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Welcome

We are excited to have you begin your undergraduate degree completion program with us! This Student Handbook provides information about our philosophy of teaching, our mission and objectives, and the requirements, policies, and procedures associated with the Early Childhood and Family Studies (ECFS) Online program, offered under the University of Washington’s Undergraduate Online Degree Completion Program. UW Professional and Continuing Education (UW PCE) is proud to partner with the College of Education on this program.

We designed this handbook to help guide your program of study and to address frequently asked questions concerning the completion of your degree. Please familiarize yourself with the information in this handbook, as well as information provided to you on the College of Education website and in the UW Student Guide.

Introduction

Our Mission

The UW ECFS program plays an integral role in closing the opportunity gap by training the next generation of early childhood teachers, policy makers, and researchers who use the science of early learning to support positive and lasting change in the lives of every child and family in any community.

Overview of the Major

The Early Childhood and Family Studies major is designed to immerse students in the study of child and family development and education. In this program, you will have the opportunity to learn about child development, early learning, and family studies from a variety of perspectives; receive a strong grounding in reading and understanding the theory and evidence that provide the foundation for the field and drives current research and policy efforts; and apply your knowledge and skill as your work alongside early learning and care providers.

A degree in early childhood and family studies will provide excellent preparation for a wide variety of careers in early learning, childcare, parent and family support and education, and social/mental health services. It will also serve as a pathway for graduate studies in education, child and family studies, and other areas.

Our Teaching Philosophy

Our philosophy incorporates several important aspects:

First, we believe in using a competency-based curriculum which uses practice and thoughtful reflection as a primary method of learning. As an intentional professional, you
will need to be reflective and purposeful in what you do and say in the early childhood setting to promote positive child development. The Know, See, Do, Reflect, and Improve framework, used in this degree, provides an important method for the development of the core competencies of effective and intentional teaching and work in related social and health fields. The readings, discussions, exercises, and assignments in each course give you the opportunity to:

**Know:** Gain knowledge of child development and quality teaching and learning.

**See:** Objectively describe, using specific behavioral language, what is happening in video clips of your own and others’ classrooms.

**Do:** Set goals, plan, and implement strategies (also involves enacting knowledge within the context of in-class activities).

**Reflect & Improve:** Observe your practice, assess, analyze, and implement quantifiable positive change (examined practice).

Second, we believe that it is vital for early childhood professionals to possess a deep respect for the dignity and worth of all people, as well as an appreciation of human diversity. We make it a priority to help students to develop and enhance these core values.

Lastly, we believe that students need multiple opportunities to learn new concepts and competencies through a variety of modalities to meet a range of learning styles. Therefore, we enhance instruction through the use of various activities, including case studies, interactive lessons, technology, collaborative group projects, and video sharing and feedback. Required service learning will allow for students to practice real-world application of the content learned through coursework.

**Program Objectives**

Upon successful completion of this degree, you will be able to:

1. Read and evaluate research.
2. Demonstrate knowledge and skills needed to apply, translate, and expand upon research findings to solve practical issues in early childhood applied settings.
   - Apply neurological, behavioral, and sociocultural knowledge of developmental and family systems theories to practical strategies, which support the development of young children and families in cultural contexts.
   - Describe risk factors affecting child development.
   - Engage in family-sensitive practice that acknowledges the impact of biological, social, cultural, ethnic, socioeconomic, and linguistic factors on learning and development to meet the needs of students and families from diverse backgrounds.
   - Demonstrate the appropriate selection and use of ongoing child observation and assessment to critically guide teaching and facilitate children’s development and learning.
○ Identify, evaluate, and create learning environments and exhibit adult-child interactions that support children’s social relationships, emotional and behavioral health, and self-regulation.

○ Assess the form and function of children’s challenging behaviors, develop individual behavior support plans based on the information collected, and engage in ongoing formative assessment of children’s progress.

○ Design and implement learning opportunities and justify how these are grounded in evidence-based practices that support young children’s language and literacy, math, science, and logic and reasoning learning and development.

○ Recognize indicators of typical child development and examples of atypical development.

○ Design learning environments that include accommodations and adaptations for young children with varying needs and abilities.

○ Enact and exhibit the use of evidence-based language and literacy practices.

○ Design and implement joint adult-child interactions in mathematical situations and scientific investigations and tasks that can enhance children’s thinking and justify how these are grounded in evidence-based practices that support young children’s mathematical, scientific, logical, and reasoning development.

○ Create, implement, and evaluate teaching moves that can augment children’s learning from media.

3. Engage in process of impacting social policy and advocacy demonstrating an awareness of the assets and needs of communities.

4. Demonstrate ethical and socially responsible professional characteristics and practices that demonstrate a strong professional identity.

5. Discuss, apply, and teach the skills, routines, and daily habits of becoming a resilient professional.

Degree Requirements

To graduate from the UW with your BA in Early Childhood & Family Studies, you will need a total of 180 credits. These include:

● At least 84 credits taken under the auspices of the ECFS major
● The 70 or more credits that were transferred as part of your admission to the UW
● Additional coursework to achieve a total of 180 credits.

The 180 credits do need to follow a specific distribution, which is described in the following sections.

ECFS Major Requirements

The ECFS major consists of 84 credits in the following categories:

● Core Courses
● General Development Courses
● Service Learning Courses
- Electives, including one course in each of the following categories:
  - Theoretical Foundations of Early Childhood & Family Studies
  - Methodology
  - Social Policy & Organization
  - Note: You can take all electives through the ECFS major, or you can apply coursework you’ve already taken to meet these requirements. Please let your adviser know if you believe a class you took prior to transfer meets one of these categories.

Each required course is offered at least once a year, and certain courses must be taken with your cohort. Your adviser will work closely with you to make sure required coursework is met while also meeting individual needs.

**General Education and Areas of Knowledge (AoK)**

Students must complete all General Education requirements for the BA degree. These requirements can be met with transfer credits or they can be completed after you matriculate at the UW. These requirements are:

- English Composition (5 credits)
- Additional Writing (10 credits)
- Quantitative/Symbolic Reasoning (5 credits)
- Foreign Language – completion of the third college quarter of a foreign language, if not a native speaker or did not have three years of a single foreign language in high school.
- Natural World (20 credits)
- Individuals & Societies (20 credits)
- Visual, Literary, & Performing Arts (20 credits)
- Enough additional coursework in Areas of Knowledge to bring the total to 75 credits (note: Up to 15 credits of ECFS-prefix courses may be counted towards the AoK requirement).

**Additional Requirements**

In addition to the courses described above, you will need to meet the following requirements to earn your BA:

- 2.0 overall GPA
- 2.0 GPA in your major
- a total of 90 credits taken outside of the major
- 45 credits taken as a UW student
- 45 of your last 60 credits taken at UW

**Satisfactory Progress in the Major**

You are expected to make satisfactory progress towards the attainment of a degree. “Satisfactory progress” is determined by the total number of credits you earn in the time you are at the UW. For more information, please visit washington.edu/students/reg/regpol.html#progress.
Planning Your Degree

Advising Resources

Starting a degree completion program can be challenging, especially if you haven’t taken a college course recently. In addition, we know that the online learning environment may be different than what you are used to. Below, you’ll find resources to help you in progressing through the degree, as well as information on the people who are here to help. A list of offices that provide support to students is available on page 13.

Academic Adviser

The Online ECFS degree has a dedicated adviser, Jenni Campbell, whose goal is to help you to successfully complete the program. She can assist you with planning your courses and meeting graduation requirements, refer you to relevant services and offices, and work with you on any academic or personal issues that come up within the course of the program.

Jenni’s contact details are below. In addition to email and phone, Jenni is available via chat, Google Hangout, and in person.

Email: jcole2@uw.edu
Phone: 206-685-8554
Regular office hours: Mon-Fri, 8am-5pm
To make an appointment, visit the appointment calendar.
“Drop-in” hours (chat and phone availability): Tues 9-11am and Thurs 9-10:30am

Developing a Coursework Plan

The ECFS Online program offers both full-time and part-time enrollment options. The full-time curriculum was designed to be manageable for working adults; up to 5 credits in many quarters involves putting what you learn into practice in your classroom or work with young children. Most students will pursue the program full-time; however, we also offer the option for part-time enrollment, in which you take specific classes with your cohort each quarter.

- As a full-time student, you will enroll in three ECFS major courses most quarters (13-15 credits), and each course would be taken with your cohort. It is expected that full-time students will complete their degree requirements in two to three years, depending on incoming transfer credits.
- As a part-time student, you will be required to enroll in specific courses to be taken with your cohort, but have the option of deferring other courses to later in the program. Part-time enrollment ranges from 5-10 credits each quarter, with most quarters requiring 10 credits. Completion time for part-time students will vary based on incoming transfer credits.

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In addition to your major coursework, you will also need to make sure to complete UW’s graduation requirements if you haven’t done so with prior coursework. More information on these requirements is listed on page 6.

Your adviser will be able to help you develop a coursework plan.

Registration

As an ECFS Online student, you may enroll in courses offered under the auspices of the program, as well as a selection of other courses identified by the program. This includes:

- All courses required for the ECFS major
- Selected online courses offered through UW Professional & Continuing Education
- All courses offered during UW’s Summer Quarter

Courses offered on-campus at the UW during the regular academic year and courses offered through state-funded programs are not available to students enrolled in the ECFS Online program.

Registration for all of your courses will take place through UW Professional & Continuing Education.

- Each quarter, your registration link will be emailed to you. This portal for registration will only show the courses offered for the next quarter. You will be able to register online; through email, mail, or fax; over the phone; or in person at the UW PCE Office. You can register for all courses listed (full-time status) or just for the cohort-required classes (part-time status).
- If you need or want to take a class offered outside of the ECFS Online program, talk to your adviser! She will be able to help you determine which courses you can access and give you instructions on how to register.

Service Learning & Portfolio

What is Service Learning?

Field work, or “service learning,” is an integral part of the ECFS curriculum, providing students a unique opportunity to connect coursework with life experience. This experience will be guided by the instructors. Several of your assignments will require that you apply what you have learned in a real-life setting with a group of young children, ages 0-6. Some assignments will require that you work with a minimum group size of 3-5 children. If you are currently a teacher, child care provider, or volunteer in an early learning setting (such as Head Start, Preschool, Sunday School, or projects at community centers) you may complete your assignments in these settings. If you are not currently working or volunteering in a setting with young children at least 2-3 hours per week, it is essential that you secure such a situation within the first two weeks of the quarter. If needed, we can provide resources for locating a placement.
You will demonstrate your competency of skills in assignments that require you to film your interactions with young children at your service-learning setting. Organizations have different policies regarding obtaining permission from families for filming their children. Examples of media release forms you may use will be provided to you.

**Degree Portfolio**

As you work through your service-learning, you will compile a portfolio documenting your teaching performance. In higher education, portfolios document the totality of the college experience. As you change throughout your years of college education, portfolios help you carefully look at your teaching performance, encourage your professional growth, and contribute to reflective thinking. In addition, portfolios can be a useful tool in a job search.

No two portfolios are alike; however, all portfolios create a context for your teaching experiences. They provide formative evaluation in the form of self-improvement and achievement and include rationales for the chosen artifacts. Portfolios allow you to assess strengths, reflect on goals, and identify areas for future growth.

As you progress through the program, your faculty will guide you through the process of compiling a portfolio.

**Professionalism in the Field**

Service learning not only enables you to practice what you learn in your coursework, but it also prompts you to grow as a professional. In addition to applying course content, you will be expected to demonstrate the following professional characteristics while working in the field:

**Initiative** – initiates activities when appropriate; does not wait to be asked or told when to begin tasks.

**Dependability** – follows through on tasks; completes assignments in accordance with stated parameters and/or constraints.

**Time Management/Work Organization** – organizes work and manages time effectively; completes assignments in a timely manner.

**Problem-Solving/Critical Thinking** – analyzes problem situations and conceptualizes alternative approaches and solutions.

**Respect for Human Diversity** – exhibits awareness of and sensitivity to racial, cultural, socioeconomic, religious, gender-based, sexual orientation, and other human differences; seeks out further understanding and skills needed to work with diverse populations.

**Oral Communication** – expresses self orally in a clear and organized manner.
Written Communication – expresses self in writing in a clear and organized manner.

Attending/Listening Skills – listens attentively; attends to important communications.

Interpersonal Relations – relates effectively with colleagues, classmates, instructors, supervisors and coworkers, and families and children.

Teamwork – works well with others; collaborates effectively on group assignments/projects.

Adaptability/Flexibility – adapts effectively to demands of situation; exhibits flexibility in face of change.

Responsiveness to Feedback – exhibits openness to both positive and negative feedback; responds appropriately to feedback from instructors, peers, and service-learning site staff.

Self-Awareness – demonstrates realistic knowledge of personal strengths and weaknesses and their impact on professional functioning and interpersonal relations.

Professional Identity/Development – clearly identifies with profession; exhibits professional conduct in appropriate situations; seeks out opportunities for professional growth.

Independent Functioning – follows through with commitments; completes tasks with minimal supervision.

Systems Orientation – understands that schools, families, and organizations are holistic and integrated systems; effectively utilizes rules, policies, and characteristics of each system.

These professional characteristics will guide all of your actions in your service-learning placement and beyond. You can apply these characteristics in a variety of ways; here are a few select examples:

- Dress professionally, and be aware of any dress codes in effect. As a reminder, unprofessional dress includes dirty or torn clothing, clothing with offensive language or images, shirts that are too revealing of chest or midriff areas, and pants or skirts that are revealing when sitting or standing.
- Be on time and stick to your schedule. If you can’t make it or will be late, let your supervisor know as soon as possible -- not after your shift starts.
- Maintain appropriate relationships with coworkers and children. Be mindful of liability issues (appropriate contact, etc), and keep your personal information (Facebook, etc) private.
- Maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss children and families by name or any other identifying characteristic.
Assessment & Evaluation

The UW uses a 4.0 scale. Rather than a letter grade (A, B, C, etc), you will receive a number grade ranging from 0.0 to 4.0. Detailed information on the grading scale is available in the Student Guide.

Each instructor will create their own grading system; however, there will be some similarities. At the start of the course, most instructors will tell you how many points are possible and provide you with a grading scale to show how points convert into grades. The number of points an assignment is worth will indicate how much it counts towards your final grade. For example, a 20-point assignment counts twice as much towards your final grade as a 10-point assignment in the same course. Remember, each instructor uses a different total number of points, so a 10-point assignment in one course may have more weight than a 10-point assignment in another course.

At the end of the quarter, you will receive a grade according to the scale provided by your instructor.

Community

The College of Education takes pride in its students and works to establish a community and set of communication and support structures to nurture relationships with students. These include:

Communities of Reflection and Practice (CORP)
Specific to the ECFS Online program, your Community of Reflection and Practice (CORP) will consist of 3-4 members of your cohort with whom you will share videos and have discussions related to your coursework for additional learning opportunities. Discussions can take place via discussion forum, video-sharing platforms like Google Hangout, email, etc.

ECFS Facebook Page
The ECFS Facebook page is used to share quick announcements and events with the ECFS community, both online and on-campus.

ECFS Facebook Group
The ECFS Facebook Group is a great way to connect with other members of your cohort both academically and socially. Please ask your adviser for instructions on how to join. Participation is entirely optional; if you do join, please be mindful of the information you share and maintain the confidentiality of the children and families with whom you work.

LinkedIn
LinkedIn can provide an important networking community and source of information, especially for alumni!
**Listserv**
All students are automatically assigned a University e-mail address upon entry into the University of Washington. This e-mail address is entered into the ECFS e-mail list/listserv and will be used to send program communications. Students are responsible for checking their University e-mail address regularly for critical information about scheduling, deadlines, service learning placements, and job opportunities, etc.

**Associated Students of the College of Education (ASCE)**
The Associated Students of the College of Education (ASCE) was created as a forum to voice your ideas, concerns, and share your questions about the College of Education. ECFS has a student representative on this forum. This can be an important connection for students to have a voice from the major to the College.

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**Policies & Procedures**

**College and University Policies**
The [Student Guide](#) is a handy online document that details all of the UW’s policies and procedures in one place. This document is most relevant to on-campus students, so if you come across a discrepancy or have a question, please don’t hesitate to contact your adviser!

**Communication**

Staying in contact is extremely important in an online program! You can communicate with your instructor, adviser, and fellow students using email, phone or video calls, chat, online written discussion forums, or even in-person meetings.

A few things to remember:

- Your UW Net ID will also be your UW email address (i.e. uwnetid@uw.edu). This e-mail address will be entered into the student database and will be used by the program to communicate with you. You are responsible for checking your UW email address regularly for critical information about courses, assignments, appointments, etc.
- As a UW student, you will be able to access your UW email through UW’s Google Apps program. Please make sure to set up your email through this program so you can use the UW’s Google Apps suite.
- Make sure to keep your contact details current in MyUW. If you prefer not to list your details publicly, make sure to mark “NO” under “Directory Release.” You can search for contact info for others by using the [Directory](#).

**Guidelines for Online Interactions**
In this program, you will interact extensively in online learning environments. As with any online interaction, issues of privacy and appropriate communications apply. Some points to keep in mind:

- The online learning environments (Moodle, Coaching Companion, Canvas, etc) are protected under FERPA, which means that they are secure. However, your instructors, classmates, and other program staff will have access to the information you display, so please be responsible with your personal information.
- Outside sites, including ECFS social media sites (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc), are separate from the UW and not always secure. Please be mindful of the information you display on these sites.
- Be responsible with the information you see in the online learning environments! Don’t share information about your classmates, repost photos and videos, etc.
- Use appropriate communication at all times. Do not use foul language or make offensive or hurtful remarks.
- Protect your private information and maintain confidentiality of the children and families with whom you work.

Please remember that, as a condition of your enrollment, you assume responsibility for complying with the UW Student Conduct Code.

Undergraduate Support Services

ECFS Support

**UW PCE Helpdesk:** The Helpdesk can help you with your technology issues, especially those related to accessing your course material and to course technology (including the recommended video camera). You can use the webform at the link or email ecfs_support@pce.uw.edu to access the Helpdesk.

Writing Support Services:** The College of Education offers writing support through its writing center. At the writing center, you can talk through challenges, discuss particular pieces of writing, get help brainstorming, receive feedback on your drafts, and more.

Counseling and Health

**Counseling Center:** The UW Counseling Center offers personal counseling and help with career and study skills to UW students, as well as consultations and referrals for distance students.

**Hall Health:** The Hall Health Primary Care Center is an outpatient facility that offers quality health care services to UW students and their dependents, faculty, and staff, as well as the general public. Online students who are not able to visit in person have access to unlimited phone calls with Consulting Nurses.
Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP): Students may enroll in an accident and sickness insurance plan for themselves and their dependents.

Disability Resources for Students
Disability Resources: The Disability Resources for Students office is committed to providing reasonable academic accommodations to qualified UW students with disabilities.

Diversity
Office of Minority Affairs & Diversity Academic Counseling Services: The Office of Minority Affairs offers a variety of services for students, primarily – but not exclusively – for those from backgrounds historically underrepresented in higher education.

Financial Aid
Office of Student Financial Aid: The Office of Student Financial Aid provides information on qualifying for, applying for and receiving financial aid. Specific information for students enrolled in fee-based programs is also available.

Office of Merit Scholarships, Fellowships, and Awards: The Office of Merit Scholarships, Fellowships and Awards offers information and resources about student scholarship opportunities and mentors students through the application process.

Libraries
University Libraries: The award-winning University of Washington library system has more than 16 libraries, 7 million print volumes and many online resources. The library website has specific information how online students can utilize services.

Academic Records/Transcripts
Academic Records: The Office of the Registrar maintains your academic records, including transcripts.

Please check out the PCE Website for a more comprehensive list of student resources!