback, self-recording, taking data on practice), and
- Identify three ways they will disseminate recommended practices to colleagues (e.g., communities of practice, feedback).

Students will choose from one of the following options and are welcome to email the instructor proposing an alternative option:

- A four- to five-page report, OR
- A presentation video with verbal description, OR
- A graphic organizer/visual, OR
- An alternative option approved in advance by the instructor.

Annotated Bibliography (5 points)

Students will work independently to identify five peer-reviewed publications related to at least one of the course objectives. For each publication, students should provide a one paragraph summary including the purpose, summary, and implications. All publications should be cited using APA 7th formatting. Students will create a presentation and share with their peers to promote further discussion and implications regarding course objectives during our last class meeting.

- **Other Requirements**

Attendance and Participation (25 points)

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

- Students attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period.

- Students use laptops and personal devices are to be used for instructional purposes only.
- Students complete readings and prepare for class activities prior to class as 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 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.
- Students display professional dispositions at all times while interacting with the instructor and other students.
- Students complete participation activities across the semester that complement the scheduled course topic. Instructors will periodically collect artifacts from the activities. Students in attendance and who actively engage in the learning experience will receive credit for their efforts. Graded participation activities are not announced and are implemented at the discretion of the instructor.
- Students submit attendance and participation self-evaluation.

Written Assignments

All formal written assignments will be evaluated for content and presentation. The American Psychological Association, Seventh 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. 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 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 seeking Virginia initial teaching licensure must earn a C or better in all undergraduate licensure coursework.

Professional Dispositions

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

Class Schedule

Date	Topics	Assignments
<p>Week 1</p> <p>August 24</p>	<p>Syllabus and Assignments Review</p> <p>Setting up the Field Experience</p> <p>Standards of professionalism, ethical standards, personal integrity</p> <p>The Early Childhood Special Education Profession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collaboration, co-teaching ● Coordination ● Inclusive practices and least restrictive environment <p>Lifelong learning</p>	<p>Syllabus</p> <p>Review course website</p> <p>Bb Readings (CEC and DEC Documents)</p> <p>Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 1</p>
<p>Week 2</p> <p>August 31</p>	<p>Early Childhood Special Education: History and Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Historical perspective ● Philosophical and sociological foundations ● Legislation and legal aspects <p>Early Childhood Special Education: History and Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rehabilitation Act ● PL 94-142, PL 99-457 ● ADA ● IDEA ● Legislative and judicial mandates <p>Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues in Practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CEC standards ● DEC recommended practices ● NAEYC standards and developmentally appropriate practices 	<p>Bb Readings</p> <p>Deiner, Ch 1</p> <p>Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 2</p> <p>Due to Bb (8/31) – Field Experience Approval Form</p>
<p>Week 3</p> <p>September 7</p>	<p>Overview of Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education: Service Delivery Pathways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Home-based services 	<p>Bb Readings</p> <p>Deiner, Ch 2</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Partnering with families ● Resource services ● Inclusive settings ● Self-contained classrooms ● Related services ● Case management 	Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 3 Due to Bb (9/7) – Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues Paper
Week 4 September 14	<p>Assessment in ECSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluation, assessment, and eligibility ● Progress monitoring ● Functional assessment ● Service delivery ● Functional behavior assessment (FBA) <p>Curriculum Standards in ECSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Milestones of Child Development</i> ● <i>Virginia’s Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards for Four-Year-Olds</i> ● Other standards <p>Program development/improvement</p>	Bb Readings Deiner, Ch 3 Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 4
Week 5 September 21	<p>IFSP and IEP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Team, meetings, and content ● PLAAFP, summary of child ● Functional assessment ● Annual goals ● Short-term objectives ● Services and service delivery options ● Least restrictive environment ● Transition 	Bb Readings Deiner, Ch 5
Week 6 September 28	<p>Instructional/ Intervention Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Curriculum development ● Tiered instruction ● Embedded learning opportunities ● Universal design for learning ● Accommodations 	Bb Readings Deiner, Ch 4 Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 7, 9
Week 7 October 5	<p>Instructional/Intervention Methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Functional behavior assessment and Behavior Intervention Plans 	Bb Readings
October 12	No class meeting – Monday classes meet on Tuesday	
Week 8 October 19	<p>Children with Communication/Language Disorders</p> <p>Children who are English Language Learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nature and characteristics ● Impact on social and emotional development 	Bb Readings Deiner, Ch 11, 12 Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 8, 9

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management ● Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background ● Instructional considerations in ECSE 	
<p>Week 9 October 26</p>	<p>Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nature and characteristics ● Impact on social and emotional development ● Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management ● Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background ● Instructional considerations in ECSE 	<p>Bb Readings</p> <p>Deiner, Ch 13</p> <p>Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 8, 9</p> <p>Due to Bb (10/26) – Writing an IEP Group Project</p>
<p>Week 10 November 2</p>	<p>Children with ADD/ADHD</p> <p>Children with Specific Learning Disabilities</p> <p>Children with Intellectual Delays and Disabilities</p> <p>Children who are Gifted and Talented</p> <p>Children with Social, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nature and characteristics ● Impact on social and emotional development ● Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management ● Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background ● Instructional considerations in ECSE 	<p>Bb Readings</p> <p>Deiner, Ch 8, 9, 10, 15</p> <p>Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 8, 9</p>
<p>Week 11 November 9</p>	<p>Children with Special Health Care Needs</p> <p>Children with Intellectual Disabilities</p> <p>Children with Orthopedic and Neurological Impairments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nature and characteristics ● Impact on social and emotional development ● Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management ● Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background ● Instructional considerations in ECSE 	<p>Bb Readings</p> <p>Deiner, Ch 16, 17</p> <p>Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 8, 9</p> <p>Due to Bb (11/9) – Annotated Bibliography Paper</p>
<p>Week 12 November 16</p>	<p>Children with Hearing Impairments</p> <p>Children with Visual Impairments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nature and characteristics ● Impact on social and emotional development ● Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior 	<p>Bb Readings</p> <p>Deiner, Ch 18, 19</p> <p>Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 8, 9</p>

	management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background • Instructional considerations in ECSE 	
Week 13 November 23	Working with Paraprofessionals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration • Training • Managing • Monitoring 	Bb Readings Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 10
Week 14 November 30	Review ECED 505 Annotated Bibliography Presentations	Due in Class (11/30) – Annotated Bibliography Presentation Due to Bb (11/30) – Field Experience Documentation Form Due to Bb (11/30) – Field Experience Observation and Reflection
December 6	Reading Day – No class meeting	
Week 15 December 13	Finals Week – No class meeting	Due to Bb (12/13) – Reflection on Practice and Lifelong Learning Due to Bb (12/13) – Attendance and Participation Self-Evaluation

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 <https://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://ds.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/VIA 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 <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>.

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

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