Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Degree in Early Childhood and Elementary Education

All doctoral students in the Early Childhood and Elementary Education program are expected to promote scholarly advocacy for children, appreciate the nature of children and their development, understand theories undergirding educational practices and issues, and excel as teacher educators. Required residency experiences ensure that students develop knowledge and skills related to mentoring and teaching education, as well as conducting research. Courses required in the program ensure that doctoral students share common understandings about a variety of historical, political, developmental, and theoretical paradigms that shape educational contexts and scholarship. Elective courses allow for individualization of the doctoral program to establish an area of expertise within Early Childhood and Elementary Education. The program course offerings are further described in the Program Manual for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Early Childhood and Elementary Education.

How to Apply
Admissions requirements for this degree follow doctoral admission criteria as described in the Georgia State University Graduate Catalog. The application deadline is May 1 for Fall, October 15 for Spring, and January 15 for a Summer program start date. Priority deadline of January 15 for fellowship eligibility.

Admission into the program is based upon the following criteria:
- Master's degree from accredited graduate institution or equivalent as decided by the Faculty Committee on Doctoral Programs
- 3.3/4.0 cumulative graduate grade point average (Cum. GPA) on all previous graduate work.
- Officially reported Graduate Record Examination (GRE) test scores (i.e., cannot be taken from student records or transcripts) that are no more than 5 years old at the time of application to the doctoral program
- TOEFL and GTEP scores must be submitted by international students as part of the application for Admission to Graduate Study. A score of at least 550 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the Georgia Test of English Proficiency (GTEP). The GTEP score is used to evaluate the need for remediation in the use of the English language for doctoral study before registration for any doctoral coursework.
- An autobiographical statement written in English describing personal and professional goals in relation to the goals and purposes of the Early Childhood and Elementary Education Department.
- A current vitae or resume summarizing prior education and employment history and relevant professional activities.
- A sample of scholarly writing (e.g., master's thesis, term paper, unpublished manuscript, or other written work). We suggest a check of all manuscripts for proper citations of others’ work (http://www.turnitin.com/static/home.html is one source for checking written work). Plagiarism is considered a serious breach of academic integrity and may result in the rejection of an application.
- Two letters of recommendation that analyze the applicant's academic qualifications and ability to do advanced graduate work. No more than one letter from a Georgia State University Early Childhood and Elementary Education faculty member should be submitted.
- Professional experience with young children birth-12 years.

For more information about this program, contact Teri Holbrook, program coordinator, at tholbrook@gsu.edu.
Program of Study
Planning doctoral study coursework to address the goals mentioned above is done in consultation with an advisor with consideration of each student’s career goals, prior academic work, and professional experience. Each program, which includes coursework, a residency, and other requirements, is unique. However, the following courses are offered:

A. Core Area (21 hours)
The Core Area consists of 18 semester hours of research coursework and 3 semester hours of Social Foundation of Education and Psychology of Learning coursework. After completing the required introductory methods courses, the student and Doctoral Advisory Committee identify a research track based on methodology to be employed in the student’s dissertation research. Advanced Research electives are chosen based on individual student’s need with support from the advisory committee. The Doctoral Advisory Committee may require additional coursework in a research track.

Research Core (18 hours)
Required (6):
EPRS 8500 Qualitative/Interpretive Research in Education (3)
EPRS 8530 Quantitative Methods and Analysis in Education (3)
Required (12):
A two-course sequence (6 hours) in research methodology [See Graduate Catalog for specific courses.]
Two courses (6 hours) in advanced research methods as identified by the Doctoral Advisory Committee
Social Foundations of Education and Psychology of Learning (3 hours)
Required (3):
One course (3 hours) in Social Foundations of Education and Psychology of Learning course [See Graduate Catalog for specific courses.]

B. Major Area (27 hours)
Required courses (12):
ECE 9360 Curriculum, Issues, and Historical Perspectives in Early Childhood Education (3)
ECE 9800 Scholarly Inquiry (3)
ECE 9860 Evaluating and Interpreting Research in Early Child and Elementary Education (3)
ECE 9960 Advanced Theory and Research in Child Development (3)
Elective Courses (15)
At least 12 semester hours of elective courses must come from within the department. Doctoral-level elective courses offered within the Department include: ECE/EPRS 9120, ECE/EPRS 9380, ECE 9393, ECE 9394, ECE 9395, ECE 9396, ECE 9400, ECE 9420, ECE 9810, ECE 9820, ECE 9830, ECE 9840, ECE 9850, ECE 9890, ECE 9910

K-5 Mathematics Endorsement (optional):
As part of the coursework leading to the Doctor of Philosophy degree, students who hold a current teaching certification from the Georgia Professional Standards Commission may satisfy part of the K-5 Mathematics Endorsement requirements by completing four 9000-level courses (ECE 9393, ECE 9394, ECE 9395, and ECE 9396). To apply for the K-5 Mathematics Endorsement, students must also complete ECE 7740 Internship in Early Childhood Education I (3) while enrolled in one of the four specified 9000-level endorsement courses. ECE 7740 does not satisfy the 8000-9000 level-course requirements for the College of Education courses applicable to the Doctor of Philosophy degree.

D. Dissertation (15 hours)
Required ECE 9990 Dissertation (15)

Program total: minimum of 63 semester hours