

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

ECED 804.001 Critical Perspectives on Families in Education Research and Practice
3 Credits, Fall 2022, In-person
8/22/2022–12/14/2022, Mondays/ 4:30-7:10 pm
Krug Hall 102, Fairfax Campus

Faculty

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Prerequisites/Corequisites

Admission to the PhD in Education program or post-master's status and approval of course instructor.

University Catalog Course Description

Examines critically the dynamics and processes of families from culturally, racially, linguistically, economically, and ability diverse backgrounds and relationships between families and education professionals. Includes in-depth study of theory and methods in family research using a critical lens.

Course Overview

Not applicable

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a seminar format.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

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

1. Apply knowledge of family systems, family functioning, family coping and adaptation, and family resilience in research.
2. Identify current research and limitations of that research related to families from diverse cultural, racial, linguistic, socioeconomic, and ability backgrounds.
3. Describe effective practices to promote family-professional collaboration.
4. Synthesize and critically analyze current family literature using intersectional critical lens.
5. Integrate critical family theory, research, and recommended practices in developing an original project related to better understanding families of culturally, racially, linguistically, socioeconomically, and ability diverse children and youth.

Professional Standards

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards:
Not Applicable

Required Texts (select one, see Book Club assignment—we will discuss and select on the first day of class. Do not purchase before class begins.)

Chaudry, A. (2004). *Putting children first: How low-wage working mothers manage child care*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. ISBN: 9780871541727

Chaudry, A., Morrissey, T., Weiland, C., & Yoshikawa, H. (2017). *Cradle to Kindergarten: A new plan to combat inequality*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. ISBN: 9780871545572

Haspel, E. (2019). *Crawling Behind: America's Child Care Crisis and How to Fix It*. Castroville, TX: Black Rose Writing. ISBN: 978-1-68433-427-8

Lareau, A. (2003, 2011). *Unequal childhoods: Class, race, and family life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. ISBN: 9780520271425

Solomon, A. (2012). *Far from the tree*. New York: Scribner. ISBN: 978-0-7432-3671-3 (especially chapters on Deaf, Down Syndrome, Autism, Disability, Transgender)

Required Articles

Additional readings listed in course schedule and for student-led presentations will be 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, VIA, hard copy).

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Attendance, Participation, & Weekly Questions and Reflections	Ongoing	15
Book Club Questions and Participation	Ongoing	20
Book Club 1		5
Book Club 2		5
Book Club 3		5
Book Club 4		5
Research and Policy Brief	10/17	20
Research Paper-Annotated Bibliography	10/24	10
Student-Facilitated Seminar	11/14, 11/21, or 11/28	10
Research Proposal	12/7	25
TOTAL		100

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

Attendance, Participation, & Weekly Questions and Critical Reflections (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 post at least two critical questions related to the readings on Blackboard before class. These ought not be clarifying questions but rather questions that encourages others to

think more deeply and critically about the readings and course content. **DUE: Sundays at noon**

- 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 and speaking in small and large group discussions, (c) using laptops and other electronic devices only to support discussion and learning and not for non-academic uses during class time, (d) completing written work related to the activities, and (e) supporting the participation and learning of classmates.
- Students show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-class and online discussions, activities, and written reflections.
- After each class, students will post weekly reflections on Blackboard related to the readings, discussion, and activities. **DUE: no later than Tuesday evenings**

Book Club Questions and Participation (4 meetings x 5 points = 20 points)

Students will select a "Book Club" to join. To participate fully in each Book Club Session students will read the assigned chapters and bring two discussion questions to provide to their group during the discussion. These questions should link back to critical family theories and other course concepts. Upon completion of Book Club Meetings, students will present overarching themes which arose from their Book Club Meetings, especially as they are tied to the course material for the week. Students will be graded based on their contribution to group discussions and presentation.

Research and/or Policy Brief (2-4 pages) (20 points)

Students will write a short research and/or policy brief (2-4pp.) based on the topic the student is investigating for their final paper or a topic of his/her/their choice related to families in education. A *research* brief should include: Background (what is the problem or issue?), Research Findings* (summarize and integrate at least 8-10 peer-review journal articles), and Policy Implications for families from diverse backgrounds. A *policy* brief should include: Background (what is the area of research (eg. immigrant families, child welfare, families with transgender students. etc.)?), Policies connected to this issue and related research findings (summarize and integrate at least 8-10 peer-review journal articles and/or policy research reports), and Policy Recommendations. Students should include on the final page of the brief a list of 3 places he/she/they plans to submit the brief. Examples of briefs and ideas for submission sites will be provided upon request. **Advanced doctoral students (i.e., working on Portfolio 3) may create a research brief based on findings from his/her/their own individual research. Students should work with the instructor to complete this type of brief.*

Annotated Bibliography (10 points)

Students will develop an annotated bibliography that includes 15 sources. At least 10 of these sources will be peer-reviewed empirical research articles. The other 5 sources may include books and/or book chapters, or other types of resources (e.g., essays, white papers, videos, websites, etc.) on a family topic of interest. Entries will include the following:

- 5- to 10-sentence annotation about each source including:
 - reflective note (e.g, connections, implications, questions that arise, etc.)
 - accurate bibliographic information presented in APA style
 - a summary of the argument or thesis, theory used, the results, and the conclusions

- an analysis of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the article

Student-Facilitated Seminar on Diverse Families in Early Childhood (10 points)

Students will facilitate a 45-60¹ minute seminar on a topic related to the role of families in education using a critical lens. To prepare for the seminar, students will read extensively. As they read, they will prepare an annotated bibliography (see above assignment). The bibliography will include references in APA style, a 5- to 10-sentence annotation about each source, and a reflective note (e.g., connections, implications, questions that arise, etc.). During the seminar development process, students will provide face-to-face and online help and feedback to classmates.

Students will select two to three research articles for their classmates to read prior to the seminar and will email information on how to access the articles at least two weeks before the seminar. On the evening of the seminar, students will introduce the topic, present relevant background information using audio and/or visual aids, facilitate the discussion, and close the discussion with a summary and some future questions and thoughts to explore. They will provide handouts to support the learning and discussion. They will post their annotated bibliography on Blackboard for their classmates' reference. In addition, students will post feedback for each facilitator on Blackboard after the seminar and prior to the next class session.

Research Paper: Literature Review and Short Proposal (25 points)

The student will conduct a review of the literature on a topic of their choice related to the connections between families and education using a critical lens. This paper should critically review the literature from the perspective of culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse children and families. It should link to course themes, and it should discuss limitations as well as implications. Specifically, this paper should cover the following: (a) critical review of the literature (student needs to include 12-15 empirical articles), which includes theoretical approach, the major findings and whether there are inconsistencies, methodological, design, and measurement issues, and an integrative statement regarding findings (8-10 pages) (b) issues not addressed by the research to date: what do we know, what are the gaps in the literature (2-3 pages) (c) implications for future research, policy, and practice (2-3 pages); and, (d) a short proposal (3-4 pages) of a possible future study to begin to fill these gaps.

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. 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.)

¹ The amount of time students have will vary based on the number of students enrolled in the class.

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/>.

Course Schedule and Topics

Week	Topic <i>(*indicates book club meeting week)</i>	Readings
Week 1: 8/22	Introduction to the Course: Lenses for Understanding Contemporary Families	1. Hill Collins (1998)- <i>It's all in the family: Intersections of gender, race, and nation</i> 2. James et al. (2018)- <i>The central roles of race and racism in reframing Family Systems Theory: A consideration of choice and time</i> 3. Ingoldsby et al. (2004) <i>Family Systems</i> (Ch. 7) 4. White & Klein (2002)- <i>Family Systems</i> (Ch. 5) (Read 1, 2, AND 3 or 4)
UNIT 1: Contemporary Families: Demographics & Experiences (* book club week)		
Week 2: 8/29	Defining Families in the Context of Changing Families	1. Fisher et al. (2022). <i>Two years in the life of a pandemic: Listening to the voices of parents</i> . From the RAPID Survey: https://rapidsurveyproject.com/our-research/two-years-in-the-life-of-a-pandemic 2. Stewart (2007) - <i>Who is kin?</i> 3. Dreby & Adkins (2012)- <i>The strength of family ties: How US Migration shapes children's ideas of family</i> 4. Iruka et al. (2016)- <i>How change in home and neighborhood factors are related to change in Black children's academic and social development from kindergarten to third grade</i> 5. Weigel (2008) - <i>The concept of family</i> 6. Casper & Bianchi (2002) - Ch. 1 (Read 1, AND 2 or 3, AND 4, AND 5 or 6)
Week 3 9/5	NO CLASS	LABOR DAY!

<p>Week 4: 9/12</p>	<p>Diverse Family Forms*</p>	<p>1. Letiecq (2019)- <i>Surfacing family privilege and supremacy in family science: Toward justice for all</i> 2. Green (2009)- <i>Single custodial fathers and mothers meeting the challenge</i> 3. Kuvalanka et al. (2019)- <i>Grandparents raising their transgender grandchildren: An exploratory study</i> 4. Gates (2011) – <i>Family formation and raising children among same-sex couples</i> (https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Gates-Badgett-NCFR-LGBT-Families-December-2011.pdf) (Read 1, 2, 3 –4 is optional, plus book club reading)</p>
<p>Week 5: 9/19</p>	<p>Global Families</p>	<p>1. Boit et al. (2020). <i>Voice of refugee mothers: Navigating the complexities of supporting their preschool children’s literacy development.</i> 2. Ferreira van Leer et al. (2021). <i>Disruptions to child care and work arrangements for low-income Hispanic families are common, varied, and costly</i> 3. Vesely et al. (2021). ‘<i>A place where my children can learn to read, write, and play</i>’: <i>The search for early care and education among undocumented Central American immigrant mothers</i> 4. Vesely (2013)- <i>Low-income African and Latina immigrant mothers’ selection of early childhood care and education: Considering the complexity of cultural and structural influences</i> 5. Vesely et al. (2014)- <i>Turning points and transitions: The role of families in women’s immigration experiences</i> 6. Vesely et al. (2019)- <i>Immigrant families across the life course: Impacts on physical and mental health</i> (Read 1 AND 2, AND 3 or 4, AND 5 or 6)</p>
<p>Week 6: 9/26</p>	<p>Low-income Families*</p>	<p>1. Roy et al. (2004) - ‘<i>Don’t have no time</i>’- <i>Daily rhythms and the organization of time for low-income families</i> 2. Iruka et al (2018) – <i>Profiles of parenting for low-income families and links to children’s preschool outcomes</i> 3. Parish et al. (2008)- <i>Material hardship in US families raising children with disabilities</i> 4. Speirs et al. (2015). <i>Is stability always a good thing? Low-income mothers’ experiences with child care transitions</i> 5. Vesely et al. (2013)- <i>It takes two: Sensitive caregiving across contexts and children’s social, emotional, and academic outcomes</i> (Read 1 or 2, AND 3, AND 4 or 5, plus book club reading) Preliminary paper topic DUE</p>
<p>Week 7: 10/3</p>	<p>Parenting, Mothering, and Fathering</p>	<p>1. McGuire et al., <i>Transfamily Theory</i> 2. Few-Demo et al., <i>Queer Theory, Intersectionality, and LGBT-Parent Families</i> 3. Read two blog posts from Raising Unicorns (links in Bb0 4. Roy (2004) - <i>Three-block Fathers: Spatial perceptions and kin-work in low-income African American neighborhoods</i></p>

		<p>5. Bocknek et al. (2020)- <i>Adaptive parenting among low-income Black mothers and toddlers' regulation of distress</i></p> <p>6. Letiecq et al. (2019). <i>Central American immigrant mothers' mental health in the context of illegality</i> (Read 1 or 2, AND 3 & 4, AND 5 or 6)</p>
<p>Week 8: 10/10</p> <p>Class meets Oct 11 due to Fall break</p>	<p>Families with Children with DisAbilities*</p>	<p>1. Roper et al. (2014)- <i>Caregiver burden and sibling relationships in families raising children with disabilities and typically developing children</i></p> <p>2. Riojas-Cortez (2011)- <i>Culture, play, and family-Supporting children on the autism spectrum</i></p> <p>3. Hartley et al. (2014)- <i>Division of labor in families of children and adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder</i></p> <p>4. Boyd et al. (2018)- <i>Strengthening service access for children of color with autism spectrum disorders: A proposed conceptual framework</i> (Read 1 & 2, AND 3 or 4, plus book club reading)</p>
<p>UNIT 2: Frameworks, Theories & Methods for Understanding Contemporary Families</p>		
<p>Week 9: 10/17</p>	<p>Ecological Theories</p>	<p>1. Garcia Coll et al. (1996)- <i>An Integrative Model for the Study of Developmental Competencies in Minority Children</i></p> <p>2. Weisner (2002)- <i>An Ecocultural understanding of children's developmental pathways</i></p> <p>3. Super & Harkness (1986)- <i>The developmental niche</i></p> <p>4. Tudge et al. (2016)- <i>Still misused after all these years: A reevaluation of the uses of Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory of human development</i></p> <p>5. Roy (2014)- <i>Fathering from the long view: Framing personal and social change through life course theory</i> (Read 1, AND 2 or 3, AND 4 & 5) Research/ Policy Brief DUE</p>
<p>Week 10: 10/24</p>	<p>Family Stress and Family Resiliency Frameworks*</p>	<p>1. Ingoldsby et al. (2004) – <i>Exploring family theories</i> (Ch. 6)</p> <p>2. Vesely et al. (2017)- <i>Immigrant family resilience in context</i></p> <p>3. Ungar (2011). <i>The social ecology of resilience: Addressing contextual and cultural ambiguity of a nascent construct</i></p> <p>4. Select two blog posts of interest to you from Michael Ungar's Psychology Today blog: https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/nurturing-resilience (Read 1, 2, 3—4 is optional—plus book club reading) Annotated Bibliography DUE</p>
<p>Week 11: Oct 31</p>	<p>Critical Methods & Approaches for Understanding Families' Experiences</p>	<p>**Asynchronous ONLINE CLASS**</p> <p>1. Vesely et al. (2018)- <i>What does this mean to you?</i></p> <p>2. Letiecq et al. (in press)- <i>Participatory action research with, by, and for families</i></p> <p>3. Roy et al. (2015)- <i>Sampling richness and qualitative integrity: Challenges for research with families</i></p> <p>4. Lareau- Appendix A (Read all)</p>

Week 12: 11/7	Critical Methods & Approaches for Understanding Families' Experiences	1. Fisher et al. (2022)- RAPID Survey: https://rapidsurveyproject.com/aboutus 2. Chaudry- Appendices B, C 3. Small (2009) - Appendices A, B, C 4. Bianchi et al. (2006) - Ch. 2 5. Hansen (2005) - Ch. 1 (Read all)
UNIT 3: Student Facilitated Seminars on Families		
Week 13: 11/14	Student Seminars	Readings: TBD by seminar facilitators
Week 14: 11/21	Student Seminars	Readings: TBD by seminar facilitators
Week 15: 11/28	Student Seminars	Readings: TBD by seminar facilitators
12/7	Course Wrap-up	Final Papers DUE

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 VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. 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>.