



North Carolina
Early Educator Certification
Continuing Education Unit
Development & Review Tool

Winter 2011

Overview

Thousands of Early Educators in North Carolina are certified by the North Carolina Institute for Child Development Professionals (Institute, www.ncicdp.org) each year. The Institute is a field-based organization that was founded in 1993 with a mission of promoting the implementation of a comprehensive professional development and recognition system that links education and compensation for child development professionals to ensure high quality care and education services for children and families.

The Early Educator Certification (EEC) process was designed to reduce the cost of entering the field, documenting the education of the workforce and operating a child care program. It is the first-in-the-nation, field-wide professional certification for the early care and education and school age workforce, available to all those working directly with or on the behalf of children ages birth to twelve. EEC verifies the education of individuals working in the field on a standardized scale providing Early Educators with a portable certification that may be used in all regulated child care settings in the state.

Certified Early Educators in North Carolina must maintain a current certification. Certified individuals have three to five years to complete their renewal requirements, based on their EEC level. Options for renewal currently include CEUs or college credits or a combination of both. Teaching CEUs or college credits is also an option for EEC renewal if an individual is certified at the highest levels.

Why Education Matters
http://www.ncicdp.org/documents/Why_Education_Matters.pdf

EEC renewal options are based on research that has shown that college coursework and degrees result in higher quality care and education environments, better outcomes for children, higher levels of workforce compensation and lower workforce turnover rates. Research about adult learning has shown that adult learners need time to listen, take in, use and reflect on information provided to improve practice. Therefore, CEUs must be a total of .5 CEUs in length and may be offered in one sitting or over a period of time. Non-credit bearing options (continuing education units or CEUs) provided for EEC renewal are not intended to supplant college courses but rather to fill the gaps in content, provide information about a topic unable to be covered in-depth in a college course and/or provide skills to prepare participants to attend or return to college studies.

The types of continuing education listed above do not include all forms of professional development that serve to advance and inform practice. Additional types of professional development include, but are not limited to, professional development planning, mentoring, coaching, consultation, leadership forums and opportunities, membership in a professional association and resource linking – to both information and individuals and more.

Defining the Role of an Adult Educator

As a provider of education and continuing education, adult educators are a direct supplier of critical content, research and resources that can increase the knowledge and skills of the workforce, directly impacting the lives of tens of thousands of children every day. The primary focus of an adult educator includes product, process, and procedures which may be defined within the scope of an organization or other structure, such as field standards, funding requirements and/or agency guidelines.

Effective adult educators plan, facilitate and assess learning. They have an understanding of their own skills and limitations and are able to be the “*guide on the side versus the sage on the stage*”. In this multi-faceted role, adult educators may be viewed as teachers, peers and leaders, simultaneously. As leaders in the field adult educators must understand the value of sharing their knowledge and experiences with a goal of helping others learn from their experiences and transform or improve practice.¹ Adult educators have the obligation to keep up to date on current research about child development, changes in regulations, standards and systems, adult learning strategies and workforce data to inform both your knowledge and the content of continuing education sessions you will provide.

Guidelines for Adult Educators

The Institute has developed a set of guidelines for adult educators interested in providing continuing education units (CEUs) for EEC Renewal. CEUs are cohesive units of learning that are a step between training and college education. The provision of CEUs for EEC renewal, as with many professions, requires formal education and experience in the field. The Adult Educator Endorsement (AEE) outlines the basic knowledge and skills of an adult educator providing early childhood or school age content for EEC renewal, including education (documented by certification) and experience and effectiveness as a trainer.

Adult Educator Endorsement

<http://ncicdp.org/continuing-education/trainer-guidelines-tools/>

The AEE was developed by a field-representative task group, shared with key partners and approved by the Institute Board. It reflects the work of many other states that have previously defined trainer requirements as well as requirements outlined for trainers

¹ North Carolina Institute for Child Development Professionals (www.ncicdp.org)

supporting the certification and/or licensure of other professions. The AEE serves as guidelines for the industry, consumers, sponsors and providers of CEUs for EEC renewal. More information about the AEE and application documents may be found at the link shown in the textbox to the right.

Ethical Conduct

Ethical conduct on the part of all working in the field is vital to building a strong profession. Adult educators must find “balance between an obligation to support and nurture adult learners and the obligation to provide caring and competent professionals to work with young children and their families” as detailed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children’s Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment and Supplement for Adult Educators This Code and Supplement are required to be read prior to application for the AEE and adhered to by adult educators who are endorsed by the Institute.

NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct & Supplement for Adult Educators

<http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSETH05.pdf>
and
<http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/ethics04.pdf>

Continuing Education Sources for EEC Renewal

Credit-Bearing Options: College Courses/Degrees

In North Carolina, 58 community colleges and over 20 public and private universities provide college credits that may lead to credentials, certificates and degrees in early childhood education, school age and other related fields.

Standards

All NC early childhood systems, including the NC Division of Child Development and EEC, require coursework be taken at a **regionally** accredited institution of higher education (college or university). All public community colleges and universities in North Carolina are regionally accredited.

Consumer beware -- Degree program accreditation systems in other states, offered online or in other countries may not be regionally accredited. If nationally accredited courses are earned by an Early Educator, credits may not transfer to a North Carolina college.

Costs

According to a survey conducted by Child Care Services Association (fall 2009):

- NC's community college course rates were \$50 per credit hour.
- NC university credits for undergraduate programs ranged from \$238.06 – \$323.75 (for 1 – 5 credit hours).
- NC distance learning costs per credit hour ranged from \$76.61 – \$144.22.

Check the Institute's website section called College Education to find the most current data.

Financial Assistance

A variety of financial aid sources from federal grants, to tax credits to T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarships for earning credits for both certification and renewal are available for Early Educators. . To access more information for resources to reduce college costs see www.ncicdp.org/education.

Documentation

Official transcripts are used to document college courses earned for EEC renewal.

Non-Credit Bearing Options: Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

Many professions and an increasing number of early childhood systems in other states include continuing education units (CEU) as part of their professional development continuum. Research has shown that adult learners need time to listen, take in, use and reflect on information provided to improve practice. Partners at the national, state and local levels, including child care resource and referral and Smart Start agencies, community colleges and universities, public school and/or professional associations, private trainers and more are moving swiftly together to build accessible CEU options. CEU options may be provided to inclusion on the Institute's Calendar of Events (<http://ncicdp.org/calendar-of-events/>).

Standards

- a. CEU Topic Areas – Content areas are designated by the NC Division of Child Development (www.ncchildcare.net) topic areas. All CEUs for EEC renewal must address one or more topic areas.

Sources for College Courses & Degrees

- Two-year Degree Programs
 - www.nccommunitycolleges.edu (NC Community College System)
 - www.childcareservices.org/schools/index.php (online-directory)
- Four-year Degree Programs
 - <http://www.northcarolina.edu/content.php/system/index.htm> (public)
 - <http://www.ncicu.org> (independent)
- Graduate Degree Programs
 - <http://www.northcarolina.edu/content.php/system/index.htm> (public)
 - <http://www.ncicu.org> (independent)

1. Planning a safe, healthy learning environment
2. Children's physical & intellectual development
3. Children's social & emotional development
4. Productive relationships with families
5. Program management
6. Professionalism
7. Observing & recording children's behavior
8. Child growth development
9. Inclusion of children with special needs

b. CEU Content - CEUs must be a total of .5 CEUs in length. They may be offered in one sitting or over a period of time. CEUs provided for EEC renewal are not intended to supplant college courses but rather to fill the gaps in content, provide information about a topic unable to be covered in-depth in a college course and/or provide skills to prepare participants to attend or return to college studies. Content approval is provided by an EEC recognized body as shown below, to support utilizing existing continuing education systems in our state and to avoid using resources to create duplicative systems. CEUs for EEC renewal must be approved by one of these sources:

1. Regionally accredited community college or
2. Regionally accredited university or
3. North Carolina local education agency/school(LEA)or
4. Organization approved by the International Association for Continuing Education & Training (www.iacet.org)

c. CEU Instructors - Guidelines for the providers of CEUs for EEC renewal are outlined in the Adult Educator Endorsement. If the adult educator providing CEUs is endorsed by the Institute, DCD will accept the CEUs as in-service training hours without a training plan, if they are approved by an EEC recognized source and they meet the requirements for the individual's professional development for facility licensure. This will allow use of the CEU documentation for both EEC renewal and DCD facility licensure.

Seeking CEU Content Approval

The endorsement of an adult educator by the Institute and/or the development of a CEU does not automatically guarantee an approving body will provide CEUs for the content. Recognized bodies that are eligible to grant CEUs for EEC renewal may choose to provide CEUs for a session and/or hire adult educators who meet their required criteria, often reflective of the field's guidelines (Adult Educator Endorsement) to provide a CEU session as the content expert.

To seek approval from a recognized college, university or LEA adult educators are encouraged to follow these steps:

1. Review the Continuing Education Overview and Calendar of Events listing form to distribute CEU information. (see Institute website)
2. Review the Institute's CEU Development & Review Guide available through an Institute CEU Development Training.
3. Review the Institute's Continuing Education Library ([CEL](#)) to inform the development of session content.
4. Review the nine DCD topic areas to be sure your session meets the needs of the workforce for EEC and facility licensing purposes.
5. Apply for the Institute's Adult Educator Endorsement (AEE).
6. Draft an outline of the CEU session (see worksheet in the CeU-T).
7. Contact a local entity that is eligible to provide CEUs for EEC renewal. *Share the Institute's website address (www.ncicdp.org) to inform the discussion. Note: system offices for North Carolina colleges, universities and the Department of Public Instruction do not issue CEUs. CEU content approval is a local, case by case decision.*
8. Inquire about CEU approval and/or CEU Instructor hiring criteria.
9. Inquire about paperwork and fees associated with approval of your CEU session.
10. Inquire about learner assessment, monitoring and documentation needs. *Approving bodies may monitor the provision of the CEU to assure it is aligned with what was approved, meets their quality standards and achieves intended learning outcomes. Documentation will be needed by EEC, if endorsed and may be needed by the approving body to support follow up with participants, as needed.*

Costs

The cost of a CEU varies just like the cost of in-service training workshops. Local school, non-profit agencies, state agencies and national vendors offer CEUs for free or at a low cost. The cost for up to 2.4 CEUs (or 24 contact hours) through a NC community college is about \$3/hour. NC universities offer CEUs at a cost of about \$10/hour. See the Institute's Calendar of Events (www.ncicdp.org).

Documentation

CEU documentation provided for EEC renewal that is not provided by a regionally accredited college or university should include the name of the session, date(s) and location of session(s), the number of CEUs and the CEU granting body. If the CEU is provided by a regionally accredited college or university an official student transcript documents the attainment of CEUs.

Building CEU Options for EEC Renewal

The Institute has worked with partners and adult educators for over two years in an effort to collectively build high quality continuing education unit (CEUs) options for certified Early Educators that would supplement college courses. In addition, the Institute has worked with key partners to develop resources, including this tool, trainings and online continuing education library and more for adult educators who are interested in providing continuing education units to certified professionals in support of Early Educators maintaining their certification,

Principles of Design

The Principles of Good Practice in Continuing Education, developed by the Council on the Continuing Education Unit, provide our field with a set of design principles for building CEUs for EEC renewal. The design principles provide essential elements for providing learning experiences that recognize the learner's needs, build from the learner's experiences and seek to achieve learning outcomes. Design principles for building CEU options for EEC renewal support the development of high quality learning experiences that will...

- Supplement, not supplant, college courses.
- Supply a cohesive unit of learning about a subject or content area.
- Utilize principles of good design regardless of the delivery mode (i.e. face: face, online, hybrid, etc.).
- Originate from pre-determined learning outcomes.
- Build on an individual's prior experiences and knowledge, collected from previous sessions and/or a pre-assessment of knowledge and skills.
- Reflect the current standards and guidelines for the field and workforce.
- Include and utilize current research and best practices.
- Align with systems supporting the field (i.e. regulatory, funding criteria, etc.).
- Engage participants as self-directed learners.
- Assess participant learning.
- Use session evaluations to strengthen future CEU offerings.

Announcing a CEU

Best practices provide guidance about pre-event action by the CEU instructor to prepare the learners for a successful experience. CEU instructors are encouraged to:

- Provide timely announcements of each event.
- Share requirements including technology and pre-requisites.
- Share the event location and directions, noting accessibility features.
- Provide fee information and sources of support.
- Develop pre-assessment methods for each learning outcome.
- Utilize pre-assessment tools to inform the development of content.

A sample CEU announcement may be found at <http://www.ncicdp.org/documents/Sample%20descriptor%20for%20CEU%20providers.pdf>

Documenting a CEU for EEC Renewal

CEU documentation needed for EEC renewal options that are not provided by a regionally accredited college or university should include the:

- name of the session
- date(s) and location of session(s)
- number of CEUs
- CEU granting body
- CEU instructor name and contact information.

If the CEU is provided by a regionally accredited college or university an official student transcript documents the attainment of CEUs for EEC renewal purposes.

CeU Development & Review Tool Overview

The Institute developed the Continuing Education Development and Review Tool (CeU-T) to support the development CEU session content in support of EEC renewal.

The CeU-T is drawn from the principles of good practice in continuing education, workforce development processes used in early childhood systems in other states, North Carolina's early childhood systems and standards, the NC Division of Child Development In-service Training Outline Form and process, and the NC Community College System Curriculum Improvement Project Course Development & Review Rubric (2008) and the work of professions who have long certified or licensed their respective workforce.

The CeU-T provides essential elements needed in a continuing education session that is intended to support adult learning, skill development and the transference of knowledge. It is designed to also support reviewers in sharing feedback with developers/development teams. The CeU-T is a dynamic tool and may, through use, be amended and enriched to reflect new knowledge and identified needs of the populations it is intended to serve and support.

CeU-T Categories

A blank CEU development worksheet and a completed CEU session sample chart are provided to assist developers in outlining a CEU session (see pages 11 & 12). A glossary of terms is provided on page 13. And references, resources and links to some early childhood program and provider standards commonly used by our field are included on page 20.

The CeU-T categories are provided to support the developer or reviewer in editing the content developed to reflect best practices. Note all CeU-T categories should be addressed regardless of length or mode of delivery.

1. Learning Needs.....	page 13
2. Learning Outcomes.....	page 14
3. Learner Diversity & Connection to Early Childhood Systems	page 15
4. Engaging Learners.....	page 16
5. Content Review.....	page 17
6. Learning Experiences Review.....	page 18
7. Assessment of Learning Outcomes.....	page 19

**Indicators marked by an asterisk reflect standards used by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET, www.iacet.org)*

Charting Your CEU Content to Support EEC Renewal Requirements – Worksheet

Title/Topic:

Goal/Purpose of CEU Session:

Pre-assessment strategy(ies):

DCD Topic Area(s): 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Segment/Time + Standards Addressed	Learning Outcomes (What will change?)	Instructional Methods experiences/activities/assignments (What will they do?) <i>Includes take homes/in-betweens</i>	Engagement Strategies (How will learners participate/self-direct own learning?)	Assessment Strategies (How will you know change occurred?)

Total Time (min 5 hours): _____

Materials needed: _____

DCD Topic Areas: (1) Planning a safe, healthy learning environment, (2) Children’s physical & intellectual development, (3) Children’s social & emotional development, (4) Productive relationships with families, (5) Program management, (6) Professionalism, (7) Observing & recording children’s behavior, (8) Child growth development, (9) Inclusion of children with special needs

Charting Your CEU Content to Support EEC Renewal Requirements - Sample

Title/Topic: Supporting Early Educators in Supporting Healthy Social Emotional Behavior

Goal/Purpose of CEU Session: By the end of the session, participants will be able to identify effective strategies for supporting healthy social emotional behavior in child care settings.

Pre-assessment strategy(ies): Survey participants prior to the session to learn what strategies they are currently using.

DCD Topic Area(s): 2, 7, 8

Materials Needed: CSEFEL pyramid visual, Foundations booklet, publications, discussion prompts

Session # and Time Allotted/ Standards	Content	Learning Outcomes (What will change?)	Instructional Methods experiences/activities & assignments (What will they do?)	Engagement Strategies (How will you involve the learners?)	Assessment Strategies (How will you assess learning has occurred?)
Session 1 Total: 5 hours (.5 CEUs) CSEFEL, Foundations for Early Learning, Regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share research about ages & stages - Provide statistics about children’s needs - Demonstrate how schedules, environments and child: staff ratio influence behavior - Provide examples of when things went well and not so well. - Brainstorm preventive strategies - Provide tips for coping with difficult or ongoing behavior challenges 	Participants will <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increase their awareness about what behavior they can realistically expect from young children. - be able to scan and address up to 3 potential triggers in the environment - identify up to 5 potential preventive strategies to prevent - be able to draw on 3 or more coping methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lecture (listen) - Case studies (read) - Group discussions (comprehension) - Online research (read, comprehend, synthesize) - Email discussion (write) - Role play (use) - Individual reflection (assess) - Printed materials (read) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading case studies - Discussing case studies - Building a schedule - Setting up a learning environment - Participation in role play - Review of printed and online resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-assessment survey of learner needs - Oral discussions - Review of email discussions - Pop up Q&A at end of session - Email follow up to check in re: use of content one – two months after session

Glossary of Terms

- **Assessment** – the process for determining individual achievement of learning outcomes.
- **Continuing Education Unit (CEU)** – Equal to 10 contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction.
- **Learning experience** – an interaction between the learner and planned, organized educational activities resulting in a change in the learner's knowledge, skills or attitude.
- **Learning need** – the difference between the current level and the desired level of the learner's knowledge and skills or attitude
- **Learning objective** – defines what learners will be able accomplish after the session and the types of knowledge and skills needed.
- **Learning outcome** - knowledge, skills or attitude acquired as a result of a learning experience.
- **Outcome** – a specified change that is measurable or observable.

Category 1: Learning Needs

Key Element	Developer Notes	Ready	Ready with Modification	Comments
Session outline addresses multiple learning styles through student learning opportunities and activities (i.e. use of media, activities, observation/demonstration, use of research, web links to extend learning, etc.).				
Session outline includes student learning opportunities for learning in groups and individually.				
Session outline includes opportunities to practice/build writing skills.		—	—	—
Session outline includes opportunities to practice/build reading skills.				
Session outline includes opportunities to practice/build math skills.		—	—	—
Session outline includes opportunities to practice/build comprehension skills.				

Category 2: Learning Outcomes

Key Element	Developer Notes	Ready	Ready with Modification	Comments
Learning objectives and outcomes are the focus of the continuing education and training and they provide evidence of a link between learner needs and outcomes.*				
Instructional methods are consistent with learning outcomes regardless of delivery mode.*				
Session outcomes reflect current early childhood research.				
A discussion about learning outcomes if provided at the beginning of the session.*				
The developer has provided clear and concise, written statements of intended learning outcomes for the session or activity.				
The statements of intended learning outcomes for the session focus on learning that can be applied by the learner to situations beyond the boundaries of the learning environment.				
When several inter-related activities, sessions, etc. contribute to the learning outcome, the outcomes of each activity are clearly articulated.		---	---	---
The session outline or agenda clearly specifies when each learning outcome will be addressed.		---	---	---
Learning outcomes are sequenced so that learners are able to recognize their progress toward achieving the stated learning outcomes.*		---	---	---

Category 3: Learner Diversity & Connection to Standards and Systems

Key Element	Developer Notes	Ready	Ready with Modificatio	Comments
The session content addresses learner diversity in terms of culture and language in a way that honors and respects differences.				
The session content addresses the variety of settings in which learners are located (i.e. urban, rural, CCR&R, etc.) and the setting in which they work (family child care, center, preK, Head Start, etc.)				
The session content provides connections between systems of care and education and the standards of the field.				

Category 4: Engaging Learners

Key Element	Developer Notes	Ready	Ready with Modifications	Comments
The rationale for each learning experience is a result of a needs identified and documented.*				
Prior experience and/or education of participants is assessed and used to engage participants in learning.*				
Participants learning styles are assessed and applicable strategies are used to convey information.				
Opportunities for participants to self-direct their learning are provided and engage learners.				
Opportunities to use or access technology to deepen and/or extend learning is made available whenever possible.*				

Category 5: Content Review

Key Element	Developer Notes	Ready	Ready with Modificatio	Comments
Session objectives are clearly linked to the learner's needs.				
Session content is sequenced to incrementally build the student's knowledge and is organized in a logical manner in support of learning outcomes.*				
Session content reflects current standards and guidelines.				
Session outline demonstrates how opportunities build additional knowledge based on individual education and experiences will be provided.				
Session outline reflects and promotes use of current research.				
Session outline reflects the diversity of the learners, the settings in which they work and the population she/he serves.				

Category 6: Learning Experiences Review

Key Element	Developer Notes	Ready	Ready with Modificatio	Comments
The learning environment is conducive to and supports the learning experiences to be provided.*	-			
Learning experiences are designed to facilitate the role of the learner and are organized in such a manner as to provide for appropriate continuity, sequencing and integration of the activity to achieve the specified learning outcomes.*	-			
Instructional methods accommodate various learning styles and are designed to promote interaction between and among learners, instructors and learning resources to achieve the states learning outcomes. <i>(demonstration required, flexibility encouraged).</i> *				
The statements of intended learning outcomes of a continuing education activity determine the selection of instructional strategies, materials, media and other learning strategies and create an appropriate learning environment.				
Program content, instructional materials and delivery processes are relevant and timely for achieving intended learning outcomes.		—	—	—
Instructional staff is qualified by education and experience to provide quality instruction in the relevant subject matter.		—	—	—

Category 7: Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Key Element	Developer Notes	Ready	Ready with Modificatio	Comments
Continuing education activities are evaluated through assessment of learner's performance in terms of intended learning outcomes.*				
More than one assessment method is used to ensure learners have mastered each learning outcome. <i>(assessment methods may cover more than one outcomes).</i> *				
Assessment methods measure achievement of learning outcomes and must be completed before learners are awarded credits.*				
Follow up with participants is considered and provided when possible.				

References & Resources

- Council on the Continuing Education Unit Principles in Good Practice in Continuing Education: <http://www.apa.org/about/governance/council/policy/principles-of-good-practice.pdf>
- North Carolina Institute for Child Development Professionals Continuing Education Library: <http://www.ncicdp.org/continuing-education/continuing-education-library-cel-2/>
- Early Childhood Leadership & Policy Network: <http://www.uncg.edu/hdf/programs/ECLPN%20policy%20paper%20no.%20105.pdf>
- Preparing Teachers of Young Children: The Current State of Knowledge, and a Blueprint for the Future: <http://www.irl.berkeley.edu/cscce/2009/preparing-teachers-of-young-children/>
- National Child Care Information Center Early Childhood Professional Development Systems Toolkit : http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/pd_toolkit/index.html
- North Carolina and National Guidelines & Standards

Early Educator Certification

<http://ncicdp.org/certification-licensure/eec-overview/>

Adult Educator Endorsement

<http://ncicdp.org/continuing-education/trainer-guidelines-tools/>

NAEYC Personnel Prep Standards

<http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/ppp>

NAEYC Accreditation Standards & Supportive Skills

www.naeyc.org/accreditation/

Birth-Kindergarten Standards

<http://www.ncprek.nc.gov/TLU/pdf/tluBKStandards.pdf>

PK-3 Teacher Core Knowledge

http://www.fcd-us.org/resources/resources_show.htm?doc_id=462123

CDA Standards

http://www.cdacouncil.org/cda_cs.htm

Core Knowledge for PK-3 Teaching

http://www.k12.wa.us/earlylearning/pubdocs/Core_Knowledge.pdf