



ABEC215

Family and Community Contexts of Early Childhood

S1 External 2015

Institute of Early Childhood

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Rosemary Dunn

rosemary.dunn@mq.edu.au

Contact via email

X5B 244

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

12cp and admission to BTeach(ECS)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit examines the concept of a family life cycle and explores some of the major changes that impact upon Australian families with particular emphasis on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Specific stresses associated with changes in cycles of family life are addressed. Within the framework of family systems theory, children and families in exceptional circumstances are also considered. Informal and formal family and community support services are examined, and the role of early childhood educators in contributing to this support is explored.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Have an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
2. Have a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect,

substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community.

3. Have an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.
4. Be able to find relevant information about families, communities and early childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.
5. Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
6. Be able to communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them
7. Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

Assessment Tasks

| Name | Weighting | Due |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| <u>1. In Class Test</u> | 10% | 12 February 2015 |
| <u>2. Reflective Writing</u> | 15% | 7 March 2015 |
| <u>3. Essay</u> | 30% | 11 May 2015 |
| <u>4. Oral Presentation</u> | 10% | TBC on-campus April |
| <u>5. Group Workshop Programme</u> | 15% | TBC on-campus April |
| <u>6. Groupwork reflection</u> | 5% | TBC on-campus April |
| <u>Open Book Examination</u> | 15% | 8 June 2015 |

1. In Class Test

Due: **12 February 2015**

Weighting: **10%**

Multiple choice and short answer questions examining understanding of key concepts for this unit explored in the first on-campus block.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. Have an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of

families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.

- 7. Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

2. Reflective Writing

Due: **7 March 2015**

Weighting: **15%**

Analysis of regulatory documents and a children's picture book: how should early childhood educators work with children's cultural heritage, family type and experience of life? What does the chosen picture book communicate to children about diversity?

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 5. Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
- 6. Be able to communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them
- 7. Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

3. Essay

Due: **11 May 2015**

Weighting: **30%**

Discussion of the importance and/or value of early childhood educators to be aware of a family's circumstances, with consideration about what formal and informal supports may be available for particular groups/family types, e.g. single parent families, step/blended families, newly immigrated/refugee families, where a family member is incarcerated. Two family types to be considered in the paper.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. Have an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- 2. Have a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and

family structures on parenting and links to the community.

- 3. Have an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.
- 4. Be able to find relevant information about families, communities and early childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.
- 6. Be able to communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them
- 7. Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

4. Oral Presentation

Due: **TBC on-campus April**

Weighting: **10%**

Adopting the role of a workshop organiser, provide an introduction to a speaker/workshop providing information about the relevance of the speaker/workshop to the overall theme of a conference/workshop event. Individual component of group work Assessment Task 5 (below).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. Have an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- 2. Have a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community.
- 3. Have an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.
- 4. Be able to find relevant information about families, communities and early childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.
- 6. Be able to communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations

and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them

- 7. Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

5. Group Workshop Programme

Due: **TBC on-campus April**

Weighting: **15%**

Final group work submission of a conference/workshop event planned by 2-3 students. Titles and abstracts for series of planned speakers and sessions, explaining main subject matter and the relevance of this session:

"Your service has asked you and 1-2 colleagues to plan a workshop event for your centre, for staff, parents and the community, to explore the issues impacting families in your centre's community. You may choose from (but not feel limited by) the following:

1. Violence and conflict: the impact on children, families and communities
2. Cultural diversity: what does it mean to live in our community within Australia?
3. Disability and developmental difference
4. Bereavement and grief
5. Isolation

Other proposed topics to be discussed with unit convenor for approval.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. Have an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- 2. Have a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community.
- 3. Have an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.
- 4. Be able to find relevant information about families, communities and early childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.

- 6. Be able to communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them
- 7. Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

6. Groupwork reflection

Due: **TBC on-campus April**

Weighting: **5%**

Self-reflection on group work experience (see Assessment Task 5 above).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 3. Have an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.
- 5. Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
- 7. Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

Open Book Examination

Due: **8 June 2015**

Weighting: **15%**

Five short answer questions, based on the readings for this unit. (Approximately 100-150 words each)

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. Have an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- 2. Have a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community.
- 3. Have an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.

- 6. Be able to communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them
- 7. Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

Delivery and Resources

External. Two on-campus blocks with 4x3hr sessions in each (February and April).

Text book: Bowes, J., Grace, R. & Hodge, K. (2012). *Children, families and communities: Contexts and consequences*. (4th Edition) South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- 6. Be able to communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them

Assessment tasks

- 2. Reflective Writing
- 3. Essay
- 4. Oral Presentation
- 5. Group Workshop Programme

- Open Book Examination

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 3. Have an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.
- 5. Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
- 6. Be able to communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them

Assessment tasks

- 2. Reflective Writing
- 3. Essay
- 4. Oral Presentation
- 5. Group Workshop Programme
- 6. Groupwork reflection
- Open Book Examination

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 5. Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
- 7. Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

Assessment tasks

- 1. In Class Test
- 2. Reflective Writing
- 3. Essay
- 4. Oral Presentation
- 5. Group Workshop Programme
- 6. Groupwork reflection
- Open Book Examination

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Have an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- 2. Have a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community.
- 3. Have an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.
- 4. Be able to find relevant information about families, communities and early childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.

Assessment tasks

- 1. In Class Test

- 3. Essay
- 4. Oral Presentation
- 5. Group Workshop Programme
- 6. Groupwork reflection
- Open Book Examination

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Have an in-depth understanding of the broad theoretical approaches to the study of families, including ecological theory, family systems theory, life cycle approaches, and theories of risk and resilience and be able to critically analyse real life situations in relation to these understandings.
- 2. Have a detailed knowledge of contemporary issues concerning children and families, issues such as divorce, the role of the extended family, child abuse and neglect, substitute care and community violence, the impact of diverse cultural influences and family structures on parenting and links to the community.
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- 5. Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
- 6. Be able to communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them

Assessment tasks

- 1. In Class Test
- 2. Reflective Writing
- 3. Essay

- 4. Oral Presentation
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- 6. Groupwork reflection
- Open Book Examination

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 4. Be able to find relevant information about families, communities and early childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.
- 6. Be able to communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them

Assessment tasks

- 2. Reflective Writing
- 3. Essay
- 4. Oral Presentation
- 5. Group Workshop Programme
- Open Book Examination

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 3. Have an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and

informal services for families.

- 5. Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
- 6. Be able to communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them
- 7. Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

Assessment tasks

- 1. In Class Test
- 2. Reflective Writing
- 3. Essay
- 4. Oral Presentation
- 5. Group Workshop Programme
- 6. Groupwork reflection
- Open Book Examination

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 4. Be able to find relevant information about families, communities and early childhood and the range of formal and informal services available to support them from a range of sources including the library, newspapers and electronic sources.
- 5. Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
- 6. Be able to communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them
- 7. Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

Assessment tasks

- 1. In Class Test
- 2. Reflective Writing
- 3. Essay
- 4. Oral Presentation
- 5. Group Workshop Programme
- 6. Groupwork reflection
- Open Book Examination

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 3. Have an understanding and knowledge of the range of formal and informal supports available to families with young children that you will draw upon to evaluate formal and informal services for families.
- 5. Be reflective about learning, new and existing skills and experience.
- 6. Be able to communicate effectively, respectfully and sensitively in a range of situations and for different audiences about the specific issues faced by young children, their families and communities and for professionals working with them
- 7. Engaged in a respectful and committed way to your studies in this subject with student colleagues and staff.

Assessment tasks

- 1. In Class Test
- 2. Reflective Writing
- 3. Essay
- 4. Oral Presentation
- 5. Group Workshop Programme
- 6. Groupwork reflection
- Open Book Examination