

## **MASTER OF EDUCATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD**

The Early Childhood Program offers a Master degree in Early Childhood Education. The program is designed to serve the professional development needs of educators and child care professionals by preparing them to serve a diverse population of early childhood students and their families. The Early Childhood program offers students a broad understanding within the theoretical constructs which support practices for young children that are socially, culturally and individually appropriate. The program emphasizes a holistic view of the child and family while also

valuing their role as integral to the community. The goal of the program is for graduates to develop the skills to engage in issues of advocacy with children and families.

The field of Early Childhood Education encompasses a range of professions including certified teachers, child development specialists, early childhood directors, early childhood education coordinators, early childhood advocates and Head Start professionals. Therefore, this degree program focuses on developing the skills and thought processes of both certified and non-certified professionals who work with young children.

### **Program Details**

The Master of Education in Early Childhood degree requires a total of thirty six (36) graduate coursework hours. Twenty-seven hours of this degree are linked to coursework within the Early Childhood program. The degree plan includes required and optional courses offered throughout the year. Additionally, students must identify nine hours as a support or specialty field. Students may choose from either Early Childhood, Bilingual/English as a Second Language Education, Counseling, Educational Administration, Reading or Special Education.

The capstone experience for the Master of Education includes two options. Students may elect to complete this degree by choosing the graduate research project or thesis option. Additional coursework may be required depending on the option selected. All students, regardless of the capstone experience option chosen, will develop an e-portfolio that documents content proficiency.

### **Prerequisites**

Applicants to the Master in Early Childhood program should have a broad base in the following areas: Child Growth and Development, Curriculum and Instruction, Consumer Sciences or Human Ecology.

### ***Required Coursework (21 semester credit hours)***

EDEC 5333	Foundations in Early Childhood Curriculum	3 credit hours
EDEC 5315	Advocacy	3 credit hours
EDEC 5349	Play in the Early Years	3 credit hours
EDEC 5312	Understanding and Valuing Young Children and Families in a Diverse Society	3 credit hours
EDEC 5320	Supporting the Development of Literacy	3 credit hours
EDEC 5330	Assessment Practices in Early Childhood	3 credit hours
EDEC 5310	Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers and Families: The First Four Years	3 credit hours

### **II. Research Core (6 semester credit hours)**

EDEC 5314	Foundations of Research: Early Childhood	3 credit hours
EDEC 5370	Action Research in Early Childhood	3 credit hours

***Elective Requirement (9 hours)***

The program allows students to customize their electives in the specialty/support fields listed below to achieve their academic/career endeavors.

- Bilingual/English as a Second Language
- Counseling
- Educational Administration
- Special Education
- Reading
- Thesis Credits (when electing the Thesis Option)