

Early Childhood Education Program
Technical Diploma and Associate Degree
Western Technical College

Supplemental Information

- **Course Sequence and Delivery.** The Associate Degree program can be completed in 2 years (Fall, Spring, Fall, Spring), with a very full course load in all eight of the 7-week sessions. Most students spread this out to include some summer general studies courses to lighten the load. The Technical Diploma can be completed in 1 year (Fall, Spring), with a full course load.
- **Reliable Transportation.** You will need reliable transportation to complete the requirements of practicum. The program utilizes sites in the La Crosse and surrounding areas within our region. While we try to place you close to home, we do have sites within a 50-mile radius of La Crosse. Students are responsible for their own expenses for transportation related to the site assignment.
- **Field Experiences.** Our program utilizes four field experiences. Field placements are hands on learning opportunities in a real-world workplace. You will start out slowly in your first term and work up to taking over the lead teaching responsibilities in a childcare setting during your last term, ensuring that you feel confident in your profession.
- **Criminal Background Check with Fingerprinting.** This is a Wisconsin Department of Children and Families requirement. Western does not accept background checks conducted by third parties (i.e., your employer), unless the results appear on the DCF portal. DCF staff will review the results of your fingerprint or name-based background check, and will issue a preliminary eligibility determination, usually within 7 days of submission. The student can begin practicum placements with this determination. DCF will conduct the other required checks and will issue a final determination within 45 days. It is possible upon final determination, if a serious conviction is found, that a student could not continue the practicum placement based on DCF findings. Western Technical College is not responsible for tuition costs should you have a DCF finding that prevents you from finishing the course/program. ECE faculty will contact you if this is the case. Western Technical College must abide by DCF's ruling of the background findings.

New charges or arrests after the background check has been completed must be reported to Nicole Cooksey, the Associate Dean of the Academic Excellence, Education, and Human Services Division (608.789.6239), within five (5) working days. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the program.

- **Health Report.** You will be required to complete a DCF Health Record upon entrance to the program. This form must be copied and kept with you as your Field Experience sites will need a copy of this completed form.
- **Child Care Licensure.** After graduation you may need to apply for your WI Registry certificate to document your professional level. As you enter the workforce, you will be prepared to teach in a center, own your own family center, or work as an assistant in a public school. Wisconsin

Department of Children and Family Child Care licensing regulations will apply to most workplace settings.

- **Expenses in Addition to Textbooks.** Many of our courses include assignments which require you to own some basic supplies. These items do cost you extra money. Items that you would need to purchase include adult scissors, small scissors, box of water-based colored markers, black permanent markers, eraser, ruler, box of crayons and/or colored pencils, double stick tape, glue stick and storage container for previous materials. You will also need a Western student ID and lanyard for field placements. Some field placements may have a dress code. There is an additional cost to complete an annual background check submission. There are other common expenses of printing, photo copying, lamination, and other supplies needed as you progress through the program.
- **Body Art and Piercings.** A student may display no body art or piercing that might be considered offensive. Most employment settings have policies that are generally broad; however, they do reserve the right to deny employment and field experience placement if body art or piercings are found to be offensive to those in that setting.
 - You may be asked to cover the body art with clothing or dressings or remove the piercings to complete your experience. If your placement has a more restrictive policy on body art or piercings, it will be enforced.
- **Program Faculty.** If you have specific questions about the program or your situation, please contact the ECE program faculty directly.

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