



Early Childhood Education: Introduction to Early Childhood Education

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the historical, theoretical, and developmental foundations for educating young children, with an emphasis on creating inclusive environments and curricula that are responsive to the needs of diverse children and their families. Topics include historical influences, program types, guidance strategies, professionalism, current trends and issues, and advocacy.

Course Prerequisites

No prerequisites for this course are required.

System Requirements

- Computer with word processing software
- Internet access connection
- Online video viewing capabilities/Adobe flash player
- Software capable of reading PDF files

Operating Systems	Browsers
Windows XP	Firefox, Chrome
Windows 7 and 8	IE9, IE10, Firefox, Chrome
Windows Vista	IE9, IE10, Firefox, Chrome
Mac OSX	Safari, Firefox, Chrome
iOS devices (tablets and phones)	Safari
Android devices (tablets and phones)	Chrome

NOTE: Additional software will be used, but will either be free and open-source or trial versions, and will be based on the individual needs of each teacher's Web site development and deployment needs. The instructor will work closely with each teacher to assist in determining the appropriate software.

Text Books/Supplemental Reading

Critical reading of assigned articles and text is embedded throughout the course.

Global Goals of the Course

Upon completion of the course, the learner will be able to:

1. Analyze the evolution of the field of early childhood education from its historical and theoretical backgrounds to its current issues and trends.
2. Evaluate programs and learning environments according to appropriate strategies and practices within each of the developmental domains.
3. Examine the quality of early childhood programs according to standards and with the application of different assessment and documentation tools.
4. Explore strategies and practices that promote healthy and safe learning environments and foster children's development of self-regulating skills.
5. Advocate for professionalism, ethical practices, cultural awareness, and positive family and community partnerships.

Instructional Objectives

The learner will deepen existing knowledge of content and apply professional expertise to the skills and strategies contained in this course by meeting the following instructional objectives:

Lesson 1: Roles, Responsibilities, and Education of Early Childhood Education Professionals

- 1.1 Explain the mission and purpose of the early childhood professional
- 1.2 Describe the various roles of professionals in the field of early childhood education
- 1.3 Explain education expectations for those working in various roles in the field of ECE
- 1.4 Describe the unique characteristics of various early childhood settings including family child care, center-based care and education (public and private), infant/toddler care, Head Start, public pre-kindergarten, primary grades, and after-school care

Lesson 2: History and Theories of ECE

- 2.1 Describe contributions of historical figures to the field of early childhood education
- 2.2 Compare the various theories of child development
- 2.3 Compare the various learning theories

Lesson 3: Current Issues in ECE-Research, Trends, and Policy

- 3.1 Identify current issues in early childhood education
- 3.2 Describe the current trends in early childhood education in terms of their impact on children, families, and early childhood professionals
- 3.3 Analyze the implications of research on early childhood education

Lesson 4: Child Development

- 4.1 Describe the characteristics of children ages zero through age eight in each developmental domain
- 4.2 Describe the typical age-related developmental accomplishments for each age group, including infants and toddlers, preschoolers, kindergartners, and children in the primary grades
- 4.3 Explain how knowledge of child development impacts care and education of infants and toddlers
- 4.4 Explain how knowledge of child development impacts teaching for preschoolers
- 4.5 Explain how knowledge of child development impacts teaching of children in kindergarten
- 4.6 Explain how knowledge of child development impacts teaching of children in the primary grades

Lesson 5: Being an Effective Teacher: DAP, Environments, and Play

- 5.1 Explain the concept of Developmentally Appropriate Practices
- 5.2 Explain how DAP considers the age-related developmental characteristics of young children
- 5.3 Explore how DAP addresses individual differences
- 5.4 Describe how DAP is responsive to social and cultural contexts
- 5.5 Apply developmentally appropriate teaching practices to learning in the developmental domains
- 5.6 Describe how DAP influence the arrangement of the learning environment
- 5.7 Critique the application of DAP to the early childhood education environment
- 5.8 Explain the role of play in developmentally appropriate environments

Lesson 6: Special Needs and Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

- 6.1 Describe early childhood education inclusive practices
- 6.2 Analyze early childhood education interpersonal environments that are responsive to cultural, linguistic, and individual needs
- 6.3 Analyze early childhood education physical environments that are responsive to cultural, linguistic, and individual needs
- 6.4 Explain the terminology in special education

Lesson 7: Standards for Effective Practice and Curriculum in Early Childhood

- 7.1 Describe the various standards that promote recommended practices
- 7.2 Explain how program quality standards impact curriculum development
- 7.3 Explain how the developmental domains and knowledge of content areas relate to curriculum development
- 7.4 Describe the characteristics of effective curriculum
- 7.5 Explain how intentional teachers plan and implement curriculum

Lesson 8: Health, Safety, and Well Being of All Children

- 8.1 Describe practices that promote health, good nutrition and cleanliness in early childhood settings

- 8.2 Analyze the qualities of early childhood environments that promote safety in indoor and outdoor settings
- 8.3 Explain practices that promote the health, safety, and well being of all children
- 8.4 Justify the role of play in healthful development and learning

Lesson 9: Guiding Young Children

- 9.1 Explain the guidance strategies that facilitate appropriate behavior in early childhood
- 9.2 Identify how the individual guidance strategies impact specific behaviors in children
- 9.3 Determine how to use a variety of guidance strategies in the early childhood education classroom
- 9.4 Promote practices that support the development of self-regulation skills
- 9.5 Determine the effectiveness of early childhood environments in promoting appropriate behavior and reducing inappropriate behavior of children

Lesson 10: Family, School, and Community Partnerships

- 10.1 Identify the role of curriculum as a lens in classroom instruction
- 10.2 Describe instructional improvement using research-based best instructional strategies
- 10.3 Explain the purpose of national Common Core Standards

Lesson 11: Assessment of Young Children

- 11.1 Describe the different approaches used to assess young children
- 11.2 Describe the advantages and disadvantages for various types of assessments in early childhood
- 11.3 Explain the positive contributions of documenting assessment results to teaching and learning
- 11.4 Explain how assessment findings shape decision making and influence teaching, learning, and early childhood program quality

Lesson 12: Professionalism in Early Childhood

- 12.1 Explain what it means to be an ECE professional: ethical conduct and using evidence-based practices
- 12.2 Describe the role of advocacy in the field of ECE
- 12.3 Explain ways EC professionals can contribute the development of policies that impact early childhood education
- 12.4 Explain what it means to be a culturally competent EC professional

Teaching Methodology and Delivery Model

Teaching methodologies used in this course are specifically designed to maximize learning in a graduate-level, online distance-learning model. Each course facilitator is trained and/or experienced in facilitating graduate-level online courses as well as the specific content and skills of this course.

1. Online methodologies include instructor/expert presentations, directed skill practice, assignment and quiz completion, as well as the synthesis of new knowledge and skills in designing educational applications.
2. The course is taught in a supportive learning environment with teacher-participant interaction and feedback.
3. Content focuses on the presentation of advanced concepts linked to instructional strategies which accommodate learning needs of a diverse student population.
4. Course content, activities, and assignments are organized into Lessons/Milestones that participants complete during the 12-week span of the course. Course content is intended to cover material equal to 45 seat hours of instructional time.
5. Class participants actively construct their own learning and make it personally relevant by acquiring and applying course knowledge/skills to their own teaching situation.

Topics Agenda

Milestone One: Roles, Responsibilities, and Education of Early Childhood Education Professionals

This milestone focuses on the roles and responsibilities of professionals working in early childhood education, including the educational expectations and opportunities available in the field. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to analyze the roles, responsibilities, and requirements of those who work in early childhood settings.

Milestone Two: History and Theories of ECE

This milestone focuses on the contributions of historical figures and learning theorists, child development and learning theories, and program models. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to analyze the evolution of the field of ECE through its historical figures and developmental and learning theorists.

Milestone Three: Current Issues in ECE-Research, Trends, and Policy

This milestone focuses on current trends and the influence of contemporary research on the field of early childhood education. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to analyze current issues that have implications for children, families, society, and early childhood professionals.

Milestone Four: Child Development

This milestone focuses on how knowledge of development and learning impacts the care and education of infants and toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarteners, and children in primary grades. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to

describe the age-related developmental accomplishments of young children from birth through age eight in each of the developmental domains, and their corresponding appropriate teaching strategies.

Milestone Five: Being an Effective Teacher: DAP, Environments, and Play

This milestone focuses on defining and applying developmentally appropriate practices, creating appropriate learning environments, and the role of play. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to critique developmentally appropriate learning environments for children ages zero through eight years of age.

Milestone Six: Special Needs and Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

This milestone focuses on inclusive practices, responsive interpersonal and physical environments, and the language of special education. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to analyze programs that support individual differences, are culturally responsive, and include all children.

Milestone Seven: Standards for Effective Practice and Curriculum in Early Childhood

This milestone focuses on defining, planning, and implementing effective curriculum and connecting developmental domains to curriculum content areas and content knowledge. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to analyze early childhood education standards as they relate to the preparation of developmentally appropriate curriculum.

Milestone Eight: Health, Safety, and Well Being of All Children

This milestone focuses on healthy practices, hazards in children's settings, the role of supervision, teaching health and wellness concepts to young children, and how play promotes healthy development. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to analyze practices that ensure the health, safety, and well being of all children.

Milestone Nine: Guiding Young Children

This milestone focuses on effectively using guidance strategies, defining guidance, regulation, self-regulation, and executive functioning, and creating environments that promote appropriate behaviors. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to compare a variety of guidance strategies to help children develop emotional self-regulation and avoid challenging behaviors.

Milestone Ten: Family, School, and Community Partnerships

This milestone focuses on effective communication techniques for involving families and the importance of creating positive relationships and meaningful family involvement. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to describe strategies that foster teacher and family partnerships for effectiveness in early childhood programs.

Milestone Eleven: Assessment of Young Children

This milestone focuses on the purpose and methods of assessment and the implications of assessment on program quality and decision making. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to describe the role of assessment and documentation as tools that inform curriculum development and improve teaching, child learning outcomes, and early childhood program quality.

Milestone Twelve: Professionalism in Early Childhood

This milestone focuses on the meaning of professionalism, the role of advocacy, and the importance of cultural competence. After completion of this milestone, participants will be able to evaluate the attributes of professionalism in the field of early childhood education, including professional practice, advocacy, and social justice.

Assessments and Grading

In keeping with best instructional and assessment practices, this course requires participants to demonstrate synthesis and application of course knowledge linked to the instructional objectives of this course. Assessment of the projects should not be limited to the quantity of work submitted but should carefully consider the quality and intellectual value of the work. Assessments are due and will be submitted to the instructor within the 12 weeks of the allotted class time. Unless the instructor states otherwise, all papers are expected to be properly formatted electronically.

Graded Assessment Types	Weights (%)
Writing Assignments	80%
Quizzes	20%
Total:	100%

Copies of performance assessment rubrics are included in the course. Points are assigned based on a four-point criterion rubric specifically delineated for each assessment that can be further defined as follows:

Distinguished: The assessment is highly imaginative; demonstrates critical thought; is unique; shows substantial application to one's own teaching or professional position; *goes above and beyond requirements*; is creative; demonstrates both breadth and depth of knowledge of transition-related subject matter; shows individual's personality; is professional in presentation and appearance; and demonstrates considerable effort. The assessment is exceptionally completed and demonstrates clear understanding of the tasks, gives explanations, and shows how the assessment applies to a teaching/learning situation. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Distinguished" on the course rubric.

Proficient: The assessment is well-organized and complete; is effectively and clearly presented; demonstrates clear understandings; applies what has been learned to the

author's own classroom situation; clearly shows connections; is detailed; and is thoughtful and supported with ideas. A thoroughly completed assessment demonstrates that the participant shows awareness of the tasks, gives explanations, and shows how the assessment applies to a teaching/learning situation. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Proficient" on the course rubric.

Basic: This is the lowest passing grade. The assessment meets minimum requirements; includes general information but lacks descriptive detail; shows limited application to teaching/learning; and lacks originality. This denotes work that does not meet **all** aspects of standards for academic performance in a graduate-level course. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Basic" on the course rubric.

Unsatisfactory: The assessment is missing evidence or information; is sloppy and poorly organized; demonstrates only surface understandings; shows no evidence of application to the author's own teaching situation; is poorly written; and does not meet minimum standards for academic performance in a graduate-level course. The assessment meets the specific criteria delineated in "Unsatisfactory" on the course rubric.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

All participants are expected to maintain academic honesty and integrity by doing their own work to the best of their ability. Academic dishonesty (cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, etc.) will result in the participant receiving a zero for that assignment or paper.

Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and The Americans with Disabilities Act, participants who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, which might affect their ability to perform in this class, are encouraged to inform the Director of Academic Affairs prior to the first session. Reasonable academic accommodations, aids, and adjustments may be made as needed to provide for equitable participation.

Attendance

Participants will have 12 weeks from the time of their first date of login to complete the course. They will need to contact The Connecting Link at (888) 550-5465 should they not be able to complete the online class in the time given.

Late Work and Make-Up Policy

Failure to complete all work in this time frame will result in an **incomplete** or a grade of **F** for the work, depending on the reason for the delay.

University Compliance

Course content and instruction are bound by policies associated with the university granting academic credit for the course. Such policies include, but are not limited to: academic integrity and honor codes, institutional objectives and grade grievance procedures. These policies are located within the official academic catalogs which can be accessed through the university's official website.

Compliance with National Standards

Alignment to the Danielson Framework for Effective Teaching

The *Danielson Framework for Effective Teaching* is designed to provide educators with a structure for analyzing and assessing teacher practice and in constructing techniques to strengthen that practice.

Compliance with National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

The NBPTS represents the highest level of professional achievement in the continuum of teacher professional development. The alignment of NBPTS to *Global Course Outcomes* is as follows:

Compliance with Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards for Teachers

InTASC is guided by the basic premise that an effective teacher must be able to integrate content knowledge with the specific strengths and needs of students to ensure that all students learn and perform at high levels.