Candidates for certification in Early Childhood Education must complete a major that consists of two key elements. The first element emphasizes critical concepts and ideas important to one’s general education and academic preparation for teaching. The second emphasis stresses a professional core organized in five areas:

- Early Childhood Development
- Cognition and Learning
- Subject Matter Pedagogy Content (Pre-K through 4th grade)
- Assessment
- Family and Community Partnerships
- Professionalism