

This sample syllabus provides resources, activities, readings, and assignments aligned with the Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators (2020) and DEC Recommended Practices (2014). Consider state and university policies and add as appropriate. This is not a complete syllabus; nor is it intended to suggest that the standard would be addressed in only one course in the curriculum.

ECPC Sample Syllabus

Standard 1: Child Development and Early Learning

Course Description

This example is Standard 1.

This course is designed to help students understand the impact of different theories and philosophies of early learning and development on assessment, curriculum, instruction, and intervention decisions. Students will learn how to apply knowledge of normative developmental sequences and variations, individual differences within and across the range of abilities, including developmental delays and disabilities, and other direct and indirect contextual features that support or constrain children's development and learning. These contextual factors as well as social, cultural, and linguistic diversity will be considered when learning how to facilitate meaningful learning experiences and individualize intervention and instruction across contexts.

Required Text

The textbooks listed below are sample textbooks that address Standard 1. When developing or revising your syllabus, you may also choose supplemental readings. (See References in the Resources section of the [ECPC Curriculum Modules: Professional Standards](#) for related literature and resources.)

Batshaw, M. L., Roizen, N. J., & Pellegrino, L. (Eds.). (2019). *Children with Disabilities* (8th ed.). Pearson.

Berk, L. (2021). *Infants and Children: Prenatal Through Middle Childhood* (9th ed.). Pearson.

Standard 1 Components - Student Learning Outcomes

IHE faculty may develop additional student learning objectives by breaking down the components into sub-objectives and describing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions students are expected to learn upon successful completion of this course. Two sample student learning objectives are listed for each of the numbered components below. These are examples only and are not intended to be a complete set of objectives for the respective component.

As a result of active participation and successful completion of course requirements, students will be able to:

- 1.1 Demonstrate an understanding of the impact that different theories and philosophies of early learning and development have on assessment, curriculum, intervention, and instructional decisions.
 - Describe the key developmental theorists and their theories on early development and learning that influence EI/ECSE pedagogy.
 - Describe the influence of theories of early development and learning on EI/ECSE pedagogy: assessment, curriculum, intervention, and instructional decisions.
- 1.2 Apply knowledge of normative sequences of early development, individual differences, and families' social, cultural, and linguistic diversity to support each child's development and learning across contexts.
 - Describe the sequence of developmental milestones from ages birth to five years across developmental domains.
 - Describe the influence of a family's social, cultural, and linguistic diversity on child development and learning across contexts.
- 1.3 Apply knowledge of biological and environmental factors that may support or constrain children's early development and learning as they plan and implement early intervention and instruction.
 - Describe the effects of biological factors on a child's development and learning.
 - Describe the effects of environmental factors on a child's development and learning.
- 1.4 Demonstrate an understanding of characteristics, etiologies, and individual differences within and across the range of abilities, including developmental delays and disabilities, their potential impact on children's early development and learning, and implications for assessment, curriculum, instruction, and intervention.
 - Identify characteristics and etiologies of conditions that may cause developmental delays and/or disabilities.
 - Describe individual differences within and across the range of conditions likely to cause developmental delays and/or disabilities.

Topical Course Outline

The topical course outline is organized by course sessions and aligns course topics with EI/ECSE Standards and components. In addition, reading(s) and learning activities are identified for each topic

Week	Standard 1 Components	Topic and Readings	Activities
1	1.1	History, theory, and applied directions including the field of child development, historical foundations, and basic issues; Berk, Ch. 1 Description of mid-twentieth century theories, recent theoretical perspectives, comparing child development theories	Describe a theory regarding child development and thoroughly discuss the strengths and weaknesses.

Week	Standard 1 Components	Topic and Readings	Activities
		Berk, Ch. 1	
2	1.3	Biological foundations, genetic foundations Berk, Ch. 3	In assigned peer groups, discuss how biological factors influence child development. Submit a one-page summary of the group discussion and highlight three key points.
3	1.3	Reproductive choices, prenatal development, prenatal environmental influences, childbirth, approaches to childbirth, birth complications; a look ahead to heredity, environment, and behavior Berk, Ch. 3	Identify a minimum of 10 resources in the local community that families might access to support family priorities and basic needs. In two to three sentences, describe each resource.
4	1.4	Early learning, motor skills, and perceptual capacities, the newborn, motor development in infancy, perceptual development in infancy Berk, Ch. 4 Child outcomes and reporting	View the Child Outcomes Step by Step video. The video explains functioning necessary for each child to be an active and successful participant at home, in the community, and in other places like a childcare program or preschool. In assigned peer groups, reflect on the three Child Outcomes and the importance of understanding the impact of different developmental theories on early learning and development.
5	1.2	Physical growth, brain development, factors affecting physical growth Berk, Ch. 5	Sample videos to observe physical growth, birth to age three: Gabby and Nicholas Gabby Sample videos to observe physical growth, ages three to five: Samantha and Sara Samantha

Week	Standard 1 Components	Topic and Readings	Activities
			Review and discuss the CDC's Developmental Milestones for birth to age eight.
6	1.1	<p>Cognitive development, Piaget's cognitive-developmental theory, sensorimotor stage (birth to 2 years), preoperational stage (2 to 7 years), knowledge of other stages including concrete operational stage and formal operational stage Berk, Ch. 6</p> <p>Piaget and education, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Vygotsky and education, Evaluation of Vygotsky's theory Berk, Ch. 6</p>	<p>Observe a child at the campus childcare center. Describe the child's current development through the lens of a specific child development theory that we have discussed in class.</p> <p>Sample videos to observe cognitive development, birth to age five: CDC Milestones in Action</p>
7	1.2	<p>Cognitive development, information-processing approach, general modes of information processing, theories of information processing, attention, memory, metacognition, applications to learning Berk, Ch. 7</p>	Interpret the child observation and reflect on how your expectations may influence your interpretation.
8	1.4	<p>Ethnic and socioeconomic differences in IQ, explaining individual and group differences in IQ, early intervention and intellectual development, giftedness Berk, Ch. 8</p>	In assigned peer groups, discuss how environmental factors influence children's development. Submit a one-page summary of the group discussion and highlight three key points.
9	1.2	<p>Language development, components of language, theories of language development, prelinguistic development, phonological development, bilingualism</p>	With your partner family, conduct a language sample with the child and analyze the sample for components of language. Summarize the

Week	Standard 1 Components	Topic and Readings	Activities
		Berk, Ch. 9	<p>findings and share with your partner family. Sample video to observe language development, birth to age three: Lilly</p> <p>Sample videos to observe language development, ages three to five: Joy and Johna Working on a Puzzle.</p> <p>Cameron and Alexis Playing with Blocks</p>
10	1.2	Emotional development, functions of emotions, development of emotional expression, understanding and responding to the emotions of others, temperament and development, development of attachment; attachment, parental employment and childcare Berk, Ch. 10	Observe the interactions between the child and caregiver in a video about premature infants. Identify how these interactions may be impacted by prematurity.
11	1.3	Self and social understanding, emergence of self and development of self-concept, constructing identify, thinking about other people, social problem solving Berk, Ch. 11	In assigned peer groups, complete the Early Childhood Recommended Practices Module 1 about interactions.
12	1.3	Moral development, human nature, social understanding, development of morally relevant self-control, development of aggression Berk, Ch. 12	Bring to class a news article/story related to child development that challenges you to examine the evidence presented in the article/story.
13	1.4	Development of sex differences and gender roles, gender stereotypes, influences on gender stereotyping and gender-role	Review your interdisciplinary case study/family partnership project.

Week	Standard 1 Components	Topic and Readings	Activities
		adoption, gender identity, gender attributes Berk, Ch. 13	
14	1.2	Origins and functions of the family, family as a social system, socialization within the family, family lifestyles and transitions, vulnerable families, child maltreatment Berk, Ch. 14	With your partner family, talk about what the family views as important to support their child's development.
15	1.4	Peer relations, media, schooling Berk, Ch. 15	Final reflection

Resources

Resources to supplement the ECPC Sample Syllabus Standard 1:

- [Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for EI/ECSE \(2020\)](#)
Link to the standards and supporting resources.
- [Center for Parent Information and Resources](#)
Link to family-friendly materials and resources.
- [Early Childhood Recommended Practices Modules \(Module 1\)](#)
A module to support understanding of children's learning and development.
- [ECPC Cross-Disciplinary Competencies](#)
Core cross-disciplinary competence areas for use by ECI professionals.
- [Learn the Signs. Act Early](#)
CDC's Developmental Milestone Checklists
- [Observation Videos: Results Matter Video Library; Colorado Dept. of Education](#)
A video library of early intervention, just being kids, clips for practicing observation, documentation and assessment skills, and general interest.
- [Observation Videos: Early Intervention Video Library](#)
This video library is a collaborative project of the Early intervention-Early Childhood Professional Development Community of Practice (EI-EC PD CoP) and the Virginia Early Intervention Professional Development Center.
- [Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators](#)
Link to the standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Journals in EI/ECSE

Below are examples of journals that publish topics about EI/ECSE. Faculty may want to explain how to use articles to support practice and to examine current research. Clarify the difference between practitioner-based journals and research-based journals.

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

Assignments

1. Discussion Group Participation (Components 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4)

Complete the readings in advance of each discussion session. In assigned peer groups, respond to the discussion prompt. Submit a one-page group summary.

2. Letter to the Editor (Component 1.1)

Every day there are articles or news stories about early child development. Often these press reports are based on peer reviewed journal articles and are frequently written in such a way as to grab the reader's attention but may misrepresent the true findings. Identify a press report in the media that relates to child development and early learning and verify the credibility of the article by researching the background information. Then, write a letter to the editor advocating for an evidence-based position. Provide evidence for your position from course readings, developmental theories, and discussions.

3. Child Observations (Component 1.2)

You will have opportunities to observe children at the Child Lab and/or through various center and family partnerships throughout this course. Complete a running record with expanded notes about each observation and summarize the notes and analyses.

4. Interdisciplinary Case Study/Parent Partnership (Components 1.3 and 1.4)

This project is designed to help you apply theory to practice by identifying aspects of the family system that influence the child's development and learning. You will work in partners, representing at least two disciplines (e.g., SLP, ECI, SW). Have weekly conversations with your partner family to learn about the child's development, particularly that of social competence. Try to understand factors that affect development within the child, within the family and the immediate environment, and beyond the home. Work toward a deeper understanding of the child's and family's strengths. Submit a minimum of 15 journal entries that describe the weekly conversations with your partner family, with evidence of reflection about what you observed, discussed, and learned.

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