



Early Childhood Policy In Institutions of Higher Education

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and the Buffett Early Childhood Fund*

Created originally as a prototypical module by the Early Childhood Policy in Institutions of Higher Education (ECPIHE) initiative, this document has been modified for use by (*insert university name*) for use in its (*insert program name*). This document supports ECPIHE’s foundational intent to create and support a cadre of scholars who address early childhood policy. Moreover, it acknowledges ECPIHE’s purposeful creation of comprehensive and adaptive materials that are designed to be modified to reflect the instructional goals and needs of diverse contexts and users. For more information about ECPIHE and/or to learn about additional coursework related to the initiative, please visit <http://policyforchildren.org/ecpihe/>

This module is Module 3 of 12 90-minute modules that have been developed as part of the Early Childhood Policy in Institutions of Higher Education (ECPIHE) effort funded by the Heising-Simons Foundation and Buffett Early Childhood Fund. The work herein represents the collective effort of the project’s Content Work Group, which includes Linda Espinosa, Sharon Lynn Kagan, Kristie Kauertz, Helen Raikes, Aisha Ray, Adele Robinson, Catherine Scott-Little, Linda Smith, and Albert Wat. Eva Landsberg and Samantha Melvin contributed to the work, as well. Each module contains distinct content so that it may be used individually or in combination with other modules. Taken together, the 12 modules could form a course.

Title	<i>Module 3 – Unequal Childhoods, Racial Equity, and Early Childhood Policy</i>
Learning Outcomes	<p><i>By the end of the session, students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the basics of how unequal childhoods in relation to race, social class, and gender are related to structural inequality, disproportionality, history, and opportunity structures; • Understand how attention to culture and diversity have evolved over time within the field; • Understand key theoretical constructs (e.g., critical race theory) and key concepts (e.g., equity, segregation, racialization, opportunity structures) and their application to early childhood educational inequities; • Consider how inequities, equity strategies, and structural racism affect young children’s early care and educational experiences and outcomes • Examine early childhood education and equity-focused policies.
Content	<p><i>PART I – Introduction (~20 minutes)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is meant by “unequal childhoods”? Unequal compared to what? How do inequality, racism, and sexism truncate developmental outcomes and family functioning?

- How have visions of equity and diversity changed over time (e.g., from deficit to asset; from multicultural to culturally relevant to culturally responsive to culturally preserving)
- What are the unique factors that contribute to unequal childhoods in the U.S., specifically social stratification, segregation, and ideologies (e.g., racism, sexism)?
- What does data illustrate regarding how race, gender, and social class intersect in early childhood and influence developmental and educational outcomes: suspensions and expulsions of children under 6 from early childhood programs, access to high-quality early childhood program, special education assignment, health status, and other indicators of child well-being?

PART II – Critical Race Theory and Other Useful Constructs (~15 minutes)

- What is critical race theory and what are its contributions to understanding equity and disproportionality in early childhood policy?
- What is racism, bias, racialization, sexism, gender equity, equity, equality, and disproportionality? What is meant by the phrase, “race or gender are ‘socially constructed’”?
- Bias, deficit thinking, “poverty punishment,” and early childhood care and education—the challenge of race and gender in care and early learning processes and settings
- Critical thinkers: Post modernists and their impact on DAP and considerations of “whiteness,” Western hegemony

PART III – What Has Been the Historic Role of Federal Policy on Race and Gender? A Complex and Contradictory Tale (~15 minutes)

- *Constructing disproportionality:* The historic role of federal policy in supporting and exacerbating racialization, segregation, and poverty for children and families of color in education and housing
- *Advocating for equity:* Head Start and the War on Poverty

PART IV – Equity-Focused Policies in Early Childhood (~10 minutes)

- What are racial and gender equity approaches to early childhood policy? What do they offer? What are their limitations?
- Characteristics of racial and gender equity approaches:
 - Universal vs. targeted strategies
 - Data as a key driver
 - Understanding the roots of equity problems
 - Placing those most affected by the policies and programs at the center of equity work
 - A brief review of the challenge of assessing and measuring the impact of racial and gender equity initiatives.
- Common racial or gender equity tools: Equity Action Framework; Race Matters Toolkit
- Examples of equity approaches in early childhood policy: The case of Oregon’s early childhood equity work

Delivery Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60 minutes: Lecture, PPT, and Q&A • 15 minutes: Work on early childhood equity problem vignettes in small groups with targeted questions • 15 minutes: Report back and brief discussion of key ideas that emerged from group discussion.
Application Activity/ies	<p>Case vignettes of an equity problem related to young children and families: Using the Equity Action Framework questions, work in dyads or small groups. Discuss together the vignette and questions provided. Be prepared to share key points with the entire group.</p>
Selected Readings	<p>Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2017). <i>2017 Kids count data set</i>. Retrieved from https://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-2017kidscountdatabook.pdf#page=14</p> <p>Coates, T. (2014, June). The case for reparations. <i>The Atlantic</i>. Retrieved from https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/</p> <p>Coll, C. G. et al. (1996). An integrative model for the study of developmental competencies in minority children. <i>Child Development</i>, 67(5), 1891-1914.</p> <p>Ladson-Billings, G. (2007). <i>Gloria Ladson-Billings reframes the achievement gap</i> (Audio). National Writing Project. Retrieved from https://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/2513</p> <p>National Urban Indian Family Coalition. (2008). <i>Urban Indian America: The status of American Indian and Alaskan Native children and families</i>. Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from https://www.aecf.org/resources/urban-indian-america/</p>