

TEACHING AND LEARNING: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (MED) ONLINE

The Department of Teacher Education prepares Urban Professional Multicultural Educators through an integrated program of courses and field experiences. Programs offered are designed for the preparation of future educators. The programs of study center around our commitment to excellence in teaching in today's diverse society through the investigation of significant educational issues, inquiry into student learning and effective teaching practices, and the use of technology in teaching and learning. Online and online-hybrid classes offer opportunities for synchronous and asynchronous participation and supervision. We engage teacher candidates in critical reflection upon their practice throughout the program. We foster engagement in schools through our Partnership Schools and other school and agency affiliations. Upon completion of this online program, teacher candidates measure themselves against the values of our guiding conceptual framework through the completion of professional portfolios. Values that are part of this framework include: commitment to social justice, critical pedagogy, and positive educational transformation within the context of a Vincentian personalism that honors the dignity of each person.

Students entering the program must be able and willing to devote themselves to a program requiring a minimum of 105 hours of daytime internships/field experiences in early childhood programs and schools. These school-based internships. Two internships (ECE 481, ECE 482) are aligned with curriculum and instruction theory courses and require students to be in the field during the daytime for 35 hours in a preschool classroom setting, and 35 hours in a primary-grade (K-2nd grade) classroom setting. Students also are required to complete 35 hours of observational field experience in an infant-toddler classroom. As part of their culminating experiences in early childhood education, students devote a minimum of 10 consecutive weeks to full-time student teaching. Students who are working full-time in childcare centers and schools may be able to complete their student teaching and some of their clinical hours in their employment sites. Contact the Early Childhood Education Program Director to determine options and eligibility.

The program in early childhood education prepares students to teach children in a variety of urban and suburban educational settings, including public and private elementary schools and early childhood education centers. Graduates earn the Master of Education degree and are entitled to apply for the Illinois Professional Educator License. In addition, teacher candidates meet IL Approval for Teaching Young Children with Special Needs, ages 3-6. All of these elements are built into the required curriculum.

In addition, students have options of acquiring the following endorsements and credentials:

- Early Childhood Bilingual/ESL endorsement
- Early Childhood Learning Behavior Specialist (special education) endorsement
- Courses toward acquiring credentials in Developmental Therapy

Licensure

Program Requirements	Quarter Hours
Degree Requirements (MEd)	60
Total hours required	60

Learning Outcomes

Student will be able to:

- Integrate and apply their synthetic research-based knowledge of child development to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments for each child.
- Establish respectful, reciprocal relationships that involve, support, and empower families as well as the communities in which they live. They create these relationships based upon their ongoing study of theory-based methods and models for understanding each family's characteristics, the community's dynamics, and the identified needs of the children.
- Critically research and use multiple forms and approaches of effective assessment in planning and documenting all children's ongoing growth and development, in the service of informing stakeholders' work and support of children and families.
- Investigate, evaluate, and develop a wide repertoire of developmentally appropriate and productive strategies that address the multiple learning needs of children and the families who support them.
- Create, implement, and critically analyze as well as evaluate meaningful curriculum through use of research tools and professional academic disciplinary knowledge, to enhance learning outcomes for all children.
- Demonstrate a high level of professional knowledge, competence, and communication skills in the service of providing and advocating for quality care and education in various settings, across the early childhood age span (i.e., birth through age 8y).

Dispositions

The College of Education expects its students to demonstrate the following dispositions and competencies across coursework, field experiences, clinical placements, and professional interactions. These competencies reflect professional, ethical, and inclusive practice aligned with state licensure requirements, accreditation standards, and our Vincentian mission to prepare effective and socially responsible professionals. We recognize that some concepts can be interpreted subjectively and have at times disproportionately impacted marginalized communities. Accordingly, our dispositions are applied with attention to equity, transparency, and cultural responsiveness. Faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to consult the standards of relevant professional organizations and accrediting bodies for specific expectations within their fields and engage in ongoing dialogue about these dispositions to raise questions, address concerns, and ensure fair and equitable implementation.

Justice and Ethical Responsibility

Student acts with integrity, ensuring their decisions and actions promote justice in all academic and professional standards.

Measures:

- Follows all ethical, legal, and professional standards, including confidentiality and mandated reporting requirements.

- Demonstrates accountability in academic and professional decisions and actions.
- Advocates for and enacts equitable and just practices that protect the dignity, safety, and well-being of others.

Diversity and Cultural Responsiveness

Student respects diverse identities, cultures, and experiences to foster equitable and inclusive interactions in all learning and professional settings.

Measures:

- Reflects on personal values, biases, and assumptions.
- Adapts learning and practice to meet the needs of diverse individuals and communities.
- Promotes respect and equity in interactions across classroom and professional settings.

Leadership and Professional Growth

Student takes ownership of their learning and professional growth and applies knowledge thoughtfully to address challenges, improve practice, and support positive learning and professional environments.

Measures:

- Seeks opportunities to advance knowledge, skills, and professional growth.
- Reflects on experiences and feedback to improve and innovate practice.
- Applies knowledge and skills to solve problems or to improve outcomes in academic, professional, and field settings.

Collaboration and Professional Relationships

Student builds positive relationships and collaborates effectively in all academic and professional settings.

Measures:

- Communicates respectfully and professionally with peers, staff, faculty, supervisors, and community partners.
- Incorporates feedback to improve collaborative work and interactions.
- Maintains interpersonal and professional boundaries.

Professionalism and Communication

Student models professionalism by engaging responsibly and communicating respectfully within all learning and professional contexts, recognizing that professional norms may vary across cultural, community, and institutional contexts.

Measures:

- Demonstrates professional behavior, including preparedness, punctuality, and attire and language.
- Communicates clearly, respectfully, and effectively in verbal, nonverbal, and written forms.
- Follows guidelines, policies, and procedures in classrooms, professional, and field settings.

Teacher Preparation Field Experience

Each student pursuing licensure in the College of Education must complete structured Field Experiences in schools and sites aligned with their area of licensure in conjunction with designated education courses. Field Experience hours must be completed across a variety of settings and grade levels, include work with diverse student populations, and involve experiences in special education settings. Field Experiences must be completed during the quarter in which the course is taken and align with the completion of required course assignments. In addition to the requirements above, students must complete the minimum total Field Experience hours required by their program to be eligible for Student Teaching. All hours must be submitted by the student and approved by faculty in the Field Experience Hours Log upon completion each quarter and be verified by the Field Experience & Student Teaching Office before final approval for Student Teaching.

Student Teaching Requirements

Student Teaching is the culminating course for teacher candidates. It is an onsite experience in classrooms. The course requires candidates to be in schools and sites full-time. As the culmination of their teacher preparation program, it requires candidates to demonstrate their preparedness to teach, including reflecting the skills and sensibilities set out by the various professional organizations and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). A seminar course is required in the same quarter as student teaching.

All students in teacher preparation programs must meet the following requirements prior to enrollment in Student Teaching and the seminar course:

Academic & Clinical Requirements

- Complete all courses required for the degree (including major coursework, content area courses, and general education coursework)
- Complete all program-required Field Experience hours
- Achieve a minimum overall cumulative GPA of 3.00
- Meet all other program requirements (e.g., residency requirement, OPI test)
- Attempt the required Illinois licensure content area test in the primary licensure area and grade level*
- Demonstrate satisfactory professional dispositions

**Secondary Education students placed in a middle grades classroom for Student Teaching must pass the middle grades content-area exam prior to Student Teaching and attempt the secondary content-area exam. Both exams must be passed to be eligible for licensure.*

Student Teaching Preparation and Deadlines

- Attend a Mandatory Student Teaching Informational Session approximately 2-3 quarters prior to expected quarter of Student Teaching
- Meet with an Academic Advisor to confirm academic eligibility and timeline
- Submit Student Teaching Application after meeting with an Academic Advisor, approximately 2-3 quarters prior to Student Teaching; application includes site preferences, resume, unofficial transcripts, FERPA release form, and writing sample

- Submit and complete any additional placement school/district application materials and/or clearance requirements by the noted deadlines
- Meet all academic requirements and professional disposition expectations one quarter by the quarter preceding Student Teaching, and continue to meet them through that quarter
- Attempt content area tests no later than 2 months prior to student teaching start date
- Attend Student Teaching Orientation in the weeks prior to the start of the Student Teaching experience

Students are expected to meet all stated requirements, procedures, and associated deadlines related to their Student Teaching placement. An eligibility review will be conducted approximately one month prior to the start of Student Teaching to confirm that all requirements and timelines have been satisfied. Failure to comply with these expectations within the established timelines may result in removal from the current placement or Student Teaching deferral to a future quarter. In cases where these expectations are not met, the Field Experience & Student Teaching Office may determine that continuation in the current placement is not appropriate. Decisions will be made at the discretion of the Field Experience & Student Teaching Office, following review of relevant information and, when feasible, communication with the student regarding the deficiency. The Field Experience & Student Teaching Office reserves the right to reassign or remove a student from their placement, considering the specific situation and any documented efforts to comply with requirements.

If a student or the program determines that the student will not complete Student Teaching but intends to finish the degree, the student must consult with the Program Director or Department Chair to identify appropriate substitute coursework. Approval of substitution courses is at the discretion of the Program Director or Department Chair, and such coursework will be equivalent in credit hours to the Student Teaching and seminar requirements. In these cases, a notation will be added to the student's transcript stating: "Completion of degree requirements did not lead to eligibility for licensure."

Licensure

Requirements for licensure include completion of an education preparation program, all licensure content tests (including OPI for world language endorsements), and an awarded bachelor's degree. A bachelor's degree is required to qualify for licensure and must be awarded before applying for the license. Student teaching must be passed with a minimum grade of B- or higher and the seminar course with a minimum grade of C or higher.

Upon finishing all requirements, DePaul sends notification to ISBE to verify completion of requirements. Then students must submit an application in the ISBE system (ELIS). Application requirements include an application form, application fee, official transcripts, and registration fee.

All individuals must meet ISBE requirements in place at the time of application for the license. Requirements are subject to change at the discretion of ISBE.

Individuals seeking subsequent (additional) endorsements after applying for licensure must contact a College of Education Licensure Officer to determine next steps. Additional courses, tests, and fees may be required as per ISBE requirements.

Licensure Tests

All individuals pursuing a Professional Educator License (PEL) issued by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) are required to pass a content area exam specific to their primary teaching area. Students wishing to add endorsements to their license will also be required to pass any additional content area exams in the desired endorsement area. The Academic Success Center can provide tutoring, workshops, online resources, and practice tests.

Endorsements

An endorsement is a credential on a Professional Educator License (PEL) that identifies the specific subjects or grade level that the license holder is authorized to teach.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) issues endorsements in various subject areas. To view the full list and requirements, visit the ISBE website.

Please note that the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) may change the licensure and endorsement requirements at any time and without prior notice. Individuals are bound by the requirements in place when applying for the license or endorsement, not the requirements in place when they began the program.

Teacher Performance Assessment

A Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA) is a subject-specific, performance-based assessment for teacher candidates designed to demonstrate their ability to plan, teach, assess, and reflect on instruction. A TPA is designed to measure an educator's knowledge, skills, and preparedness in a real-world teaching context. A teacher performance assessment requirement for Illinois licensure is waived until September 1, 2029. Illinois will develop and pilot a state-developed teacher performance assessment between 2026 and 2029 (see Public Act 104-0128.) (<https://ilga.gov/Documents/Legislation/PublicActs/104/PDF/104-0128.pdf>)

Beginning in the 2026-2027 academic year, the College of Education may participate in the ISBE pilot program for a new Illinois Teacher Performance Assessment (ILTPA). If the college participates, the ILTPA will be required as part of the Student Teaching course. Additional information about pilot requirements and procedures will be provided to Student Teaching instructors and students when it is received from ISBE.

The new Illinois TPA may require a fee to complete. In addition, candidates may be required to earn a minimum passing score to successfully complete the assessment and be eligible for licensure.

Degree Conferral & Graduation

The awarding of a degree is not automatic. The student must submit an application to be considered for the degree. The university awards and posts degrees at the end of each regular academic term (autumn, winter, spring, summer).

It is the student's responsibility to initiate the degree conferral process by submitting an online application. Submitting an application indicates the student's intent to complete all degree requirements by the end of the term for which the application is submitted.

Undergraduate students must be approved for student teaching and complete student teaching and seminar to be cleared for the degree. Students must submit a graduation application for the quarter that corresponds with term in which Student Teaching is completed.

Once the application has been submitted, the student may not register for any term after the one selected in the application.

To apply for degree conferral, log on to Campus Connect. Select "Advising, Progress & Graduation", then "Apply for Graduation". The on-screen instructions will take you through the application process.

Provided that all requirements and financial obligations are met, degrees are posted 30 days after the official end of the term. Official dates are listed on the Academic Calendar.

DePaul holds one commencement ceremony each year in June. To participate, the student must first apply for degree conferral for the current academic year and then submit a cap and gown order.

Eligibility for the June Commencement ceremony is limited to students who complete the entirety of their program requirements, including student teaching, within the same academic year (prior to the ceremony).

Additional information about degree conferral and graduation can be found on the Commencement website at <https://resources.depaul.edu/commencement/Pages/default.aspx>

Degree Requirements

The requirements below are those approved by the Illinois State Board of Education in April 2016.

Health, Safety and Child Nutrition Requirement

Students must provide documentation of successful course completion that shows they possess the requisite knowledge and skills to provide appropriate content and experiences for young children from birth through age 8 that reflect the interrelationships among health, safety, and nutrition. In addition, students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of cultural influences on young children's health, safety, and nutrition, and how to work with special needs children affected by health impairments. Finally, students also must demonstrate their familiarity with practices that promote good nutrition, dental health, and the physical, social, and emotional well-being of young children.

This requirement can be met by completing ECE 615 (Child Health Safety & Nutrition), or an equivalent course taken at the undergraduate or graduate level outside of DePaul. Consult a faculty advisor to determine whether a prior course fulfills this content requirement.

Course Requirements

Introductory Courses: 12 quarter hours required, grade of C or better required.

Course	Title	Quarter Hours
ECE 406	LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD (BIRTH TO 8Y)	4
ECE 421	CHILD AND FAMILY IN THE URBAN COMMUNITY	4
SCG 404	CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT	4

Advanced Courses: 40 quarter hours required, grade of C or better required.

Course	Title	Quarter Hours
ECE 407	PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS: CURRICULUM AND STRATEGY	4

ECE 408	CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION IN PRIMARY GRADES	4
ECE 411	ASSESSMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD INCLUSIVE SETTINGS	4
ECE 420	MATH AND SCIENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD	4
ECE 423	SUPPORTING EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	4
ECE 427	YOUNG EXCEPTIONAL CHILD: METHODS AND CHARACTERISTICS	4
ECE 434	LITERACY, LITERATURE, & THE YOUNG CHILD	4
ECE 481	INTERNSHIP IN THE PRESCHOOL SETTING	2
ECE 482	INTERNSHIP IN THE PRIMARY-GRADE SETTING	2
BBE 451	TEACHING DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD: THEORY, POLICY AND PRACTICE	4
Select one of the following:		4
SCG 408	EDUCATION AND SOCIETY	
SCG 409	SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION	
SCG 411	PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION	

¹ ECE 407 may be taken concurrently.

² ECE 408 may be taken concurrently.

Student Teaching: 8 quarter hours required, grade of B- or better required

Registration in student teaching requires completion of all requirements and procedures listed in the college core section.

Course	Title	Quarter Hours
ECE 595	EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENT TEACHING	6
ECE 596	EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENT TEACHING SEMINAR	2

Recommended/Optional Courses

ECE 480 provides experience with a population for whom highly qualified educators are in increased demand.

Course	Title	Quarter Hours
ECE 480	INTERNSHIP WITH INFANTS AND TODDLERS	2

Bilingual/ESL Endorsement Courses

Teacher candidates seeking an endorsement in Bilingual or ESL can add the credential to the Professional Educator License (PEL) by taking additional courses. Requirements are listed in the Endorsements section of the Course Catalog and are in addition to degree requirements.

Learning Behavior Specialist Special Education Endorsement Courses

Individuals seeking an endorsement in Special Education (called LBS1-Learning Behavior Specialist) can add the credential to the Professional Educator License (PEL) by taking additional courses. Courses are: SER 431, SER 475, SER 476, SER 597. Requirements are

listed in the Endorsements section of the Course Catalog and are in addition to degree requirements.

Special Education Approval Courses

All students in ECE program will take 5 courses that are required for the degree. These courses will make ECE students who are seeking a PEL eligible to receive a letter of approval in early childhood special education. An approval in early childhood special education makes graduating ECE license holders eligible to work in preschool special education settings. Five special education courses are: ECE 406, ECE 411, ECE 421, ECE 423, ECE 427.

Licensure Tests

Students seeking licensure by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) are required to successfully complete a set of tests specific to the Early Childhood professional field:

- Early Childhood Content Area Test (test #206) – assesses knowledge of language and literacy development, learning across the curriculum, diversity, collaboration, and professionalism in the early childhood program. Test is required before Student Teaching (deadlines apply).
- EdTPA - assessment conducted during the student teaching experience including video clips of instruction, lesson plans, student work samples, analysis of student learning and reflective commentaries. Students will submit an electronic portfolio to an outside agency for independent evaluation and a fee will be imposed by that agency as part of the assessment.

Internships & Other Field Experiences

Each student seeking licensure from the College of Education must complete supervised Internships in appropriate settings in conjunction with education courses. In addition, there are some courses, which might require certain hours of field experience to be completed, and / or have field assignments, which students are required to complete. Two internship-type field-based courses (ECE 481, ECE 482) are aligned with curriculum and instruction theory courses across the program. Each internship course requires completing 75 hours of field experience in its relevant grade level classroom. ECE 481 is taken concurrently with ECE 407. ECE 482 is taken concurrently with ECE 408. Since these internship courses are scheduled only once per academic year, be sure to work with your advisor in carefully mapping out when you will take them. For details on requirements, expectations, documentation, & courses in your program that require fieldwork hours, visit the College of Education website.

Non-Licensure Option

Individuals that do not desire a license or are not eligible for a license can seek to earn the degree without meeting licensure requirements. In seeking this option, individuals understand that the following stipulations apply:

- Confirmation must be given in writing that they seek this option and agree to the stipulations.
- A notation is placed on the transcript indicating that “completion of degree requirements did not lead to eligibility for licensure.”
- Individuals have the option to return to the ECE program within 1-2 years after earning the graduate degree to complete student teaching and other licensure requirements (including ISBE-mandated tests) and become eligible for the license. The non-licensure notation will remain on the original transcript for the graduate degree. Additional coursework may also be required.

- Coursework is chosen in consultation with a faculty advisor and is tailored to individual's prior coursework, experience, and professional interests.
- All coursework must be taken at DePaul; no transfer credit is allowed from other institutions.
- Individuals must complete the specified coursework within 2 years or be subject to re-evaluation.
- A minimum of 2 courses (8 credit hours) are required to substitute for the student teaching experience. Coursework must be 400 level and receive a grade of B- or better.

Developmental Therapy Option

These course, listed below, will prepare early childhood teacher candidates for a career requiring expertise in early intervention for infants and toddlers (e.g., from birth to age three) with special needs and their families. The coursework can be taken in addition to degree requirements, or if seeking the non-licensure option, can be taken to replace student teaching. After taking the required courses and earning the degree, individuals will be required to take a training workshop on the State of Illinois system of Early Intervention and apply directly to Provider Connections to receive their Developmental Therapy credentials after submitting their transcripts.

Course	Title	Quarter Hours
ECE 490	DEVELOPMENTAL THERAPY STRATEGIES FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS IN EARLY INTERVENTION	4
ECE 491	ASSESSMENT OF INFANT AND TODDLERS	4
ECE 492	WORKING WITH FAMILIES OF INFANTS AND TODDLERS: PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION IN EARLY INTERVENTION	4
ECE 493	INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES WITH INFANTS, TODDLERS AND TWOS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (optional)	2

Infant Toddler Courses

Two infant toddler courses are available for special population or as elective for early childhood education students who seek additional specialty in infant/toddler education.

Course	Title	Quarter Hours
ECE 495	DESIGNING CURRICULUM FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS	4
ECE 615	SPECIAL TOPICS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING	4