Working with young children in early childhood programs is both a privilege and a joy. It is the opportunity to have a great impact on the earliest stages of children’s lives which is the foundation for their continued growth and development. The interaction and activities you have with children during these formative years will influence their potential for cognitive and academic development, their self-esteem and emotional development, social skills and physical growth and development. As you can imagine, it is therefore critical to be well prepared to provide them with the best experiences possible and you will learn how to do so through your own professional preparation.

**NAEYC Core Values for Professional Preparation**

The knowledge and skills you acquire through the KU Early Childhood Development program are based on the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) Standards for Early Professional Preparation. NAEYC is the world’s largest early childhood professional organization and supports early childhood programs and focuses on improving professional practice through research, publications, conferences and training. NAEYC offers early childhood accreditation, professional and program standards and is recognized as a leading advocate for quality early childhood initiatives.

NAEYC core values in professional preparation are based on research and include the following:

- Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8;
- Early Learning Standards: Creating Conditions for Success;
- Early Childhood Mathematics: Promoting Good Beginnings;
- Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children;
- Screening and Assessment of Young English-Language Learners;
Promoting Positive Outcomes for Children with Disabilities: Recommendations for Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation;

Responding to Linguistic and Cultural Diversity: Recommendations for Effective Early Childhood Education;

Still Unacceptable Trends in Kindergarten Entry and Placement;

Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation.

(p. 4 NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation at http://naeyc.org/positionstatements/ppp )

NAEYC Standards for Professional Preparation

Early childhood professionals may work in a variety of roles such as an early childhood classroom teacher, family child care provider, Head Start teacher or as an aide in some public schools. They may also serve in home-family support roles such as home visitors, family advocate, child protective services worker or parent educators. In professional support roles they may continue to be early childhood administrators, or staff trainers so they must be prepared to meet many different needs.

In preparing for these varied experiences and the ability to support the developmental needs of children from birth through age 8, NAEYC recommends the following preparation standards that is addressed through your degree plan;

- **Standard 1:** Promoting Child Development and Learning
- **Standard 2:** Building Family and Community Relationships
- **Standard 3:** Observing, Documenting and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families
- **Standard 4:** Using Developmentally Effective Approaches to Connect with Children and Families
- **Standard 5:** Using Content Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum
- **Standard 6:** Becoming a Professional

Throughout your program, you will be learning how to fulfill each of these important preparation standards so that you can fully fulfill the program outcomes introduced to you back in unit 1. Each of your major requirement
courses will take you to a new level of understanding the knowledge and
skills needed to fulfill these standards and prepare you to be a highly
competent, qualified early childhood professional.

For more information and details on NAEYC’s Standards for Professional
Preparation please go to http://naeyc.org/positionstatements/ppp