



ECED 4423 Early Care Connections Online

**Midwestern State University
Gordon T. & Ellen West College of Education and Professional
Studies
Fall 2025**

Professor Information

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Required Reading

Alanís, I., & Sturdivant, T. (Eds.). (2023). Focus on Developmentally Appropriate Practice: Equitable and Joyful Learning in Preschool. National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Instructor Response Policy

Please feel free to contact me via cell phone BUT you need to leave a voice or text message so that I can get back to you. I will respond within 24 hours M-F

Course/Catalog Description

Methods and practices for early care settings that ensure resources, activities, and spaces are designed to make all young children and their families feel valued and connected in the learning

WCoE Conceptual Framework

The outcomes for graduates of professional programs are based upon knowledge, skills, and dispositions in the following elements:

- Learner Development - understand how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and design and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.
- Learning Differences - understand individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.
- Learning Environment - work with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation.
- Content Knowledge - understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.
- Application of Content - understand how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.
- Assessment - understand and use multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.
- Planning for Instruction - plan instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.
- Instructional Strategies - understand and use a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

- Professional Learning and Ethical Practice - engage in ongoing professional learning and use evidence to continually evaluate his or her practice, particularly the effects of his or her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.
- Leadership and Collaboration - seek appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

Objectives

1. Illustrates understanding of the importance of a family's culture as an influence on a child's development. (NAEYC 1,2,4; Texas Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators 6.1)
2. Demonstrates knowledge of how to set up an inclusive environment for young children that fosters a sense of belonging and ensures access for all young children. (NAEYC 1, 4; Texas Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators 1.3)
3. Plans activities designed for children with special needs to be included in play, and demonstrates knowledge of how to incorporate assistive technology for children with special needs. (NAEYC 1, 4, Texas Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators 1.3)
4. Recognizes that language plays a critical role in children's connection to their culture and community and distinguishes best practices that support young children whose first language is not English. (NAEYC 2,4; Texas Infant, Toddler, and Three-Year-Old Early Learning Guidelines: Culturally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Settings)
5. Explains the key components of trauma informed care and demonstrates understanding of trauma informed best practices in early care NAEYC 1,7; Texas Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators 3,7).
6. Analyzes basic needs of families and address how that effects early care best practices (NAEYC 1,6; Texas Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators3,7).

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

Standards

Standard 1 - Child Development and Learning in Context

Early childhood educators (a) are grounded in an understanding of the developmental period of early childhood from birth through age 8 across developmental domains. They (b) understand each child as an individual with unique developmental variations. Early childhood educators (c) understand that children learn and develop within relationships and within multiple contexts, including families, cultures, languages, communities, and society. They (d) use this multidimensional knowledge to make evidence-based decisions about how to carry out their responsibilities.

1b: Understand and value each child as an individual with unique developmental variations, experiences, strengths, interests, abilities, challenges, approaches to learning, and with the capacity to make choices.

Standard 2: Family-Teacher Partnerships and Community Connections

Early childhood educators understand that successful early childhood education depends upon educators' partnerships with the families of the young children they serve. They (a) know about, understand, and value the diversity in family characteristics. Early childhood educators (b) use this understanding to create respectful, responsive, reciprocal relationships with families and to engage with them as partners in their young children's development and learning. They (c) use community resources to support young children's learning and development and to support children's families, and they build connections between early learning settings, schools, and community organizations and agencies.

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

Standard 4: Developmentally, Culturally, and Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices

Early childhood educators understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children's ages and characteristics and on the settings in which teaching, and learning occur. They (a) understand and demonstrate positive, caring, supportive relationships and interactions as the foundation for their work with young children. They (b) understand and use teaching skills that are responsive to the learning trajectories

of young children and to the needs of each child. Early childhood educators (c) use a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate and culturally and linguistically relevant, anti-bias, and evidence-based teaching approaches that reflect the principles of universal design for learning.

Texas Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators

Core Competency Area 6: Diversity and Dual Language Learners

6.1 Cultural Diversity and Equity Competencies:

1. Articulates the importance of a family's culture as an influence on a child's development (creative expression, response style.)
2. Nurtures and interacts with children as individuals.
3. Engages children in positive discussions, read-alouds, and play activities focused on cultural differences.
4. Is supportive of children who make non-stereotypical play choices (boys choosing dresses in dramatic play, preferring academic tasks to imaginative play.)
5. Articulates the influence of culture on interactions with families (meaning of eye contact and non-verbal communication, accepted roles and boundaries for caretakers and educators) and how to engage in effective and positive conversations with all families.
6. Embraces cultural differences and works closely with families to help children transition to the early childhood setting.
7. Plans activities with families that support each child's culture and uses these activities in class to increase children's awareness and understanding of differences and similarities across families.
8. Reflects on own biases and gaps in knowledge regarding cultural influences on children in their classroom and seeks resources and support from other staff to fill in gaps and adjust practices.
9. Integrates, labels, and discusses materials (music recordings, books, pretend food, dolls, toys) that represent the unique cultures of children in the classroom.

10. . Encourages participation from families and staff to ensure a variety of cultural perspectives are represented in program curriculum, activities, and plans.
11. Ensures classrooms have materials (music, books, toys, posters, graphics) that are sensitive to and represent the cultural diversity of the program.
12. Enhances the capacity of others through discussion, modeling, and training in culturally and linguistically sensitive interactions (raising awareness of nonstereotypical play choices, response styles.)
13. Develops and provides information and resources to families and staff regarding cultural differences, influences on development, and culturally sensitive classroom practices.

6.2 Supporting Dual Language Learners: competencies

1. Articulates the language model of the program, when applicable (states activities and times of day designated for instruction in English or other language.)
2. Provides explanation and instruction of basic words for those English Language Learning (ELL) children in the classroom that may not be ready for more sophisticated vocabulary.
3. Uses visual representations (props, manipulatives, pictures) to support ELL children's understanding of classroom activities and instruction.
4. Discusses differences in instruction between languages spoken in the classroom (differences in Spanish and English punctuation, syllabic versus phonemic languages, grammar.)
5. Modifies activities according to the needs of Dual Language Learning (DLL) and ELL children, while adhering to the instructional model of the program.
6. Models strategies, lessons, and activities that support DLL/ELL children
7. Integrates knowledge of developmental theory, state early learning guidelines, curriculum, positive guidance, and learning strategies to plan quality experiences for DLL/ ELL children.
8. Enhances the capacity of others through discussion, modeling, and training of effective techniques that engage DLL/ELL children in positive interactions and activities that support their development across domains

Texas Infant, Toddler, and Three-Year-Old Early Learning Guidelines

Culturally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Settings:

1. It is critical that early care and education professionals connect with the families they work with. Get to know parents, ask them what traditions and customs are important to them. Whenever possible, invite parents to share their traditions with you and the class.
2. Recognize that language plays a critical role in children's connection to their culture and community. Best practice in this area includes speaking with young children in their home language. In this way, providers support young children's connection to their culture and their language development.
3. It is important that providers honor diversity and cultural awareness as a concept and a core value of our society. Introduce stories and books to young children that actively seek to diminish stereotypes, honor pride in one's self and one's origins, and explore how it feels to be different. Play is also an important area for consideration. Young children often use play to explore cultural values, norms, and roles, so it is important that toys, books, and materials in the classroom represent all people and cultures. When observing young children play, be sensitive to the biases they are forming and try to mediate them.

Assessment

Students will demonstrate mastery of these standards by their participation in class, completion of class assignments, projects and lesson plans relating to bilingual content methods and assessment.

Grading Procedures

Grades	Expectations
A 90 - 100%	Work is outstanding and exemplary
B 80 - 89%	Work that is above the minimum requirements
C 70 - 79%	Work meets expected level of performance for most students
D 60 - 69%	Work that falls short of minimum criteria
F 59% or below	Work that falls well below the expected level of performance for most students

Assignments

1. Student Engagement and Chapter Assignments 10%

You are expected to read chapter assignments, and to actively participate by completing all work for each module and these need to be fully completed to the best of your ability. Students will also be required to complete chapter assignments that align with the course textbook and outside videos and/or readings.

2. Basic Needs Reflection 20%

Students will complete the basic needs module where they will examine the US Federal Poverty Level FPL Guidelines, create a basic needs cost chart based on the community they live in, and reflect upon their findings for young children/families in their area.

3. IRIS Module Classroom: An Introduction to Student Differences 10%

Students will be required to go through each section the challenge, initial thoughts, perspectives and resources, the wrap up, and then go to the assessment and answer the five questions. The answers will be submitted through D2L.

4. Picturebooks: Digital Bookshelf 20%

Students will create a digital bookshelf of 15 picture books that are that represent an array of cultures. The bookshelf will include a link to a video of the book, and an attached page with a brief summary of each book including multicultural representations and information on the author and illustrator.

5. Trauma Informed Care Paper 20%

Students will write a paper in which they synthesize what they have learned about trauma informed care and the components of trauma-informed practices and creating trauma-sensitive spaces for young children.

6. Early Care Case Studies 20%

Students will watch video modules on exploring best practices in early care settings. They will discover best practices for creating a welcoming and supportive learning environment that foster is each child's sense of individuality and sense of belonging to their classroom community. Then students will analyze three different

case studies/scenarios from early childhood settings and make decisions on how to use best practices to handle each situation in a developmentally appropriate manner.

Attendance Policy

You are expected to complete all coursework and fully participate in the online course.

Other Class Policies

- Late Assignment Policy - Assignments need to be turned in on the due date and time. If for some reason you are unable to bring in an assignment, you must e-mail it, or send it in with a friend when it is due. Points will be deducted each day it is late. Extenuating circumstances must be discussed with the instructor at least 2 days.
- Change of Schedule- A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the [Schedule of Classes](#) each semester.
- Refund and Repayment Policy- A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).
- Services for Students with Disabilities- In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

- Campus Carry Rules/Policies- Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)
- Smoking/Tobacco Policy- College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by MSU TEXAS. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.
- Alcohol and Drug Policy- To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.
- Campus Carry- Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).
- Active Shooter-The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [Safety / Emergency Procedures](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "Run. Hide. Fight." which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)
- Obligation to Report Sex Discrimination under State and Federal Law- Midwestern State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. State and federal law require University employees to report sex discrimination and sexual misconduct to the University's Office of Title IX. As a faculty member, I am required to report to the Title IX Coordinator any allegations, personally observed behavior, or other direct or indirect knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, which

includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking, involving a student or employee. After a report is made, the office of Title IX will reach out to the affected student or employee in an effort to connect such person(s) with resources and options in addressing the allegations made in the report. You are also encouraged to report any incidents to the office of Title IX. You may do so by contacting:

Laura Hetrick

Title IX Coordinator

Sunwatcher Village Clubhouse

940-397-4213

laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu

You may also file an online report 24/7 at [Online Reporting Form](#)

Should you wish to visit with someone about your experience in confidence, you may contact the MSU Counseling Center at 940-397-4618. For more information on the University's policy on Title IX or sexual misconduct, please visit [Title IX Website](#)

- Grade Appeal Process- Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University MSU Catalog
- Notice- Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.
- Inclement Weather- In the case of campus closure due to inclement weather, key decision-makers will monitor weather projections and communicate with local news agencies and WFISD leadership to make a delay or cancellation decision. Notification occurs through official campus channels and in communication with the local news networks. MSU channels include MSU Alert, MSU Safety app, Postmaster, and website headers. MSU Police and the Office of Marketing and Public Information. Information for all channels can be found at MSU Ready. This online course will continue as scheduled, but if assessment deadlines coincide with the closure dates, deadline will be delayed until after the campus reopens. The timeline is as follows:

Event	Time	Day	Decision
Inclement weather occurs during regular work/class day	3:30 PM	Day of inclement weather	Cancel classes/events after 5 PM
Overnight inclement weather expected	8 PM	Day before inclement weather	Close campus or delay opening

Event	Time	Day	Decision
Delay called the day before but change to closure due to the extent of weather impact	6:15 AM	Day of delay	Close campus
No cancellation or delay decision made the night before	5:30 AM	Day after no decision made the night before	Close campus or delay opening

Please note: By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a "limited right" in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course.

The "limited right" shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student's work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, and for educational purposes.

References/ Scientifically-Based Research/Additional Readings

Midwestern State University. *Midwestern State University Undergraduate Catalog*, [MSU Catalog](#)

Midwestern State University. *Mustangs Midwestern State University Student Handbook*. [Student Handbook](#)

[Culturally Relevant Books in the ELL Classroom](#)

[Getting Started With Culturally Responsive Teaching](#)

Follari, L. (2014). *Valuing diversity in early childhood education*. Pearson.

York, S. (2016). *Roots and wings: Affirming culture and preventing bias in early childhood*. (3rd ed.).

Clark, C. P. (2021). An opportunity for change: Groundbreaking scholar Gloria Ladson-Billings on culturally relevant pedagogy and why education as we know it needs to be transformed. *Literacy Today*, 38(5), 24-27.

Kurian, N. Building Inclusive, Multicultural Early Years Classrooms: Strategies for a Culturally Responsive Ethic of Care. *Early Childhood Educ J* 52, 863-878 (2024).

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-023-01456-0>

[Texas Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators](#)

[National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\) Standards](#)

[Texas Infant, Toddler, and Three-Year-Old Early Learning Guidelines](#)

Appendix A: Standards/Competencies

Assignment/Module/ Course Activities	Course Objectives or Student Learning Outcomes	Standard or Competency
Student Engagement sand Chapter Assignments	1-8	NAEYC 1,2,4, 7; Texas Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators; Texas Infant, Toddler, and Three-Year-Old Early Learning Guidelines: Culturally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Settings
Basic Needs Reflection	3,4	NAEYC 2,4, 7; Texas Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators
IRIS Module Classroom: An Introduction to Student Differences	1-8	NAEYC 1,2,4, 7; Texas Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators; Texas Infant, Toddler, and Three-Year-Old Early Learning Guidelines: Culturally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Settings
Picturebooks: Digital Bookshelf	2,5,6,7	NAEYC 1,2,4; Texas Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators; Texas Infant, Toddler, and Three-Year-Old Early Learning Guidelines: Culturally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Settings
Trauma Informed Care Paper	1,5	NAEYC 1,2,4; Texas Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators

Assignment/Module/ Course Activities	Course Objectives or Student Learning Outcomes	Standard or Competency
Early Care Case Studies	1,5,3	NAEYC 1,2,4, Texas Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners and Administrators; Texas Infant, Toddler, and Three-Year-Old Early Learning Guidelines: Culturally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Settings