Description
This course focuses on understanding, analyzing, and evaluating theory and research in early childhood intervention, which is defined as a broad and interdisciplinary field of study and practice. The course will involve readings, learning assessments, as well as discussion and application sessions with other students and the instructor. Participants will consider the role of theory in early childhood intervention research; how theory and research are used to develop frameworks or approaches to guide early childhood interventions and practices; and how early childhood intervention research is designed, implemented, and appraised. Impacts of theory, evidence-based practices, recommended practices, and implementation science will be considered in relation to contemporary research and practices in early childhood intervention. An integrated approach to applied research in early childhood intervention will be emphasized, which highlights important linkages among theory, research design, measurement, analysis, and resulting implications for additional research and practices.

Relation to Early Childhood Studies Doctoral Concentration
This course is related to the UF early childhood studies doctoral concentration course sequence. The specialization sequence is designed to prepare early childhood leaders with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to advance policies, research, and practices for the benefit of young children and their families within and across various ecological contexts. A course in early childhood theory and research is part of the concentration sequence because early childhood leaders should have knowledge, skills, and dispositions that support their active engagement in applied research and their ability to design, implement, and evaluate early childhood interventions informed by theory and research. Moreover, early childhood leaders should have knowledge, skills, and dispositions to ensure the ethical conduct of research with young children and their families and that young children, their families, and the personnel who support them benefit from the application of evidence-based practices.

Philosophy of Teaching
Our teaching philosophy includes several key principles, maxims, and norms: (a) establish an instructional context and learning community that sets the occasion for
learning and achievement of course objectives; (b) use instructional strategies that have been demonstrated empirically to support learners to acquire relevant knowledge, skills, and dispositions; (c) use scaffolding and individualized instructional strategies appropriate for each learner; (d) respect diversity, including learning histories, and its importance in creating a culturally responsive and contextually relevant learning environment; and (e) motivate learners by establishing clear expectations for learning and performance and by applying meaningful evaluations, including performance feedback and differential consequences. Learners take an active role by making substantive contributions to their own learning and to the learning of others by identifying (a) learning strengths and needs in relation to established course objectives, (b) preferred methods to ensure they acquire and master course content and demonstrate competencies, and (c) motivators for learning.

**Objectives**

By the end of the course, learners will be able to:

1. Describe, analyze, and evaluate major theories or conceptual frameworks in early childhood intervention, which is defined as a broad field of study and practice.
2. Analyze and integrate how theories, conceptual frameworks, or models and their associated principles, constructs, and concepts are linked to research hypotheses and recommended or evidence-based practices in early childhood intervention.
3. Define and differentiate evidence-based practice (two uses of the term) and recommended and developmentally appropriate practices and discuss implications for theory, applied research, and practice in early childhood intervention.
4. Define and illustrate key terms used in early childhood intervention research.
5. Describe research processes and products as they relate to applied research in early childhood intervention.
6. Identify key considerations in early childhood measurement and analyze as well as evaluate how measurement and measurement decisions potentially impact research questions, definitions of variables, study procedures, study findings, and study implications.
7. Differentiate statistical, practical, and clinical significance in early childhood research.
8. Apply design, measurement, and statistical concepts to analyze applied research in early childhood intervention.
9. Appraise critically applied research in early childhood intervention by identifying and applying indicators of research quality.
10. Apply an evidence-based practice applied inquiry framework (PICO) to formulate an answerable question, search for and appraise evidence related to the question, evaluate the evidence, and describe how the evidence could be used to inform recommended practices in the field.

**Additional Early Childhood Doctoral Concentration Objectives**

1. Analyze how theories and frameworks are used to inform the development of policy and practices (theoretical foundations).
2. Discern differences between competing viewpoints on critical early childhood theory and research issues (critical thinking skills).
3. Apply inquiry skills to conduct critical reading of and to synthesize the extant theoretical and empirical literature (research inquiry skills).
4. Create scholarly papers and receive feedback about scholarly writing (writing skills).
6. Demonstrate clear, coherent, and accurate oral communication skills and engage in critical dialogue with peers and faculty (communication skills).

**Learner Expectations**

The value of our learning together during class sessions is dependent on the preparation and participation of each learner. Therefore, each participant is expected to complete the assigned readings for each session, to attend each session, and to participate actively in small and large group discussions and activities. Learners are expected to engage in continuous cycle of planning, organizing, instructing, monitoring, and evaluating their learning in relation to specified objectives throughout the semester.

1. Each participant should read ALL assigned readings and complete all learning activities specified on the syllabus. **Readings and learning activities for class should be completed by the date listed on the schedule.**

2. Learning assessments are due by 3:00 pm on the date shown on the schedule. **Late assessments will be accepted only in extreme cases and only after consultation with the instructors.** A grading penalty may be applied when learning assessments are submitted late.

3. Learners are expected to attend scheduled class and participate actively in discussions and activities. **Cell phones should be placed on vibrate during class unless we are using them as part of learning activities.** Learners are responsible for procuring handouts, notes, assignments, et cetera in the event that they are absent from class. **Active participation means expressing your own thoughts and listening to those of others, engaging in respectful dialogue, and being willing to challenge and be challenged by important ideas or diverse perspectives.** Learners are expected to take leadership roles in particular discussions, engage actively in discussions and activities, and share their knowledge and expertise with other learners. **Participation in class will be assessed by the instructors and student using the following criteria:** (a) degree to which learner is knowledgeable about content of required readings and other materials as evidenced by their substantive contributions to discussions, activities, or responses to questions; (b) contributions made to the learning community through sharing of resources or offering supports to other learners; (c) insightfulness of questions and comments during discussions or activities to encourage analysis and
critical thinking; and (d) ability to follow group discussion and contribute effectively to class or electronic discourse. **Up to 10 points are available for participation.**

4. For preparing written assignments and class presentations, learners should follow guidelines outlined in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed., 2010). Points will be deducted from learning assessments when APA guidelines are not followed (this includes correct APA formats for citations and references).

**Required Texts**


*You can purchase the text or individual chapters listed below under Additional Assigned Readings section of the syllabus.

**Recommended Texts**

(Will read excerpts from some of these texts. You can decide whether to acquire these recommended texts for your professional library.)


is available electronically for download from the National Academies Press website]


**Additional Assigned Readings**

(A beneficial outcome from doctoral courses and seminars occurs when each learning community member shares additional readings and resources. Below is an initial list of additional readings for the course this semester. Additional readings might be identified by the learners or instructors throughout the semester to extend or enhance learning.)


**Formal Learning Assessments and Points Assigned to Each Assessment**

Learners will complete several formal learning assessments during the course. Each assessment is designed to help students and the instructor monitor and evaluate the extent to which learners meet objectives for the course. For most learning assessments, evaluation criteria or an evaluation rubric will be used to help inform the monitoring and evaluation. Learners will be provided with the list of criteria or rubric to be used at least 2 weeks before the learning assessment is due.

1. **Learning Assessment #1 - Linking Theory and Research Paper (DUE September 27, 2016).** Write a paper in which you (a) review a theory or framework in early childhood intervention (i.e., review of major concepts, constructs, or principles); (b) identify concepts, constructs, or principles from the theory or framework that became hypotheses tested as part of an applied research study in
early childhood intervention; (c) describe the research questions that guided the applied research study, the variables reflected in the research questions, and how these variables relate to concepts, constructs, or principles specified in the theory or framework; (d) specify how variables of interest were operationally defined and measured, and (e) describe how findings from the study would help confirm or advance theory or framework principles, constructs, or concepts and inform practice from an evidence-based or recommended practices perspective. The paper should be approximately 10-15 pages, double-spaced, APA format. (20 points)

2. Learning Assessment #2 – Practice-Focused Research Synthesis (DUE October 11, 2016). Locate a practice-focused research synthesis published in a scholarly journal or visit an evidence-based practice or research synthesis web site to locate a practice-focused research or evidence synthesis (e.g., What Works Clearinghouse, Research and Training Center on Early Childhood Development, Campbell Collaboration, Cochrane Collaboration) of interest to you. Read the synthesis and complete a written evaluation addressing the focus and quality of the review using criteria provided by the instructors. The evaluation should be between 5-10 pages, double-spaced, APA format. (10 points)

3. Measurement in Early Childhood Intervention (DUE November 22, 2016). Select an instrument or measurement tool that either is commonly used in early childhood intervention or is of interest to you. Write an approximately 5-page double-spaced, APA format review of the instrument, focusing primarily on its purpose(s), available psychometric integrity evidence, and how it might be used in an applied research study in early childhood intervention (e.g., if you were conducting an applied research study, what construct(s) might this measure help you operationalize). A helpful resource for how to write a review of an instrument or measurement tool is Mental Measurements Yearbook with Tests in Print, which is available on-line through UF Libraries - A-Z Database List (search for Mental Measurements Yearbook with Tests in Print). (10 points)

4. Review of Evidence for DEC Recommended Practice – Course Capstone Project (Due December 13, 2016). Using a PICO evidence-based practice framework provided by the instructors, identify a DEC recommended practice to which you will apply the PICO framework. You will need to frame the DEC recommended practice in the form of a question that you will pose and then answer. The question should include a statement of the problem (P), intervention (I), comparative intervention (C, if applicable) and outcome (O). Your PICO statement can then be used to search for published evidence for the recommended practice. You must use systematic search criteria and procedures to identify the best-available evidence for the practice. Once you identify the best-available evidence, you will classify the evidence using a framework provided by the instructors and review the quality of the evidence using established criteria for various research designs (i.e., group experimental, single-subject experimental, correlational). The instructors will provide the evidence criteria and indicators you will use for this assignment. Additional information and guidance about this learning assessment will be provided in a separate document. (50 points)
Grading

Points Available:
Participation in Meetings: 10 points
Learning Assessment #1: 20 points
Learning Assessment #2: 10 points
Learning Assessment #3: 10 points
Learning Assessment #4: 50 points
Total Points = 100

Grades Earned Based on Points Earned/Total Points X 100
92% or higher: A
87 - 91%: A-
86 - 84%: B+
83 - 80%: B
79 - 77%: B-
76 - 74%: C+
73 - 70%: C
69 - 67%: C-
68 - 60%: D*
Below 60%: E*

*Note. These are not “passing” grades for graduate students according to the UF Graduate Student Catalog. (http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#grades)

Academic Honor Code
Students and faculty are expected to adhere to the academic honor code of the University of Florida as published on the University of Florida Web site at: http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php For this course, students should pay particular attention to the policies related to citing sources appropriately and avoiding plagiarism. Please ask the instructor if you would like some helpful references related to citing sources effectively and avoiding plagiarism.

Americans with Disabilities Act
As described on the UF Disability Resource Center Web site, “there is a strong commitment to equal education for all students at the University of Florida. The University will strive to be aware of and sensitive to the unique needs of all students. Student needs will be addressed through a lens of knowledge, awareness, and sensitivity to cultural, racial, religious, ethnic, and disability diversity.” Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations should (1) register with and provide documentation to the Disability Resource Center, and (2) bring a letter to the instructor from the DRC that verifies the need for academic accommodations and what type. This should be done before or within the first week of class. For more information about the Disability Resource Center contact them at

Disability Resource Center
0020 Reid Hall
Phone: (352) 392-8565
Fax: (352) 392-8570 Web site: http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/
Week One (August 23)
Topics:
- Overview of Course Activities and Review of Course Syllabus
- Context for Theory and Research in Early Childhood Intervention
- History of and Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood Intervention

Text Readings: Preface, Foreword, and Chapter 1 – S & M

Week Two (August 30)
Topic:
- Theory in Early Childhood Intervention: Foundations for Research, Policy, and Practice
- Building Blocks of Theory (Concepts/Constructs, Principles)
- Conceptual Frameworks and Models

Text Readings:
S & M – Chapter 4

Additional Readings:

Week Three (September 6)

Text Readings:
Chapter 9 – S & M

Additional Readings:

**Locate and bring an empirical article that is an original report of research to class in which the science of human behavior or applied behavior analysis was the guiding framework for the study.**

**Week Four (September 13)**

**Topic:**
- Theory in Early Childhood Intervention - Foundations for Research, Policy, and Practice: Transactional Theory and Model of Human Ecology

**Text Readings:**
- Chapters 4 and 7 – S & M

**Additional Readings:**

**Locate and bring an empirical article that is an original report of research to class in which transactional theory or the model of human ecology was the guiding framework for the study.**

**Week Five (September 20)**

**Topic:**
- Theory in Early Childhood Intervention - Foundations for Research, Policy, and Practice: Developmental Vulnerability and Resilience, Biodevelopmental, and Developmental Systems

**Text Readings:**
- Chapters 2, 6, and 28 – S & M

**Additional Readings:**

Locate and bring an empirical article that is an original report of research to class in which developmental vulnerability and resilience, biodevelopmental framework, or developmental systems framework was the guiding framework for the study.

**Week Six (September 27)**

**Topics:**
- Neurobiological Bases of Early Intervention

**Text Readings:**
Chapter 10 – S & M

**Additional Readings:**
TBD

**Learning Assessment # 1 DUE – September 27**

**Week Seven (October 4)**

**Topics:**
- Connecting Theory to Research and Practices in Early Childhood “Intervention”
- Early Childhood “Sectors” – Implications for Early Childhood “Intervention”
- Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) in Early Childhood
- Recommended Practices in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education

**Text Readings:**
Chapters 15, 16, 17, 19 – S & M

**Additional Readings:**

**Week Eight (October 11)**

**Topics:**
- Overview of Implementation Science and Its Relevance for Early Childhood Intervention Research and Practices
- Frameworks Guiding Implementation of Practices in Early Intervention
Additional Readings:

Learning Assessment # 2 DUE – October 11

Week Nine (October 18) – NO CLASS

Week Ten (October 25)
Topics:
• “Effectiveness” of Early Intervention: First- and Second-Generation Research Questions
• Introduction to “Evidence-Based” Practice: Linkages Among Research, Practice, and Implementation Science

Text Readings:
Chapter 22 & 23 - S & M

Additional Readings:
Week Eleven (October 25)
Topic:
- Origins of evidence-based practice: Evidence-based medicine
- Evidence-based practice in early childhood and early intervention: “A tale of two meanings”
- Division for Early Childhood Evidence Syntheses: Gathering and Appraising Evidence in Support of the DEC Recommended Practices

Text Readings:

Additional Readings:

Begin Work on Capstone Project – Topic Approval Submission DUE

Week Twelve (November 1)
Topics:
- Applied Research in Early Childhood Intervention: Research Traditions and Methods
- Applied Research in Early Childhood Intervention: What Do We Know and What Do We Need to Know?
Additional Readings:
Goodwin, W. L., & Goodwin, L. D. (1996). *Understanding quantitative and qualitative research in early childhood education* (pp. 3-29). [Chapters 1 and 2]

**Week Thirteen (November 8)**
Topics:
- What Constitutes Quality in Early Childhood Intervention Research by Type of Research Design?
- PICO – A Framework for Identifying and Appraising Evidence about a Recommended Practice in Early Childhood Intervention
- Coding Forms for Capstone Project

**Additional Readings:**

**Capstone Project: Framing of Recommended Practice and Search Terms for Evidence Review DUE**

**Week Fourteen (November 15)**
Topics:
- What Constitutes Quality in Early Childhood Intervention Research by Type of Research Design?
• PICO – A Framework for Identifying and Appraising Evidence about a Recommended Practice in Early Childhood Intervention
• Coding Forms for Capstone Project

Additional Readings:

**Week Fifteen (November 22)**
Topics:
• Measurement in Early Childhood Intervention Research: Opportunities and Challenges
• Recommended Practices in Early Childhood Assessment: Relations to Identifying and Measuring Outcomes in Early Childhood Intervention Research

Additional Readings:

**Learning Assessment #3 DUE: Measurement in Early Childhood Intervention**

**Week Sixteen (December 6)**
Topics:
Integration and Summary: Linking Theory, Research, and Evidence-Based or Recommended Practices in Early Childhood Intervention
Additional Readings:

December 13, 2016 (No Class) – EXAM Learning Assessment #4 DUE: Review of Evidence for DEC Recommended Practice – Course Capstone Project