

# ECFS 200: Introduction to Early Childhood and Family Studies

Autumn 2018 • University of Washington

Instructor: Mary Clevenger-Bright

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## Overview

This is a survey course that explores current practices, programs, and research in the field of early childhood and family studies from a bio-ecological perspective. The focus of the course is on understanding the biological child within family, community, cultural, political, and economic contexts, recognizing that development doesn't occur in isolation. This, in turn, informs the creation and ongoing evaluation of programs, policy, and advocacy in such areas as parenting and family support, mental and physical health, early learning and care, poverty, and other risk factors. This introductory course is suited to students wishing to integrate early childhood and family studies into their academic and professional careers. Each week students explore a different area of early childhood study including, child development, relationships and attachments, risk and resilience, mental and physical health, policy and advocacy, global diversity, quality teaching and learning, and early childhood education environments.

## Role of Service-Learning in the Course

Students in this course are asked to engage the material, not only intellectually and analytically, but practically and personally. Through service learning, students will reflect on how, in their work with community partners, they see people's lives affected by the interplay between their own actions and the social contexts in which they act. Working in organizations that offer work with young children will give students to apply first-hand all the learnings from the course. They will understand how external circumstances affect the internal worlds of young children. Students who work with partners that serve people from a variety of backgrounds and cultures will gain perspectives on diversity and cultural-responsiveness, an important take-away in an increasingly multicultural world.

## Assignments Related to Service-Learning

Students complete a service learning powerpoint presentation at the end of the quarter along with a Service Learning Reflection paper; in both, they consider three main concepts in the course and how these ideas have 'come alive' through their service learning experience.

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