M.S.Ed. in Early Childhood Education

Although the rewards of working with children from birth through age 8 are unlimited, our M.S.Ed. in Early Childhood Education makes each interaction even more impactful. Our degree strengthens and broadens the preparation of teachers and other professionals who work with this population. It’s perfect for preschool teachers, elementary school (K-2) teachers, child care administrators, family services workers, parent-educators, family child care providers, intervention specialists and more. Two optional concentrations are available, one that meets requirements for a Professional Educator License to teach early childhood and one to fulfill special education approval requirements for teaching birth through age 6.

**Admission Requirements**

You’ll need to submit:
- Your application to the Graduate School.
- Official transcripts (your undergraduate GPA must be 2.75 or higher) and test scores.
- A career goals statement.
- Letters of recommendation.

If you also pursue the Professional Educator License with Early Childhood Education Endorsement, you also need a passing score report for the Test of Academic Proficiency (or a qualifying ACT with writing score or the SAT).

**Learning Outcomes**

During our program of study, you will:
- Apply your understanding of young children’s characteristics and needs, and of multiple interacting influences on children’s development and learning, to create environment that are healthy, respectful, supportive and challenging for all children.
- Create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families and their children’s development and learning.
- Observe, document and use other effective assessment strategies in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to support children’s development and learning.
- Integrate your understanding of, and relationships 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.
- Conduct yourself as a member of the early childhood profession.
M.S.ED. IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Working for you

Although our courses in Early Childhood Education are offered primarily in DeKalb every semester (fall, spring and summer), limited coursework is available at our other regional sites. You are free to take courses at any NIU campus that suits your scheduling and geographic needs.

You can substitute your life experience for part or all of your pre-student teaching clinical experiences and student teaching if the following four conditions are met:

• Full-time employment in the grade level and discipline for which the candidate is seeking licensure and for an appropriate length of time, as determined by the program.
• Documentation that your life-experience was a single, continuous experience monitored and/or evaluated at a satisfactory level of performance.
• Letter of recommendation from the administrator of the school.
• Written recommendation from the NIU licensure program supervisor that your performance in the experience was equivalent to or greater than that expected of a candidate successfully completing the traditional student teaching or clinical experience.

Coursework

Non-Thesis Option

EPS 506 Theories and Research in Child Behavior and Development (3)
SEEC 500 Analysis of Instruction in Early Childhood Education (3)
SEEC 504 Developmentally Appropriate Practice in the Primary Classroom (3)
SEEC 511 Comparative/International Early Childhood Education (3)
SEEC 521 Educational Diagnosis and Assessment of Young Children with Special Needs (3)
or
SESE 523 Observation and Assessment in Early Childhood Special Education (3)
SEEC 535 Family and School Partnerships for Academic Success (3)
SEEC 598 Master’s Project (3)

One graduate-level course in research, such as the following, or approved by advisor (3 credits).

ETR 519 Applied Educational Research (3)
ETR 520 Introduction to Research Methods in Education (3)
ETR 521 Educational Statistics I (3)

Additional Requirements

• A focus area – administration of early childhood programs, emergent literacy, movement development, pedagogy in early childhood education, research in early childhood education, and special education – to provide a broader base of knowledge, a supportive skill or more sophisticated research competencies. The focus area requires a minimum of nine semester hours, approved by your advisor.
• Successful completion of a comprehensive examination. The comprehensive examination is conducted in conjunction with the completion of your master’s project.

Thesis Option

If you choose the thesis option, you will select research in early childhood education as your focus area. Six of the nine semester hours required for the focus area must be taken in SEEC 699: Master’s Thesis (3-6 credits). You are still required to take SEEC 598 (1-6 credits).

Apply online

go.niu.edu/gradapply

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