



Enrollment Information and Application

Center for Early Education and Care

University of Massachusetts Amherst

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the early care and educational services of the Center for Early Education and Care (CEEC) at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The enclosed material provides an overview of the program that will help you decide whether to apply for enrollment. Specifically, it provides a program description, tuition information, and a description of the application and enrollment process.

If, after reviewing this information packet, you have any questions or wish to schedule a visit, please call 545-1566.

Program Overview

The Center for Early Education and Care has provided quality child care services to the University community for over three decades. This tradition of service is one that we take great pride in and look forward to continuing for many more generations of UMass children and families.

- ◆ CEEC provides full-day and flexible-schedule child care services for children ages 15 months through five years.
- ◆ CEEC provides a model educational program based on developmentally appropriate practices which meet the accreditation criteria of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs of NAEYC.
- ◆ CEEC is licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.
- ◆ CEEC provides student teaching, internship, volunteer, and research opportunities for University students and faculty.

Location, Hours, and Calendar

The Center for Early Education and Care is located on Clubhouse Drive, between the football stadium and the softball field, on the southwest side of campus.

The CEEC full-day classrooms operate year-round and the flexible-schedule classrooms are open during the academic year. CEEC follows the University holiday and emergency closing schedule. The classrooms are closed during one week in May, one week in August, and three afternoons during the year for professional development and facility maintenance activities. The Center is closed the week between the Christmas and New Years holidays for winter recess. Families are not charged tuition for the closed weeks. Please refer to the current CEEC Program Calendar for specific dates for the current year.

Enrollment Schedule Options

The Center for Early Education and Care offers a variety of enrollment options. Parents select an enrollment schedule that best meets their child care needs from the full-day and flexible-schedule classroom options.

The Full-Day Classrooms are open year round with the following enrollment schedule choices:

- ◆ 3, 4, or 5 Core Days (8:15am – 4:15pm) (there are a limited number of 3- and 4-day spaces)
- ◆ Any number of Morning or Afternoon Extended Days (7:30 – 8:15am and 4:15pm – 5:30pm).

The Flexible-Schedule Classrooms are open during the academic year (September – May) and offer the following enrollment schedule options: Minimum enrollment is three (3) hours per day, and nine (9) hours per week. Hours of care may not exceed thirty (30) hours per week. Parents reserve flexible-schedule enrollment in any combination of hours using the drop-off and pick-up times listed on the Enrollment Application form.

There are two methods of purchasing services at the Center for Early Education and Care: Reserved Care and Additional Care. These are described below.

Reserved Care:

Parents reserve a schedule of services at the time of enrollment and re-enrollment. Changes to the Reserved Care schedule may be requested during the University's Fall and Spring course Add/Drop periods. The enrollment schedule in place at the end of the Add/Drop period is in effect for the remainder of the semester. Changes to Reserved Care schedules are made on a space available basis and cannot always be accommodated. Parents contact the Office Manager with requests to change the Reserved Care schedule.

Additional Care:

Additional Care (hours of care in addition to the Reserved Care schedule) may be scheduled up to ten working days and no less than one working day in advance of the need, on a space available basis. Fees for Additional Care are based on the parent's contracted tuition rate and are added to the next month's bill.

Enrollment Eligibility and Priority

Enrollment is offered on a space available basis, in the order of date of application according to the enrollment priorities listed below. Families may apply for enrollment and be placed on the waiting list with a confirmed pregnancy. Need for tuition assistance is verified at the time of enrollment based on household size and income. When program enrollment is filled, applicants for enrollment are placed on a waiting list.

There are four categories of affiliation that are considered for enrollment eligibility. The child's parent or legal guardian, or spouse/domestic partner of the parent or legal guardian must be a member of one of the following affiliation categories:

1. University affiliated (undergraduate student, graduate student, staff, and faculty)
2. UMass Amherst Alumni
3. Five-College and US Fish and Wildlife affiliated
4. The Community-at-Large

Within the above affiliation categories enrollment is prioritized in the following order:

1. Sibling of currently enrolled child
2. Previously enrolled child whose parent/guardian is on leave from University work or study, returning within six (6) months
3. University undergraduate student, graduate student, and employees (Five-day enrollment requests receive priority over four-day and three-day enrollment requests.)
4. UMass/Amherst Alumni
5. Five-College students and employees and US Fish and Wildlife employees
6. Community-at-Large

Flexible-Schedule Enrollment Priorities

In addition to the eligibility and priority policy outlined above, families enrolling in the flexible-schedule classrooms are eligible for varying amounts of care per week based on the family's study and/or work service need.

Flexible-schedule offers of enrollment are made in order of the date of application in the following manner:

1. At least one parent of the household must be at least a half-time student at the University. Single student parents and two student parent families receive enrollment priority.
2. The family must meet the low-income criteria (see Flexible-Schedule section of *CEEC Sliding Fee Scale Determination* chart).
3. The family's service need is designated into one of three Enrollment Schedule Tiers which specifies the maximum hours of care they may schedule per week: Tier 1 (up to 30 hours per week), Tier 2 (up to 21 hours of care per week), and Tier 3 (up to 12 hours of care per week).
4. The family then selects the enrollment schedule they wish to receive.
5. Each semester enrollment schedule priority is given first to families who qualify for Tier 1, then Tier 2, and then Tier 3. Every effort will be made to give each family their requested enrollment schedule, however, there is no guarantee that each family will receive the enrollment schedule they request.

Tuition Fees

The enclosed chart is used to determine each child's tuition rate. Eligibility for tuition assistance is determined at the time of enrollment or re-enrollment based on documented household size and income and service need.

Curriculum Information

The Center for Early Education and Care utilizes the Project Approach curriculum to provide an individualized educational program based on developmentally appropriate practices. Program goals include supporting children's emerging self-concepts and assisting them in learning social, cognitive, and motor skills. Teachers expand on children's interests and experiences, encourage them to function independently, and foster understanding and respect for the ideas and individuality of others.

While children in the program come from diverse family backgrounds and have unique personalities though they share a curiosity and openness to learning about the world. Our approach to curriculum is to join with children's interests at their developmental level and then to encourage and provide for further exploration, enjoyment, and creativity. Throughout our classrooms we seek to challenge children to think creatively and, as age permits, analytically.

The curriculum focuses on the process of learning, not the outcome. Our goal is to maximize success and minimize frustration, allowing children space and time to explore, create, and learn at their own pace. The daily routines and activities are:

- ◆ developmentally appropriate to the ages of the children,
- ◆ meaningful or challenging to children in aesthetically, cognitively, socially and physical ways, and
- ◆ inclusive of a full range of family and cultural backgrounds.

Teachers organize the physical space into learning centers designed to foster creative thinking and independent choice making. In the classroom you will see children, individually and at other times in small and large groups, working on and talking about their activities. During the daily schedule there are social times for eating and playing games, individual and group art projects, small manipulatives and large blocks for building, dress-up clothing and props for pretend play,

and crayons, markers and pencils for drawing and practicing with letters, outdoor activities on the playground and on walks,

Teachers observe and talk with children to assess their interests, developmental skills, and areas for growth. Teachers then select an area or topic for exploration, which encourage children to listen, touch, explore feelings, play, and construct with materials. Paintings, drawings, murals, charts, 3-dimensional constructions, and dramatic performances are some of the ways children demonstrate and summarize their Project explorations and learning. Ice, Wind, Monarch Butterflies, Measuring Tools, Keys, Ramps, What Lives in the Dirt? Our Homes, and Our Families have all been the subjects of in-depth Project investigations in our classrooms.

Diversity and Inclusiveness

The Center for Early Education and Care strives to develop an appreciation for the richness of diversity which encompasses CEEC families and to provide an inclusive environment which reflects the diversity of the campus community and the world in which we live. Consistent with University policy, CEEC does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, age, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability, military status, or genetic information.

The early childhood professionals at CEEC understand that at an early age children absorb our society's biases of gender, age, race, language and physical characteristics. We strive to support children as they explore, celebrate, and understand their differences and shared similarities. Our approach acknowledges that children and adults can be empowered to stand up for their rights and the rights of others and to recognize and question social injustice. We challenge the children and ourselves to:

- explore issues of fairness as seen from a child's perspective;
- see conflict as a challenge in problem-solving;
- be open to differing perspectives, ideas, attitudes and behaviors;
- monitor our words and actions for unconscious bias or prejudice;
- recognize and demonstrate respect for diversity among people

Behavior Guidance

CEEC's approach to behavior guidance (discipline) is based on the acceptance of a wide range of children's feelings and the encouragement of self-control. Respect for each other and the environment are emphasized through the development of social skills such as turn-taking, helping, and cooperation. Children are encouraged, individually and as a group, to generate possible solutions to conflicts, to predict various outcomes, and to choose alternative behaviors.

We seek to balance the needs of the child for autonomy and individual attention, with the needs of the group for consistent expectations which embrace a sense of fairness.

Underlying all behavior guidance and classroom management practices at CEEC is an awareness of child development principles and a commitment to safety and respect for children. We demonstrate this by:

- ◆ Holding appropriate expectations for children's developing ability to experience empathy and to accept responsibility for their own behavior;
- ◆ Setting non-arbitrary limits that serve to promote children's safety and social competence;
- ◆ Evaluating the environment and curriculum to ensure that they are challenging and stimulating, yet, predictable and nurturing;
- ◆ Being flexible in our classroom management techniques in order to accommodate and value the diversity of personalities, learning styles, developmental levels, and cultures;
- ◆ Reflecting upon and responding to children's individuality by documenting behaviors of concern and strategizing with the child's parents.
- ◆ Parents are encouraged to discuss any questions regarding behavior guidance management with their child's teachers and/or the Director.

Staff

The key to quality early childhood care and education is a professional staff, trained and experienced in early childhood education with an ability to create nurturing relationships with children. At CEEC, staff establish communication with parents as part of the essential partnership with families that is critical to providing nurturing care for children. In addition, a comprehensive screening process ensures that staff are well suited to the job, providing parents with an extra degree of confidence in their children's care.

Teacher/Child Ratios and Group Size

A Supervising Teacher and Teacher make up the professional teaching team of each classroom. Professional staffing is supplemented by undergraduate Assistant Teachers. Our planned teacher/child ratios for the preschool classroom are three (3) teachers for up to twenty (20) children. Our planned teacher/child ratios for the toddler classroom are three (3) teachers for up to nine (9) children. These planned teacher/child ratios exceed the state licensing requirements of two (2) adults for up to twenty (20) preschoolers or nine (9) toddlers.

Snacks and Lunches

Snacks are provided by the program and are served family style, giving children an opportunity to develop social and self-help skills. Parents provide a nutritious lunch for their child each day. Parents are encouraged to share snack menu suggestions and are welcome to join their child for lunch in the classroom.

Parent Participation

CEEC is committed to promoting meaningful active parent participation in the program. Parents are encouraged to visit their child's classroom and are welcome to participate at any time. On-going verbal and written communication with parents about their child and family is important for the teachers in creating a program for the children.

Each family is assigned a primary teacher within the teaching team. This teacher meets with the parents when the child is enrolled to learn information the family wishes to share about their child's interests and approaches to learning, and about their family's structure, preferred child-rearing practices, cultural background, and goals for their child. The Primary Teacher is the parent's primary source of information about their child's experience in the classroom. This teacher writes the child's twice annual developmental assessment and holds parent/teacher conferences with the family. Both professional teachers interact with all of the children in the group and communicate with parents at drop-off and pick-up times.

Summary

Above all, we believe that CEEC must be a wonderful place to be a child and we endeavor to provide that environment every day. Your questions and suggestions are always welcome.

An Application for Enrollment is included with this information packet. We urge you to submit your application as soon as enrollment offers are made in the date order in which they are received. Applications are accepted in the CEEC office. If you do not receive acknowledgment of your application within one week, please call the Center for Early Education and Care office. If you have any questions about the application or the program, please call Center for Early Education and Care at (413) 545-1566.

**CENTER FOR EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE
University of Massachusetts**

TUITION ASSISTANCE INFORMATION

There are several types of assistance available to support University families in their payment of child care tuition at the Center for Early Education and Care. A brief description of each program is offered below. For more information specific to your family speak with Penny Gagnon of the CEEC office (577-4740).

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Graduate Student Senate Child Care Tuition Assistance

The UMass Graduate Student Senate (GSS) provides child care tuition assistance to student families using licensed child care. Students who pay the student activity fees are eligible to receive assistance child care tuition assistance each semester in an amount that will vary according to the number of families that apply and the funds available.

For more information and to receive an application, contact:

Graduate Student Senate Office (413) 545-2896
919 Campus Center

<http://blogs.umass.edu/gss/graduate-childcare-assistance-program>

GEO/Administration Health and Welfare Trust Fund Child Care Tuition Assistance

The GEO/Administration Health and Welfare Trust Fund reimburses eligible graduate employees for some of their child care tuition costs. Families may use on- or off-campus child care services that are licensed by the state of Massachusetts.

Visit this program's website for a description of eligibility requirements and application time lines:

<http://www.hwtrust.geouaw.org/#!/geo-childcare/csdq>

GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Flexible-Schedule Tuition Subsidy

The University provides funds to CEEC to offset the operating costs of the flexible-schedule classrooms in order to offer low-income student families a significantly subsidized tuition rate. Fee rates are assigned at the time of enrollment and re-enrollment based on documentation of household size and income which is provided by parents. The \$1.00 and \$2.00 per hour tuition fees for these services are not billed to subsidy eligible parents but are currently paid by the GEO/Administration Health and Welfare Trust Fund which provides benefits for UMass graduate student employees.

Annual Income & Household Size

Hourly Rate*	Annual Income & Household Size			
	2 person	3 person	4 person	5 person
2.00	< \$26,232	< \$29,712	< \$37,560	< \$42,600
1.00	< \$18,480	< \$20,100	< \$22,800	< \$25,800

* The Flexible-Schedule Subsidy income eligibility levels are based on Mass. EEC child care assistance sliding fee scale. Annual Gross Income as per federal 1040 Income Tax Form.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Child Care Tuition Assistance Program (CCTA)

The Child Care Tuition Assistance Program provides eligible undergraduate student parents with tuition assistance for licensed child care for children under the age of six years and out-of-school care for children through 6th grade. Undergraduate student parents that are enrolled in the University for 6 or more credits per semester and that have a financial need, which is verified by the Financial Aid Office, are eligible to apply. Applications are due by August 1 for Fall semester funding and by December 15 for Spring semester funds.

For more information and to receive an application, contact:

Office of Family Resources (413) 545-0865
428 Student Union <http://www.umass.edu/ofr/childcare.php>

Department of Early Education and Care Child Care Tuition Vouchers

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) subsidizes child care fees of low to moderate income families throughout the state. In order to qualify, each parent living in the home must have a service need and meet income criteria. Families that receive Transitional Assistance for Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) that are working or attending a college or training program usually meet the eligibility criteria.

EEC Service Need Criteria include: each parent of the household is working 30 or more hours/week, and/or seeking paid employment, and/or enrolled full-time in high school, vocational training, or undergraduate study, and/or incapacitated, and/or the child is disabled.

EEC Income Need Criteria: Household income must be at or below 50% of the State Median Income. See household size and income listings included on the CEEC Tuition Assistance chart.

EEC child care vouchers are administered by Resource and Referral agencies throughout the state. The agency in Western Massachusetts is New England Farm Workers' Council, (413) 272-2207.

POST-DOCTORAL

GEO/Administration Health and Welfare Trust Fund Child Care Tuition Assistance

The GEO/Administration Health & Welfare Trust Fund has an annual pool of funds to distribute to eligible post-doctoral families to help defray the costs of on- or off-campus child care services. Eligibility criteria include: one individual of the family must be a UMass post-doctoral employee working at least half-time and the household annual income is less than \$50,000. The child care services used must be licensed by the state of Massachusetts.

Visit this program's website for a description of eligibility requirements, time lines, and application form: <http://www.hwtrust.geouaw.org/#!pd-childcare/chuf>

FACULTY

The University has set aside a small pool of funds from which new tenure-system faculty may be eligible for partial assistance with child care tuition expenses. The following employees are eligible for this program: tenure-system, bargaining-unit faculty during their first three years in their current positions.

For more information and an application form contact:
John Bryan, Vice Provost Academic Personnel
545-2870, JohnBryan@provost.umass.edu.

STAFF

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FACULTY AND STAFF

Dependent Care Assistance Program (DCAP)

The Dependent Care Assistance Program is available to all University employees as a way to reduce dependent care costs. The DCAP program allows an employee to pay up to \$5,000 each year of dependent care expenses through payroll deduction with pre-tax income. As a result of the salary dollars being removed from taxable income, an employee may fall into a lower tax bracket and/or lower the percentage of income s/he pays for taxes. Open enrollment for this program occurs in December to start the following calendar year.

For more information about the DCAP:
<http://www.umass.edu/humres/flexible-spending-hcsadcap>
Beth Ives, Human Resources, (413) 545-6115

CEEC Sibling Discount

CEEC families are eligible for a sibling discount if more than one child from the same family is enrolled in the Center. The parent pays full tuition for the youngest child and receives a 10% discount for each additional child.