IECE 325
Partnerships with Families

Instructor: Sylvia L. Dietrich, Ph.D.
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Email: Sylvia.dietrich@wku.edu
Office Hours: Posted on office door

Course Schedule/Location: Tuesday, 8:30 – 11:15 AM, TPH 302

Western Kentucky University Information Number: 745-4845 (School closing information due to inclement weather)

Prerequisites: IECE 321, 322, 323

Corequisites: IECE 324, 326; EXED 422; LTCY 310

Course Description: Strategies that early childhood educators employ to develop active partnerships with families. Fifteen hours of field experience are required; students are responsible for their own transportation.

Textbooks/Readings:


Additional Readings: The instructor will assign additional readings as appropriate for the course.

IECE Teacher Standards:
V. Reflects/evaluates professional practices.
VII. Engages in professional development
VIII. Supports families
IX. Demonstrates implementation of technology

Course Objectives:
1. Identify and implement strategies for communicating with families. (VIII)
2. Identify formal and informal supports and resources appropriate for families. (VIII)
3. Identify and implement family education/training activities. (VIII)
4. Identify strategies for involving families as teachers. (VIII)
5. Identify strategies for involving families as advocates. (VIII)
6. Engages in ongoing self-reflection to improve professional practices. (V)
7. Applies professional ethics, practices and legal mandates in ECE settings. (V)
8. Identify and discuss resources for professionals and families. (VII)
9. Critically reviews and applies research and recommended practices. (VII)
10. Seeks support and expertise of others to improve professional practice. (VII)

Course Outline:

A. Review of family-centered services model
B. Communicating with families
   a. Two way communication strategies
   b. Parent conferences
   c. Home visits
   d. Written communication – newsletters, handbooks, note systems
   e. Technology as a communication vehicle
   f. Working with interpreters
C. Formal and information resources/supports
   a. Coping styles
   b. Family support groups
   c. Parent-to-parent networks
   d. Community/state/national support agencies/organization
   e. Family/youth resource centers
D. Family education/training
   a. Home visits
   b. Lending libraries
   c. Group meetings
   d. Self-instructional meetings
E. Families as teachers
   a. Volunteer programs
   b. Parents as teacher models
   c. Program/home carryover strategies
F. Family members as advocates
   a. Community/state/national advocacy opportunities
b. Preparing family members to be advocates

Note: Research, recommended practices, and legislation for each of the above will be discussed.

Course Requirements:

1. **Teacher Interview:** Each student will interview a public school preschool teacher regarding planned activities with families and develop a written summary of the interview. A preschool teacher will be “assigned” by the instructor. Guidelines for the summary and interview questions will be provided by the instructor. The interview must be completed prior to beginning the observations in number 2 below. (50 points)

2. **Observations:** Each student will observe four public school/community activities with families (e.g., parent workshop, support group meeting, parent conference, home visit, IFSP meeting, IEP meeting) and develop a written report for each based on guidelines provided by the instructor. (25 points each)

3. **Resource Review:** Each student will review 5 resources related to some aspect of family involvement (e.g., parent education, communication), prepare an annotated bibliography of those resources with copies for students, and present the resources in class. This assignment is the critical performance for this course. The performance task and rubric are in the Electronic Portfolio System (EPS). The product must be uploaded in the EPS system for you to receive a grade for this assignment and the course. (50 points)

4. **Parent Workshop:** Each student will participate as a team member to develop and implement a workshop for family members. Guidelines will be provided by the instructor. (100 points)

5. **Exams:** Each student will complete three exams based on class discussion and readings. (50 points each)

Grading:

Points will be assigned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Interview</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Review</td>
<td>50 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Workshop</td>
<td>100 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>150 points</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total** 500 points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93 - 100%</td>
<td>465-500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85 - 92%</td>
<td>425-464</td>
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</tbody>
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C 77 - 84% 385-424
D 70 –76% 350-384
F 69% and below

- Students are expected to attend all classes and to have completed assigned readings prior to each class. If an absence is unavoidable, (a) students are expected to contact the instructor, prior to the class session or as soon thereafter as possible, and (b) students are expected to take responsibility for all missed information and material.
- Active class participation based on professional experiences and assigned readings is expected.
- Course materials, announcements, etc. will be made available via Blackboard. The WKU e-mail address will be used for all students.
- All written assignments will be typed and conform to standards of documentation, organization, mechanics, and legibility (i.e., adhere to APA format). Assignments not adhering to these standards will result in lower scores. Plagiarism as defined in the university catalog is not acceptable and may result in failure of the course. Students are expected to use person-first language.
- The course schedule, topics, assignments, and procedures are subject to change as deemed necessary by the instructor or in the case of extenuating circumstances.
- Make-up exams will not be given.
- All students are required to complete fifteen (15) hours of field experience in this course. According to university policy, all students completing field experiences are required to have the following documents on file in the Teacher Assistance Center, Room 408 Tate Page Hall: current TB test, current physical, current criminal background check (thumbprint). It is the student’s responsibility to obtain the appropriate forms and submit the documents BEFORE beginning field experience directly to the Teacher Assistance Center. Questions should be directed to Ms. Tammy McComb at 270-745-6571 (fax: 270/745-3442) or tammy.mccomb@wku.edu
- Field experience hours must be documented. Failure to complete and document fifteen (15) hours of field experience will result in an automatic grade of F for the course, regardless of point accumulations on assignments.