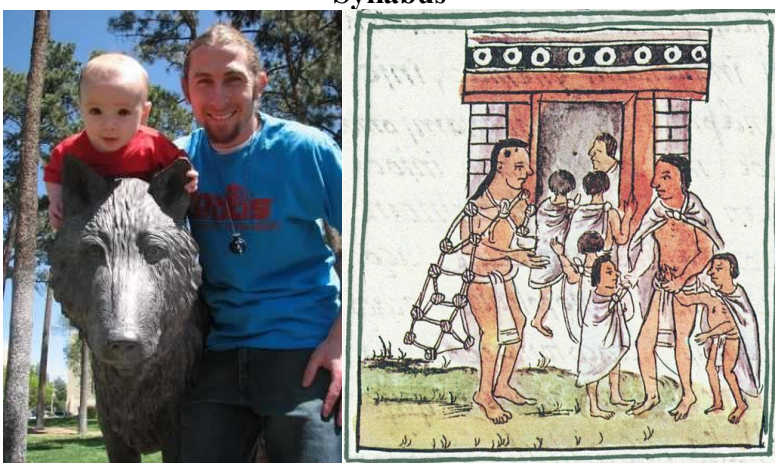
ECED-2121: Curriculum Development through Play: Birth through Age 4 (PreK) Practicum
UNM-Valencia
Fall 2026
Syllabus



(Left: My oldest son, Aidán and myself; Right: Mexica Calmecac or advanced School)

Instructor: Joshua Frank Cárdenas, Ph.D.
Classroom: Online via Canvas (canvas.unm.edu). You must have a UNM net ID to access it.
Class Days, Times and Location: To Be Scheduled (at a qualifying ECE Site)
Office: In person Rm. #111, Arts & Sciences building or via Zoom
Office Hours: Thursday 2:30-4:30pm Online via Zoom. These times may be subject to change, but I'll let you know at the beginning of the week with an announcement. If you would like to meet at a time more convenient for you, please suggest 3 times in a Canvas message and I will respond promptly.
Email: jstjoshn@unm.edu, however, the best way to communicate with me is with a **Canvas** message. Note: I do not usually respond to messages from Friday evening until Monday morning. If you have an academic emergency, you can also phone a friend-classmate, contact a Librarian, a Writing Center tutor, or PASOS for help on or off campus.

Land Acknowledgement

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

Course Description

The field-based component of this course will provide experiences that address curriculum

content that is relevant for children birth through age four in developmentally and culturally sensitive ways of integrating content into teaching and learning experiences. Information on adapting content areas to meet the needs of children with special needs and the development of IFSPs is included. Curriculum development in all areas, including literacy, numeracy, the arts, health, science, social skills, and adaptive learning for children, birth through age four, is emphasized.

*This is the practicum section of the co-requisite ECED-2120. This section requires each student to perform no less than 60 hours of service in a Focus 4 Star or above rated early childhood classroom.

Course Competencies

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:

• Provide a variety of activities that facilitate development of the whole child in the following areas: Physical/motor, social/emotional, language/cognitive and adaptive/living skills. A.5

• Develop, implement and evaluate an integrated curriculum that focuses on children's development and interests, using their language, home experiences, and cultural values. D.5

• Provides and uses anti-bias materials and literature, and experiences in all content areas of the curriculum. D.7

• Create and manage inclusive learning environments that provide individual and cooperative opportunities for children to construct their own knowledge through various strategies that include decision--making, problem solving, and inquiry experiences. E.4

• Demonstrate understanding that each child's creative expression is unique and can be encouraged through diverse ways, including creative play. E.5

• Plan blocks of uninterrupted time for children to persist at self-chosen activities, both indoors and outdoors. E.6

• Demonstrate understanding of the influence of the physical setting, schedule, routines, and transitions on children and use these experiences to promote children's development and learning. E.7

• Use and explain the rationale for developmentally appropriate methods that include play, small group projects, open-ended questioning group discussion, problem solving, cooperative learning and inquiry experiences to help young children develop intellectual curiosity, solve problems, and make decisions. E.8

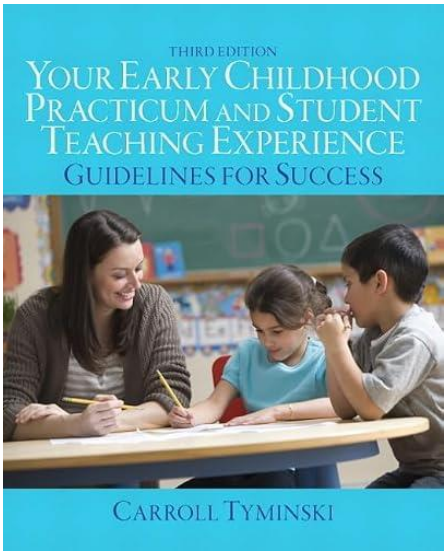
Student Learning Outcomes

- Explain how young children develop and learn with knowledge of the concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of content areas appropriate for different developmental levels.
- Use and explain the rationale for developmentally appropriate methods that include play, small group projects, open-ended questioning, group discussion, problem solving,

cooperative learning and inquiry experiences to help young children develop intellectual curiosity, solve problems, and make decisions.

- Students will demonstrate knowledge of varying program models and learning environments that meet the individual needs of all young children, including those with diverse abilities.
- Design curricula and learning environments based on developmental observational assessment, children's interests and relevant content topics.

Required Textbooks & Materials



Tyminski, Carroll (2014). *Your Early Childhood Practicum and Student Teaching Experience: Guidelines for Success*, 3rd ed. Boston, Mass.: Pearson.

Other required readings, texts and materials will be provided on Canvas. Suggested sources are found always in the Library folder in the Major Resources module.

Credit-Hour Statement

This is a three-credit-hour course delivered online over 16 weeks during the Fall 2026 semester (Aug 17 to Dec 12). Please plan for a minimum of 16 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 send messages via Canvas, give announcements or updates, as well as being the place where our resources, assignments and work is completed. Students should check their email at least every couple of days, if not every day.

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.

Attendance Policy

Students must attend class each day. A maximum of 3 missed classes is allowed with instructor notification. Lateness and leaving early is not acceptable and will count as ½ class missed. All students must attend the first day and week of class or will be dropped. Excessive absences, lateness and leaving early prior to census will force a student to be dropped. 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. Students must participate fully. Students must refrain from using their cell phones and other devices in class and instead focus on taking notes and completing in-class activities timely. Students should not be doing work for other classes. Students are expected to complete 60 or more hours with a qualifying ECE site and instructor. If a student cannot commit or complete these hours they must be dropped from the course.

Academic Dishonesty (from the UNM Catalog)

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.

The use of AI on assignments is expressly prohibited except after you have completed your work to review, revise, edit and improve your own writing and work. The most common uses of AI include having AI applications to write for you, do research for you, creating images, or create presentations. Using AI to create a presentation is only allowed for structural components like color, shapes, text or image boxes, etc., rather than a content-quality component, whereby words and images are created, and AI generated searches and research is substituted for your own efforts. Every single word and image choice must come from you as a student. Asking AI for suggestions is okay, but replacing your choices with AI generated work is not allowed. Instead, do the work and research, advance your own voice and analysis, make friends and find support with people who can help you over the long term and can add to your knowledge, skills and abilities academically and socially. AI is not your friend; it is a crutch and artificial conjuror that often gets things wrong. I am also an expert at detecting AI use and will strictly reinforce my standards and rules. One rewrite is allowed; otherwise, repeated use will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

University of New Mexico-Valencia faculty, staff, and students commit to values of trust, honesty, integrity, and accountability. We will not tolerate academic dishonesty. By enrolling in any course at UNM-V, the student accepts the UNM Academic Honesty Code and affirms the following pledge:

I will not lie, cheat, fabricate, plagiarize, or use any other dishonest means to gain unfair academic advantage.

Required Reading Assignments

Throughout the course, you will be provided with required reading assignments. Our textbook is found via the UNM online catalog/Worldcat. You are expected to complete all of the required reading assignments and to integrate what you have read into your course assignments as well as your online discussions. Our discussion is based on the reading, and our weekly check-in assignments are based on our reading, practice/practicum hours, experience and observation.

Weekly Reflections

Students are required to be doing two things each week. (1) Participating in class at/with UNM Valencia (by reading, reflecting and discussion) and participating in their ECE sites; (2) Students need to take copious notes, photographs, recordings, copies/scans of student work, products, classroom/school materials, texts, curriculum, rules, etc... to document your experience. Keep a journal and transfer your knowledge of the readings and in-class experiences into weekly reflection papers. These notes, observations and ideas can be utilized in your Child Case Study which requires a similar observation-note taking approach. Use APA format, 1-2 pages, double spaced, 12-point font.

Child Case Study

Select a young child to observe multiple times over the course of the semester. Use a variety of methods to record your observations. Your final product will use the information from these observational notes, classroom discussions and the textbook, to provide a complete case study presentation. Describe their ability in three developmental areas and what that means for curriculum development for this child.

Teacher Activity Analysis

Observe a curriculum activity being conducted by a teacher that has been planned for a child or group of children at your site. Take detailed notes; analyze and discuss this activity in the context of the readings. Elements to consider:

- Describe the activity. Who was present, what were the materials, what were the written objectives?
- Describe the implementation. What happened?
- Analyze the activity from the perspective of each of the participants: e.g., the teacher, the parent, the child.
- Analyze the activity from the perspective of the readings and class discussion.
- Analyze whether diversity is woven into the curriculum
- Reflect on the activity and what you have learned.

Final Reflection, Timesheet and Forms

At the end of your 60 hours performing your practicum hours in an early childhood education classroom and site, you will submit a Final reflection upon your total experience, a completed timesheet, and the required forms including a pre and post field experience checklist. The Final reflection must be a 5 page paper, in APA format, double-spaced, 12 point font, and 1" margins.

Mid-term

The Midterm will consist of a Walkthrough of Your Classroom, Curriculum, Students, Site and Progress. This will cover weeks 1-8. This will be turned in as an audio-video presentation 15 minutes minimum in length.

Final

This is your final reflection which focuses upon your total experience, learning and growth while participating in a service-learning or practical experience in the classroom. This is an audio-video presentation of 15 minutes minimum in length, with a minimum of 10 slides. Cite sources and use evidence to elucidate your growth and learning related to curriculum, play-based activities and the culturally relevant and sustaining classroom. APA format throughout is required with a minimum of 2 sources, one being our textbook, the other related to the site where your learning takes place, such as the curriculum or lesson plans utilized.

Due Dates Policy, Late Work and Revision

Students are expected to turn in work on the date that it is due. Feedback comes along with each assignment and so will be given liberally for on time material while late work will receive the minimum of feedback. Late assignments will be accepted; however, students who turn in late work must write an expanded post for discussion posts, of 2 paragraphs along with 2 responses of equal length and for projects an extra

page minimum. Late work is graded also in the order it was received along with other late work, and never is graded before current ungraded work. All work can be revised for a better grade, but like above, will be regraded in the order it was received as a regrade, which will be graded *before* late work. Turn in the work on time and often, and receive liberal, constant feedback. This is a drafting and editing process. Get used to this. Get used to reading and writing 1-2 pages each week as notes, discussion posts and replies, weekly reflections, projects, papers, quizzes, exam questions, and more. This is all practice towards becoming a replete educator and curriculum specialist.

Grading and Assignments

Assignments	Grade Percentage
Attendance & Participation (In-Class & Out of Class Practice) 150 pts	30%
Teacher Activity Analysis 50 pts	10%
Midterm Walkthrough 100 pts	20%
Child Case Study 50 pts	10%
Syllabus Quiz 50 pts	10%
Final Reflection, Timesheet and Forms 100 pts	20%
Total 500 pts	100%

Percentages and Grade Equivalent

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-	

COURSE OUTLINE

Week	Topic & Readings	Activities and Assignments
Week 1: 08/20	Principles, Practice, Relationships (D.1, D.2)	Reflection 1
Week 2: 08/27	Principles, Practice, Relationships (D.1, D.2) Ch. 1: Preparing to Begin Student Teaching	Reflection 2
Week 3: 09/03	Caregiving, Play, and Exploration as Curriculum (E.1, E.2, E.5, E.8) Ch. 2: Becoming a Professional	Reflection 3
Week 4: 09/10	Caregiving, Play, and Exploration as Curriculum (E.1, E.2, E.5, E.8) Ch. 3: Establishing Effective Professional Relationships	Reflection 4
Week 5: 09/17	Attachment with Infants and Toddlers (E.1, E.6, E.7) Ch. 4.: Guiding Young Children in the Classroom	Fingerprinting, Background Check, Site Selection, Pre-field Experience Contract & Conference, Practicum Student Agreement Due Reflection 5
Week 6: 09/24	Infant and Toddler Perception (D.6, E.1, E.4, E.5, A.11) Ch. 5: Classroom Management: Environments & Routines	Reflection 6
Week 7: 10/01	Motor Skill Development of Infants and Toddlers (E.6, E.11, D.5)	Reflection 7
Week 8: 10/08 (No classes)	Midterms	Midterm Walkthrough Due
Week 9: 10/15	Infant and Toddler Cognition (E.11, D.7) Ch. 6: Observations and Evaluations of Student Teaching	Reflection 8
Week 10: 10/22	Language Development of Infants and Toddlers Ch. 7: Assessment of Young Children	Reflection 9 Teacher Activity Analysis Due

Week 11: 10/29	Emotional Development Ch. 8: Supportive Instruction	Reflection 10
Week 12: 11/05(No Class)	Developing Social Skills in Infants and Toddlers Ch. 9: Understanding Diverse Communities and Interacting with Children's Families	Reflection 11
Week 13: 11/12	Physical Environment Ch. 10: Completion of Student Teaching: Looking Ahead	Reflection 12 Child Case Study Due
Week 14: 11/19	Social Environment (D.5, D.6, F.9)	Reflection 13 Observation Self-Review Due
Week 15: 11/26 (No Class)	Family & Parent Relationships	Reflection 14 Post-Field Experience Due
Week 16: 12/03		Reflection 15 Final Reflection due
** Instructor reserves the right to make required changes during the course		

Classroom and University Policies & Best Practices

Tips for Being Successful

1. Recognize, Nourish and Develop Your Power, Your Gifts, Your Strengths, Your Abilities, Your Knowledge and Your Experiences, these are what we carry as an individual.
2. Recognize, Nurture and Engage Your Culture, Language, Values & Traditions, for these are what we carry as one of the People.
3. Build and Rebuild Your Relationships, Family, Friends, Students, Instructors, Staff & Community, for these are what we depend upon for support and in turn, support. Don't abandon them and they won't abandon you.
4. Valencia.unm.edu/library, Library.unm.edu, Archive.org and Canvas.unm.edu are our local and extralocal storehouses of knowledge. Use them at will.
5. Everyone needs a Mentor, to be Seeking & Finding Alumni and Advanced Students to learn from and how better to learn.
6. Everyone needs Tutoring and Advisement: so, reach out and ask for help all the time. There is no shame in struggling to learn, everyone does in their own way.
7. "Take Copious Notes", or a ridiculous amount of notes. Type up your assignments & review the Sources before class. Don't cheat yourself, you need strong study skills.
8. Take a Fun or non-Academic Class such as Art, Music, Martial Arts, Yoga, Etc.. for balance, health/sanity.
9. Go to Office Hours, usually before or after class and communicate regularly with instructors, for me it's via Canvas messaging for others another method.

10. Make Friends, Have Study Buddies, & Study Sessions. Others learn differently and can provide new and innovative ways to succeed that may work for you, while yours may work for them.
11. Attendance is mandatory as is participation. Show up on time and ready. Online students need to show their faces and be present so find the right place to take synchronous classes and get comfortable being uncomfortable. If your teacher and other students do not get to know you, by exposing parts of your self-identity, you will not get to know them either.
12. You will need a computer and good internet connection all the time. Check email every day. Check Canvas every day.
13. Draft your work. Start with your own reading of the materials and your own notes. Add lectures, discussions, teacher communications, handouts, etc.. Then attempt the regular assignments and gain instructor and peer feedback in the process. Work on assignments early and draft your work from first to final.
14. Frequent advisement. You must know where you have come from to know where you are headed. You must talk to others who have been successful and those trained to serve as advisors for advice and guidance.
15. No judgements, no assumptions, no disrespect or discrimination. Come with an open mind and heart and you will leave fuller than you can imagine.
16. Find a job that will support your academic experience, that will give you the time off when you need to study, or better, it provides financial assistance to attend and complete. Scholarships exist within your school and outside of it and you must attempt many of them to get a sense of the standards and rationales of each, and to get the hang of rejection and acceptance.
17. Talk to your family and community about your desire to gain an education. Let them know what it will take, how to support you, the sacrifices you will need to make, and that you will not leave them behind or forget about them. Many of our family does not understand everything that is involved in going to college and so misunderstand our actions or motives or feel rejected or left behind when we devote so much time to gaining knowledge, a degree and a profession. It may be foreign to them so let them in on what it's like so there is mutual understanding and support.

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.

Student Support

Confidential services for students are available at LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center, Women's Resource Center, and the LGBTQ Resource Center. The Women's Resource

Center supports all students, including those who are pregnant or are parents. UNM Pregnancy and Parenting Support information is available. UNM-Valencia has lactation stations located in LRC 112 (Tomé campus) and in the Workforce Training Center.

Student Health and Counseling (SHAC) at (505) 277-3136.
TimelyCare: Free 24/7 virtual care services (medical, emotional support, health coaching, self-care, basic needs support).
LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center (505) 277-2911: help with contacting faculty and managing challenges that impact your UNM experience.
PASOS Resource Center (505) 925-8546, mailto:pasos@unm.edu. The Resource Center is an on-campus center that serves as a "one-stop" for all non-academic needs of UNM-Valencia students.
Laptops can be checked out with a student ID and current enrollment from the Administration building.
The Library is also an incredible resource which provides reference desk help either in person (LRC), call (505) 925-8990, text (505) 916-1647, or you can Schedule an Appointment with a Librarian including Chat Reference - Ask a Librarian from our Facebook page.
The library also provides numerous other services including the following:

- Library has a scanner.
- Library makes your LOBO ID. More Info
- Library will borrow books/articles not owned (interlibrary loan).
- Library does not buy textbooks.
- Library has a Study Room available for group study.
- Library provides Reserve Collection for class support
- Library requires your LOBO ID to borrow materials.
- Library also has black and white printing available.
- Weekly events such as an ASL social, Gaming Club meetings and tournaments.

Other Resources are available on the Student Resources website by clicking the link.

Learning Commons: Tutoring Services and Writing Center
Tutoring is available to you in education, 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 Bookings.

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. **T**he webpage, with more details about available hours, is here: Learning Commons: Tutoring Services webpage.

Title IX: UP2720 & UP2740

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.

COVID-19 Health and Awareness

UNM is a mask friendly, but not a mask-required, community. If you have a positive COVID-19 test, please stay home for five days, and isolate yourself from others, per the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines. If you need an extension, please get in touch with me via CANVAS; I can work with you to provide alternatives for course participation and completion. UNM faculty and staff know that these are challenging times. Please let me, an advisor, or another UNM staff member know that you need support so we can connect you to the right resources. Please be aware that UNM will publish information on websites and emails about changes to our public health status and community response.

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/

Religious Accommodations

Every effort shall be made to reasonably and fairly accommodate religious obligations that will conflict with scheduled assignments or required attendance, provided advance notification is given. Whenever possible, you should give at least two weeks' advance notice to request special accommodation.