

**EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY  
COURSE SYLLABUS**

**Department:** Education

**Course Title:** Families, Culture, and Child Development

**Course Number:** ECE 410

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Catalog Description:** Provides an overview of the diversity in families whose children are enrolled in early childhood education classrooms. Examines cultural diversity in parenting and family communication, family stressors, risk and protective factors, and parenting styles. Presents a variety of strategies for communicating and collaborating with families, and involving them in curriculum planning and assessment.

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**Eastern EPP’s Candidate Learning Outcomes, NCATE and CAEP Standards, CT SDE  
Pre-service Competencies, and CCCT Standards**

<b>Eastern EPP’s Candidate Learning Outcomes (CLOs)</b>	<b>National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)</b>	<b>Council of Accreditation for Educator Preparation (CAEP)</b>	<b>Connecticut Preservice Competencies (PSC)</b>	<b>Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (CCCT)</b>	<b>NAEYC Standards</b>	<b>CEC Standards</b>
<b>Domain I:</b> Intentional Teaching	<b>Standard 1:</b> Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions	<b>Standard 1:</b> Content and Pedagogical Knowledge	<b>Domain 1:</b> Development and Characteristics of Learners	<b>Domain 1:</b> Content and Essential Skills	<b>Standard 1:</b> Promoting Child Development and Learning	<b>Standard 1:</b> Foundations
<b>Domain II:</b>	<b>Standard 2:</b> Assessment	<b>Standard 2:</b> Clinical	<b>Domain 2:</b> Evidence-	<b>Domain 2:</b> Classroom	<b>Standard 2:</b> Building	<b>Standard 2:</b>

Data Literacy  <b>Domain III:</b> Cultural Competence  <b>Domain IV:</b> Professional Practice and Leadership	System and Unit Evaluation  <b>Standard 3:</b> Field Experiences and Clinical Practice  <b>Standard 4:</b> Diversity  <b>Standard 5:</b> Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development  <b>Standard 6:</b> Unit Governance and Resources	Partnerships and Practice  <b>Standard 3:</b> Candidate Quality, Recruitment, and Selectivity  <b>Standard 4:</b> Program Impact  <b>Standard 5:</b> Provider Quality, Continuous Improvement, and Capacity	based/Standards-based Instruction  <b>Domain 3:</b> Evidence-based Classroom and Behavior Management  <b>Domain 4:</b> Assessment  <b>Domain 5:</b> Professional Behaviors and Responsibilities	Environment, Student Engagement and Commitment to Learning  <b>Domain 3:</b> Planning for Active Learning  <b>Domain 4:</b> Instruction for Active Learning  <b>Domain 5:</b> Assessment for Learning  <b>Domain 6:</b> Professional Responsibilities and Teacher Leadership	Family and Community Relationships  <b>Standard 3:</b> Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families  <b>Standard 4:</b> Using Developmentally Effective Approaches to Connect with Children and Families  <b>Standard 5:</b> Using Content Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum  <b>Standard 6:</b> Becoming a Professional	Development and Characteristics of Learners  <b>Standard 3:</b> Individual Learning Differences  <b>Standard 4:</b> Instructional Strategies  <b>Standard 5:</b> Learning Environments and Social Interactions  <b>Standard 6:</b> Language Instructional Planning  <b>Standard 7:</b> Assessment  <b>Standard 8:</b> Professional and Ethical Practice  <b>Standard 9:</b> Collaboration
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### ECE 410 Outcomes Aligned with Standards and Key Experiences

<u>Outcomes</u>	ECTC Standards	CLOs & CAEP Standards	NAEYC/CEC/PSC/CCCT	Key Experiences
<b>By the end of the course the students will:</b>				
1. Describe the influences of culture, class, and family life on children's development, behavior, and learning. [Meets CT statutory requirement C.G.S. Sec. 10-145a (b)]	ECTC 2a, 2b, 2c	CLO Domain III CAEP 1	NAEYC 1 and 2. CEC 2, 3, 5, 6, and 9 PSC a1A. a5A. a5D CCCT: 6.6, 6.8,	Response to Case Study  Parent Interview

			6.10	
2. Gain an understanding and appreciation of cultural, class, and gender diversity in family structure and dynamics.	ECTC 2a, 2b, 2c	CLO Domain III CAEP 1	NAEYC Standard 2 CEC 1, 9, and 10 . PSC a1A, a5A, a5D CCCT 6.6, 6.8, 6.10	Response to Case Study  Parent Interview  Cultural Research Presentation
3. Gain an understanding and appreciation of cultural and class diversity in parenting and family life and explain the historical, economic, and political sources of variations.	ECTC 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a, 2b, 2c	CLO Domain III CAEP 1	NAEYC 2. CEC 1, 5, 9 and 10 PSC a1A, a5A, a5D CCCT 6.6, 6.8, 6.10	Cultural Research Presentation
4. Apply research on family diversity to the resolution of problems of school-family discontinuity and the establishment of collaborative relationships and goal consensus with parents.	ECTC 2a, 2b, 2c	CLO Domain III CAEP 1	NAEYC 2 and 4 CEC 1, 3, 9, and 10 PSC a1A, a 4D, a5A, a5D CCCT 6.6, 6.8, 6.10	Parent Interview  Mock Parent Conferences
5. Understand the concepts of parent support and education in empowering families and encouraging family decision-making; develop more culturally sensitive, collaborative relationships with families.	ECTC 2a, 2b, 2c	CLO Domain III CAEP 1	NAEYC 2. CEC 1, 3, 9, and 10 PSC a1A, a 4D, a5A, a5D CCCT 6.6, 6.8, 6.10	Parent Interview  Mock Parent Conferences
6. Apply concepts of diversity in family life to the development of family involvement, communication, education, and conferencing programs.	ECTC 2a, 2b, 2c	CLO Domain III CAEP 1	NAEYC2. CEC 1, 3, 9, and 10 PSC a1A, a 4D, a5A, a5D CCCT 6.6, 6.8, 6.10	Family Involvement Plan
7. Describe the risk and protective factors and multiple stressors	ECTC 2a, 2b, 2c	CLO Domain III	NAEYC 2	Cultural Research Brief

influencing families and children, including poverty, substance abuse, community violence, child abuse and neglect, and other societal and community problems and conditions.		CAEP 1	CEC 1 and 2 PSC a5A, a5B, a5C CCCT 5.7	Cultural Presentation
8. Describe the importance of attachment, its cultural and societal influences, and the ways it can be nurtured in the classroom.	ECTC 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a, 2b, 2c	CLO Domains I and III CAEP 1	NAEYC 1 and 2. CEC 2, 3, 4, and 5 PSC a3B, a3C CCCT 2.1, 2.2, 2.3	Parent Interview  Cultural Research Brief  Cultural Presentation
9. Describe the influences of gender, family, culture, and class on the acquisition of social competence and the formation of self-concept.	ECTC 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a, 2b, 2c	CLO Domains I and III CAEP 1	NAEYC 1 and 2. CEC 2, 3, 4, and 5 PSC a3B, a3C CCCT 2.1, 2.2, 2.3	Parent Interview  Cultural Presentation
10. Describe the influence of culture and bilingualism on language development, communication styles, and interpersonal interactions.	ECTC 1a, 1b, 1c, 2a, 2b, 2c	CLO Domains I and III CAEP 1	NAEYC 1, 2, and 4. CEC 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. PSC a5D CCCT 1.5, 6.6, 6.8	Parent Interview Cultural Presentation
11. Apply ideas on cultural diversity in child development and family life to the planning of a unit of instruction.	ECTC 4a, 4b, 4c, 4d, 5b, 5c	CLO Domains I and III CAEP 1	NAEYC 1, 2, 4. CEC 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9 PSC a2F, a4C, a5D CCCT 1.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3	Culturally-Responsive Lesson Plan

**Course Outcomes Aligned with Liberal Arts Core Tier 3 Requirements**

<b>Course Outcome</b>	<b>Tier 3 Outcome</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
12. Write thoughtful analyses of two investigations on culture and families: an ethnographic interview with a family member and a review of literature on family life and culture.	Demonstrate the ability to engage in independent inquiry	Parent Interview  Cultural Research Brief  Cultural Presentation

13. Demonstrate a critical perspective on education and development by expressing viewpoints and asking questions in class and online and through the development of a culturally responsive lesson for young children.	Apply current and critical thinking in a focused area of study	Culturally-Responsive Lesson Plan
14. Revisit and reconceptualize their views on children, learning, and teaching, based on their independent research on families and culture.	Reflect on the context of their Independent Inquiry or artistic creation	Parent Interview Cultural Research Brief Cultural Presentation
15. Draw from their full liberal arts core—particularly courses in the social sciences—as they discuss historical, sociological, psychological, and ecological influences on children and families in class.	Reflect on this work as an outcome of their liberal arts education	Class Participation Written Responses to Weekly Readings
16. Demonstrate an ability to communicate ideas using a variety of methods in presentations to both an academic and a family/community audience.	Effectively communicate ideas orally, visually, and in writing.	Cultural Presentation
17. Describe and apply <b>ethical considerations in working with families and communities</b> and in conducting and reporting on research on human subjects.	Discern the ethical dimensions of the production and acquisition of knowledge within disciplines	Response to Case Study Cultural Research Brief Class Participation
18. Apply methods of inquiry, including ethnographic interview techniques and library research in conducting studies of families and culture.	Effectively seek and employ information to achieve academic goals	Parent Interview Cultural Research Brief

### Course Calendar

Date	Topic	Assignments Due
8/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Families and Culture</li> <li>• Sharing Family Stories</li> <li>• The Story of A: Why Families Matter</li> <li>• Overview of the Course</li> </ul>	
<b>NO CLASS: Labor Day</b>		
9/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to families and culture: “Talking in the teacher’s lounge”</li> <li>• <b>Ethical considerations in working with families and children</b></li> <li>• Cultural differences versus deficits: Appreciating and celebrating cultural diversity</li> </ul>	<b>***Response to Readings Due***</b>

9/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do Families Always Love Their Children?: Dispositions Toward Families</li> <li>• Misinformation on Child Development and Culture</li> <li>• <b>Ethics in research on children and families of diverse backgrounds: Challenging a deficit model</b></li> <li>• Case of Aziza</li> </ul>	
9/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Risk and Protective Factors</li> <li>• Analyzing families who are at risk or resilient: Overview of the response to a case study assignment</li> <li>• Ethical practices in supporting families at risk: What are the professional responsibilities of teachers?</li> <li>• Ahmik comes to school: Cultural elements that teachers need to know about</li> </ul>	<b>***Response to Readings Due***</b>
10/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What teachers need to know about a child's culture</li> <li>• Cultural continuum game</li> <li>• Communication with families: Interviews, conferences, and informal conversations</li> <li>• <b>Conducting supportive, positive, honest, and ethical conferences with families</b></li> <li>• Parent conference exercise</li> </ul>	<b>***Paper: Response to Case Study Due***</b>
10/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-family conflicts: Methods of resolution</li> <li>• Parent Involvement: What works and for whom?</li> <li>• Developing a family involvement plan for all families</li> </ul>	<b>***Response to Readings Due***</b>
10/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fathers: Do they matter? How do we get them involved?</li> <li>• What kind of parent are you (or will you be)? Does it matter?</li> <li>• "Good enough parenting"</li> <li>• Parenting Styles: Is there one correct way to parent?</li> </ul>	
10/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child abuse and neglect: Impact on child development</li> <li>• DCF presentation: Obligation of mandated reporters</li> <li>• <b>The ethical and professional obligations of mandated reporters</b></li> </ul>	<b>***Family Involvement Plan Due***</b>  <b>***Response to Readings Due: 3/20***</b>
10/31	<p>Culturally responsive curriculum: Applying research on culture to planning and teaching</p> <p>Ethical considerations regarding the Common Core and mainstream academic standards</p> <p><b>Ethical issues about the support and education of boys of color in the wake of Ferguson, Missouri</b></p>	
11/7	Cultural Roundtables	<b>***Cultural</b>

	Interviewing families: Ethnographic methods Rethinking childhood: How culture and family influence separation and autonomy.	<b>Research Brief and Roundtables***</b>  <b>***Response to Readings Due***</b>
11/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culturally responsive curriculum: Language differences versus deficits and discourse styles</li> <li>• Teaching in linguistic diverse classrooms.</li> <li>• Sheltered instruction for dual language learners</li> </ul>	
11/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sheltered instruction and dual language learners</li> </ul>	<b>***Response to Readings Due***</b>
11/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-bias scavenger hunt</li> <li>• <b>Ethical considerations in combating bias</b></li> </ul>	
12/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movie Night</li> </ul>	<b>***Culturally Responsive Lesson Plan Due***</b>  <b>***Response to Readings Due***</b>
12/12	<b>FINAL EXAM WEEK: NO EXAMS</b>	<b>***Parent/Family Interview Write Ups Due***</b>

### Assessments

1. **Response to Family Case Study:** Students will write a **5-page** response to a case study that has been written in the format of the Harvard Family Research Project and Harvard School of Business case study formats. A choice of cases, will be posted on Blackboard. Each addresses issues, dilemmas, or crises related to an individual family with a child or children who are younger than eight years of age. Most have two parts—a Part A which summarizes the family’s life and a Part B that reveals something new, surprising, worrisome, or uplifting, to be read after the reader reflects on Part A. So, the cases often read as intriguing mysteries, with Part B being a kind of resolution to a family’s situation. that ends the case study. The response paper will analyze the child’s and family’s risk and protective factors—which are highlighted in readings and class discussions--and will include recommendations for supporting and establishing positive relationships with the family in a school setting. **This paper must reference assigned readings on families and risk and protective factors assigned in class.**
2. **Cultural Research Brief:** Students will read about a cultural group of interest—the culture may be that of the parent or family member they will interview (see below) or a cultural group in the student’s practicum, but need not be. Readings can be from journals and chapters accessible in the Eastern data bases or reputable, research-based or well-referenced

websites. Students will write a *research brief*—a short, readable paper that is commonly published by research centers or universities to make theory and research accessible to professionals or parents. The brief must include not only general cultural characteristics but features of family life, parenting, and child development. Guidelines for writing such a brief will be presented in class. The brief will be approximately **4 pages** long and will review in a concise manner at least four separate references. **Note:** One or two outstanding briefs will be chosen each semester to be posted on the Center for Early Childhood Education website, which would allow a citation in the author’s resume.

3. **Cultural Research Roundtables:** On a given night, students will be assigned to research roundtables—tables of three or four other students—to share the findings contained in their cultural research brief. Each student will give an informal 15-minute presentation, followed by a five-minute discussion of the culture studied. The presentation is not evaluated, but is required for completion of the course. **Failure to present at these roundtables or not to prepare adequately for these will result in a lower grade in the class.** Students will submit their research brief on the night that they present at the roundtables.
4. **Parent Interview:** Students will interview a parent or primary caregiver of a child of a culture or family background that is completely different from one’s own. The parent will be of a *historically underrepresented group*. It is highly recommended that the student arrange to interview a parent whose child is enrolled in the student’s practicum placement. The interview may be with a parent of any cultural group which has been traditionally considered a “minority,” or include “persons of color.” African-American, Latino, Asian, Middle Eastern, Native American, or other groups are examples. Students who wish to interview a parent who is of Euro-American background, but is facing unique challenges or situations--a parent whose family lives in severe poverty, a disabled parent, a gay or lesbian parent, or a parent whose child has a disability—must seek approval from the instructor. Students will ask questions, using ethnographic methods, taking field notes on parent answers, and writing an in-depth, **8- to 10-page** reflection paper, on what was discovered. **The paper must reference readings on parents and culture and describe ways the parent is similar to, or different from, families described in the readings.**
5. **Family Involvement Plan:** Students will develop a parent involvement plan that includes at least three distinct activities or experiences to occur over the course of a school year. The plan must include strategies for involving families of diverse cultural backgrounds and characteristics, and must refer directly to course readings. The plan will be written in a **4-page** planning document that will be provided in class.
6. **Culturally-Responsive Activity/Lesson Plan and Analysis:** Students will develop a **2-page** plan for a lesson, learning center, or small group activity, which directly reflects the unique histories, world views, discourse styles, diverse linguistic backgrounds, collective orientations, and play interests of the cultural group that was the focus of the research brief/roundtable presentation. The plan must include both content (e.g., knowledge learned) and methods (e.g., teaching strategies and grouping) that address the needs of

this particular cultural group. In addition, the student will write a **2-page** analysis, to accompany the plan, which describes precisely how the planned activity addresses the needs of the cultural group being addressed. **The paper must directly refer to research conducted for the cultural brief and roundtable.**

7. **Responses to Readings:** There is no textbook for the course. Articles and chapters will be posted on Blackboard and should be read by the class session in which they are to be discussed. Reference to readings in all assignments is required in order to do well in the course. Every two weeks, students will write a 1-page reflection (**1 page x 7 weeks = 7 pages**) on what they have learned from readings over the past two weeks, to be submitted on Blackboard. The instructor will score each submission, based on criteria shared in the assignment sheet.
8. **Attendance:** Attendance at every class session is expected. Please inform the instructor if you have an unavoidable absence (prior to the class missed, if possible, but no later than one week after the absence). **Students should read the ECE attendance policy, presented below; excessive absence may result in a lower grade or an inability to complete the course.**
9. **Professional Interactions and Class Participation:** Much of the learning in this course will come from exchanging ideas with other students and the instructor in the class and actively participating in cooperative learning groups. Due to the topics included, disagreements and controversial opinions are likely in class discussions. Students are expected to actively share their views and to respectfully listen and respond to the viewpoints of others. **Poor involvement or unprofessional behavior in class may result in a lower grade in the course.**

**Total Pages of Completed Work (to meet writing intensive criteria for the course): 34**

**Assignment of Grades:**

Students will be assigned grades based on the quality of their work on all assignments. Grades will be calculated using the following weighting:

<b>Project:</b>	<b>Percentage of Final Grade:</b>
Response to Case/Case Study	15%
Parent Interview	20%
Cultural Research Brief and Roundtables	20%
Parent Involvement Plan	15%
Cultural Lesson/Activity Plan	15%
Response to Readings	15%
Total:	100%

### Blackboard/Vista Policy

This course is taught using the course management system adopted by the university. All projects, papers, and other assignments must be submitted through Blackboard. If a student has problems with this system, it is their responsibility to contact ITS for assistance. All aspects of the course—assignments, assigned readings, calendar of events and due dates can only be accessed through this system. It is the responsibility of the student to learn to use Blackboard and to seek assistance through the IT department of the university if they encounter computer incompatibility or other difficulties. **The professor will monitor students' access to readings assigned on Blackboard as one measure of class participation.**

### Office Hours of Jeffrey Trawick-Smith

**Office:** CFDRC 216  
**Phone:** 465-5232  
**E-mail:** Please email me about course-related topics through Blackboard email; non-course messages may be sent to trawick@easternct.edu

#### **Office Hours:**

Monday: 2:00 to 4:00

Wednesday: 12:00 to 1:00

Thursday: 2:00 to 4:00

Available other times and days by appointment.

### **Attendance Policy Early Childhood Education Programs Eastern Connecticut State University**

In-class discussions and activities are a fundamental part of all early childhood education courses. Participation in such class experiences is as critical for learning as outside-of-class readings and assignments. For this reason, a new attendance policy was reviewed and approved by the early childhood faculty in March 2004. This new policy will take effect in Summer 2004 for all courses in the program:

1. Students are expected to attend **all** class sessions for all courses in the ECE program. To be counted as present, students must attend the full class session; arriving exceedingly late or leaving early from class may be considered an absence.
2. Only **documented** health, family, or other emergencies will be considered valid excuses for absence. Evidence of an emergency must be submitted to the course instructor in order for an absence to be excused. Elective absences, avoidable, non-emergency or non-health absences that

are chosen by the student will be considered unexcused absences.

3. In the event a class must be missed, the student should make every effort to inform the faculty member **before** class. If this is impossible, the student must contact the instructor **within two days** of the absence, to explain the reasons for missing (including documentation of an emergency) and to review the class that was missed. Failure to do this will result in the absence being considered unexcused.
4. Students may be asked by the instructor to do additional reading or work related to a missed class. **All missed field experiences and practicum sessions must be made up in a timely fashion.** Failure to complete additional work or make-up hours will result in the absence being considered unexcused.
5. Absences may result in a lower grade in the class. Individual faculty members will set their own policies on how missed classes will affect final grades. However, the following rules apply to **all courses** in the program:
  - a. Students who miss the equivalent of **two weeks** of a course due to **unexcused** absences will automatically have their final grade reduced by one full grade level. (**Note that this is the equivalent of missing two weekly classes or four bi-weekly classes for non-emergency reasons.**)
  - b. Students who miss **three or more weeks** of a class for any reason--**excused or unexcused**--cannot complete the course and must withdraw. They must complete the course again on the next semester that it is offered, before moving on to the next undergraduate core of the program or the next graduate class. (**Note: Even if the three weeks of absences are excused, the student must still withdraw from the course, since the ECE faculty would be unable to assure the State Department of Education that the student had acquired the knowledge and skills that they address.**)

### **Policy on Academic Misconduct**

A goal of the Early Childhood Education Program is to promote the professional and ethical behavior of our teaching candidates. One important aspect of this behavior is academic honesty. For this reason, the work of candidates will be carefully monitored to assure that standards of academic integrity are met. If a candidate has plagiarized a passage or passages in a paper or project without proper attribution, she or he will fail the course. A repeated violation could result in dismissal from the program and, in some cases, the university. The following is the formal definition of plagiarism, as presented in the Eastern Student Handbook:

“Copying sentences, phrases, paragraphs, tables, figures or data directly or in slightly modified form from a book, article, Internet site or other published or unpublished source, or adapting the ideas of another authority without following acceptable forms of citation (i.e., quotation marks, endnotes, footnotes, parenthetical notes, and/or other contextual information).”

-Eastern Connecticut State University Academic  
Misconduct Policies and Procedures, *Student Handbook*,  
2011

### **Accessibility Services**

Eastern Connecticut State University is committed to following the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you are a student with a disability (or think you may have a disability), and require adaptations or accommodations, or assistance evacuating a building in the case of an emergency, please contact the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) at 860-465-0189 to discuss your request further. Any student registered with the OAS should contact the instructor as soon as possible for assistance with classroom accommodations. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and must be communicated through a Letter of Accommodation which is drafted by the OAS.