

**College of DuPage**  
**Early Childhood Education and Care**  
**Academic Program**

**Program Information and Application Packet for**  
**Early Childhood Education and Care**  
**Certificates and Degrees**  
**FALL 2026**



Note: This packet is for Fall 2026 registration for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) courses. Students will need to create an account with DISA Health/CastleBranch (information in packet) and complete all items on the DISA/CastleBranch site before receiving admission to the program and to be eligible for registration. Registration deadlines are noted in the packet.

Dear Students,

**Welcome to the Early Childhood Education and Care program at College of DuPage!** We are happy that you are interested in joining our community of future educators.

Our Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) program blends hands-on experience with classroom learning to prepare you for a rewarding career working with children from birth through age eight. You'll gain practical skills and real-world experience to set you up for direct entry into the early childhood education and care field or for transfer.

Graduates are prepared for roles such as early childhood assistant teacher, lead teacher, assistant director, center director in childcare settings, or paraprofessional. Many students also choose to transfer to earn a bachelor's degree with a Professional Educator License in Early Childhood Education to teach preschool through second grade in a public school setting.

Full-time students who follow the [program map](#) can complete the ECEC degree in two years. However, many of our students are also working full-time, so we offer shorter-term ECEC certificates and stackable certificates leading to Gateways Credentials—allowing you to build skills and advance your career on your own timeline.

**To get started:**

- **Please review this Admissions Packet carefully and follow all the instructions. Note the application deadlines.**
- **The application only needs to be completed by those pursuing an ECEC certificate and/or ECEC degree. ECEC elective courses and the Child, Growth and Development course are open to any student without completing the application process.**

We look forward to having in our program!

**Sincerely,**

**College of DuPage Early Childhood Education and Care program**

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## **College of DuPage**

### **Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) FAQ Sheet**

#### **1. How do I know if ECEC is the right field for me?**

Do you enjoy working with children and adults? Do you have strong interpersonal skills and advanced verbal and written communication skills? Are you physically active, attentive, reliable, patient, organized, a good multi-tasker, a team player, creative, professional, and someone who considers themselves a lifelong learner? ECEC is a relationship-based field and requires daily interactions with children, their family members, and your colleagues. If this all sounds like you, then ECEC may be a good career choice to consider.

#### **2. How long is the ECEC program?**

Full-time students who follow the program map exactly as it's laid out with success can complete the ECEC program in two full years, including summer. However, we have many students who are taking courses part-time while working full-time, who complete the program on their own schedule, whether it be a certificate or a degree.

#### **3. What can I expect in my ECEC courses?**

ECEC courses include a variety of weekly readings and assignments that require research, reflection, and application of course content. Most ECEC courses also require weekly field observations to be completed outside of class time during the day. Students are responsible for finding and scheduling their own daytime observations at DCFS-licensed childcare centers and public school programs. These observations require written reports that help the student connect what they observe to content covered in the course. Students may also have in class activities, lab experiences, partner and group work, presentations etc. In advanced ECEC courses, students will spend additional time each week in early childhood classrooms developing and implementing developmentally appropriate emergent curricular experiences. The ECEC program culminates in a semester long student teaching experience.

#### **4. Are there any prerequisites for the program?**

Yes. All students must have Reading Category 1 placement. In addition, all students will need to apply for admission to the Early Childhood Education and Care program. Students will create an account with DISA Healthcare Technology, which requires a separate non-refundable fee. Students will be required to complete a fingerprint background check, submit an updated DCFS medical form, and complete other documentation. Students must submit and pass all requirements to be admitted to the ECEC program and to be eligible to register for ECEC core courses. All ECEC courses have additional course prerequisites as the courses build on each other.

Students are highly encouraged to take English as Speech their first semester in addition to the Math placement test. Students are also required to meet with the ECEC Advisor, Christine Jandak (returning students) or Bess Fuertes (new students) to discuss their academic plan as a requirement for program admission.

### **5. Is ECEC an online program?**

No. The ECEC program at COD is not an online program. Most courses are offered in the evening, with only a few available late afternoon or online. Students should plan to attend face-to-face courses in the evening or late afternoon on COD's main campus to complete the program. General education courses may be taken online or face-to-face on campus.

### **6. What grades can I teach if I study ECEC?**

ECEC covers birth to eight years old. Students may find work as an early childhood assistant teacher, lead teacher, assistant director, or director in a childcare center, or as a paraprofessional in a school district. Students who transfer and earn a bachelor's degree and a Professional Educator License (PEL) in Early Childhood Education are eligible to teach up to 2nd grade in a school district. This also includes preschool programs within school districts.

### **7. Should I be working in the field of ECE while taking courses?**

Yes! We highly recommend that all ECEC students seek employment at a DCFS-licensed childcare center. This experience will help you develop your skills and connect classroom learning to practice. Approximately 80 percent of our ECEC students are currently working in childcare as they are completing their coursework. Please discuss your educational goals with your employer to ensure they support your pursuit of a degree and will accommodate some of the scheduling flexibility you will need to complete the program requirements.

### **8. I am interested in transferring to a university to continue my ECEC studies. What should I pursue at COD?**

The Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree in ECEC, with the completion of the Gateways Level 4 Credential, is fully transferable to all in-state public universities, and a few private universities. For full-time students that means 2 years at COD and 2 years at the University. We have very good relationships with many Universities and can assist students in finding the best fit.

Students who may not be sure of their long term path or are looking to meet basic DCFS teacher qualifications or paraprofessional qualifications, may also choose to pursue an Associate in Arts (AA) degree with an ECEC certificate. Students may still transfer with this degree if they end up wanting to go that route, however the courses these students take will include more general education courses and be very specific to the University they choose.

Students who intend to transfer should schedule an appointment with the ECEC Advisor, Christine Jandak, within their first semester to ensure they are taking the correct courses for the University they intend to transfer to.

### **9. Are there any Gateways Credentials available?**

Yes! The COD ECEC program offers stackable certificates aligned to Gateways Early Childhood Credentials Levels 2 - 4. By completing the ECEC AAS degree, you can earn a Gateways Early Childhood Credential Level 4. Students may also earn the Gateways Early Childhood Director Credential Level 1 by completing the AAS degree in Early Childhood Administration.

**10. What if I completed a CDA?**

If you have a current Child Development Associate (CDA) credential in either Infant/Toddler or Early Childhood, schedule an appointment with Christine Jandak, ECEC advisor, at (630) 942-2259. You must meet with her in person and log in to your CDA account to show your **active** credential. Once reviewed and approved, Christine will help you complete the paperwork to receive six elective semester credits for the ECEC program. Students may not receive credit for more than one valid CDA.

**11. I think I'm interested in the Early Childhood Education and Care program. Where do I start?**

**Start by reading through this packet completely.** If you still have questions about the program before applying, you can meet with one of our ECEC advisors by contacting Counseling and Advising at 630-942-2259. Ask to meet with one of the following advisors:

**Continuing ECEC students should request to meet with:**

Christine Jandak

**NEW ECEC students should request to meet with:**

Bess Fuertes

See next page

## **Essential Functions for Early Childhood Educators**

Drawing on Illinois Department of Children and Family Services requirements, and industry standards, early childhood educators must demonstrate a range of physical, sensory, communication, cognitive, and behavioral functions to ensure a healthy, safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment for children. The following essential functions enable educators to meet the varied needs of young children and support their holistic growth and development. Students will need to demonstrate these functions throughout the ECEC program, in their ECEC college classrooms as well as in the field. These functions apply to students' work with children, families, supervisors, other college students, and college instructors. If the ability to perform these essential functions with or without reasonable accommodations result in the inability to meet student learning outcomes, the student may be at risk of not successfully completing the ECEC course and/or the ECEC program.

### **Physical Expectations**

- **Active mobility and stamina-** the ability to stand for extended periods of time, sit on the floor, squat, stoop, jump, run and climb as necessary to supervise and engage with children etc.
- **Lifting and carrying-** the physical strength to lift and carry children as needed to assist them; typically, 35-50 pounds
- **Manual dexterity-** ability to use hands and fingers to assist with tasks such as fastening, buttoning, zipping, feeding, tying shoes, operating classroom equipment, opening items (i.e. medication), manipulating art supplies and other classroom materials, taking story dictation, writing notes and observations, holding and turning pages of books, demonstrating handwriting skills etc.
- **Performing basic care routines-** ability to assist with handwashing, toileting, diapering, dressing, serving meals etc.
- **Emergency response-** ability to respond quickly and effectively in an emergency, which may involve moving swiftly to safely evacuate children, administer an epi-pen, administer first-aid etc.

### **Sensory Expectations**

- **Visual and auditory acuity-** ability to see and hear clearly to supervise children indoors and outdoors, to recognize and respond to soft/loud verbal and non-verbal cues, and to recognize potential hazards.
- **Response to sounds-** ability to function appropriately in an environment that can be very loud with laughter, talking, crying, screams, banging toys etc. Ability to respond responsibly when fire alarm, tornado warnings, and other loud sounds are present.
- **Sensory integration awareness and observation-** understand sensory processing needs in children and demonstrate the ability to keenly watch children's behaviors, interactions, and responses to a variety of sensory inputs to create a stimulating yet manageable environment for young children.

### **Communication Expectations**

- **Verbal communication-** ability to speak very clearly, engage in face-to-face conversations, and use language that is appropriate and reflective of the audience; children, colleagues, and parents, classmates and college instructors. Demonstrate ability to model appropriate speaking skills for children, read aloud to children, provide clear instructions to children, communicate effectively in emergency situations etc.

- **Non-verbal communication-** demonstrate professional and authentic use of facial expressions, body language, and varied tones of voice to effectively convey emotions, set boundaries, and respond to children's cues.
- **Active listening-** demonstrate the skill of attentively listening to children, as well as parents, colleagues, supervisors, classmates and college instructors to understand their needs, concerns, or their sharing of ideas and stories etc.
- **Written communication-** ability to demonstrate and model writing for children in real time and take handwritten documentation notes for a variety of uses.

### **Cognitive Expectations**

- **Developmental knowledge-** demonstrate understanding and application of developmentally appropriate practices, the Illinois Early Learning Guidelines, and the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards. Apply a deep understanding of child development theories and how children learn and develop across different developmental domains and the interconnectedness between domains.
- **Problem-solving and adaptability-** ability to think quickly to solve problems and adapt activities, experiences, and routines based on children's moods, interests, and unexpected events. Ability to anticipate children's behaviors, analyze situations, and develop logical, effective, and appropriate strategies for a positive outcome in a variety of situations.
- **Reasoning and judgement-** ability to use sound judgement and apply the NAEYC ethical code of conduct to make decisions that protect the safety of children and guide developmentally appropriate practices.

### **Behavioral and Professional Expectations**

- **Ethical practices-** maintain high ethical standards and accountability adhering to NAEYC Ethical Code of Conduct, COD Academic Honesty policy, COD Code of Conduct, ECEC Program Policies, DCFS licensing regulations, and maintaining confidentiality.
- **Emotional maturity and patience-** demonstrate emotional maturity by managing one's own emotions to provide a stable and secure presence for children. Show flexibility in interactions with children, families, supervisors, other college students, and COD instructors. Exhibit patience, empathy, and maturity in responding calmly to stressful and/or overwhelming situations and accepting feedback.
- **Cultural sensitivity-** respect, value, and show sensitivity to diversity including, but not limited to, socioeconomic, cultural, ethnic, ability, sex, family structure etc. Create inclusive environments and plan experiences that embrace diversity and include everyone in an equitable manner.
- **Modeling-** serve as a role model by always demonstrating positive pro-social behaviors and appropriate language and interactions in all environments.
- **Accountability-** meet academic expectations in the classroom and while in childcare centers for academic purposes including, but not limited to; arriving on time, staying for the designated time, adhering to deadlines, following policies and procedures etc.

## **ECEC PROGRAM COST AND CERTIFICATE/DEGREE OPTIONS**

**Estimate of Student Fees:** Starting Fall 2026, the cost for in-district student tuition is \$160 per semester credit hour. Additional costs include books and lab fees/materials. Students will need to set up a DISA Health account for background check and secured document management. **The student will be responsible for the DISA Health account cost, which is not covered by financial aid.** Student may also incur a cost for visiting their Doctor to get the DCFS health form completed and signed. If the student's 'Program Admit' status is revoked or if it has been more than 12 months since the student has taken ECEC courses, the student will incur the cost of reapplying to the program.

**The ECEC Program offers many options for certificate and degree completion for you to choose from.** The ECEC certificates are 'stackable' meaning they build upon each other to culminate in the completion of an AAS degree. Following are the course requirements for degree completion. **Please note that each ECEC course has different prerequisites. Students who are already in the program should consult with the ECEC Program Advisor, Christine Jandak, for academic planning. Students who self-advise risk delaying completion.**

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE**

#### **Early Childhood Certificate +Gateways Level 2 Credential- ECEC.CER.ECEC**

**(18 credits)**

**\* Students pursuing an AA degree can also complete this certificate**

ECEC 1100  
ECEC 1101  
ECEC 2211  
ECEC 2252  
ENGLI 1101  
SPEEC 1100

#### **Early Childhood Advanced Certificate + Gateways Level 3 Credential- ECEC.CER.ADV**

**(18 credits PLUS previous courses listed)**

ECEC 1102  
ECEC 1151  
ECEC 2251  
ECEC 1116  
MATH 1100 or higher  
PSYCH/SOC

#### **AAS Degree in Early Childhood Education + Gateways Level 4 Credential- ECEC.AAS**

**(Courses below PLUS all previous courses listed – 60-64 credits total)**

ECEC 2245\*  
ECEC 2220  
ECEC Electives  
Science with Lab  
General Ed. Classes

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD ADMINISTRATION**

### **Early Childhood Administrator Certificate ECEC.CER.ADMIN (23 credits)**

ECEC 1100

ECEC1101

ECEC 2210

ECEC 2211

ECEC 2251

ECEC 2254

ECEC 2255

ECEC 2256

### **AAS Degree in Early Childhood Administration + Gateways Level 2 Credential & Illinois Director's Credential Level 1 - ECEC.AAS.ADMIN**

**(Courses below PLUS all previous course listed – 64 credits total)**

ECEC 1102

ECEC 1116

ECEC 1163

ECEC 2245

ECEC 2221

ECEC 2252

ECEC Electives General Ed. Classes

## **DECLARING YOUR PROGRAM OF STUDY**

**STUDENTS WILL NEED TO HAVE THE CORRECT PROGRAM OF STUDY AND ALL CORRESPONDING CERTIFICATES LISTED CORRECTLY ON MYACCESS AS PART OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS. See options above.**

Students must submit their Academic Program Change using the online form **IN THE STUDENT PORTAL (Miscellaneous>>Student Forms>>Student Academic Program Change Request)**.

**You may need to complete the form up to 3 times!**

- 1) as your main degree, Associates in Applied Science, ECEC.AAS or ECEC.AAS.ADMIN
- 2) add to your program of study, first certificate
- 3) add to your program of study, second certificate

Here are the codes for you:

**IF YOU ARE PURSUING THE AAS DEGREE IN ECEC**, you will need to have the following THREE codes listed for your program of study: ECEC.AAS and ECEC.CER.ADV and ECEC.CER.ECEC

**IF YOU ARE PURSUING THE AAS DEGREE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD ADMINISTRATION**, you will need to have the following THREE codes listed for your program of study: ECEC.AAS.ADMIN and ECEC.CER.ADMIN and ECEC.CER.ECEC

**IF YOU ARE PURSUING THE AA DEGREE PLUS THE FIRST CERTIFICATE**, you will need to have the following TWO codes listed: AA and ECEC.CER.ECEC

**IF YOU ARE ONLY PURSUING A CERTIFICATE**, you will just need to have the certificate code (see certificates above) \*This will need to be updated if you end up changing to a degree

**Returning students who have completed an ECEC certificate or will complete a certificate by the end of the Spring semester, need to have applied for the certificate. Follow these instructions and use the certificate course codes above when filling out the form: <https://cod.edu/records/forms/application-degree-certificate.html>**

## Early Childhood Education and Care Basic Program Admission Requirements

This program is not a limited admissions program. This program is open to all students who are interested in pursuing Early Childhood Education and Care as a career who can meet all the requirements and complete the items below by the application deadline. Note that the application only needs to be completed by those pursuing an ECEC certificate and/or ECEC degree.

### To be eligible to apply, the student must first:

- Apply to College of DuPage if not already a student
- Meet Reading Category 1 to take ECEC courses
- Be in good academic standing/non-probation. If a student is on academic probation/suspension the student will need to meet with a Full-Time faculty member to discuss a potential plan for getting off probation by completing general education courses prior to reapplying for the ECEC program the next semester.
- Not have failed the same ECEC course two or more times or not passed more than two of any ECEC courses within an academic year. If student has not met this requirement, the student will need to meet with a Full-Time faculty member to discuss a potential plan to enter the program in the following semester.
- Complete all items on the DISA Health/Castlebranch site. If ANY item is missing or incomplete, the student's application will not be approved and the student will not receive admission to the program. It is up to each student to go through each item on the DISA Health/Castlebranch site carefully to ensure that they have fully completed everything, whether it be uploading documents, certificates, or signatures. *Applications that have been reviewed and denied for missing/incomplete information two times for 16 week course admission, will not be reviewed again until the last review period. If there is still missing/incomplete information, the student will only be eligible for the next review which is for the 12 week course admission only. There will be no exceptions. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate attention to detail, independence, and accountability. Students that do not meet the final deadline for 12 week courses will need to wait to apply for the next semester.*

## APPLICATION PROCESS

1. If you have not been admitted to College of DuPage, you first need to apply by completing the \$20 nonrefundable application online: <https://cod.edu/admissions/new-students/index.html>  
You may also submit to see if you qualify for an application fee waiver: <https://cod.edu/admissions/fee-waiver.html>
2. To Ensure that all of your eligible credits are accounted for, submit official transcripts from all previous institutions you have attended to the Office of Student Records to be evaluated: <https://www.cod.edu/records/transcript-evaluation.html>
  - To verify receipt of your transcript(s), log into inside.cod.edu, click on 'myACCESS for Students', select 'Academic Profile'. The receipt status of your transcript(s) will be listed under 'Unofficial Transcripts'
  - If you have an international transcript from a high school or college, those must be evaluated as well. Please refer to the following website for more information: <https://www.cod.edu/records/transcript-evaluation.html>
  - Reach out directly to the Office of Student Records, not faculty or advisors, if you have questions regarding transcripts: [recordsoffice@cod.edu](mailto:recordsoffice@cod.edu) or (630) 942-3838
3. Follow these steps to **Create your DISA Health Account** for Background Check and Document Manager:  
**GO TO:** <https://portal.castlebranch.com/CV72>
  - Click on 'Package Selection' at the top
  - Click on 'Please select' on the left and choose 'Early Childhood Education and Care' then choose 'FT78-Background Check-Compliance Tracker'
  - Check the box at the bottom of the screen indicating that you have read the order instructions then click the green button on the right to continue
  - On the Sign-In page you will click the green button to 'Create Account'
  - Fill in all the information to create the account- **The email address you provide will become your username. Remember the password you create!**
  - As you complete each part continue to scroll down to click on 'Next'
  - Click on SAVE if prompted for each section you complete
  - Be sure to include all previous names where it asks.
  - Where it asks, be sure to include ALL previous addresses in the last seven years. **If you do not include all previous addresses, it will delay your background check.**
  - Where it asks for a license # just put 0000. This is NOT for a drivers license, it is for a professional license.
  - Choose **Criminal Check for Illinois**

**NOTE: Every student applying to the ECEC program is required to complete this background check for the program, regardless if you completed this for your job.**

4. **Payment:** Payment is due immediately. The fee is \$67.00 + \$2.99 processing fee. You can choose to pay in full or pay in installments. If you pay in installments, you will pay 50% up front then 25% each of the following two months.
5. **\*\*FEES ARE PAID BY THE STUDENT DIRECTLY TO DISA/CastleBranch. THIS FEE IS NON-REFUNDABLE.** COD does not coordinate any part of the payment and cannot issue any refunds for any issues incurred. Problems or questions regarding payment should be directed to DISA/CastleBranch, not to COD faculty or advisors.
6. The current time frame for background checks to be processed in Illinois is 30 days. Keep this in mind as any delays in submitting your application will delay this process.
7. **DO NOT PAY THE FEE TO RUSH RESULTS!!** This will NOT get the background check completed any sooner. This is a non-refundable fee, so you should not choose this.
8. **VERY IMPORTANT NOTE:**  
Once you have paid the fee and finished setting up your account, you will receive an alert on your account/or email regarding this **VERY IMPORTANT NEXT STEP. To actually complete the background check there is a form that you will receive via email that you will need to sign (e-signature or pen signature ONLY) and you will need to submit it within 5 days to the email address that is provided on the form. If you do not do this, you will not get the background check. If you do not submit this form with an actual signature, NOT printed/typed name, then your form will be rejected by the Illinois State Police and you will need to pay the fee again to redo it.**
9. Once you have created your DISA/CastleBranch account and have submitted the additional paperwork for your background check, you will then work on completing all the other application items on the DISA/CastleBranch document manager for the admissions process.

**\*Questions regarding setting up your DISA/CastleBranch account should be directed to CastleBranch Customer Service: 888-914-7279 or [servicedesk.cu@castlebranch.com](mailto:servicedesk.cu@castlebranch.com)**

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE:**

Students will have multi-year access to their DISA Health/CastleBranch account. Students will be **required to undergo a basic background check every two years for the ECEC program. A fee will be required again two years from your original application date to do another background check to remain admitted in the program.**

At this time, due to delays in Illinois State Police processing, the fingerprint background check is not being required for admissions, only the basic background check. However, should the fingerprint background check be required in the future, students will then need to pay the additional fee to complete it to remain admitted

in the program. If it is not completed, student's will lose their 'Program Admit' status and will not be able to register for ECEC classes.

**Background check results and health form results will not be shared by COD with childcare centers or schools. We will only inform childcare centers and schools, in a general statement, that all students in the ECEC program have completed a background check and DCFS Health form. However, students have access to their results and at their own will, may choose to share those results with childcare centers or schools upon their request.**

## **Document Manager through DISA Health/Castlebranch**

**Follow the instructions below to access the DISA Health/CastleBranch document manager to complete the application documents.**

**GO TO: <https://portal.castlebranch.com/CV72> and log back into your account using the email and password you used when creating your account.**

This is where you will find the document tracker, which is essentially a 'To Do' list of items that need to be completed as part of your application process. Details of what is in the document tracker are as follows:

### **Documents should not be emailed to ECEC faculty\* or ECEC advisors**

1. **Background Check Completion** – there is nothing to submit here as you should have already completed and submitted those documents after you created your DISA/CastleBranch account. This section will be verified by ECEC FT Faculty once results are received and then noted in your file. Please remember that background checks take approximately 30 days to be completed by the State.
2. **Work Status Questionnaire and Employment Verification\***- Everyone will complete and upload the questionnaire. Students who are currently working in a childcare center or ISBE preschool or kindergarten will need to have their **Director or Principal email the ECEC Chair, [zaarj@cod.edu](mailto:zaarj@cod.edu), directly from their official work email\*** verifying the information requested in the document.
3. **State of Illinois DCFS Medical Report on an Adult in a Child Care Facility** - Google "CFS 602" Medical Report on an Adult in a Child Care Facility. Mark 'volunteer' and for address put 'Centers in DuPage County'. If your physician asks, you can tell them you are a college student doing observations at various childcare centers. All sections must completed by the physician, NOT by you, and the student needs to pass all the requirements. This form must be **signed by physician and dated within previous three months of applying** – upload
4. **Statement of Commitment form** - signed and uploaded
5. **Early Childhood Education and Care Essential Functions Form** - signed and uploaded
6. **Certificate of Completion: Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters.** This is found at: <https://mandatedreporter.dcf.illinois.gov/en/index-man>. When you register, put 'other' for your mandated reporter role. For 'organization' put College of DuPage. Address: 425 Fawell Blvd. Glen Ellyn, IL 60137. This must be completed no more than 6 months prior to application - copy of certificate uploaded

7. **DCFS Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status Form** - signed and uploaded
8. **Meet with ECEC Program Advisor, Christine Jandak** (returning students) **OR Bess Fuertes** (New students), to develop your academic plan. This is required as part of the application process. Christine or Bess will email you a confirmation of your meeting including the date you met and verification that you made a plan - save that email and upload
9. **Program of Study is Listed Correctly:** See previous information regarding this. Your program of study must be reflected correctly in MyAccess and will be verified it is complete by FT Faculty to be eligible for admission. Students who are eligible to apply for a certificate will also need to have completed the application (see previous information on this).

### **How will I know when I have been admitted and can register for courses?**

**Do Not email faculty or advisors for updates on your application as they will not have an answer for you. Read the following information carefully.**

**Only when ALL DISA/CastleBranch Document Manager items are fully completed and reviewed AND the results of the background check have been received (and passed), will the application be considered 'complete'**. If everything has been approved once complete, you will receive an email to your COD email account informing you that your application was approved. Your student ID will be submitted by us to the Registration Office and they will denote your account with 'PA', meaning you have been given 'Program Admit' status. This will take a few days from the time you receive your approved admissions email. You will then be able to register for your courses. Please refer to the dates when documents will be reviewed to determine when you may expect an email regarding your application.

Students' applications are reviewed in the order they have been completed, including us having received the background check results, so it is in your best interest to complete everything as soon as possible so that you have earlier registration. **Remember that background checks take up to 30 days. If everything has been completed, but your background results have not been received by the application due date, your application will not be reviewed until the next review cycle, if results are received.**

- If ANY item is missing or incomplete, the student's application will not be approved and the student will not receive admission to the program. It is up to each student to go through each item on the DISA Health site carefully and ensure that they have fully completed everything, whether it be uploading documents, certificates, or signatures. *Applications that have been reviewed and denied for missing/incomplete information two times for 16 week course admission, will not be reviewed again until the last review period. If there is still missing/incomplete information, the student will only be eligible for the next review which is for the 12 week course admission. There will be no exceptions. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate attention to detail, independence, and accountability. Students that do not meet the final deadline for 12 week courses will need to wait to apply for the next semester.*

\*Students are able to view their documents on the site

## FALL 2026 APPLICATION DEADLINES and REVIEW DATES

**\*All application packets are reviewed in the order they are fully completed. Background check results must be received for applications to be considered 'completed'**

**FIRST DUE DATE to apply to the ECEC program is June 8<sup>th</sup> for Fall 2026, both 16 week and 12 week courses. \*Completed applications received by June 8<sup>th</sup> will be reviewed between June 9<sup>th</sup> and June 16<sup>th</sup>**

**COMPLETED APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER JUNE 8<sup>TH</sup> WILL BE REVIEWED ONLY DURING THE FOLLOWING REVIEW CYCLES.** Please remember that an application is considered 'complete' only after all parts of the application are submitted AND the background check RESULTS have been received.

**JUNE 29<sup>TH</sup> – JULY 3<sup>RD</sup>**

**JULY 13<sup>TH</sup> – JULY 17<sup>TH</sup>**

**JULY 27<sup>TH</sup> - JULY 31<sup>ST</sup>**

**FINAL DEADLINE** to have all completed applications submitted for review for 16 week courses is August 9<sup>th</sup>. These final applications will be reviewed between August 10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>, not before.

**\*\*FOR FALL 2026 12wk COURSES – DEADLINE TO APPLY IS SEPTEMBER 13, 2026; applications will be reviewed September 14<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup>,** in the order they were completed (with background check results). If you previously applied to register for 16 week courses you do NOT need to reapply for 12 week courses.

**NOTE: Students interested in applying for practicum courses (ECEC 1163, 2220, and 2221) or ECEC 2245 Methods courses, will be required to complete TWO separate applications.**

-It is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** that students complete the ECEC program application documents and the background check form as soon as possible, in order to meet the June 8<sup>th</sup> deadline, since background checks take 30 days for the ECEC program.

-You will ALSO need to submit an additional application, specific to these courses, to the Clinical Chair by June 8<sup>th</sup>. **Consent to register for these courses is on a first come, first served basis. Students must complete BOTH application requirements to be eligible.** Please note that these courses have limited enrollment and students who delay submitting both applications may risk not being able to register until the next semester if all seats are full. Students who are eligible for these course are responsible for reaching out to the Clinical Chair, Cindy Rice, at [ricecyn@cod.edu](mailto:ricecyn@cod.edu) to request the additional application packet.

## Can I lose my 'Program Admit' status if I have already been admitted to the ECEC program?

Once a student is admitted to the program, their ECEC Program Admission does not guarantee the student will be able to remain admitted in the program. Program Admission can be revoked and the student will not be able to register for additional ECEC courses, for reasons including, but not limited to, any of the reasons noted below. The student may potentially be permitted to reapply in a future semester after consultation with a Full-Time Faculty member:

- Student has not taken ECEC courses for a full academic year (spring, fall, and summer semesters)
- Student has not successfully passed two or more (any) ECEC courses with a C or better during the academic year
- Student has failed the same ECEC course (grade of D or F) more than two times in an academic year or not passed more than two of any ECEC courses in an academic year.
- Violation of, or inability to meet, any policies/procedures/requirements as outlined in the following:  
<https://cod.edu/student-experience/dean-of-students/index.html>  
[Rules 407 Licensing Standards for Day Care Centers](https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements)  
<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements>
- Inability to fulfill essential functions as described in this admissions packet
- Other concerns raised by FT or adjunct faculty, other students, community early childhood centers/schools etc.

### **Information Disclaimer:**

The information in this application is not to be considered an irrevocable agreement between the student and the ECEC program. The program reserves the right to change, at any time, without notice, requirements, curriculum, course structure and content, as well as other such matters that may not be within its control.

For questions regarding the Program Admission process, please contact FT Faculty or the ECEC Program Advisor.

Jean Zaar; FT Faculty and ECEC Program Chair  
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Cindy Rice; FT Faculty and ECEC Clinical Chair  
[ricecyn@cod.edu](mailto:ricecyn@cod.edu)

Continuing ECEC Student Advisor:  
Christine Jandak  
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NEW ECEC Student Advisor:  
Bess Furtres  
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