

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

ECED 404.DL1 Engaging Families of Diverse Learners, Birth-Grade 6  
3 Credits, Fall 2024, Online Bichronous  
10/21/2024-12/14/2024; Tuesdays/ 7:20 pm-10:00 pm

**Faculty**

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**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

None

**University Catalog Course Description**

Focuses on strategies for developing culturally appropriate family professional engagement to benefit children, birth – sixth grade, including children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and children with special needs. Explores theories and research supporting a family-centered approach, including family and professional rights and responsibilities, especially in the special education process.

**Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an 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 @gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on August 26, 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](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 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: 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 two 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. Discuss theories and research supporting family engagement and a family-centered approach to the education of children birth-sixth grade.
2. Discuss the role of cultural and familial contexts in attitudes, beliefs, values, and child rearing practices.
3. Analyze personal values, beliefs, and cultural biases that influence their work with families.
4. Identify underlying standards of professionalism and ethical standards, principles, and ways to work with families, including examining methods of improving communication between schools and families, especially regarding social and instructional needs of children.
5. Describe strategies that support and assist families to identify their priorities, resources, and concerns for their children, including children with special needs.
6. Create tailored opportunities for collaborating with families in the ongoing education of children, especially in terms of increasing family engagement in student learning at home and in school, particularly among families from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds and with children with special needs, including children who are gifted.
7. Identify how families experience substance abuse, trauma—including child abuse and neglect - and other adverse childhood experiences, and family disruptions.
8. Utilize family systems theory to describe and understand family dynamics.
9. Identify specific components of IDEA that support family voices in the special education process.
10. Adopt a strengths-based, problem-solving perspective when analyzing dilemmas related to family engagement.
11. Discuss the theories and techniques of family-centered intervention, including issues related to families from diverse racial, ethnic cultural, religious, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds and multicultural education.
12. Complete study in child abuse and neglect recognition and intervention in accordance with curriculum guidelines developed by the Virginia Board of Education in consultation with the Virginia Department of Social Services.
13. Exhibit standards of professionalism, ethical standards, and personal integrity with children, families, and professionals in the field and in interactions with classmates, the instructor, and others.
14. Use writing as an instructional and assessment tool to generate, gather, plan, organize, and to communicate for a variety of purposes; integrate correct written conventions (i.e., grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling); and format using current APA style.

**Professional Standards** – Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards, Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Professional Preparation Standards, and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Professional Standards and Competencies, Virginia Professional Studies Competencies, and Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies

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

## **Learner Outcomes or Objectives**

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

15. Discuss theories and research supporting family engagement and a family-centered approach to the education of children birth-sixth grade.
16. Discuss the role of cultural and familial contexts in attitudes, beliefs, values, and child rearing practices.
17. Analyze personal values, beliefs, and cultural biases that influence their work with families.
18. Identify underlying standards of professionalism and ethical standards, principles, and ways to work with families, including examining methods of improving communication between schools and families, especially regarding social and instructional needs of children.
19. Describe strategies that support and assist families to identify their priorities, resources, and concerns for their children, including children with special needs.
20. Create tailored opportunities for collaborating with families in the ongoing education of children, especially in terms of increasing family engagement in student learning at home and in school, particularly among families from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, religious, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds and with children with special needs, including children who are gifted.
21. Identify how families experience substance abuse, trauma—including child abuse and neglect—and other adverse childhood experiences, and family disruptions.
22. Utilize family systems theory to describe and understand family dynamics.
23. Identify specific components of IDEA that support family voices in the special education process.
24. Adopt a strengths-based, problem-solving perspective when analyzing dilemmas related to family engagement.
25. Discuss the theories and techniques of family-centered intervention, including issues related to families from diverse racial, ethnic cultural, religious, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds and multicultural education.
26. Complete study in child abuse and neglect recognition and intervention in accordance with curriculum guidelines developed by the Virginia Board of Education in consultation with the Virginia Department of Social Services.
27. Exhibit standards of professionalism, ethical standards, and personal integrity with children, families, and professionals in the field and in interactions with classmates, the instructor, and others.
28. 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) Standards, Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Professional Preparation Standards, and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Professional Standards and Competencies, Virginia Professional Studies 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 Competencies

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

## Virginia Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement Competencies

Family-Centered Intervention

## DEC Professional Preparation Standards

DEC 2.1 Candidates apply their knowledge of family-centered practices, family systems theory, and the changing needs and priorities in families' lives to develop trusting, respectful, affirming, and culturally responsive partnerships with all families that allow for the mutual exchange of knowledge and information.

DEC 2.2 Candidates communicate clear, comprehensive, and objective information about resources and supports that help families to make informed decisions and advocate for access, participation, and equity in natural and inclusive environments

## NAEYC Professional Standards and Competencies

NAEYC 2a Know about, understand, and value the diversity of families

NAEYC 2b Collaborate as partners with families in young children's development and learning through respectful, reciprocal relationships and engagement

NAEYC 2c Use community resources to support young children's learning and development and to support families, and build partnerships between early learning settings, schools, and community organizations and agencies

## Required Texts

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

Grant, K. B., & Ray, J. A. (2023). *Home, school, and community collaboration: Culturally responsive family engagement* (5th ed.). Sage. ISBN: 9781071812211

Steen, B.F. (2023). *Hear our voices! Engaging in partnerships that honor families*. National Association for the Education of Young Children. ISBN: 978-1-952331-18-3

Additional required course readings listed on the class schedule are posted in Bb.

## Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Bb, VIA, hard copy). The entire course is out of a total 1,000 possible points.

Assignments	Due Dates	Points
Attendance & Participation <sup>1</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attendance &amp; Participation Self-Evaluation (100 pts)</li><li>Discussion Board Participation (50 pts)</li><li>Weekly Reading Quizzes (50 pts)</li></ul>	Weekly Sync Classes  Weekly Weekly	<b>250</b>

<sup>1</sup> Check Bb for details about module participation activities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-Assessment of Dispositions in VIA (50 pts)</li> </ul>	December 9	
<i>Hear Our Voices!</i> Discussion	Ongoing	<b>100</b>
Cultural Competency Training Module	November 12	<b>25</b>
Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition and Intervention Training Module	November 26	<b>25</b>
Engaging Families Home Visit Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part 0: Select Family</li> <li>Part 1: Diverse Family and Community Characteristics (Memo 1)</li> <li>Part 2: Understanding and Engaging Families (Memo 2)</li> <li>Part 3: Supporting and Partnering with Families (Memo 3, Resource &amp; Reflection)</li> <li>Part 4: Family Story Presentation</li> <li>Full Home Visit Project (Parts 1, 2, &amp;3 in one document) with any necessary corrections uploaded to VIA</li> </ul>	October 29 November 12 November 26 December 3 December 3 December 9	<b>500</b> 0 <sup>2</sup> 150 200 100 50 0 <sup>3</sup>
Family Engagement Plan	December 9	<b>100</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1000</b>

- Assignments and/or Examinations**

***Hear Our Voices!* Mini-lesson/ Discussion (100 points)**

Students will be responsible for leading a mini-lesson/ discussion about an assigned chapter from the *Hear Our Voices!* text with their small group. Once during the semester, during a designated week, small groups will facilitate an interactive mini-lesson and discussion on their assigned *Hear Our Voices!* chapter. The discussion will include a brief written summary or outline of the chapter (less than 1 minute), an interactive hands-on activity that supports peers’ understanding of three major points of the chapter, and provide a list of five additional resources (links, articles, books, etc.) connected to the chapter topic. The interactive hands-on activity should connect the main points of the chapter with practical application(s) of the content in terms communication between schools and families, shared decision-making practices, instructional practices that are sensitive to culturally and linguistically diverse learners and informed by families, or ways of increasing family engagement in student learning in home and school. Students will complete this in their small groups on a designated week assigned by the professor.

**Engaging Families Home Visit Project (500 points)**

Students will focus on developing culturally appropriate family professional engagement to benefit children, including children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and children with special needs, including children who are gifted and talented and children with disabilities. Students will support and engage families through respectful, reciprocal relationships by conducting a home visit (individually or in partners), including an interview with at least one of the primary caregivers and a family observation during a family event when all primary caregivers and children are present (e.g., family outdoor time, family game night, birthday

<sup>2</sup> “Select Family” is assigned 0 points; however, if the student does not follow the procedure to have the instructor approve the family with whom they plan to work, it can impact the student’s Memos 1-3.

<sup>3</sup> Student will not receive points for uploading to VIA, but failure to upload to VIA may delay student’s receipt of their final grade.

celebration, holiday celebration) with a family of a child (birth – third grade) **whose family experiences structural marginalization<sup>4</sup> by U.S. society based on the following: race, ethnicity, immigrant status, family structure, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, child or parent’s ability status, or religion and whose perspective on early childhood education and parenting is likely to be different from their own.**

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

**Part 0: Select Family (0 points<sup>5</sup>):** The student will review number 1 under Part 1 below and select a family based on the designated criteria. The student will submit a 3-5 sentence paragraph via Blackboard describing how the family is marginalized in a way the student is not. This will require the student to share information about their own intersectional identities such that the instructor is able approve the student working with the family for the assignment. **\*STOP and Please Note: The student must have the family they plan to work with for the home visit project approved by the course instructor BEFORE beginning to write Memo 1.**

**Part 1: Diverse Family & Community Characteristics Memo 1 (150 points):** Memo 1 should include the following four sections.

- 1. Rationale for Selecting Family:** Students will describe the family they selected and will include responses to the following: (a) a rationale for why they chose this family, (b) an explanation of the ways they think the family’s experiences are similar or different from their own, (c) what they have observed about how society views the child and family (either based on race, ethnicity, family structure, sexual orientation, ability, religion, etc.), and (d) an honest attempt to identify and describe any assumptions they have about this family.
- 2. Introducing themselves:** Students will find a way to determine and communicate the common ground between themselves and the family they selected (e.g., gender, work, education, experiences, etc.) as these help with initial introductions. They will describe the introduction and the process they will use to introduce themselves to the family.
- 3. Questions to assist in learning about the child:** Students will develop a set of questions that they will use to help them learn more about the child in terms of the child’s likes, dislikes, interests, and experiences.

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<sup>4</sup>**Marginalized populations** are groups and communities that experience discrimination and exclusion (social, political and economic) because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social and cultural dimensions. (from: <https://nccd.ca/glossary/entry/marginalized-populations>)

<sup>5</sup> “Select Family” is assigned 0 points; however, if the student does not follow the procedure to have the instructor approve the family with whom they plan to work, it can impact the student’s Memo 1 and Memo 2 grade

4. **Questions to assist in learning about the parents and family:** Students will develop a set of questions to ask during the home visit to begin to understand the parents' goals for themselves as well as their children, including goals that reflect the linguistic and ability diversity of the child. They will use the following questions to guide them: How did this family come to be in this place where you have met them? What do you need to understand about their experiences in order to understand them? What is their perspective about their child or children, including the child's or children's linguistic and/or ability diversity? These questions should also help students begin to learn more about the family's everyday experiences as well as prior experiences that might be insightful as they begin to work with them.
- **Memo 1: Students will write a 4- to 5-page memo that addresses the above four points. The student must receive feedback on Memo 1 BEFORE visiting with the family. Do not visit with the family until Memo 1 feedback is received. If the student visits the family before Memo 1 feedback is received, they will need to visit with the family again once they have Memo 1 feedback.**

**Part 2: Understanding and Engaging Families Memo 2 (200 points):** Memo 2 should include critical reflections on the following events (\*see below for key components of this memo).

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

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

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

2. **Observation at a Family Event:** Students will conduct an observation of the child at a family event (e.g., birthday party, family gathering, family dinner, etc.). It can be a routine event or a special event. They must spend at least an hour with the family. During this event,

students will engage the family in an informal conversation to find out about the meanings of their actions, describing and making meaning of their learning experience with the family.

- **Memo 2: Students will write a 6- to 7-page memo describing what they learned during the informal interview with the family and at the family event.**

In relation to the informal interview, students will contrast the family's experiences with their own family experiences and critically examine their previous assumptions given new information and experiences. Students should consider and note the questions that elicited important information. In relation to the child observation at a formal event, students will describe what they saw/heard, the key activities that took place, and what these taught them about the family.

Students can organize the memo based on a discussion of each assumption OR based on the 3 or 4 questions that elicited the best information in relation to the student's assumptions.

**Students should be sure to spend more time critically reflecting and thinking about these experiences rather than simply summarizing everything that happened. In relation to both the informal interview and observation, students should be sure to include the following: (a) what they learned about the family and their changing needs in these interactions (i.e., use a strengths-based perspective), how what they learned challenges or confirms their previous assumptions discussed in Memo 1 and provided greater insight into themselves through coming to know this family, and how they further understand the family through the lens of family systems theory; (b) discuss at least one family-centered practice to support this family's current needs (inform Memo 3); and, (c) what this experience might mean for the student as an educator, particularly in terms of engaging diverse families through communication and instructional and family-centered practices that are sensitive to culturally, linguistically, and ability diverse children and their families.**

### **Part 3: Supporting and Partnering with Families: Family Resource Tool and Discussion**

**(100 points):** This part of the Home Visit project includes a follow-up meeting with the family after memo 2 is completed. The student will use information gathered in the interview and family observation portion of the project to create a family-centered resource tool for the family (e.g., websites, apps, organizations, etc.)

- This tool (i.e., 1-page handout) should be clear, comprehensive, objective, and visually engaging and should be tailored to the family's expressed needs.
- Once the resource tool is created, the student will meet with the family via video conference/in-person meeting to share this resource.
- The student will turn in to Blackboard, Memo 3, which will include (a) the resource tool and (b) a 1-page description of the tool, including three ways that this tool will meet their Home Visit family's needs *and* a description of their experiences providing the family with the tool.
- Students will distribute their resource tools (without 1-page summary) to classmates via Bb discussion board and/or during a class session.

**Part 4: Home Visit Family Story Presentation (50 points):** Students will present what they have learned from their family home visits as a story.

- Each student presentation will be a total of 3-5 minutes and will be presented in class.

- This presentation will include insight into the family’s experiences, including (a) what the student learned about themselves *and* the family; (b) how the student will apply this in their future work with young children and families; and (c) how the student applied their knowledge of the family’s experiences to create a clear and comprehensive resource to provide information and support to the family.
- The presentation should not sound like a clinical case presentation. Students should be creative with their story presentation and consider how they would like their own story to be told from a strengths-based, problem-solving perspective.
- To receive full credit, the student should provide feedback on classmates’ presentations.

### **Family Engagement Plan (100 points)**

Students will use their experiences with the children and families in their setting, any community connections they have made, as well as course content, including readings and discussion, to create a multi-year family engagement plan. This will include not only why they believe it is important to engage with families as a teacher/ practitioner but also the ways they believe are most effective for doing this. Specifically, students will select *at least* three of the six areas of family engagement articulated by Halgunseth and colleagues (2009) to discuss in their family engagement plan:

1. equality and respect for cultures;
2. joint decision-making;
3. two-way communication;
4. build relationships;
5. learn from families/ integrate knowledge and skills of families;
6. support home and community learning

Students will use the template provided and will include academic, both research- and theory-based, literature, specific concrete strategies from the readings, teaching/classroom experiences, and home visit experiences that they plan to implement in their classroom. All course readings should be cited appropriately according to APA format for endnotes.

### **Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition and Training Module (25 points)**

Students will complete an online module focused on child abuse recognition and intervention in accordance with curriculum guidelines developed by the Virginia Board of Education in consultation with the [Virginia Department of Social Services](#).

### **Cultural Competency Training Module (25 points)**

Students will complete an [online module](#) focused on cultural competency in accordance with curriculum guidelines developed by the Virginia Department of Education.

- **Other Requirements**

#### **Attendance and Participation**

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. For undergraduate students: 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. For graduate students: 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 and presentation. The American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition (APA) style will be followed for all written work. All written work unless otherwise noted must be completed on a word processor and should be proofread carefully. (Use spell check!) If students are not confident of their own ability to catch errors, they should have another person proofread their work. When in doubt, they should check the APA manual. Students may consult the Writing Center for additional writing support.

Students will do the following:

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

### ● **Grading**

A+ = 98 – 100 A = 93 – 97 A- = 90 – 92 B+ = 87 – 89 B = 83 – 86 B- = 80 – 82

C+ = 77 – 79 C = 70 – 76 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.

### **Field Accommodations**

If you believe you need ADA accommodations during your field placement and/or internship experience, please contact Mason's Disability Services office (DS). Specific accommodations for fieldwork and internships may be different than academic accommodations; however, like academic accommodations, they are not retroactive. Connecting with DS is a student-initiated interactive process. DS will collaborate with the department and possibly the placement site to provide reasonable accommodations that are individualized and based on documentation,

functional limitations, and a collaborative assessment of needs. For more information, please refer to the Disability Services website: <https://ds.gmu.edu/field-placement/>.

### **Use of Generative AI**

Use of Generative-AI tools should be used following the fundamental principles of the Honor Code. This includes being honest about the use of these tools for submitted work and including citations when using the work of others, whether individual people or Generative-AI tools.

### **Professional Dispositions**

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

## Class Schedule

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments
<b>Week 1</b> <b>Oct 21-27</b>  <b>Sync Class</b> Oct 22 7:20-10:00pm	Introduction to Course, Instructor, and Peers	Review Syllabus and Course Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wheatley, <i>Willing to be Disturbed</i></li> <li>▪ Spectrum of Family &amp; Community Engagement</li> </ul>	
	Intro to Families & Family Engagement  Defining Family  Standards of Professionalism and Ethical Standards in Working with Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NAEYC Equity Position statement (<a href="https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/equity-position">https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/equity-position</a>)</li> <li>▪ Stewart (2007) <i>Who is Kin?</i></li> <li>▪ Dreby &amp; Adkins (2012) <i>The Strength of Family Ties: How US Migration Shapes Children's Ideas of Family</i></li> </ul>	
<b>Week 2</b> <b>Oct 28-Nov 3</b>  <b>Sync Class</b> Oct 29 7:20-10:00pm	Critical Lens for Understanding the Role of Families in Children's Development: Intersectionality  Using a Strengths-Based, Problem-Solving Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ View: The Danger of a Single Story (posted in Bb)</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Intersectionality Self-Study Guide</a>  <b>Choose one:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Krastel (2021)</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Intersectionality in the Early Years Setting</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>DUE in Bb (10/29): Part 0</b> <b>Home Visit</b> <b>Family Selection</b>
	Contemporary Families: Demographics, Structures, and Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grant &amp; Ray, Chapter 4</li> <li>▪ Turnbull, Chapter 3 (Family Functions)  <b>Choose one:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Casper &amp; Bianchi (2002) <i>Changing Families in a Changing Society</i></li> <li>▪ Walsh (2003) <i>Changing Families in a Changing World</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Week 3</b> <b>Nov 4-10</b>  <b>No class, Election Day</b>	Intro to Theories and Research for Understanding the Role of Families in Children's Development: Family Systems Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grant &amp; Ray, Ch. 2</li> <li>▪ Steen, Ch. 1, <i>Why Family Voices and their Stories Matter</i> (pp. 5-28)</li> <li>▪ Spotlight on YC and Families, pp. 4-11 <i>Applying Family Systems Theory to Early Childhood Practice</i></li> </ul>	

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments
	Developmental Process of Parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Steen, Ch. 2, <i>Building Reciprocal Family Partnerships</i> (pp. 29-50)</li> <li>▪ Lareau (2008) <i>Excerpts from 'Unequal Childhoods'</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Week 4</b> <b>Nov 11-17</b></p> <p><b>Sync Class</b> Nov 12 7:20-10:00pm</p>	<p>Family Diversity: Implicit Bias &amp; Sociocultural Perspective</p> <p>Analyzing Personal Values, Beliefs, and Cultural Biases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ View: <i>Tricia Rose Keynote on Structural Racism</i> (on Bb)</li> <li>▪ Wlazlinski &amp; Cummins (2011) <i>Using Family Stories to Foster Parent and Preservice Teacher Relationships</i></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">State of Science (2013) Implicit Bias Review (Kirwan Institute) [pp. 30-34]</a></li> <li>▪ <a href="#">State of the Science (2014) Implicit Bias Review (Kirwan Institute) [pp. 12-21]</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>Due to Bb (11/12): Part 1 Home Visit Memo 1 Diverse Family and Community Characteristics</b></p> <p><b>Group 1 Hear Our Voices! Presentation</b></p> <p><b>Group 2 Hear Our Voices! Presentation</b></p> <p><b>DUE in Bb (11/12): VDOE Cultural Competency Module Certificate</b></p>
<p><b>Week 5</b> <b>Nov 18-24</b></p> <p><b>Sync Class</b> Nov 19 7:20-10:00pm</p>	<p>Family Diversity: Immigration, English Language Learners, Ethnically, Racially, and Culturally Diverse Families, Low-Income Families, Single-Parent Families</p> <p>Cultural and Familial Contexts in Attitudes, Beliefs, Values, and Child Rearing Practices</p>	<p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grant &amp; Ray, Chapter 5</li> <li>▪ Steen, Ch. 3, <i>Creating a Caring Community and Welcoming Environment</i> (pp. 50-70)</li> <li>▪ Vesely et al. (2013) <i>Capitalizing on ECE: Low-Income Immigrant Mothers' Use of ECE to Build Human, Social, and Navigational Capital</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Choose one:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ McGee &amp; Hughes (2011) <i>Identifying and Supporting Young Gifted Learners</i></li> </ul> <p>Riojas-Cortez (2011) <i>Culture, Play, and Family: Supporting Children on the Autism Spectrum</i></p>	<p><b>Group 3 Hear Our Voices! Presentation</b></p> <p><b>Group 4 Hear Our Voices! Presentation</b></p>
	Family Diversity: Families with Children with Disabilities and Families with Children Who Are Gifted, Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grant &amp; Ray, Chapter 10</li> <li>▪ Steen, Ch. 4, <i>Meeting the Needs of Families through Assessment</i>, (pp. 71-88)</li> </ul>	
	Priorities, Resources, and Concerns of Families		
	How IDEA Supports Family Voices in Special Education		

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments
	Family Diversity: Families with LGBTQ+ Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Spotlight on YC and Families: <i>Creating Safe, Just Places to Learn for Children of Lesbian and Gay Parents</i> (pp. 24-27)</li> <li>▪ Read: 3 blog posts from <i>Raising Unicorns</i> (links in Bb)</li> <li>▪ Bartholomaeus &amp; Riggs (2017) <i>Whole-of-School Approaches to Supporting Transgender Students, Staff, and Parents</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Week 6</b> <b>Nov 25-Dec 1</b></p> <p><b>Sync Class</b> Nov 26 7:20-10:00pm</p>	Families in Transition, Families Facing Adversity (substance abuse, trauma, abuse, neglect), Family Disruption & Transitions; Trauma- and Trauma-informed Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grant &amp; Ray, Ch. 6, 7, 8</li> </ul>	<p><b>DUE in Bb (11/26): Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition and Intervention Training Module</b></p> <p><b>DUE in Bb (11/26): Part 2 Home Visit Memo 2 Understanding, Supporting, and Engaging Families Analysis and Reflection</b></p>
	<p>Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Family Engagement</p> <p>Family Engagement: Cultural and Linguistic Competence &amp; Home-School Learning</p> <p>A Family-Centered Approach to Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grant &amp; Ray, Ch. 1</li> <li>▪ Steen, Ch. 5, <i>Strategies and Activities for Honoring and Partnering with Families</i> (pp.89-109)</li> <li>▪ Halgunseth et al. (2009) <i>Family Engagement, Diverse Families, and Early Childhood Education Programs: An Integrated Review of the Literature</i></li> </ul>	

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments
<p><b>Week 7</b> <b>Dec 2-8</b></p> <p><b>Sync Class</b> Dec 3 7:20-10:00pm</p>	<p>Family Engagement: Communication &amp; Home-School Learning</p> <p>Creating Tailored Opportunities for Collaborating with Families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grant &amp; Ray, Ch. 9</li> <li>▪ US Department of Health and Human Services &amp; US Department of Education (2016)- <i>Policy Statement on Family Engagement</i></li> <li>▪ Graue &amp; Hawkins (2010) “<i>I Always Feel They Don’t Know Anything About Us</i>”: <i>Diverse Families Talk About Their Relations with School</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>DUE in Bb (12/3): Part 3 Home Visit Memo 3 (Bb: Resource and reflection)</b></p> <p><b>DB: Resource only to share with class)</b></p>
	<p>Course Wrap up</p> <p>Standards of Professionalism and Ethical Standards in Working with Families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grant &amp; Ray, Chapters 11 &amp;12 Choose <b>one</b>:</li> <li>▪ Moreno, Lewis-Menchaca, &amp; Rodriguez (2011) <i>Parental Involvement in the Home: Critical View Through a Multicultural Lens</i></li> <li>▪ Stitt &amp; Brooks (2014) <i>Reconceptualizing Parent Involvement: Parent as Accomplice or Parent as Partner?</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>DUE in Class: Part 4 Home Visit Presentations</b></p>
<p><b>Week 8</b> <b>Finals Week</b></p>		<p>None</p>	<p><b>DUE in Bb (12/9): Family Engagement Plan</b></p> <p><b>DUE to Bb in VIA (12/9): Upload Home Visit Project (Memos 1, 2, 3 in one document)</b></p> <p><b>Due in Bb to VIA (12/9): Self-Assessment of Dispositions</b></p> <p><b>DUE in Bb (12/9): Attendance and Participation Self Evaluation</b></p>

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

## Core Values Commitment

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

## GMU Policies and Resources for Students

### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to Mason’s Academic Standards (see <https://academicstandards.gmu.edu/>)
- 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.
- Common Policies affecting all courses at George Mason University (see <https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/home/gmu-common-course-policies/>)

### *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>.**

## Evaluation Guide

See Key Assessment Evaluation Guide Document.