

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

ECED 201.001 Introduction to Early Childhood Education for Diverse Learners
3 Credits, Fall 2023, In-person
8/21/2023-12/13/2023, Mondays & Wednesdays/ 12:00-1:15 pm
Peterson 1111, Fairfax Campus

Faculty

Name: Pamela Coan Epler
Office Hours: By Appointment
Office Location: Thompson Hall 1200, Fairfax Campus
Office Phone: 703-993-3844
Other Phone/Text: (571) 723-2205
Email Address: pcoan@gmu.edu

Prerequisites/Corequisites

None

University Catalog Course Description

Explores major theories of learning in culturally, linguistically, ability, and socioeconomically diverse early childhood education contexts. Focuses on identifying developmentally effective approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families that positively influence young children's learning. Emphasizes anti-bias curriculum and considers advocacy pathways for early childhood educators. Note: Field Experience Required.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a lecture and/or hybrid format.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

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

1. Describe the historical, philosophical, and sociological foundations underlying the role, development, and organization of public education in the United States.
2. Discuss the legal status of teachers and students, including federal and state laws and regulations; school as an organization/ culture; 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.
3. Describe the major theories of development and learning and how they are reflected in early childhood education settings birth through age eight.
4. Discuss multiple influences on early development and learning (i.e., diverse cultural and linguistic contexts for development, children's close relationships with adults and peers, economic conditions of children and families, health status and disabilities,

children's individual developmental variations and learning styles, opportunities to play and learn, technology and the media, and family and community characteristics).

5. Identify anti-bias, culturally sensitive teaching and learning practices that promote children's engagement.
6. Reflect on developmentally effective approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child's development and learning.
7. Evaluate how observed experiences are developmentally appropriate, meaningful, and challenging for all young children, including those with developmental delays or disabilities, address cultural and linguistic diversities, and lead to positive learning outcomes.
8. Analyze contemporary issues and current trends that might affect their work in the future and articulate the broader contexts and challenges within which early childhood professionals work.
9. Exhibit standards of professionalism, ethical standards, and personal integrity with children, families, and professionals in the field experience setting and in interactions with classmates, the instructor, the field experience coordinator, and others.
10. 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 Competencies

Foundations of Education and the Teaching Profession

Supervised Clinical Experiences

Required Texts

Morrison, G. (2021). *Early childhood education today* (15th ed.). Pearson Education. ISBN: 9780135754283

Pelo, A. (2008). *Rethinking early childhood education*. Rethinking Schools. ISBN: 9780942961416

Other readings as assigned.

Recommended Texts

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

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 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-Evaluation	Ongoing December 6	25
Critical Reflections <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reflection 1• Reflection 2• Reflection 3• Reflection 4	August 25 September 8 October 6 November 3	20 5 5 5 5
Field Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Field Experience Approval Form• Field Experience Journal• Field Experience Verification Form	August 23 November 17 November 17	15 1 10 4
Early Childhood Education Exploration Project <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Part 1: Developing an Early Childhood Philosophy• Part 2: Evaluating Anti-bias Teaching and Learning Tools• Part 3: Exploring Early Childhood Settings	September 15 October 13 November 20	40 5 15 20
TOTAL		100

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

Field Experience (15 points)

This course requires a minimum of 10 hours of field experience. Students will complete their field experience in an early intervention, home-based, school-based, or community-based setting with diverse young children (i.e., infant, toddler, prekindergarten, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, or third grade). To initiate this assignment, students will visit <https://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf> and complete the [Online Field Experience Registration](#). On the form, they will be asked to indicate how their placement will be arranged. Students have two options for fulfilling their field placement requirement.

Option 1:

- Students may arrange their own field experience if they are a full-time contracted school system employee and are able to complete their field experience in an early intervention, home-based, school-based, or community-based setting with diverse young children (i.e., infant, toddler, prekindergarten, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, or third grade).

Option 2:

- Students may request placement in an early intervention, home-based, school-based, or community-based setting with diverse young children (i.e., infant, toddler,

prekindergarten, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, or third grade) through the field placement office <https://cehd.gmu.edu/endorse/ferf>.

- The field placement office will arrange placement for students in a specific school with a specific teacher.

Field Experience Approval Form (1 point)

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

Field Experience Journal (10 points)

Students will complete at least 5 field experience journal entries throughout the semester to document observations, connections to course content, and any questions that arise during the field experience. Each journal entry should be approximately one page in length for each of the five entries and will be submitted towards the end of the course through Blackboard. A template is provided on Blackboard.

Field Experience Verification Form (4 points)

Upon completion of their field experience hours, students will provide documentation of their experience.

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

Students will exhibit standards of professionalism, ethical standards, and personal integrity throughout the field experience process with the instructor, field experience coordinator, classroom teacher, students, administrators, etc. Students will refer to Bb for DEC Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for EI/ECSE and NAEYC Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators.

Critical Reflections (20 points)

Students will submit four reflections (at 5 points each) that make connections among the Pelo text, observational scenarios, and early childhood practice. Specifically, each reflection will focus on a specific topic connecting course readings and concepts discussed in class. These topics include the following:

- Reflection 1: Professionalism
- Reflection 2: Teaming and Collaboration
- Reflection 3: Interaction
- Reflection 4: Environment

The point of each reflection is NOT for students to simply provide a summary of the readings and/ or their field experiences; rather, students are to think critically about what is being read, discussed, and learned in class. Reflections will be two double-spaced pages in length using 12-point Times New Roman font and follow current APA writing style.

Early Childhood Education Exploration Project (40 points)

Students will engage in a three-part project that documents their (a) developing philosophy of early childhood education, (b) understanding of anti-bias teaching and learning tools, and (c) knowledge of a specific early childhood education setting.

Part 1 Developing an Early Childhood Philosophy (5 points)

Students will develop a brief personal philosophy of early childhood education. Each personal philosophy should include the following:

- definition of the role of an early childhood educator or professional
- description of an early childhood theory of development serving as the foundation for teaching and learning
- statement of the importance of supporting diverse learners

Each philosophy statement should be no longer than one double-spaced page. Students will share their personal philosophy with at least two peers and discuss similarities and differences between each philosophy statement. Philosophy statements will be graded according to the rubric provided on Blackboard.

Part 2 Evaluating Anti-Bias Teaching and Learning Tools (15 points)

Students will identify and evaluate a teaching and learning tool that can be used to promote an anti-bias curriculum. Examples of teaching and learning tools include, but are not limited to, the following:

- practices (e.g., number talks)
- resources (e.g., articles, books)
- online resources (e.g., reputable websites, podcasts)

Students will submit a short overview of their teaching and learning tool for approval prior to submission. After receiving approval for their tool, students will complete the evaluation form provided on Blackboard.

Students will provide a description of their selected teaching and learning tool as part of a resource *Share Fair* on Blackboard. This overview will include the name of the tool and its use in promoting anti-bias curriculum. If the tool is accessible online, students will provide a link to access the tool. The purpose of this resource *Share Fair* is to provide all students with a resource library to promote anti-bias and anti-bias curriculum in their future work as early childhood professionals.

Part 3 Exploring Early Childhood Settings (20 points)

Students will develop and present information on an early childhood education or care setting. In the presentation, students will do the following:

- Describe the type of early childhood program selected.

- Summarize the historical and philosophical context related to the type of early childhood program selected.
- Connect to at least one theory of development appropriate for the selected early childhood education setting.
- Explain how children from culturally, linguistically, ability and socioeconomically diverse backgrounds are supported in the selected setting.

Students will utilize an electronic presentation format (e.g., PowerPoint, Prezi) to develop a 5-minute presentation. Each student will post their presentation on Blackboard prior to presenting.

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 you are not confident of your own ability to catch errors, you should have another person proofread your work. When in doubt, you should check the APA manual. You 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+ = 100-98 A = 97 – 93 A- = 92 – 90 B+ = 89 – 87 B = 86 – 83 B- = 82 – 80
 C+ = 79 –77 C = 76 – 73 C- = 72 – 70 D = 69 – 60 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 College of Education and Human Development (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	Topic	Reading	Assignments Due
Week 1 Aug. 21	Introduction and Review of Syllabus	Morrison, Chapter 1	
Week 1 Aug. 23	The Early Childhood Profession	CEC Code of Ethics https://exceptionalchildren.org/standards/ethical-principles-and-practice-standards NAEYC Ethical Principles and Practice Standards The 10 NAEYC Program Standards NAEYC Pelo, Choice of selection from Part 7; p.187	Due to Bb (8/23): Field Experience Approval Form Due to Bb (8/25): Critical Reflection #1
Week 2 Aug. 28	Historical, Philosophical, and Sociological Foundations	Morrison, Chapter 4 Pelo, Introduction (ix-xvi) Pelo, Part 4-1 p. 123	

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments Due
Week 2 Aug. 30	Early Childhood Education: Past and Present	Morrison, Chapter 4 Pelo, Introduction (ix-xvi) Pelo, Part 4-1 p. 123	
Week 3 Sept. 4	No Class, Labor Day		
Week 3 Sept. 6	Theories of Development and Learning	Morrison Chapter 5 Pelo, Choice of selection from Part 3	Due to Bb (9/8): Critical Reflection #2
Week 4 Sept. 11	Theories of Development and Learning Continued	Morrison Chapter 5 Pelo, Choice of selection from Part 3	
Week 4 Sept. 13	School as an Organization and Culture	Morrison, Chapter 6 Pelo, Part 4-2 pg. 131	Due to Bb (9/15): Part 1 Developing an Early Childhood Philosophy
Week 5 Sept. 18	Infants and Toddlers	Morrison, Chapter 9 Additional Blackboard Materials	
Week 5 Sept. 20	No Class Meeting		
Week 6 Sept. 25	The Preschool Years	Morrison, Chapter 10 Additional Blackboard Materials	
Week 6 Sept. 27	Kindergarten	Morrison, Chapter 11 Additional Blackboard Materials	
Week 7 Oct. 2	Primary Grades (1-3)	Morrison, Chapter 12 Additional Blackboard Materials	
Week 7 Oct. 4	Review infants- primary Grades	Morrison, Chapters 9 -12	Due to Bb (10/6): Critical Reflection #3
Week 8 (Oct. 9) Class meets Tuesday Oct. 10	Observation and Assessment for Teaching and Learning	Morrison, Chapters 3, 13 Pelo, Part 3-6 p. 109	

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments Due
Week 8 Oct. 11	Observation and Assessment for Teaching and Learning	Morrison, Chapters 3, 13 Pelo, Part 3-6 p. 109	Due to Bb (10/13): Part 2 Evaluating Anti-Bias Teaching and Learning Tools
Week 9 Oct. 16	Anti-Bias Teaching	Morrison, Chapter 15 Pelo, Part 1-1 p. 3 Pelo, Part 1-2 p. 7	
Week 9 Oct. 18	Anti-Bias Teaching	Morrison, Chapter 15 Pelo, Part 1-1 p. 3 Pelo, Part 1-2 p. 7	
Week 10 Oct. 23	Understanding Children with Diverse Needs	Morrison, Chapter 16 Pelo, Choice of selection from Part 3	
Week 10 Oct 25	Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning	Morrison, Chapter 15 Pelo, Part 1-1 p. 3 Pelo, Part 1-2 p. 7	
Week 11 Oct 30	Developmentally Appropriate and Effective Approaches	Morrison, Chapter 14 Pelo, Choice of selection from Part 5	
Week 11 Nov 1	Guiding Behavior	Morrison, Chapter 14 Pelo, Choice of selection from Part 5	Due to Bb (11/3): Critical Reflection #4
Week 12 Nov 6	Connecting Parents, Families, and Communities	Morrison, Chapter 17 Pelo, Part 6-2 p. 165	
Week 12 Nov 8 Asynch Class No Class Meeting	Guiding and Connecting Children	Morrison, Chapter 17 Pelo, Part 6-2 p. 165	
Week 13 Nov 13	Technology and Young Children	Morrison, Chapters 3, 13 Pelo, Part 3-6 p. 109	

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignments Due
Week 13 Nov 15	Types of Early Childhood Programs	Morrison, Chapter 7 Pelo, Choice of selection from Part 7	Due to Bb (11/17): Field Experience Journal Due to Bb (11/17): Field Experience Verification Form
Week 14 Nov 20	Child Care	Morrison, Chapter 7 Pelo, Choice of selection from Part 7	Due to Bb Before Class (11/20): Part 3 Exploring Early Childhood Education Settings
Week 14 Nov 22	No Class, Thanksgiving Break		
Week 15 Nov 27	Role, Development, and Organization of Public Education Federal and State Programs	Morrison, Chapter 8 Pelo, Choice of selection from Part 2	
Week 15 Nov 29	Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood Education	Morrison, Chapter 2	
Dec 4-5	Reading Days: No class meeting		
Dec 6-13	Finals Week: No class meeting		Due to Bb (12/6): Attendance and Participation Self-Evaluation

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

Core Values Commitment

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

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices 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.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.

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