



Childhood Education and Family Studies

Student Handbook

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Southwestern Oregon Community College is an Equal Opportunity Educator and Employer.

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NONDISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT

Southwestern Oregon Community College seeks to develop degree credit programs, courses, community service offerings, provides open admission, counseling, placement services for all persons regardless of religion, sex, national origin, physical or mental disabilities, age, or veteran status.

AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT

If you need course adaptations or accommodation because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with your instructors, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with your instructor as soon as possible.

CODE OF ETHICS

The Childhood Education and Family Studies Program follows and adheres to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct. These ethics may be accessed [here](#) or online at <http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSETH05.pdf>

Introduction

The field of Early Childhood Education is concerned with the development and learning of children from birth through age eight. This program focuses on early children's education through a theoretical orientation that places early childhood education within broader social, historical, political, and cultural contexts. Coursework at Southwestern provides a context for teacher candidates to critically examine early education and childcare as well as a practical opportunity for teacher candidates to experience this learning in a real school setting. Infused in the coursework are themes of inclusion, bilingual and multicultural education and care, critical thinking, and reflective teaching. Early Childhood Education is an exciting and dynamic field in which standards for teachers and career opportunities are constantly developing and growing.

The Southwestern CE FS program offers a range of coursework encompassing infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and primary-aged children. Through field placements at Early Head Start, Educare Laboratory School, local elementary schools, community placements and teacher candidate teaching, candidates develop competence in the use of culturally relevant and developmentally appropriate practices.

Guiding Principles & Goals - Childhood Education and Family Studies Programs at Southwestern

Principles:

Main themes within the program include understanding children as the leading role of their own learning, supporting families in their roles with young children, respecting diversity, and addressing the needs of children with diverse abilities in inclusive settings. Themes of inclusion, bilingual and multicultural education and care, critical thinking, and reflective teaching are infused throughout the Early Childhood coursework. Coursework and field experiences, at every level, recognize the social, historical, political, and cultural contexts that have influenced the profession.

Goals:

To provide opportunities for teacher candidate-child, teacher candidate-classroom teacher, teacher candidate-content and teacher candidate-faculty interaction supporting teacher's professional growth and development.

To provide model early care and education programs and staff for teacher candidates to develop effective knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Graduates of the Southwestern Childhood Education & Family Studies Program will possess broad general education and content area knowledge, remain effective and reflective practitioners and problem solvers, apply innovative learning technologies and participate in opportunities for professional growth. Through its efforts, the CE&FS Program seeks to empower its graduates by enabling them to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will allow them to excel in their careers or further educational goals.

Laboratory School and Family Center Mission

Our Family Center and laboratory school provides young children with a nurturing, supportive environment that fosters their love of learning and their development as happy, healthy, responsible human beings who can achieve their fullest potential in society.

Guided by current research and sound educational practices from the fields of child development and family studies, we are committed to providing a resource for the people of Coos County that strengthens child, parent, and community well-being.

Laboratory School and Family Center Goals

1. To provide a model facility which promotes education, training, and support for children, families, staff, and students.
2. To view the family as the child's primary nurturer, educator and caretaker.
3. To work with families as a team and share expertise in the healthy development of the child.
4. To employ only qualified, trained educators knowledgeable in the field of child development, early childhood education and family studies.
5. To provide resources for children, families, staff, and the community.
6. To provide a model teacher training program which emphasizes excellence in education.
7. To work with partners and clients of the Newmark Center and Southwestern Oregon Community College to assist in providing needed support for parents to facilitate their self-sufficiency and independence.

Laboratory School and Family Center Curriculum Philosophy

Our goal is to create a relaxed and positive atmosphere that promotes a positive self-image, an opportunity for expression, and a feeling of responsibility and independence for each child. We provide opportunities for physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth in planning our curriculum. Emphasis is on learning through play. Our center is set up with a variety of learning areas that stimulate curiosity, imagination, and exploration.

All children are individuals, and each child is unique. In planning our curriculum, we take these individual differences and needs into consideration. We also strive to provide an environment that fosters cooperation rather than competition among the children.

A significant characteristic of early childhood is the sensorial nature of children. This means that children learn best by experiencing through their senses. They are oriented to the here and now rather than to the past or to what lies ahead. Research has shown us that children learn best through direct, concrete experiences with people, objects and hands-on manipulation of materials. They also learn best from activities they have chosen themselves. It is important for children to choose their own activities because they:

1. Are more likely to be motivated;
2. Will most often choose activities which are stimulating and give them needed opportunities to practice; and
3. Can feel in control of their learning.

In planning our curriculum, much of the day is devoted to play, child-selected activities, hands-on experiences, and experiences involving the five senses (sensorial). Our curriculum is derived from the most current research in child development. "What works" for children, with consideration of long-range goals, is our guiding foundation. Our program is a dynamic weaving of ideas from Montessori, Reggio Emilia, family centered, and "best practices" curriculum.

A core value of our program related to professional and personal ethics is teacher credibility. Thus, we represent the real world to children accurately and honestly; and we refrain from confusing children with our own adult fantasies, while encouraging them to imagine, create, control and dramatize their own. We define fantasy as that which cannot occur in the real world (i.e. people transforming into other things, animals being personified).

Information for Employment in the Industry

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Students wishing to enter the field of early learning and family services may need to demonstrate competence in various intellectual, physical and social aspects, which represent the fundamentals of professional early childhood education practice.

The following functions may be considered essential requirements for employment. The purpose of these functions is to ensure teachers provide safe, competent and timely care to children in classroom settings.

Mobility/Motor Skills: Sufficient motor ability (balance, coordination, speed and agility) and strength to move independently throughout a classroom setting, to move equipment/children, and to ensure safe and effective environments.

Examples (Not Inclusive):

- *Have mobility, strength, and dexterity to be able to lift a child weighing up to 50 pounds; interact at each child's level and retrieve children who wander and/or run from the group*
- *Be able to sit down on floor or group and get up again quickly*
- *Be able to change a diaper*
- *Perform the duties of sweeping, mopping, cleaning tables, and toilets, etc.*
- *Be able to run and play with children outside*

Sensory Abilities: Sufficient auditory, visual and tactile ability to monitor and assess needs of children.

Examples (Not Inclusive):

- *Have adequate hearing in order to supervise children from across a 20 ft. room*
- *Have adequate vision in order to supervise children from across a 20 ft. room*
- *Demonstrate required sensory skills in order to observe individual children as well as a group of children for monitoring safety, social interaction, non-verbal cues, or signs of physical abuse or neglect*

Communication Skills: Sufficient verbal and non-verbal communication abilities with children, families and other child care providers in the early childhood environment.

Examples (Not Inclusive):

- *Understand and respond to oral communications and directions*
- *Impart information and orally communicate appropriately with children, families, and others*
- *Be able to read, write, understand, and respond to written instructions, communications and materials*
- *Have adequate verbal and written communication skills with other adults (colleagues, parents) and children of differing ages*

Behavioral/Cognitive Skills: Sufficient ability to collect, interpret and integrate information for sound decision-making.

Examples (Not Inclusive):

- *Be dependable; not be late or absent for work in excess or without notification*

- *Refrain from the use and abuse of any substance that would impair the ability to attend work consistently and work with children in a reliable manner*
- *Have the ability to attend work consistently and work with children in a reliable manner to ensure safety of, observation of, and assessment of all situations involving a child, and group of children and co-workers*
- *Adapt to changing duties and needs of work environment, to include retaining new information as related to the program, the profession, and needs of each child*
- *Exercise independent judgement of effectively solve problems, and make decisions*

Emotionally/Interpersonal: Sufficient behavior and social abilities to interact and work collaboratively with individuals, groups, and families.

Examples (Not Inclusive):

- *Take initiative in speaking with parents to make them and the child feel welcome. Work with families and children during arrival and departure to provide a smooth transition.*
- *Be able to stand or sit in front of groups of children and present class materials*
- *Be able to multi-task: stay in control and adequately supervise a group of at least 10 children who are performing different activities. Should have skills in order to meet the needs of small and/or large groups of children while also being aware of the other children in the room; and helping those with special needs or problems at any given time*

Childhood and Education Degree Programs Conceptual Framework

“The Big Ideas”

Our students’ confidence is built through their success with the rigor of the course via the assignments and activities requiring collaborating, creating, presenting, writing, and testing. We encourage individuals to engage in ongoing self-reflection and exploration of their strengths and challenges for delivering the critical, complex services needed by young children beginning during the pre-service phase of their career. We are a "Community of Learners" in which we all (including children, their families, staff, and college students) learn and grow together.

There are a variety of different program designs addressing the education and care of young children across a rather wide continuum of quality. The SWOCC CE FS program emphasizes developmental theories as the basis for practices and curriculum.

There is a professional organization (NAEYC) that provides guidelines, books, a journal, and professional development opportunities for individuals committed to offering the highest quality programs for young children. Our program aligns with, is accredited by, and supports the principles, standards, ethics, and teachings of NAEYC.

The acknowledgement / recognition that the domains of development of the whole child are, or should be, addressed in their learning processes dates back many centuries and was central in the thinking of several well-known and respected educational philosophers.

Play is the natural vehicle through which young children learn and is at the heart of developmentally appropriate educational practice. The provision of ample time for child-directed free play in the daily schedule is critically important to the healthy development of the whole child. Teacher-directed, structured learning experiences are set-up using effective transitions, brief, carefully constructed and skillfully executed in order to facilitate learning for young children. The outcome for children is an equal time allotment for free play activities combined with an equal time for directed experiences within the day.

Theorists have identified and studied patterns in each domain of development that educators of young children understand and know how to support through rich, sensory curricular applications. Concrete, hands on experiences are engaged by children in order for them to construct an understanding of abstract, symbolic representations of their world (words, letters, numbers and the like). Children build their knowledge of the world around themselves through active and sensory experiences that are carefully planned through curriculum.

Children move through the stages of development individually at their own pace based on biological maturation and experience in their environments and do not receive external pressure to "hurry". Readiness is a major concept and theme in the program. Addressing an individual child’s special need may be an exception, as waiting for readiness may not provide the needed support.

Respect for children and the protection of childhood are central themes of the program and are demonstrated within each domain of development studied in the course. These are perhaps most clearly demonstrated as we refrain from hurrying children in the developmental domains. Again, intervention for special needs may be the exception.

We value childhood, and do not regard it as a time to prepare children for the future or next stage; but as a time to enjoy in and of itself. Children are not miniature adults, they are real people now.

Cognitively respect is shown as we support children’s major developmental task of discovering the world around themselves through exploration, investigation, and problem solving; and we understand that each individual must construct conceptual understanding of the operations of the world for himself / herself. We offer learning opportunities through which the child may experience both successes and challenges in an appropriately resourced, child-centered environment. We accomplish this through a rich, well-considered and researched curriculum.

Physically respect is shown as we create child-sized environments, learning centers and a variety of experiences that allow large motor and small muscle movement and encourage children to actively engage the indoor and outdoor learning environments. It is also shown through provision of healthy, nutritious foods and safe surroundings. Our habit of hunkering and conversing with children eye-to-eye is a physical manifestation of our deep respect for the child. Based on the research regarding brain development in infants and young children, we recognize that movement and sensory interaction with the environment throughout the day is a critical need for young children and facilitates both physical and cognitive development. Therefore, curriculum ideas are strongly related to the processes of brain development and the consequent critical impact on the development of the whole person.

Emotionally respect is shown as we build trust with children by allowing them to choose and initiate action in and on the environment, and at the same time being present to provide opportunities to extend and challenge the child’s interest and abilities. We understand the need for children to feel lovable, capable, and worthwhile and use the skill of encouragement instead of praise to deliver those messages. We build children’s security when they overtly see our partnership with, respect for, and inclusion of their parents or guardians in the program.

Socially respect is shown with positive guidance strategies, modeling of empathy/affirmation of feelings, and the provision of an environment that encourages social play and honors individual differences in the ability to socialize. Learning centers and equipment are designed to encourage collaboration and cooperation as children work together; and adults practice patience with children who are just beginning to learn social skills and self-regulation. Adults carefully explain that we all play together at our school when children’s words or actions indicate bias-based exclusion such as, “You can’t play in the block area because you are a girl,” or, “No boys allowed in the house.”

Respect is also shown as multicultural and linguistic diversity are integrated across all disciplines within the curriculum and families are encouraged to share their culture and language within the classroom. Our program is an inclusive anti-bias program committed to promoting the acceptance and appreciation of human diversity. We welcome children and families of all racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds and family compositions. We strive to reflect this respect for diversity in our educational programs and services, our policies and practices, and our interactions with families and the community.

Application of Child Development Theory in Southwestern CE FS Program Practicum Courses

Early childhood educators apply theory from a variety of individuals studied in the Southwestern CE FS Program. In general, theorists agree that early childhood is a period of sensory exploration and discovery of the operations of the real world – physical and social. Below are summaries of some of the ideas presented by major theorists Piaget, Vygotsky, Montessori, and Erikson.

Jean Piaget: His core point is that children must construct concepts about the operations of the real world themselves through hands-on, personal experience (as opposed to being told about things). He believes:

- ✓ Curiosity drives learning and the adult role is to “make them wonder” and provide blocks of time and opportunity for repetition and symbolic play.
- ✓ Adults should present real problems to solve, nurture inquiry, and support the search for answers.

Piaget identifies ages 2 – 7 or 8 as the pre-operational stage of cognitive development and cites some limitations in children’s thinking as they progress through this state.

- ✓ Children are not yet capable of logic, so reasoning is based upon how things look to them (it is intuitive) and they are fooled by appearances (and think such things as the sun is following me).
- ✓ They have a maladjusted sense of cause and effect and have difficulty distinguishing between fantasy and reality. To the young child, everything they can see, whether in the room or in a dream or on a screen or other media, is *real*. They do not have the cognitive ability to view something as not real so they accept everything as real.
- ✓ They are unable to reverse thought, so their thinking is always moving in a forward direction. If, for instance, a story uses a flashback or dream sequence, the children’s thinking won’t usually follow and they will view the flashback as the next part of the story as it moves forward. This inability relates to the confusion between fantasy and reality. The ability to differentiate real from fantasy will come as they begin to reverse thought and attain logic, and the journey is progressive.
- ✓ They use and receive language literally so may not be able to follow metaphor such as, *the arms of the tree reached for me*.

Piaget’s answer to the limitations of children’s thought in the pre-operational stage of development is to give them plenty of hands-on exploration with the real world and to give them time to grow. He believed children’s cognitive development occurs through the natural timing of physical development (genetics) coupled with interactions within the environment (humans and physical environment).

The Southwestern CE FS programs’s decision to present reality based curriculum to groups of children in educational settings is our own conclusion based on what we learn from Piaget – he did not suggest this application in his writings. We believe ECE teachers should be credible individuals who “tell it like it is” and refrain from confusing reality when working with young children who are sorting out the operations of the real world. We don’t, however, ask families to apply this same practice since their story and media preferences are part of their own family culture.

Lev Vygotsky: Lev Vygotsky extends Piaget’s work and believes that social and cognitive development build on each other and work together; and that it takes interaction with teachers and peers for children to learn. Zone of Proximal Development is one of his major concepts relating to children’s learning. The ZPD is the distance between the most difficult task a child can do alone and the most difficult task a child can do with help from an adult or a peer.

Scaffolding is the primary technique he suggests in order for adults to give the assistance needed for learning to move upward through the child’s ZPD. For a painter, a scaffold is used to help him reach what is out of reach as he paints. A teacher scaffolds for the same reason – to help children reach what is out of reach when they work alone. A teacher must carefully observe in order to prepare to scaffold (provide supporting questions or

information) for a child. We must determine where he/she is in the learning process and where he/she is capable of going – a skill that takes experience, time, and commitment. Vygotsky suggested pairing children who can learn from each other, which is part of our intent in constructing small group experiences in the center. In fact, much of Vygotsky's theory is applicable in our small group planning, although, it may also be applied as adults and peers interact with intent during free play.

Maria Montessori: Montessori's theories are so ingrained in Early Childhood Education practice, that we frequently don't give her credit for them, yet she deserves credit because they address the whole child and are critical for the learning and healthy development of young children. Her ideas include:

- ✓ Give children meaningful work.
- ✓ Create child centered (and child sized) environments.
- ✓ Provide real tools that work.
- ✓ Keep materials and equipment accessible to the children.
- ✓ Create beauty and order in the environment.
- ✓ Allow children to take responsibility and therefore to develop competence.
- ✓ Schedule large blocks of open-ended time for children to work.
- ✓ Observe the children and adjust the environment and curriculum, based on what you observe.

Erik Erikson: Erikson's theory applies to the social and emotional development of children and identifies the critical tasks to be accomplished at each stage as children form personality strengths or weaknesses. While his theory extends through 8 stages of the human lifespan from birth to death, the first four stages apply to early childhood development. Strengths stated refer to the successful result of the developmental struggle concluded at that stage.

- ✓ Age 0 -1 year – Trust vs. Mistrust (strength developed is **hope**)
- ✓ Age 2 – 3 years – Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt (strength developed is **willpower**)
- ✓ Age 4 - 5 years – Initiative vs. Guilt (strength developed is **purpose**)
- ✓ Age 6 – 12 years – industry vs. Inferiority (strength developed is **competence**)

Early childhood educators support *trust* through attachment, credibility, and consistency. We support *autonomy* through giving simple choices (and not giving false choices), setting reasonable limits, and accepting children's swings between independence and dependence. We support *initiative* through encouraging independence, setting expectations that are in line with children's individual abilities, focusing curriculum on real things, providing active learning situations and focusing on process instead of product, and calling attention to children's capabilities as opposed to mistakes. We support *industry* as we allow children to choose projects they can achieve (or want to try to achieve) and use materials to create products they value.

Addressing Physical Development in Curriculum Planning

Identification of a developmental goal in any of the following would be sufficient to support curriculum planning: cephalo-caudal or proximal-distal patterns of development, large muscle, small muscle, gross motor, fine motor, perceptual motor, eye-hand coordination, sensory awareness, nutrition, health.

Reference used for summaries:

Mooney, Carol Garhart. 2000. Theories of Childhood: An Introduction to Dewey, Montessori, Erikson, Piaget & Vygotsky. St. Paul, MN: Merrill/Prentice Hall

Practicum/Field Experiences/Internships

Practicum courses and Internships (CWE's) are required for most of Southwestern Oregon Community College's Childhood Education and Family Studies (CE&FS) certificate and degree programs.

Preschool Practicum Courses for the AAS Degree: ECE 163/163B – Practicum I ECE 209/209B – Practicum II ECE 102/102B – Practicum III ECE 261/261B – Practicum IV 21 Total Credits	Infant Toddler Practicum Courses for the AAS Degree: ECE 263/263B – Practicum I ECE 161/161B – Practicum II ECE 162/162B – Practicum III ECE 262/262B – Practicum IV 21 Total Credits	CWE – Internships Required for CE FS AAS and AS Degrees and the AS in Elementary Education: ED 180/280 HV (Home visiting) ED 180/280 P (Pre-K) ED 180/280 K (K-3) ED 180/280 I (3 – 8)
Preschool Practicum Courses for the AS Degree: ECE 163/163B – Practicum I ECE 209/209B – Practicum II ECE 102/102B – Practicum III 15 Total Credits	Infant Toddler Practicum Courses for the AS Degree: ECE 263/263B – Practicum I ECE 161/161B – Practicum II ECE 162/162B – Practicum III 15 Total Credits	Credits vary between 1 and 3 depending on student and program. All must be set up through the internship coordinator

Practicum Placements for the courses listed above will be coordinated with your instructor. Students enrolled in the CE FS AAS or CE FS AS degree programs should locate the Practicum Manual and Forms Packet on the website for more information on practicum sites and required documentation.

Internships (CWE) are coordinated with the Job Placement and Internship Coordinator and must be arranged one term in advance. Contact information for the Job Placement and Internship Coordinator is listed in the front of this handbook.

Professional ePortfolio:

Information about Your Childhood Education and Family Studies ePortfolio

All students graduating with an AS or an AAS in Childhood Education and Family Studies must present a Professional ePortfolio to Childhood Education Faculty at the time they apply for graduation. Here is information on why and how...

Developing a professional e-portfolio makes a statement about who you are as an early childhood professional. What is a professional e-portfolio?

A professional e-portfolio is a collection of electronic documents that demonstrates your competence as an early care and education teacher. It provides a picture of your career, your knowledge, your abilities, and your philosophies about working with young children. Developing your e-portfolio is an on-going process. The e-portfolio creates a record of professional growth and development throughout your career.

A Professional e-Portfolio is:

- A tool for collecting and showing growth and achievement over time in your career field
- Not a scrapbook, but a representation of your early childhood abilities
- Like an expanded resume
- A very common requirement for teaching placements and to help in seeking jobs in schools
- A good exercise in self-evaluation

How can you use a professional e-Portfolio? Once you gather the materials for your portfolio and take the time to put it together, there are many ways you can use the portfolio – use it:

- To highlight your work experience for prospective employers.
- To share with your supervisor.
- To share your accomplishments and expertise with co-workers.
- As a storage system. (When your employer asks for documents for your employee file, they are available!)
- As a record of your ongoing professional development, education, and experience.
- As an advocacy tool.
- AND: Display your ePortfolio page for others to see your commitment to ECE.

Why create an electronic portfolio?

- Many people have found them a helpful way to more clearly present portfolio items - not only through text, but also through visuals, audio, and video formats
- Information can be stored on the Internet – privacy settings keep others from seeing your work.
- It takes up very little room and is easy to update or make changes
- It can include: sound, pictures, graphics, and even video
- It is convenient to use your portfolio to apply for jobs, sending your portfolio link to highlight your accomplishments in the field.

Keep
Keep

Track.
Track.

Keep developing
Keep developing
yourself.
yourself.

Keep
Keep
organized.
organized.

Statement of Commitment*

As an individual who works with young children, I commit myself to furthering the values of early childhood education as they are reflected in the ideals and principles of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. To the best of my ability I will

- Never harm children.
- Ensure that programs for young children are based on current knowledge and research of child development and early childhood education.
- Respect and support families in their task of nurturing children.
- Respect colleagues in early childhood care and education and support them in maintaining the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.
- Serve as an advocate for children, their families, and their teachers in community and society.
- Stay informed of and maintain high standards of professional conduct.
- Engage in an ongoing process of self-reflection, realizing that personal characteristics, biases, and beliefs have an impact on children and families.
- Be open to new ideas and be willing to learn from the suggestions of others.
- Continue to learn, grow, and contribute as a professional.
- Honor the ideals and principles of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.

* This Statement of Commitment is not part of the Code but is a personal acknowledgment of the individual's willingness to embrace the distinctive values and moral obligations of the field of early childhood care and education. It is recognition of the moral obligations that lead to an individual becoming part of the profession.

Sign and Print Your Name
