



THE MARYLAND EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERSHIP PROGRAM (MECLP)

I. Maryland Early Childhood Leadership Program (MECLP)

MECLP, a workforce development program of the Sherman Center for Early Learning in Urban Communities at UMBC, is designed to accelerate leadership development in the field of early childhood. MECLP seeks to develop and support strong leaders who will catalyze positive change and significantly improve school readiness and related outcomes for early learners, particularly disadvantaged and vulnerable children and their families.

Guided by its Advisory Committee of Maryland and national early childhood leaders, the goals of MECLP are to:

- Effect State level change in systems, policies, and programs through newly developed leaders representing early childhood classrooms, programs and associated fields that comprise Maryland's early childhood system.
- Advocate for equitable high-quality early childhood care and education experiences for all children.
- Develop a broad and diverse network of early childhood professionals recognized as transformative leaders in the field creating a workforce pipeline.
- Improve outcomes for young children, families and communities.

II. Leadership Development Opportunity

MECLP is now accepting applications for participation in its second cohort of Fellows who are expected to represent the ethnic, geographic, and affiliation diversity that reflects Maryland's early childhood system.

MECLP Fellows will participate in the *Leading for Change in Early Childhood Education* year-long *SHER 601* course. *SHER 601* is a 12 month, cohort based 3-credit, post baccalaureate course offered through the Sherman Center that includes:

- Six in person, daylong learning sessions: Fellows will discuss and reflect on new content and work together to develop testable solutions for critical problems of practice and policy in early childhood.
- Engagement with guest presenters and the Advisory Committee as Fellows build leadership networks.
- Six asynchronous online sessions: Fellows will engage in discussions, homework/reading assignments, and video conferences/webinars, conducted through Blackboard, a web-based learning platform.
- Individual and small group activities, as well as individual or group capstone projects.

III. Curriculum Design

MECLP contracted with the Institute for Early Education Leadership and Innovation (IEELI) at UMass, Boston to adapt and deliver its innovative, research-based curriculum. The adapted curriculum, *Leading for Change in Early Childhood Education*, is a joint, co-branded course offered through MECLP and the IEELI. MECLP's inaugural cohort of 14 fellows are currently learning with Dr. Anne Douglass, Founder and Director of IEELI and member of UMBC's Graduate Faculty.

SHER 601 uses a highly interactive approach that centers on the leadership development of each fellow in the context of programs/settings in which they work providing them with a deeper understanding of themselves as agents of change in their fields. Cohort fellows will examine the theory and practice of change to gain an understanding of what contributes to organizational progress and sustained improvements. They will also examine impediments to change and survey a range of approaches for making change more effective.

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IV. Core Competencies

The *Leading for Change in Early Childhood Education* Course is grounded in 7 core competencies:

- a. Vision (long-term view; ability to see the larger system; establish shared understanding of complex problems with others; leverage diversity)
- b. Personal leadership skills & values (strong ethics; communications skills; commitment to diversity; continuous learning; resilience; adaptive behavior; political savvy)
- c. People management/leadership (build teams/workforce; set direction; nurture growth and professional development; identify stakeholders including families, educators, funders, legislators, etc.)
- d. Organizational capacity (effective use of data and research to inform decisions and areas of focus; lead others through change; conflict management skills; obtain and maintain critical resources)
- e. Results/outcomes (establish & execute goals; create & model accountability; measure & evaluate progress)
- f. Creativity/innovation (develop resourcefulness, a spirit of inquiry, entrepreneurship, collaboration)
- g. Public policy knowledge (understand policy and legislative environment, at local, state and national levels)

V. Fellows Selection Criteria and Requirements

Cohort fellows are expected to:

- Reflect the ethnic, geographic and affiliation diversity of Maryland's early childhood system.
- Be drawn from a variety of settings, including but not limited to public schools, Head Start, Center and Family Care, Early Childhood Advisory Councils (ECACs), Judy Centers, non-profits, 2 and 4 year higher education institutions, Health Departments, advocacy groups and foundations.
- Have a Bachelor's Degree.
- Submit Application Form 2020-21 and an up-to-date resume.
- Submit Unofficial Transcripts from completed degree programs.
- Secure the approval of their supervisor to participate in MECLP.
- Forward the Reference Form to two references.
- Attend all in-person sessions throughout the calendar year.

2020 -2021 Calendar

Half-Day Orientation Session October 24, 2020, December 12, 2020 (Cohort I Capstone Project Presentations)

Six (6) full day (9:00 am to 3:00 pm) Saturday sessions held at UMBC on:

January 30, 2021, March 6, 2021, May 22, 2021, July 10, 2021, October 16, 2021, December 11, 2021

Childcare and, if traveling 2+ hours, overnight accommodations will be covered by MECLP if needed.

V. Course Fees

SHER 601 is an elective course in the Community Leadership Program in the Department of Professional Studies at UMBC. The Sherman Center for Early Learning in Urban Communities will cover the SHER 601 course tuition, estimated at \$2,400. Cohort members selected for 2020/21 will be billed a \$250 program fee to cover instructional materials.

- **Application, Resume and Reference Letters Due - June 19th**, submitted online at umbc.meclp.edu, or emailed to: meclp@umbc.edu.
- **Members of the MECLP Advisory Committee will conduct interviews** with selected applicants in mid-July through mid-August.
- **Notification of Acceptance into the 2020/21 cohort is expected the last week in August.** Once accepted into the Cohort, students will submit required UMBC health forms and the Respect and Consent (Title IX) on-line training prior to the start of the class.