

EARLY CHILD SPECIAL EDUCATION (ECSE)

ECSE 305 Development and Learning in Children With and Without Disabilities (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): FCST 314; and ECEL 279 or SPED 279. This course is designed to provide preservice teacher candidates with a socioculturally based understanding of children's development from birth through middle childhood. By examining theories and current research in child development, they learn that outcomes for children with and without disabilities are situated in multiple contexts, and in the complex interplay between biological and environmental factors. Children's developmental pathways will be understood in relation to their implications for learning in early childhood and elementary education settings. Teacher candidates learn the etiologies, behavioral characteristics and wide range of developmental outcomes associated with various disabilities and childhood disorders. They learn to observe and interpret the physio-motor, cognitive, and social/emotional development of children and provide interventions that promote optimal learning and development among all children.

ECSE 328 Curriculum and Pedagogy in Inclusive Early Childhood Classrooms (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): ECEL 279; and substitute teaching license is required, consult your teacher education advisor for information. In connection with fieldwork, students explore various pedagogical principles and early childhood curricular approaches to meet the individual and diverse needs of all children birth to age eight, including children with disabilities, within the inclusive early childhood classroom. Students discuss and critically investigate issues related to inclusive learning environments, developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive curriculum, play-based lessons, and authentic assessments. Students analyze inclusive pedagogical tools of differentiated instruction, instructional and assistive technologies, and universal design for learning. Emphasis is placed on valuing the diversity of young learners' strengths and uniqueness and using the knowledge and interests of young learners to inform instructional planning. Students demonstrate an understanding of these practices through the development of an interdisciplinary, universally designed curriculum unit plan.

ECSE 339 Pedagogy in the Inclusive Elementary Classroom (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): ECEL 279; and substitute teaching license is required, consult your teacher education advisor for information. In connection with fieldwork, students explore pedagogic principles and practices that enable teachers to create inclusive classrooms that support social and academic needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities across all primary subject areas. Students analyze and actively explore inclusive pedagogical tools of differentiation, universal design for learning, instruction and collaboration. Emphasis placed on developing a conceptualization of inclusive schools that are responsive to the needs of all students. Students develop an understanding of how children may be at risk of experiencing marginalization and failure in schooling on the basis of dis/ability, social class, race, ethnicity, language heritage, and other facets of identity. Students demonstrate an understanding of these practices through development of an interdisciplinary, universally designed curriculum unit plan. Fieldwork is required.

ECSE 375 Special Topics in Inclusive Education (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): ECEL 279 or SPED 279. This selected topics course explores a topic or issue in the field of inclusive education that is not currently covered in existing courses. Students will gain specific knowledge and skills in a well-defined area of expertise. This course may be repeated once for a maximum of 6 semester hours, as long as the topic is different.

ECSE 502 Sociocultural Context of Disability and Inclusive Education (3 credits)

This course applies critical perspectives to the study of disability and inclusive education through an examination of the shifting social, cultural and political constructions of disability in society. The course material deconstructs traditional psychological interpretations as well as medical models of disability, which conceptualize disability as a "problem" to be fixed or limitations that are located within individuals. In contrast, students explore sociocultural models of disability, which conceptualize disability as a social construct, and people with disabilities as members of marginalized minority group. By examining issues related to disability in the context of the sociocultural paradigm, students have opportunities to take varied perspectives on the ways in which social and environmental factors come to define the experience of disability. Students explore disability and inclusive education through multiple lenses, such as autobiography, personal narrative, film, social policy, and research.

ECSE 505 Learning and Development in Children With and Without Disabilities (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): FSHD 214 or FSHD 512 or departmental approval for appropriate course substitutions or departmental permission to take one of these courses concurrently with ECSE 505. This course is designed to provide teacher candidates with a socioculturally based understanding of children's development from birth through middle childhood. By examining theories and current research in child development, they learn that outcomes for children with and without disabilities are situated in multiple contexts, and in the complex interplay between biological and environmental factors. Children's developmental pathways will be understood in relation to their implications for learning in early childhood and elementary education settings. Teacher candidates learn the etiologies, behavioral characteristics and wide range of developmental outcomes associated with various disabilities and childhood disorders. They learn to observe and interpret the physio-motor, cognitive, and social/emotional development of children and provide interventions that promote optimal learning and development among all children.

ECSE 506 Observation and Assessment of Young Children with Disabilities: Birth to Age 8 (3 credits)

This course focuses on observation, screening and assessment of young children with disabilities from birth to age eight. Students explore commonly used techniques and assessment instruments, examine administration procedures, and learn to interpret findings related to children's development. An emphasis is placed on family partnerships, using observation as a tool in natural settings, and creating appropriate assessment plans for young children.

ECSE 508 Strengthening Partnerships with Families of Children with Disabilities (3 credits)

This course is designed to enhance students' understanding of the importance of meaningful family-professional partnerships. Students gain knowledge, skills, and dispositions to work collaboratively with diverse families to support the education of children with disabilities. The influence of historical, social, cultural, and community influences are deeply embedded in course content. Various approaches including family-focused practice and family systems theory are explored. Students draw from course readings, presentations by guest speakers, and personal and professional experiences to participate in class discussions, complete assignments and expand their understanding of issues vital to families of children with disabilities.

ECSE 509 Principles and Practices in Inclusive Early Childhood Education (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): ECSE 502 and ECSE 505. Students engage in an in-depth investigation to learn how to provide services and supports in inclusive early childhood environments by critically examining guiding principles, current research and exemplary practices. Topics explored include the historical, political, philosophical and legal foundations that shape early childhood practices and how to provide culturally responsive and individualized early education for diverse learners and their families.

ECSE 510 Supervised Practicum and Seminar in Inclusive Early Childhood (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): Departmental approval. This course is a supervised field experience for students who are working within diverse early childhood settings young children with and without disabilities aged birth to eight years. Students spend a minimum of 75 hours in an educational setting where they observe and practice instructional planning and measurement, classroom management, and collaboration with families and professional colleagues. Students also meet regularly in a course seminar designed to create a supportive forum for discussion, problem-solving and examination of issues and topics that grow out of and contribute to each student's professional teaching practice. As a field-based practicum, students are expected to demonstrate a high level of initiative and professionalism as they contribute to the life of their classroom setting, carry out a self-defined investigation project and engage collaboratively in the seminar sessions.

ECSE 511 Advanced Teaching Practices in Inclusive Early Childhood Education (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): ECSE 502 or equivalent and ECSE 509. Young children are naturally inquisitive about their world. They wonder, discover, explore and interact with their environment and the people in it. In this course, experienced practitioners receive advanced preparation for designing and implementing individualized and culturally responsive learning opportunities and curriculum for young children with and without disabilities in inclusive early childhood environments (i.e., child care centers, preschool, Head Start, early elementary school). Through an emergent and child-centered approach, students deepen their understanding of and ways of responding to young learners with a wide range of abilities and diverse backgrounds. Students learn through direct experience and evidenced-based strategies how to create, implement and evaluate high quality educational practices and innovative curricula for diverse young learners birth to age eight.

ECSE 518 Neuromotor Development of the Young Child (3 credits)

The study of typical and atypical patterns of neuromotor organization and development, including general principles of stability, mobility, and the equilibrium as they influence postural stability is presented. Implications for the educator of young children with disabilities will be stressed.

ECSE 519 Language and Early Literacy Development (3 credits)

Explores the development of language, communication and early literacy in children birth to age five, focusing on both typical and atypical development pathways. Considers how children acquire language in social context and the relationships between communicative skills and literacy. Within a theory to practice framework, the course covers topics that include the family's role in early language development, language socialization across cultures, bilingualism and second language acquisition, speech and language impairments, and the emergence of literacy in both home and preschool settings. The role of early childhood teachers in fostering language and literacy development in children with diverse needs and backgrounds is highlighted.

ECSE 520 Research in Inclusive Early Childhood Education (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): Three years of early childhood and/or elementary teaching experience. Methods for writing a research paper are studied. Significant problems affecting children with and without disabilities are investigated and discussed. Published research projects are evaluated. Candidates examine some of the epistemological, political, and methodological issues associated with the idea of teacher research. They study research design, data analysis and method for writing a literature review around a specific action research topic. The focus in this course is on teacher research in education with an emphasis on research conducted by P-5 teachers.

ECSE 523 Communication, Collaboration and Consultation in Inclusive Early Childhood and Elementary Contexts (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): ECSE 509 and ECSE 502. Provides students with a theoretical framework to guide the interactions of early childhood professionals with educational systems, communities, and with each other to insure appropriate educational practices for young children with special needs. Effective strategies to support communication, collaboration, conflict resolution, consultation, mentoring, and collaborative research skills will be addressed. Students will explore various methods for developing professional partnerships that facilitate interagency collaboration in early intervention, transdisciplinary team practices, and team teaching in inclusive early care and education. Students will reflect upon the various ways in which communication, collaboration, and consultation support curriculum, programs, and professional development.

ECSE 528 Early Childhood Inclusive Curriculum Literacy Instruction (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): ECSE 502. Restriction(s): Teacher certification or substitute teaching license is required; consult your teacher education advisor for information. In connection with fieldwork experiences, students explore pedagogical principles and practices that enable teachers to create inclusive classrooms that support social and academic needs of diverse learners, including disabled learners, across all primary subject areas with a focus on content literacy strategies and assessment. Students analyze and actively explore inclusive pedagogical tools of universal design for learning, differentiated instruction, and student-centered learning. Emphasis is placed on developing a conceptualization of inclusive schools that are responsive to the needs of all students. Students develop an understanding of how children may be at risk of experiencing marginalization and failure in schooling on the basis of dis/ability, social class, race, ethnicity, language heritage, and other facets of identity. Students demonstrate an understanding of these practices through the development and teaching of an interdisciplinary, universally designed lesson plan, assessment, and a group curriculum unit plan. 30 hours of fieldwork is required. To meet New Jersey certification code requirements, this course integrates concepts related to content literacy, a critical area for early childhood classrooms.

ECSE 536 Observation and Assessment of Elementary Age Children with Disabilities (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): ECSE 502 and ECSE 505. Students actively engage in observation and assessment of elementary age children with disabilities, with particular emphasis on using assessment processes to inform teachers' pedagogy and support children's active involvement in the general education curriculum. Students plan, implement, and critically interpret the results of a wide range of types of both formal and informal assessments (e.g., standardized assessments, curriculum-based assessments, norm- and criteria-referenced assessments, performance-based and portfolio assessments, etc.) across all skill and subject areas. Throughout the course, specific attention is given to students' critical analysis of the underlying assumptions of assessment processes and of the culture, class, language, and gender implications of using assessment practices in schools.

ECSE 539 Pedagogy in Inclusive Elementary Education (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): ECSE 502; and teacher certification or substitute teaching license is required; consult your teacher education advisor for information. In connection with fieldwork, students explore pedagogic principles and practices that enable teachers to create inclusive classrooms that support social disabilities across all primary subject areas. Students analyze and actively explore inclusive pedagogical tools of differentiated instruction, universal design conceptualization of inclusive schools that are responsive to the needs of all students. Students develop an understanding of how children may be at risk disability, social class, race, ethnicity, language, heritage and other facets of identity. Students demonstrate knowledge of these practices through the development plan. Fieldwork is required.

ECSE 540 Practicum and Seminar in Inclusive Elementary Education (3 credits)

Corequisite(s): ECSE 541. Prerequisite(s): ECSE 502 and ECSE 505 and ECSE 539. Students participate in a supervised field experience within diverse K-5 settings serving children with and without disabilities. Upon pre-approval from the Graduate Program Coordinator, each student spends a minimum of 75 hours in the educational setting. Under guidance of the course instructor, students engage in small group work to discuss issues and topics from field-based experiences, and also to engage in problem-solving that draws upon research, theory, and conceptual models on child development, assessment, pedagogy, and collaborative practice.

ECSE 541 Advanced Pedagogy in Inclusive Elementary Education (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): ECSE 502 and ECSE 505 and ECSE 539. Drawing upon a variety of critical theories and pedagogies (e.g., critical disability studies, critical race theory, queer theory, feminist theories, etc.), students actively develop advanced, inclusive pedagogical strategies and stances that enable them to be responsive to students of significant cultural, behavioral, communication, and academic diversity in inclusive school settings. Students explore and enact direct connections between theory and ethical practice in their own pedagogy through active and in-depth exploration of both research-based case studies and examples drawn directly from their own classroom practice. Through this process, students add both advanced thinking (theoretical) tools as well as advanced collaborative process (problem-solving) tools to their strategic pedagogical toolbox. Students also develop the sophisticated pedagogic and professional development skills necessary for playing leadership roles in schools through the collaborative process of inclusion facilitation.

ECSE 542 Inclusive Pedagogies for Students with Complex Learning and Behavioral Needs (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): ECSE 509 or ECSE 539. Candidates explore advanced pedagogical approaches that enable teachers to facilitate access to academic curricula in inclusive schools for all students, including those with complex learning and behavioral needs. Candidates investigate commonly perceived "barriers" to full and meaningful participation in schools for students experiencing a wide range of disabilities commonly regarded as "severe" or "significant." The course critically examines the pedagogical challenges posed by intersections between the complex needs of these learners (including nonconventional communication, behavior, emotional regulation, attention, sensory perception and integration, movement, and motor development) and the standardized and standards-based behavioral and academic expectations of schools.

ECSE 575 Special Topics in Inclusive Education (3 credits)

The selected topics course explores a topic or issue in the field of inclusive education that is not currently covered in existing courses. Students will gain specific knowledge and skills in a well-defined area of expertise. May be repeated once for a maximum of 6 semester hours, as long as the topic is different.

ECSE 580 Conceptual Foundations of Autism Spectrum Disorders: Bio-Psych-Social Perspectives (3 credits)

This course introduces students to the core features and core developmental profile of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Students examine the nature of human attachment and the interpersonal nature of human development and neurobiology. They review historical and contemporary perspectives on the origins and interventions for ASD, including a comparative analysis of the models of human development underlying major educational and therapeutic approaches. Students explore the central role of affect in organizing development along multiple lines and the affective and relational precursors of communication. Using a bio-psycho-social perspective, they examine the field of sensory processing disorders (SPD), regulatory disorders and language development, so they are informed about the critical importance of developing a child's unique profile. Students also examine the socio-cultural context of autism, and understand the role of educators as change agents.

ECSE 581 Observation, Assessment and Wonder in Autism Intervention (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): ECSE 580 may be taken as prerequisite or corequisite. In this course, students and instructor together examine the complex and at times perplexing presentation of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in young children. Students examine the ways in which children with ASD might be viewed through the eyes of parents, peers, and naive, untrained persons. They review the classification categories used in special education in New Jersey and survey other classification/diagnostic systems that address ASD. They survey screening and assessment instruments and learn to assess each child's individual profile by considering their visual-spatial abilities, tactile sensitivity, auditory/language processing, motor planning and play. Students also examine the sociocultural factors of observation and assessment, as well as differences in observation and assessment methods across environments (i.e. home, school, clinic, community). In keeping with bio-psycho-social perspective, students evaluate transdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches to assessments within play-based activities.

ECSE 582 Inquiry and Praxis: Developmental Approaches for Autism Intervention (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): ECSE 580 and ECSE 581. In this course, students review the predominant methods and approaches for ASD intervention and consider empirical or evidentiary support for alternative or supplemental methods of intervention, including holistic approaches, dietary restrictions, and the use of assistive technologies. They examine and practice developmental and relationship-based models of intervention for ASD, specifically the DIR/Floortime Model. They formulate strategies that integrate behavioral and developmental/relational models, emphasizing the need for reflective practice and considering the disciplinary boundaries and cross-overs inherent in work that considers all areas of development as integrated. In addition, students analyze the cultural and systemic context surrounding a child diagnosed with ASD, including early educational/ intervention programs, inclusion models of special education, the role of individualized plans (IFSP/IEP) in the development of the child, and the reciprocal impact of the label of ASD on peers, siblings, family, community, and social policy. Students explore the implications of "least restrictive environments" and the policies established by educational code.

ECSE 583 Practicum: Reflective Practice in Autism Intervention (3 credits)

Prerequisite(s): ECSE 580, ECSE 581, ECSE 582. In this culminating course for the Cert in Developmental Models of Autism Intervention, students participate in an intensive practicum with children on the Autism Spectrum. They apply knowledge of the Developmental, Individual-Difference and Relationship-based model; multi-disciplinary perspective; ability to integrate insights from a variety of approaches; and skills in identifying goals and objectives for education and intervention. Through practical work experiences with children on the Autism Spectrum, students gain an understanding of the interplay between Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and the child, family, school, clinical setting, and community. They analyze their experience through a reflective supervision framework and examine their own cultural and early childhood experiences, their feelings about working with children on the Autism Spectrum, and the professional boundaries and ethical considerations that are inherent in working in a relationship-based model. The course is comprised of a weekly seminar and 100 field-based practicum hours (usually in the student's work setting, pre-approved by the instructor) for the semester. In addition to reading the scholarly and professional literature, students use vignettes, case-based learning, videos, and audio recordings to evaluate their practicum experience.