

Early Childhood Development
Associate in Applied Science
Program Level Assessment Plan
11/30/06

Early Childhood Development Program Mission Statement

The mission of Eastern's Early Childhood Development Program is to provide students an understanding of intellectual, physical, social, and emotional principles critical to providing quality care to children from birth to five years of age. The program provides practical experience working with children in a variety of settings including child care facilities, in-home services, Head Start programs, and pre-school programs. Students may choose courses for direct care positions such as teachers and classroom assistants or they may select the entrepreneurial emphasis for child care center owners, administrators and directors. This career based program is designed for student desiring to enter the job market as child care providers or owner/operators of child care services.

In addition to selecting an area of emphasis, students can obtain the Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree through four pathways. The first option is a traditional two year program with 61 - 62 earned credit hours. The second option, the Associate in Applied Science in Occupational Development: Early Childhood Development provides students who complete the ACDS Certification with 33 credits through an articulation agreement with the Department of Labor, area employers and Eastern. The third pathway, the Associate in Applied Science in Technical Studies: Early Childhood Development incorporates 15 credit hours of articulated credit for students completing the Child Development Specialist (CDA) credential.

In cooperation with Hampshire High School and as a part of the West Virginia Earn A Degree Graduate Early (WV EDGE) project a fourth pathway was approved in fall 2004 . The course outcomes for the A.A.S. in Occupational Development: Apprenticeship for Child Development option (ACDS) and the WVEIS Codes from the West Virginia Department of Education were articulated into the A.A.S. in Technical Studies. Students can earn 21 credit hours for high school coursework if they successfully complete the courses and pass a proficiency test with a minimum performance standard of 75%.

Eastern's goal in developing an Early Childhood Development, Associate in Applied Science Degree Program is to meet the needs of the child care facilities and in-home providers in its service area. The program supports the institution's mission in two ways. First, the program addresses the expressed need for professional, formally educated, skillful child care providers as defined through the DACUM process. Secondly, through assessment and articulation of existing child care provider training programs, the program promotes life long learning by encouraging current child care workers to build upon existing credentials toward completing an associate degree.

The program provides:

- Access to higher education throughout the College's responsibility district

- Seamless curricula through use of brokered courses and incorporation of prior learning assessment
- Seamless curricula for high school dual credit and tech prep initiatives
- Graduates to meet current and projected regional employment needs for child care workers
- Program flexibility to meet a variety of job placement options
- Development of services within individual communities

Early Childhood Development Program Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the Early Childhood Development Program the graduate will:

- Respond to the health and safety needs of children
- Assess children's growth and development
- Plan and implement children's routines within the child care setting
- Plan and organize a learning environment for young children
- Arrange and manage learning center
- Identify and implement positive discipline strategies that can be utilized by child care workers in the child care setting
- Develop and implement age-appropriate activities that provide learning through the child's level of communication, interest and imagination
- Plan developmentally appropriate curriculum for young children
- Identify and work with children with special needs within a variety of child care settings
- Demonstrate appropriate responses to nurture and develop positive self-esteem in pre-school age children
- Communicate with parents and families
- Participate in life-long learning and professional development
- Participate in extracurricular center activities outside the classroom setting, such as planning family events, participating in program and strategic planning
- Maintain records according to state and federal guidelines

Additionally, graduates completing the entrepreneurial emphasis will apply business management skills to planning and establishing businesses that provide early childhood education and child-care.

Assessment of Early Childhood Education Goals and Course Outcomes

The following assessment instruments and standards will be used to discern student academic achievement and course effectiveness in meeting program goals and course outcomes.

- Completion Rate/course level: At least 80% of students enrolling in early childhood development courses will successfully complete the course(s). This will be determined at the end of each semester based on final grades. Beginning in Spring 2007, completion rates for EDF 217 Human Development & Learning and PSY 213 Guiding the Behavior

of Children will be tracked as a pilot project. At least 80% of the students will demonstrate mastery of the course outcomes by earning at least a 70% average in each course through a variety of classroom assessments. Courses to be assessed in subsequent semesters will be determined based on the Part Time Evening Program Implementation schedule.

- Drop Rate: For Spring 2007 the pilot project will track the drop rate for EDF 217 Human Development & Learning and PSY 213 Guiding the Behavior of Children. The drop rate will not exceed 30%.
- Course-level effectiveness: Course outcomes for targeted childcare courses will be assessed on a cyclical basis over a three-year period. At least four outcomes from two courses will be assessed annually. Exam questions linked to course learning outcomes are included in final examinations. Students' performance in answering these questions will be analyzed across sections and semesters. For Spring 2007, EDF 217 Human Development & Learning will be the targeted pilot course. Courses to be assessed in subsequent semesters will be determined based on the Part Time Evening Program Implementation schedule.
- Graduation Rate: At least 75% of students enrolling in the Early Childhood Development program will successfully complete the associate degree within 5 years. This will be measured by the number of graduates from the program.
- Syllabus Analysis: Syllabus analysis will be conducted on an annual basis to assure consistency of outcomes with Master Course Record Forms and among section of specific courses.
- Transcript Analysis: Transcript analysis will be conducted as triggered by deficiencies in course level assessment activities.
- Advisory Committee Review: Annual advisory committee review will provide qualitative evaluation of program effectiveness in meeting regional childcare needs.
- WorkKeys is administer to Associate of Applied Science graduating students as a measure of the effectiveness of the general education core in relation to the workplace Three tests from the WorkKeys series are administered to graduating students: Applied Mathematics Reading for Information and Locating Information. Minimum performance standards are defined in accordance with Standards and Measures for Perkins III Core Indicators. Scores falling below the designated standard indicate the need for a comprehensive curriculum review to determine cause and appropriate corrective action.
 - Applied Mathematics Performance Standard: Seventy-seven percent (77%) of program completers will score at or above the appropriate WorkKeys level for their given occupational area. The minimum WorkKeys score for Early Childhood Development is 4.

- Reading for Information Performance Standard: Eighty-eight percent (88%) of program completers will score at or above the appropriate WorkKeys level for their given occupational area. The minimum WorkKeys score for General Early Childhood Development is 5
- Locating Information Performance Standard: Eighty-eight percent (88%) of program completers will score at or above the appropriate WorkKeys level for their given occupational area. The minimum WorkKeys score for Early Childhood Development is 4
- Capstone assessment: The A.A.S. in Early childhood Development requires a capstone project providing an opportunity to integrate and apply program learning outcomes. The Occupational Development and Technical Studies students do not complete the capstone course since both credentials (CDA and ACDS Certificates) have a major component of experiential requirements. The A.A.S. students also participate in application experiences in the Infant and Toddler Seminar and the Early Childhood Seminar. Students develop a project exploring a problem, opportunity or new trend in Early Childhood Development as it relates to early childhood education or child care facilities. Students analyze the problem, conduct a literature review and provide a recommendation suitable for application within a workplace or educational organization. These research projects are reviewed and graded by the academic program director for general education and instruction utilizing a rubric correlated to course outcomes for early childhood development. At least 75% of the graduating students will score the minimum Capstone performance standard of 80%.
- Enrollment Patterns: Enrollment trends will be monitored. Shifts in target courses and number of majors will trigger detailed assessment review as defined in above items. Courses to be assessed will be determined based on the Part Time Evening Program Implementation schedule.
- Course evaluation surveys are used as indirect assessment measures of student success and satisfaction. Survey questions provide self reports of learning acquired through course completion, understanding of intended course learning outcomes, satisfaction with instruction, and course effectiveness.

Data Collection

Multiple methods will be used to collect appropriate data to assess student learning and success. Primary data will be analyzed to determine course level effectiveness. A secondary analysis of student records will be conducted to track student success, engagement and goal attainment. Student records selected for the secondary analysis include enrollment patterns in early childhood courses, course grades, drop rates, and degree, or job attainment.

Target outcomes will be identified for evaluations over a three year cycle. Standard exam questions will be administered across multiple sections of target courses.

A secondary analysis of course evaluation will be conducted to address students' perceptions of success and satisfaction. Self-reports will provide a qualitative perspective of the students' "lived experience" in the child development courses.

Data Analysis and Recommendations

The Academic Program Director for General Education and Instruction will analyze the capstone project report utilizing the scoring rubric and data collected from primary and secondary source on an annual basis. Calculations will be prepared as defined in the assessment section. Scores falling below the minimum performance standard will serve as the trigger for further evaluation or course revision depending upon the sample size, and historical patterns. Analysis may also serve as the trigger for implementation or modification of student support services.

Program Reports

The Academic Program Director for General Education and Instruction will prepare an annual assessment report and recommendations. These reports will be provided to the Dean of Learner Support Services, Dean for Academic Services, Associate Dean for Academic and Learner Support Services, and the Learner Outcomes Team (LOT). Reports will address the student outcomes, methods of assessment, results of assessment activities and recommendations.

Assessment reports will be shared with content and practitioner faculty for the Early Childhood Development courses. The faculty and the advisory committee will be convened to determine need for programmatic change or course revision.

Effectiveness of Assessment Plan

As this program grows, additional methods of assessment will be added to determine student success and effectiveness of the curriculum. Assessment is in its initial stages of implementation. Effectiveness of this plan will be evaluated in subsequent years. The Five Fundamental Questions for Conversations on Student Learning (Priddy and Solomon) will serve as prompts for dialog in utilization of assessment data for improvement of student learning. As trends in student academic achievement are monitored, need for additional assessment activities or change in focus will become evident by applicability of results in curriculum revision.

The Five Fundamental Questions for Conversations on Student Learning (Priddy and Solomon)

1. How are your stated students' learning outcomes appropriate to your mission, programs, and degrees?
2. What evidence do you have that students achieve your stated learning outcomes?
3. In what ways do you analyze and use evidence of student learning?
4. How do you ensure shared responsibility for assessment of student learning?
5. How do you evaluate and improve the effectiveness of assessment of student learning efforts?

See Excel File for Program Outcomes Matrix