Graduate Certificate
18 Credit Hours

This program is offered by the School of Education. It is available online and at the St. Louis home campus.

For information on the general requirements for a certificate, see Certificate Program Policies and Procedures under the Academic Policies section of this catalog.

Program Description

This graduate certificate program was designed in partnership with educational leaders from Reggio Children and the internationally acclaimed Municipal Preschools and Infant Toddler Centers of Reggio Emilia, Italy. The program offers an in-depth understanding of the pedagogical principles and essential elements of Reggio Emilia’s social constructivist approach to early learning.

In the school system of Reggio Emilia, educators and families of each school are supported by a pedagogista who could be compared to a mentor, coach and/or consultant in U.S. schools. These pedagogical coordinators support the professional development of educators and collaborate with them to make choices and decisions about their ongoing work with children and families. They do this by working closely with educational colleagues to observe, document and analyze the learning processes and experiences of children, and then draw implications for teaching and learning.

The certificate program consists of four 3-credit hour courses and two 3-credit hour pedagogical coordinator internships for a total of 18 credit hours. The four courses are offered online and development of internships will be negotiated with faculty.

Learning Outcomes

- Identify and analyze the historical, social, philosophical and psychological underpinnings and principles of the Reggio Emilia approach and educational services in relation to those of other recognized approaches to early education in the U.S. and around the world.
- Analyze systems thinking perspectives about early childhood services and the pedagogy of listening that support an interdependent community of learners (including children, teachers, families and the broader community).
- Develop and apply the skills and concepts of observation and documentation in relation to (a) the pedagogy of listening, (b) principles of organization of the day that support interdependence of learners and learning, (c) the creation and ongoing development of learning environments and (d) the concept and practices of progettazione.
- Explore the role and functions of the pedagogical coordinator and demonstrate ability to carry out these functions in collaboration with teachers, children and families from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds.

Requirements

- ECED 5750 Negotiated Learning: The Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Education (3 hours)
- ECED 5820 Creating Learning Environments (3 hours)
- ECED 5870 Expressive Languages (3 hours)
- ECED 5800 Applied Research (3 hours)
- ECED 5810 Pedagogical Internship (3 hours)
- ECED 5811 Pedagogical Internship (3 hours)

The university coursework will be totally integrated with the internship.

Admission

Candidates may pursue the certificate by itself or integrate their certificate work with their MA degree in early childhood education. All candidates must have prior teaching experience and a bachelor’s or master’s degree in early childhood education or a closely related field. All applicants must meet the admission criteria for the MA in early childhood education.

Students who are interested in applying to this certificate program should also see the Admission section of this catalog for general requirements.

Admission Requirements

- Receipt of official transcripts from the baccalaureate-granting institution.
- Undergraduate cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Admission to the early childhood education MA program.
- Essay: What motivated you to become an early childhood educator? Based on the School of Education’s mission statement, the program description and candidate learning outcomes, how do you think your participation in this certificate program will help you accomplish your personal and professional goals?

Send all admissions materials to:
Office of Admission
Webster University
470 E. Lockwood Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63119

Completed application files will be reviewed by the Graduate Department of Education.