

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Program Description

The Associate of Applied Science Degree Program in Early Childhood Education is designed for students wishing to work with children from birth to 8 years of age in a variety of settings using developmentally appropriate practice and adhering to the professional code of ethics established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

After completing the program, students will be qualified for any position in a child-care setting as specified by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services licensing requirements. In addition to the Associate of Applied Science degree, the program meets all the requirements for the Child Development Associate (CDA) certification. Students also have the option to complete a one-year diploma or a 12-credit certificate in early childhood education.

Associate of Arts and Associate of Science Degrees may also be earned by students planning to transfer to a four-year institution to teach in Pre-K to Second Grade settings. Students should consult with an ECED faculty advisor to plan a program of study to meet their needs.

Throughout the program, students have an opportunity to experience working with young children directly in the on-campus Child Development Center at MCC and other sites in the community. During the final semester, students complete a student teaching experience in which they assume total responsibility for infants, toddlers and pre-school age children.

Students must be able to meet the standards established by Child Care Licensing in Nebraska to participate in lab assignments. These requirements include:

- Criminal background check and clearance.
- Complete a felony misdemeanor statement.
- Have clearance from Nebraska Child and Abuse Registry.

Failure to pass the current standards for Licensing may excluded students from lab settings.

It is highly recommended that students acquire or renew their First Aid/ CPR Certification as students.

Program Objectives

- **Promote Child Development and Learning:** Students will use their understanding of young children's characteristics and needs and of multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning, to create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive and challenging for ALL children.
- **Build Family and Community Relationships:** Students will know about, understand and value the importance and complex characteristics of children's families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families and involve ALL families in their children's development and learning.
- **Utilize Observation, Documentation, and Assessment to Support Young Children and Families:** Students will know about and understand the goals, benefits and uses of assessment. They

know about and use systematic observations, documentation and other effective assessment strategies in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to positively influence children's development.

- **Teach and Learn:** Students will integrate their understanding of and relationship with children and families; their understanding of developmentally effective approaches to teaching and learning; and their knowledge of academic disciplines to design, implement and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for ALL young children.
- **Become a Professional:** Students will identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies.

Career Opportunities

Career possibilities include pre-school teacher, paraeducator, teaching assistant, public child care, HeadStart programs, director of a child care center, child care homes, corporate child care, nanny agencies and other careers related to working with children.

Associate of Applied Science Degree

- Early Childhood Education, AAS (<https://catalog.mpcc.edu/course-catalog/programs/early-childhood-education/early-childhood-education-aas/>)

Diploma

- Early Childhood Education Diploma (<https://catalog.mpcc.edu/course-catalog/programs/early-childhood-education/early-childhood-education-diploma/>)

Certificate

- Early Childhood Education Certificate (<https://catalog.mpcc.edu/course-catalog/programs/early-childhood-education/early-childhood-education-certificate/>)