

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The Early Childhood Education Certificate Program has been designed to develop expertise in professionals working with children from ages three through eight, which translates to pre-kindergarten through grade three. This program provides a broad spectrum of early childhood education courses, all strongly influenced by the beliefs of the National Association for the Education of young Children (NAEYC), and built on the Nebraska Department of Education endorsement standards. The program combines theory with observation and participation in clinical, community and school practicum settings. The program recognizes that early childhood development is a process of accommodation between the child, the teacher, and the child's environment. Students in the program will learn to translate content and pedagogical knowledge into practice. This, along with many diverse field experiences, will prepare the prospective teacher to understand and implement developmentally appropriate practice in the variety of environments affecting the young child.

Program Goals

1. Candidates prepared in early childhood education endorsement program are grounded in a child development knowledge base. They use their understanding of young children's characteristics and needs, and of multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning, to create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for each child.
2. Candidates prepared in early childhood education endorsement program understand that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with children's families and communities. They know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children's families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families in their children's development and learning.
3. Candidates prepared in early childhood education endorsement program understand that child observation, documentation, and other forms of assessment are central to the practice of all early childhood professionals. They know about and understand the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment. They know about and use systematic observations, documentation, and other effective assessment strategies in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to positively influence the development of every child.
4. Candidates prepared in early childhood education endorsement program understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children's ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Candidates know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child's development and learning.
5. Candidates prepared in early childhood education endorsement program use their knowledge of academic disciplines to design, implement, and evaluate experiences that promote positive

development and learning for each and every young child.

Candidates understand the importance of developmental domains and academic (or content) disciplines in early childhood curriculum.

They know the essential concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of content areas, including academic subjects, and can identify resources to deepen their understanding. Candidates use their own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum that promotes comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child.

6. Candidates prepared in early childhood education endorsement program identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice.

They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies.

Early Childhood Education Graduate Certificate requirements (18 credits)

Code	Title	Credits
Take each of the following courses:		
EDU 556	Foundations and Best Practices of Early Childhood Education	3
EDU 557	Investigating Critical and Contemporary Trends and Issues in Early Childhood Education	3
EDU 558	Content and Methods Specific to Early Childhood Education	3
EDU 559	Significant Concepts for Early Childhood Education	3
EDU 560	Assessment, Observation, Screening and Evaluation in Early Childhood Education	3
EDU 561	Becoming an Early Childhood Teaching Professional	3
Total Credits		18