ECED 1110: Child Growth, Development and Learning
University of New Mexico-Valencia Campus
Fall 2026 Semester: Aug 17, 2026 – December 12, 2026

Instructor: Dr. Gabriela Peterson
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Office Hours: By appointment only
Credit Hours: 3
Delivery method: Online (asynchronously via Canvas)

Course Overview

This basic course in the growth, development, and learning of young children, prenatal through age eight, provides students with the theoretical foundation for becoming competent early childhood professionals. The course includes knowledge of how young children grow, develop, and learn. Major theories of child development are integrated with all domains of development, including biological-physical, social, cultural, emotional, cognitive and language. The adult's role in supporting each child's growth, development and learning is emphasized.

Course Competencies

This course is part of the articulated Universal Catalogue of Courses for Early Childhood Education in the State of New Mexico. The following objectives are taken from the New Mexico State Department of Education's Common Core Competencies for early childhood professionals (see Common Core Content manual). Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following competencies at the established level of proficiency:

- Incorporate understanding of developmental stages, processes, and theories of growth, development, and learning into developmentally appropriate practice. A.1
- Demonstrate knowledge of the interaction between maturation and environmental factors that influence physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and cultural domains in the healthy development of each child. A.2
- Demonstrate knowledge of the significance of individual differences in development and learning. Demonstrate knowledge of how certain differences may be associated with rate of development and developmental patterns associated with developmental delays and/or specific disabilities. A.3
- Demonstrate knowledge of the similarities between children who are developing typically and those with diverse abilities. A.4
- Demonstrate knowledge of the many functions that language serves in the cognitive, social, and emotional aspects of development in the formative years. A.7
- Demonstrate knowledge of the developmental sequence of language and literacy, including the influence of culture and home factors. A.8

- Demonstrate knowledge of how children acquire and use verbal, non-verbal, and alternative means of communication. A.9
- Demonstrate knowledge of the relationship among emotions, behaviors, and communication skills to assist children in identifying and expressing their feelings in appropriate ways. A.10
- Use appropriate guidance to support the development of self-regulatory capacities in young children. A.11

Course Learning Outcomes

In this course, students will:

- Apply theories, stages, and processes of child growth, development, and learning to developmentally appropriate practices.
- Explain how maturation and environmental factors influence children's physical, social, emotional, cognitive, linguistic, and cultural development.
- Identify individual differences in development, including developmental patterns associated with delays, disabilities, and diverse abilities.
- Describe the similarities between children who are developing typically and children with diverse abilities.
- Explain how children develop language and literacy and use verbal, nonverbal, and alternative forms of communication.
- Analyze how culture and home experiences influence children's language, literacy, development, and learning.
- Explain the relationship among children's emotions, behaviors, and communication skills.
- Apply appropriate guidance strategies that help children express their feelings and develop self-regulation

Required Text

Puckett, M. B., Black, J. K., Wittmer, D. S., & Petersen, S. H. (2009). *The Young Child: Development from Prebirth Through Age Eight* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Credit-Hour Statement

This is a three-credit-hour course delivered in an entirely asynchronous online modality over sixteen weeks during the fall 2026 semester. Please plan for a minimum of 18 hours per week to learn course materials and complete assignments.

Course Webpage on Canvas (canvas.unm.edu)

Course information, including this syllabus and grades, will be available via canvas.unm.edu. This course will appear in your Canvas course listing. I will also send out emails to the class periodically. Students should check their email at least every couple of days if not every day.

Attendance Policy

As the class is asynchronous online, there is no attendance to be taken. However, assignments must be completed each week by Sunday at midnight to be accepted. You have all week at your convenience to read or watch the material and complete the assignment, so there are no late assignments except for extreme circumstances. Quizzes and exams will be administered on Canvas at specific times that will be posted in advance. It is the prerogative of the instructor to decide what is an extreme circumstance. Email me if you have something unusual that comes up that interferes with your ability to complete assignments.

UAP 2720 and 2740

Our classroom and university should foster mutual respect, kindness, and support. If you have concerns about discrimination, harassment, or violence, please seek support and report incidents. Find confidential services at LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center, the Women's Resource Center, and the Arcoiris Center. UNM prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex (including gender, sex stereotyping, gender expression, and gender identity). All instructors are "responsible employees" who must communicate reports of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and sexual violence to Compliance, Ethics and Equal Opportunity. For more information, please see UAP 2720 and UAP 2740.

Responsible Learning and Academic Honesty

Cheating and plagiarism (academic dishonesty) are often driven by lack of time, desperation, or lack of knowledge about how to identify a source. Communicate with me and ask for help, even at the last minute, rather than risking your academic career by committing academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty involves claiming that work created by another source is your own original work. It is a Student Code of Conduct violation that can lead to a disciplinary procedure. When you use a resource in work submitted for this class, document how you used it and distinguish clearly between your original work and the material taken from the resource.

Selective Generative AI Use

Generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, may be used in this course when permitted by the instructor or assignment directions. Appropriate use of AI can support learning, creativity, and professional development.

Students must disclose meaningful use of generative AI in submitted work. A brief statement is sufficient, such as: "I used ChatGPT to brainstorm ideas and revise my writing for clarity. I reviewed and edited the final work myself." Minor uses, such as spelling, grammar correction, citation formatting, or accessibility tools, generally do not require disclosure unless otherwise stated.

Students remain responsible for all work they submit, including AI-generated content. AI may not be used to misrepresent learning, fabricate sources or information, submit work you do not understand, or replace the intellectual or creative work required by an assignment. All AI-assisted work must follow UNM's Academic Integrity guidelines.

Do not enter private, confidential, sensitive, or personally identifiable information into AI tools. Specific expectations for AI use may vary by assignment and will be clearly communicated. If you are unsure whether AI use is appropriate, please ask me before submitting your work.

Required Readings

Throughout the course, you will be provided with required reading assignments. The assignments are located in Weekly Assignments on the course menu. You are expected to complete all required reading assignments and integrate what you have read into your course assignments and online discussions.

Due Dates Policy

Students are expected to turn in work on the date that it is due. Late assignments will be accepted; however, 1 point will be deducted every day it is late. No late postings on the Discussion Board are permitted. See "Late Work and Exemptions" below.

Netiquette

Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving politely online. Unfortunately, something about cyberspace makes it easy for people to forget that they are interacting with other real people. The following bullet points cover some basics of communicating online:

1. Be sensitive to classmates coming from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and holding different political and religious beliefs. Plus, they will have other differences.
2. Use good taste when composing your responses in Discussion Forums. For example, swearing and using profanity are often insensitive to your classmates, so they should be avoided. Also, consider that slang can be misunderstood or misinterpreted.
3. Don't use all capital letters when composing your responses, as this is considered "shouting" on the Internet and is regarded as impolite or aggressive. It can also be stressful on the eye when trying to read your message.
4. Be respectful of others' views and opinions. Avoid "flaming" (publicly attacking or insulting) them, as this can cause hurt feelings and decrease the chances of learning from different points of view.
5. Be careful when using acronyms. If you use an acronym, it is best to spell out its meaning first, then put it in parentheses afterward, such as Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). After that, you can use the acronym freely throughout your message.
6. Use good grammar and spelling, and avoid using text-messaging shortcuts.

Academic Dishonesty (from the UNM Catalog)

"Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, dishonesty in quizzes, tests, or assignments; claiming credit for work not done or done by others; hindering the academic work of other students; misrepresenting academic or professional qualifications within or without the University; and nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other University records.

Each student is expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in academic and professional matters. The University reserves the right to take disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, against any student who is found guilty of academic dishonesty or who otherwise fails to meet the expected standards. Any student judged to have engaged in academic dishonesty in coursework may receive a reduced or failing grade for the work in question and/or for the course.

Respectful and Responsible Learning

We are all responsible for ensuring that learning occurs safely, honestly, and equitably. Submitting material as your work that has been generated on a website, in a publication, by an artificial intelligence algorithm, by another person, or by breaking the rules of an assignment constitutes academic dishonesty. A student code of conduct violation can lead to a disciplinary procedure.

Please ask me for help finding the resources you need to succeed in this course. I can help you use study resources responsibly and effectively. Off-campus paper writing services, problem-checkers and services, websites, and AIs can be incorrect or misleading. Learning the course material depends on completing and submitting your work.

UNM preserves and protects the integrity of the academic community through multiple policies, including policies on student grievances (Faculty Handbook D175 and D176), academic dishonesty (FH D100), and respectful campus (FH CO9). These are in the Student Pathfinder (https://pathfinder.unm.edu) and the Faculty Handbook (https://handbook.unm.edu).

Accommodations

UNM is committed to providing equitable learning opportunities for students with documented disabilities. As your instructor, it is my objective to facilitate an inclusive classroom setting, in which students have full access and opportunity to participate. To engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations for this class and/or program, please contact The UNM-Valencia Equal Access Services (Sarah Clawson, Coordinator), at (505) 925-8840 or by email at sjclawson@unm.edu.

Learning Commons: Tutoring Services

Tutoring is available to you in math, science, writing, and other subjects through the Learning Commons: Learning and STEM Centers and Writing Center. In-person tutoring is in these

centers in the LRC (the building that also has the library). In addition, tutoring in Zoom and, for writing, through email, is also available. Tutoring is a fantastic way to use your resources and set yourself up to learn deeply and well in your courses. To schedule an appointment, please go to Learning Commons BookingsLinks to an external site..
If you have difficulty with the scheduling link above, would like an appointment in a subject not listed at that link, or have a question, email tutor@unm.edu. You'll get answers during business hours, Monday through Friday. The webpage, with more details about available hours, is here: Learning Commons: Tutoring Services webpage.

Title IX

Our classroom and university should always be spaces of mutual respect, kindness, and support, without fear of discrimination, or harassment, if you ever need assistance or have concerns about incidents that violate this principle, please access the resources available to you on campus. Please note that, because UNM faculty, TAs, and GAs are considered "responsible employees," any disclosure of gender discrimination (including sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, and sexual violence) made to a faculty member, TA, or GA must be reported by that faculty member, TA, or GA to the university's Title IX coordinator. For more information on the campus policy regarding sexual misconduct and reporting, please see https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2740.html.

Citizenship and/or Immigration Status

All students are welcome in this class regardless of citizenship, residency, or immigration status. Your professor will respect your privacy if you choose to disclose your status. As for all students in the class, family emergencies are usually excused with reasonable notice to the professor, as noted in the attendance guidelines above. UNM has committed to the success of all our students and our undocumented community members community. The Administration's welcome is found on our website: http://undocumented.unm.edu/.

Land Acknowledgement

Founded in 1889, the University of New Mexico sits on the traditional homelands of the Pueblo of Sandia. Since time immemorial, the original peoples of New Mexico, Pueblo, Navajo, and Apache, have deep connections to the land and have made significant contributions to the broader community statewide. We honor the land and those who remain stewards of it throughout the generations and acknowledge our committed relationship with Indigenous peoples. We gratefully recognize our history.

Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Activity
Week 1 (Aug. 17-22)	The What and Why of Early Childhood Development	Discussion Board #1 Professional Reflection # 1
Week 2 (Aug. 24-29)	The Where, When, and How of Early Childhood Study and Assessment	Discussion Board #2 Professional Reflection # 2
Week 3 (Aug. 31-Sept. 5)	The Family Before Birth	Discussion Board #3 Professional Reflection #3
Week 4 (Sept. 7-12)	The Child and Family At Birth	Discussion Board #4 Professional Reflection # 4
Week 5 (Sept. 14-19)	The Brain, Perceptual and Motor Learning and Development, and Physical Health and Growth of the Infant: Birth to 1	Discussion Board #5 Professional Reflection # 5
Week 6 (Sept. 21-26)	Emotional and Social Development of the Infant: Birth to 1	Discussion Board #6 Professional Reflection # 6
Week 7 (Sept. 28-Oct. 3)	Cognitive, Language, and Literacy Learning and Development of the Infant: Birth to Age 1	Discussion Board #7 Professional Reflection # 7
Week 8 (Oct. 5-10)	Perceptual and Motor Learning and Development, Health and Physical Development: Ages 1–3	Discussion Board #8 Professional Reflection # 8
Week 9 (Oct. 12-17)	Emotional and Social Learning and Development: Ages 1–3	Discussion Board #9 Professional Reflection # 9
Week 10 (Oct. 19-24)	Cognitive, Language, and Literacy Learning and Development: Ages 1–3	Discussion Board #10 Professional Reflection # 10
Week 11 (Oct. 26-31)	Motor Learning and Development, Health and Physical Development: Ages 3–5	Discussion Board #11 Professional Reflection # 11
Week 12 (Nov. 2-7)	Emotional and Social Learning and Development: Ages 3–5	Discussion Board #12 Professional Reflection # 12

Week 13 (Nov 9-14)	Cognitive, Language, and Literacy Learning and Development: Ages 3–5	Discussion Board #13 Professional Reflection # 13
Week 14 (Nov 16-21) Thanksgiving break (Nov 26-28)	Motor Learning and Development, Health and Physical Development: Ages 5–9	Discussion Board #14 Professional Reflection # 14
Week 15 (Nov 30-Dec. 5)	Emotional and Social Learning and Development: Ages 5–9	Discussion Board #15 Professional Reflection # 15
Week 16 (Dec. 7-12)	Cognitive, Language, and Literacy Learning and Development: Ages 5–9	Discussion Board #16 Professional Reflection # 16 Final Exam

Assignments and Grading

See Canvas for full assignment descriptions and due dates.

Category	Description	Weight
Online Discussion Boards	Students are required to participate in and post weekly discussions on Canvas. This will enable us to learn and interact with each other as a community of learners. Discussion postings must be complete and have at least five lines of text. No maximum number of words is required, but please use good judgment. Use references to websites or readings to support your comments whenever possible. You must get your initial discussion postings up early in the week, so others can read them and share their thoughts and experiences. We will build on one another's ideas by interacting fluidly throughout the week. Therefore, post your initial response to the discussion forum no later than Thursday and reply to three classmates no later than Saturday. Discussion boards open on Sunday at midnight.	30%
Professional Reflection Assignments	There will be one observation practice per week. Students are expected to complete an observation practice every week. Observation practices consist of watching video clips of children, documenting what is seen, and reflecting on your learning. Observation practices will be completed every Sunday.	30%

Final Exam	Students are expected to complete a comprehensive final exam that demonstrates their understanding of the key concepts, theories, and practices covered throughout the course. Students will apply the knowledge and strategies learned throughout the semester to questions related to child growth, development, and learning.	40%
Total		100%

Note: Grades in the course are assigned using Fractional Grading

Grading Scale

Points will be recorded for each activity and totaled at the end of the semester. The grading scale below will apply based on the percentage of total points possible.

As	Bs	Cs	Ds	F
100-97=A+	89-87= B+	79-77= C+	69-66 D+	58-0 F
96-93= A	86-83 =B	76-73 =C	65-62 D	
92-90 =A-	82-80 =B-	72-70 =C-	61-59 D-	

This syllabus should be viewed as a guide. While every attempt is made to provide an accurate overview of the course, circumstances and events may make it necessary for the professor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any syllabus changes are at the instructor's discretion and will be made with advance notice. Changes will be posted in the Announcement section of Canvas.