Graduate Programs in Early Childhood Education

**Why should I get a Master of Arts degree in Early Childhood Education?**
The M.A. in Early Childhood Education (ECE) will help you to expand your understanding of the characteristics of learning and development of children ages 0 to 8, and your expertise in teaching young children and working with their families. With a growing emphasis at federal and state levels on the importance of high quality education during the preschool and primary years, leaders in early childhood education are sought by schools and agencies throughout California.

For those candidates who already hold a clear credential, graduate credits may count as professional development units for salary advancement in your school district and for credential renewal. The M.A. in Early Childhood Education also qualifies teachers for the California Child Development Permit at the director level.

**What is special about studying Early Childhood Education at Sonoma State University?**
The ECE concentration of the Master of Arts degree in Education at Sonoma State University emphasizes the importance of understanding the links between child development and the practice of teaching in classrooms for young children from infancy through grade three. This developmental perspective is explored through a variety of cultural and theoretical lenses as candidates ground their ideas from readings and discussion in their day-to-day work with young children. The importance of continuity of experience from home to school and across levels of education is emphasized in coursework and individualized research projects. Coursework and special projects also support teachers in their roles as agents of change.

Our courses cover a wide range of topics including:

- The development of language and literacy in first and second languages
- The role of play in learning and development
- The social and emotional nature of learning at home and at school
- Communication between early childhood educator and families
- Environments that support optimal learning for young children
- Techniques for organizing and implementing staff development and parent and family education
- Advocacy and leadership for families and children

Program Advisor:
Charles Elster, PhD.
707-664-2350
[charles.elster@sonoma.edu](mailto:charles.elster@sonoma.edu)
APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

How to apply:

PLEASE SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING TO:
CREDENTIALS OFFICE, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
STEVENSON HALL ROOM 1078
SONOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
1801 E. COTATI AVENUE
ROHNERT PARK, CA 94928

1. One official transcript from each college or university you have attended. You need at least one course dealing with theories of development and developmental changes from birth through middle childhood. (No internet printouts accepted)

Grade point average requirement: cumulative upper division / graduate 3.0; Education 3.0

2. A completed application form. Program admission requirements include at least 45 hours of teaching or volunteering in an Early Care and Education setting. If you don’t have this experience at the time of your application, you may complete the hours before you begin the program.

3. Two (2) recent letters of reference (not more than one year old). Among other topics the letters should address the following:
   - How long the writer has known you and in what capacity
   - Your academic potential for graduate work
   - Your curiosity and passion to learn about children and education
   - Your commitment to promoting the quality of early care and education

Letters can be added to program application or mailed directly to:
Credentials Office
School of Education
Sonoma State University
1801 E. Cotati Ave.
Rohnert Park, CA 94928

Letters may also be submitted (as attachments) to credentials.office@sonoma.edu or Cal State Apply (these letters are accepted from person writing reference)

* Please note: At least one letter should be from an instructor who can refer to your academic potential to succeed in a graduate program.

4. A photocopy of a valid California teaching credential or permit, if appropriate. No teaching credential is required for the M.A. degree. A B.A. or B.S. degree is required

5. A narrative statement of approximately 750 words, in which you answer the questions below. You do not have to list your answer to each question separately, but you should address all points in your narrative.
   - What are your career goals? How do you hope to use an M.A. degree to improve the lives of young children?
   - What development and learning theories guide your work with young children?
   - Briefly describe a book or article that you have recently read. In what ways does this text contribute to your understanding of children or early childhood education?
   - What are the most important issues in the field of Early Care and Education today?

Your response will be evaluated on the organization and clarity of your ideas, conventional grammatical structure, appropriate use of English, and scholarly potential. Please include references to academic or professional sources to support your points.

6. Documentation of University Admission or Application

7. After your application has been received, you will be notified of a date for an interview.
PLEASE NOTE: ACCEPTANCE IN GRADUATE STUDY IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IS DEPENDENT ON ACCEPTANCE TO THE UNIVERSITY. PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR UNIVERSITY APPLICATION VIA Cal State Apply

ECE M.A. Program Coursework: 30-36 units

The ECE MA is likely to transition to an online program in Fall 2020. If the new online program is approved, continuing students would be able to finish the program under the current requirements, but the following courses would only be offered in a completely online format: EDEC 531, EDEC 532, EDEC 535, and EDEC 538. If you have questions about the proposed change, please contact the advisor for the ECE graduate program, Charles Elster (elster@sonoma.edu).

The total number of units of the program varies from 30 to 36 semester units, depending on the Culminating Path selected by students. The following is a list of the courses ECE M.A. candidates take.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Core (6 units EDUC courses):</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDUC 570</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDUC 571</td>
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Masters Degree Culminating Paths (6-12 units): Students select one of the following three paths.

1. Thesis (6 units)
   a. EDUC 598   | Developing a Thesis Project (3) |
   b. EDUC 599   | Supervised Research for the Thesis/Project (3) |

2. Individualized exam (9 units)
   a. EDUC 573   | Supervised Study for the individualized Examination (3) |
   b. Two other courses |

3. Cognate (12 units- may include Specialist Credential coursework)
   a. EDUC 572   | Supervised Study for the Cognate (3) |
   b. Three other courses (9 units) |

Required ECE Core Courses in Concentration (12 units)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDEC 531</td>
<td>The Role of Play in Development and Learning (3) (offered Fall of odd numbered years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDEC 532</td>
<td>Social-Moral Development in Childhood (3) (offered Fall of even numbered years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDEC 535</td>
<td>Leadership and Advocacy on Behalf of Families and Children (offered Spring of odd numbered years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDEC 538</td>
<td>The Development of Language and Thinking in Infancy through Middle Childhood (3) (offered Spring of even numbered years)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PLUS Electives (6 units)

At least two electives in the areas of Special Education, Curriculum Teaching and Learning, Reading and Language, and/or special topics ECE courses will be chosen in consultation with the ECE Advisor. Some examples of course options are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDSP 422</td>
<td>Collaborative Partnerships in Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDSP 423</td>
<td>Assessment, Curriculum and Instructional Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDSP 432</td>
<td>Designing Inclusive Environments in Early Childhood Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Vision Statement

Advancing social justice in schools and communities through excellence in education.

### Mission Statement

The School of Education provides transformative educational experiences through teaching, research, and key initiatives. We prepare undergraduates, graduate students and credential candidates to advocate for social justice in their learning and throughout their careers so that students, schools, and communities flourish.

### Core Values

1. **We believe** that examining and respecting human differences is central to educational inclusivity.

2. **We believe** that collaboration and community partnerships strengthen our work.

3. **We take** a critical and reflective stance in light of educational and social inequities.

4. **We are committed** to equity and access in education for all students.

5. **We promote** meaningful learning through theoretically sound and research-based pedagogies.
GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
APPLICATION

Masters in Education: Early Childhood Education

Application for: Fall _______ Spring _______
Year                       Year

Name: ________________________________
                             Last     First     M.I.

Former Name(s): _______________________________________________________________

Address: ________________________________________________________________
                             City     State    Zip

*Social Security Number _____________________                  *Date of Birth _______________

Phone (Home):_____________________ Phone (Work): ____________________Phone (Cell): _______________

*E-mail Address:_____________________________________________________

Sexual Orientation: _____heterosexual/straight   _____gay/lesbian   _____bisexual   _____other   _____not sure
                   _____decline to state

Gender Identity: _____male   _______female  __________nonbinary  __________decline to state

*This information must be provided

Ethnic Identity – Indicate the group with which you most strongly identify

_____ 1.      American Indian/Alaskan Native   _____ 13.     Laotian
_____ 2.      Black Non-Hispanic, including African American  _____ 14.    Vietnamese
_____ 3.      Mexican-American, Mexican, Chicano    _____ 15.     Thai
_____ 4.      Central American               _____ 16.    Other Southeast Asian
_____ 5.      South American                _____ 17.     Guamanian
_____ 7.      Puerto Rican                   _____ 19.    Samoan
_____ 8.      Other Latino, Spanish-origin, Hispanic _____ 20.    Other Pacific Islander
_____10.     Japanese                       _____ 22.     Filipino
_____11.     Korean                        _____ 23.    Other
_____12.     Asian Indian                   _____ 24.    Decline to State
PLEASE COMPLETE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

Are you currently enrolled at SSU?  □  Yes  □  No

If yes, date admitted: ________________________________

How did you hear about our program? ________________________________

List all colleges/universities where you earned your B.A/B.S degree and where you have taken credential and graduate coursework. Please indicate the dates of attendance and degree(s), credential(s) earned if applicable.

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

List the Child Development courses you have completed. Please indicate dates, grades and institution where you took the course/s.

___________________________________________________________________________

☐ I have submitted ALL documents as listed below via Cal State Apply. (If not submitted attach to this application)
  • Statement of Purpose
  • Letters of Recommendation

_________________________  __________________________
Signature                  Date

Complete this form and return it to:

School of Education        Sonoma State University
Credentials Office         1801 East Cotati Avenue
Stevenson Hall 1078         Rohnert Park, CA  94928
Verification of Pre-Program Field Experience
Application to Early Childhood Education M.A. Program

Candidate’s Name: ____________________________________________________________

Instructions:
Below are options to fulfill the pre-admission field experience requirement for entrance into the MA-Early Childhood Studies Program at Sonoma State University.

Please have an appropriate teacher/administrator complete this form to verify your experience, or add contact information for the appropriate teacher-administrator. Experience may be in a licensed early care and education program serving children from infancy to age 8 or in an elementary classroom K-2. Experience working as nanny does not qualify for this purpose.

Section 1 – Please check appropriate box.

☐ 1. Completion of at least 45 hours of **experience** working with children from birth to age 8

☐ 2. Completion of at least 45 hours of experience as a **teacher’s assistant** working with children from birth to age 8

☐ 3. Completion of at least 45 hours of experience as **teacher** of children from birth to age 8

☐ 4. Successful completion of any **course or courses which involved field experiences of 45 hours** during which you worked with children from birth to age 8. Please add catalogue course description.

☐ 5. Other experiences: please check with the Admissions Office

Section 2 – Site Information and Verifying Signature

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<tr>
<th>Center/School</th>
<th>Location</th>
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Age group or grade level

From: ____________ To: ____________

Date of service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verifying Teacher’s/Administrator’s Name</th>
<th>Verifying Teacher’s/Administrator’s Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Print</td>
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<tr>
<td>email</td>
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Verifying Teacher’s/Administrator’s Email

Mobile phone: ___________________________ Cell phone: ___________________________

Rev.6.14.19