

Early Childhood Education



Specialist Candidate Handbook

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Early Childhood Education Specialist Candidate Handbook

I. Introduction

The purpose of this Early Childhood Education Ed. S. Candidate Handbook is to familiarize candidates with the purpose and goals of the Early Childhood Ed.S. Program and the requirements for successful completion of the program.

The Ed.S. program in Early Childhood Education at Columbus State University provides advanced professional and pedagogical studies that develop *expertise* in the knowledge, skills, and habits of accomplished teachers.

The Education Specialist (Ed.S.) graduate program in Early Childhood Education is carefully designed to provide candidates with advanced knowledge, skills, and dispositions of:

1. curriculum theory, models, and design appropriate for implementation in settings for young children (scholarship);
2. developmentally appropriate instructional strategies appropriate for diverse young learners, their learning styles, and their environments (teaching);
3. a self-selected area of professional interest conducive to assuming leadership roles within a school setting (scholarship & professionalism);
4. methods, techniques, and instruments appropriate for assessment of young children and their programs, facilitators, and environments (teaching);
5. problem solving resources, skills, and techniques necessary for sound decision making in early childhood environments (scholarship & professionalism);
6. contemporary theory and research in cognition, social-emotional development, and physical growth as applied to diverse young children in multicultural societies (scholarship);
7. technological resources for instruction, management, media development, and problem solving (teaching).

II. Degree Requirements 2009-2010

Area 1 Professional Core

Required Hours: 6

EDUF 7115 Psychology of Teaching

EDUF 7116 Applied Educational Research: Assessing and Monitoring Student Achievement

Area 2 Concentration

Required Hours: 12

EDEC 7126 Issues in Mathematics Education in Early Childhood

EDEC 7155 Cognitive Development in Young Children

EDEC 7899 Research in Early Childhood

Select two semester hours (7000 level or above) of advisor-approved courses in related area.

Area 3 Electives

Required Hours: 12

EDCI 6115 NBPTS Pre-candidacy: Understanding Process/Principles

EDCI 6116 NBPTS Candidacy: Preparation & Documentation

Select six semester hours (6000 level or above) in early childhood courses or approved related field studies. A minimum of 18 hours must be completed at the 7000 level.

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*To add a Reading Endorsement to your certification, the following courses must be completed with a 3.0 or greater GPA: EDRG 6118, 6245, 6148, and 6756.

Note: The following courses may be taken for a Math Endorsement: MAED 6130, MAED 5131G, MAED 5132G, MAED 5133G, EDEC 6125.

The following course or course equivalent is required if not taken at the M.Ed. Level:
EDEC 6156: Neurological, Psychological, and Physiological Dev: Conception to Age 10.

****A publication is required for this program.**

III. Course Descriptions 2009-2010

EDUF 7115. Psychology of Teaching (3-0-3) An advanced critical examination of research and theories relevant to effective teaching, including motivation, learning theories, at-risk students, classroom management, cooperative learning, self-esteem, social learning and others.

EDUF 7116. Applied Educational Research: Assessing and Monitoring Student Achievement (3-0-3) Advanced applications of qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods research with consideration of historical, descriptive, correlational, causal-comparative, and experimental studies. Emphasis on data collection and analysis to assess and monitor student achievement.

EDEC 7126. Issues in Mathematics Education in Early Childhood (3-0-3) *Prerequisite:* EDEC 6125 or its equivalent. An in-depth examination of issues to the mathematics education of young children.

EDEC 7155. Cognitive Development in Young Children (4-0-4) Constructivism, neuro-anatomical correlates of learning, and selected theories relevant to the cognitive processes of children from conception through age nine.

EDEC 7899. Research in Early Childhood (0-6-3) *Prerequisite:* Admission to the Ed.S. program. Advanced research investigation under the direction of a major professor and faculty committee.

IV. Specialist Project

The Specialist Project is a complete research project that is of publishable quality. The final project must be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal for consideration for publication. All specialist projects must meet the requirements of the Early Childhood Education Program Graduate Faculty. The purpose of this section of the handbook is to explain those requirements, to direct the candidate in following the required steps, and to help the student comply with the necessary deadlines. This project will likely take more than one semester to complete. Candidates should expect to spend 2-3 semesters completing this project.

MANUSCRIPT REQUIREMENTS

General Guidelines for Specialist Project

Your final report for EDEC 7899 should include the following:

1. **Abstract** – Provide a brief overview of the study and your findings (limit 120 words)
2. **Background** – Describe your background and experiences that led you to select this research topic. Why is this research important?
3. **Literature review** – Provide a thorough and complete review of the professional literature related to your study. Your review should reflect your knowledge of national and state standards for teaching and learning as well as current research in education.
4. **Methodology** – Describe participants in your study, the data that you collected (tasks, assessments, surveys, observations, etc.), how it was collected (methods), and when it was collected.
5. **Analysis** – Describe what occurred during the study and any patterns you observed. What did the research participants do and say? What themes emerged from your analysis of the data? What were the results of any statistical analysis that was done? (Not all of these apply to every study.)
6. **Discussion** – Provide your interpretations of the data analysis. What conclusions (if any) can you draw? What are the implications of your study for teaching and learning? What were the limitations of your study and how might those limitations affect your interpretation of the data? What additional research might need to be conducted?
7. **Appendices** – Include tasks, surveys, interview protocols, and other instruments used in the study.

Specialist Project Grading Rubric

Criteria	Needs Improvement (0-2 pts.)	Satisfactory (3-4 pts.)	Score
Abstract	Abstract is missing or does not provide adequate overview of study	Abstract provides good overview of study	
Background	No background or rationale provided for study	Description of relevant background information and experiences that provide rationale for study are included. Appropriate research question(s) included and clearly stated.	
Review of literature	Literature review is incomplete; some of the sources cited are irrelevant to the study	Literature review is thorough, complete, and relevant to the study; demonstrates knowledge of national and state standards for teaching and learning	
Methodology	Methods (participants and procedures) are unclear; best practices are not implemented by candidate in his/her classroom; surveys, interview protocols and other instruments used in study are unclear or are not provided	Methods (participants and procedures) are described in clear detail; instructional strategies used by candidate in his/her classroom represent best practices; instruments used in study are provided and are of high quality (e.g., clear and relevant questions to elicit participants' thinking)	
Analysis	Description of study is incomplete; data is not summarized; analysis is lacking or incomplete	Clear and thorough description of what occurred during study is included; data is clearly summarized; analysis shows careful study of and reflection on the data	
Discussion	No interpretation or discussion of data analysis is included; candidate does not connect findings/conclusions to his/her own teaching; no evidence of study's impact on student learning; findings and conclusions are not supported by the data	Provides clear interpretation and discussion of data analysis; implications of study for teaching and learning are discussed; data summary and analysis provide evidence of the impact on student learning; findings and conclusions are supported by the data	
Overall quality	Frequent grammatical and/or spelling errors; writing lacks clarity, does not follow APA format	Paper is of publishable quality; thoughts are clearly presented and there are very few (if any) minor grammatical or spelling errors; APA format is followed.	

A satisfactory score for each of the criteria listed above is required to earn a satisfactory grade in EDEC 7899. Work that is not satisfactory in any category will be returned for revision.

STEPS TO AN APPROVED SPECIALIST PROJECT

Identify a Topic of Interest

The specialist project is a publishable research project designed and carried out by the Ed. S. candidate under the supervision of her/his advisor. It is expected that Ed. S. candidates will develop an interest in and curiosity about particular issues related to early childhood education over the course of their studies, which will lead to appropriate research topics. This interest and curiosity should be discussed with the advisor to explore the possibilities for research. Once the candidate, in consultation with her/his advisor, has decided upon a topic for the specialist project, she/he must submit *Form A* to the advisor for formal approval. A copy of *Form A*, approved by the advisor, will be returned to the candidate and a copy should be filed with the Early Childhood Program Coordinator. At this time, the student will be eligible to register for EDEC 7899 and begin work on a formal proposal for the research.

Complete a Proposal

The formal proposal consists of the following components: background and statement of the problem, a literature review, research question(s), and a detailed description of the participants and method(s) that will be used to investigate the issue and answer the question. **All components of the proposal must be submitted and approved by the advisor prior to proceeding with the project.** Once the proposal is approved, the candidate must submit *Form B* to the advisor. A copy of *Form B*, approved by the advisor, should be filed with the Early Childhood Program Coordinator. At this time, the candidate should submit the CSU *Human Research Proposal* documents to the advisor for approval. In many cases, it is necessary to prepare a letter of informed consent to present to the review committee (See Informed Consent). The advisor will determine when the *Human Research Proposal* is ready to be submitted to the Human Subjects Review Committee. Upon approval by the committee, a copy of the approved *Human Research Proposal* should be filed with the Early Childhood Program Coordinator.

Get Necessary Approvals

Approval from the school district in which the research will be conducted must be obtained after approval from the Human Subjects Review Committee is granted. Requirements vary for each school district. It is the candidate's responsibility to find out the requirements for his/her school district. This handbook contains information regarding the requirements for Muscogee County School District. Upon receiving permission from the school district, a copy of the letter granting permission must be filed with the Early Childhood Program Coordinator. At this time, the candidate may, under the direction of her/his advisor, begin collecting data as outlined in the proposal. ***No data may be collected for the project prior to filing the necessary approvals with the advisor and the program coordinator.***

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Complete Research

The candidate is responsible for collecting and analyzing data, under the direction of the advisor, and completing the data analysis, discussion, and implications sections of the paper. The candidate must submit the completed paper to her/his advisor for approval. Any changes required by the advisor must be made. The *Candidate Responsibilities* section of this handbook outlines additional responsibilities of the candidate in preparing the final paper for approval. Once the final paper has been approved, the candidate must submit *Form C*, approved by the advisor, to the Early Childhood Program Coordinator.

Candidates who expect to graduate must apply for graduation through the Registrar's Office no later than the last day of the semester prior to the semester of graduation. This deadline is important and exceptions are seldom permitted. Failure to meet the deadline will result in postponement of graduation.

FORM A

ED.S. RESEARCH TOPIC FORM (FORM A)

This form is to be completed by the Ed.S. candidate. Submit this form to your Specialist Project advisor after developing a research topic in consultation with your advisor. This form must be submitted and approved by the advisor prior to registering for EDEC 7899. If not completed satisfactorily, submitted, and approved, the candidate will be expected to withdraw from EDEC 7899 and reschedule the course at a later date. A completed copy of this form is to be filed with the Early Childhood Program Coordinator.

Department:		Program:		
Last Name:		First:		MI:
Address:				
City:	State:	Zip:	Email Address:	
CSU ID:		Daytime Phone:		Cell Phone:

Proposed Title of Research Project:

Brief Description of Research Project:

Advisor

Date

Candidate

Date

FORM B

ED.S. RESEARCH PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM (FORM B)

This form must be completed, signed, and submitted to the advisor for approval. An advisor approved copy must be submitted to the Early Childhood Program Coordinator before submitting the Human Subjects proposal to the Human Subjects Review Committee.

Department:		Program:	
Last Name:		First:	MI:
CSU ID:		Email Address:	

Title of Research Project:

Brief Description of Research, including research question(s) and methods:

In signing we confirm our approval of the research topic, project description and research design, as outlined in the candidate's proposal.

Ed.S. Advisor

Date

Candidate

Date

FORM C

ED.S. FINAL APPROVAL FORM (FORM C)

This form is to be completed by the candidate and Ed.S. advisor. Submit this form along with your completed research project for final approval once all advisor-requested changes have been made. The advisor's signature on this form indicates approval of the Specialist Project as submitted. A copy of this form, signed by the advisor, must be submitted to the Early Childhood Program Coordinator.

Department:		Program:		
Last Name:		First:		MI:
Address:				
City:	State:	Zip:	Email Address:	
CSU ID:		Daytime Phone:		Home Phone:

Title of Research Project:

In signing we confirm our approval of the of the candidate's Specialist Project as complete and meeting all requirements

Ed.S. Advisor

Date

Candidate

Date

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Candidate

The candidate works under the guidance of a faculty advisor. **However, the obligations of research, accuracy, writing, and quality rest with the candidate.**

The candidate's minimum responsibilities include:

1. Thorough and original research and analysis.
2. Organizing and presenting well-written material accurately and usefully in clear and standard English.
3. Following correct form in quotations, citations, references, and illustrative materials using APA style and format. See *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (latest edition).
4. Presenting a manuscript meeting the requirements of the program.
5. Making all improvements and/or corrections suggested by the advisor.
6. Checking final copy for errors.
7. Seeing that all steps toward final approval are taken on time, including the filing of the necessary forms as outlined in this guide.
8. Insuring that the work is entirely the candidate's own except where reference is made to the work of others.
9. Ensuring that the work does not include proprietary or classified information.

The candidate should not use a previously approved project as a model because requirements may have changed since its approval, leading the candidate to incorrect work that will have to be redone.

The Faculty Advisor

The faculty advisor will guide the candidate on research, analysis, writing, and other scholarly aspects of the work. Submission of a specialist project is defined as the time at which the first complete draft of such is submitted to the faculty advisor for review. The faculty advisor will read the manuscript critically and may suggest improvements and refuse approval pending additional work. When the faculty advisor signs the Approval Page, she/he certifies that the project is clear and accurate, that it represents an original and worthwhile contribution, that the suggestions made by her/him are incorporated into the final work, and that the work conforms to the standards of the Columbus State University Early Childhood Program.

No faculty member will sign approval of a project until it is of foremost quality and meets all requirements.

Columbus State University Human Subjects Review Policy

Available online at

(http://cougarnet.colstate.edu/cp/render.UserLayoutRootNode.uP?uP_tparam=utf&utf=http%3A%2F%2Ffaculty.colstate.edu%2Fpolicy.asp)

122 Research Involving Humans

122.1 Committee

The Human Subjects Review Committee or sub-committee thereof, shall serve as the screening, reviewing and recommending body for all research proposals and projects which involve human subjects (**Appendix III**).

122.2 Policy

Safeguarding the personal integrity, rights and welfare of all human subjects involved in research undertakings at Columbus State University shall be of primary importance. In order to provide for this responsibility, it shall be the policy of Columbus State University that all research endeavors involving human subjects shall be described in writing to the Human Subjects Review Committee, in advance of beginning such research. The Human Subjects Review Committee shall review the proposal and shall recommend approval, modification, or rejection of the project. The Human Subjects Review Committee may impose the requirement of the subject's informed consent before recommending approval of the project.

122.3 Applicability

The policy applies to any and all research endeavors which may place the human subject at risk. This policy applies (but is not limited) to those experiments known as "double blind," and to those endeavors using experimental stimuli as: electrical stimulus, sensory deprivation, and hypnosis, when such conditions are deliberately generated and deliberately applied for experimental purposes. Moreover, data obtained from such experimentation shall not be divulged or otherwise made visible unless proper informed consent has been obtained.

122.4 Subject

This term describes any student, faculty, staff, employee, or volunteer who is used in any research of a psychological, biological, sociological, medical, or educational nature. This term applies equally to persons who have either unrestricted civil freedom or restricted civil freedom (prisoners, patients, etc.).

122.5 "At Risk"

An individual is considered to be "at risk" if he or she may be exposed to the possibility of harm--physical, psychological, sociological, or other--as a consequence of any activity which a reasonable person would judge as going beyond the application of those established and accepted methods necessary to meet his needs. The determination of when an individual is at risk is a matter of the application of common sense and sound professional judgment to the circumstances of the activity in question.

122.6 "Informed Consent"

Informed consent assumes that the subject individual has been fully informed and indicates understanding of the nature of experimental techniques to be applied, studied, or manipulated. It additionally assumes that the subject is capable of understanding at the short- and long-range levels the normally expected risks and hazards (if any) and gives consent freely, especially where Columbus State University students are involved, without pressure of threat to academic grades.

122.7 Stored and Retrieved Data

This policy requires that data and information about individuals obtained during scientific/scholarly research and experimentation will be protected against compromise and/or unauthorized visibility and that such data will be removed to the "objective" category at the earliest possible time--that is, the names and other identities of the human subjects will be removed from the data and destroyed and all "keys" for such re-identification will be likewise rendered useless.

122.8 Publication of Research Findings

All authors and researchers will be obliged to adhere to the rules as outlined in this document of confidentiality, ethics, and consideration of the individual's personal welfare in any subsequent publication of research findings.

122.9 Interpretation

Questions and disputes arising from the implementation of this policy which the Human Subjects Review Committee cannot resolve shall be settled by the VPAA or such other authority as the president of Columbus State University may designate.

Human Subjects Review Committee Form

(Available online at

http://cougarnet.colstate.edu/cp/render.UserLayoutRootNode.uP?uP_tparam=utf&utf=http%3A%2F%2Ffaculty.colstate.edu%2Fpolicy.asp)

Human Research Proposal to the Human Subjects Review Committee

Instructions-- Please choose either option: 1. submit eight copies of this form and all supplementary materials to the committee Chair (Currently, Dr. David Schwimmer, Dep't of Chemistry & Geology, 111 LeNoir); -or- 2. submit this form via email, with all supplementary materials as attachments, to the Committee Chair (schwimmer_david@colstate.edu).

Name:

Date:

Class and /Instructor
(if student):

Project Title:

Problem/Purpose/Nature of the Project:

Subject(s) (Include recruitment procedures):

Methodology/Procedures:

Additional Considerations:

Action

Approved Denied

Instructor Comments:

Approved Denied

Dept. Chair Comments:

Approved Denied

*Human Subjects Review Committee Comments:

*Approval must also be secured from other agencies and/or institutions, when such subjects are to be used.

Muscogee County School District Research Guidelines (Available online at http://www.mcsdga.net/inside/adm/research/request_research.htm)

Anyone wishing to conduct research or collect data for the purpose of research must apply and obtain approval from the MCSD Superintendent. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Students of the Muscogee County School District
- Students from other systems
- Undergraduate and graduate students
- MCSD teachers and administrators
- Teachers and administrators from other systems
- College and university professors

Anyone wishing to conduct independent research should apply for approval. Once the request is received, it will be reviewed by the **Department of Research, Accountability, and Assessment (RAA)**, and a recommendation will be made to the Superintendent to accept or reject the research project. The Superintendent's decision is final. Once a decision has been made by the Superintendent, the applicant will be notified. Any data collection that takes place in a school must also be approved by the principal.

When submitting your application to RAA, please attach the following:

- Letter requesting approval to collect data in the Muscogee County School District
- Copy of surveys and/or interview prompts
Consent forms for parents and assent forms for students - all students must have a signed consent form signed by the parent before data collection can begin
- Statement in the consent form that participation is voluntary and there will be no consequences if they decide not to participate or if they withdraw during the course of the study
- Copy of the completed IRB form
- Letter from the major professor stating that he/she has read the proposal, and it is in final form and the advisor approves it
- Letter from the building administrator (principal) stating that he/she has read the proposal, surveys, and consent forms and approves and will support the project if it is approved by the Superintendent
- Form from the website
- Complete proposal including the hypotheses/questions, literature review, methodology, time frame, and plan for analysis

All aspects of the research project must be completed when researcher and respondents are not on contract or instructional time. Materials may not be distributed by school system personnel including, but not limited to, pony mail personnel, principals, teachers, paraprofessionals, secretaries. When the final submission is made, please allow three weeks for all documents to be read and evaluated.

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Projects using data that are in the public record are exempt from this process. For example, test scores that are posted on the Internet may be used for the purpose of research without obtaining approval. However, individual scores that are maintained by MCSD are not exempt from this process.

Research applicants should also be aware of the following:

- There are laws that protect the privacy of students and their grades.
- Sensitive topics such as use of drugs, sexual activity, or sexual preference are less likely to be approved.
- Respondents are to be advised that their participation is voluntary.
- Research infringing on instructional time will generally not be approved.
- Research in a school to which the researcher is not assigned is not likely to be approved.

Requests should be sent to
Dr. Carol Bradshaw
Post Office Box 2427
Columbus, GA 31902
or cbradshaw@mcsdga.net

Muscogee County School District Permission Form for Independent Research

(Available online at http://www.mcsdga.net/inside/adm/research/request_research.htm)

Permission to Conduct Independent Research, Collect Data, Administer Tests, or Administer Other Survey Type Instruments in the Muscogee County School District

Name of Primary Researcher _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Contact Number _____ Alternate _____

Email Address _____

Secondary/Other Researcher _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Contact Number _____ Alternate _____

Email Address _____

MCSD Employee Yes _____ No _____

School _____ Position _____

Is the research for undergraduate/graduate course credit? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please provide name of the institution, area of study, course title, and name of the instructor.

Institution _____

Area of Study _____

Course Title _____ Instructor _____

Instructor Contact Number _____

Beginning Date for Study _____ End Date _____

Number of Subjects _____

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Purpose of the Study_____

Problem Under Investigation_____

Hypothesis/Research Question_____

Specify the data requested. Please indicate name of test(s), school(s), year(s) and grade(s)_____

Give a brief description of statistical treatment (plan for analyzing the data) of data._____

Please carefully read the statements below. By signing this form, you are acknowledging that you have read, understand and agree with the terms of the research request. Once all of the necessary documents have been received and reviewed by Research, Accountability, and Assessment (RAA), the request will be recommended for or not recommended for approval by the MCSD Superintendent. The MCSD Superintendent has the right to disapprove a request even if recommended for approval by this office.

- Professional Ethics will be observed in all aspects of the research including data collection, confidentiality of participants' identities, and reporting.
- The school system, school(s), students, or other personnel cannot be identified by name.
- The researcher(s) have read the Policy for Release of Student Records as adopted by the Muscogee County School District and located in the Board of Education Policy Manual.
- The researcher(s) agree(s) that a file copy of the research paper will be submitted to RAA for professional and legal purposes before it is released to anyone else.
- If the researcher(s) proposes to administer an instrument, a copy must be submitted with the request.
- If this is a school project, attach a letter from the teacher who will be supervising the research.
- If required, please attach form from Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects.

Signature_____ Date_____

Signature_____ Date_____

Informed Consent

The following information must be conveyed to each subject/parent or guardian (if under age 18):

Informed consent is a statement that the study involves research, an explanation of the purposes of the research and the expected duration of the subject's participation, a description of the procedures to be followed, and identification of any procedures which are experimental;

1. a description of any reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts to the subject;
2. a description of any benefits to the subject or to others which may reasonably be expected from the research;
3. a disclosure of appropriate alternative procedures or courses of treatment, if any, that might be advantageous to the subject;
4. a statement describing the extent, if any, to which confidentiality of records identifying the subject will be maintained;
5. for research involving more than minimal risk, an explanation as to whether any compensation and an explanation as to whether any medical treatments are available if injury occurs and, if so, what they consist of, or where further information may be obtained;
6. an explanation of whom to contact for answers to pertinent questions about the research and research subjects' rights, and whom to contact in the event of a research-related injury to the subject; and
7. a statement that participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled, and the subject may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled.

Sample Informed Consent

Parental Consent Form for Participation in Research

I give my consent for my child _____ to participate in the research titled, " _____ ", which is being conducted by _____, Early Childhood Education Department, Columbus State University. I understand that this participation is entirely voluntary; I or my child can withdraw consent at any time without penalty and have the results of the participation, to the extent that it can be identified as my child's, returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

1. The reason for the research is _____.
2. The benefit that my child may expect from the research is _____.
3. The procedures are as follows:
4. No discomforts or stresses are foreseen.
5. No risks are foreseen. My child's participation is voluntary.
6. The results of this participation will be confidential, and will not be released in any individually identifiable form.
7. The researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project.

Please sign both copies of this form. Keep one and return the other to your child's classroom teacher.

Signature of Researcher

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Research at Columbus State University that involves human participants is overseen by the Human Subjects Review Board.