



Early Childhood Higher Education Programs

Accreditation Decision Report

This report presents the decision of the NAEYC Commission on the Accreditation of Early Childhood Higher Education Programs.

Institution Name: Cape Fear Community College State: NC
Dates of Site Visit: March 24-27, 2019
Degree program(s): A.A.S. Early Childhood Education
Date of Decision: June 2019

Decision: Accreditation

Rationale for Findings:

Learning opportunities are aligned with key elements of the standards. Collectively, key assessments are aligned with the cognitive demands and skill requirements of the key elements of the standards and describe program expectations for candidates' growth and competence in relation to the standards. The program ensures that all candidates have opportunities to observe and practice with at least two of the early childhood age groups and at least two of the early childhood settings.

Annual Reporting Date: September 30

First Report Due: 2020

Accreditation Decision Report: The Accreditation Standards

Nationally accredited programs must substantially meet the Accreditation Standards through evidence provided in the Self-Study Report and Peer Review Team site visit. The accreditation decision is based on evidence that the program meets the Accreditation Standards through four indicators: documented learning opportunities, key assessments, data on candidate performance on key assessments, and use of that data to improve the program in relation to the accreditation standards. (NAEYC Early Childhood Higher Education Accreditation Handbook, p. 37, 60).

Program Strengths in relation to Accreditation Standards:

- The program offers an extensive list of opportunities throughout the coursework for students to learn and practice key elements of the standards elements.
- Assessments are nicely aligned with the standards, and they offer meaningful and challenging activities for candidates.
- The program has done a thorough job of analyzing the data results; the recommendations from the analyses should improve student performance if they are implemented.
- The program requires well planned and well staffed field experiences with children ages zero through three and ages three through five in an on-site lab school, a Head Start program, and other high-quality centers.

Areas for Program Improvement in relation to Accreditation Standards:

- The rubrics should be reviewed to ensure that students' knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions are always being assessed rather than simply the contents of the submission.
- The rubrics would be stronger if each level clearly distinguished between levels with more objective statements rather than using terms such as "in-depth," "weak," "significant," "extensive," and "adequate." Inter-rater reliability will be improved by describing the characteristics of those terms in the rubrics.
- Rubrics for Key Element 3b in Key Assessment 2 and Key Element 4b in Key Assessments 3 and 4 should also assess the use of technology, which is included in the standard element.
- The rubric for Key Element 3c in Key Assessment 2 should also assess the use of assistive technology, which is included in the standard element.
- The rubric for Key Element 5c in Key Assessment 5 should assess the design and implementation of curriculum in addition to its evaluation.

As part of their continuous growth and improvement related to the standards, all programs are encouraged to review the resources in the online accreditation resource library and from NAEYC staff.

Accreditation Decision Report: The Accreditation Criteria

Learning opportunities and assessments are developed and implemented in unique programs that are responsive to particular candidates, faculty and communities. This unique program context is described through the twelve Accreditation Criteria. The rest of this report offers feedback on your program's areas of strength and areas for improvement related to Accreditation Criteria. (NAEYC Early Childhood Higher Education Accreditation Handbook, p. 27, 59).

Program Strengths in relation to Accreditation Criteria:

- The program has a solid conceptual framework, which was developed collaboratively with early childhood education faculty, community stakeholders, and early childhood education advisory council members.
- The program has a well defined early childhood mission and early childhood philosophy.
- All program tracks have a solid foundation in early childhood education coursework.
- The ECE Resource Room is equipped with professional literature, infant-toddler resources, dramatic play materials, math and science manipulatives, consumables, as well as teacher books, videos, and children's books.
- The program offers opportunities to recruit dual-enrollment high school students.

The Commission commends the program for its strengths revealed through the accreditation process, in addition to those identified here.

Areas for Program Improvement in relation to Accreditation Criteria:

- The program should continue to address its concern about a high rate of turnover and retaining students from diverse populations by providing hands-on training and coursework.
- The program is encouraged to find ways to recruit diverse faculty.
- Additional classroom space would allow for easing in scheduling early childhood classes to accommodate the varied early childhood education part-time student schedules.

The Commission supports the program in its continued growth in the areas identified in the Self-Study Report and Peer Review Report.

Annual Report Expectations

It is expected that the program will continue to build upon its strengths and engage in ongoing reflection and improvement. Suggested areas for consideration are offered in this report.