Admission Requirements

- A baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university**.

- A minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.00 is required for full admission and 2.75 for conditional admission to the program. All GPA calculations are based on the last 60 units of undergraduate and post-baccalaureate study.

- A current résumé to be submitted with the application for admission as well as all post-secondary transcripts. Submit the online application at www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/admissions.

- Experience/background in the field with young children and families.

- Two professional narrative letters of recommendation.

- A brief (two-page) admission essay discussing the applicant’s experiences working with young children and families, and rationale for earning a master’s degree related to professional goals and career aspirations.

One or more of the following:

- An undergraduate degree or graduate course work in Early Childhood Education, child development, family studies or a related field OR

- Teacher certification in early childhood education OR

- Teacher certification in elementary education plus 6 units in early childhood education OR

- A minimum of three years of professional experience in an early childhood program or related setting serving young children from birth to age 8 OR

- Undergraduate courses in the following areas:
  - educational psychology or psychology of learning
  - child growth and development
  - curriculum and methods in early childhood education

Exceptional candidates who do not meet the specific experience/background criteria above may be considered for admission if they intend to work in settings with children from birth through age 8. In these instances, an interview with the program director is required.

NOTE: The M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education is an advanced program and does not lead to initial teacher certification in early childhood education. Individuals interested in post-baccalaureate study should apply for the M. Ed. Certification Option.

Non-immigrant international students: See additional admission information in Graduate Admissions (http://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/admissions/apply/international.html)

**See Exceptions to Policy in Graduate Admissions (http://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/admissions/apply/policies.html)

M.Ed. Certification Option

The program offers a certification option for Early Childhood Education graduate students who already have a background in the field of early childhood education, in addition to increased professional development at the graduate level. The M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education is recommended for graduate students with undergraduate degrees or significant experience in early childhood education, child development, or child and family studies, or who are practicing professionals working with young children and families. The M.Ed. Certification Option consists of the seven required courses and four elective courses that are geared toward certification, as well as additional units in specific areas to meet certification requirements. These additional units will be determined based on prior course work, and will likely include courses in the teaching of reading and internship. The M.Ed. Certification Option will likely require more than the 33 units for the basic M.Ed.
In addition to the admissions requirements above, applicants for the M.Ed. Certification Option must also provide qualifying scores on the Praxis CORE exam (as determined by MSDE) or other approved testing alternative (qualifying SAT, ACT, or GRE scores).

**Degree Requirements**

The Master of Education in Early Childhood Education requires a minimum of 33 units, including the following:

- Completion of required prerequisite courses
- Course work for the degree
- Goals Statement: At the beginning of the program, students will identify an individualized area of focus to guide their professional growth in their graduate study and will submit a Goals Statement. This document will serve as a plan so that students may achieve their individual professional and academic objectives.
- Graduate Professional Portfolio: Students present a professional portfolio as an exit requirement of the program. Along with ECED 773 (or ECED 898), the portfolio will provide a capstone experience. It will demonstrate integrated graduate-level learning and evidence of essential professional dispositions, and will reflect the students’ growth as professionals and leaders in their areas of specialization within the field of early childhood education. As an ongoing collection of graduate work, it will serve as a synthesis of learning throughout degree course work and reflect NAEYC Standards for Advanced Professional Preparation.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECED 607</td>
<td>LEARNER DIVERSITY, CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS, AND INCLUSION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECED 609</td>
<td>GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECED 610</td>
<td>LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS: CURRICULUM AND TECHNOLOGY</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECED 611</td>
<td>TEACHER AS RESEARCHER: RESEARCH METHODS IN EDUCATION</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECED 619</td>
<td>ASSESSMENT, OBSERVATION AND EVALUATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECED 665</td>
<td>CURRICULUM THEORY AND DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECED 773</td>
<td>SEMINAR IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION</td>
<td>3</td>
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**Electives**

These courses support the student’s individualized area of focus as indicated on the initial Goals Statement, and are to be selected from departmental courses or up to 6 units from another department with permission.

Total Units: 33

**Course Sequence**

The first two courses of the graduate program are ECED 611 and ECED 609. These two courses must be completed before other courses are taken, except for students who begin degree course work during the summer. The final, or capstone, course is ECED 773. In ECED 773, students are provided an opportunity to develop a creative and interdisciplinary statement of their professional identity, as they articulate their views on why they care about children and why they do what they do. All other course work must be completed either prior to or concurrent with taking this course. All students must complete ECED 773 with the grade of “A” or “B” (the course may be repeated) or successfully complete ECED 898.

**Thesis Option**

As an alternative to ECED 773, students may elect the ECED 898. This option is available for students who may wish to pursue doctoral studies at a later date or who have identified a strong commitment to a specific topic of inquiry they wish to pursue in great depth. Students who elect the Thesis Option will take the 6-unit ECED 898 in place of the 3-unit ECED 773 and 3 elective units. Students must meet with adviser one term prior to enrolling in this course.

**Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Options within the M.Ed.**

**Post-Baccalaureate Family-Professional Collaboration Certificate**

Family/home collaboration is a vital aspect of Early Childhood professional practice. Graduate students interested in developing expertise as a family specialist may complete the requirements for the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Family-Professional Collaboration within their master’s degree program. These students must also meet with the director of the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program in Family Studies for advising on course requirements for the certificate program. Students take the following courses as three of their electives in the M.Ed. in order to obtain the Family Studies Certificate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FMST 601</td>
<td>APPLIED FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMST 610</td>
<td>FAMILY-PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMST 620</td>
<td>PROJECT IN FAMILY FOCUSED PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

For more information about the Post-Baccalaureate Family-Professional Collaboration Certificate, see the description in the Interdisciplinary Programs section of the catalog.

**Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program in Autism Studies**

Graduate students interested in developing expertise in Autism Studies may complete the requirements for the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Autism Studies within their master’s degree program. These students must also meet with the director of the Post-Baccalaureate Certificate Program in Autism Studies for advising on course requirements for the certificate program. Students will take the following courses as three of their electives in the M.Ed. in order to obtain the Autism Studies Certificate:

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IDHP 770</td>
<td>SPECIAL TOPICS IN THE FIELD OF AUTISM</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDHP 791</td>
<td>DIRECTED READINGS IN THE FIELD OF AUTISM</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDHP 792</td>
<td>INDEPENDENT STUDY IN THE FIELD OF AUTISM</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Preparation: NAEYC Standards addressed in the M.Ed. required courses are aligned with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Graduate students who are teachers in public school settings may further focus their elective courses to work toward preparation of the portfolio and
Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs 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.

NAEYC STANDARD 1. PROMOTING CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING
Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs 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.

1a: Knowledge and understanding young children’s characteristics and needs, from birth through age 8.
1b: Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on early development and learning
1c: Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments for young children

NAEYC STANDARD 2. BUILDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS
Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs 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.

2a: Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics
2b: Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships
2c: Involving families and communities in young children’s development and learning

NAEYC STANDARD 3. OBSERVING, DOCUMENTING, AND ASSESSING TO SUPPORT YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs 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.

3a: Understanding the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment including its use in development of appropriate goals, curriculum, and teaching strategies for young children
3b: Knowing about and using observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches, including the use of technology in documentation, assessment and data collection.
3c: Understanding and practicing responsible assessment to promote positive outcomes for each child, including the use of assistive technology for children with disabilities.
3d: Knowing about assessment partnerships with families and with professional colleagues to build effective learning environments.

NAEYC STANDARD 4. USING DEVELOPMENTALLY EFFECTIVE APPROACHES
Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children’s ages, characteristics, and

Early Childhood Education M.Ed.
young children across the entire developmental period of early childhood in at least two of the three early childhood age groups (birth age 3, 3 through 5, 5 through 8 years) and in the variety of settings that offer early education (early school grades, child care centers and homes, Head Start programs).

7a: Opportunities to observe and practice in at least two of the three early childhood age groups (birth age 3, 3-5, 5-8)

7b: Opportunities to observe and practice in at least two of the three main types of early education settings (early school grades, child care centers and homes, Head Start programs)

**Courses**

**ECED 515 DAY CARE CENTER (3)**

Theory, philosophy and research on running day care centers and the organization of day care programs in various settings. Discussion of curriculum and program development. Includes 70 hours of the program.

**ECED 603 TEACHER-LEARNER RELATIONSHIPS IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOM (3)**

Theory, philosophy and research on teacher-learner relationships with emphasis on developing corresponding learning classroom environments and interaction between teacher and learner in the early childhood classroom.

**ECED 604 MATH/SCIENCE IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM (3)**

Theory, pedagogy and related research on developmentally appropriate practices in math and science for young children, with emphasis on a constructivist approach to learning.

**ECED 605 THE ARTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN (3)**

Explores the fundamental role of the arts in young children's lives and curricula, expands on teacher understanding of the arts for all individuals, provides references for low- or no-cost materials, as well as concrete, practical strategies for fine arts learning design and implementation. The course identifies how the arts build interest, motivation and learning in all areas of the curriculum.

**ECED 607 LEARNER DIVERSITY, CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS, AND INCLUSION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (3)**

Theory, pedagogy and related research on multiple aspects of learner diversity, with emphasis on developing appropriate culturally responsive and inclusive environments for young children.

**ECED 608 INTEGRATED CURRICULUM AND AUTHENTIC LEARNING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (3)**

An integrated approach to learning in preschool and primary programs, with emphasis on social studies, the arts and technology through the Project Approach and inspirations from Reggio Emilia. Based on an understanding of young children's growth and development, and on appropriate curriculum practices with strategies for meaningful learning within various curriculum systems and settings. Addresses the skills, knowledge and attitudes that children need in a diverse, democratic society. Prerequisites: Graduate standing or permission of instructor.

**ECED 609 GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN (3)**

Current theory and research on the growth and development of young children, including both typical and atypical development; methods of studying behavior; implications for early childhood programs. To be completed during the fall or spring semesters within the first 6 credit hours of the program.

**ECED 610 LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS: CURRICULUM AND TECHNOLOGY (3)**

Research and practice on school transformations and new educational directions as a result of evolving technologies. Examine how emerging technologies can support curriculum and create new learning environments that are developmentally appropriate for young children.

**ECED 611 TEACHER AS RESEARCHER: RESEARCH METHODS IN EDUCATION (3)**

Development of skills, insights and understanding basic to planning and conducting research, with emphasis on interpretation and application of research results. Focus on research methods and literature applicable to early childhood education. To be completed during the fall or spring semesters within the first 6 credit hours of the program.

**ECED 612 CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND MANAGEMENT IN PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN (3)**

Examines the nature of young children's peer conflicts, the role of conflict in children's development and ways for practitioners and families to promote children's pro-social interaction, conflict resolution and early violence prevention. Also addresses adult conflict issues in early childhood settings.

**ECED 613 PROGRAMS FOR INFANTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN (3)**

Research, theory and best practice relating to the development and care of young children from 0 to 3. Examines the design, implementation and evaluation of programs for infants and toddlers. Emphasis on the needs of young children and their families in diverse and inclusive settings.

**ECED 614 WORKING WITH LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE YOUNG CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES (3)**

Examines research, theory and practice in educating linguistically diverse learners in the early childhood classroom. Designed to enhance understanding and practice of instructional materials, methodologies, and assessment practices to support linguistically diverse learners and literacy development. Strategies to enhance collaboration with diverse families and cultures will also be emphasized in this course.

**ECED 615 ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS (3)**

Theory and practice of operating programs for young children, staff selection and mentoring; curriculum development; working with families; licensing and accreditation; budgeting; program and staff evaluation.

**ECED 616 MATERIALS AND PRACTICE FOR MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGY AND LEARNING (3)**

Research and practice on multimedia technology and early childhood education. Experience and evaluate resources for young children. Experiment and integrate technology in classrooms with young children, grades Pre-K to 3.

**ECED 618 THINKING THROUGH THE PROCESSES AND ACQUISITION OF LITERACY (3)**

Literacy acquisition, birth through age 8, through study of learning theories based on brain research, cognition, language acquisition. Strategies for integrating reading and writing processes across the curriculum. Bachelor's degree in ECE or related field, teaching experience or permission of instructor.

**ECED 619 ASSESSMENT, OBSERVATION AND EVALUATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (3)**

Forms, functions and roles of assessment for planning and implementing effective programs for young children from diverse cultures and home languages and with varied learning needs. Qualitative and quantitative approaches to assessment and evaluation and methods of observing children. Appropriate strategies for conducting, reporting and decision-making related to various procedures and instruments.
ECED 621 ASSESSMENT OF READING AND WRITING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (3)
Assessment to Guide Instruction: Assessment of primary-grade children's reading and writing. Purposes and types of assessment tools available for use in the classroom, types of information provided by assessment tools and appropriate use of the information including communicating results and formulating specific instructional recommendations to enhance each child's growth in reading and writing.

ECED 623 STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING READING & WRITING: BALANCED LITERACY APPROACHES IN ECED CLASSROOM (3)
Reading and writing instruction with young children: development of comprehensive, effective programs, management of programs, evaluation of learning, use of strategies to develop comprehension, word skill and composition.

ECED 647 ADVANCED PROCESSES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING (3)
Systems of analyzing teaching behavior; models of teaching for achieving cognitive, social and personal learning objectives; and analysis of classroom application of teaching models.

ECED 665 CURRICULUM THEORY AND DEVELOPMENT (3)
History, theories, research and contemporary influences of curriculum development in early childhood education; objectives, content and evaluation; teacher as curriculum developer and implementer.

ECED 670 SPEC TOPICS ECED (1-3)
In-depth study of a selected topic in Early Childhood Education. The specific requirements and prerequisites will vary with each topic and will be designated by the department each time there is a topic scheduled. Each topic may be taken as a separate course.

ECED 671 SPEC TOPICS ECED (1-3)
In-depth study of a selected topic in Early Childhood Education. The specific requirements and prerequisites will vary with each topic and will be designated by the department each time there is a topic scheduled. Each topic may be taken as a separate course.

ECED 672 SPEC TOPICS ECED (1-3)
In-depth study of a selected topic in Early Childhood Education. The specific requirements and prerequisites will vary with each topic and will be designated by the department each time there is a topic scheduled. Each topic may be taken as a separate course.

ECED 673 SPEC TOPICS ECED (1-3)
In-depth study of a selected topic in Early Childhood Education. The specific requirements and prerequisites will vary with each topic and will be designated by the department each time there is a topic scheduled. Each topic may be taken as a separate course.

ECED 674 SPEC TOPICS ECED (1-3)
In-depth study of a selected topic in Early Childhood Education. The specific requirements and prerequisites will vary with each topic and will be designated by the department each time there is a topic scheduled. Each topic may be taken as a separate course.

ECED 675 SPECIAL TOPICS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (1-3)
In-depth study of a selected topic in Early Childhood Education. The specific requirements and prerequisites will vary with each topic and will be designated by the department each time there is a topic scheduled. Each topic may be taken as a separate course.

ECED 677 SPECIAL TOPICS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (1-3)
In-depth study of a selected topic in Early Childhood Education. The specific requirements and prerequisites will vary with each topic and will be designated by the department each time there is a topic scheduled. Each topic may be taken as a separate course.
ECED 750 PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (3)
The design, development and evaluation of programs in education and human services, including early childhood education. Theory, paradigms and models; policy in the program development process; grant writing; Bronfenbrenner’s notions of the ecology of human development in the design of programs; budgeting; program evaluation and use of technology in program development.

ECED 752 FAMILIES, SCHOOLS, AND COMMUNITIES IN A CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT (3)
Family, community, and school as a focal point of professional practice for teachers and teacher educators; relationship between teachers and families in support of the education and development of children in the context of the community; addresses teacher/child/family interactions within diverse contemporary communities, including urban, rural, tribal, migrant, linguistic, ethnic and others. Within a bioecological systems framework, the course builds on knowledge base of research, theory and practice, addressing national standards and practical applications for teachers.

ECED 760 CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD (3)
In depth consideration of guiding theories and critical perspectives in the field of early childhood. Readings to include original works by Vygotsky, Bronfenbrenner, Piaget and others. Post-modern, feminist, post-colonial perspectives, activity and systems theories offer a critical examination of traditional theories in relation to current research and to the students’ professional experiences. Prerequisites: No prerequisite courses. Open only to students in CAS in Early Childhood Education or with permission of the program director.

ECED 762 LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY IN EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE (3)
Theory, research and practice in early childhood as a foundation for leadership in the field and advocacy on behalf of young children, families, communities and the profession. An examination of current issues in the field and strategies for articulating positions and for working toward change. Leadership in teaching administration, policy-making and ethical decision-making. Prerequisites: Open only to students in CAS in Early Childhood Education or other graduate students with permission of the program director.

ECED 764 ETHICS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN EDUCATION AND RELATED HUMAN SERVICES (3)
An examination of the nature of ethics, social justice, and related critical social issues, addressing theoretical foundations and emphasis on implications for practice and advocacy among education and other professionals in early childhood education, elementary education, secondary education, special education, and other educational specializations as well as for those in administration and in related human services settings. Open only to students in CAS in Early Childhood Education or to other graduate students with permission of the program director.

ECED 773 SEMINAR IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (3)
The final course for students enrolled in the graduate program in Early Childhood Education. Focus of seminar discussions on issues and topics of importance in early childhood education. Exploration of theoretical, philosophical, historical and/or sociological foundations of topics (to be taken in the final semester of the program).

ECED 794 TRAVEL AND STUDY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (1-6)
A field study, including cultural tours in selected foreign countries, of current early childhood education programs, facilities, and trends. Academic work includes lectures, observations, and personal interactions. Participation in planned educational activities and a follow-up paper are required. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 units.

ECED 897 EARLY CHILDHOOD ED THESIS (6)
Original investigation using acceptable research method and design under the direction of one or more faculty members.

ECED 898 EARLY CHILDHOOD ED THESIS (3)
The previous course, ECED 897, taken over two consecutive semesters.

ECED 899 THESIS CONTINUUM (1)
Continuation of thesis research.