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

ECED 505.C01 Introduction to Early Childhood Special Education
3 Credits, Summer 2024, Online Bichronous
6/24/2024-8/1/2024; Wednesdays/ 7:20 pm-10:00 pm

Faculty
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Prerequisites/Corequisites
None

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

Course Delivery Method
This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using a synchronous 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 June 24, 2024.

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: 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 four 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 nature and characteristics of major disabling and at-risk conditions for young children, including children with diverse cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
2. Describe the services and pathways for service delivery for children birth through age five with disabling and at-risk conditions, including methods for instructional services and programs, curriculum development, and tiered instruction.
3. Provide an overview of early intervention and early childhood special education programs.
4. Describe the historical perspective and philosophical and sociological foundations underlying the role, development, and organization of special education in the United States.
5. Discuss legislation and legal aspects associated with students with disabilities, including legislative and judicial mandates related to education and special education (e.g., the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, § 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act) and legal decisions related to person with disabilities and explain how it intersects with current issues and influences professional practice.
6. Describe current regulations and procedures governing special education to include Individualized Education Program (IEP), Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA), and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) development.
7. Describe the development process of IEPs and IFSPs, including case management, collaboration, co-teaching, interagency coordination, inclusive practices, least restrictive environment, and transition.
8. Describe disciplinary practices, policies, and procedures, and alternative placements in schools in relation to young children with disabling conditions and at-risk conditions.
9. Describe the role of assessment in identification, eligibility, service delivery, and program development/improvement for young children and their families, including children and families with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
10. Describe effective strategies for training, managing, and monitoring paraprofessionals.
11. Exhibit standards of professionalism, ethical standards, and personal integrity with children, families, and professionals in the field experience setting (e.g., early intervention, home-based, school-based, community-based) and in interactions with classmates, the instructor, the field experience coordinator, and others.
12. Use writing as an instructional and assessment tool to generate, gather, plan, organize, and to communicate for a variety of purposes; integrate correct written conventions (i.e., grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling); and format using current APA style.

Professional Standards

Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) 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, and Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies

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

Virginia Professional Studies Endorsement Competencies
Supervised Clinical Experiences

Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies
Nature and Characteristics of Major Disabling and At-Risk Conditions
Foundations of Legal Aspects
Standards of Professionalism
Supervised Experiences

Required Texts
American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Author. ISBN: 9781433832178
Deiner, P. L. (2013). *Inclusive early childhood education: Development, resources, and practice* (6th ed.). Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. ISBN: 9781111837150
Gargiulo, R. M., & Kilgo, J. L. (2020). *An introduction to young children with special needs: Birth through age eight*. Sage. ISBN: 9781544322063

Required Online Documents
Council for Exceptional Children Division for Early Childhood. (2020). I*nitial 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_6e8952cda15f48b3935a7729dddcb50d.pdf
Council for Exceptional Children. (2015). *What every special educator must know: Professional ethical and standards.* Author. Retrieved from https://www.cec.sped.org/Standards/Ethical-Principles-and-Practice-Standards
Division for Early Childhood. (2014). *DEC Recommended Practices*. Retrieved from https://divisionearlychildhood.egnyte.com/dl/tgv6GUXhVo

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

Assignment	Due Date	Points
Attendance and Participation ● Self-Evaluation	Ongoing	**25**
Field Experience Documentation	Ongoing	**15**
Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues Paper	7/14	**10**
Annotated Bibliography Paper	7/21	**5**
Individualized Education Program (IEP) Writing Group Project	7/24	**30**
Reflection on Practice and Lifelong Learning	7/31	**15**
Total		**100**

● **Assignments and/or Examinations**

Annotated Bibliography (5 points)
Students will work independently to identify five peer-reviewed publications related to at least one of the course objectives. For each publication, students should provide a one paragraph annotation/summary including the purpose, summary, and implications of the study. All publications should be cited using APA formatting guidelines.

Field Experience Documentation (15 points)
This course requires a minimum of 15 hours of field experience. Students will use videos provided by the instructor and/or obtain placement in an early childhood special education (ECSE) environment which may include classrooms, early intervention programs, and experiences in family homes. As students watch the videos and observe in an ECSE environment, they will complete the field experience documentation charts provided on Blackboard by summarizing, in writing, what they observed in relation to the Division for Early Childhood's (DEC) Recommended Practices. Using the DEC Recommended Practices (RP) as a foundation, students will describe how their observations exemplify specific RPs, strategies for ECSE professionals to implement specific RPs in ECSE environments, and strategies for ECSE professionals to implement specific NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) in ECSE environments.

Upon completion of the field experience hours, students will write a three- to four-page reflection that summarizes how each of the seven topic areas of the DEC Recommended Practices were implemented in the ECSE environment. Students will describe evidence as it relates to specific topic areas. Students may propose an alternative method of reflecting on the field experience and must obtain permission from the instructor prior to completing an alternative method of field experience reflection.

Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues Paper (10 points)
Students will cite information from the course textbook, class discussions and handouts, and/or other relevant peer-reviewed sources to support the information they provide regarding special education legislation. The student will explain the historical, philosophical, and sociological foundations of special education by doing the following:
- Describe key elements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, including citations from course materials;
- Identify the professional ethical standards and practices within that guide the field of special education; and
- Identify three ways special education law will influence their practice in the settings they currently or plan to work. Each of these should align with special education law.

Students will choose from one of the following options and are welcome to email the instructor proposing an alternative option:
- write a three- to four-page, double-spaced paper, OR
- create a video, OR
- create a detailed graphic organizer, OR
- submit an alternative option approved in advance by the instructor.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Writing Group Project (30 points)
Collaboratively, students will conduct a mock IEP meeting and write an IEP for a case-study child with their peers using the IEP form posted to Blackboard. Students will write the IEP together in a virtual meeting with their group while also using a checklist to act out a typical IEP meeting. Students should connect the first week of class to (a) determine their communication system and schedule, (b) decide how they will record their IEP meeting, and (c) complete a roles and responsibilities plan. Roles include (a) scribe (individual who will type), (b) submitter (individual who will submit the assignment and who will share feedback with group once graded), (c) facilitator (individual who will organize meetings and keep track of time). Additionally, students should decide the roles each group member will take during the "IEP Meeting" (e.g., parent/legal guardian, educator, etc.) The IEP will include the following (see Diener, 2013, p. 113 and http://idea.ed.gov):
- Case-study child's present level of performance that includes a detailed discussion of the child's family, medical history, previous early intervention and/or educational services, family's cultural and/or linguistic background, and the child's strengths and areas of need across the developmental domains
- Measurable annual goals with at least one goal addressing a behavior and/or social emotional area of need
- Special education and related services
- Projected time frame for services
- Expected participation with children without disabilities and explanations of the extent to which the case study child is not participating with children without disabilities (least restrictive environment statement)
- Accommodations and modifications

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

Reflection on Practice and Lifelong Learning (15 points)
Upon reviewing the DEC practice videos, students will reflect on their observations and the Division for Early Childhood's Recommended Practices. Students will:
- Identify the DEC Recommended Practice strands and practices,
- Provide a summary of their observations of each strand including the setting in which it was observed,
- Specify the DEC practice strands and practices that include elements of diversity specific to families, cultures, and early childhood learning environments,
- Provide a summary of their observations of each of these practices including how diversity is embedded,
- Identify three ways they will continue to learn about DEC Recommended Practices (e.g., conferences, webinars, publications),
- Identify three ways they will gain support in applying these practices within the early childhood environment they will work (e.g., peer observation and feedback, self-recording, taking data on practice), and
- Identify three ways they will disseminate recommended practices to colleagues (e.g., communities of practice, feedback).

Students will choose from one of the following options and are welcome to email the instructor proposing an alternative option:
- four- to five-page report, OR
- presentation video with verbal description, OR
- graphic organizer/visual, OR
- alternative option approved in advance by the instructor.

- **Other Requirements**

Attendance and Participation (25 points)
1. Attendance is taken when the class is scheduled to start, and a student will be considered late once attendance is taken. If a student leaves more than 10 minutes before the end of the class, then it is considered an early departure. Two late arrivals or early departures, or a combination of both, equals one absence.
2. Students who are registered for the course at the start of the semester must attend the first class session to continue in the course. If the student is registered for the course and unable to attend the first class session, they should drop the course and plan to take it in a subsequent semester.
3. Course length:
   a. <u>For undergraduate students:</u> In 15-week semester-long courses, more than 2 class absences will result in one full letter grade (10%) deduction. For example, if a student has a 92% in a 15-week course, after more than 2 absences their grade will automatically change to an 82%. In a course that is less than a full 15-week semester length, inclusive of 7.5-week and 10-week courses, more than 1 class absence will result in one full letter grade (10%) deduction. For example, if a student has a 92% in a 7.5-week course or a 10-week course, after more than 1 absence their grade will automatically change to an 82%.
   b. <u>For graduate students:</u> In 15-week semester-long courses, more than 2 class absences will result in one letter grade (5%) deduction. For example, if a student has 92% in a 15-week course, after more than 2 absences their grade will automatically change to an 87%. In a course that is less than a full 15-week semester length, inclusive of 7.5-week and 10-week courses, more than 1 class absence will result in one letter grade deduction. For example, if a student has a 92% in a 7.5-week course or a 10-week course, after more than 1 absence their grade will automatically change to an 82%.
4. Per the catalog (AP.1.6.1), excused absences, to observe religious holidays or to participate in university-sponsored activities (e.g., intercollegiate athletics, forensics team, dance company, etc.) must be communicated to each faculty, within the first two weeks of the semester, with the dates of major religious holidays on which the student will be absent, and the dates for which they are requesting an excused absence for participation in any university-sponsored activity scheduled prior to the start of the semester, and as soon as possible otherwise. Absence from classes or exams for these reasons does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the absence. Students who miss classes, exams, or other assignments because of their religious observance or for participation in a university activity will be

provided a reasonable alternative opportunity, consistent with class attendance policies stated in the syllabus, to make up the missed work. Students are obligated to provide their instructor with a letter from a university official stating the dates and times that participation in the University-sponsored activity would result in the student missing class.

5. Inclusive ECE program participation policy:
   a. In accordance with the GMU Attendance Policies (University Catalog, 2023-2024), "Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they are registered. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation is a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, early departure, or failure to engage in online classes as de facto evidence of nonparticipation." See https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/registration-attendance/#ap-1-6.

Online participation in synchronous sessions requires students to remain engaged and active learners. Therefore, students must keep their camera on throughout the entire class session. Students must attend the entire class session without distractions and participate in small group and whole group activities. If cameras are off and engagement is not evidenced the student will be marked as absent.

If you must be absent, late, or leave early from class, or have your camera off, inform the instructor prior to the beginning of the class session, at least 24-48 hours.

Written Assignments
All formal written assignments will be evaluated for content <u>and</u> 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 enrolled in a CEHD Licensure Graduate Certificate program, however, must earn a B- or better in all graduate licensure coursework. A degree-seeking graduate student will be dismissed after accumulating grades of F in two courses or 9 credits of unsatisfactory grades (C or F) in graduate courses. A 3.0 grade point average is required for completion of the graduate degree.

Professional Dispositions

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

Class Schedule

Date	Topics	Assignments
Week 1 **June 24-30** **Sync Class** June 26 7:20-10:00pm	Syllabus and Assignments Review Setting up the Field Experience Standards of professionalism, ethical standards, personal integrity	Syllabus Review course website Bb Readings (CEC and DEC Documents)
	The Early Childhood Special Education Profession ● Collaboration, co-teaching ● Coordination ● Inclusive practices and least restrictive environment Lifelong learning	Deiner, Ch 1 Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 1, 2
	Early Childhood Special Education: History and Legislation ● Historical perspective ● Philosophical and sociological foundations ● Legislation and legal aspects Early Childhood Special Education: History and Legislation ● Rehabilitation Act ● PL 94-142, PL 99-457 ● ADA ● IDEA ● Legislative and judicial mandates	Deiner, Ch 2

Date	Topics	Assignments
Week 2 **July 1-7** **Sync Class** July 3 7:20-10:00pm	Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues in Practice ● CEC standards ● DEC recommended practices ● NAEYC standards and developmentally appropriate practices	Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 3 **Due to Bb (7/7): Field Experience Documentation: Family**
	Overview of Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education: Service Delivery Pathways ● Home-based services ● Partnering with families ● Resource services ● Inclusive settings ● Self-contained classrooms ● Related services ● Case management Program development/improvement	Deiner, Ch 3
	Assessment in ECSE ● Evaluation, assessment, and eligibility ● Progress monitoring ● Functional assessment ● Service delivery ● Functional behavior assessment (FBA) Curriculum Standards in ECSE ● *Milestones of Child Development* ● *Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Comprehensive Standards for Four-Year-Olds* ● Other standards	Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 4, 5 **Due to Bb (7/7): Field Experience Documentation: Assessment**
Week 3 **July 8-14** **Sync Class** July 10 7:20-10:00pm	IFSP and IEP ● Team, meetings, and content ● PLAAFP, summary of child ● Functional assessment ● Annual goals ● Short-term objectives ● Services and service delivery options ● Least restrictive environment ● Transition	Gargiulo & Kilgo, Ch 6, 7, 8 **Due to Bb (7/14) Field Experience Documentation: Teaming and Transition**

Date	Topics	Assignments
	Instructional/ Intervention Methods ● Curriculum development ● Tiered instruction ● Embedded learning opportunities ● Universal design for learning ● Accommodations Instructional/Intervention Methods ● Functional behavior assessment and Behavior Intervention Plans	Deiner, Ch 4, 5 **Due to Bb (7/14): Field Experience Documentation: Instruction** **Due to Bb (7/14): Foundational Knowledge and Current Issues Paper**
Week 4 **July 15-21** **Sync Class** July 17 7:20-10:00pm	Children with Communication/Language Disorders Children who are English Language Learners Children with Specific Learning Disabilities ● Nature and characteristics ● Impact on social and emotional development ● Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management ● Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background ● Instructional considerations in ECSE	Deiner, Ch 8, 11, 12 **Due to Bb (7/21): Field Experience Documentation: Interaction and Environment**
	Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Children with ADD/ADHD ● Nature and characteristics ● Impact on social and emotional development ● Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management ● Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background ● Instructional considerations in ECSE	Deiner, Ch 10, 13 **Due to Bb (7/21): Annotated Bibliography Project**

Date	Topics	Assignments
	Children who are Gifted and Talented Children with Social, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders ● Nature and characteristics ● Impact on social and emotional development ● Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management ● Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background ● Instructional considerations in ECSE	Deiner, Ch 9, 15
Week 5 **July 22-24** **Sync Class** July 24 7:20-10:00pm	Children with Orthopedic and Neurological Impairments Children with Special Health Care Needs Children with Intellectual Disabilities ● Nature and characteristics ● Impact on social and emotional development ● Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management ● Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background ● Instructional considerations in ECSE	Deiner, Ch 14, 16, 17 **Due to Bb (7/24): Writing an IEP Project**
	Children with Hearing Impairments Children with Visual Impairments ● Nature and characteristics ● Impact on social and emotional development ● Impact on developmentally appropriate behavior expectations and behavior management ● Within context of family, culture, and linguistic background ● Instructional considerations in ECSE	Deiner, Ch 18, 19
	Working with Professionals ● Collaboration ● Training ● Managing ● Monitoring	

Date	Topics	Assignments
Exams **July 31-Aug 1**		**Due to Bb (7/31): Reflection and Practice on Lifelong Learning** **AND** **Attendance and Participation Self Evaluation**

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

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

GMU Policies and Resources for Students
Policies
● Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/).
● Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/).
● Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
● Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see http://ds.gmu.edu/).
● Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
Campus Resources
● Support for submission of assignments to 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, 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: http://cehd.gmu.edu**.**