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# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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### Distinction Between Certificate, Associate, and Bachelor Degree Programs in Early Childhood Education

- It is strongly encouraged by the National Associate of the Education for Young Children (NAEYC) that colleges and universities create outcomes for all programs in accordance with the NAEYC Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Education. The standards are listed as outcomes for the BA in ECE on page 142 of the catalog.
- The certificate programs emphasize practical skills and immediate application in early childhood settings, while the associate degrees include a broader range of general education and specialized courses. Bachelor degrees encompass extensive professional development, leadership, and policy advocacy.
- Certificate completers are prepared for entry-level positions in licensed early childhood education programs, such as aides, assistant teachers, or childcare providers. Associate degree completers are qualified for lead teacher roles, and bachelor degree completer's are prepared for curriculum development, coaching, and administrative positions.
- Pathway to a Higher Education: The Certificate of Achievement and ECE Skills Certificate programs serves as a stack-able credentials, creating a pathway for students to continue their education towards an Associate of Applied Science or Associate of Arts in Early Childhood Education. This allows students to build on their knowledge and skills as they progress in their careers. The outcomes ensure that students in the ECE Skills Certificate or Certificate of Achievement programs are well-prepared for entry-level roles in early childhood education, while clearly distinguishing the students' level of expertise from those pursuing an associate's or bachelor's degree in ECE.