



NORTHWEST FLORIDA
STATE COLLEGE

**Bachelor of Science in
Early Childhood Education**

STUDENT
HANDBOOK

2019 - 2020

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**Bachelor of Science in
Early Childhood Education**
Student Handbook
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and Nondiscrimination**

Northwest Florida State College is dedicated to the concepts of equity and equal opportunity. It is the specific intention of the college not to discriminate on the basis of age, color, ethnicity, disability, marital status, national origin, race, pregnancy, religion, genetic information, or gender, in its employment practices or in the admission and treatment of students in its programs or activities.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. ss1681) is an all-encompassing federal law that prohibits discrimination based on the sex of students, employees, and third parties when appropriate, of educational institutions which receive federal financial assistance. Sexual harassment of students, which includes acts of sexual violence, is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title

IX. Northwest Florida State College complies with all aspects of this and other federal and state laws regarding non-discrimination.

Anyone with questions about compliance or a complaint regarding harassment or discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence of Title IX, should contact the College's Equity Coordinator using the following contact information:

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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 catalog is available online at <http://catalog.nwfsc.edu/>.

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, Associate 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 prerequisite, EDF 1005A.
- 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 six credits in college, the student will need to complete six credits of foreign language before completing the program.)
- Agreement to submit to 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 any background checks required by the early learning center used for field experiences and transportation to complete field experiences.

Financial Assistance

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

Scholarships

Students may also apply for scholarships through the Northwest Florida State College Foundation at <https://www.nwfsc.edu/students/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 Study 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.

Students are expected to dress professionally during the field experience. Failure to do so will be reflected in the assignments for which there is a field experience.

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 <https://www.nwfsc.edu/students/campus-services/free-tutoring/> or visit the Academic Success Center on the Niceville Campus.

Smarthinking is an online real time tutorial service available to all NWFSC students. Assistance with papers can be obtained online as well as questions that come up when studying or writing. 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 Accomodation Resource Center on the Niceville Campus or call (850)729-6079/729-6014. 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 are allowed to repeat two different courses before mandatory withdrawal from the Early Childhood Education major.
3. Students may repeat the internship only once.
4. Students earning a grade below a "C" at the midpoint of the semester should contact their professor immediately for an appointment.
5. 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:

- Adherence to the program admission/eligibility requirements
- Overall academic record
- Cumulative GPA at time of program departure
- Semester GPA at the time of departure
- Previous pattern of student progression within the program
- Program enrollment (course and program capacity)
- Availability of field placement
- Previous field experience performance
- 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 Teacher 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 course sequence is 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 Teacher 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) 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	D	70-74
B.....	85-94	F	69 or below
C.....	75-84		

Students are evaluated based upon:

- Mastery of the course objectives, skills and competencies.
- Field experience performance in courses with field placements.

Individual Success Plan (ISP)

Students may be assigned an Individual Success Plan, or ISP, (*See Appendix Three*) to provide mentoring guidance and/ or reinforcement in areas of academic or professional dispositional concern. An ISP is first used as an intervention to identify failing areas and strategies for improvement through objectives, goals, artifacts and timelines. For students who do not make adequate improvement by the end of a course, the ISP will call for the student to repeat the course, and the student will receive a D or F in the course and have the opportunity to repeat it. In some cases, the course ISP may require completion of extra student work, and the course grade will not be awarded until completion of the ISP; until that point, the grade received is an Incomplete. Grades of Incomplete may impede a student's ability to progress in the BS-ECE program. If the ISP is not completed within the specified time, not to exceed the end of the next sixteen-week semester, the Incomplete automatically becomes a grade of F. The nature of the ISP is the prerogative of the instructor and/or Director of Teacher Education. If multiple ISPs are generated, the student's progression in the program may be reviewed by the NWFSC BS-ECE Professional Standards Committee.

Academic Issues

Students experiencing academic difficulties will meet with the faculty member or department Director to create an ISP to address deficiencies and remediate identified weaknesses. Examples of such weaknesses may include but are not limited to the following:

- Failure to demonstrate mastery of standards in a field placement
- Failure to pass a class because of late assignments, absences, unsatisfactory work, low test scores, etc.

Professional Dispositional Issues

Students displaying behaviors incompatible with the early childhood profession will meet with the faculty member or department Director to create an ISP to address deficiencies and remediate identified concerns, such as:

- Inappropriate or unprofessional interactions with teachers and staff, administrators or children in the early childhood field experience setting, includes lack of cooperation and collaboration.
- Unfair or discriminating treatment of children.
- Failure to demonstrate a belief that all children can learn.
- Failure to uphold the NAEYC Code of Ethical conduct for early childhood professionals working with young children.

ISP Strategies

ISP strategies may include, but are not limited to, the following, at the discretion of the instructor and/or department Director:

- Resubmission of Assignment. Repeat course.
- Faculty mentoring.
- Documented use of Academic Success Center resources. Written paper or project.
- Research and written reflection on alternative, positive behaviors.
- Career assessment administered through the NWFSC Career Center to determine potential alternate career paths.

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 readmission 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:

- Falsification of records or reports
- Academic dishonesty
- Harming or putting in the way of harm a student
- Violation of student and/or program confidential information
- Violation of field experience site policies or procedures, including confidentiality and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Violation of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.
- 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:

- Director of Teacher Education
- 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 of Teaching and Learning 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 Teacher Education Office. 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 BS ECE program is an online program. Attendance in the online classroom is necessary to a student's ability to achieve the objectives of the course. Regular attendance is also an indication of professional behavior. BS ECE students are expected to check into each online classroom minimally one day a week. Remember that online course access is time and date stamped, providing a record of course "attendance."

Class Courtesy

Professional behavior is an expectation of all students present in the 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 online class discussions. Students who demonstrate unprofessional behavior online or in a field experience will be notified by the course instructor and may be required to meet via web or phone conferencing.

Students attending online course sections that include chats or other video conferencing meetings should ensure that these meetings are free from distractions to include children and other people, pets, televisions, cell phones and other potential disruptions. Wearing computer headphones is a good way to minimize outside noises to others in meetings.

When attending online chats or videoconferencing sessions students should be present the entire session unless arrangements have been made with the instructor in advance of the session. Students should be focused on the session and not engaged in other activities.

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 via *Smarthinking*, which can be accessed under “NWFSC Resources” in the online classrooms. Credit for late or otherwise deficient papers/written assignments will be reduced/adjusted according to the policies of the individual instructor.

Computer Access

BS-ECE courses are offered online utilizing the Blackboard learning platform. Students will need to access assignments, discussions, chats and other activities by logging into their Blackboard course sites and thus must have access to a computer. Students are expected to log into their courses once a week minimally and should plan to do so more often for optimal understanding and timely completion of all course activities. Additionally, students should be proficient in word processing, e-mail and research literature searches. 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. Departmental communications are sent via email and only to student NWFSC email accounts. 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 the Student tab in the Northwest Florida State College’s RaiderNet.

Electronic Academic Records

Northwest Florida State College's Raidernet gives students access to their NWFSC records. Students may also access records and unofficial transcripts through Florida's Virtual Campus at 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 field experience 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 children ages birth – 4 years 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 Education 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 <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7674/urlt/0064538-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.

Supervising Teacher – The birth -age four years cooperating teacher is responsible for assisting in the professional 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 BS-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 on:

- Mental health counseling for domestic violence
- Sexual assault
- AIDS
- Victim advocate
- Substance abuse
- Pregnancy
- Referral services

Background Screening

All candidates entering the Bachelor's Program in Early Childhood Education must complete any background and/or fingerprint screening procedures required of the early learning center where field experiences will take place. All candidates must provide proof of successful screening prior to field experience placement (*See Appendix One*).

Field Experience Placement Process

Candidates are responsible for arranging their own field experience placements. The candidate is responsible for arranging his/her own transportation to and from the designated early childhood program. 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 for a diversity of experiences.

The Early Childhood Education Placement Coordinator will have final approval of all field placement sites.

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:

- Required background and security clearances form (*See Appendix One*)
- Field Placement Agreement (*See Appendix Two*)
- Student Handbook Acknowledgment (*See Appendix Six*)

All forms should be completed and turned in to the Teacher Education Office.

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.

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 days they have made arrangements to attend.

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 supervising teacher or director 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 program, 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.

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 online course sites. 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 may prevent a candidate from passing the course.*

Remember That the Supervising Teacher Is in Charge

It is important that candidates remember the supervising teacher is responsible for all activities in the classroom. Candidates must ask for permission from the supervising 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 supervising 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 supervising teacher. The supervising 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 supervising 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 supervising 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 supervising teacher, course instructor and the Director of Teacher Education. These individuals will then assist candidates in the next appropriate step.

End the Experience Positively

On the final visit, candidates should ask the supervising teacher if he/she has received the email containing the student evaluation survey. They should encourage the supervising 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 supervising teacher did not receive the initial introductory email containing course information and student evaluation link.

Candidates should express their appreciation to the supervising 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 supervising teacher as a gesture of professional appreciation.

Problem Solving

If a problem arises, candidates are expected to resolve the problem with the supervising 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 Teacher Education, college instructor and cooperating teacher (if the placement has been received).

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

EEC 4940, Internship in Early Childhood Education, requires a placement of 450 hours in an early childhood setting that serves children ages birth to 4 years. To get a diverse experience the 450-hour internship is completed as follows: (a) 375 hours, which may be completed in the intern's place of employment and (b) 75 hours, which must be completed in an early childhood setting that is different from (a).

Interns are responsible for securing their 375-hour and 75-hour placements; however, the placements must also be approved by the NWFSC Teacher Education Office. Interns should submit along with this placement form, a copy of the background/fingerprint screening required by the early childhood setting and wait for approval before beginning internship hours. Any hours completed prior to approval by the Teacher Education Office will not be accepted.

Video Requirements for Observations

The Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood Education is a fully online program. The observations during the internship require the student to be videoed during teaching and to submit the observation videos to the internship course instructor. The student intern is responsible for obtaining permission to video at the internship site. If this permission is denied, the student may (1) seek to complete the internship at another site or (2) be observed by a qualified observer approved by the NWFSC Director of Teacher Education.

Alternate Procedure for Internship Observations--

The following steps for receiving approval for the alternate procedure for internship observations are:

1. Complete the Request for Approval (*See Appendix Four*).
2. Identify an individual who will commit to conduct four observations, and who meets the following qualifications:
 - Four year college degree or higher with at least 12 college credit hours in early childhood education/child growth and development (transcript required) AND

- Three years of experience in an early childhood education setting, serving children ages birth through four (resume required) AND
 - Completion of statement of understanding by the observer (*See Appendix Five*).
3. A fee for these services is the responsibility of the student intern. A typical fee for this service is in the range of \$50.00 to \$100.00 per observation. The student intern will need to negotiate this with the observer.

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 supervising teacher. The intern should meet the program director at the earliest opportunity. Reminder: *Interns will be following the program calendar, not the college calendar.*

Completing Required Hours During Internship

Interns must complete all required hours during the internship placement. If illness, emergency or other circumstances prevent the intern from completing the required hours, it is the responsibility of the intern to let the supervising teacher and the college supervisor know as soon as possible to determine whether or not successful completion is possible. Prolonged or repeated absence will jeopardize the intern's ability to complete his/her hours and pass the internship course.

Taking Additional Courses Concurrently with Internship

Students are eligible for internship if they have completed all BS Early Childhood program courses, or have no more than 3-credits remaining to complete.

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 Teacher Education Department prior to applying for internship in order to assist in securing an appropriate placement and arranging proper accommodations. The Teacher 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 Teacher Education of special health conditions (pregnancy, temporary medication, etc.) prior to the negotiation of placements for internship. This affords the program and the NWFSC Early Childhood Education Placement Coordinator 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, parents, teachers and staff.

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.

Canceling an Assignment

When cancellation of an internship assignment becomes necessary, the Early Childhood Education Placement Coordinator 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 Early Childhood Education Placement Coordinator to secure a new assignment during the next semester.

Securing Internship Assignments

Students must have all internship assignments approved by the Teacher Education Office. 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 supervising teacher's evaluations are a consideration 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 Teacher 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, professional and 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 Teacher Education Department will assist candidates along the way.

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**APPENDIX
ONE**

Background Screening Procedures

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
Background Screening Requirement

Requirement:

All BS-ECE candidates are required to complete a background screening clearance for the center in which they will complete field experiences. For background screening, candidates should check with center where field experiences will take place on its specific requirements. Candidates may submit a copy of the background screening clearance from their current employer if currently employed in an Early Childhood facility. A copy must be on file, in the Teacher Education office, at the time of admission. Students may contact the Teacher Education Office Specialist at (850)729-6440 to arrange sending the form.

Please check one below and provide the information under the checked item:

I am currently employed in an Early Childhood center.

Name of employer: _____

Employer phone number: _____

Name of director or supervisor: _____

Director or supervisor email address: _____

I am not employed in an Early Childhood center. I have arranged to complete my field experience at the Early Childhood center below.

Name of early childhood center: _____

Phone number of early childhood center: _____

Name of center director: _____

Center director email address: _____

Student Acknowledgment of Background Clearance Screening Requirement:

I understand that in addition to submitting this form I must also submit to the Teacher Education Office, a copy of my background screening/clearance required by the center. I further understand that I may not begin any field placement activities until the clearance has been submitted and approval has been granted by the Teacher Education Office.

Candidate printed name Date Candidate signature

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**APPENDIX
TWO**

Field Placement Agreement

FIELD PLACEMENT AGREEMENT

Early childhood center 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, candidates must complete the Field Placement Agreement. 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. If you have not already completed this form, as part of the advising process, you must complete it, make your own copy of the document, and immediately return the original to the Teacher Education Office

The Office Specialist for Teacher 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:

___ Placements must be approved first through the Teacher Education Office.

___ I will remember that as a candidate I represent the college and the BS-ECE program, therefore:

- I will arrive at my field experience on time.
- I will present a clean, neat, and professional appearance, both in my person and in my dress
- I will treat all aspects of my field experience professionally

___ I will document the field experience as required by the course instructor.

___ I will be responsible for appropriate and timely communication with the supervising 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 understand any 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 printed name Date Candidate signature

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**APPENDIX
THREE**

**Student Individual Success Plan
(ISP)**

**BS EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
INDIVIDUAL SUCCESS PLAN**

Student Name: _____ Student ID: _____

ISP Faculty: _____ Date plan initiated: _____

Course Number and Title: _____ Course Grade () _____

Course Term Necessity for ISP: _____

Failing to complete course successfully because Assignments are deficient:
(Describe assignments and reason for not passing)

Failed to complete course successfully because Field Experience is deficient:
(Describe deficiency)

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Faculty/Mentor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Specific ISP Goals (to be completed by ISP faculty mentor at initial ISP meeting with student):

Learning Objectives _____

Learning Strategies _____

Required artifacts/ assignments to demonstrate Mastery _____

Timeline: _____

Due date of artifacts/assignments for learning objective: _____

Faculty Signature _____
(indicating successful completion of artifacts/assignments)

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**APPENDIX
FOUR**

**Request for Approval for an Alternate
Procedure for Internship Observations**

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL FOR AN ALTERNATE PROCEDURE FOR INTERNSHIP OBSERVATIONS

Date MM / DD / YYYY

Student Name

Student ID#

Student Email

Phone

I have not been granted permission to be videoed in the classroom where I will complete the 375 hour portion of the internship for the Bachelor of Science, Early Childhood Education. I am requesting approval to be observed by an early childhood professional for the 4 required observations for EEC 4940. I understand that it is my responsibility to identify a person who meets the required qualifications and has agreed to complete the 4 observations.

Observer

Mailing Address

Email Address

Phone

The observer meets the following qualifications:

_____ Four year college degree or higher with at least 12 college credit hours in early childhood education

_____ Three years of experience in an early childhood education setting serving children ages birth through four

_____ My relationship with the observer must not include any of the following:

- immediate relative (mother, father, sibling, spouse, son, daughter)
- current direct supervisor
- co-worker in the same classroom

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**APPENDIX
FIVE**

**Statement of Understanding:
Alternate Procedure for Internship Observations**

**STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING:
ALTERNATE PROCEDURE
FOR INTERNSHIP OBSERVATIONS**

Observer

Mailing Address

Email Address

Phone

I have agreed to serve as observer of _____ for the 4 required observations for the internship (EEC4940) for the Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education. I will complete the field experience observation form following the instructions provided for each observation, email the observation to the internship professor, and will be available to discuss the observations with the professor of the internship as needed.

I understand the following (please initial each one):

_____ The agreement for the required time commitment and exchange of payment exists between the student and the observer only. The observer is not contracted by NWFSC.

_____ I must have a Bachelor degree or higher with at least 12 college credit hours in early childhood education. An official transcript must be provided to the Department of Teacher Education.

_____ I must have three years of experience in an early childhood education setting serving children ages birth through four. A resume documenting experience with contact information must be provided to the Department of Teacher Education.

_____ My relationship with the observer must not include any of the following:

- immediate relative (mother, father, sibling, spouse, son, daughter)
- current direct supervisor
- co-worker in the same classroom

Mail official transcript and resume to: Director of Teacher Education, NWFSC, 100 College Boulevard E, Niceville, FL 32578.

Signature of Observer

Date

MM / DD / YYYY

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APPENDIX
SIX

Student Handbook
Acknowledgement

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 BSE-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.

Printed Name

Signature

NWFSC Student ID#

Date MM / DD / YYYY

~~~~~  
DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE