

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, INFANT/TODDLER LEVEL 3 CREDENTIAL CERTIFICATE (725)

About Our Program

The Infant/Toddler Level 3 Credential certificate provides students with a specialized focus on the unique strengths and needs of infants and toddlers with particular focus to children and families that are culturally, linguistically and ability diverse. Students will study the comprehensive development of the young child, birth to three years, with a focus on understanding current brain research and best caregiving practices. Students will research the process of designing infant/toddler environments that are individually, culturally and developmentally appropriate with focus on creating inclusive environments. The program is available for early childhood educators, parents, administrators, and health care professionals. The certificate is 35/36 credit hours, with all the credit hours applying to the Associate of Applied Science in Early Childhood Education. The Illinois Gateway Level Infant/Toddler Level 3 Credential is designed to support movement through the state of Illinois Career Lattice. Gateways credentials are awarded and recognized by the Illinois Department of Human Services Bureau of Child Care and Development. Gateways credentials are symbols of professional achievement and are embedded in the new quality rating and improvement system, ExceleRate Illinois. The Infant/Toddler Level 3 Credential expands on foundational professional knowledge, and supports progression to the Infant/Toddler Level 4 Credential or direct exit into the field.

Nature of Work and Employment

Infant/Toddler Level 3 Credential certificate holders work in licensed child care programs as assistant teachers or for home visiting programs such as Early Head Start or Prevention Initiative programs. Family child care providers are encouraged to use this program to upgrade their own training and preparation.

Special Considerations

Certificate students must demonstrate good physical and emotional health and submit to and pass a criminal background check. To successfully begin the early childhood degree, students must meet the communication requirements. Students must take either Introduction to Early Childhood Education (ECE 121 Intro to Early Childhood Ed) or Child Growth and Development (ECE 122 Child Growth & Development) and earn a grade of "C" or better to proceed through the early childhood program. They must maintain a "C" or better in all early childhood courses to complete the certificate. A workplace experience is encouraged and may be made available.

Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
Required ECE Courses		
ECE 121	Intro to Early Childhood Ed	3

ECE 122	Child Growth & Development	3
ECE 123	Hlth,Safety,Nutrition Yng Chil ¹	3
ECE 125	Assessment in EC Settings ¹	3
ECE 202	Curriculum in EC Settings ¹	3
ECE 203	Home,ScI,ComRelations ECE ¹	3
ECE 205	Intro to Infant/Toddler Care ¹	3
ECE 213	Incl Environ for Inf/Tod ¹	3
ECE 128	Practicum ¹	2-3
or ECE 204	Exceptional Child ECE	

Related Required Courses

SPCH 191	Fund of Speech Communication	3
Select one of the following communication courses:		
BUSN 141	Business Communications ¹	3
ENGL 121	Rhetoric and Composition I ¹	
Select one of the following:		
BUSN 125	Math of Business	3
College Level Math		

Total Hours **35-36**

¹ Course has a prerequisite. See course description.

Program Outcomes

- Evaluate children's unique developmental patterns, utilize assessments to inform instruction, and identify appropriate resources for those who may require further support.
- Develop and implement teaching strategies, materials, and content to support varied learning styles and abilities, incorporating evidence-based practices such as universal design and children's interests.
- Create and maintain safe, healthy, and engaging environments that promote each child's learning and development through inclusive practices and high-quality, responsive interactions that support their sense of belonging and well-being.
- Interpret and utilize assessment data to guide instructional planning, adapt environments, and individualize learning experiences.
- Demonstrate ethical standards, professional conduct, and effectively collaborate with colleagues, families, and community partners.
- Advocate for the early childhood education profession and actively support families—including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds—through informed, respectful engagement and community-focused advocacy.
- Implement high-quality, responsive learning experiences that align with children's needs, feedback, and the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards.

Program Contacts

Call Highland at 815-235-6121 for the following program contacts:

- Rae Schupbach-Roe, Dean, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Fine Arts
- Melissa Johnson, Coordinator of Early Childhood Education
- Vicki Schulz, Student Advisor/Transfer Coordinator