

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

ECED 491.001 Seminar in Early Childhood Education for Diverse Learners  
3 Credits, Fall 2023, Hybrid  
8/21/2023–12/13/2023; Wednesdays/ 4:30-7:10 pm  
(In-person: 8/23, 9/20, 10/18, 11/15; Synchronous online: 8/30, 9/27, 10/25, 11/29)  
Thompson Hall L003, Fairfax Campus

**Faculty**

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**Required Prerequisites**

ECED 490  
May be taken concurrently.

**University Catalog Course Description**

Provides opportunity to evaluate and reflect upon classroom practices and interactions with diverse young children, families, and other professionals. Examines evidence-based practices used in early childhood classrooms to respond to the individual and group strengths, needs, and interests of young children with varied abilities from culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse backgrounds.

**Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered online using a synchronous seminar format using 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 August 21, 2023.

**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](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](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/](http://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.  
Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- 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. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor 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. Describe the legal status of teachers and students, including federal and state laws and regulations; school as an organization/culture; contemporary issues and current trends in education, including technology in education; local, state, and federal governance of schools, including the roles of teachers and schools in communities; and *Virginia's Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers.*
2. Discuss examples from student teaching of various school crisis management and safety plans and identify ways they have worked to create a safe, orderly, inclusive classroom environment that engages individual children, including children with diverse abilities, in meaningful learning activities and social interactions.
3. Discuss examples from student teaching of research-based classroom and behavior management techniques, classroom community building, positive behavior supports, and individual interventions, including techniques that promote emotional well-being and teach and maintain behavioral conduct and skills consistent with norms, standards, and rules of the educational environment.
4. Discuss examples from student teaching of diverse, age-appropriate classroom and behavior management approaches based on culturally responsive behavioral, cognitive, affective, social, and ecological theory and practice that support professionally appropriate practices that promote positive redirection of behavior, development of social skills, and development of self-discipline.
5. Identify strategies used during student teaching that demonstrate effective classroom management skills through methods that build responsibility and self-discipline, promote self-regulation, and maintain a positive learning environment.
6. Identify examples of modifying and managing the learning environments and experiences during student teaching to meet the individual needs of children, including children with disabilities, gifted children, children who are English learners, and children with diverse cultural backgrounds.
7. Identify a variety of age-appropriate techniques used during student teaching, informed by learning principles and knowledge of child development, that teach social and emotional skills to individual children and groups of children to assist with behavior management.
8. Provide examples from student teaching of the ways data were collected, analyzed, and used to inform instruction and guide children's behavior.
9. Discuss evidence-based instructional practices implemented during student teaching that promoted positive learning outcomes for young children.

10. Discuss ways they differentiated instruction in their student teaching experience to respond to the individual strengths, needs, and interests of young children.
11. Reflect critically on their practice and collaborations and discuss ways they engage in continuous learning.
12. Explain how historical, philosophical, and sociological foundations underlying the role, development, and organization of public education in the United States influence current teaching practices and environments and discuss ways to navigate school environments.
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, the field experience coordinator, 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**

Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Teaching Standards, Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators (EI/ECSE), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators, Virginia Professional Studies Endorsement Competencies, Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies, and Virginia Early/Primary Education PreK-3 Endorsement Competencies

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

### **Virginia Professional Studies Endorsement Requirements**

Classroom and Behavior Management  
Foundations of Education and the Teaching Profession

### **Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies**

Behavior Management  
Standards of Professionalism

### **Virginia Early/Primary Education PreK-3 Endorsement Competencies**

Methods

### **Required Texts**

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Author. ISBN: 978143383216-1  
Fields, M., Merritt, P., & Fields, D. (2018). *Constructive guidance and discipline: Birth to age eight* (7th ed.). Pearson. ISBN: 9780134547916

### **Recommended Texts**

Tyminski, C. (2014). *Your early childhood practicum and student teaching experience: Guidelines for success* (3rd ed.). Pearson. ISBN: 9780132869959

## Required Online Documents

- 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>
- 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](https://d4ab05f7-6074-4ec9-998a-232c5d918236.filesusr.com/ugd/95f212_6e8952cda15f48b3935a7729dddc50d.pdf)
- National Education Association for the Education of Young Children. (2020). Professional standards and competencies for early childhood educators. Retrieved from [https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/professional\\_standards\\_and\\_competencies\\_for\\_early\\_childhood\\_educators.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/professional_standards_and_competencies_for_early_childhood_educators.pdf)
- National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2019). *NAEYC position statement: Advancing equity in early childhood education*. Retrieved from <https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/naeycadvancingequitypositionstatement.pdf>
- Virginia Department of Education. (2021). Virginia’s guidelines for uniform performance standards and evaluation criteria for teachers. Retrieved from [https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/performance\\_evaluation/teacher/](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/performance_evaluation/teacher/)
- Virginia Department of Education. (2021). Virginia tiered systems of support. Retrieved from <https://vtss-ric.vcu.edu/>

## 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 Date	Points
Attendance and Participation • Self-Evaluation	Ongoing 12/6	25
Classroom Management and Guidance Analyses • Reading Log with Quotes for each Chapter	<i>Ongoing and based on readings</i> 11/29	25
Internship Reflections • Video 1: Tour • Video 2: Tour and Update	Submit to Bb <b>before</b> class: 8/30 10/18	10 5 5
Professional Resume	Draft: 9/27 Final: 10/4	10
Strength-Based Instruction and Guidance Talking Points Brief	Draft: 11/8 Final: 11/29	30
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

**Classroom Management and Guidance Analyses (25 points)**

This assignment is designed to assist students to explore and develop their own guidance and management practices. Students will (a) complete weekly readings and reflections related to classroom management and guidance philosophies, (b) maintain a reading log with quotes from each chapter, and (c) engage in video analysis reflective experiences. A Classroom Management and Guidance Analyses guide will be available on Blackboard. Students are expected to follow the schedule and complete assignments according to the schedule.

**Internship Reflections (10 points)**

Students will identify select artifacts from their internship to upload to Blackboard to be used during seminar discussions. Artifacts include the following:

***Introducing the Internship Placement***

Students will upload two videos to *Blackboard* introducing their internship at two points during the semester (see class schedule). For both videos, they will narrate the video as they video record the various aspects of the internship (e.g., organization's mission and vision, age/grade level of the children in the classroom). In their second video, they will also explain any changes they have made to their internship goals in response to what they have learned thus far.

**Professional Resume (10 points)**

Students will prepare a resume relevant to the positions they plan to seek. They will participate in feedback sessions, use feedback to revise their resume, and submit a final draft of their resume to Blackboard.

**Strength-Based Instruction and Guidance Talking Points Brief (30 points)**

Students will prepare a two-page, single-spaced, strength-based instruction and guidance talking points brief. This brief is designed to help students organize their talking points for interviews, conversations with families, and collaborating with colleagues and other professionals. The brief will include the following:

- an introduction that provides an overview of their beliefs about strength-based instruction and guidance,
- nine to 12 strengths-based instruction and guidance talking points with a paragraph or bulleted points elaborating on each point, and
- in-text citations and a reference list written in APA style to support the introduction and talking points.

- **Other Requirements**

**Attendance and Participation (25 points)**

Active participation and engagement are imperative for optimal learning. Therefore, students will prepare for and participate in in-class and online activities. Students will be expected to do the following:

- Attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the entire class period for all in-person and online synchronous class sessions.
- Complete all online asynchronous work by the due dates.
- Use laptops and personal devices for instructional purposes only during in-person and online synchronous class sessions.
- Complete readings and prepare for class activities prior to class as evidenced by the ability to discuss, write about, and engage in activities related to the concepts presented and examined in the texts.
- Complete participation activities across the semester that complement the scheduled course topic. *Note: Instructors will periodically collect artifacts from the activities.*
- Support the participation and learning of classmates. 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.
- Show evidence of critical reflective thinking through in-person, online synchronous, and online asynchronous discussions, activities, and written reflections.
- Display professional dispositions at all times when interacting with the instructor, classmates, and other professionals.
- Submit an 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. Portions of the APA manual appear at the Style Manuals link on the Mason library website at <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/content.php?pid=39979>. Students may consult the Writing Center for additional writing support.

Students will do the following:

1. Present ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner. (Avoid wordiness and redundancy.)
2. Develop points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly.
3. Refer to appropriate authorities, studies, and examples to document where appropriate. (Avoid meaningless generalizations, unwarranted assumptions, and unsupported opinions.)
4. Use correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar.
5. Type the paper with double spacing, indented paragraphs, 1-inch margins all around, and 12-point Times New Roman font.

- **Grading**

A+ = 98 – 100   A = 93 – 97   A- = 90 – 92   B+ = 87 – 89   B = 83 – 86   B- = 80 – 82  
 C+ = 77 – 79   C = 73 – 79   C- = 70 – 72   D = 60 – 69   F = < 60

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	Readings and Assignments Due
<p><b>Week 1</b> <b>Aug 23</b></p> <p>In-person</p>	<p>Engaging in Critical Reflection on Teaching, Professional Collaborations, and Opportunities for Continuous Learning</p> <p>Establishing Professional Relationships</p> <p>Professionalism, Ethical Standards, and Personal Integrity</p>	<p><i>Review the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>CEC Initial Preparation Standards &amp; ECSE Specialty Set</i></li> <li>• <i>NAEYC Initial Preparation Standards and Developmentally Appropriate Practices Position statement</i></li> <li>• <i>Virginia's Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers</i></li> <li>• <i>Student Teaching Evaluation Materials</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 2</b> <b>Aug 30</b></p> <p>Online Synchronous</p>	<p>Legal Status of Teachers and Students</p> <p>Crisis Management and Safety Plans</p> <p>Considering Guidance and Discipline of Diverse Young Children in the Classroom</p> <p>Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports</p>	<p>Read: Fields et al, Chapter 1</p> <p><b>Due to Bb by 8/30: Internship Reflections Video Tour #1</b></p>
<p><b>Week 3</b> <b>Sep 6</b></p> <p>Asynchronous</p>	<p>Effect of Physical, Emotional, Social, and Intellectual Development on the Behavior and Discipline of Diverse Young Children</p> <p>Preparing for and Learning from Student Teaching Observations and Evaluations</p>	<p>Read: Fields et al, Chapters 2 and 3</p>



	Virginia’s Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers	
<b>Week 4 Sep 13</b>  Asynchronous	Classroom Management: Environment, Routines, and Discipline Programs in Inclusive Classrooms  Interpreting and Using Assessment of Diverse Young Children to Inform Practice	Read: Fields et al., Chapter 4
<b>Week 5 Sep 20</b>  In-person	Teaching Desirable Behavior Through Example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building inclusive classroom community</li> <li>• Promoting well-being</li> </ul> Implementing Evidence-Based Instructional Practices	Read: Fields et al., Chapter 5  <b>Due to Bb by 9/20: Video Analysis #1 Chapters 1-4</b>
<b>Week 6 Sep 27</b>  Online Synchronous	Communication Strategies for Effective Discipline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redirecting behavior</li> <li>• Positive behavior supports</li> </ul> Collaborating with Diverse Families and Communities	Read: Fields et al., Chapters 6  <b><i>Due to Bb by 9/27: Draft of Professional Resume</i></b>
<b>Week 7 Oct 4</b>  Asynchronous	Helping Children Understand and Accept Limits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual interventions</li> </ul> Preparing for a Professional Career in Early Childhood Education – Reference Letters	Read: Fields et al., Chapter 7 and 8  <b>Due to Bb by 10/4: Final Professional Resume</b>
<b>Week 8 Oct 11</b>  Asynchronous	Supportive instruction	
<b>Week 9 Oct 18</b>  In-person	Preparing for a Professional Career in Early Childhood Education -Creating An Effective Resume	Read: Fields et al., Chapters 9 and 10  <b>Due to Bb by 10/18: Video Analysis #2 Chapters 5-9</b>

		<b>Due to Bb by 10/18: Internship Reflections Video Tour #2 (Update or new classroom)</b>
<b>Week 10 Oct 25</b>  Online Synchronous	Punishment Versus Discipline  Preparing for a Professional Career in Early Childhood Education – Applying for Positions	Read: Fields et al., Chapter 11
<b>Week 11 Nov 1</b>  Asynchronous	Childlike Behaviors and Unmet Needs  Preparing for a Professional Career in Early Childhood Education – Interviewing for Positions	Read: Fields et al., Chapter 12
<b>Week 12 Nov 8</b>  Asynchronous	Meeting the Diverse Needs of Young Children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culturally responsive approaches</li> <li>• Addressing children’s stress and vulnerabilities</li> </ul> Preparing for a Professional Career in Early Childhood Education – Articulating a Code of Practice	Read: Fields et al., Chapter 13  <b>Due to Bb by 11/8: Video Analysis #3 Chapters 10-13</b>  <i>Due to Bb by 11/8: Draft of Strengths-based Instruction and Guidance Talking Points Brief</i>
<b>Week 13 Nov 15</b>  In-person	Analyzing Discipline Challenges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigating school environments</li> </ul>	
<b>Week 14 Nov 22</b>  No class, Thanksgiving break	Preparing for a Career in Early Childhood Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding how historical, philosophical, and sociological foundations underlying the role, development, and organization of public education in the United States influence current teaching practices and environments</li> </ul>	

<b>Week 15</b> <b>Nov 29</b>  Online Synchronous	Course reflection	<b>Due to Bb by 11/29: Strengths-Based Instruction and Guidance Talking Points Brief</b>  <b>Due to Bb by 11/29: Reading Log with Quotes for each Chapter</b>
<b>Reading Days</b> <b>Dec 4-5</b>	No Class	
<b>Finals Week</b> <b>Dec 6-13</b>	No Class	<b>Due to Bb by 12/6: Attendance and Participation Self-Evaluation</b>

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

### Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

### GMU Policies and Resources for Students

#### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <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](mailto: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, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:** As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, 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 or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

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

## Strengths-Based Instruction and Guidance Talking Points Brief Evaluation Guide

- /2 Prepared a two-page, single-spaced, strength-based instruction and guidance talking points brief designed to help students organize their talking points for interviews, conversations with families, and collaborating with colleagues and other professionals.
- Focused on strength-based instruction and guidance
  - Addressed the intended purpose and audience
  - Wrote two single-spaced pages
- /10 Provided an introduction to the strengths-based instruction and guidance talking points brief.
- Used strengths-based language
  - Provided an evidence-based introduction to the instruction and guidance talking points
- /15 Provided nine to 12 strengths-based instruction and guidance talking points with a paragraph or bulleted points elaborating on each talking point.
- Stated talking points using strengths-based language
  - Included talking points meaningful and relevant to working in early childhood education settings
  - Provided evidence-based support for each talking point
- /3 Wrote the talking points in a clear, concise, and cohesive manner using correct spelling and mechanics.
- Presented ideas in a clear, concise, and organized manner
  - Developed talking points coherently, definitively, and thoroughly
  - Cited appropriate authorities, studies, and examples are cited where appropriate
  - Used correct capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar
  - Followed APA style in the text and in the reference list