

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

ECED 504.D02 Engaging Families of Diverse Young Learners
3 Credits, Summer 2021
05/17/2021 – 07/24/2021
Online Asynchronous

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 Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an asynchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on May 17, 2021.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers

To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Windows Media Player: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
 - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

- Course Week: Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on Monday and finish on Sunday.
- Log-in Frequency: Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 4 times per week.
- Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues: Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload: Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support: Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content, or other course-related issues. The one-on-one meeting with the instructor is via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette: The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing

information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

- Accommodations: Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

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

1. Discuss theories and research supporting family engagement and a family-centered approach to the education of children birth – sixth grade.
2. Discuss the role of cultural and familial contexts in attitudes, beliefs, values, and child rearing practices.
3. Analyze personal values, beliefs, and cultural biases that influence their work with families.
4. Identify underlying standards of professionalism and ethical standards, principles, and ways to work with families, including examining methods of improving communication between schools and families, especially regarding social and instructional needs of children.
5. Describe strategies that support and assist families to identify their priorities, resources, and concerns for their children, including children with special needs.
6. Create tailored opportunities for collaborating with families in the ongoing education of children, especially in terms of increasing family engagement in student learning at home and in school, particularly among families from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds and with children with special needs, including children who are gifted.
7. Identify how families experience substance abuse, trauma—including child abuse and neglect—and other adverse childhood experiences, and family disruptions.
8. Utilize family systems theory to describe and understand family dynamics.
9. Identify specific components of IDEA that support family voices in the special education process.
10. Adopt a strengths-based, problem-solving perspective when analyzing dilemmas related to family engagement.
11. Discuss the theories and techniques of family-centered intervention, including issues related to families from diverse racial, ethnic cultural, religious, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds and multicultural education.
12. Complete study in child abuse and neglect recognition and intervention in accordance with curriculum guidelines developed by the Virginia Board of Education in consultation with the Virginia Department of Social Services.
13. Exhibit standards of professionalism, ethical standards, and personal integrity with children, families, and professionals in the field and in interactions with classmates, the instructor, and others.
14. 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 – Virginia Professional Studies Competencies, Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies, Virginia Early/Primary Education PreK-3 EPK3 Endorsement Competencies, Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards, Council of Exceptional Children (CEC) and Division of Early

Childhood (DEC) Standards, and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards

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

Virginia Professional Studies Competencies

Human Growth and Development (Birth Through Adolescence)
Curriculum and Instruction

Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies

Family-Centered Intervention

Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standard Elements

InTASC 1k The teacher values the input and contributions of families, colleagues, and other professionals in understanding and supporting each learner’s development.

InTASC 2m The teacher respects learners as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds and various skills, abilities, perspectives, talents, and interests.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (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. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Author. ISBN: 9781433832178

Grant, K. B., & Ray, J. A. (2019). *Home, school, and community collaboration: Culturally responsive family engagement* (4th ed.). Washington, DC: Sage. ISBN: 9781506365732

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

Additional required and recommended course readings listed on the class schedule are posted in Blackboard

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard (Bb), Tk20/VIA, hard copy).

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Attendance & Participation ¹	Ongoing	25
• Module Participation Activities		
• Attendance & Participation Self-Evaluation	7/24	
• Self-Assessment of Dispositions	7/24	

¹ Check Bb for details about module participation activities

Critical Reflections		10
• Critical Reflection 1 –Module 1	5/23	2
• Critical Reflection 2 –Module 2	5/30	2
• Critical Reflection 3 –Module 3a	6/6	2
• Critical Reflection 4 –Module 4	7/5	2
• Critical Reflection 5 –Module 5	7/11	2
<i>Spotlight</i> Discussion	Ongoing	10
Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition and Intervention Training Module	6/27	5
Engaging Families Home Visit Project		30
• Part 0 Select Family	5/30	0 ²
• Part 1 Diverse Family and Community Characteristics (Memo 1)	6/13	10
• Part 2 Understanding, Supporting and Engaging Families (Memo 2)	7/5	20
• Full Home Visit Project with any necessary corrections uploaded to Tk20/VIA	7/24	
Family Story Presentation	7/18	5
Statement of Philosophy (Draft)	7/11	15
Peer Review Process	7/18	5
Statement of Philosophy (Final)	7/24	10
TOTAL		100

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

Module Participation Activities (5 points/module = 25 points)

For each module, individual, pair, small, and/or large group activities will be posted. Students are asked to participate in these “class discussions” by accomplishing the activity as an individual or a group. Students will be graded based on their level of participation with critical thought in these activities.

Requirements: To earn full credit, students need to address **each** aspect of the weekly activity posted. This means that **multiple** components must be completed, including individual and group work each week. **Each activity response** should reflect course content and other sources to enrich the discussion.

Evaluation of Module Participation Activities: To build a rich learning community through group discussions, the following areas will be assessed for EACH module activity, which will be submitted using google docs (be sure to give editing access to the instructor): **(a) promptness and initiative, (b) quality of individual work in terms of relevance and contribution to the learning community, and (c) quality of collaborative work.**

² “Select Family” is assigned 0 points; however, if the student does not follow the procedure to have the instructor approve the family with whom they plan to work, it can impact the student’s Memo 1 and Memo 2 grade.

1. Promptness and initiative: Student completes in a timely manner, the activities and assignments, leaving adequate time for fellow students to collaborate in meaningful ways. **Please be kind to your group-mates and do not wait until the last minute to participate in activities. (1 points)**
2. Quality of work: Responses to the assignments and activities should be comprehensive and coherent, as well as well reflect an application of the course material. Skimpy activity or assignment responses or responses that do not reflect course resources will not receive full credit. For each group workshop submission, it is expected that *after* the submission students respond to the instructor’s initial round of feedback provided via google docs. Feedback will be provided early on so student can understand the depth and breadth or expected responses. **(2 points)**
3. Collaboration: The majority of weekly assignments and activities are collaborative in nature, as they would be in a face-to-face course. To earn these points there must evidence in the Bb discussion board of back-and-forth collaboration with group members. In particular, for each weekly assignment, each person will be assigned a role or roles (student might have multiple roles one week, depending on the size of the class/group) including:
 - a. Team Leader: The team leader has one of the most important roles because they need to set a timetable and encourage/motivate the group members to meet deadlines. The team leader will share the final work with the instructor via Bb. **Team leaders should plan to send an email to all group members very early in the week to set up the process.**
 - b. Communications Officer: The "communications officer" is the point of contact between the group and the instructor. If the group has questions of the instructor, this person will email the instructor on behalf of the group. If the instructor has questions about the project, they would address them to the communications officer. Communication officers might plan to send check-in emails to group members to make sure everyone is on track. The Communications Officer will email the instructor with the dates/times/Zoom information for group meetings.
 - c. Tech Support: Tech support handles any issues directly involving technology. For example, if the activity involves developing a Padlet, the group member who is tech support that week will download the free program and upload the Padlet template.
 - d. Editors: The editors' responsibilities really come at the end of the project because they will read through the activity and edit for content, clarity, and cohesiveness. **(2 points)**

Activity completion is asynchronous. Refer to the course calendar for “due by” dates. Students should plan to meet with their small groups via Zoom (instructions for accessing Zoom through GMU are in Bb). **Once these meetings are scheduled the communications officer will email the course instructor the date and time of the meeting with the Zoom link.** The instructor will sometimes drop-in on these meetings to answer questions and observe the group work.

Critical Reflections (5 @ 2 points each = 10 points)

Students will critically reflect every other week on the course material for the specific modules included in the table above this section. Their post is due by 11:59PM on the due date. Students will ensure that they create a thread (**thread should be named with the student’s name**) and

provide at least **one** comment for one of the other student threads in order to receive full points. Comments on peers' posts are due two days after due date of original post by 11:59PM. If students prefer to keep their reflection private, they may email the instructor their critical reflection.

Expectations for critical reflections:** Reflections must be a minimum of 300 words in length, be thoughtful and relevant, and include original and/or critical thought. The point of these reflections is NOT for students to simply provide a description or summary of the issues at hand; ***rather, students are to think critically about what is being discussed/ learned in class, form and state an opinion about something they read, and provide coherent points to support or illustrate their perspective. Students might consider the following in their responses:

- How is your perspective regarding families and working with families is shifting and changing?
- What assumptions or biases (that you hold) are emerging?
- How are you thinking in new ways regarding working with families from diverse backgrounds? How will you use the knowledge and experiences you are gaining in this course as you work in a classroom with young diverse learners and their families?
- How do the readings relate to your own family experiences and/or the experiences of the families you work with each day?
- What is something you read that you are wondering or curious about?
- What is a strategy you are thinking about to apply something you read that you believe will strengthen your ability to build a relationship with families that is grounded in trust and respect for each other?

Keep these same expectations in mind for commenting on other students' posts. **Comments on other students' posts should be at least 100 words. Comments on others' posts must be posted within 2 days of the due date of the original post.**

Spotlight on Young Children and Families Discussion (10 points)

Students will be responsible for leading a discussion about an assigned chapter from the *Spotlight on Young Children and Families* text with their small group. Once during the semester, during a designated week, small groups will create a short screencast including a brief summary of the reading (less than 1 minute), three strategies for how to integrate the content into an ECE/ECSE classroom, and a list of 5 additional resources (links, articles, books, etc.). The three strategies should demonstrate: ways to improve communication between schools and families; instructional practices that are sensitive to culturally and linguistically diverse learners and informed by families; ways of communicating with families regarding the social and instructional needs of children; and ways of increasing family engagement in student learning in home and school. Students will complete this in their small Module groups. ** Students should schedule a 30-minute Zoom meeting with the course instructor at least one week before the Spotlight is due to discuss the screencast. The group leader must initiate scheduling this meeting with the instructor by reaching out one week before the desired meeting date or two weeks before the Spotlight is due. For example, if the Spotlight is due on April 19th, the meeting with the instructor should happen on or before April 12th, and therefore the group should reach out to the instructor by April 5th to schedule the meeting. Students will be graded on both their screencast for their assigned week as well as their comments on others groups' Spotlight videos

which will be posted in Bb Discussion Board throughout the semester. Therefore, Spotlight grades will not be posted until after the last group submits their screencast at the end of the semester.

Engaging Families Home Visit Project (must be virtual due to COVID-19*) (35 points)

Students will focus on developing culturally appropriate family professional engagement to benefit children, including children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and children with special needs, including children who are gifted and talented and children with disabilities. Students will support and engage families through respectful, reciprocal relationships by conducting a virtual home visit (individually or in partners), including an interview using video conference (eg. Zoom, WebEx, FaceTime) with at least one of the primary caregivers, and a virtual family observation during a family event when all primary caregivers and children are present (eg. family outdoor time, family game night, virtual birthday celebration, virtual holiday celebration) with a family of a child (birth – third grade) **whose family is marginalized³ by U.S. society based on the following: race, ethnicity, immigrant status, family structure, socioeconomic status, sexuality, child or parent’s ability status, or religion and whose perspective on early childhood education and parenting is likely to be different from their own.**

Students will apply their knowledge and understanding of diverse family characteristics through their observations and interaction with the family during the virtual home visit. Throughout the assignment, students will critically consider for their home visit families: methods of improving communication with their home visit families’ schools; ways of increasing family engagement in student learning in home and school; how schools might improve communication with families regarding social and instructional needs of children; and how they consider their developing instructional practices to be sensitive to culturally and linguistically diverse learners, particularly as a result of this project.

Before beginning the Engaging Families Home Visit, students will send an email message to the professor describing how the family they want to engage with for the Virtual Home Visit is considered marginalized by U.S. Society and how the family is different from the student's immediate family. Students must receive an email message from the professor, approving of the family, before proceeding with the Engaging Families Home Visit Project. Students are encouraged to contact the professor for any support they need to select a family that is considered marginalized by U.S. Society and is, as different as possible, from the student's immediate family.

For families in the Fairfax County Public School District, students should send the family the letter about the project that is in the Resource Section on the Blackboard Course Menu.

***COVID-19 Addendum:**

The home visit project is a core assignment in this course. Considering the current situation with COVID-19 and social distancing, the student’s health and well-being come first. Students will

³**Marginalized populations** are groups and communities that experience discrimination and exclusion (social, political and economic) because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social and cultural dimensions. (from: <https://nccdh.ca/glossary/entry/marginalized-populations>)

NOT visit families in person. Instead, the student will arrange with the family a virtual interview and family observation. Specifically, for both the interview portion and the observation the student will use a video conferencing tool (e.g., Zoom, WebEx, FaceTime, Skype, WhatsApp, etc.). For the observation component, the student might consider observing a family dinner, for example. In this case, the student would video conference during family dinner, and prompt conversation with *"If I were at your house right now, observing dinner in person, what would I be seeing, that I might not see now through the screen? Tell me more about what I would see in terms of the activity, sibling relationships, parent-child relationships, etc.? Why is this type of event important to you?"* During the interviews, the student could also ask questions related to the family's daily routine to fully understand their day-to-day experiences. For example, the student might ask the parent/guardian the following question: *"Tell me about how your dinner routine looks every day."* Don't be afraid to ask families follow-up questions.

Part 0: Select Family (0 points⁴): The student will review number 1 under Part 1 below, and select a family based on the designated criteria. The student will submit a 3-5 sentence paragraph via Blackboard describing how the family is marginalized in a way the student is not. This will require the student to share information about their own intersectional identities such that the instructor is able to approve the student working with the family for the assignment. **THE STUDENT MUST HAVE THE FAMILY APPROVED BY THE INSTRUCTOR BEFORE BEGINNING TO WRITE MEMO 1.**

Part 1: Diverse Family and Community Characteristics Memo 1 (15 points): Memo 1 should include the following four sections.

- 1. Rationale for Selecting Family:** Students will describe the family they selected and will include responses to the following: (a) a rationale for why they chose this family, (b) an explanation of the ways they think the families' experiences are different from their own, (c) what they have observed about how society views the child and family (either based on race, ethnicity, family structure, sexual orientation, ability, religion, etc.), and (d) an honest attempt to identify and describe any assumptions they have about this family.
- 2. Introducing themselves:** Students will find a way to determine and communicate the common ground between themselves and the family they selected (e.g., gender, work, education, experiences, etc.) as these help with initial introductions. They will describe the introduction and the process they will use to introduce themselves to the family.
- 3. Questions to assist in learning about the child:** Students will develop a set of open-ended questions that they will use to help them learn more about the child in terms of the child's likes, dislikes, interests, and experiences.
- 4. Questions to assist in learning about the parents and family:** Students will develop a set of open-ended questions to ask during the home visit to begin to understand the parents' goals for themselves as well as their children, including goals that reflect the linguistic and ability diversity of the child. They will use the following open-ended questions to guide them: *How did this family come to be in this place where you have met them? What do you need to understand about their experiences in order to understand them? What is their perspective about their child or children, including the child's or children's linguistic and/or ability diversity?* These questions should also help students

⁴ "Select Family" is assigned 0 points; however, if the student does not follow the procedure to have the instructor approve the family with whom they plan to work, it can impact the student's Memo 1 and Memo 2 grade

begin to learn more about the family's everyday experiences as well as prior experiences that might be insightful as they begin to work with them.

- **Memo 1: Students will write a 4- to 5-page memo that addresses the above four points. THE STUDENT MUST RECEIVE FEEDBACK ON MEMO 1 BEFORE VISITING WITH THE FAMILY. DO NOT VISIT WITH THE FAMILY UNTIL FEEDBACK ON MEMO 1 IS RECEIVED.**

Part 2: Understanding, Supporting, and Engaging Families Memo 2 (20 points): Memo 2 should include critical reflections on the following events (*see below for key components of this memo).

1. **Meeting (virtually) with the Family:** Students will informally interview the parents or guardians. In this interview, students should attempt to learn as much as possible through *meaningful* exchanges. Students should challenge themselves to understand the family's views of struggles they may have, how they make sense of the world, and how the parents' and families' realities of the world are different from their own. They should also challenge themselves to learn more about the family's perspectives on the child's diversity, including linguistic and ability diversity.

Students will consider the amount of time they have and the ease with which they will be able to engage persons of another culture. First, students will arrange to spend time with the family member(s) via Zoom, WebEx, or another video conferencing tool. The focus should be to engage respectfully with the family member on his or her own terms and turf (if possible), rather than conducting a formal interview. Students will meet with the parent in a relaxed framework.

Students will challenge themselves to hear the voices/values of others on their own terms. This will be difficult and may be uncomfortable. Students must consider how they can get to know other people and their culture on their own terms. It is recommended that students "ask, ask, ask." They should ask the family for clarification or meaning when something is confusing or feels very different to them. Students should reflect on their own culture, experiences, and stories as they learn about their family's stories. At the end of this informal meeting, students will ask the family if they might be able to join them (virtually) at a family event (e.g., birthday party, family gathering).

2. **Observation (virtual) at a Family Event:** Students will virtually conduct an observation of the child at a family event (e.g., birthday party, family gathering, family dinner, etc.). It can be a routine event or a special event. They must spend at least an hour with the family. During this event, students will engage the family in an informal conversation to find out about the meanings of their actions, describing and making meaning of their learning experience with the family.

- **Memo 2: Students will write a 5- to 6-page memo describing what they learned during the informal interview with the family and at the family event.**

In relation to the informal interview, students will contrast the family's experiences with their own family experiences and critically examine their previous assumptions given new information and experiences. Students should consider and note the questions that elicited

important information. In relation to the child observation at a formal event, students will describe what they saw/heard, the key activities that took place, and what these taught them about the family. **Students should be sure to spend more time critically reflecting and thinking about these experiences rather than simply describing or summarizing everything that happened. In relation to both the informal interview and observation, students should be sure to include the following: (a) what they learned about the family in these interactions (i.e., use a strengths-based perspective), (b) what they learned about themselves through coming to know this family (i.e., revisit previous assumptions), (c) what this experience might mean for the student as an educator particularly in terms of engaging diverse families through communication and instructional practices that are sensitive to culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse children and their families.**

Home Visit Family Story Presentation (5 points)

Students will present what they have learned from their family home visits as a story. Each student presentation will be a total of 3-5 minutes and will be posted in the discussion board. This presentation will include insight into the family's experiences, including what the student learned about themselves *and* the family, and how the student will apply this in their future work with young children and families. To receive full credit, the student should comment on at least two student's presentation with one point of constructive feedback and one compliment. The presentation should not sound like a clinical case presentation. Students should be creative with their story presentation and consider how they would like their own story to be told from a strengths-based, problem-solving perspective.

Statement of Philosophy for Working with Families and Communities (20 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 1-1.5 single-spaced page statement of their philosophy for working with families. This will include not only why they believe it is important to engage with families as a teacher/practitioner but also the ways they believe are most effective for doing this. Specifically, students will select at least three of the six areas of family engagement articulated by Halgunseth and colleagues (2009): 1) equality and respect for cultures; 2) joint decision-making; 3) two-way communication; 4) build relationships; 5) learn from families/ integrate knowledge and skills of families; 6) support home and community learning, to discuss in their statement of philosophy. Students will include academic, both research- and theory-based, literature as well as concrete examples from the readings, teaching/classroom experiences, and home visit experiences. 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 according to APA format for endnotes.

Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition and Training Module (5 points)

Students will complete an online module focused on child abuse recognition and intervention in accordance with curriculum guidelines developed by the Virginia Board of Education in consultation with the Virginia Department of Social Services. Students will submit the Certificate of Completion, via Blackboard, awarded when the online module is completed successfully.

- **Other Requirements**

Attendance and Participation (25 points)

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

- Students complete readings and online content 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 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 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 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 an attendance and participation self-evaluation.
- Students submit the Self-Assessment of Dispositions.

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 B- or better in all graduate 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	Readings	Assignments (Bb= Blackboard; DB= Discussion Board)
Module 0: Introductions to Course, Instructor, and Students			
May 17-23	Introduction to Course, Instructor, and Peers	Review Instructor Introduction Video Review and Respond to Student Introductions Review Syllabus and Course Requirements	Due to Bb DB by 5/19 – Student Introduction & Personal Wheel
Module 1: Intro to Families and Family Engagement			
May 17-23	Intro to Families & Family Engagement Standards of Professionalism and Ethical Standards in Working with Families Defining Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grant & Ray, Chapter 2 ▪ Wheatley, <i>Willing to be Disturbed</i> ▪ NAEYC Equity Position statement (https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/equity-position) ▪ View: <i>The Danger of a Single Story</i> (posted in Bb) 	Due to Bb DB by 5/21 – Telling My Family Story
	Intro to Theories and Research for Understanding the Role of Families in Children’s Development Using a Strengths-Based, Problem-Solving Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stewart (2007) <i>Who is Kin</i> ▪ Dreby & Adkins (2012) <i>The Strength of Family Ties: How US Migration Shapes Children’s Ideas of Family</i> 	Due to Instructor via email & Bb DB by 5/23 – Group Workshop on Social Identity Wheel Due to Bb by 5/23 – Critical Reflection 1
Module 2: Contemporary US Families and Parenting			
May 24-30	Contemporary Families: Diversity (racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, linguistic, and socioeconomic) Demographics, Structures, and Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grant & Ray, Chapter 4 ▪ Spotlight I on YC and Families, pp. 4-11 <i>Applying Family Systems Theory to Early Childhood Practice</i> ▪ Turnbull, Chapter 3 (Family Functions) <p>Choose one:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Casper & Bianchi (2002) <i>Changing Families in a Changing Society</i> ▪ Walsh (2003) <i>Changing Families in a Changing World</i> 	Due to instructor via Bb by 5/30 – Home Visit Family Selection

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments (Bb= Blackboard; DB= Discussion Board)
	Developmental Process of Parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grant & Ray, Chapter 3 ▪ Listen: “School Success: Inspire Motivation” (from Peace at Home Parenting look in Bb for accessing webinar) <p>Choose one:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lareau (2008) <i>Excerpts from ‘Unequal Childhoods’</i> ▪ Bianchi, Robinson, & Milkie (2006) <i>Parenting: How Has It Changed?</i> 	<p>Due to Instructor via email & Bb DB by 5/30 – Group Workshop on Parenting</p> <p>Due to Bb by 5/30 – Critical Reflection 2</p>
Module 3a: Implicit Bias in Education			
May 31 – June 6	<p>Family Diversity: Implicit Bias & Sociocultural Perspective</p> <p>Analyzing Personal Values, Beliefs, and Cultural Biases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spotlight on YC and Families: <i>Culture and the Promotion of Inclusion in Child Care</i> (pp. 38-43) ▪ View: <i>Tricia Rose Keynote on Structural Racism</i> (on Bb) ▪ State of Science (2013) Implicit Bias Review (Kirwan Institute) [pp. 30-34]: http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/docs/SOTS-Implicit_Bias.pdf ▪ State of the Science (2014) Implicit Bias Review (Kirwan Institute) [pp. 12-21]: http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/2014-implicit-bias.pdf 	<p>Due to Bb DB by 6/6 – Group 1 Spotlight</p> <p>Due to Instructor via email & Bb DB by 6/6 – Group Workshop on the IAT and Implicit Bias</p> <p>Due to Bb by 6/6 – Critical Reflection 3</p>
Module 3b: Family Diversity			
June 7-13	<p>Family Diversity: Immigration, English Language Learners, Ethnically, Racially, and Culturally-Diverse Families, Low-Income Families, Single-Parent Families</p> <p>Cultural and Familial Contexts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grant & Ray, Chapter 5 ▪ Spotlight IV on YC and Families, pp. 44-49 <i>Working with Diverse Families to Enhance Children’s Early Literacy Development</i> ▪ Vesely et al. (2013) <i>Capitalizing on ECE: Low-Income Immigrant Mothers’ Use of ECE to Build Human, Social, and Navigational Capital</i> <p>Choose one:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Graue & Hawkins (2010) <i>“I Always Feel They Don’t Know Anything</i> 	<p>Due to Bb DB by 6/13 – Group 2 Spotlight</p> <p>Due to Bb by 6/13 – Home Visit Memo 1: Diverse Family and Community Characteristics</p>

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments (Bb= Blackboard; DB= Discussion Board)
	in Attitudes, Beliefs, Values, and Child Rearing Practices	<p><i>About Us”: Diverse Families Talk About Their Relations With School.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wlazlinski & Cummins (2011) <i>Using Family Stories to Foster Parent and Preservice Teacher Relationships.</i> <p>Choose one:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moreno, Lewis-Menchaca, & Rodriguez (2011) <i>Parental Involvement in the Home: Critical View Through a Multicultural Lens</i> ▪ Stitt & Brooks (2014) <i>Reconceptualizing Parent Involvement: Parent as Accomplice or Parent as Partner?</i> ▪ Hock & Mooradian (2013) <i>Defining Coparenting for Social Work Practice: A Critical Interpretive Synthesis</i> 	
	<p>Family Diversity: Families with Children with Disabilities and Families with Children Who Are Gifted, Inclusion</p> <p>Priorities, Resources, and Concerns of Families</p> <p>How IDEA Supports Family Voices in Special Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grant & Ray, Chapter 11 ▪ Spotlight on YC and Families: <i>A Team Approach: Supporting Families of Children with Disabilities in Inclusive Programs</i> (pp. 28-37) ▪ McGee & Hughes (2011) <i>Identifying and Supporting Young Gifted Learners</i> <p>Choose one:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prezant & Marshak (2006) <i>Helpful Actions Seen Through the Eyes of Parents of Children with Disabilities</i> ▪ Riojas-Cortez (2011) <i>Culture, Play, and Family: Supporting Children on the Autism Spectrum</i> 	<p>Due Bb DB: 6/13 – Group 3 Spotlight</p> <p>Due to Instructor via email & Bb DB by 6/13 – Group Workshop on Poverty Simulation</p>

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments (Bb= Blackboard; DB= Discussion Board)
June 14-20	Family Diversity: LGBTQ+ Families, Families in Transition, Families Facing Adversity (substance abuse, trauma, abuse, neglect), Family Disruptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grant & Ray, Ch, 6-8 ▪ Spotlight on YC and Families: <i>Creating Safe, Just Places to Learn for Children of Lesbian and Gay Parents</i> (pp. 24-27) ▪ Choose one: ▪ Bartholomaeus & Riggs (2017) <i>Whole-of-School Approaches to Supporting Transgender Students, Staff, and Parents</i> ▪ Gates (2008) <i>Diversity among Same-sex Couples and their Children</i> 	<p>Due to Bb DB by 6/20 – Group 4 Spotlight</p> <p>Due to Instructor via email & Bb DB by 6/20 – Group Workshop on Working with Families of children with LGBTQ+ Families. What is LGBTQ+ https://youtu.be/xnTSSbS7Dgk</p>
Module 4: Family & Family Engagement Theories			
June 21-27	Additional Family Theories & Tools for Understanding Diverse Families and their Role in Children’s Development: Family Stress Theory, Family Resiliency Framework Using Family Systems Theory to Understand Family Dynamics and Family-Centered Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Garcia Coll et al. (1996)- <i>An Integrative Model for the Study of Developmental Competencies in Minority Children</i> <p>Choose one:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ingoldsby, Smith, & Miller (2004) <i>Exploring Family Theories (Chapter 6)</i> ▪ Walsh (2003) <i>Family Resilience: Strengths Forged through Adversity</i> 	<p>Due to Bb DB by 6/27 – Group 5 Spotlight</p> <p>Due to Bb by 6/27 – Individual Work: Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition and Intervention Training Module Completion Certificate</p>
June 28- July 4	Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Family Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Grant & Ray, Ch. 1 ▪ Halgunseth et al. (2009) <i>Family Engagement, Diverse Families, and Early Childhood Education Programs: An Integrated Review of the Literature</i> ▪ US Department of Health and Human Services & US Department 	<p>Due to Bb by 7/5 – Home Visit Memo 2: Understanding, Supporting, and Engaging Families Analysis and Reflection</p>

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments (Bb= Blackboard; DB= Discussion Board)
		of Education (2016)- <i>Policy Statement on Family Engagement</i> ▪ Spotlight VII on YC and Families, pp. 20-23 <i>Mapping Family Resources and Support</i>	Due to Bb by 7/5 – Critical Reflection 4
Module 5: Family Engagement (History, Tools, Strategies)			
July 5- 11	Family Engagement: Cultural and Linguistic Competence & Home-School Learning A Family-Centered Approach to Education Creating Tailored Opportunities for Collaborating with Families	▪ Grant & Ray, Ch. 9 & 13 ▪ Spotlight on YC and Families: <i>Partnerships for Learning: Conferencing with Families</i> (pp. 12-15) ▪ Vesely & Ginsberg (2011) <i>Strategies and Practices for Working with Immigrant families in Early Education Programs</i>	Due to Bb DB by 7/11 – Group 6 Spotlight Due to Instructor via email & Bb DB by 7/11 – Group Workshop: What’s going on with Tomasito? Due to Bb by 7/11 – Critical Reflection 5 Due to Bb by 7/11 – Statement of Philosophy Draft to Peer in Small Group
July 12- 18	Family Engagement: Communication & Home-School Learning Student Home Visit Family Presentations	▪ Grant & Ray, Chapter 10 ▪ Spotlight IX on YC and Families, pp. 12-15 <i>Partnerships for Learning: Conferencing with Families</i>	Due to Bb by 7/18 – Review of Peer’s Statement of Philosophy Due to Bb DB by 7/18 – Home Visit Family Story Presentation
July 19-24	Standards of Professionalism and Ethical Standards in Working with Families	▪ Grant & Ray, Chapter 12 ▪ Berrera & Corso (2003)- <i>Skilled Dialogue- Foundational Concepts</i>	Due to Bb DB by 7/20 – Response to Classmates home visit family story presentation

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments (Bb= Blackboard; DB= Discussion Board)
			<p>Due to Bb by 7/24 – Statement of Philosophy Final version</p> <p>Due to VIA by 7/24 – Upload of Home Visit Project (Memo 1 and Memo 2 in one document) & Self-Assessment of Dispositions</p>

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>.

Evaluation Guide

Engaging Families: Home Visit Project				
	Exceeds	Meets	Approaches	Does Not Meet
Part 1: Diverse Family and Community Characteristics				
<p>InTASC 2m The teacher respects learners as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds and various skills, abilities, perspectives, talents, and interests.</p> <p>NAEYC 2a Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics</p>	<p>Student provided a description that met criteria and reflected an extensive knowledge and understanding of the child's family, community, life experiences, values and culture.</p>	<p>Student provided a description of a diverse family's characteristics and background that demonstrated an understanding of the child's family, community, life experiences, values, and culture.</p>	<p>Student attempted to provide a description of a diverse family's characteristics and background that demonstrated an understanding of the child's family, community, life experiences, values, and culture. However, student provided limited information about the family.</p>	<p>Student did not provide a description of a diverse family's characteristics and background that demonstrated an understanding of the child's family, community, life experiences, values, and culture.</p>

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Part 2: Understanding, Supporting, and Engaging Families				
<p>InTASC 1k The teacher values the input and contributions of families, colleagues, and other professionals in understanding and supporting each learner’s development.</p> <p>NAEYC 2b Supporting and engaging families and community through respectful, reciprocal relationships</p>	<p>Student provided an analysis that met expectations and demonstrated an in-depth understanding of how this interaction with a family informs his/her ideas on developing relationships as an early childhood/ elementary educator.</p>	<p>Student provided an analysis of his/her interaction with the family, including what the student learned about him/herself and how this understanding informs the student’s ideas on developing relationships as an early childhood/ elementary educator.</p>	<p>Student attempted to provide an analysis of his/her interaction with the family, including some understanding of what he/she learned. However, student did not explain how this understanding informed his/her ideas on developing relationships as an early childhood/ elementary educator.</p>	<p>Student did not provide an analysis of his/her interaction with the family and did not show understanding of how to develop relationships as an early childhood/ elementary educator.</p>