Early Childhood Special Education Program
Leadership and Scholarship Focused on Learning and Development

Student Handbook

Special Education Program
Department of Educational Psychology, Special Education, and Communication Disorders
Georgia State University
Atlanta, GA

“Preparing informed, empowered, committed, and engaged educators”

This handbook was prepared to assist students with program planning during their time in the ECSE program. This handbook provides policies and suggestions that are in addition to the rules and regulations of the College of Education & Human Development and Georgia State University. It is the responsibility of the student to be familiar with the graduation requirements and academic policies of the College and University and for meeting all registration, fee, and other deadlines pursuant to continuous enrollment, sufficient academic progress, and graduation.

College of Education & Human Development
Georgia State University
2016-2017

I certify that I have reviewed this handbook which includes an outline of the program requirements, including information on background checks and the required ethics module for certification.

Name_______________________________________  Date__________________
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Welcome to the Early Childhood Special Education Program at Georgia State University! This student handbook provides an overview of the Masters and Certification programs in Early Childhood Special Education offered in the Special Education Program in the Department of Educational Psychology, Special Education, and Communication Disorders (ESC) at Georgia State University.
Early Childhood Special Education Program

Faculty

Sarah Hansen, Ph.D. (University of Oregon). Sarah Hansen received her Ph.D. in Early Intervention/ECSE at the University of Oregon. She is an Assistant Professor and Program Coordinator for the ECSE program at GSU. Dr. Hansen's interests are: intervention, assessment, and natural change agent training of early social communication skills for young children with or at risk for autism spectrum disorders and other developmental disabilities. She is also an active participant in the Council for Exceptional Children, Division of Early Childhood, ABAI, and NAYEC.

Dr. Hansen will teach three of the major courses in ECSE and supervise the practicum experiences. You will have courses with other ESC and College of Education and Human Development faculty members as well.

Peggy Gallagher, Ph.D. (University of North Carolina Chapel Hill). Dr. Gallagher is recently retired as a Professor and Coordinator of the Early Childhood Special Education program at Georgia State University. Dr. Gallagher’s research interests are inclusion of young children with special needs; family issues, particularly siblings, in families of children with special needs; personnel preparation in early childhood special education; and issues of collaboration in special education. Dr. Gallagher is an active participant in the European Teacher Education Network (ETEN). She has hosted visiting scholars from China and Turkey and was recently a Senior Fulbright Specialist working in Sri Lanka.
Early Childhood Special Education Program

Overview

The Masters and Certification programs in Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) at GSU are housed in the Special Education program in the department of Educational Psychology, Special Education, and Communication Disorders of the College of Education & Human Development at Georgia State University. The ECSE program prepares educators to work with young children with disabilities and their families.

Master’s Degree or Non-degree (Certification Only) in Early Childhood Special Education

The Early Childhood Special Education Program offers two Master’s degrees (M. A. T. and M. Ed.) and a non-degree certification only option.

The M. A. T. (Master of Arts in Teaching) degree is offered for those who wish to receive initial certification working with young children with disabilities and typical children through 5th grade, along with a Master’s degree. The certification received through the M. A. T. degree or non-degree option is Special Education-General Curriculum—Early Childhood. This certifies individuals to teach all core subjects for children from preschool through 5th grade, with and without disabilities, included in the general curriculum. It also qualifies graduates to work in the Babies Can’t Wait Early Intervention program for young children Birth-3 years, and their families.

The Masters of Education (M. Ed.) degree is for applicants who do not want teaching certification to be a classroom teacher but are interested in obtaining advanced pedagogy, methods and strategies to work with children with disabilities in non-educational settings that do not require state certification. It is also appropriate for those who already have T4 certification in special education. For those with current T4 certification in special education, this M. Ed. leads to a Level 5 advanced degree and certification upgrade, but only in the field of special education your current certification is in. This allows students with previous Georgia certification in special education to pursue a certification upgrade but it would not add the field of certification for Special Education-General Curriculum-Early Childhood (which certifies one to teach regular education as well from preschool through 5th grade) unless that is your T4 certification.

Students in both degrees as well as certification only students who successfully complete the program will also receive a Georgia reading endorsement.

Successful completion of the Master’s program results in either a Master’s of Art in Teaching (M. A. T.) or Master’s in Education (M.Ed.) in Special Education, with a concentration in Early Childhood Special Education.

Application and Enrollment

Graduate and non-degree students may apply and enroll in either Summer or Fall semesters and may enroll as part time or full time students. Courses are taught by College of Education and Human Development faculty, typically in the afternoon (e.g., 4:30-7:00p) or late evening (e.g.,
7:30-10p) at the Georgia State University campus in downtown Atlanta. There are a few courses that are offered either partially or completely online. Summer courses may be offered during the day.

All Master’s and certification students are required to enroll in and complete two practicum experiences, including an initial (at least part-time) and a final (full time) practicum experience in a preschool, kindergarten, or early elementary classroom (preschool through 5th grade) with children with disabilities. Practicum experiences may be completed on the job or the student’s advisor may arrange a student teaching placement. All practicum experiences are completed in either the fall or spring semester (i.e., not during the summer).

**Add-on Endorsement in Preschool Special Education**

There is an add-on endorsement option for professionals who already hold a valid Georgia Special Education, Early Childhood, or Speech-Language Pathology Certification. Students in this program receive an endorsement in Special Education Preschool after taking a minimum of 9 specified credit hours.

**Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) option**

ECSE students may also be interested in adding on the BCBA, a cross-disciplinary certification focusing on the specific and comprehensive use of principles of learning to address the behavioral needs of individuals with disabilities. This requires a separate application to the BCBA program, but courses can be taken simultaneously with the ECSE coursework. GSU has an approved sequence of 6 BCBA courses (that along with supervised practicum) lead to eligibility to take the BCBA Exam. One of the BCBA courses can be substituted for an ECSE course in your program plan (EPY 8020 instead of EXC 7030). More information can be found at [www.education.gsu.edu](http://www.education.gsu.edu) or [www.bacb.com](http://www.bacb.com) or by contacting your advisor.
Early Childhood Special Education Program

Philosophy

Program Assumptions:
We believe that:

✓ Individuals preparing to teach students with disabilities need a foundation of broad general child development and education based in the major academic disciplines.
✓ Educators need to understand, respect, and value the multicultural backgrounds and diverse educational needs of students in our schools and promote cooperative programs.
✓ The programs for special education personnel preparation should be based on research to the greatest extent possible.
✓ Special education personnel preparation programs should be based on an identified set of teaching and facilitative skills that are related to the individual educational and developmental needs of individuals with disabilities.
✓ Special education personnel preparation programs should prepare educators who can appropriately evaluate and modify strategies in response to student outcome data.
✓ Special education personnel preparation programs should provide field-based opportunities for observation, feedback, supervision and self-evaluation of applied experiences in appropriate settings.

Program Philosophy:
The Special Education Program at Georgia State University is committed to preparing special educators who can provide scholarship and leadership focused on learning and development, consistent with the diverse needs and abilities of individuals with disabilities and their families. The faculty members recognize that the prepared personnel must have the flexibility to adapt to the changing role of the special educator, the changing patterns regarding how special education services are delivered, and the changing social and economic contexts in which individuals with disabilities live. The faculty members are committed to providing Georgia’s public and private schools with educators whose field-based education has prepared them to implement the best practices in special education, to communicate effectively and to work collaboratively with other special educators, general educators, parents and support personnel.
Early Childhood Special Education Program

Standards and Competencies

Core Competency Areas

A carefully designed series of courses and practicum experiences prepare students to meet standards within ten Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC; adopted April 2011) and seven Council for Exceptional Children (CEC; approved by NCATE 2012) competency areas. The Division of Early Childhood/CEC Specialty Set standards as well as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) standards are also used. Students who graduate from the program will be competent in the following areas:

INTASC Standard 1 Learner Development; CEC Standard 1 Learner Development
INTASC Standard 2 Learning Differences; CEC Standard 1 Individual Learning Differences
INTASC Standard 3 Learning Environments; CEC Standard 2 Learning Environments
INTASC Standard 4 Content Knowledge; CEC Standard 3 Curricular Content Knowledge
INTASC Standard 5 Application of Content; CEC Standard 3 Curricular Content Knowledge
INTASC Standard 6 Assessment; CEC Standard 4 Assessment
INTASC Standard 7 Planning for Instruction; CEC Standard 5 Instructional Planning
INTASC Standard 8 Instructional Strategies; CEC Standard 5 Instructional Strategies
INTASC Standard 9 Professional Learning and Ethical Practice; CEC Standard 6 Professional Learning and Practice
INTASC Standard 10 Leadership and Collaboration; CEC Standard 7 Collaboration.

Links to these standards can be found at the following:
http://www.cesso.org
http://www.cec.sped.org
https://www.naeyc.org/ncate/standards
## Early Childhood Special Education Program

### Required Courses

*Shaded courses indicate prerequisite courses. Ideally, these should be taken first but that is not required. Course offerings may change at any point so continuously check on course availability.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Semester Offered</th>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>Masters’ Degrees</th>
<th>Add-On Certification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EPY 2050 Human Growth and Development</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXC 4020 Characteristics and Instructional Strategies for Students with Disabilities</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDRD 6600 Intro. To Materials and Methods in Reading Instruction (3) OR EDRD 7600 Theory and Pedagogy in the Study of Reading - take before EDRD 7550 or 7650</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDRD 7550 Linking Literacy Assessment and Classroom Instruction (3) OR EDRD 7650 Individualized Assessment and Instruction for At-risk Readers (3)</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXC 7030 Applied Behavior Analysis (3) OR EPY 8020 (if in BCBA option; check schedule for offerings)</td>
<td>Spring and Summer only</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDMT 7400 Mathematics Concepts for Special Learners (3)</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXC 7929 Initial Practicum in ECSE (3)</td>
<td>Fall, Spring</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXC 7000 Collaboration with Parents and Professionals (3)</td>
<td>Spring of Odd Years</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Code</td>
<td>Course Title</td>
<td>Semester Offered</td>
<td>Certification</td>
<td>Masters Degrees</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXC 7010</td>
<td>Language Development and Language Disabilities (3)</td>
<td>Summer of Even Years</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXC 7190</td>
<td>Alt. Approaches to Literacy Instruction for Students with Disabilities (3)</td>
<td>Fall, Spring</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXC 7300</td>
<td>Assistive Technology: Reading and Academics (3)</td>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>EXC 7320</td>
<td>Methods for Teaching Students with Autism (3)</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXC 7330</td>
<td>Physical and Health Management of Students with Disabilities (3)</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXC 7650</td>
<td>Characteristics of Young Children with Disabilities (3) – prereq: EXC 4020; must take EXC 7650 before EXC 7660</td>
<td>Fall of Even Years</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXC 7660</td>
<td>Methods of Teaching Young Children with Disabilities (3); prerequisite is EXC 7650</td>
<td>Spring of Odd Years</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPY 7080</td>
<td>The Psychology of the Learner</td>
<td>All</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>EPSF 7100</td>
<td>Critical Pedagogy (3) or EPSF 7110 Multicultural Education (3) or EPSF 7120 Social and Cultural Foundations of Education (3)</td>
<td>All</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPRS 7900</td>
<td>Methods of Research in Education (3) or EPRS 7910 Action Research (3) or EPRS 7920 Educational Measurement</td>
<td>All</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXC 7939</td>
<td>Final Practicum in ECSE (3)</td>
<td>Fall, Spring</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Early Childhood Special Education Program

Course Descriptions

**EPY 2050 – Human Growth and Development**
Students study the research and theory on human development spanning the years from conception through adolescence. The roles played by biology, gender, and culture are examined, as is the relationship between development and the learning process. 3.0 Credit Hours

**EXC 4020 – Characteristics and Instructional Strategies for Students with Disabilities**
This course is designed to provide the student with an overview of the identification, classification, eligibility, and the unique characteristics of individuals with disabilities who require accommodations and adaptations throughout their life cycle. The course will focus on basic instructional strategies used to teach these individuals. The course includes an analysis of individuals across classification categories as well as an in depth review of all areas of exceptionalities per Georgia House Bill 671. 3.0 Credit Hours

**EDRD 6600 – Introduction to Materials and Methods in Reading Instruction**
Intended for students who do not have a background in education or who are not majoring in language and literacy education. This course introduces students to classroom approaches to reading instruction. Foci include examination of how children learn to read and analysis of specific strategies and materials used to teach reading. Students are involved in observing and analyzing literacy programs in field experience settings. 3.0 Credit Hours

**EDRD 7600—Theory and Pedagogy in the Study of Reading**
This course addresses methodologies and materials used in developmental reading programs. Students analyze strategies, materials, and organizational designs for teaching reading to all students including those representing diverse cultural and linguistic communities. 3.0 Credit Hours

**EDRD 7550 – Linking Literary Assessment and Classroom Instruction**
*Prerequisite: EDRD 6600 or EDRD 7600 or equivalent.* This course involves advanced study of the planning and managing of classroom literacy events based on assessment information. Emphases include a supervised classroom experience where students (1) examine ways of recording, analyzing, and using assessment information in daily classroom instruction; and (2) consider cultural, psychological, social, and political issues associated with traditional ability
groups and alternative approaches to ability grouping that can be implemented to meet students' needs. 3.0 Credit Hours

EDRD 7650 – Individual Assessment and Instruction for At-Risk Readers  
*Prerequisite: EDRD 6600 or EDRD 7600 or equivalent.* This course introduces the use of formal and informal assessment methods for the diagnosis of individual student's reading strengths and weaknesses. Emphases include instructional strategies for working with at-risk or remedial readers and a practicum experience in which students compile literacy profiles of struggling readers using a case study approach. 3.0 Credit Hours

EXC 7030 – Applied Behavior Analysis  
This course is a study of the theory and implementation of behavioral strategies for behavior change in students. Strategies include those for data collection and analysis and behavior increase, maintenance, and decrease. Applied project required. 3.0 Credit Hours

EDMT 7400—Mathematics Concepts for Special Learners  
Students explore the full range of materials and strategies for developing mathematical competence in special learners. The course emphasizes diagnosis, remediation, concept learning, and mathematical problem solving taught in a concrete, student-centered manner. 3.0 Credit Hours

EXC 7929 Practicum I: Early Childhood  
This intensive practicum course (minimum of 200 hours) in a public school setting provides opportunity for initial in-depth experiences with early childhood students. This practicum may extend beyond one term. This must be completed during the fall or spring semester. 3.0 Credit Hours

EXC 7000 Collaboration with Parents and Professionals  
Prerequisite: planned certification or degree program or consent of the instructor. This course provides students with strategies to successfully collaborate with families, teachers, related staff, and other members of the educational team for students in special education. This course is only offered spring semester of odd years. 3.0 Credit Hours

EXC 7010 – Language Development and Language Disabilities  
This course examines normal and delayed communication development. It includes theories of language development as well as implications for educational programming for preschool and school age students with special needs. This course is only offered summer semester of even years. 3.0 Credit Hours
EXC 7190 – Alternative Approaches to Literacy Instruction for Students with Disabilities
Students study the design, implementation, and evaluation of reading, writing, and spelling instruction for students with disabilities, with an emphasis on an explicit, direct approach to instruction as supported by research. Students study explicit instructional procedures in phonological awareness, decoding, comprehension, writing, and spelling. Commercial programs that are research-based and that meet the needs of students with disabilities are reviewed and demonstrated. 3.0 Credit Hours

EXC 7300 – Assistive Technology: Reading and Academics
This course provides instruction in various forms of assistive technology for students with disabilities and includes computer adaptations for physical access and assistive technology to promote reading, writing, math and other academic areas. Course may extend beyond one term. This course is only offered spring semester. 3.0 Credit Hours

EXC 7320 – Methods of Teaching Students with Autism
This course provides an examination of the unique learning styles of students functioning on the lower end of the autism spectrum and how their disability may affect behavior and learning. Empirically- validated methods for teaching communication, socialization, self-help, and basic academics will be discussed along with the application of these methods across environments. This course is only offered fall semester. 3.0 Credit Hours

EXC 7330 – Physical Health Management of Students with Disabilities
This course includes a wide variety of techniques to meet the student's physical and health needs including how to position the student for optimal instruction, lifting and handling procedures, feeding techniques, and health care procedures (e.g., tube feeding, catheterization). This course is only offered fall semester. 3.0 Credit Hours

EXC 7650 – Characteristics of Young Children with Disabilities
Prerequisite: consent of the instructor, EXC 4020. This course focuses on legislation and learning and behavioral characteristics of young children with disabilities. A minimum grade of "B" is required for this course. This course is only offered fall semester of even years. 3.0 Credit Hours

EXC 7660 – Methods of Teaching Young Children with Disabilities
Prerequisite: EXC 7650. This course includes instructional methods, materials, and curriculum used in teaching young children with disabilities. Three-hour weekly field placement is required as part of course. This course is only offered spring semester of odd years. 3.0 Credit Hours
EXC 7939 – Practicum II: Early Childhood
Prerequisite: contact the department; all required EXC coursework must be completed and, for Masters students, comprehensive exams must have been taken and passed before enrolling. This intensive practicum course (minimum of 600 hours) provides opportunity for full-time, in-depth experiences with early childhood students with disabilities and must be completed during the fall or spring of the semester you plan on graduating. 3.0 Credit Hours

EPY 7080 – The Psychology of Learning and the Learner
This course provides an overview of major behavioral, cognitive, and sociohistorical approaches to learning with consideration of learning across the life span. Sources for individual differences in learning are discussed. 3.0 Credit Hours (Masters only)

EPSF 7100 – Critical Pedagogy
Students learn ways to enhance and stimulate opportunities for democratic schooling. Topics address teaching for social action through community service, critical literacy, multiculturalism, and post colonialism. 3.0 Credit Hours (Masters only)

EPSF 7110 – Multicultural Education
Students explore educational reforms in relation to race, ethnicity, culture, gender, and diversity within a democratic framework. Emphasis is placed on examining the economic, political, and social frames that affect the quality of education within a multicultural, social reconstructionist perspective. 3.0 Credit Hours (Masters only)

EPSF 7120 – Social and Cultural Foundations of Education
Students analyze the roles of schools in the social order from the perspectives of the humanities and the social sciences. 3.0 Credit Hours (Masters only)

EPRS 7900 – Methods of Research in Education
Students study research methods, procedures, and designs. Preparation of research abstracts in education and related fields is included. 3.0 Credit Hours (Masters only)

EPRS 7910 – Action Research
This course provides an overview of the research methods and philosophy of practitioner self-study. 3.0 Credit Hours (Masters only)

EPRS 7920 – Educational Measurement
Prerequisite: college algebra. The development and application of classroom assessment instruments and the use of standardized measurement instruments in educational settings are emphasized. 3.0 Credit Hours (Masters only)
Early Childhood Special Education Program

SAMPLE

Two-Year Course Plan for a

Part-Time ECSE Certification Only Student

Summer Even Years
EDRD 7650 Individualized Assessment and Instruction for At-risk Readers (3)
EXC 7010 Language Development and Language Disabilities (3)

Fall Even Years
EXC 7650 Characteristics of Young Children with Disabilities (3)
EXC 7929 Initial Practicum in Early Childhood Special Education (3)
EXC 7190 Alternative Approaches to Literacy Instruction for Students with Disabilities (3)

Spring Odd Years
EXC 7660 Methods of Teaching Young Children with Disabilities (3)
EXC 7000 Collaboration with Parents and Professionals (3)
EXC 7030 Applied Behavior Analysis (3)

Summer
EDMT 7400 Mathematics Concepts for Special Learners (3)
EDRD 6600 Introduction to Materials and Methods in Reading Instruction (3)

Fall
EXC 7320 Methods for Teaching Students with Autism (3)
EXC 7330 Physical and Health Management of Students with Disabilities (3)

Spring
EXC 7300 Assistive Technology: Reading and Academics (3) (with permission of advisor to take with final practicum)
EXC 7939 Practicum II: Early Childhood (3)
Reading portfolio due in March
ECSE portfolio due at end of semester

*assumes student has completed undergraduate prerequisite courses EPY 2050 (Human Growth and Development) and EXC 4020 (Characteristics and Instructional Strategies for Students with Disabilities)

Note: This is a sample course plan only and does not guarantee that courses will be offered on days and times that will allow for a student to take this exact schedule of courses. Students should continually forecast what courses they have left and when the courses will be offered.
Early Childhood Special Education Program

SAMPLE Two-Year Course Plan for a Full-Time ECSE Masters Student

Summer Even Years
EXC 7010 Language Development and Language Disabilities (3)
EDMT 7400 Mathematics Concepts for Special Learners (3)
EDRD 6600 Introduction to Materials and Methods in Reading Instruction (3)

Fall Even Years
EXC 7650 Characteristics of Young Children with Disabilities (3)
EXC 7320 Methods for Teaching Students with Autism (3)
EXC 7330 Physical and Health Management of Students with Disabilities (3)

Spring Odd Years
EXC 7300 Assistive Technology: Reading and Academics (3)
EXC 7660 Methods of Teaching Young Children with Disabilities (3)
EXC 7000 Collaboration with Parents and Professionals (3)
EPY 7080 Psychology of Learning & Learner (3)

Summer
EDRD 7650 Individualized Assessment and Instruction for At-risk Readers (3)
EXC 7030 Applied Behavior Analysis (3)

Fall
EXC 7190 Alternative Approaches to Literacy Instruction for Students with Disabilities (3)
EPRS 7920 Educational Measurement (3)
Take Comprehensive exams

Spring
EXC 7939 Practicum II: Early Childhood (3)
EPSF 7110 Multicultural Education (3)
Reading portfolio due in March
ECSE portfolio due at end of semester

*assumes student has completed undergraduate prerequisite courses EPY 2050 (Human Growth and Development), EXC 4020 (Characteristics and Instructional Strategies for Students with Disabilities), and EXC 7929 (Initial Practicum in ECSE)

Note: This is a sample course plan only and does not guarantee that courses will be offered on days and times that will allow for a student to take this exact schedule of courses. Students should continually forecast what courses they have left and when the courses will be offered.
Early Childhood Special Education Program

Requirements

Continuous Enrollment
Graduate students must register for at least a total of six hours of coursework during any period of three consecutive terms (fall, spring, and summer) until completion of degree. In order to graduate, students must be actively enrolled in coursework in the program of study during the term they finish degree requirements for graduation.

Planned Program
The College of Education & Human Development requires that you have a planned program on file in the department and in the Office of Academic Assistance. Therefore, you should see your advisor as soon after being admitted as is possible or early in the first semester of your enrollment; do not wait for registration. When you see your advisor, the two of you will plan your program and both of you will sign the document (the Planned Program) and forward it for the Chairperson’s signature. The original will be kept on file, a copy sent to the Office of Academic Assistance and a copy given to you. No changes can be made to the courses specified on the planned program unless a petition for course substitution has been filed and approved. PLEASE NOTE: Many courses are offered only once per year or once every other year, and consequently, it is important for students to carefully plan their program of studies.

Graduate Bulletin
You should also get access to the College of Education & Human Development Graduate Bulletin and keep it in your files. The graduate bulletin for the year that you entered the program contains the course of study and the requirements you must satisfy. You are responsible for knowing the regulations and procedures contained therein. Therefore, you should read the Bulletin’s general sections as well as the courses required in your program. Ask questions about anything you do not understand! Your advisor is your best source of information!

Participation in Key Assessments
Throughout the program, key assessment data for candidates are systematically collected at multiple points using the LiveText data platform. Department wide rubrics are used to score the input. The relevant data sources are used to document candidates’ knowledge, performance, and dispositions in teaching. Data are analyzed regularly by ESC faculty and used to improve candidate performance, program quality and unit operations. It is mandatory that students purchase a LiveText account during their first semester of enrollment for a one-time fee of $80-$125. Please contact the front desk of the ESC department to purchase your Live Text account.

The program key assessments include:

- Content Pedagogy (Literacy Teaching in EXC 7190; Reading Project Assignment in
Planning (Lesson Plan Assignments Completed in EXC 7660 and EXC 7939)
P-12 Pupil Change (P-12 Change Rubric – Unit Plan Assignment in EXC 7939)
Performance (Performance Rubric based on Georgia Department of Education Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) Performance Standards (observations by university supervisor) and summaries based on ECSE portfolio, both in EXC 7939)
Dispositions (Unit-wide dispositions; instructor completes in EXC 7650 and 7939)
Content Knowledge (GPA; GACE scores)

Please note that we are now using rubrics from your edTPA assignments as part of EXC 7939 for some of these assessments. We encourage you look at your LiveText site routinely to review the results of various key assessments that are required as part of your coursework. You will be responsible for uploading assignments to Live Text during certain courses for assessment purposes as noted above. You will be notified of this requirement on the course syllabus.

Participation in edTPA
The edTPA is a subject-specific performance assessment administered during the candidate’s student teaching (EXC 7939) which is designed to be educative and predictive of effective teaching and student learning. As of Fall 2015, students in the ECSE program are required to score successfully on the Elementary Education edTPA which includes a video demonstration of their teaching and extensive planning, instruction, and reflection of their work. There is a cost of approximately $300 to submit edTPA portfolios which will be incorporated into student fees.

Ethics Assessment
Applicants for the ECSE program must take the Georgia Educator Ethics Assessment prior to admission. This is a self-paced modular, computer-based test designed to both teach and assess knowledge and skills in the areas of the Georgia Code of Ethics for Educators and of ethical understanding to guide behaviors and decision making. Candidates must again take the GACE Ethics program exit assessment prior to program completion. Educators must pass the assessment for the Induction certificate. Georgia State University’s school code is 5090. For questions or to sign up to take the GACE Ethics Assessment, please contact Ruchi Bhatnagar in the Dean’s Office (rbhatnagar@gsu.edu) or go to gsugacehelp@gsu.edu

Grade Requirements
Participation in both the Masters and certification programs is conditional upon acceptable performance in coursework and practica. Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average (GPA) in all graduate courses taken in the degree and certification program. In addition, students must receive a grade of “A” or “B” in all ECSE core courses. Students who receive a grade of “C+” or lower in an ECSE core course must retake the class. A student who fails to earn a grade of “A” or “B” after taking the course a second time will be scholastically excluded from this major. Students who are experiencing difficulty in either coursework or practicum are expected to immediately notify the course instructor or practicum supervisor. During practicum and student teaching, any student who is asked to withdraw from his or her site by site or university personnel must voluntarily withdraw (or be withdrawn) from the site and course, and receives a grade of no pass or incomplete, depending on instructor’s discretion. The student will
not be placed in a subsequent practicum or student teaching site. A letter grade of “D” or “F” or an “N” (no pass) in a graduate course at Georgia State University is not accepted for credit, but is computed as part of the GPA. The accumulation of more than five credits of “N” or “F” grades regardless of the GPA or a GPA below 3.0 at any time is considered unsatisfactory.

**Diversity of Experiences**

Each student must maintain a log of all practicum experiences, including class assignments, to document experiences across age, development level, and race/culture on the Diverse Experiences form for the Early Childhood Special Education program. You should obtain this form at the start of your program so that you may document your experiences as you go. You may obtain the Diverse Experiences form from your advisor or from the 8th floor front desk (see April Smith: aprilsmit@gwu.edu). This form is due to April Smith with your application for your final practicum EXC 7939, the semester before you plan to complete your final EXC 7939 practicum. Diversity experiences may be loaded to LiveText accounts at a future date.

**Tort Liability Insurance**

Teacher education students are required to obtain tort liability insurance prior to any field experience with children or families. Evidence of this insurance should be given to the course instructor. Tort liability insurance covers expenses related to civil suits brought against education students for acts or omissions that occur. No amount of vigilance or professionalism can prevent some accidents. You can get tort liability insurance through the GSU chapter of the Student Georgia Association of Educators (SAGE; contact MSE department on 6th floor of COE), the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE), by joining another professional education organization that provides such coverage, or by private coverage.

**Practicum Experiences**

As part of the Masters and Certification program requirements, students complete two practicum experiences supervised by a university supervisor and based on the Georgia Department of Education Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) Performance Standards. All practicum experiences must be conducted during either the fall or spring semester. Students may not enroll in practicum courses (EXC 7929 or EXC 7939) during the summer semester. Students who wish to be placed for either EXC 7929 or EXC 7939 should notify their advisor at the beginning of the semester prior to the semester in which they plan to complete the practicum experience so that the placement may be approved of and arranged by the advisor, and the appropriate requests may be completed within the university and the school district. Placement is a collaborative process with the participating school district and GSU/ECSE program. STUDENTS SHOULD NEVER SECURE THEIR OWN PLACEMENT.

The initial practicum (EXC 7929) provides students with an opportunity to develop and practice skills in delivering instruction and assessment. The student will complete the requirements for this practicum for 15-20 hours per week for one semester in a public school setting classroom (preschool through 5th grade) with young children with and without disabilities; total of 200 hours minimum.

The final practicum (EXC 7939) is completed after students have completed all coursework with the minimum grade requirements. Masters’ students must have also taken and successfully
passed their comprehensive exams PRIOR to taking EXC 7939. Students should submit a practicum request form, along with the Diversity Form, to April Smith (aprilsmith@gsu.edu) during the semester BEFORE the final practicum placement. The final practicum is designed to provide the opportunity for students to demonstrate instructional management (e.g., IEPs, grouping, scheduling), classroom instruction (e.g., assessment, planning, management, instruction, data collection, evaluation), and program management (e.g., referrals, inclusion, collaboration) skills that have been learned in the program. It is during this practicum that students confirm that they have mastered those skills needed to independently teach students with and without disabilities. The final practicum involves a minimum of 8 hours a day for 15 consecutive weeks during one semester in a public school setting classroom (preschool through 5th grade) with at least 4-5 young children with significant disabilities beyond speech/language impairment (inclusive environment is ideal); total of 600 hours minimum. Students will meet with their advisor and final practicum supervisor(s) and other final practicum students prior to the start of the semester in which they are taking EXC 7939. During this time, advisors and supervisors will review the requirements for the final practicum experience, including edTPA requirements, necessary forms, ECSE portfolio, and the exit interview. The advisor and supervisors will also answer all student questions and schedule the initial supervision visits. Students enrolled in EXC 7939 will receive an email detailing the date, time, and location of this meeting from their advisor before the EXC 7939 semester starts.

There are two options for completing initial and final practicum experiences. Students may either complete the experience on the job OR they can request to be placed with a master teacher:

**Placement with a Master Teacher:** Students who wish to be placed with a master teacher for either EXC 7929 or EXC 7939 should notify their advisor at the beginning of the semester prior to the semester in which they plan to complete these practicum experiences so that the placement may be approved of and arranged by the advisor, and the appropriate requests may be completed within the university and the school district. Student should also submit a formal placement request along with their diversity form to April Smith (aprilsmith@gsu.edu) during the semester before the final placement. Placement is a collaborative process with the participating school district and GSU/ECSE program. STUDENTS SHOULD NEVER SECURE THEIR OWN PLACEMENT. When students are placed with a master teacher, the teacher will be employed in a public school in the metropolitan Atlanta area, hold the appropriate certification in special education, ideally hold a Master’s degree, and have at least three years of teaching experience in the relevant area of exceptionality.

**On the Job:** Students who complete initial and final practicum experiences on the job must be employed in a classroom that meets the practicum requirements (i.e., public school setting preschool through 5th grade with young children with disabilities in the Atlanta metro area) and have the approval of their principal or supervisor. An inclusive classroom is acceptable IF there are at least 4-5 students with significant disabilities beyond speech and language impairment. If students complete their initial practicum on the job or entered the program with this experience, they will receive course credit for EXC 7929 if they provide a letter from their principal or supervisor on school letterhead indicating: (a) date employment commenced, (b) program description, including grades/ages served and public school status, (c) classroom description, including number of students and disability type, (d) roles and responsibilities in the classroom, and (e) principal or supervisor’s signature. Students often find that this letter is most easily
completed if they draft the letter themselves and have the principal or supervisor complete and sign the letter. This letter should be submitted in paper copy to the student’s advisor.

**Comprehensive Examination (Masters’ students only):**

Successful passage of the comprehensive exam is required the semester prior to completing EXC 7939 for Masters’ students. Students must register for the exam the semester prior to the one in which they plan to take the exam. See April Smith (aprilsmith@gsu.edu) to register. The exam is offered each summer, fall, and spring semester on a Saturday, often early in the semester. The exam takes place in a computer lab of the COHD building and will include 6-8 questions. Sample questions for the comprehensive exam may be obtained from your advisor or the 8th floor front desk. Students are encouraged to study for the comprehensive exam in study groups with fellow students. You are not allowed to use notes, materials (e.g., books, articles), or outside resources (e.g., Internet, cell phones) during the exam.

**State Certification Exam:**

Students must register for, take, and pass the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE) exam titled “Early Childhood Special Education-General Curriculum”, Tests 003 and 004 OR the combined version, 503. General information about the GACE exam and study materials for the ECSE General Curriculum exam may be found at: [http://gace.ets.org](http://gace.ets.org)

Students may take the exam in any semester after completion of EXC 7660, though you are encouraged to wait until the semester before you begin your final practicum or take it during the semester you are completing your final EXC 7939 practicum (as long as your scores reach the advisor one month before the semester ends). Students should arrange for a copy of their test results to be sent to GSU’s Office of Academic Admissions when they take their exam. Students must also submit a copy of their successful test results to their advisor as part of the EXC 7939 course requirements.

**Reading Portfolio**

As part of ECSE Masters and certification programs, the GSU College of Education and Human Development offers a Reading Endorsement Certificate. This program qualifies teachers to work closely with children experiencing general reading difficulties, more fully understand the reading process, and fulfill "highly-qualified" requirements for certification purposes. The Reading Endorsement program consists of three courses and an exit portfolio that is submitted at the Reading Endorsement Portfolio Portal in Live Text. The portfolio should be submitted as soon as you have completed the 3 course sequence (EDRD 7600 or EDRD 6600; EXC 7190; EDRD 7550 or EDRD 7650); however, it is advisable to go ahead and access the portfolio as you will use it throughout the reading sequence courses to document your coursework and experiences. The portfolio will be evaluated in either March (spring graduation) or October (fall graduation).

Throughout course work related to language and literacy, candidates gain experiences providing individualized instruction to students from a variety of grade levels to foster reading development, as well as reflectively applying theory into practice in preparation for future instruction.

The Reading Endorsement Certificate is especially beneficial to students within the Early Childhood Special Education program in that reading is so critical to content development.
beginning in the earliest grades. An understanding of normally occurring reading processes, research-proven instructional strategies supportive of delayed readers, and practical assessment tools for the reading classroom provide both novice and veteran educators with the confidence and expertise to lead informed conversations among parents, colleagues, and administrators.

The Reading Endorsement Certificate is offered and supervised by the faculty in the Urban Literacy Clinic. If students have any questions about the reading portfolio or endorsement, they should contact the faculty in this program directly. The current contact person is Gertrude Tinker-Sachs who may be contacted at gtinkersachs@gsu.edu or 404-413-8388. More information about the reading endorsement can be found at http://literacyclinic.education.gsu.edu/programs/

Opening School Experience

As part of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) requirements, students in the ECSE program must complete an opening school experience (OSE) during their time in the program. This experience must be completed by August of the academic year they wish to complete student teaching (e.g. Student teaching, EXC 7939 in Spring 2018—complete OSE in August 2017). Students will sign up for the course (0 course credit), EXC 4650, during the Fall semester. Course requirements include several activities that expose the student to what a teacher experiences during the opening days of school.

ECSE Portfolio

Each student seeking certification in Early Childhood Special Education must maintain a portfolio that documents their mastery of specific program standards and outcomes. The portfolio is an opportunity to document how you’ve grown as a teacher and to reflect on all that you’ve learned in the program. Students are encouraged to keep all of their assignments (and pick up assignments from instructors at the end of the semester) so that they may be included in the portfolio. The portfolio is due to the student’s advisor at the end of the EXC 7939 semester, at least one week in advance of the student’s exit interview. The portfolio will involve a large binder that includes all or almost all of the assignments (graded or ungraded) completed throughout the program, organized by dividers, with a summary page at each divider. The summary page should introduce the assignments included in that section, discuss how the assignments reflect and meet the standard for that competency area, and describe what the student learned about that competency area. The use of the suggested assignments in the portfolio rubric is not mandatory. These assignments are rather examples; their use will depend heavily on the student’s program plan as well as the assignments that were used in particular courses with particular instructors that the student had. These assignments are just suggestions based on student input to provide guidance on how to organize the portfolio. Students may wish to purchase a binder to use for the portfolio early in the program so that they may keep assignments organized as they go, rather than leaving this large task to their last semester. Students are encouraged to submit their portfolios digitally if that is more convenient. The ECSE portfolio should be organized and will be evaluated according to the ECSE portfolio rubric, available from Dr. Hansen. The summary sheets should be uploaded to LiveText during the EXC 7939 semester.
**Exit Interview**

Students will schedule an exit interview, a meeting that will last approximately 1 hour, with their advisor for the end of the last semester in which the student is enrolled. This meeting is usually scheduled during the last few weeks of this semester as part of the EXC 7939 course requirements. During the meeting, the student and advisor will review the student’s work in the program through the ECSE portfolio. The advisor will also ask the student to share about his or her experiences in the program, both positive and constructive. The advisor will address any remaining questions or concerns for the student prior to his or her graduation from the program. If the student’s future employment and contact information is known at the time of the exit interview, the advisor will collect this information for follow-up purposes.

**Georgia Certification**

Georgia has moved to a tiered certification process. As of July 1, 2014, there will be 4 levels of teacher certification: pre-service, induction, professional, and advanced/lead professional. Students who are admitted candidates and have completed a successful background check and the Georgia Educator Ethics exam will receive pre-service certification. Candidates who complete the ECSE program, including passing the GACE ECSE exam, passing the edTPA, and passing the Ethics exam, and who have fewer than 3 years of experience in the last 5 years, will receive the Induction certificate. Once ECSE students have begun teaching and have at least two years of successful performance on the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES), they will be eligible for the standard professional certificate. You may apply for certification when you have completed all requirements for certification on your planned program. You must file the necessary forms required for the recommendation for certification to the Office of Academic Assistance, Room 300, College of Education and Human Development Building. Please note that there is reciprocity with other states’ certification offices. Check with the receiving state for further information.

**Time Limitations**

Coursework may be no more than six calendar years old at the time of graduation.

**Deadlines**

- Applications to take the comprehensive examinations must be filed no later than one semester proceeding the semester in which you plan to take the examination. Students may obtain the application for the exam with sample study questions from the 8th floor front desk and should submit the application to the 8th floor front desk staff. Contact is April Smith (aprilsmith@gsu.edu)
- Applications for final practicum (EXC 7939) should be filed during the first month of the semester in advance of the intended practicum. Applications submitted in the fall for spring final practicum are due to April Smith by September 10. Applications submitted in the spring for fall student teaching are due to April Smith by February 1. Students may obtain the application for EXC 7939 from the 8th floor front desk and should submit the application with their Diverse Experiences Form to the 8th floor front desk staff. If the student is completing EXC 7939 in a placement with a master teacher, he or she must complete a Criminal Background Check as part of his or her EXC 7939 application.
Criminal Background Check forms are available in the Office of Academic Assistance, 3rd floor, College of Education. This form must be submitted to the OAA with a check or money order. Proof of tort liability insurance is also required if you are completing your final practicum in a placement with a master teacher. Your advisor will give you information on tort liability during the initial EXC 7939 meeting.

- **Petitions** for course substitutions must have the prior approval of your advisor, the department chairman, and the dean of the College of Education and Human Development before the course is taken. Therefore, petitions must be filed early enough to work their way through the process before it is time for you to register. Retroactive approvals are not given.

- Before you can be recommended for certification, you must pass the GACE II exam in your certification area (see page 21). Neither the college nor the department will recommend you for certification prior to the completion of those courses and GACE requirements specified on your planned program. You may apply for certification when you have completed all requirements for certification on your planned program. You must file the necessary forms required for the recommendation for certification to the Office of Academic Assistance, Room 300, College of Education & Human Development Building.

- Applications for graduation (Master’s students only) must be filed two semesters in advance. Log on to PAWS to apply. For information review [http://registrar.gsu.edu/graduation](http://registrar.gsu.edu/graduation). Note: You must be enrolled for at least six credit hours during your last three terms, including at least 3 credit hours during the term that you are graduating.
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<tr>
<th>Date Completed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planned Program:</strong> Complete prior to or during first semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete paperwork for preservice certificate as requested by advisor and OAA; must be completed before any practicum experiences can begin</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Comprehensive Exams (Masters only):</strong> Apply one semester before you plan to take the exam; must pass before you may take EXC 7939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXC 7939:</strong> EXC 7939 is taken after the completion of all course work and the comprehensive exam. Apply one semester before you plan to take the course (by 2/1 or 9/10); include Diverse Experiences form; submit Criminal Background Check form with check or money order.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Graduation (Master’s Students Only):</strong> Apply online through PAWS two semesters prior to the semester that you plan to graduate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Certification Exam:</strong> Register for the ECSE-General Curriculum exam with GACE, take and pass the exam during or before the semester of graduation (results must be known before graduation deadline); send results of the exam to Georgia State University and provide advisor with a copy of the results</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Certification:</strong> Apply through the Office of Academic Assistance once certification requirements are complete</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reading Portfolio:</strong> Complete and submit via Live Text in October (Fall graduation) or March (Spring graduation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ECSE Portfolio:</strong> Complete and submit to advisor at least one week prior to the exit interview in EXC 7939 (scheduled for the end of the last semester); Upload summary forms to LiveText.</td>
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Early Childhood Special Education Program

Helpful Information

Registering for Classes

Students must first activate their GSU campus accounts prior to registering for courses. You may do this by going to [http://technology.gsu.edu/](http://technology.gsu.edu/) This site will allow you to activate both GSU email and GoSolar. Should you have any problems, please contact the Help Desk at 404-413-4357. To register, go to the GSU home page ([http://www.gsu.edu/](http://www.gsu.edu/)) and click on “GoSolar”. Enter your student number and Personal Identification Number. You will be asked to select a term (e.g., “Summer 2016”). Then you will be given the opportunity to register for classes by entering a CRN or course number. It is strongly recommended that you register in adherence to university deadlines to circumvent late registration fees for you will be responsible. You should also drop an undesired class by the university deadlines in order to forgo penalties for late drops.

Advising

Students should review this handbook and other advising information given to them. If they still have questions about courses or requirements, they should contact their advisor. Students will receive the most prompt response by contacting Dr. Hansen through email. However, phone or in person meetings may be necessary for longer, more in depth, or personal discussions. Faculty advisors teach classes on and off campus, conduct research, and supervise practicum students, so they are not likely to be available if students drop in to the office; appointments are necessary.

Course Authorizations

From time to time, a course that a student may wish to register for will require authorization. In the event that course registration is blocked for this (students will get an error message), students should email their advisor with the course number and name, semester of the course offering, and the student’s Panther ID. The student’s advisor will pass along this information to the appropriate individual to authorize the student to register for the course.

Independent Study

Independent study courses may not be substituted for a course that is taught on a regular basis.

Application to Master’s Degree From Non-Degree Status:

Students who are admitted as non-degree students and are interested in applying to the Masters program should pay particular attention to the enrollment limitations in their acceptance letter. Only nine (9) hours of graduate coursework completed beyond prerequisite requirements may be used toward the Master’s degree.
Incomplete Grades
Incomplete grades are only given for medical reasons and must be removed before the end of the next semester. See the complete description of procedures regarding incomplete grades in the College of Education & Human Development Graduate Bulletin.

Academic Honesty
As members of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The University assumes as a basic and minimum standard of conduct in academic matters that students be honest and that they submit for credit only the products of their own efforts. Both the ideals of scholarship and the need for fairness require that all dishonest work be rejected as a basis for academic credit.

The University’s policy on academic honesty is published in the Faculty Affairs Handbook and the Student Handbook, On Campus, which is available to all members of the University community. The policy represents a core value of the University and all members of the University community are responsible for abiding by its tenets. Lack of knowledge of this policy is not an acceptable defense to any charge of academic dishonesty. All members of the academic community, including students, faculty, and staff, are expected to report violations of these standards of academic conduct to the appropriate authorities. For questions or further information about how issues of academic honesty will be handled in the ECSE program, please see the Georgia State University Student Code of Conduct and Policies on Academic Conduct and Policies: http://codeofconduct.gsu.edu

Campus Parking, Transportation, & Campus Safety

- Parking, including budget cards, monthly passes, and student lots: http://parking.gsu.edu/
- Public transportation, including MARTA and cycling: http://transit.gsu.edu/
- GSU University Police provide safety escorts to walk with students to parking lots and decks 24 hours a day as well as vehicle assistance (e.g., locked cars, changing tires, battery recharging). Phone 404-413-2100 or 404-413-3333 in emergency or visit the website at: http://safety.gsu.edu/police/

Counseling Center
Students may access counseling services including stress management, couples counseling, and personal individual counseling at the Georgia State University Counseling Center. The center is located in the Citizen’s Trust Building at 75 Piedmont Ave NE. Call 404-413-1640 for appointments.

Sexual Misconduct
The University will not tolerate sexual misconduct and will take necessary steps to end reported sexual misconduct. To read the complete policy visit http://codeofconduct.gsu.edu or contact the Dean of Students at 404-413-1515.
**International Experience Options in Early Childhood Special Education**

The ECSE program at Georgia State University encourages students to participate in an international experience as part of their masters’ coursework. As a teacher, you are likely to find children from other countries are in your classroom and it is helpful to have a basic understanding of different cultures and experiences so that you can be responsive to the child, his or her language and culture, as well as family perspectives. There are several options for international experiences in ECSE. These include:

1. Online discussions of case studies with students from China, India, and/or Turkey through EPY 7080, a required course in the masters program. Be sure to register for the section that says international experiences with Dr. Commander (ncommander@gsu.edu).

2. Participation in study abroad experiences through the Department of Early Childhood and Elementary Education or other College of Education & Human Development departments. In the past, these experiences have included Norway, Sweden, Greece, Morocco, Ethiopia, and China. They often occur in the Spring or summer semester, either during Spring break, or at the end of the semester in April/May, are usually short term--1-5 weeks, and are focused on educational experiences. The China program, for instance, includes a teaching component in elementary schools where you live with host families of students in the university lab school. Depending on the timing of the trip, you could coordinate this experience while taking regular GSU coursework. The course number for the China study abroad program is ECE 4700/8000 and the program director is Dr. Yali Zhao (yzaho@gsu.edu). You can also contact Ms. Erin Kothari at ekothari@gsu.edu in the College of Education & Human Development Office of International Programs for additional information related to other countries and universities that the College has established relationships with where you can complete a study abroad experience.

3. Participation in other GSU study abroad experiences. See the Office of International Initiatives website for all upcoming study abroad opportunities at GSU: [http://www.gsu.edu/international-initiatives](http://www.gsu.edu/international-initiatives).

4. Participation in a trip with Dr. Paula Beckman's group, International Partners ([www.internationalpartners.org](http://www.internationalpartners.org)), in Central America. Dr. Beckman is a specialist in the area of Infancy and Early Childhood Special Education at the University of Maryland. She is currently involved in working with children who are at risk for learning problems due to poverty and lack of educational opportunity. As part of this interest, she is currently working with children, teachers, and schools in poor, developing countries, particularly in Central America. In this area, she has been providing training for teachers as well as working with administrators to improve the quality of education for children in poor communities. Information and costs on oncoming trips are available on the website. Depending on the timing of the trip, you could coordinate this experience while taking regular GSU coursework.
5. Completing part of the final practicum (EXC 7939) in another country, usually one of the European Teacher Education Network (ETEN) countries, of which GSU is a member. You may find the ETEN website at: http://www.eten-online.org With this option, you would complete 10 - 12 weeks of the semester in a placement in the Atlanta area and then complete the final 3-5 weeks in another country. We would request that the international setting be in an English speaking school or at least with a teacher who speaks English, but that may not be possible. If you have skills in another language it would be great for you to use your skills in a school that speaks that language (and you should request that). You would be supervised by our colleagues in the ETEN network. Housing (for a fee) is usually provided on university campuses or in nearby apartments. In this option, you would pay your tuition and fees for EXC 7939 at GSU. The only additional costs would be for travel and insurance, as well as food, housing and transportation at the local site.

General Information on International Experiences

International experiences often take time away from jobs and family as well as school work so they must be carefully planned in advance. Most professors are willing to work with you in order for you to have an international experience but they must be asked ahead of time so that plans for missing class or assignments are worked out in advance.

There are also additional costs beyond tuition and fees involved in all the options except # 1 above, depending on the country and length of stay. Please refer to the GSU Office of International Initiatives website http://www.gsu.edu/international-initiatives under Study Abroad for scholarships and financial aid information for your international experience.

Please note that you will need to have a current passport, possibly a visa, and up to date shots as advised by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to travel internationally.

Dr. Gallagher, with Erin Kothari, can help coordinate the international component of the ECSE program. Though retired, Dr. Gallagher has a wealth of experience internationally, both in teacher education and with research, and can help you plan your focus. You should work with your advisor to let Dr. Gallagher know at least three semesters in advance of when you would like to travel so that she can help you plan. Please contact her at pgallagher@gsu.edu