

DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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Vision Statement

Towson University will be recognized for preparing innovative and socially just professionals who advocate on behalf of children, families, and the profession. We will empower educators with strong knowledge of research-based pedagogies, a technology-rich skillset, a deep understanding of how children, youth, and adults learn, and caring dispositions to lead and succeed in inclusive and equitable settings.

Mission Statement

The mission of Educator Preparation Programs at Towson University is to:

- Prepare the next generation of diverse educators and leaders committed to meet the individual needs of all learners.
- Advance scholarship around significant priorities in the profession.
- Collaborate with and advocate for children, families, and communities.
- Develop and implement innovative solutions to education challenges.

Department Theme

The Department of Early Childhood Education is committed to preparing reflective educators who implement effective and appropriate research-based practices that foster joyful learning to support every child in achieving their full potential.

Programs of the Department

The Department of Early Childhood Education offers the following programs of study: the major in Early Childhood Education, the Master of Arts in Teaching in Early Childhood Education, Master of Education in Early Childhood Education, and the Master of Education in Gifted and Creative Education. For more information about graduate programs, consult the *Graduate Catalog*.

TU's Department of Early Childhood Education faculty prepares teachers to advocate for young children and their families, to create and facilitate developmentally appropriate environments for all learners. The guiding principles are the philosophical and practical basis for departmental programs.

Students entering the Early Childhood Education program are made aware of the sophisticated and demanding work that teachers of young children perform, and they are screened accordingly for admission into the program. Emerging teachers are challenged to recognize teaching as one of the highest and most dynamic professional callings to which one can aspire.

Faculty members facilitate the developing teacher's respect for, pride in and commitment to the teaching profession. Faculty members

motivate and inspire developing teachers in pathways of successful interactions with young children by strengthening their innate abilities and honing classroom techniques and best practices with families and children. ECED majors learn to exert positive influences on all learning scenarios. After completion of the program, teacher candidates have a firm sense of professional self-direction as educators and confidence in their decision-making when interacting with children, colleagues and family members in the educational setting. Faculty members assist in the development of emerging teachers who are reflective and ever-growing practitioners. From the outset, emerging teachers are taught and provided models of teaching that reflect the ethic that only the very best is good enough for young children and their families.

Faculty members work to awaken and support the developing teacher's ability to value and approach children from broad intellectual, academic and social foundations. Emerging teachers are prepared to rely upon those foundations in order to support the development of relevant and challenging curricula and to learn to respond to young children's immediate and long-term needs.

All course content promotes developmentally appropriate pedagogy that facilitates integrated learning experiences and environments for young children. The faculty understands how young children develop and learn; thus, they facilitate in developing teachers content-appropriate pedagogy. The faculty also provide a wealth of experiences, strategies, creativity and resources to enable developing teachers to draw in and inspire young children in all content areas.

The Early Childhood Education faculty members help emerging teachers understand how their personal and professional philosophies prompt them to facilitate the development of the "whole child." Integrated knowledge about child development is crucial to understanding children's play, learning and socialization. Faculty members make it apparent to developing teachers that assessing and responding to children's individual differences and developmental needs requires resourcefulness, responsibility and responsiveness. Developing teachers are encouraged to respond to the individual child while recognizing that each child's responses occur incrementally within the context of meeting the needs of a total group or class.

Faculty members in the Department of Early Childhood Education are committed to preparing developing teachers with the ability to meet the diverse learning needs of all young children, particularly in terms of their creative and aesthetic development, their learning modalities (visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile), and their myriad intelligences (spatial, musical, mathematical, linguistic, kinesthetic and personal). Moreover, the faculty encourages students to become teachers who value the significance of human diversity and the richness, beauty and power that human diversity offers to classrooms and environments where learning takes place. Faculty and emerging teachers, therefore, are committed to designing diversity-rich environments that encourage respect for the individuality of teachers, young children and families. Additionally, faculty members promote respect for communities and the importance of communities in the lives of the children they serve. These efforts create a firm ethical foundation of practice with the teachers in their relationships with young children, their families and communities.

The goals and objectives of the Department of Early Childhood Education reflect the mission and the vision of the College of Education. Students in the program are provided the knowledge and experiences needed to assist in the development of the skills, dispositions and competencies identified by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (inTASC)

Standards, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards for professionals in Early Childhood Education.

Major in Elementary Education / Early Childhood Certification

In cooperation with Elementary Education, students can select courses that will enable them to seek certification in Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education. Graduates of this program are eligible to teach children from birth through age 13. Interested students should contact the Department of Elementary Education.

Major in Early Childhood / Special Education

Education majors may elect to become certified in both Early Childhood and Special Education by selecting this integrated major. This program, specially designed to integrate both early childhood education and special education, prepares students as early childhood classroom teachers, as well as infant/primary special education teachers. Interested students should contact the Department of Special Education.

Outcomes

Students are required to compile and successfully complete a Capstone Project as a requirement for completion of the ECE program. The Early Childhood Teacher Education Program utilizes the *Interstate Teachers Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards* and the *Standards of the National Association on the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)* as the performance-based outcomes for all teacher candidates. All ECE candidates are required to satisfactorily complete the edTPA capstone assessment project.

Master of Arts in Teaching—Early Childhood Education

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ECE Assistant Graduate Director for MAT and External Programs: M. Lisa Mason
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The Master of Arts in Teaching program is designed to prepare highly qualified students without formal training or experience in the field of education for teacher certification in Pre-kindergarten through grade 3. For more information, refer to the *Graduate Catalog*.

Admission

Admission Requirements for Teacher Education

The Teacher Education Executive Board, representing all initial teacher education programs at Towson University, utilizes the following **minimum** requirements as conditions for admission into teacher education programs, maintaining candidate status and formal entry into the capstone internship. Programs may include additional requirements for admission into the program and/or the capstone internship.

The College of Education admits students either as freshmen or as undergraduate transfer students from accredited, post-secondary institutions. During the freshman and sophomore years, students are generally engaged in pre-professional courses or courses that fulfill Core Curriculum requirements, as well as all identified prerequisites (e.g., specific and sequential courses in Core Curriculum) for admission to COE screened majors and programs.

All College of Education undergraduate programs are screened majors. As an integral part of the teaching/learning experience, students work with advisers in a strategic planning process across all years at TU. Accordingly, to support student success, all COE students are required to confer prior to registration each term with their assigned advisers.

I. PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO ALL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

1. Complete a self-disclosure criminal background form to be submitted to the major department with the application.
2. Submit an application for formal admission to the program. Students seeking admission to teacher education programs must contact their department chairperson or program coordinator by 45 credit hours for program-specific procedures and requirements for admission to professional education programs.
3. A cumulative/overall GPA of 3.00 or higher is required for admission to an initial licensure teacher education program.
 - i. Applicants with a GPA between 2.50 - 2.99 may be admitted conditionally if they provide evidence of passing scores on a Basic Skills Assessment* as identified by the Maryland State Department of Education (i.e. SAT, ACT, GRE, Praxis Core) and receive approval from the department chairperson/program coordinator.

**Candidates may apply for a test waiver directly to the department. Such waivers should only be granted if it is predicted, based on the individual candidate's transcript data, that the candidate's final cumulative/overall GPA will be above a 3.00.*

II. ADDITIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Students must complete 65 units of courses in the program and will apply for the major during their fifth term to begin in their sixth term. The number of students admitted into the program each term is determined by available spaces.

The following requirements must be met for approval to advance into the ECED major:

1. Completion of 65 or more units with a grade equivalent of 2.00 (C) or higher. Students must maintain 3.00 grade point average in the major.
2. Students must be approved by assigned adviser to apply for the ECED program. Students must submit an online application with unofficial transcripts from all colleges and universities, Advising Data Form, Checklist of Plan of Study, and evidence of meeting the basic skills assessment requirement to the Department of Early Childhood Education.
3. All students must meet with an assigned adviser in the Department of Early Childhood Education each semester.

Majors

- Major in Early Childhood Education

Faculty

Professors: LeaAnn Christenson, Janese Daniels (Chairperson), Stephen Schroth, Mary Slade, Ocie Watson-Thompson

Associate Professor: Sara Hooks (Graduate Program Director)

Assistant Professors: Stephanie Moody, Zachary Price

Lecturers: Lisa Buchy, Hannah Cawley, Danielle Ellis, Gweneth Mahoney, Ann McLaughlin, Jennifer Pett, Lissa Shorr

Lecturer II: M. Lisa Mason, Amy (Kit) McDowell (Program Coordinator University at Shady Grove)