



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about MECLP

What is MECLP?

The Maryland Early Childhood Leadership Program (MECLP) is a workforce development initiative designed to accelerate cross-sector leadership in early childhood education, poised to effect state-level change in systems, policies, legislation, and programs in Maryland. MECLP is building a community of people who are committed to personal growth and change leadership. Our Community of Practice includes leadership training as well as a continuum of supports and opportunities that will have a longer-term impact on improving outcomes for Maryland's young children, families, and communities.

Who is eligible to participate in MECLP?

Early childhood professionals representing diverse ethnicities, regions, and early childhood education sectors in Maryland who are eager to lead innovation and change in early childhood systems are eligible to apply. Early childhood professionals include family- and center-based professionals, Head Start and Judy Center staff, pre-k and kindergarten teachers and administrators, special education and ELL staff, CCRC and Family Support Center staff, ECAC and LECACs members, mental health professionals, family engagement professionals, along with other practitioners that support young children and their families in Maryland.

What am I signing up for?

Participation in MECLP includes a variety of components including a graduate level 3-credit hybrid course offered by UMBC in partnership with UMass Boston (SHER 601), robust coaching support through its Community of Practice, and numerous opportunities for leadership in early childhood education based on the interests of the network of fellows.

Do I need to have a leadership role in order to participate in MECLP?

Not necessarily. MECLP seeks highly qualified early childhood professionals who wish to advance the early childhood field in Maryland by holding leadership positions in their workplace, their communities, on committees and councils, and/or as volunteers.

How long is the program?

Participation in MECLP offers fellows a lifelong connection to MECLP and early childhood education leaders in Maryland and in the nation. Once accepted into MECLP, fellows are enrolled in the SHER 601 year-long course, *Leading for Change in Early Childhood Education*. After completing the course, MECLP fellows are invited to join the Community of Practice, which provides continuous engagement with members of other cohorts, MECLP Advisory Committee members, and other ECE leaders from Maryland and beyond.

MECLP has created a pathway to a 6-credit graduate Endorsement in Early Childhood Leadership from UMBC, consisting of SHER 601 - *Leading for Change in Early Childhood Education* and SHER 602 - *Policy and Advocacy for Systems Change in Early Childhood Education*. We plan to develop two additional 3-credit graduate courses in early childhood, which will position fellows to receive a 12-credit Certificate in Early Childhood Leadership from UMBC.

What is the structure of the SHER 601 course?

The 12-month course, SHER 601 - *Leading for Change in Early Childhood Education*, is a cohort-based, 3-credit graduate course which includes six in-person full-day Saturday classes, six asynchronous online classes, individual and small group assignments, and a capstone project focused on a self-selected issue specific to early childhood education in Maryland. The course uses a highly interactive approach that centers on the leadership development of cohort fellows in the context of the programs/settings in which they work, providing them with a deeper understanding of themselves as agents of change in their fields.

Is there a minimum academic and GPA requirement to enroll in SHER 601 and SHER 602?

Participants must hold a Bachelor's degree and a minimum 3.0 undergraduate GPA.

What documents are needed to apply?

Applicants must submit the Cohort V application, a resume, unofficial transcripts from all degrees awarded, and two letters of recommendation.

What is the cost of the program?

The tuition and fees (\$2,640) for enrollment in SHER 601 are paid through grant funds awarded to MECLP. Each cohort member is responsible for paying a one-time Instructional Materials Contribution of \$275 to cover the cost of course texts and materials.

What is the application process timeline?

The application for Cohort V will be released on May 10th, 2023. Completed applications and supporting documents are due on June 30th, 2023.

How can I subscribe to MECLP's newsletters and updates?

You can subscribe to MECLP's newsletters and updates by emailing meclp@umbc.edu. To read more about MECLP, please visit our website at <https://meclp.umbc.edu>.

I still have more questions. How can I contact MECLP?

Please email Louise Corwin at meclp@umbc.edu.