



# STUDENT HANDBOOK

Early Childhood  
Education Program

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## **JMU Professional Education Unit Conceptual Framework**

### **What is conceptual framework?**

A conceptual framework is a guiding set of principles, beliefs and concepts that provide the basis for designing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and changing programs that prepare teachers and other educational professionals.

It is based on a foundation of philosophies, research and outcomes that JMU professional community is committed to and is aligned with state and national standards.

### **What is JMU's conceptual framework?**

JMU's mission is to produce effective educational professionals in a diverse and changing society.

In order to do this faculty, candidates and school personnel believe that:

- Professional education must be responsive to changes in society and schools
- All children deserve opportunities for learning success
- Learning to be an educational professional is a lifelong task
- Professional education must be collaboratively planned, delivered and evaluated
- Candidates and faculty must be self-reflective about their impact on learners
- Candidates must have the opportunity to practice, reflect on and receive feedback through developmental field experiences
- There are certain dispositions, knowledge and skills that candidates must demonstrate in order to be successful
- Candidates and faculty must be evaluated based on their performance

### **What should JMU educational professionals be able to do?**

Based upon these beliefs there are eleven core competencies that describe the knowledge, skills and dispositions that all professionals should possess. Each licensure program has defined specific outcomes related to each competency.

1. The education professional demonstrates personal qualities and dispositions that reflect effective development as a professional educator.
2. The education professional understands the structure, skills, core concepts, and methods of inquiry of the discipline(s) taught or practices, is convinced of the worth of the discipline or subject, and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful to students.
3. The educational professional understands the latest research on how children learn and develop and how culture influences human development. The educational professional applies this understanding by providing, supporting, and encouraging learning opportunities that support intellectual, social and personal development.
4. The educational professional understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.
5. The educational professional plans, supports, and encourages instruction as well as other educationally-related activities and programs that are based on numerous variables including research-based best practices, knowledge of subject matter, the nature of the learners, students' learning strategies, the goals of the curriculum and the community.
6. The educational professional uses an extensive repertoire of instructional strategies, including the utilization of a wide variety of educational technology and media, to develop students' critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
7. The educational professional uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages personal growth, positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

8. The educational professional uses knowledge of effective verbal, non-verbal and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration and supportive interaction in the classroom.
9. The educational professional uses a variety of assessment techniques, both formal and informal, for varying purposes.
10. The educational professional is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of educational choices and actions, and uses that understanding to adjust teaching, seek support, develop professionally, and improve educational practice based on such reflection.
11. The educational professional fosters relationships with colleagues, families, and communities to support students' learning and well-being.

## ECED Program Goals

- I. Candidates possess and apply knowledge of child development
  - A. Creates learning opportunities that focus on process and child-generated products.
  - B. Selects content and teaching strategies that are age appropriate.
  - C. Sequences knowledge and skills in an age-appropriate manner.
  - D. Systematically observes documents and interprets a child's actions using a child development frame of reference.
  - E. Demonstrates the belief that all children can learn.
  
- II. Candidates help children to acquire, develop and maintain appropriate self-control
  - A. Takes appropriate initiative to intervene or interact when needed
  - B. Assists children in resolving conflicts by reflecting their feelings and encouraging them to suggest solutions
  - C. States expectations in a positive way
  - D. Models appropriate ways of identifying and resolving problems
  - E. Establishes classroom rules and procedures that help children feel and be safe
  
- III. Candidates use knowledge of the teaching/learning process to plan and implement meaningful curriculum.
  - A. Provides first-hand experiences, real objects and interactions with people to lay a foundation for children to move toward a more complex way of learning
  - B. Facilitates learning that moves from concrete to abstract, through levels of representation
  - C. Utilizes print and non-print materials that provide children with additional information and social labels
  - D. Provides a variety of means for children to express their understanding (teacher-directed and child-initiated)
  - E. Utilizes children's demonstration of understanding to inform subsequent instruction
  - F. Uses multiple curriculum goals, including national, state and district standards in preparing long and short-term instructional plans
  - G. Formulates clear and appropriate learning outcomes
  - H. Integrates content areas using a thematic approach to teaching and learning
  - I. Selects appropriate content and instructional strategies to create appropriate disequilibrium
  - J. Designs the environment, schedule and activities to promote children's physical and psychological health and safety and sense of security
  - K. Designs the environment to reflect respect for the child as an individual and family contexts
  - L. Selects and places real and representational materials and equipment in the environment considering the dimensions of soft/hard, open/closed materials, simple/complex/super units, intrusion/seclusion, and high/low mobility
  - M. Develops and uses a daily schedule that provides uninterrupted large blocks of time for children's learning, provides for individual learning styles and paces, and established meaningful routines for children's self-direction
  - N. Organizes and monitors group work and ensures that learning experiences to allow for full and varied participation of all children
  - O. Uses instructional time wisely
  - P. Assists classroom volunteers and aides in supporting the development of a smoothly functioning classroom community
  
- IV. Candidate possesses and uses knowledge of content to support learners' achievement in subject disciplines, particularly mathematics, science, language and literacy, and social studies.
  - A. Uses knowledge of national and state content standards
  - B. Uses knowledge of the structure of disciplinary content (e.g. science is organized into physical, earth & space, health and human, and life sciences)
  - C. Has knowledge of the scope and sequence of content disciplines
  - D. Has knowledge of essential concepts of disciplinary content
  - E. Can identify resources, including technology, to deepen their own and their students' understanding of content knowledge
  - F. Has knowledge of themes that cut across and integrate content disciplines

- V. Candidates understand the importance of the family community in children's learning and development and demonstrate respectful interactions.
- A. Displays a warm and nurturing attitude toward all children
  - B. Shows a genuine interest in the lives of children and their families
  - C. Is familiar with relevant aspects of children's backgrounds, knowledge, experience and skill
  - D. Communicates in a variety of ways with children and their families regarding classroom activity, student progress and available services
  - E. Models support and consideration of individual and cultural differences
  - F. Involves families to support candidate's understanding of children and family's understanding of the curriculum
- VI. Candidates understands and uses formal and informal assessment evaluation strategies to monitor student progress and make instructional decisions
- A. Recognizes individual children's actions as indicators of developmental processes and progress
  - B. Interprets and articulates child's progress to parent and other professionals
  - C. Uses a variety of observational data gathering tools (e.g. time samples, running records, checklists and rating scales, anecdotal recordings, incident records, behavior logs, etc.) to document progress
  - D. Uses a variety of content assessment approaches as selected response formats (multiple-choice, true/false, matching); constructed response formats (fill-in-the-blank, short answer, label diagram, essay questions); performance (play, verbal, interaction, oral reading, etc); and products (portfolios, project drawings, constructions, writing, word sorts) to assess, monitor and evaluate individual student's learning
  - E. Compares assessment data to norm-references, rubric-criterion, and individual child's prior performance to evaluate progress
  - F. Acts responsibly and appropriately when using assessment/evaluation approaches
  - G. Treats assessment/evaluation data confidentially and with respect for the child's and family's privacy
  - H. Acts in partnership with parents in the assessment/evaluation of children's progress
- VII. Candidates possess understanding of their professional roots and responsibilities and of appropriate ethical and professional behavior
- A. Recognizes the historical and legal precursors of current educational practices, responsibilities, and the role of early childhood educators
  - B. Advocates for the needs of children and their families
  - C. Exhibits behavior consistent with accepted ethical, and professional standards for educators
  - D. Holds membership in a professional organization for early childhood educators and participates in professional activities
  - E. Evaluates own teaching performance and seeks feedback from others
  - F. Is committed to growth and self-improvement

**JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY**

**PreK-3 Program Sequence**

	<b>Semester I</b>	<b>Semester II</b>	<b>Semester III</b>	<b>Semester IV</b>
<b>ECED Courses</b>	<b>ECED 372 Intro to ECED (3)</b>  <b>EDUC 360 Foundations of American Education (3)</b>  <b>ECED 442 The Young Child (3)</b>	<b>READ 366 Early Literacy Development and Acquisition (3)</b>  <b>ECED 412 Science and Social Studies for Young Children (3)</b>  <b>ECED 401D Diversity and Differentiation (3)</b>	<b>ECED 444 Children and Math (3)</b>  <b>READ 436 Literacy Learning in Elementary Grades (3)</b>	<b>ECED 481 Seminar in Family/Community (2)</b>
<b>Field work</b>	<b>ECED 371 Practicum in ECED (1) – 3 or 4 yr. olds</b>  <b>ECED 441 Practicum in Child Development (1) – 2 - 5 yr. olds</b>	<b>ECED 443 Practicum in Primary Grades (1) K, 1st or 2nd Service Learning</b>	<b>ECED 461 Integrated Day Practicum (3) 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> grade</b>	<b>ECED 480 Student Teaching PK or K and 1-3 (16)</b>
<b>IDLS courses</b>	<b>6 hrs.</b>	<b>6 hrs.</b>	<b>6 hrs. including IDLS 400 if in Humanities/SS concentration</b>	

Candidates wishing to add to the PreK-3 endorsement, must apply to and be accepted in graduate school to pursue a MAT , Early Childhood Special Education or SPED (K-12). In addition, endorsement in ESL can be obtained through undergraduate and graduate courses.

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## ECED UG Assessment Plan

Assessment of candidate performance includes evaluation of performance in individual courses, as well as performance in practicum as well as other criteria. At various gates throughout the program, there is a summative assessment where faculty committees review the overall performance of each candidate. In order to pass through the gate to the next sequences of courses and experiences, a candidate must be making satisfactory progress. If progress is unsatisfactory, the candidate will not be allowed to continue until any identified deficiencies are corrected. In some cases, a candidate will be allowed to continue in the next semester, but there will be a plan of action for addressing any concerns that have been identified by the faculty.

The performances that are reviewed at each gate include:

Gate I: before enrolling in Sem I courses

- Acceptance in teacher education

Gate II: before enrolling in Sem II courses

- Continued acceptance in teacher education
- C or better in each Education course
- Practicum performance
- Professional dispositions
- Communication skills
- Satisfactory performance o key assessment – case study

Gate III: before enrolling Sem III courses

- Continued acceptance in teacher education
- C or better in each Education course; 2.5 in all ECED courses
- Practicum performance
- Professional dispositions
- Communication skills
- Satisfactory performance on key assessment(s)

Gate IV: before enrolling in Student Teaching

- Acceptance in student teaching
- C or better in each Education course; 2.5 in all ECED courses
- Practicum performance
- Professional dispositions
- Communication skills
- Satisfactory performance on key assessment – lesson plans

Gate V: before program completion

- Pass Praxis II
- Successful student teaching
- Satisfactory performance on key assessments – Praxis II, VCLA, VRA, Teacher Work Sample, Family Project(s)
- Graduation

## PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR IN UNIVERSITY AND ASSIGNED PRACTICA

As you enter the teaching profession, society and your professors expect you to demonstrate professional behavior at all times when representing the Early and Elementary preparation programs. Candidates are expected to:

### University classrooms and other sponsored activities

- Treat all information about children, cooperating teachers and school professionals confidentially and with respect for privacy
- Follow the attendance policies of your class and professor.
- Arrive promptly and stay until excused
- Turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices and attend to classroom activities
- Use professional written and oral language
- Complete all responsibilities as assigned and by the deadline
- Spend time appropriately in class – is attentive and involved
- Participates appropriately in small group activities
- Interact respectfully with peers and faculty
- Reflects objectively on own performance
- Accepts feedback in a positive manner
- Follow the JMU Honor policy

### Field-based Practica

#### 1. Attendance and Participation

- a. You are expected to **attend** every practicum day, be punctual, and participate for the entire period. You should be in the classroom and ready to participate at your assigned time.
- b. If you must be **absent** from practicum due to personal illness or emergency, notify your teacher and leave a voice message for your supervisor before school begins. On or before the practicum day immediately following your absence, discuss a make-up time with the teacher. Notify the supervisor of this date via email.
- c. In the event of **inclement weather, school cancellations and delays** are announced on WSVA radio (AM 550), WHSV-TV (cable channel 11), and online at [www.whsv.com](http://www.whsv.com). Know the delay policy for your assigned practicum.
- d. You are not expected to attend practicum during **official JMU closings**.
- e. Many schools have a designated **parking** area for visitors. If it is not clear where you should park, ask your teacher or school secretary. You should not park in a staff lot without permission.
- f. Follow the **sign-in procedure** for visitors/practicum students at your school.
- g. Wear your **JMU photo name tag** whenever you are on school property.
- h. **Dress professionally!** As a participant in the school, you are expected to follow guidelines for appropriate dress. Failure to do so will result in a request for you to leave the classroom and will be considered an unexcused absence from practicum. Take cues from the teachers. Your dress does not have to be elaborate, but must be neat and professional. Be sure you are dressed to be actively involved with young learners. You will need to reach and bend without exposing undergarments, cleavage, or midriff. In public school practica, men may need to wear neckties.

Be "IN THE NO" when it comes to dress:

*	NO short skirts	*	NO exposed midriffs
*	NO low necklines	*	NO slogan t-shirts
*	NO tight slacks	*	NO ragged jeans/slacks
*	NO spaghetti straps	*	NO visible body piercing other than
*	NO high heels		ears

- i. **Cell phones** should not be used while you are working at a school. If you must bring one into the building, be sure it is turned off and kept with your personal belongings.
- j. Do not **eat or chew gum** while working at a school. Water bottles should be left with your personal belongings. If you are at the school over lunch, find out the policies for buying or bringing your lunch.
- k. Respect the **confidentiality** of information regarding children and their families. DO NOT discuss children in front of classmates or family members, or with anyone who is not professionally associated with the school. Use assigned code names in all your observation notes and formal writing. If parents ask you for information about their children or another student, refer them to the teacher.
- l. Ask the teacher's permission before **taking photographs or videotaping**.
- m. Many of the activities and materials in classrooms are original. Respect the value of these professional works, just as you would have others view something you created. If it is acceptable for you to **copy ideas** from your teacher or another staff member, do so at a time when the children are out of the classroom and you do not have other responsibilities. Your first obligation is always to your teacher and your students.
- n. Be sure your teacher is aware of **assignments** that must be conducted during practicum. Schedule these in advance so you can be flexible in accommodating to changes in class and school schedules. Don't wait until the last minute to do an assignment!
- o. If your **teacher is absent**, you should continue with your scheduled activities, unless plans for the substitute indicate otherwise. You are NEVER to serve as a substitute teacher, even for short periods of time.
- p. Ask for **suggestions and feedback** throughout the semester. View input from your teacher or supervisor as an opportunity to learn and grow as an early childhood professional. Follow the evaluation procedure and schedule for your specific practicum.

### Classroom Guidelines

- a. Learn all the children's names by the end of the second week.
- b. When **speaking to individuals** or a small group of children, position yourself on their eye level so that a loud voice is unnecessary and eye contact is natural. Even when speaking to the entire class, a soft voice is more effective. It is never appropriate for you to raise your voice to speak to children across the classroom; walk to them and get their attention before you begin talking.
- c. Use **Miss, Mr., or Mrs.** when you address adults in front of the children, or whatever is appropriate at your placement.
- d. Convey an **attitude of warmth and acceptance**. Children (AND adults) respond most favorably to someone they know cares for them. Smile a lot! Let everyone know you are happy to be at the school and value them as individuals.
- e. Be **sensitive to cues from children** that your involvement is needed. Be responsive when they ask for assistance. However, your role is not to be their playmate or do things for children that they can do

themselves. Talk with the teacher if you are uncertain about how much help to provide in specific situations.

- f. Be alert to ways you can **be helpful to the teacher**. Convey your willingness to assist in any way. Ask questions if you aren't sure what to do or if you have questions about what you observe. Choose times that are least disruptive to speak to the teacher.
- g. Observe and learn the teacher's expectations for the children. Insist that rules are followed. Be firm and positive in your interactions (do not end ANY direction with "OK?"). Remember, you are the teacher, not a "buddy." Talk with the teacher about your role in situations of inappropriate behavior and keep the teacher informed of any problematic situations you observe or help resolve. Never interfere with the teacher's directions to the group or a specific child.
- h. In most cases, the children are encouraged to put away classroom materials as they finish using them. Usually a reminder or an offer of assistance is all that is necessary. **DO NOT TAKE OVER CLEAN-UP FOR CHILDREN, BUT REALIZE** that often they do need help.
- i. **Always wash your hands** with soap when you arrive, before and after handling food or coming in contact with potentially infectious materials, after wiping a child's nose or your own, and after helping a child in the bathroom. Insist that children follow these same guidelines.
- j. Learn several **finger plays and songs** to use during transition times. Choose ones that are appropriate for calming a small group, calling children to finish a task, or keep children focused while waiting for others. A good song on the tip of your tongue can work wonders!
- k. Refrain from **chatting with other students** or congregating in clusters of adults.
- l. **Avoid standing** as much as possible. If you are working on a writing assignment, sit on a low chair or on the floor at a place that does not disrupt normal traffic flow or interfere with the children's activities. **DO NOT** sit on tables or equipment.
- m. Support the teacher and children in carrying out routines and expectations. If there are two or more students working in the same classroom, at least one should always be free to **assist the teacher**. Plan your assignments accordingly.
- n. If you observe an incident in which **a child is hurt or hurts** others (verbally or physically) or you overhear child chare information that makes you uncomfortable, inform the teacher as soon as possible.
- o. You are responsible for **cleaning up** after activities you plan for students. Never leave additional work for the classroom teacher.
- p. Take advantage of every opportunity to practice using technology in ways that will support the learning of children and enhance your practicum experience.



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Candidate's name:

Date & time activity is to be presented:

Date written plan is submitted to the practicum teacher:  
(MUST be at least one week before the activity is to be conducted)

- I have reviewed this initial plan and approve it as written.
- I have reviewed this initial plan and approve it with the recommendations noted. I expect to have a revised plan that reflects these recommendations submitted on the day the activity is presented.
- I received this revised plan on the day the activity was presented.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Practicum Teacher

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**TITLE/TYPE OF ACTIVITY**

**CONTEXT OF ACTIVITY**

**CONCEPTS TO BE COVERED**

**LESSON OBJECTIVES**

**RELATED VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING**

**MATERIALS NEEDED**

**PROCEDURE**

**Preparation of the Learning Environment (take a picture to include with your reflection).**

**Introduction of the activity**

**Implementation of the activity (specific procedure for teacher and students)**

**Closure and cleanup**

**MODIFICATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

**WHAT COULD GO WRONG WITH THIS LESSON AND WHAT WILL YOU DO ABOUT IT?**

**ASSESSMENT PLAN**

**(Develop a data collection form for assessing student involvement and learning. Attach it to this document.)**



**LESSON PLAN REFLECTION**  
JMU Early Childhood Education Program

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Candidate's name:

Teacher's name and school where activity was conducted:

Date the activity was conducted:

The following assignment components are being submitted with this document:

- All lesson plans given to my teacher and supervisor (original and a revision if required)
- Data collection sheet for the activity
- Picture of the setup of the activity
- Instruction cards and other materials (or pictures of the materials) I created to support the activity
- Documentation of supplemental activity for partners

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As soon as possible following your activity, write your response to the following questions. Reflections must be written independently, even if you worked with a partner in planning and conducting the activity. Be thorough in your reflection and cite specific examples of the children's language, involvement, reactions, exploration, and learning.

**TITLE/TYPE OF ACTIVITY**

A. How did your actual lesson differ from your plans? Describe the changes you made and explain why you made them. Be **thorough** and **specific** in your description.

B. Evaluate the impact of the lesson **based on your plan for assessing learning and the individual data you collected on each lesson objective**. Be **thorough** in your description. Cite **multiple** examples of student behavior and language that document your conclusions

C. Describe at least one way you could incorporate developmentally appropriate practice in a better or more thorough way if you were to present this lesson again.

D. If you were the teacher in this classroom, what follow-up experiences would you plan? (Develop your answer based on the data that was collected and your observations during the lesson.)

E. What did you learn from this experience about children, teaching, and yourself?

1. Share something you learned about young children as a result of planning and conducting this activity. Relate this new knowledge to principles of child development and/or appropriate curriculum from your ECED 442/ELED 308 and ECED 372 courses.

2. Share something you learned about teaching as a result of planning and conducting this activity.

Describe how you will apply this new knowledge to upcoming opportunities for developing learning experiences for children.

3. Share something you learned about yourself as a result of planning and conducting this activity.

If you worked with a partner, include a brief description of the supplemental activity you did. If you developed an art display or documentation panel, attach a picture. If you composed a newsletter page, attach a copy.