BA in Early Childhood Education

The Early Childhood Education 37 credit major is a dynamic and diverse program, calling upon students to be immersed in contemporary theories of development, rich curriculum studies, and in-depth training in contemplative traditions, all of which supports the ground of developing teachers from the inside out. In addition, students’ learning is expanded by observations, service learning, lab assignments, and international service work, which foster the students’ practical classroom experience from day one.

This major draws upon the richness of Boulder’s contemplative early education community, including Alaya Preschool, Naropa’s lab school. Program courses emphasize the integration of mindfulness—awareness with holistic teaching practices. Observation-based child development courses emphasize emotional development. Students explore contemplative teaching skills drawn from holistic and spiritual traditions, such as Waldorf, Montessori, Shambhala, and Reggio Emilia. Teaching skills grow from firsthand observation practice and course study with master teachers in a variety of contemplative preschool settings.

Internship

The culmination of the BA degree is the internship course, in which students apprentice with experienced teachers in Naropa’s lab school or other early education programs. This highly individualized on-the-job training helps students develop and refine their teaching skills in exemplary educational environments. (Students are strongly encouraged to take no more than 12 credits during the internship.)

Entering the Major

In accordance with University policy, students can declare their major at any time. In order to progress through the coursework in this major, students should take the following important course prerequisite at the earliest opportunity: EDU245 Education, Culture, and Critical Pedagogy. Because of the nature of this program, it is important to meet with program faculty either before you declare or soon after. Please consult with your Academic Advisor to plan your schedule in the program.

Portfolio

All students must submit a portfolio, according to department guidelines, of their work prior to graduation. The portfolio is part of the undergraduate Early Childhood Education degree program requirements.

Degree Requirements

BA in Early Childhood Education

Prerequisite Course

• EDU245 Education, Culture, and Critical Pedagogy (3)

Required Courses

• EDU210 Nature and Education (3)

Course Credits

EDU310 Kindergarten Magic: ECE Curriculum Development (3)
EDU330 Holistic Teaching Traditions: Introduction to ECE Profession (3)
EDU360 Administration of Early Childhood Care and Education Programs (3)
EDU365 Administration: Human Relations for Early Childhood Professions (3)
EDU380 Observing Development: Infants & Toddlers (3)
EDU385 Observing Development: Early Childhood Growth & Development (3)
EDU404 Maitri and Learning Styles (3)
EDU420 Energy & Expression: Guidance Strategies for Children (3)
EDU430 Teaching Young Children: ECE Lab Techniques (3)
EDU450 Supervised Teaching Practicum (4)

SUBTOTAL 34

Choose one elective:

• EDU352 Poverty Matters (3)
• EDU393 Issues in Education: The Mary Culkin Series (3)

SUBTOTAL 3

TOTAL CREDITS 37

Course Listings

EDU210 Nature and Education (3)
This course contributes to broadening and deepening student understanding of the relationship between nature and education. The scope, scale, trends and implications of nature and education in classroom practices, pedagogy, and curriculum are theoretically and experientially examined and practiced. Course fee.

EDU245 Education, Culture & Critical Theory (3)
Education, culture and critical theory promote the idea that education is to help students make sense of their world and at the same time help students make sense of themselves in the world. Students are both subjects and objects of education. They are the learner, teacher and the researcher. Through the study of critical theory, this class explores the questions of what education can be, develops skills to uncover what education actually is and deepens students’ understanding of the contradictions that have shaped their own and other people’s consciousness. This course deepens the students’ appreciation of inquiry through literary review and discussion and increases their ability to recognize the ways power operates to create oppressive conditions for some groups and privilege for others. Students gain skills in challenging the more common views of reality.

EDU310 Kindergarten Magic: ECE Curriculum Development (3)
An opportunity for teachers of young children to focus on the artistry and essential skills of being a preschool or kindergarten teacher.
Movement, story, song, crafts, puppetry, circle time, and painting are explored as part of the early childhood curriculum. Students create an environment for each other to work with those skills and discover their own creative impulse in relationship to sharing the magic while learning to develop an early childhood curriculum.

**EDU330**
**Holistic Teaching Traditions: Introduction to ECE Profession (3)**
During this course, students encounter some of the most important contemporary holistic and contemplative approaches to teaching young children. The study focuses primarily on the contemplative traditions of Shambhala, Montessori, Waldorf, Reggio Emilia and others. On-site observations are done in preschools that use these approaches. Students explore and compare these traditions to enhance their development as teachers. In this process they begin to incorporate personally meaningful aspects of these traditions into their own emerging and unique teaching styles. Sitting meditation requirement.

**EDU365**
**Administration: Human Relations for Early Childhood Professions (3)**
This course focuses on the human relations component of an early childhood professional’s responsibilities, including director-staff relationships, staff development, leadership strategies, parent-professional partnerships, and community interaction.

**EDU380**
**Observing Development: Infants and Toddlers (3)**
A study of the development of children ages birth to three, with particular emphasis on toddlers and three-year-olds. The approach begins with firsthand contemplative observation, then proceeds to studies of relevant developmental theory within a contemplative context in the areas of body, speech, and mind.

**EDU385**
**Observing Development: Early Childhood Growth and Development (3)**
A study of the development of children ages four to eight with emphasis on four to six-year-olds. As in EDU380, the study begins with first-hand contemplative observation and then proceeds to relevant developmental theories within a contemplative context of the areas of body, speech, and mind. Prerequisite: EDU380, Observing Development: Infants and Toddlers.

**EDU393**
**Issues in Education: The Mary Culkin Series (3)**
A public lecture series through which students can learn about a wide variety of issues in the field of education, including early education, higher education, and contemplative education. Regional and national leaders address such topics as diversity and multicultural perspectives, public policy, current research, spirituality, leadership, and other key issues of interest to educators. Through this broad survey of topics, we become connected to the larger education community. A companion discussion forum is available for students taking this course for credit. Course work includes relevant readings and response papers relating to each topic.

**EDU404**
**Maitri & Learning Styles (3)**
Students study and practice the traditional five Buddhist energy styles in relation to teaching and learning. Integrated into this approach is an exploration of multiple learning styles. Adapted for westerners from the tradition of Tibetan yoga, maitri training is a sophisticated method of cultivating awareness of the emotions and developing appreciation of discrete styles of statement in ourselves and others. Students learn how they might manifest these intrinsic wisdoms in their own educational journeys, in teaching, in curriculum development and in creating learning environments. Prerequisite: Established meditation practice and permission of instructor. Materials fee.

**EDU430**
**Teaching Young Children: ECE Lab Techniques (3)**
This course brings a contemplative view to learning the skills necessary for teaching preschool children, emphasizing the importance of observation and reflection. The class combines lecture/discussion, observation and experiential approaches. Students utilize developmentally appropriate practice and the seven core dispositions of teaching to examine the dynamics of the child, the adult and the environment within a contemplative setting. The class visits each of the internship settings and students are assigned their internship placements for the spring semester. The study of preschool teaching then focuses on the details of that particular philosophy and teacher. Prerequisite: EDU245 and EDU380.

**EDU450**
**Supervised Teaching Practicum (4)**
This practicum provides supervised internship teacher training in a contemplative preschool setting. As the culmination of the BA program, this course is an internship with a skilled teacher who practices contemplative preschool education. Interns practice and are trained in all the skills of teaching a preschool class. Supervision includes regular meetings with the supervising teacher, the teaching team, and the program director. Open to program students only. Prerequisites: EDU245, EDU330, EDU380, EDU404, and EDU430. EDU420 and EDU310 can be taken simultaneously with or prior to EDU450.

**EDU499**
**Independent Study: Early Childhood Education (0.5)**
Independent Study.