



ECPC Sample Syllabus

Standard 2: Partnering with Families

*This **sample** syllabus provides ideas, resources, activities, readings, and assignments, aligned with the Initial Practice-Based Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators (2020) and DEC Recommended Practices. Consider state and university policies and add them as appropriate. This is an example only and is not a complete syllabus.*

ECPC Sample Syllabus

Topic: Partnering with Families

Semester Year

Instructor:	Primary Delivery Format:
Office:	Class Location:
Email:	Office hours:
Phone:	

***Indicate preferred method of communication and response time to be expected.*

Course Information

Course Description

Faculty will insert their course description here. This example is Standard 2.

Example. This course is designed to help students gain knowledge of family-centered practices and family systems theory to develop and maintain reciprocal partnerships with families. Students apply family capacity-building practices as they support families to make informed decisions and advocate for their young children. Students will engage families in opportunities that build on their existing strengths, reflect current goals and foster family competence and confidence to support their children’s development and learning. 3 Credits.

Required Text

Example:

Turnbull, A. A., Turnbull, H. R., Erwin, E. J., Soodak, L. C., & Shogren, K. A. (2015).

Families, professionals, and exceptionality: Positive outcomes through partnerships and trust (7th ed), Pearson.

Standard 2 Components - Student Learning Objectives

Faculty will break down the Standard 2 Components and describe the knowledge, skills, and dispositions students are expected to learn upon successful completion of the course.

Examples: As a result of active participation and successful completion of course requirements, students will:

- 2.1 Students demonstrate application of their knowledge of family-centered practices, family systems theory, and the changing needs and priorities in family’s lives to develop trusting, respectful, culturally responsive and affirming partnerships with all families that allow for the mutual exchange of knowledge and information.
- 2.2 Students observe and practice communication of clear, comprehensive, objective information about resources and supports that help families to make informed decisions and advocate for access, participation, and equity in natural and inclusive environments.

- 2.3 Students identify and practice strategies to engage families in identifying their strengths, priorities and concerns; support families to achieve the goals they have for their family and their young child’s development and learning; and promote families’ competence and confidence during assessment, individualized planning, intervention, instruction, and transition processes.

ECPC Curriculum Planning Tool

Faculty can use the ECPC Curriculum Planning Tool to develop initial Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) programs and blended Early Childhood Education (ECE) and EI/ECSE programs aligned with personnel preparation standards and DEC Recommended Practices. The tool can be used to ensure that the standards and recommended practices are embedded within and throughout the curriculum.

This is a downloadable excel file from the ECPC website and should be personalized to meet the needs of your EI/ECSE or blended ECE/ECSE program. The tabs represent the EI/ECSE Practice-based Professional Standards and are not intended to represent single courses within an EI/ECSE program.

Tentative Course Schedule

Example: *Include a course schedule for transparency of expectations. Example topics, readings and assignments below. Consider the field placement and/or practicum requirements.*

Week	Standard 2 Components	Topic and Readings	Activity Bank (examples of course activities)
1	2.1	Family systems theory Family centered practice Changing needs and priorities in family’s lives Turnbull, 1-2	Begin a relationship/ partnership with a family. This will extend beyond the semester. See assignment 1.
2	2.1	Developing trusting, respectful, culturally responsive and affirming partnerships Exchanging knowledge and information with families Turnbull, 1-2	Complete an ecomap with your partner family.
3	2.1	Contemporary family issues Supporting families in vulnerable circumstances	Conduct a family interview with your partner family.
4	2.1	Role of families as partners Turnbull, 5 Diversity in families, Hanson, Ch. 1	Interview a current Part C provider about the role of families as partners and support of family diversity.

5	2.2	Historical and legal foundations for family advocacy Turnbull, 6	Investigate and describe activities of Partners in Policymaking.
6	2.2	Communication with families Hanson, Ch. 8	Ask partner family about their best experience and worst experience in receiving information about their child.
7	2.2	Sharing objective information about resources and supports	
8	2.2	Helping families make informed decisions	Research a topic such as sleeping and develop a conversation guide for parents with information about choices.
9	2.3	Helping families advocate for access, participation, and equity in natural and inclusive environments	Develop a one-page elevator sheet for families on inclusion.
10	2.3	Family rights and responsibilities under federal and state policies Turnbull, 7	Find your local district's or Part C program's family rights brochure and video tape yourself introducing the notion of parent's rights to families.
11	2.3	Engage families in identifying their strengths, priorities and concerns	Ask your partner family to identify their strengths, priorities, and concerns.
12	2.3	Support families to achieve the goals they have for their family and young child's development and learning	Discuss with partner family what works best for achieving goals they have set.
13	2.3	Promote families' competence and confidence during assessment	Observe a video of an assessment and note number of times parent spoke and type of communication.
14	2.3	Promote families' competence and confidence during individualized planning, intervention and instruction	Discuss with your partner family the actions professionals have taken that helped them to feel more confident and competent.
15	2.3	Promote families' competence and confidence during transition processes	Observe a video of a transition conference and discuss how the families displayed competence and confidence and what might have led to this.

Other considerations for your syllabus:

Examples:

Grading and Course Expectations

Course Guidelines (*Modify content as needed for your class.*)

	Before Class Sessions	During Class	Assignments
Be Respectful	Come prepared to engage in discussions and activities.	Use appropriate and professional language. Honor diverse opinions and perspectives. Use “person-first” language when addressing someone with a disability. Ex. “A person with autism”	Obtain instructor permission <i>prior</i> to due dates if more time is needed.
Be Responsible	Read and/or view expected context <i>before</i> class sessions. Contact instructor if you are unable to attend class.	Attend class sessions and actively participate in discussions and activities. Maintain personal, student and school confidentiality. Ensure technology is turned off to eliminate distractions for yourself and others.	Submit original work. Maintain academic integrity. Submit assignments on time. Submit electronically via LMS
Be Informed	Follow syllabus, guided notes and class presentations regarding content to be read or viewed.	Sign up for LMS notifications. Check your email regularly. Be alert to cancellations due to weather, instructor emergency, etc.	Identify assignment due dates on the LMS class calendar, guided notes, class presentations and syllabus. Ask questions about assignments in class, through email or during office hours. Assignments can be revised with instructor permission.

Attendance and Participation

Example: This is a fast-paced and interactive on-line class. Students “attend” class by accessing learning materials and completing activities posted on the LMS site, and by participating actively in the online discussion board. Participation in the discussion boards is a graded requirement of the class and missed deadlines without prior permission or without a valid excuse will result in a reduced grade for that week’s class. Missing deadlines on more than one occasion without prior permission or a valid excuse will result in a discussion with the instructor about the student’s ability to continue with the class.

People First Language

Example: All assignments must be completed using People First Language. Points will be deducted if these conventions are not followed. The following websites present additional resources on People First Language: Snow, K. (2005). People first language. Retrieved from [http://www.inclusioncollaborative.org/docs/Person-First-Language-Article Kathie Snow.pdf](http://www.inclusioncollaborative.org/docs/Person-First-Language-Article%20Kathie%20Snow.pdf)

Digital Services Required

Describe technology requirements and resources needed for course (e.g., Canvas, Blackboard, Brightspace, Zoom, Google Suite).

Example: Students in this course are required to have the following technology to participate fully in this course. **Note:** The instructor recognizes that not all students may have access to the technology listed below. Students should reach out to the instructor at least one week prior to the course start date to discuss challenges and accommodations that may need to be made.

- Active email address (sign up for University email if you have not already)
- Access to LMS (Learning Management System)
- Internet connection (preferably high -speed broadband wired or wireless)
- Speakers and a microphone (built in or USB plug-in or Bluetooth)
- Webcam (built-in or USB plug in)
- Supported operating systems to access Zoom ([requirements here](#))
- Supported Web browser (Google Chrome is strongly recommended)
- Word processor (such as Microsoft Word)
- Adobe Reader (to view PDF files)

Resources

Listed below are resources students may find to be helpful as they learn about the field of Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education.

- *[CEC Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators -EI/ECSE \(2020\)](#)*
- *[Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators](#)*
- *[CONNECT Modules \(Modules 3 and 4\)](#)*
- *[Early Childhood Recommended Practices Modules \(Module 5\)](#)*
- *[ECPC Cross-Disciplinary Competencies](#)*
- *[ECPC Website of Resources](#)*
- *[Center for Parent Information and Resources](#)*
- *[Family Voices](#)*

Journals in EI/ECSE

Journals that publish early childhood and early intervention (there are many more, but these are excellent choices for you to consider). Consider explaining how to use these to support practice and to examine current research – clarify the difference between practitioner-based journals and research-based journals.

- Infants and Young Children
- Topics in Early Childhood Special Education
- Journal of Early Intervention
- Journal of Special Education Technology
- Young Exceptional Children
- Teaching Exceptional Children
- Intervention in School and Clinic
- Journal of Early Hearing Detection and Intervention
- International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education
- Young Children
- Exceptional Parent Magazine
- Rural Special Education Quarterly

Example Assignments

Family Interview/Collaboration Project (150 points) The family interview is an assessment technique used collaboratively with the family to identify resources, priorities, and concerns of the family. The relationship between the educator and the family should be one of teamwork and collaboration. The preferred approach by many is to engage the family in conversation rather than conducting a formal interview. Before beginning the process, it is important that you have an established rapport with the family and communicate your respect for their time and effort. At the start of the interview clearly state its purpose and give them background information about yourself and the program. Use both open-ended and closed-ended questions to gather information and be sensitive when probing for further information. Use a “funnel approach” by starting with broad concerns and getting more specific. Using open-ended questions pertaining to the family’s daily activities is a very effective strategy for identifying the family’s resources, concerns and priorities.

The interviewer should keep the following precautions in mind (Bagnato & Neisworth, 1991):

1. The identification of family needs and strengths is not a mandatory component of the IFSP/IEP – it is voluntary. No child can be refused services because of the family’s refusal to be assessed.
2. Identification of family resources and concerns should be planned individually with each family.
3. Identification of family resources and concerns should be conducted in a non-intrusive manner.
4. Conduct the interview in ways to respect the family’s home language, values, and culture.
5. Respect the family’s right to only share what they wish to share.

Information obtained from the interview should be used to directly assist the family. The educator should explain why the information is needed and how it will be used BEFORE the interview begins.

Possible Interview Techniques

- Semi-structured questions to provide a sharing avenue but not a defined stopping point like closed-ended questions
- Closed-ended questions for specific information (birth weight of child, etc.)
- Using family stories (experience stories)
- The use of a tape recorder (requires signed consent) can help capture every detail of the interview

Additional family interview materials will be posted in the BrightSpace course.

Following the Family Interview, you will carry out approximately 10 hours of collaboration with the family to address the priority goals identified during the interview process. You will create a Collaboration Log to identify the hours and activities you engaged in with the family. You will also create a Resource Guide to address the family's concerns and to help them attain their goals. The resource guide should include materials related to accessing services outside of special education such as Social Security benefits, health insurance, transportation, higher education, case management, social services, and informal family supports. The guide must be organized in a way that facilitates the family's learning of how to access resources outside special education.

To be submitted: Family Interview and supporting interview documents (e.g., interview questions, ecomap, map of goals/outcomes aligned with everyday routines) and Collaboration Log, Resource Guide and supporting collaboration documents.

Presentation/Training (50 points) Develop a presentation and/or training materials on a critical issue related to early childhood intervention and family-centered practice. Create one of the following: (1) a 15-20 slide PowerPoint presentation that you might present in the future, or (2) training materials (e.g., pamphlet, insert to IFSP/IEP manual, handouts, portfolio materials). Include resources or website links where individuals can obtain more information and be sure to include references for information you obtain from websites or articles. Then write a 2-page reflection on why you chose the topic and how you will use the presentation/materials you created.

Book Review and Book Talk (25 points each) This assignment involves reading a book authored by a family/parent. As our perspective expands, our new thinking may help us develop a broader and deeper understanding of families who have children with disabilities. Select two books from the supplemental list. **For the first book, you will write a 3 to 5-page paper** reflecting on the book's impact on you as an educator, as a parent or as a member of a family. Include your reflections on the questions listed below:

- What is the experience of the parents? How is it presented?
- How is this a universal experience?
- How does the child's disability impact on the child's experience with the education system?
- What is the parents' experience with the educational system? What is the child's experience?
- How does the experience of the child or the parent's impact on your experiences as a teacher or with education?
- Other thoughts?

For the second book, you will lead a book talk in class. There are no specific guidelines for the book talk – I want you to be creative! However, through the activities you plan, it should be evident that you are applying your knowledge learned in this course and that you have an understanding of the perspectives presented in the book and the impact of disability on the family system. Additionally, you should plan on two to three excerpts from the book to provide participants to read prior to your talk to assist with the discussion and activities.

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