College of Human Ecology

Early Childhood Education

Overview
Early childhood education is a career for individuals who seek the satisfaction of enhancing the development and learning of young children. The Bachelor of Science in early childhood education at K-State is a four-year program designed for students who wish to work as teachers or administrators in early care and education programs for young children, birth through kindergarten, including children with disabilities.

The pre-service teacher education program blends early childhood education and early childhood special education content knowledge and pedagogy into one blended teacher preparation program. Supervised clinical experiences working with children age 6 weeks to 6 years are completed in licensed and accredited classrooms.

The program provides the professional foundation for future teachers to support the education of young children across developmental domains and content areas, with specific focus on young children with special needs and the role of families in early education.

Professional options
Students who complete a bachelor's degree in early childhood education meet the requirements for Kansas teacher licensure in early childhood unified (birth through kindergarten). Students then complete an application for the early childhood unified license for the Kansas State Department of Education. Career and Employment Services has information and resources to assist in finding a professional position.

Careers
Positions taken by recent K-State graduates include:
- Early childhood special educator
- Infant-toddler teacher
- Head Start teacher
- At-risk teacher
- Early childhood specialist in a corporate child care center
- Prekindergarten teacher
- Kindergarten teacher
- Early childhood teacher in a military child care program

The knowledge, skills and dispositions emphasized in the early childhood education curriculum are transferable to many careers serving children and families, including:
- Family development specialists
- Child life specialists
- Public policy advisors
- Training and technical assistance specialists
- Parent educators

Employers
Positions may be found in:
- School districts
- Social service agencies
- Business, industry or military child care centers
- Franchised, private and nonprofit child care programs

Job experience
The early childhood education program is distinguished by numerous clinical experiences paired with methods courses. Students complete course work and clinical practice with infants, toddlers, preschoolers and kindergartners, including children with disabilities.

Clinical experiences with kindergartners are completed in kindergarten classrooms of unified school districts and are supervised by experienced professionals. Clinical experiences with younger children are completed at K-State's Hoelfin Stone House Early Childhood Education Center. Student teaching takes place at the end of the degree program, and students assume responsibility for an early childhood classroom under the guidance of a clinical instructor and university supervisor.

Before beginning clinical experiences, students must undergo a physical examination, including a tuberculosis test, at their own expense.

Students must not have any physical or mental conditions that would interfere with the health, safety and welfare of children.

Students will be screened by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment for criminal and child abuse histories through the Kansas Bureau of Investigation and Department of Children and Families. Students not cleared by these two agencies will be dropped from the early childhood education program. Additional requirements, including first aid and CPR certification, must be met before a student teaching application is approved.

Academics
The 120-credit bachelor's degree in early childhood education can be completed in four years with careful planning and the guidance of an advisor. Program requirements include courses in general education — such as communication, social sciences, humanities, natural sciences and quantitative studies — and professional education, including child development, teaching and learning experiences, administration and organization of programs, and relationships with families.

Once students meet the requirements for admission to the professional teacher education program, they are permitted to enroll in advanced professional courses and clinical experiences. See the early childhood education curriculum guide for details about admission to the professional teacher education program and specific course numbers and titles.

Accreditation
The early childhood education program is approved by the Kansas State Department of Education accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, or NCATE. The university is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities.

Points of pride
Graduates of Kansas State University’s early childhood education program meet the requirements to teach young children. In supervised clinical internships, students work with infants and toddlers, preschoolers and kindergartners.

k-state.edu/admissions/academics
Faculty
Faculty include master teachers who hold graduate degrees and licensure in the professional field.

Preparation
Students who meet the Kansas qualified admission requirements are prepared to enter the early childhood education program at K-State. Practical work experience with young children in group settings is recommended.

Advising
When students select early childhood education as their major, they are assigned an academic advisor who works with them to ensure they meet degree requirements. Students also receive professional advising and information concerning Kansas teacher licensure requirements from an early childhood education faculty member.

An early childhood education advising website is maintained to provide students access to degree and licensure information at all times.

Facilities
Students complete classroom observations and clinical experiences at the Hoeflin Stone House Early Childhood Education Center on the north end of campus. The laboratory school is accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

The facility houses four full-day classrooms enrolling children age 6 weeks through 5 years and two part-day classrooms serving children 3 to 5 years of age. Children with identified delays and disabilities are included in the educational program. Special services, including speech-language therapy, occupational and physical therapy, and music therapy are provided on site.

Licensure
The Kansas State Department of Education prescribes the requirements for early childhood unified (birth through kindergarten) teaching licensure in Kansas. K-State’s bachelor’s degree in early childhood education meets the licensure standards for early childhood teachers (birth through kindergarten) in Kansas.

Admissions
Incoming students apply to K-State through the general university admissions process. Students may apply online to the university at k-state.edu/admissions/apply.

Suggested coursework
Freshman
First semester (15 credits)
- ENGL 100  Expository Writing I
- FSHS 110  Introduction to Human Development
- PSYCH 110  General Psychology
- MATH 100  College Algebra
- Humanities Elective
- GNHE 210  Foundations of Human Ecology

Second semester (16 credits)
- ECED 310  Early Childhood
- ECED 313  Pre-professional Experiences in Early Childhood- Unified
- SOCI 211  Introduction to Sociology
- ENG 200  Expository Writing II
- COMM 105  Public Speaking IA
  or
- COMM 106  Public Speaking I
- Earth Science elective with lab

For more information about early childhood education, contact:
School of Family Studies and Human Services
College of Human Ecology
Kansas State University
303 Justin Hall
1324 Lovers Lane
Manhattan, KS 66506-1403
785-532-5510
fslhs@k-state.edu
he.k-state.edu/fslhs

For information about transferring coursework from other institutions, contact:
Karen Pence
College of Human Ecology
Kansas State University
119 Justin Hall
1324 Lovers Lane
Manhattan, KS 66506-1401
785-532-5500
Fax: 785-532-5504
ktpence@k-state.edu

For more information about Kansas State University, contact:
Office of Admissions
Kansas State University
119 Anderson Hall
919 Mid-Campus Drive North
Manhattan, KS 66506-0102
1-800-432-8270 (toll free) or
785-532-6250
k-state@k-state.edu
k-state.edu/admissions

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