



# Academic Learning Compact

## Early Childhood Education BAE

### Program Mission Statement

The mission of the Pre-K/Primary Education (age three through grade 3) program is to provide students in our program with intentional learning experiences designed to enhance their knowledge of young children (0-8), increase their engagement and advocacy in the early childhood community and provide opportunities for personal growth.

The B.A.E program in Pre-K Primary Education promotes high-quality early learning for all graduates, by connecting practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children. The early childhood faculty provide opportunities for candidates to demonstrate that effective teaching is a complex process based on an expanded knowledge base related to child development and learning processes. These include family theory, social context, appropriate curriculum, instructional practices, diversity, and inclusion.

Learning outcomes for the BAE in Early Childhood Education are taken from the National Association for the Education of Young Children Higher Education Standards (NAEYC). These standards express a national vision of excellence for early childhood professionals. They are deliberately written as statements of core knowledge, understanding and methods used across multiple settings and in multiple professional roles. The key elements of each standard progress from a theoretical knowledge base, to more complex understanding, and then to the application of knowledge in professional practice. The standards are the same across degree levels. The key elements of Initial Standards describe expectations for beginning early childhood teachers. The key elements of Advanced Standards describe expectations for advanced roles in the early childhood profession: including accomplished or mentor teacher, program administrator, teacher educator, researcher and policy maker.

Below are the Student Learning Outcomes and the indicators for each outcome.

### Student Learning Outcomes:

**Student Learning Outcome 1 (Content/Discipline Specific Knowledge):** Candidates design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum that promotes comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child:

- Aligns instruction with state-adopted standards at the appropriate level of rigor,
- Sequences lessons and concepts to ensure coherence and required prior knowledge,
- Designs learning experiences for students to achieve mastery and demonstrate a variety of applicable skills and competencies, and
- Uses diagnostic student data to plan lessons; and selects appropriate formative assessments to monitor learning.

**Student Learning Outcome 2: Assessment (Critical Thinking):** The effective educator consistently:

- Uses a variety of assessment tools and assessment data to inform instruction and monitor student achievement and progress,
- Designs and aligns formative and summative assessments with learning objectives,
- Uses a variety of assessment tools to monitor student progress, achievement and learning gains,
- Interprets student assessment data and shares results with students and stakeholders, and,
- Adapts assessments and testing conditions to meet student needs

**Student Learning Outcome 3: The Learning Environment (Communication; Critical Thinking):** To maintain a student-centered learning environment that is safe, organized, equitable, flexible, inclusive, and collaborative, the effective educator consistently:

- Manages individual and class behaviors through a well-planned classroom management system by modeling clear communication skills; organizing and managing classroom resources; conveying high expectations to all students; and maintaining a supportive and equitable climate,
- Respects students' cultures (e.g., language, family background) and adapts the learning environment to meet the learning needs of all students, and
- Utilizes appropriate assistive technologies that enable students to participate in high-quality communication interactions and achieve their educational goals.

**Student Learning Outcome 4: Build Family and Community Relationships (Critical thinking)**. The effective educator consistently:

- Understands that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with children's families and communities.
- Values the importance and complex characteristics of children's families and communities.
- Creates respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families in their children's development and learning.
- Collaborates with the community to create meaningful experiences for the children and the community.

## **Assessment Approaches**

Graduates of the early childhood education program will demonstrate mastery of content knowledge and teaching skills, communication skills, and critical thinking through proficiency in courses in educational foundations, courses in the major, and related clinical experiences. All course assignments in the early childhood education program provide evidence of progress toward or mastery of the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Higher Education Standards, which are the SLOs for the program. Each NAEYC aligns with one of the UNF student learning outcome categories: discipline specific knowledge and skills, communication or critical thinking.

The program utilizes a two-faceted approach to monitor progress on SLOs. First, each course in the program contains at least one course-embedded performance task designated as a T-LAP (Teaching and Learning Accomplished Practices). These assignment tasks have been designed to enable teacher candidates to demonstrate their ability to synthesize course content and show proficiency with one or more of the four SLOs. Data on student performance on T-LAPs across semesters informs instructor decision-making regarding the effectiveness of course assignments and/or instructional activities.

Second, students create and add to an individual program portfolio each semester as part of each field experience course. They choose artifacts for their portfolio that illustrate each of the SLOs emphasized during that semester and provide written justification for why the artifact demonstrates mastery or developmentally appropriate progress toward mastery on that SLO. Students add to the portfolio across semesters, with new artifacts from courses taken in subsequent semesters. Artifacts for the portfolio can be chosen from assignments completed in their field experience and/or those completed during other teacher preparation courses taken in the same semester. These data enable program faculty to monitor individual student growth over the course of the program as evidenced in their portfolio. The two-faceted approach provides data faculty can use to examine performance data for individual courses within the program, student growth as they progress through the entire program, as well as their growth in specific areas across semesters (e.g., literacy, TESOL, STEM). This data informs the decision-making process for program improvement.

The program adopts a developmental perspective to proficiency, thus students at the beginning of their program as first semester juniors are not expected to demonstrate the same level of proficiency on any SLO as students at the end of their program. Furthermore, program faculty have agreed upon which SLOs will be emphasized in each of the three semesters of coursework in the program. Students will be expected to demonstrate mastery of all SLOs at a novice teacher level during student teaching internship. Program faculty have identified T-LAP tasks for each course linked to the SLO that is most associated with the task. The ALC report will include data on selected T-LAP assignments that are aligned with that SLO but will not include data on all of them. When possible, data from coursework and clinical experiences will be included.

Common rubrics associated with each SLO have been created. Performance indicators on those rubrics describe behaviors that might be exhibited by a teacher candidate at various points in the program. Indicator levels range from unsatisfactory, needs improvement, developing, satisfactory, and effective to highly effective. The common rubric enables the program to monitor student progress toward mastery during each semester in their program. It also enables program faculty to determine whether students are progressing in each SLO as they move through the program.