Table of Contents

Early Childhood Education Information

Kirkwood Early Childhood Philosophy................................. 3
Early Childhood Degree Options ....................................... 4
Sample Course Sequences................................................ 7

Professionalism

A Commitment to Professionalism and Ethics....................... 12
Promoting Safety and Confidentiality................................. 13
Employability Issues ..................................................... 14
Criminal Record Check Process......................................... 15
Visiting Early Childhood Programs...................................... 16
Communicating with Faculty and Staff................................. 17
Communicating with Early Childhood Programs....................... 18

Developing a Professional Portfolio

Tips for Portfolio Planning ................................................ 19

Resources........................................................................... 23
Early Childhood Philosophy and Purpose

The mission of the Early Childhood Education department at Kirkwood is to prepare students to provide high quality early care and education for young children from birth to age eight. Students are prepared to utilize developmentally appropriate practices as identified by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). All early childhood courses focus on evidence-based practices. Several curricular strands are included in all the early childhood course work. Some of these strands include: child development, assessment, family centered practice, problem-solving, the role of culture when working with children and families, diversity and an anti-bias approach, and inclusion of all children.

Students are provided with a list of competencies when they begin early childhood courses and are required to document their skills and knowledge through the development of a professional portfolio. Early childhood faculty provides guidance, support and suggestions as students develop professional portfolios.

Early Childhood Education provides several options for students interested in the care and education of young children. Students have the option to enter employment upon completion of the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree to work in the growing number of family child care homes, preschools, child care centers and other early care and education programs. An additional option, Liberal Arts Associate of Arts with area of interest in early childhood, prepares students for transfer into a baccalaureate degree program. The Early Childhood department participates in a statewide articulation program, which facilitates the transfer of graduates to four-year institutions within Iowa for advanced study. The Early Childhood Coordinator provides advising to guide students in choosing courses that will meet the requirements of specific transfer institutions.

Students in the early childhood courses also participate in service learning and field experiences in many quality early care and education programs including kindergarten classrooms, Head Start programs, preschools, and child care centers.
**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**  
**Degree Options**

Early Childhood Education offers several certificate and degree choices:

1. Early Childhood Paraeducator Certificate  
   - 18 credits
2. Diploma  
   - 33 credits
3. Associate of Arts (transfer degree)  
   - 62/63 credits
4. Associate of Applied Science  
   - 62/63 credits

The coursework for the Kirkwood certificate includes 12 credit hours in Early Childhood Education and 6 credit hours in Education Careers. The Early Childhood courses are aligned with the Child Development Associate (CDA) Competencies. In addition to receiving the Early Childhood Education Paraeducator Certificate candidates would be eligible for Iowa Paraeducator Certification at Level I Generalist and Level II Area of Concentration – Early Childhood Education. The certificate is beneficial to individuals who need to become highly qualified associate teachers in preschool and kindergarten settings. Candidates for the certificate must maintain a C average.

The diploma verifies the Early Childhood Education training of the student seeking employment in a child care center or preschool. Persons with a diploma typically work as associate teachers or family child care home providers.

The Liberal Arts: Associate of Arts degree with Early Childhood transfer interest is designed for students planning to transfer to a four year college or university. Upon completion of the liberal arts degree students are able to transfer to a four year institution and apply to a teacher education program. Coursework includes general education courses for the liberal arts degree and elective credits in early childhood education. Teacher education programs require a minimum GPA of 2.5 or higher (consult the transfer institution for specific details and visit the Kirkwood Early Childhood Education webpage for transfer plans).

Students with a Liberal Arts AA with Early Childhood transfer interest may also enter the workforce upon completion of a degree and often work as lead teachers in early care and education programs. Students in the Liberal Arts Associate of Arts with an interest are of Early Childhood may also consider completing the Diploma in Early Childhood Education. The combination of the AA and the Diploma provide options for transfer (with the AA) and employment (with the Liberal Arts AA and the ECE diploma). The courses in the diploma can be applied to the Liberal Arts degree.

The Associate of Applied Science degree is designed for students wishing to gain education and competence in order to enter the workforce. Students in this program of study may enter the workforce upon completion of a degree and often work as lead teachers in early care and education programs.
Course Work Description

Students may begin in any semester, but may find the sequencing easier when entering in the fall.

It is recommended that the first early childhood courses taken are:
- ECE 103 Introduction to Early Childhood Education
- ECE 158 Early Childhood Curriculum I
- ECE 170 Child Growth and Development or PSY 111 Introduction to Psychology.

These courses are offered every fall and spring.

The following courses have prerequisites:
- ECE 159 Early Childhood Curriculum II (Prerequisite is ECE 158 EC Curriculum I)
- ECE 243 Early Childhood Guidance (Prerequisite is ECE 170 Child Growth and Development or PSY 121 Developmental Psychology)
- ECE 221 Infant/Toddler Care and ED (Prerequisite is ECE 170 Child Growth and Development or PSY 121 Developmental Psychology)
- ECE 262 Field Experience (ECE 103 Introduction to ECE, ECE 158 EC Curriculum I, ECE 170 Child Growth and Development; at least a 2.0 GPA overall and in early childhood courses; and a professional portfolio)

ECE 133 Child Health, Safety and Nutrition may be taken at any point in the student’s plan and is generally offered in the fall, summer and every third semester in the evening. Early Childhood courses are offered in the evenings in a three semester sequence.

Field Experience requires students spend 108 hours in two different placements. Students complete 54 hours at each of two community early care and education programs. Students work with qualified supervising teachers and when possible work with two different age groups.

Early Childhood Administration meets one of the Iowa licensing requirements for persons interested in program management.

Career Opportunities

Graduates work with children in a variety of Early Childhood programs including child care centers, child development homes, preschools, schools, and Head Start programs. Employment opportunities are expected to increase as the number of young children with parents in the work force continues to increase.

Iowa state licensing regulations do not require any formal education for an individual to be employed in child care, nor do they have formal education requirements for anyone caring for children in their home. Although the state does not require formal education for child care workers, requirements for teaching positions often vary between early childhood programs. Centers who employ teachers with degrees and home providers
with formal education receive the opportunity for additional recognition in the state’s voluntary Quality Rating System (QRS) for child care centers and child care homes.

For individuals wishing to be a director or operate their own child care center or preschool there are requirements which are a combination of experience and education, one of which is an Associate Degree.

Students who pursue a four year degree in early childhood education can obtain an early childhood teacher certificate for birth to grade three, including special education. Individuals who wish to teach kindergarten need to transfer to obtain teacher certification. Students who seek future employment in a Department of Education funded voluntary preschool for four year olds will also need to continue their education to obtain teacher certification.
SAMPLE COURSE SEQUENCES

The following tables demonstrate sample course sequencing for the diploma or AA degree. These samples are provided as examples only. Students will need to make adjustments with the Early Childhood Coordinator to fit their individual goals and needs. Associate degree sample schedules are based on 6 hrs of Composition. Students who take the 5 credit College Writing class instead will need to adjust the sequence accordingly. Students may wish to take a course or two a summer depending on work schedules and personal learning needs.

Sample Course Sequence for Liberal Arts Degree: Associate of Arts (Interest Area Early Childhood)
62/63 Credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Semester One</th>
<th>Sample Semester Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENG 105 Composition I</td>
<td>ENG 106 Composition II (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 170 Child Growth and Development</td>
<td>PSY 111: Introduction to Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 103 Introduction to Early Childhood Education</td>
<td>ECE 159 Early Childhood Curriculum II (P) OR ECE 243 Early Child Guidance (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 158 Early Childhood Curriculum I</td>
<td>SPC 101: Fundamentals of Oral Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen Ed Requirement: College Math</td>
<td>Gen Ed Requirement: Humanities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Semester Three</th>
<th>Sample Semester Four</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECE 133 Child Health Safety and Nutrition</td>
<td>ECE 159 Early Childhood Curriculum II (P) or ECE 243 Early Child Guidance (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 121: Developmental Psychology (P)</td>
<td>ECE 221 Infant/Toddler Care and Education (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 262 Field Experience in ECE OR Gen Ed: History/Cultures</td>
<td>ECE 262 Field Experience/ECE OR Gen Ed: History/Cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen Ed Requirement: Humanities</td>
<td>Gen Ed Requirement: Humanities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen Ed Requirement: Science</td>
<td>Gen Ed Requirement: Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen Ed Requirement: History/Culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Early Childhood courses transfer to four year colleges. Some of the courses transfer as elective credit and some of the courses transfer as a similar course. Articulation of Early Childhood courses to four year institutions varies depending on the receiving college or university. Advising is provided to assist students in selecting courses for the receiving institution. Students are strongly encouraged to communicate with the receiving institution.

(P) Prerequisite – this course has a prerequisite
## Sample Course Sequence for an Associate Applied Science degree – 62/63 credits

### Sample Semester One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENG 105</td>
<td>Composition I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 170</td>
<td>Child Growth and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 103</td>
<td>Introduction to Early Childhood Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 158</td>
<td>Early Childhood Curriculum I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 111</td>
<td>Introduction to Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 103</td>
<td>Introduction to Early Childhood Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPC 101</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Oral Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen Ed Requirement: Math or Science*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Semester Credits – 15**

### Sample Semester Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENG 106</td>
<td>Composition II (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 111</td>
<td>Introduction to Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 159</td>
<td>Early Childhood Curriculum II (P) OR Early Child Guidance (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPC 101</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Oral Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective- choose from following list</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Semester Credits - 15**

### Sample Semester Three

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECE 133</td>
<td>Child Health Safety and Nutrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 121</td>
<td>Developmental Psychology (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 262</td>
<td>Field Experience in ECE (P) OR Elective- choose from following list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDU 248</td>
<td>Exceptional Persons (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective – choose from following list</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Semester Credits – 15**

### Sample Semester Four

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECE 159</td>
<td>Early Childhood Curriculum II (P) OR Early Child Guidance (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 262</td>
<td>Field Experience/ECE (P) OR Elective- choose from following list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE-290</td>
<td>Early Childhood Program Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective - choose from following list</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective - choose from following list</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Semester Credits – 18**

### Choose Five electives courses from this list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDU 110</td>
<td>Exploring Teaching*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDU 119</td>
<td>Behavior Management*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDU 212</td>
<td>Educational Foundations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDU 129</td>
<td>Inclusion and Adaptation Strategies**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDU 240</td>
<td>Educational Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIT 105</td>
<td>Children’s Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 120</td>
<td>Marriage and Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL 141</td>
<td>American Sign Language I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL 171</td>
<td>American Sign Language II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLS 141</td>
<td>Elementary Spanish I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLS 142</td>
<td>Elementary Spanish II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**15 Credits**

*Select from the following for the 3 credit Math/Science requirement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDU 110</td>
<td>Exploring Teaching*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDU 119</td>
<td>Behavior Management*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDU 212</td>
<td>Educational Foundations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDU 129</td>
<td>Inclusion and Adaptation Strategies**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDU 240</td>
<td>Educational Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIT 105</td>
<td>Children’s Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC 120</td>
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<td>ASL 141</td>
<td>American Sign Language I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL 171</td>
<td>American Sign Language II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLS 141</td>
<td>Elementary Spanish I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLS 142</td>
<td>Elementary Spanish II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*Paraeducator Certification*

Kirkwood Community College offers courses that meet the voluntary Iowa Paraeducator Certification requirements. The courses meet the requirements mandated for the Generalist Certification and may be applied toward the requirements for the Areas of Concentration and Advanced Certifications. The Level I Generalist requirements can be met by taking just two Kirkwood courses:

EDU 110 Exploring teaching and
EDU 119 Behavior Management

**Recommended Maximum credits per weekly working hours:**
These hours are recommendations only. Students will want to consider family and personal needs and learning style and study habits when planning course loads.

- 18 credit hours = 0 - 10 work hours
- 15 credit hours = 10 – 20 work hours
- 12 credit hours = 20 – 30 work hours
- 9 credit hours = 30 – 40 work hours
- 6 credit hours = 40 work hours
Sample Course Sequence for a Diploma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Semester One</th>
<th>Sample Semester Two</th>
<th>Summer or Third Semester</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENG 105 Composition I</td>
<td>PSY 111: Introduction to Psychology</td>
<td>SPC 101: Fundamentals of Oral Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 170 Child Growth and Development</td>
<td>ECE 221 Infant/Toddler Care and Education</td>
<td>Optional: Paraeducator Certification*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 103 Introduction to Early Childhood</td>
<td>ECE 159 Early Childhood Curriculum II (P)</td>
<td>ECE 110 Exploring Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>EDU 119 Behavior Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 158 Early Childhood Curriculum I</td>
<td>ECE 243 Early Child Guidance (P)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 133 Child Health Safety and Nutrition</td>
<td>ECE 262 Field Experience/Early Childhood (P)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students who need to be full time in the third semester may want to carry 12 credits a semester and add the paraeducator certification to their degree. Paraeducators are school or agency employees who assist teachers or other professionals by performing a variety of tasks that enhance instruction and learning.

*Paraeducator Certification*

Kirkwood Community College offers courses that meet the voluntary Iowa Paraeducator Certification requirements. The courses meet the requirements mandated for the Generalist Certification and may be applied toward the requirements for the Areas of Concentration and Advanced Certifications.

The Level I Generalist requirements can be met by taking just two Kirkwood courses:
   EDU 110 Exploring teaching and
   EDU 119 Behavior Management

These classes can be completed quickly in one summer or two semesters

(P) Prerequisite – this course has a prerequisite
Early Childhood Education Paraeducator Certificate

The coursework for the Kirkwood certificate includes 12 credit hours in Early Childhood Education and 6 credit hours in Education Careers. These courses are aligned with the Child Development Associate (CDA) Competencies. In addition to receiving the Early Childhood Education Paraeducator Certificate candidates would be eligible to apply for Iowa Paraeducator Certification Generalist and Area of Concentration – Early Childhood Education. The paraeducator certification is issued by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners to candidates who have met requirements and completed the application process.

- ECE 103 Introduction to Early Childhood Education 3 credits
- ECE 133 Child Health Safety and Nutrition 3 credits
- ECE 158 Early Childhood Curriculum I 3 credits
- ECE 242 Early Childhood Guidance 3 credits
- EDU 110 Exploring teaching and 3 credits
- EDU 119 Behavior Management 3 credits
- 18 credits

Students may take the courses in any sequence. Courses are available at the Cedar Rapids Main Campus and the Iowa City Campus each semester including the summer and both day and evening classes are available.

Students must receive a minimum of a C in each course to be eligible for the certificate and in order to apply for the State of Iowa Paraeducator Certificate.

To learn more about the paraeducators see the Kirkwood web page: http://www.kirkwood.edu/paraeducator

Financial Aid is not available for students pursuing the certificate.
A Commitment to Professionalism and Ethical Behavior

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has established a Code of Ethical Conduct and a Statement of Commitment (2005) for professionals in early childhood. This statement is based on several core values that provide guidance in decision making and conduct for professionals working with young children. Early childhood educators make a commitment to:

- Appreciate childhood as a unique and valuable stage of the human life cycle
- Base work with children on knowledge of how children grow and develop
- Appreciate and support the bond between child and family
- Recognize that children are best understood in the context of family, culture, community and society
- Respect the dignity, worth and uniqueness of each individual
- Respect diversity in children, families and colleagues
- Recognize that children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust and respect

These core values are integrated into the early childhood courses and should serve as a model for professionalism in the college classroom and in early care and education settings. Students will study and learn to utilize the Code of Ethics through course work and are expected to model these values in daily interactions.

The Kirkwood Student Handbook emphasizes that all students, faculty and staff are part of Kirkwood’s Learning Community. “In a productive learning environment, faculty and students work cooperatively, recognize and respect differences, model the values of character and citizenship and become lifelong learners.”

Early childhood students’ professional skills will also be assessed in service learning and field experience placements. Behaviors that demonstrate professionalism in these experiences include:

- Attendance: Being prompt or calling ahead if absent.
- Dependability and reliability
- Being actively involved
- Asking when unsure about a task or procedure
- Dressing appropriately (i.e.: you can bend, crawl, lean over, pick up and be comfortable; you are not wearing anything offensive; you are dressed for all weather; your clothing is neat and clean, footwear is safe and appropriate)
- Following center, school and program policies
- Expressing genuine interest in the children and in learning experiences
- Being enthusiastic, friendly and positive
- Practicing confidentiality at all times

Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment: A Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Revised April 2005

Updated 5/22/2012; 3/27/13
Promoting Safety and Confidentiality

Students in early childhood education courses agree to practice ethical behavior as outlined in NAEYC’s Code of ethics. The overriding principle in the Code is:

“P-1.1 above all, we shall not harm children. We shall not participate in practices that are emotionally damaging, physically harmful, disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, exploitative or intimidating to children.”

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times. As indicated in NAEYC’s Code of Ethics:

“P-2.13 We shall maintain confidentiality and shall respect the family’s right to privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information and intrusion into family life.”

As part of course work students will be required to sign the following statement verifying knowledge of these responsibilities.

I am aware of the confidentiality rights of children and their families. I will maintain confidentiality and protect children’s safety by:

• Only sharing information about individual children with parents or supervising teacher/caregiver.

• Using initials or a different name for children in observations and written information for class.

• Sharing concerns about a child with the supervising teacher in a private setting

• Not discussing children’s behavior in front of them or publicly

• Avoiding discussions about individual children outside the classroom with friends or family.

• Maintaining professional, courteous, and confidential behavior when interacting with children, parents, families and staff.

• Protecting children both physically and emotionally.

_________________________   _______________________
Student Name     Date
EMPLOYABILITY ISSUES

Early care and education programs are mandated to conduct criminal and child or dependent adult abuse checks of each owner, director, staff member or volunteer with direct responsibility for child care (441 Iowa Administrative Code Section 109.6(6)).

Employers submit names to the Department of Human Services and the Department of Criminal Investigation who conduct reviews. The Department of Human Services evaluates the information and determines whether the individual may be hired. If a person has a criminal record or child abuse record the Department of Human Services conducts an evaluation to determine if the person can be employed or involved in child care.

Iowa Department of Human Services Child Care Center Licensing Rules, Administrative Code 109 state Mandatory prohibitions from involvement in child care in the following situations:

1. Founded child or dependent adult abuse that was determined to be sexual abuse
3. Placement on the sex offender registry
4. Felony endangerment or neglect or abandonment of a dependent person
5. Felony domestic abuse
6. Felony crime against a child including but not limited to, sexual exploitation of a minor
7. Forcible felony 441 I.A.C. Sec. 109.6(6)(a)

Additional convictions may prohibit a person from involvement in child care for five years as stated in 441 I.A.C. Sec. 109.6(6)(b)

1. Conviction of a controlled substance offense under Iowa Code Chapter 124
2. Founded Child abuse that was found to be physical abuse

In all other transgressions the Department of Human Services will require an evaluation before the person is permitted to be involved in child care center or preschool.

In evaluation, the Department and the employer of the person with the founded abuse or criminal record conviction shall consider the nature and seriousness of the founded abuse or crime in relation to the position sought, the time elapsed since the commission of the founded abuse or crime, the circumstances under which the crime was committed, the degree of rehabilitation, the likelihood that the person will commit the abuse or crime again, and the number of abuses or crimes committed by the person (441 I.A.C. Sec. 109.6 (6)(c).)

The Department of Human Services has the final authority to determining whether prohibition of the person’s involvement in child care is warranted and in developing conditional requirements and corrective action plans.
Most employers report that lying about or failure to disclose one’s record or history would automatically result in rejection of field experience, employment, licensure, certification, etc.

If a student has a history of felony convictions, and/or abuse or harassment findings, the student should discuss the situation with the coordinator of the college’s Early Childhood Education Coordinator immediately to evaluate the suitability of early childhood education as a career.

**Criminal Record Check Process**

Early Childhood students are required in several classes to participate in service learning or field experience hours in programs with young children. In order to participate in these course assignments and activities students are required to complete a Criminal Record Check.

Record checks will need to be completed **once** every two years. **You may not** use record checks completed by employers or other institutions.

Information regarding background checks can be found at this web site. [http://www.kirkwood.edu/site/index.php?p=27325](http://www.kirkwood.edu/site/index.php?p=27325). To view your specific compliance status information, log-on to EagleNet using your k# and password, go to COMMUNICATION and select "My Kirkwood Documents" and the Early Childhood Education Link.

In order to ensure that you are able to fully participate in course assignments and activities it is important for you to arrange to do the background checks in a timely fashion. Specific instructions for completing background checks will be sent to you. After you have read the instructions on the website and the attached information about employability, if you still have questions you may be direct them to me at 319-398-1258 or [melanie.nollsch@kirkwood.edu](mailto:melanie.nollsch@kirkwood.edu)

If a student is prohibited by the Department of Human Services to participate in early care and education programs (child care centers, preschools, etc), the student will not be permitted to participate in college course assignments requiring direct contact with children.

Information received by the college regarding criminal records or child abuse will be kept in confidence as part of the student’s educational records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
Visiting Community Early Childhood Programs
Observation and Participation Guidelines

Students who wish to visit early childhood programs to participate in service learning or field experiences must sign in at the office of each program or school upon arrival. Ask the site if they require a visitor badge. If you have questions or comments regarding the center operations, please address them to the Lead Teacher or Director/Principal.

You will need to **clearly communicate with the director, principal or lead teacher** what your assignments are for your class to ensure these activities can be approved and included in the plans for the children.

**Student Observation/Participation Guidelines:**

1. Sign in/out at the school/program office and put on a visitor name badge if required.

2. Accreditation standards and child care regulations require staff, visitors and children to wash hands upon arrival. Please take a moment to **wash your hands with running water and soap** immediately upon entry to the classroom. Turn off the faucet with a paper towel and dispose of paper towels in trash cans.

3. Check in with the lead teacher in the classroom.

4. Dress appropriately for your visit *For example:* you can bend, crawl, lean over, pick up and be comfortable; you are not wearing anything offensive (t-shirts, showing too much skin, ripped or sloppy clothing); sensible shoes (closed toe shoes); wear play clothes and be willing to get dirty; be prepared to go outside.

5. Do not eat, drink or chew gum in the classroom. Remember you are acting as a role model for the children.

6. Remain inconspicuous if you are there as an observer.

7. Stay engaged and active with the children if you are a participant. If you are not sure about how to respond to a child or your role in the room, ask the lead teacher or a staff person. If your class assignment requires you to complete activities with children these **must be approved in advance by the lead teacher.** This means you must talk to the lead teacher **before the day** you wish to present an activity to the children.

8. If you are observing do not visit with other observers. If you are participating, your primary focus should be with the children. Limit your conversations with adults.

9. As an observer when a child talks to you, answer briefly and then go back to your observation. As a participant interact with the children by having conversations and playing with them.

10. Thank the staff at the end of your visit and let them know when you will return.
Communicating with Faculty and Staff

How to communicate with your instructors:

By phone:
1. Identify yourself with your first and last name as well as the course title and time the class meets.
2. Be specific and focused about the reason for your call. Ex. I have a question about the interview assignment that is due on Tuesday.

If you leave a message:
1. Identify yourself with your first and last name as well as the course title and time the class meets. Give phone # slowly and clearly.
2. Be specific and focused about the reason for your call. Ex. I have a question about the interview assignment that is due on Tuesday.
3. At the end of the message, restate your name (first and last) and your phone #. Identify the best time(s) to call you.

By e-mail:
1. Use a Kirkwood email address
2. Be specific in the subject box. Write re: College 101 course.
3. Identify yourself with your first and last name as well as the course title and time the class meets.
4. Be specific and focused about the reason for your e-mail.
5. Write complete sentences and paragraphs in your e-mail. Watch your spelling, grammar and above all eliminate any run-on sentences.
6. When sending attachments send in Microsoft Word. If that is not available send as an RTF file
7. Realize that instructors might not be able to respond right away. If you haven’t heard from the instructor within 48 hours (except for weekend) you might want to call to see if he/she received your e-mail.
8. Check your e-mail to see if the instructor replied.

Regarding missed class:
1. Do not ask “Did I miss anything or did I miss anything important or did we do anything?”
2. Indicate that you have looked at the syllabus and are aware of your responsibilities regarding the next class. Ask if there is anything in addition to what is stated in the syllabus for which you are responsible.

Regarding assignments:
1. Always put first and last names on assignments as well as class identification.

How to communicate with other Kirkwood staff:
1. Clearly identify yourself with your first and last name as well as Eaglenet # if requested.
2. Be specific and focused about the reason for your contact. Ex. I received a notice about an overdue book. The name of the book is Everything in Its Path by Kai Erikson.
3. Be sure to note the date, time and name of the person with whom you are talking. Write down their response to your question. Keep for your records.
Communicating with Community Based Programs

How to communicate with community early childhood programs:

By phone:
1. Identify yourself with your first and last name.
2. Be specific and focused about the reason for your call. Ex. I am a student in Introduction to Early Childhood at Kirkwood Community College. One of my assignments is to visit an early childhood program for an hour. I have been trained in confidentiality and have signed a confidentiality statement. Would it be possible for me to visit your program on…..(list a couple of times as options)
3. If the center says yes, agree on a time and be sure to be there as scheduled
4. If the center says no, thank them for taking your call.
5. If you have to cancel your appointment, be sure to call in advance and see if you can set up an alternate time.
6. Plan ahead! Do not call the day before an assignment is due and expect the center can meet your needs

If you leave a message:
1. Identify yourself with your first and last name. Give phone # slowly and clearly.
2. Be specific and focused about the reason for your call. Ex. I am a student in Introduction to Early Childhood at Kirkwood Community College. One of my assignments is to visit an early childhood program for an hour. I have been trained in confidentiality and have signed a confidentiality statement. I would like to talk with you about scheduling a visit your program.
3. At the end of the message, restate your name (first and last) and your phone #. Identify the best time(s) to call you.

Do not contact teachers in a school district on your own even if you know people in the school district. There is a process for contacting schools. See your instructor for more information.
Professional Portfolio

As a student in early childhood education you will have the opportunity to gain knowledge and develop the skills needed to become a successful educator of young children. Early childhood professionals must demonstrate competency in a variety of areas in order to provide high quality services to young children.

During your studies at Kirkwood Community College you will create a professional portfolio to document your attainment of knowledge and skills. This portfolio will be a key component of your experience at Kirkwood and will demonstrate to others your expertise in early childhood education. **You will be required to have a portfolio in process prior to being accepted into field experience.** Completing your portfolio will be a major assignment during your field experience. In other early childhood courses you will be asked to save assignments and activities that demonstrate your competency as a professional. Assignments in courses are designed to help you gain knowledge, learn a skill and demonstrate your proficiency as a teacher. Preserving these assignments and activities in a portfolio will document your success. Course instructors will provide guidance on assignments to include in your portfolio.

The portfolio will benefit you in a variety of ways. The portfolio allows you the opportunity to:

- Document your knowledge and skills in early childhood education
- Demonstrate your best work and effort
- Assist you in developing and talking about your philosophy of early childhood
- Provide the opportunity for reflection
- Demonstrate your progress as a teacher over time
- Organize your accomplishments
- Provide a helpful resource for job interviews
- Provide a valuable resource for student’s transferring to four year institutions
TO CREATE YOUR PORTFOLIO

You will need:

____ Professional looking three ring binder (2 or 3 inches) for the portfolio; choose white, black or blue
____ Accordion file with tabs for a working file
____ Three hole punch
____ Extra Wide Dividers with tabs
____ List of early childhood competencies (distributed in early education classes and available from the Early Childhood Education Coordinator)
____ Page protectors, pocket dividers (Optional – to store teacher made activities, projects, etc)
____ Camera (optional) for taking photographs of projects designed for young children

Create a working file:

Many students find it helpful to organize assignments by starting a working file. The working file is not your portfolio but is a system to keep track of your assignments, handouts and resources. This organization process may make it easier for you to select items for your portfolio. You will want to be selective and choose your best work to document your knowledge and skills.

____ Purchase a durable accordion file with 10 – 12 sections. Label each section with the name of each early childhood class (7-9 sections).
____ Label a section Certificates
____ Label a section Psychology (Intro and Developmental)
____ Label a section Communication (Composition and Fundamentals of Oral Communication)
____ Label a section Other (Relevant assignments from General Education Courses)

Add items to the working file

For each class you will want to file graded assignments and projects, course syllabus, supervisor evaluations and photos or other artifacts/documents

Certificates – include certificates from community based training, CPR/First Aid, Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse, etc

Other Courses – keep relevant assignments and work. For example: research papers, service learning assignments, observations, book reviews, etc
Organizing the professional portfolio

___Place the list of early childhood competencies (NAEYC competencies for Associate degree programs distributed in early childhood education classes or available from the Early Childhood Coordinator) in the front of your binder.

___Create a tab for each National Association for the Education of Young Children Professional Development Standards

- Child Development and Learning
- Building Family and Community Relationships
- Observing, Documenting and Assessing Young Children
- Building Meaningful Curriculum
- Developmentally Appropriate Practices
- Becoming a Professional

___Select your best examples from your working file to include in your portfolio

- Review items in your working file
- Select 2 or 3 items from each course to add to your portfolio
- Read the competencies to determine placement of the artifact or assignment.
- Photographs should have a written note explaining why it is included in the portfolio
- Many items can be filed in multiple locations in the portfolio
- Discuss placement of items at the field experience interview or with early childhood course instructors/professors

Examples of Items to Include in your portfolio:

Standard One: Child Development and Learning
- Child Observations
- Research papers
- Journal Article reviews
- Website reviews
- Child Health Safety and Nutrition assignments

Standard Two: Building Family and Community Relationships
- Parent Resource Files
- Parenting Advice Columns
- Parent Newsletters
- Journal entries
- Reflections
- Family/Community Interviews
- Field trip reports of community sites/agencies
- Case Studies
**Standard Three: Observing, Documenting and Assessing Young Children**

- Child Observations and Assessments
- Developmental Summaries
- Adaptation Plans
- Completed Checklist/Rating Scales
- Research paper
- Reports of community sites/agencies

**Standard Four: Developmentally Appropriate Practice**

- Analysis of learning experiences/activities
- Analysis of learning environments
- Photographs of you interacting with children or presenting an activity to children
- Evaluations/Critiques from supervising teachers

**Standard Five: Building Meaningful Curriculum**

- Micro-teaching plans
- Unit/Project plans
- Photographs of Bulletin Boards
- Photographs of you interacting with children or presenting an activity to children
- Evaluations/Critiques from supervising teachers
- Service learning assignments
- Photographs of teacher made materials.
- Case Studies
- Research papers
- Health, Safety and Nutrition units

**Standard Six: Becoming a Professional**

- Self evaluations and journal reflections
- Interviews
- Performance Assessments
- Certificates in First Aid, CPR, Universal Precautions
- Philosophy statements

**Other sections to include:**

- **Table of Contents:** Create a one page table of contents listing each section and items included
- **Employment:** Information from related employment; Resume
- **Professional Development:** Community based professional development certificates and CEU’s

**Class Handouts and Notes:**

Many students also want to keep key handouts and class notes for future reference. *Do not keep these in your portfolio or working file.* Create another system to access these items. For example, many students choose to use the Early Childhood Tool Kit assignment from ECE 103 or create a resource file with activity ideas, resources for parents, class notes, and articles and ideas for future use.
Resources

The following resources provide useful resources and information for early childhood education professionals

**Council for Exceptional Children:** [http://www.cec.sped.org/](http://www.cec.sped.org/)

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the largest international professional organization dedicated to improving the educational success of individuals with disabilities and/or gifts and talents. CEC advocates for appropriate governmental policies, sets professional standards, provides professional development, advocates for individuals with exceptionalities, and helps professionals obtain conditions and resources necessary for effective professional practice.

**Clearinghouse on Early Education and Parenting:** [http://ceep.crc.uiuc.edu/](http://ceep.crc.uiuc.edu/)

The Clearinghouse on Early Education and Parenting (CEEP) is part of the Early Childhood and Parenting (ECAP) Collaborative at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. CEEP provides publications and information to the worldwide early childhood and parenting communities.

**Division of Early Childhood:** [http://www.dec-sped.org/](http://www.dec-sped.org/)

The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) is one of seventeen divisions of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) - the largest international professional organization dedicated to improving educational outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities, students with disabilities, and/or the gifted. DEC is especially for individuals who work with or on behalf of children with special needs, birth through age eight, and their families.

**National Association for the Education of Young Children;** [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

Founded in 1926, The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is the world's largest organization working on behalf of young children with nearly 80,000 members, a national network of more than 300 state and local Affiliates, and a growing global alliance of like-minded organizations.

**National Institute for Early Education Research;** [http://nieer.org/](http://nieer.org/)

The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) conducts and communicates research to support high quality, effective, early childhood education for all young children. Such education enhances their physical, cognitive, and social development, and subsequent success in school and later life.

**National Network for Child Care;** [http://www.nncc.org/](http://www.nncc.org/)

An Internet source of over 1000 publications and resources related to child care. Publications are research-based and reviewed.