Guide to Early Childhood Education/Related Field, Revised August 2016

For a college-level course to be considered “Early Childhood Education or a Related Field” (ECE/related), the content must address topics that support the knowledge and competencies of educators working with a birth to five population. The courses are primarily focused on young children and/or their families and emphasize a developmental understanding of young children and developmentally appropriate approaches for the early years.

Coursework currently or previously offered at RI institutions of higher education as a part of a degree in early childhood education, elementary education, or special education are acceptable towards the ECE/related requirement. A working document of these courses is available on the BrightStars website.

Course titles that contain the following words (appearing on a college transcript) are assumed to contain early care and education related content and are therefore considered ECE/related by BrightStars:

- Birth – Five  
- Child/Children  
- Child Development  
- Early Childhood  
- Early Childhood Spec. Ed.  
- Early Intervention  
- Early Learning  
- Infant  
- Toddler  
- Preschool  
- Kindergarten  
- Young Children

Courses that contain the words or topics listed below in their titles or course description could possibly contain ECE/related content. BrightStars will request and review official course descriptions to make a determination. Please note that a program may request that any course, regardless of title, be reviewed for ECE/related content.

- Child & Family Studies  
- Child Assessment & Observation  
- Child Psychology  
- Cognitive Development  
- Communication  
- Curriculum  
- Developmentally Disabled  
- Developmental Language & Communication  
- Developmental Psychology  
- Disabilities  
- Education  
- Educational Psychology  
- Family  
- Family Studies  
- Early Learning or Psychology Field Experiences (placement relevant to young children)  
- Health, Safety & Nutrition  
- Home Economics  
- Family & Consumer Science  
- Human Development  
- Instruction  
- Language and/or Speech Development  
- Language and/or Speech Disorders  
- Learning Theory  
- Lifespan Development  
- Literacy  
- Montessori  
- Parenting  
- Pediatric Nursing  
- Play  
- Positive Behavior Management  
- Psychology  
- Public Policy  
- Recreation  
- Sociology  
- Social Work  
- Storytelling