

**SPED 500**  
**Communication and Early Literacy for Young Children with Disabilities**



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**Office Hours:** by appointment

**Class Location & Time:** Tuesdays @ 7:00 pm @ Education 1122

**IMPORTANT:** The department office CANNOT take messages for professors. If you need to contact me, please email me directly. I will try my best to get back to you within 24 hours of receiving your message. I am rarely online during weekends due to other commitments. Do your best to plan the timing of your questions accordingly.

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Michael D. Eisner College of Education  
California State University, Northridge  
(Approved May 2018)

The faculty of the Michael D. Eisner College of Education, regionally focused and nationally recognized, is committed to excellence, innovation, and social justice. Excellence includes the acquisition of professional dispositions, skills, and research-based knowledge, and is demonstrated by the development of ethical and caring professionals—faculty, staff, candidates—and those they serve. Innovation occurs through the leadership and commitment of faculty, and through collaborative partnerships among communities of diverse learners who engage in creative and reflective thinking. We are dedicated to promoting social justice and becoming agents of change in schools and our communities. We continually strive to achieve the following competencies and values that form the foundation of the Conceptual Framework.

- We value academic excellence in the acquisition of research-based professional knowledge and skills.
- We strive to positively impact schools and communities. Therefore, we foster a culture of evidence to determine the impact of our programs, to monitor candidate growth, and to inform ongoing program and unit improvement.
- We value ethical practice and what it means to become ethical and caring professionals.
- We value collaborative partnerships within the Michael D. Eisner College of Education as well as across disciplines with other CSUN faculty, P-12 educators and related professionals, and other members of regional and national educational and service communities.
- We value people from diverse backgrounds and experiences and are dedicated to addressing the varied strengths, interests, and needs of communities of diverse learners.
- We value creative, critical, and reflective thinking and practice.

### **Course Description:**

This course focuses on communication strategies and early literacy development for young children with disabilities, including those who are learning English as a second language. Students will learn about recommended and evidenced based practices to assess and support these children's early language use and communicative behaviors. They will also learn to use strategies to support young children's participation in story book reading and develop their emerging literacy skills.

### **Course Objectives:**

1. Discuss principles of first and second language acquisition and identify their applications to educational practice with young children with disabilities;
2. Recognize and practice facilitation strategies that promote pre-linguistic and early linguistic aspects of communication of young children with disabilities, including English language learners;
3. Discuss alternatives to oral language and identify strategies for supporting the development of alternative communication modes for young children with oral language disabilities;
4. Identify aspects of communicative abilities and their connections to reading and writing;
5. Assess young children's language use, communicative behaviors, and emerging literacy skills using observation and informal procedures;
6. Discuss the influence of socio-cultural factors on first and second language/literacy development;
7. Identify and use educational and assistive technology strategies to enhance the development of early communication and emergent literacy skills;
8. Describe and implement activities that support development of reading related behaviors and emergent literacy (book handling skills, concepts about print, phonemic awareness, temporary spelling) of young children with disabilities, including English language learners;
9. Identify techniques to assist family members in supporting early communication/language/literacy development of their young children with disabilities, including English language learners;
10. Collaborate with other disciplines to support early communication/language/ literacy development of young children with disabilities.

### **Required Texts:**

1. Weitzman, E., & Greenberg, J. (2002). *Learning language and loving it: A guide to promoting children's social, language, and literacy development in early childhood settings* (2nd ed.). Toronto, Ontario, Canada: The Hanen Centre.
2. CA Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1 (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/preschoollf.pdf>)
3. Preschool English Learners (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/cd/re/documents/psenglearnersed2.pdf>)

4. Kindergarten Standards in English Language Arts & Literacy  
(<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/documents/finaelaccsstandards.pdf>)
5. Additional weekly readings will be posted to Canvas.

You are expected to read **assigned chapters** in the text and other readings (posted in advance on Canvas) by the date indicated on the topic schedule.

Handouts for each class session will be posted on Canvas right after each class. Access Canvas at <http://www.csun.edu/it/canvas> enter your portal username and password.

### **General Requirements:**

1. All students must abide by CSUN Student Conduct Code. Detailed information can be found at <http://catalog.csun.edu/policies/student-conduct-code/>. **Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated.** It is not the role of the instructor to judge the intent behind copied work or other dishonest conduct but only to report it to the University. *First time plagiarism will result in a Zero in the assignment, and second time plagiarism will result in a grade of F in the course.*
2. **Person-first language** should be used during class discussions and in written products. Examples of person-first language are “child with a disability” instead of “disabled child”; “child with autism” instead of “autistic child”; “child with language impairments” instead of “language-delayed child”; “child who has an intellectual disability” instead of “mentally retarded child.” *Failure to do so will result in a Zero in the assignment.*
3. Students who require academic support services should register with **Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) BH 110**. Please make an appointment to see me at the beginning of the semester; I will be happy to make accommodations to increase success in this course.
4. The instructor will not automatically drop students for absences or poor performance. It is your responsibility to monitor your performance. **Incomplete grades** will not be assigned unless you have a documented illness or family crisis.

### **Attendance & Participation:**

A critical aspect of any learning experience is the active and sustained participation by the learner. You are required to attend the class sessions. Points will be allocated and adjusted based on **engagement and participation** in each class session. Evidence of engagement involves attending all class sessions, coming to class on time, completing all readings for each class session, keeping cell phones off tables and away in bags/cases, taking notes or attending to the speaker, asking questions regarding the course material, responding to questions asked in class, and making comments on class readings/topics.

Please attend the class **on time**. During the session, you are expected to actively participate in class sessions by listening, commenting, asking questions, collaborating with fellow students, sharing ideas/resources, and engaging in discussions.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. If you **arrive at the class at 7:30pm or later**, you will be counted as absent. You are responsible for the information covered in assigned readings, class lectures, handouts, out-of-class assignments, and in-class discussions and activities.

**If you miss more than 2 class sessions (excused or unexcused), your final grade will be lowered by a letter grade (e.g., A will become B). Each subsequent absence will result in a reduction of your final grade by ½ letter grade.**

If you have some difficulties, please contact the instructor and I am happy to provide accommodations.

### **Assignments:**

Read the assigned readings by when the topic will be discussed in class. Reflect on the information discussed. Note key points that will be useful in your professional role and questions or concerns that the readings raised. Share these ideas and questions in class. Written assignments should reflect integration of the key concepts presented in reading assignments.

## **Plan Ahead!**

- **Hasty, last-minute work...let's be real.** You don't accept "last-minute-just-get-it-turned-in-so-I-get-some-points" in your own classroom because you have high expectations of your students, and high expectations for our students is a key determining factor in success. Why would I tell you to high expectations for your students if I did not model it? This goes for all assignments.
- All assignments must be typed, double-spaced, one-inch margins, font size 12, and written following the **7th edition of the APA manual**. This website (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>) will help you with APA style.
- All assignments submitted electronically must be formatted as **Microsoft Word documents (.doc or .docx)**. **Please do not submit a .pdf or JPEG file.** Problems with technology will not be accepted as an excuse for late or missing assignments.
- **Late assignment will not be accepted** unless prior written approval has been given by the instructor or acceptable documentation of an illness or emergency situation can be provided.
- Points will be allocated for each assignment to "writing style", and frequent spelling and grammar errors will result in loss of points **SO PROOFREAD YOUR WORK CAREFULLY. Excessive spelling and/or grammar mistakes will result in a Zero for that assignment.**
- On rare occasions some assignments which have been submitted are not able to be read. Should that occur, I will notify you and asked you to resubmit your assignment. **Please do not submit assignments to my email unless I ask you to do this.**

**Assignments & Grading:**

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Brief Explanation</b>	<b>Points</b>
In-Class Videologs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acting out/demonstrating various topics and strategies covered in class</li> <li>Oral explanation (included on video) of each demonstration</li> </ul>	10 pts x9 =90 pts
IRIS Module	Work on IRIS Module on Dual language learners with disabilities.	10 pts
Strategy Demonstration	Demonstrations to be presented of strategies to promote language/communication skills; demonstration of strategies to promote emergent literacy	10 pts
CA Learning Foundations Activity	Incorporate CA Learning Foundations into a preschool language arts activity.	10 pts
Social Communication Assessment	Assess language and communication skills of a young child with disabilities or at risk, and write a brief summary of the findings using AEPS.	20 pts
Dialogic Reading Project	Use dialogic reading strategies to select a book, read it to a young child, and record it.	30 pts
Kindergarten LEA Standards Activity	Incorporate Kindergarten LEA Standards into a Kindergarten language arts activity.	10 pts
DIBELS Practice	Assess the acquisition of literacy skills using DIBELS.	10 pts
<b>Total Points Possible</b>		<b>/190 pts</b>

Breakdown of points for plus and minus grades follows:

A	96-100%	<b>Outstanding</b> - Performance indicates high level of competency attainment, and demonstration
A-	90-95.9%	
B+	88-89.9%	<b>Very Good</b> - Performance surpasses a basic level of competency attainment, and demonstration
B	82-87.9%	
B-	80-81.9%	
C+	78-79.9%	<b>Average</b> - performance reflects a basic level of competency attainment, understanding and skill
C	72-77.9%	
<b>Note: The ECSE program requires that candidates obtain a grade of C or better in each course and maintain an overall GPA of 3.0</b>		
C-	70-71.9%	<b>Below Average</b> - Performance meets attainment of some competencies
D+	68-69.9%	
D	62-67.9%	
D-	60-61.9%	
F	≤ 60%	<b>Fail</b>

**Class Schedule:**

\* Class schedule may change during the semester. Changes will be announced in class or on Canvas.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
1. 8/30	Introduction Course Overview		
2. 9/6	Overview of communication and language	LLLI: Chapters 1 & 2	
3. 9/13	Science and theory of language development; Language diversity	Strategies for Promoting Communication and Language of Infants and Toddlers	<b>Videologs 1 &amp; 2</b>
4. 9/20	Get every child in on the act - so ALL children can interact Language development in infants	LLLI: Chapters 3 & 4	
5. 9/27	ELL; Dual language learners with disabilities		<b>Iris Module Videologs 3 &amp; 4</b>
6. 10/4	Get every child in on the act - so ALL children can interact Language development in toddlers	LLLI: Chapters 5 & 6 More than baby talk	
7. 10/11	Provide information & experiences that promote language learning Language development in preschoolers	LLLI: Chapters 7 , 8, & 9	<b>Videologs 5 &amp; 6</b>
8. 10/18	Strategy Demonstration	Review LLLI 1-9	<b>Videologs 7, 8, &amp; 9</b>
9. 10/25 & 10.11/1	Communication Assessment in Early Childhood	Paul & Norbury (2012) Ch. 2	
11. 11/8	Let language lead the way to literacy CA Learning Foundations	LLLI: Chapters 10 & 11 Outline/summarize	<b>Social- Communication Assessment; CA Learning Foundations</b>
12. 11/15 & 13. 11/22	Emergent Literacy Dialogic Reading Strategies	Connect Module 6	
14. 11/29 & 15. 12/6	Kindergarten Standards in English Language Arts & Literacy & Assessment	Kindergarten Standards in English Language Arts & Literacy	<b>Dialogic Reading Project; Kindergarten LEA Standards; DIBELS Practice</b>

CSUN has a range of resources to support your academic goals, engagement with campus activities and physical and mental health. Browse the links below throughout the semester and the rest of your time at CSUN.

## Academic and Technical Resources

- [University Library](#) for browsing of books, articles, media and additional academic resources.
- [Learning Resource Center](#) offers tutoring, a writing center, & more.
- [Disabilities Resource Educational Services \(DRES\)](#) for assistance with accommodations.
- [CSUN Information Technology \(IT\)](#) for technology support with Canvas and software related issues. Their office is open for calls/chat M-F from 8am-5pm PST.
- [CSUN's Accessibility Policy](#) for more information on CSUN's goal to ensure that campus communication and information technology is accessible to everyone.
- [Oviatt Library Open Educational Resources \(OER\)](#) for affordable Health Science textbooks and educational resources.

## Additional Campus and Community Resources

### Clubs and Campus Facilities

- [Oasis Wellness Center](#) for a welcoming destination where students can find serenity and relaxation, including meditation, massages, and workshops focused on managing stress.
- [Klotz Student Health Center](#) offering medical services, including Telehealth appointments.
- [Student Recreation Center \(SRC\)](#) for exercise and leisure activity that promotes wellness.
- [Career Center](#) for career, internship and job resources, resume writing, interview help & more.
- [USU](#) for a variety of services including lactation space, veterans' resources, and more.
- [Associated Students](#) providing programs designed to enhance the campus environment.
- [Financial Aid & Scholarships](#) offers aid for applications.

### Additional Resources

- [CSUN with A HEART](#) for valuable information that will connect you to various resources regarding the basic needs of students in the CSUN campus community.
- [Food Pantry at CSUN](#) providing food and toiletries for CSUN students in need.
- [University Counseling Center](#) offering free short term counseling services to students, including individual counseling, crisis intervention, group and workshops, and more.
- [Pride Center](#) supporting LGBTQIA+ students through programming and outreach.
- [Office of Equity and Diversity](#) supporting CSUN's commitment to maintaining an environment where no member of the campus community is subjected to any form of prohibited discrimination in any University program or activity.

- [Help lines](#) (after hours when the University Counseling is closed) for numerous topics/needs including suicide, drug help, rape or sexual assault, other crisis or urgent concerns and more.
- [Emergency MataCare grants](#), one-time grants to prevent evictions, urgent childcare issues, etc.