



**NORTHWEST FLORIDA  
STATE COLLEGE**

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**Bachelor of Science  
in Early Childhood  
Education**

**2016-2017**

**Student  
Handbook**

**Northwest Florida State College**

Bachelor of Science in  
Early Childhood Education  
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## Table of Contents

<b>Preface.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Mission Statements.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Student Learning Outcomes.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>BS-ECE Program Requirements and Information.....</b>	<b>2</b>
Admission/Eligibility Requirements.....	2
Steps in the Admission Process.....	3
Transfer Students.....	3
Program Expense.....	3
Financial Assistance.....	3
Scholarships.....	3
Student Advisement.....	3
Dress Code/Guidelines.....	4
Graduation.....	5
<b>Student Support-Tutorial and Special Needs.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Course Completion.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Readmission.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Student Progression.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Course Grades and Program Progress.....</b>	<b>7</b>
Incomplete Grades.....	8
Interruptions to Program Progress.....	8
Student-Initiated Withdrawal from a Course.....	8
Student-Initiated Withdrawal for the Program.....	8
Dismissal or Administrative Withdrawal from the Program.....	9
Academic Progress.....	9
Professional Disposition.....	9
Professional Standards Committee.....	10
Student Appeals and Grievances.....	10

## Northwest Florida State College

Student Evaluation of Courses and Program.....	11
Attendance.....	11
Class Courtesy.....	11
Written Assignments.....	11
Computer Access.....	12
E-mail.....	12
Records.....	12
Name/Address Change.....	12
Electronic Academic Records.....	12
<b>General Field Experience Policies.....</b>	<b>13</b>
Field Experience Attendance.....	13
Confidentiality.....	13
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).....	13
Transportation.....	14
Definition of Terms.....	14
Health and Safety.....	14
Fingerprinting Procedures.....	15
Field Experience Placement Process.....	15
Professional Expectations for Early Field Experiences.....	16
Problem Solving.....	19
Withdrawals.....	19
<b>Internship Program.....</b>	<b>20</b>
General Policies and Procedures for Field Experiences and Internship.....	20
Social and Professional Activities.....	21
Concluding Thoughts.....	22
 <b>APPENDICES</b>	
<b>ONE</b> Fingerprinting Procedures.....	<b>A1</b>
<b>TWO</b> Field Placement Agreement Part I.....	<b>A3</b>
<b>THREE</b> Field Placement Agreement Part II.....	<b>A5</b>
<b>FOUR</b> Student Handbook Acknowledgement.....	<b>A7</b>

## Preface

This Student Handbook has been prepared for use by students enrolled in the Northwest Florida State College (NWFSC) Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education (BS-ECE) Program. All students should also read the current *Northwest Florida State College Catalog and Student Handbook* for general information; the college handbook is available online at [www.nwfsc.edu/Catalog](http://www.nwfsc.edu/Catalog).

The BS-ECE Program reserves the right to change, without notice, any statement in this handbook concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, fees, curricula, and courses. Such changes shall be effective whenever determined by the appropriate faculty and administrative bodies; they may govern both existing and new students. Official notification of changes will be available in the appropriate department offices and, when feasible, provided in writing to current BS-ECE students and posted to the website under BS-ECE program information. It is the student's obligation to know and adhere to all applicable program rules and regulations.

Nothing in this handbook constitutes, is intended to constitute, or should be construed as constituting a contract between a student and NWFSC.

NWFSC is an equal access, equal opportunity institution and does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, age, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, disability, pregnancy, or veteran status. NWFSC subscribes fully to all federal and state legislation and regulations regarding discrimination.

## College Mission Statement

Northwest Florida State College improves lives. We deliver outstanding educational programs that are relevant, accessible, and engaging for students of all ages and provide exceptional cultural, athletic, and economic development activities for the communities served. We commit to excellence, creativity, integrity, and service.

## BS-ECE Program Mission

The mission of the BS-ECE program of NWFSC is to provide education that employs best practices, practical field experiences, and research-based strategies to develop quality early childhood professionals who possess the skills, knowledge, and professionalism necessary to provide high quality education and care in today's early childhood programs.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this program, NWFSC candidates for the Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood Education will:

- Demonstrate knowledge and skills essential to maintaining a developmentally appropriate learning environment for young children.
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills essential to effective teaching in an early childhood setting.
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills essential for effective developmental screening and assessment of young children.
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills in implementing successful classroom management practices.
- Demonstrate knowledge of professional practices in Early Childhood Education.

## **Early Childhood Education Program Requirements & Information**

### **ADMISSION/ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- Completion of an Associate of Science in Early Childhood Education, Associated of Applied Science in Early Childhood Education or an Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree from a regionally accredited college.
- Completion of all college preparatory coursework.
- Completion of a minimum of 18 transferable college credit hours meeting the General Education Requirements.
- Completion of lower-division state-mandated common prerequisites, including EDF 1005, EDF 2085, EME 2040, EEC 1001, EEC 1309, EEC 1601, and EEC 1949.
- A minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.
- Completion of the standard Florida Foreign Language upper division admission requirement. (If, at the time of admission the student has not completed two years of the same foreign language in high school or eight credits in college, the student will need to complete eight credits of foreign language before completing the program.)
- Agreement to submit to fingerprinting and background checks as required by early childhood programs prior to field experiences. Note: The outcome of the background check may impact the student's eligibility to meet selected program requirements, including completion of the internship and various field experiences.

## STEPS IN THE ADMISSION PROCESS

1. Submit complete *Northwest Florida State College Admission & Residency Forms*.
2. Satisfy all requirements for admission to the College
3. Submit the *BS in Early Childhood Education Application Form*.
4. Satisfy all eligibility requirements for admission to the NWFSC BS-ECE Program.

## TRANSFER STUDENTS

Transfer students are required to apply to the Early Childhood Education Department to have courses evaluated for possible transfer into the NWFSC BS-ECE program. Students must provide complete syllabi, course descriptions, artifacts, and records of field experiences if applicable for courses and field experiences to be evaluated for transfer.

## PROGRAM EXPENSE

In addition to course tuition and fees, expenditures specific to BS-ECE programs include the cost of fingerprinting and background check and transportation to off-campus field experiences.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Financial aid, scholarships, and loans are available to Early Childhood Education students from various sources. Students should contact the Office of Financial Aid to NWFSC for specific information.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

Students may also apply for scholarships through the Northwest Florida State College Foundation at [www.nwfsc.edu/financialaid/scholarships](http://www.nwfsc.edu/financialaid/scholarships).

## STUDENT ADVISEMENT

A student may receive unofficial academic advisement upon request. Each student is assigned an advisor upon admission to the program. The advisor and the student will discuss the degree plan at the beginning of the program, and a program of student will be reviewed with the student. Questions should be brought to the advisor's attention for explanation and problem solving. Not all required courses are taught every semester, so a student should withdraw from courses or make changes to the plan of study only after talking with the advisor.

## DRESS CODE/GUIDELINES

Professional dress and demeanor are critical to the success of the early childhood professional. Successful field experiences include attention to the norms and values of the early childhood program setting. Students must observe the guidelines of the programs in which they work, with the following program expectations in mind:

- Clothing must be neat and clean;
- Clothing must not be tight, revealing, short, torn, tattered, dirty, or excessively faded;
- Clothing must not have visual, written, or implied messages that are likely to disrupt the school environment;
- Noisy, distracting jewelry/accessories that could cause a safety hazard may not be worn. Ears are the only exposed areas of the body on which pierced jewelry may be worn;
- Tattoos should be covered;
- Footwear must be worn at all times. Shoes traditionally worn only at home or to the beach (e.g., flip-flop design) are not permitted;
- Women's skirts/dresses/shorts should be no shorter than slightly above the knee, and slits, flaps, or openings in skirts/dresses may not be shorter than fingertip length;
- Seasonal/decorated shirts and blouses may be worn;
- Tank tops, backless apparel, midriffs, tops with straps less than 2 inches wide, sleeveless tops that are revealing (deep or low cut), or see-through blouses are not acceptable;
- Men must wear socks with shoes;
- Hair should be well groomed. Men are permitted facial hair if it is neatly trimmed and moderate in style.

***These guidelines apply to all presentation experiences within NWFSC BS-ECE courses. Students teaching or presenting to peers in the BS-ECE program are expected to dress professionally. Failure to do so will be reflected in the assignment grade.***

## GRADUATION

In addition to the following program requirements, students must satisfy all college graduation requirements specified in the applicable Northwest Florida State College Catalog and Student handbook, including but not limited to applying for graduation. Students planning to graduate must apply for graduation by established college deadlines and meet all college obligations related to graduation. Graduation applications are available online. BS-ECE Program graduation requirements follow:

- A cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 for all college credit course work pursued at NWFSC.
- A cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 for all college credit course work pursued, whether at NWFSC or by transfer.
- Successful completion of all course work within the major field of study with a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0.
- Successful completion of A.A. General Education requirements, including all Gordon rule course requirements with minimum grades (“C”).
- Successful completion of the Florida foreign language requirement.
- Successful completion of at least 50% of the upper division program course work in residence at NWFSC.
- Successful completion of a minimum of one hundred and twenty (120) college credits applicable toward the B.S. Degree.

## Student Support Tutorial & Special Needs

Numerous learning support services are available at no cost to BS-ECE students through Northwest Florida State College. For a summary of Northwest Florida State College tutorial services, visit [www.nwfsc.edu/LearningSupport](http://www.nwfsc.edu/LearningSupport) or visit the Academic Success Center on the Niceville Campus.

**Smarthinking.com** is a 24/7 online tutorial service available to all NWFSC students. Assistance with papers can be obtained online. In addition, Smarthinking.com provides an online tutorial service for those questions that come up when studying or writing. Each student is limited to two hours of online time per semester with Smarthinking unless permission is given for additional hours. Permission is granted through the Academic Success Center at 729-5389.

Students with disabilities or special needs for which accommodations may be appropriate to assist in completion of the program should contact the NWFSC Disability Support Services on the Niceville Campus or call 729-6079 (TDD 1-800-955-8771 or Voice 1-800-955-8770). Such students are encouraged to make this contact as early as possible.

## Course Completion

1. Students must complete all Early Childhood Education courses with a final grade of 'C' or better.
2. Students repeating a course must also repeat the field experience component.
3. Students are allowed to repeat two different courses before mandatory withdrawal from the Early Childhood Education major.
4. Students may repeat the internship only once.
5. Students earning a grade below a "C" at the midpoint of the semester should contact their professor immediately for an appointment.
6. Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0 throughout the program and graduate with a minimum GPA of 2.0.

## Readmission

Students who withdraw from or are dismissed from the BS-ECE program may apply to return to the program; however, readmission is not guaranteed. Faculty and advisors from NWFSC are available to assist students who wish to resume their BS-ECE studies.

A written request for readmission must be submitted to the Northwest Florida State College Director of Early Childhood Education. Readmission will be determined upon consideration of the student's record with respect to the following:

- a. Adherence to the program admission/eligibility requirements
- b. Overall academic record
- c. Cumulative GPA at time of program departure
- d. Semester GPA at the time of departure
- e. Previous pattern of student progression within the program
- f. Program enrollment (course and program capacity)
- g. Availability of field placement
- h. Previous field experience performance
- i. Other program-related factors

Depending on the circumstances of program departure and the length of time since the last program enrollment, students may be required to interview with the Director of Early Childhood Education or designee. Such assessments are used as part of the advising process and designed to help ensure the returning student is successful in completing the program. Northwest Florida State College is committed to student success, and students are encouraged to complete their BS-ECE studies; faculty and staff are available to assist students with this process.

## Student Progression

The BS-ECE prerequisites are vital to the successful completion of the curriculum and should be completed as specified in the student's BS-ECE Program of Study (POS). However, due to an extraordinary and unforeseen circumstance, such courses may be taken out of sequence. To do so, the student must appeal to the Director of Early Childhood Education/designee prior to the deadline for completing the course(s).

Students must have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 in the major field of study to graduate. Students are required to perform at a minimal grade point level of 2.0 (on a 4.0 scale) on all BS-ECE course requirements.

Students are expected to maintain compliance with the standards of acceptable conduct as outlined in The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct ([www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/ethical\\_conduct](http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/ethical_conduct)) and to maintain compliance with the rules and regulations of NWFSC. Failure to comply with these standards may result in dismissal from the BS-ECE program or other appropriate action.

## Course Grades and Program Progress

Northwest Florida State College faculty members adhere to the grading practices established and presented in the Northwest Florida State College Catalog and Student Handbook. Each faculty member establishes the specific grading plan and attendance requirements for his/her class(es). These requirements are explained to the students at the beginning of each course; the course syllabus/ policies include the course evaluation criteria, as well as other instructional policies. Northwest Florida State College uses letter grades.

### NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE BS-ECE PROGRAM GRADING GUIDELINES

A	95-100
B	85-94
C	75-84
D	70-74
F	69 or below

Students are evaluated based upon

1. their mastery of the course objectives, skills and competencies
2. field experience performance in courses with field placements

## INCOMPLETE GRADES

An *incomplete* (*I* grade) is used only in cases of true hardship when unanticipated, extenuating circumstances have resulted in the student's inability to complete course requirements by the end of the semester. In all cases, however, the student must have successfully completed the majority of the course before being eligible for an *I* grade. An incomplete is the prerogative of the instructor, not the student. An *I* may be granted at the discretion of the faculty in consultation with the Director of Early Childhood Education.

## INTERRUPTIONS TO PROGRAM PROGRESS (PROGRAM DECELERATION)

### A. Student-Initiated Withdrawal from a Course

Students may withdraw from a course within the withdrawal period listed in the academic calendar for each semester. Students should check institutional materials carefully as adherence to deadlines is the student's responsibility. Students who choose to withdraw from an Early Childhood Education course may be allowed to re-enroll in that course in a future term; however, eligibility for re-enrollment is subject to course availability and to the student's program enrollment status (i.e. the student has not been dismissed or withdrawn from the program or is otherwise ineligible to re-enroll at the college). A student who withdraws from a course must meet with an advisor to update his/her program plan to reflect the changed pattern of progression. In most instances, student should expect to prolong program progress when they elect to withdraw from a course. The student should work with an advisor to explore all other alternatives before taking such action.

Students must follow appropriate NWFSC procedures when withdrawing from a course. Students who do not follow the required withdrawal procedures will be awarded the grade they earned.

Student-initiated withdrawal from all BS-ECE courses in a given term is tantamount to a student-initiated withdrawal from the program. A student considering withdrawal must meet with his/her advisor prior to taking such action. See the following section of the handbook.

### B. Student-Initiated Withdrawal from the Program and/or Request for Modified Program of Study

Students experiencing personal or academic difficulties may request a modification of their scheduled program of study/degree plan or may withdraw from the program. Some modification in course sequencing may be possible without withdrawal from the program. In such cases, the student must contact his/her academic advisor as soon as possible to discuss the situation. If a full withdrawal from courses and the program is warranted, the student will be subject to the re-admission process. Readmission to the program after withdrawal or dismissal is not guaranteed. A student who wishes to return to the program must request to be re-admitted. See the *Readmission* section of this handbook.

Students withdrawing from the BS-ECE program will be requested to complete an exit interview as part of the withdrawal process.

## **DISMISSAL OR ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM**

Dismissal or administrative withdrawal from the program may occur based on student performance in two major categories: A) academic progress and B) professional disposition.

### **A. Academic Progress**

Failure to achieve the following standards will result in a student's dismissal from the program:

- Complete each course in the major program of study with a grade of 'C' or better;
- Maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0;
- Complete the program with a minimum GPA of 2.0;
- Successfully complete all assigned field experiences.
- Repeat no more than two different Early Childhood Education courses.
- Repeat internship no more than once.

### **B. Professional Disposition**

Students should maintain the highest standards of professional and academic integrity at all times. A student whose personal integrity or behaviors do not demonstrate fitness to continue the BS-ECE program may be dismissed from the program or withdrawn from a given course. The professional dispositions and behaviors expected of the early childhood professional are addressed throughout coursework in the BS-ECE program and are expected of NWFSC Early Childhood Education students. Students must comply with the standards of acceptable conduct as outlined in The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and with the rules and regulations of NWFSC and its BS-ECE program. Failure to comply with these standards may result in dismissal from the BS-ECE program or other appropriate action.

Students may be dismissed from the BS-ECE program for behavior including but not limited to the following:

- a) Falsification of records or reports
- b) Academic dishonesty
- c) Harming or putting in the way of harm a student
- d) Violation of student and/or program confidential information
- e) Violation of field experience site policies or procedures, including confidentiality and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- f) Violation of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.
- g) A positive test for illicit drugs

Students may be dismissed temporarily or permanently from the field experience site or district at the discretion of the instructor, program administrators, and/or early childhood program personnel for inappropriate behavior. Actions resulting in an immediate threat to the safety and well-being of students may result in immediate removal of the BS-ECE from field placement(s). Note that students who are unable to complete a field experience successfully will fail the course associated with that field placement; such students may therefore be ineligible for graduation from the program.

Instances of prohibited student behavior may be referred to the appropriate college administrative official for resolution or to the Professional Standards Committee.

### Professional Standards Committee

#### Membership on the Committee may include:

- Early Childhood Education Director
- Early Childhood Education faculty and staff
- Faculty from a division outside Early Childhood/Teacher Education

#### Committee process:

- The student is notified in writing of the issue(s) to be addressed by the Standards Committee;
- The student may provide a written response to the Professional Standards Committee Chair;
- The Standards Committee Chair disseminates copies of all written documentation to the committee, calls a meeting within 2 weeks of distribution of packet, and notifies student of the date to meet with the committee;
- Committee meets with the student to discuss the issue(s) and the student's written response to the issue(s)
- The committee submits, if appropriate, a recommendation to the appropriate Dean, who consults with the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and/or Dean of Students;
- The Dean notifies student in writing of the decision;
- The Director sends copies of decision to be filed in the student's cumulative folder;

### Student Appeals and Grievances

Issues affecting a student's ability to progress in the BS-ECE program are of utmost importance to the Early Childhood Education department. Students may pursue the informal and, if needed, formal appeal/grievance procedures established by the college. Appeal and grievance procedures for various concerns, including but not limited to course grades, harassment, and discrimination, are detailed in the "Student Rights and Responsibilities" section of the *College Catalog and Student Handbook*. These rights and responsibilities apply to education students in the same manner they do to all students enrolled at NWFSC.

College policies, as well as program policies and procedures, extend to all sites where students are engaged in the role of BS-ECE.

## STUDENT EVALUATION OF SPECIFIC COURSES AND THE PROGRAM

Students are encouraged to contribute to the growth and improvement of the BS-ECE program through a variety of ways. Students are requested to complete the student evaluation of instruction offered at the course level each semester and to participate in the end of program evaluation, the college graduation survey, and the various informal evaluation opportunities throughout the program.

### ATTENDANCE

The college attendance policies apply to students in the BS-ECE program; however, individual faculty members may set more specific attendance requirements. At NWFSC, an instructor may penalize a student who fails to meet course and college attendance policies, including those addressing tardiness. Absences and tardiness jeopardize a student's ability to achieve the objectives of the course and are inconsistent with professional behavior.

### CLASS COURTESY

Professional behavior is an expectation of all students present in the traditional classroom or field experience as well as in the online classroom. This includes respect for both faculty members and students while presenting content or communicating an opinion. Students should be prepared to participate in class discussion and online discussion. Students who demonstrate unprofessional behavior online or in a class or field experience will be asked to leave the early childhood classroom.

Cell phones, beepers, and other wireless communication devices should be silent during all class and field experiences. Students should notify the course instructor if they have an emergency and need to request an exception to this policy.

Children are not permitted in classes, field experiences, or other facilities where hazardous conditions may exist. As a courtesy to faculty members, staff and other students, children are not permitted to accompany students to class.

### WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

All written assignments in BS-ECE must demonstrate a professional level of scholarship by adhering to the current American Psychological Association (APA) format. Guidelines for correct use of APA style may be found in the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. Assistance with APA style writing can also be obtained by NWFSC students at Smarthinking.com and the NWFSC Academic Success Center. Credit for late or otherwise deficient papers/written assignments will be reduced/adjusted according to the policies of the individual instructor.

## COMPUTER ACCESS

All students must have access to a computer and be proficient in word processing, e-mail, and research literature searches. Several BS-ECE courses are offered in a web-based hybrid format, and departmental communications are sent via e-mail. While most students prefer the convenience of doing their course work on their own personal computer, computer access is available in other ways for students who do not own a computer. Open computer labs are available to students at all NWFSC sites.

## E-MAIL

E-mail is an essential communication tool between faculty and students and is often a key factor in successful completion of course work. ***BS-ECE students are required to check their NWFSC e-mail accounts regularly and frequently.***

## RECORDS

NWFSC adheres to institutional, state, and federal policies regarding the confidentiality of student records.

## NAME/ADDRESS CHANGE

Changes in local and/or permanent addresses, telephone number, and change in name must be reported as soon as possible to the NWFSC Registrar and the BS-ECE Department. Currently enrolled students may make changes online through Northwest Florida State College's Raidernet at [https:// Raidernet.nwfsc.edu](https://Raidernet.nwfsc.edu).

## ELECTRONIC ACADEMIC RECORDS

Northwest Florida State College's Raidernet at <https://raidernet.nwfsc.edu> gives students access to their NWFSC records. Students may also access records and unofficial transcripts through Florida's Virtual Campus at [www.flvc.org](http://www.flvc.org).

## General Field Experience Policies

An essential part of professional preparation at NWFSC is the early field experience. Field experiences are exciting opportunities for candidates to explore assumptions about being an early childhood professional. Early field experiences are provided throughout the degree program. Specifically the purpose of these early field experiences is that the candidate:

- Learn if Early Childhood Education is the right career for him or her;
- Observes in actual classrooms;
- Observes diverse aspects of children’s lives: cognitive, social, physical, and emotional;
- Experiences teaching small and large groups before internship;
- Integrates theory and practice;
- Observes and reflects on different teaching and management strategies;
- Observes and experiences non-teaching duties of an early childhood professional.

### FIELD EXPERIENCE ATTENDANCE

Field experiences are planned to enhance the learning process. Being present, prepared, and punctual demonstrates a seriousness of purpose and enriches the learning experience for both faculty and students. At NWFSC, an instructor may penalize a student who fails to meet course and college attendance policies, including those addressing tardiness. Absences and tardiness jeopardize a student’s ability to achieve the objectives of the course and are inconsistent with professional behavior.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

Students engaged in field experiences will have access to confidential personal and family information of birth – 4 year old students and to sensitive agency information as part of their work in early childhood programs. It is of utmost importance that student/early childhood program confidentiality is observed.

Information concerning a student/family/early childhood program is not to be discussed after leaving the field experience or classroom setting. Violation of this policy may result in dismissal from the BE-ECE program.

### FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Student records are confidential documents protected by one of the nation’s strongest privacy protection laws. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA, also known as the Buckley Amendment, defines education records as all records that early childhood programs or education agencies maintain about students. All early childhood professionals must be familiar with the provisions of FERPA and conduct themselves professionally and ethically. For more information, see [www.fldoe.org/ese/pdf/ferpa/pdf](http://www.fldoe.org/ese/pdf/ferpa/pdf).

## TRANSPORTATION

Students shall provide their own transportation to any agency or institution included in curriculum requirements, including all assigned field experiences.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Candidate** – The Candidate is a college student who has met admission criteria for the college and the early childhood program. A candidate remains a candidate until completion of the degree requirements and graduation from the college.

**Cooperating Teacher** – The cooperating teacher is responsible for assisting in the professional growth of the candidate through demonstration of the instruction in teaching skills and attitudes. The cooperating teacher works collaboratively with the college instructor and Early Childhood Education program in continuing evaluation of the candidate.

**Course Instructor** – The college instructor is a faculty member who is hired by the college to teach a course within the Early Childhood Education program.

**Early Field Experience** – Early field experiences provide necessary and valuable experiences in classrooms to enhance the learning that takes place as part of the coursework in the Early Childhood Education program.

**Student** – The student referred to throughout this handbook is the student enrolled in an early childhood program.

**Internship** – The internship is the semester-long field experience during which students assume full time responsibility for planning, teaching, and assessing student in an Early Childhood Education classroom. Students must successfully complete the internship to graduate from the Bachelor of Early Childhood Education program.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

Field placements in the Early Childhood Education program require a high level of responsibility for the safety and welfare of children. The following expectations apply to all students enrolled in BE-ECE course.

### **Substance use and/or Abuse**

Substance abuse is inconsistent with the ethics of the Early Childhood Education profession, the BS-ECE program, and the College. Substance use/abuse adversely affects cognitive, sensory, affective and psychomotor behaviors and can be life threatening to oneself and others. Once admitted to the BS-ECE program, students must remain drug-free throughout their tenure in this program. Failure to do so shall be grounds for dismissal from the program. BS-ECE students must be drug and/or alcohol free when reporting to early childhood programs (including parking lots and grounds) and affiliated agencies.

A Positive drug or alcohol test result shall be grounds for dismissal from the program.

*“Students are warned that the use, manufacture, distribution, sale, or possession of alcoholic beverages or illicit drugs on campus or at any college sponsored event or activity is prohibited by college policy, except as provided in Florida Statute 561.01(17). Violation of this*

*policy will subject a student to disciplinary action. The college will refer for prosecution any violation of local, state, or federal law”.*

### **Health Services**

See the College Catalog and Student Handbook for information for the following:

- Available first aid and emergency services
- AIDS information and counseling will be provided by a counselor in the Student Services areas on the Niceville and Fort Walton Beach campuses. Contact with the AIDS counselor is confidential.
- Alcohol and drug abuse information is available from a counselor located in Student Services on the Niceville and Fort Walton Beach campuses. Call a counselor at 729-5372. The counselor maintains information on local treatment programs and their locations.

### **FINGERPRINTING PROCEDURES**

All candidates entering the Bachelor’s Program in Early Childhood Education must be fingerprinted and complete a background screening. All candidates must comply with this procedure prior to field experience placement. (See Appendix One)

### **FIELD EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT PROCESS**

If employed in an early childhood program setting, the candidate may complete early field experiences at that site. Candidates are encouraged whenever possible to do as many early field experience assignments at a site other than their worksite to provide a diversity of experiences.

Candidates not employed in an early childhood program setting will be assigned to complete field experiences at the Mary Lou O’Connor Child Development and Education Center on the Niceville campus of NWFSC.

The candidate is responsible for arranging his/her own transportation to and from the designated early childhood program. Failure to complete a field experience will prevent a candidate from passing the course.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS FOR FIELD EXPERIENCES

### Be Prepared

Candidates are required to obtain a copy of the assigned program's most recent Parent Handbook. Candidates are required to read, understand, and abide by the content in each handbook. Candidates should pay careful attention to the safety procedures and guidelines for each assigned program.

### Complete All Necessary Paperwork

Candidates will be required to have the following paperwork in order prior to beginning any field placement:

- Completion of required fingerprinting and security clearances (See Appendix One);
- Field Placement Agreement Part I completed and turned in to the Early Childhood Education Department. (See Appendix Two);
- Field Placement Agreement Part II completed and turned in to the Early Childhood Education Department ( See Appendix Three);
- Request for Early Field Experience turned in to the Early Childhood Education Department.

### Arrive at the Field Experience Site

*The candidate is responsible for arranging his or her own transportation to and from the designated program.* Candidates should locate the program in advance of the first day to familiarize themselves with the area. Visitors, including candidates, are required to sign in at the program's office each time they arrive. Candidates must wear their NWFSC student identification card at **all** times.

### Be Punctual

To maintain professionalism, candidates should always plan to arrive at least 10 minutes before expected. Candidates should always be on time, but if a delay is unavoidable, they should call the program's office and leave a message for the cooperating teacher.

### Always Show up As Expected

Candidates are to begin field experiences on the initial report date and *attend everyday as scheduled*. If a candidate is seriously ill or has a major emergency, he or she must contact the cooperating Teacher and Early Childhood Education Department *in advance of the absence*. The candidate must make plans with the cooperating teacher and the Early Childhood Education Placement Coordinator to make up the absence(s). The instructor may remove the candidate from the placement if attendance and timeliness become a problem. *Failure to complete a field experience successfully will prevent a candidate from passing the course.*

### Be Aware of the Early Childhood Program's Calendar and Closings

It is the candidate's responsibility to discuss the program's calendar with the cooperating teacher and plan for days when the program will be closed. Early Childhood programs do not follow the same calendar as NWFSC.

### **Dress for Success**

Candidates should be aware of the program dress codes for all professional employees. The importance of first impressions is not just a cliché; in representing NWFSC and the Early Childhood Education Department, the candidate must dress professionally in the field.

Professional dress and demeanor are critical to the success of the early childhood professional educator. Successful field placement includes attention to the norms and values of the setting. Students must observe the guidelines of the programs in which they work, and also follow the dress code/guidelines provided earlier in this document.

Dressing inappropriately may sabotage a candidate's overall professional image and can result in dismissal from a field experience. **Failure to complete a field experience successfully will prevent a candidate from passing the course.**

### **Observe Confidentiality**

Candidates should be mindful of confidentiality in all conversations and actions in the program in the community, on the internet (Facebook, blogs, etc. are public spaces), and in class at the college. Candidates should take care not to use the names of teachers, programs, or students when discussing field experiences. Any breach of confidentiality may result in consequences including but not limited to a candidate's being removed from the field experience or from the BS-ECE program. Program site personnel may not accept field experience candidates who have previously made inappropriate comments, breached confidentiality, or made evaluative comments regarding candidates and/or staff, even at other programs. **Failure to complete a field experience successfully will prevent a candidate from passing the course.**

### **Remember That the Cooperating Teacher Is In Charge**

It is important that candidates remember the cooperating teacher is responsible for all activities in the classroom. Candidates must ask for permission from the cooperating teacher before assisting in any activity. The candidate's arrival and departure from the classroom should not interrupt the routines and activities of the classroom; the candidate must come in and leave quietly. ***The candidate should never cross in front of the cooperating teacher when he/she is giving instructions and directions to the class.*** The candidate should display a professional attitude during field experiences by being positive, enthusiastic, outgoing and supportive of the cooperating teacher. The cooperating teacher may ask the candidate to annotate a time sheet regarding the day's activities. Such annotation may assist in making an accurate final assessment of the candidate's performance.

### **Be Responsible**

If a candidate borrows any materials from the cooperating teacher, he or she must return the materials promptly and in good order. Candidates should clarify whether or not copies of materials are to borrow or to keep.

### **Be an Active Participant In The Classroom**

Candidates are guests in the classroom and are there to observe and support the lessons planned by the cooperating teacher. Teachers are held accountable for the learning of their students and cannot afford to waste any time. Candidates will have to earn the cooperating teacher's trust before the teacher will allow the candidate to assist in the class (or small group). To

earn this trust, candidates should volunteer to help in small ways to demonstrate eagerness and ability to follow the teacher's lead. Candidates will need a positive and respectful attitude as well as patience and gentle persistence to be a successful participant in the classroom. Most cooperating teachers appreciate candidates who engage in meaningful ways with students.

### **Stay Focused**

If more than one candidate is assigned to a classroom, candidates should remember not to disturb the classroom. Candidates may not converse with one another during field experiences, no text, eat, read, study, etc. during field experiences.

### **Do Not Take a Cell Phone Into The Classroom**

Candidates should turn off their cell phones before entering the building or leave cell phones in the car. A candidate may be reached at the early childhood program office during a field experience; however, this contact should be for emergency use only. In the case of an emergency, the candidate should instruct callers to leave a message for him/her with the office staff. The early childhood program office staff will notify the candidate of the situation at the appropriate time to avoid disrupting the learning of the students.

### **Take Only the Essentials**

Classrooms are crowded; therefore, candidates are instructed to take only essential items. A notebook, pen/pencil, and lesson materials, if appropriate, are all candidates will need most of the time. Candidates should not take textbooks, course notes, purses, or valuables into the classroom. Purses may contain items (medications, items that are choking hazards, etc.) that could be harmful to young children. Candidates should be mindful that all their actions must support the work of the classroom. Behavior including but not limited to personal grooming (e.g., applying nail polish), eating a snack, reading, or chewing gum are disruptive, prohibited, and completely inappropriate. Unless the cooperating teacher invites the candidate to partake of refreshments, the candidate should not eat or drink in the classroom (this includes water).

### **Observe Universal Precautions**

Early field experience candidates should be aware of the risks of and precautions for handling bodily fluids and the program's relevant policies. Serious risks include exposure to HIV (AIDS), hepatitis, and other blood-borne pathogens. Candidates are encouraged to ask the cooperating teacher how incidents involving bodily fluids are handled in the classroom. Candidates should know where plastic gloves are first aid kits are located in the classroom. The nine steps in the universal precautions for handling exposed blood and body fluids are as follows:

- Step 1 – Put on disposable gloves (latex or vinyl).
- Step 2 – Use paper towels to absorb spill.
- Step 3 - Place used towels in leak-proof plastic bag.
- Step 4 – Flood area with bleach solution (1 part bleach to 9 parts water).
- Step 5 – Clean area with paper towels, vacuum, or broom and dustpan.
- Step 6 – Place used towels, vacuum cleaner bag, or waste in a leak-proof plastic bag.
- Step 7 – Remove gloves-pull inside out.
- Step 8 – Place gloves in bag and tie.
- Step 9 – Wash hands with soap and water for at least 10 seconds.

As a guest in the classroom, the candidate may utilize the following procedure if a sick or injured student approaches:

- Remain calm and in control of the situation.
- Without touching, try to calm the student needing assistance.
- Hand clean tissues or paper towels to the student and ask the student to cover the wound or wipe his/her mouth or hands if vomiting.
- Notify the teacher immediately and let the teacher handle the student and the clean-up.
- Make sure other students are supervised at all times and do not come in contact with the spilled blood and/or body fluids.

### **Do Not Conduct Research**

Candidates are not permitted to test or survey pupils in the early childhood programs except with materials relating directly to the pupils' work that are approved by the cooperating teacher.

### **Report Suspected Child Abuse and/or Child in Crisis**

Candidates must report concerns to the cooperating teacher, course instructor, and the Director of Early Childhood Education. These individuals will then assist candidates in the next appropriate step.

### **End the Experience Positively**

On the final visit, candidates should ask the cooperating teacher if he/she has received the email containing the on-line student evaluation survey link. They should encourage the cooperating teacher to complete and submit the survey by the date provide via email. It is the candidate's responsibility to contact the Early Childhood Education office if the cooperating teacher did not receive the initial introductory email containing course information and student evaluation link.

Candidates should express their appreciation to the cooperating teacher who welcomed them into the classroom as a professional courtesy. It is highly encouraged that candidates take the time to write a personal thank you note to the cooperating teacher as a gesture of professional appreciation.

## **PROBLEM SOLVING**

If a problem arises, candidates are expected to resolve the problem with the cooperating teacher and the course instructor. If there is a logistical concern, the candidate should contact the Director of Early Childhood Education and make an appointment to discuss the issue.

## **WITHDRAWALS**

Candidates who must withdraw from a field experience must notify the Director of Teacher Education, college instructor, and cooperating teacher (if the placement has been received).

Candidates must successfully complete field experiences before the established deadline each semester. Field experiences cannot be made up at a later time. **Failure to successfully complete a field experience will prevent a candidate from passing the course.**

## **INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

Internship is the culminating experience in the college's Early Childhood Education program, integrating the various elements of subject area and professional knowledge for application to the early childhood setting. During internship, interns synthesize and apply theoretical knowledge from previous courses in authentic, planned, professional settings.

### **GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR FIELD EXPERIENCES AND INTERNSHIP**

All students in internship must complete a total of 450 clock hours in an early childhood program during the semester. If the student is not employed in a licensed early childhood program serving children ages birth to age 4, s/he will complete the 450 clock hours of internship at the Northwest Florida State College Mary Lou O'Connor Child Development and Education Center. Any other placement assignment must be approved by the Director of Early Childhood Education. If the student is employed in an approved, licensed early childhood program serving children ages birth to age 4 (VPK), s/he may complete 375 clock hours of the internship at the place of employment. An additional placement of the remaining 75 hours must be completed at a site approved by the Director of Early Childhood Education.

#### **Arriving On the First day**

The intern should report to program at the time arranged in advance with the early childhood program. Unless otherwise instructed, the intern should report to the program office and then to the cooperating teacher. The intern should meet the program director at the earliest opportunity. Reminder: Interns will be following the program calendar, not the college calendar.

#### **Maintaining Perfect Attendance during Internship**

Interns must complete all required hours during the internship placement. If illness or an emergency should require the intern to be absent for any period of time, it is the responsibility of the intern to let the cooperating teacher and the Early Childhood Education Director know as soon as possible. Absences of three or more days must be reported to the college supervisor and/or Early Childhood Education Director. In cases of prolonged or repeated absence, the college supervisor will, after consulting with the cooperating teacher and program director, determine whether the intern's experience will be terminated.

#### **Scheduling Outside Activities**

The intern should make no plans for involvement in out-of-early childhood program activities that would interfere with teaching responsibilities in any way. If there is a pressing need for participation in any activity, it must first be cleared with the college supervisor and cooperating teacher.

### **Taking Additional Courses Concurrently with Internship**

Students eligible for internship must have completed all courses in the program of study.

### **Obtaining Accommodations for Special Needs and disabilities**

In keeping with Section 504 of the 1973 Vocational Rehabilitation Act and with The Americans with Disabilities Act, students with disabilities who have successfully completed all necessary prerequisites should consult with the Early Childhood Education Department prior to applying for internship in order to assist in securing an appropriate placement and arranging proper accommodations. The Early Childhood Education Department and the student may consult with the Office of Disability Support Services. All students must demonstrate mastery of the academic, technical, and professional standards required as appropriate to internship and the core nature and requirements of the early childhood classroom. Note that students who are unable to complete a field experience successfully will fail the course associated with the field placement; such students may therefore be ineligible for graduation from the BS-ECE program.

### **Obtaining Assistance for Temporary Conditions**

Students should inform the Director of Early Childhood Education of special health conditions (pregnancy, temporary medication, etc.) prior to the negotiation of placements for internship. This affords the program and the NWFSC Director of Early Childhood Education an opportunity to secure appropriate assignments.

## **SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

### **Engaging In Social Activities**

It is expected that interns will lead normal lives both professionally & socially. They should, in fact, seek to broaden contacts with the community through social activities open to teachers but must exercise mature judgment, tact, and discretion in all relations with students.

### **Engaging In Professional Activities**

The intern should attend and participate in professional meetings deemed appropriate by the cooperating teacher or program director. These include in-service workshops staff meetings, parent meetings, etc.

### **Cancelling an Assignment**

When cancellation of an internship assignment becomes necessary, the Director of Early Childhood Education should initiate such cancellation. Cancellation may be deemed necessary by either the college supervisor or the host program based on intern behavior, performance, or other factors affecting the safety and/or academic progress of early childhood students. Interns are not to leave their assignments without the permission of their college supervisor.

### **Repeating the Internship**

In cases where the college supervisor recommends that an intern repeat the internship experience, or any part of that experience, the college supervisor will work with the Director of Early Childhood Education to secure a new assignment during the next semester.

### **Securing Internship Assignments**

Students may not attempt to arrange their own internship assignment. Failure to observe this department policy may result in internship being delayed a full semester or failure to secure an approved placement for the intern. Inability to place an intern may affect the student's planned program completion date.

### **Passing the Internship**

The college supervisor assumes final responsibility for assigning the grade at the completion of internship; however, the cooperating teacher's evaluations are a major factor in assigning the grade. Each student teacher will receive a grade of A, B, C, D, or F in accordance with the Early Childhood Education Department grading scale. Interns must complete the internship with a grade of "C" or higher to receive credit for the internship course.

## **CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

The NWFSC Early Childhood Education Department faculty and staff hope all candidates are eager to begin their experiences in the field. Candidates will find their time in the program exciting, fascinating, and at times frustrating. Above all, candidates will find these experiences challenging on multiple levels... as a person, a professional, and as an early childhood educator. We are confident that all candidates will see their field experiences as an opportunity to learn more about themselves and the profession. The Early Childhood Education Department will assist candidates along the way.

# Fingerprinting Procedures

# Appendix One



**NORTHWEST FLORIDA  
STATE COLLEGE**

## Early Childhood Education Fingerprinting Procedures for Okaloosa and Walton Counties

All early childhood students entering the Bachelor's Program in Early Childhood Education must be fingerprinted and complete a background screening.

If you are currently employed in a DCF licensed child care program or a military child care program, you may provide a copy of your Background Clearance document to the Office Specialist, Early Childhood Education, Building Q (520), Room 140. If you do not have a copy of this document, you should request a copy from your employer.

If you are not currently employed in DCF licensed child care program or a military child care program, you will need to complete the following procedures in order to obtain the required clearance letter:

1. Call the Staff Assistant, CDEC at 729-5386 to schedule an appointment to complete the required information online to apply to be fingerprinted. Required information will include name, social security number, date of birth, race, and sex.
2. Student must take the DCF Live Scan Background Screening Submission Form along with a photo id to the live scan company to be fingerprinted.

**Horizons**  
123 Truxton Avenue  
Fort Walton Beach, FL  
M-F 8:30 am-12:30 pm, 2:00 pm-5:00 pm

3. Notify the Office Specialist, Early Childhood Education, 729-6440, when you have completed the fingerprint process.
4. Once the background clearance letter has been returned to the Director of Early Childhood Education, the student will be eligible to begin a field experience. A copy of the clearance letter will be given to the student for the student's personal records. A copy will be maintained in the student's file in the Early Childhood Education Department

**Field Placement Agreement Part I**

**Appendix  
Two**



**NORTHWEST FLORIDA  
STATE COLLEGE**

## Field Placement Agreement Part I

Early and frequent classroom experiences are an essential element of the Northwest Florida State College Early Childhood Education program. In order to meet this requirement and to be placed in area early childhood programs for observation and limited practice, including the first semester's field experience, candidates must complete both parts of the Field Service Agreement. Part II will be distributed in the appropriate class; if you have not already completed this form, Part I, as part of the advising process, you must complete it, make your own copy of the document, and immediately return the original to:

Office Specialist, Early Childhood Education  
Northwest Florida State College  
100 College Boulevard  
Niceville, FL 32578

The Office Specialist, Early Childhood Education, may be reached at 729-6440.

**Directions: Please initial beside each statement, sign and date the form, and legibly print your name.**

I understand and consent to the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ Most field experiences must be completed during normal daytime early childhood program hours, regardless of a candidate's other obligations.

\_\_\_\_\_ Placements are made only through Northwest Florida State College

\_\_\_\_\_ Failure to pass a course's field experience component will result in a candidate's failing the course.

\_\_\_\_\_ Failure to disclose any arrest, withheld adjudication or pleas of nolo contendere may result in the student's dismissal from the Early Childhood Education program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Field Placement Agreement Part II**

**Appendix  
Three**



**NORTHWEST FLORIDA  
STATE COLLEGE**

**Early Childhood Education Program**

**Field Placement Agreement Part II**

All candidates enrolled in Early Childhood Education Department courses will comply with the following rules and regulations to participate in field experiences. If this agreement is violated at any time during the candidate's field experience, the candidate may be withdrawn from the field placement. **Failure to successfully complete a field experience will prevent a candidate from passing the course.**

Directions: Complete this form, make your own copy of the document, and immediately return the original to your course instructor.

Please initial beside each statement, sign and date the form, and legibly print your name.

I understand and consent to the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ As soon as I am informed of my field experience assignment, I will make contact with my cooperating teacher to establish an initial meeting time and to work out a schedule that is acceptable to both the teacher and me. \_

\_\_\_\_\_ I will adhere to the schedule that is agreed upon and will contact the cooperating teacher and the Director of Early Childhood Education if I am unable to do so because of an emergency. \_

\_\_\_\_\_ I will remember that I am a role model for students and therefore: \_

(a) I will arrive at my field experience on time.

(b) I will present a clean, neat, and professional appearance, both in my person and in my dress

(c) I will treat all aspects of my field experience professionally

\_\_\_\_\_ I will document the field experience as required by the Director of Early Childhood Education and the course instructor.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will be responsible for appropriate and timely communication with the cooperating teacher, the Director of Early Childhood Education, and the course instructor. \_

\_\_\_\_\_ I will abide by all rules and regulations of the program in which I fulfill my field experience requirements.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will work closely with my cooperating teacher to plan and implement classroom activities. \_

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand all classroom interactions must be approved by the classroom teacher.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that failure to disclose any arrest, withheld adjudication or pleas of nolo contendere may result in my dismissal from the Early Childhood Education program. \_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Northwest Florida State College

**Student Handbook  
Acknowledgement**

**Appendix  
Four**



**NORTHWEST FLORIDA  
STATE COLLEGE**

# Student Handbook Acknowledgement

- I have read the BS-ECE Student Handbook in its entirety and understand the guidelines and procedures outlined therein.
- I understand these guidelines and procedures will apply to all BS-ECE students, and that any questions regarding the BS-ECE programs should be addressed to the chair of the Early Childhood Education Department.
- I understand that I must submit this signed, dated acknowledgement to be eligible to register for courses next semester.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
NWFSO Student ID#

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

~~~~~  
DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE