

## Conceptual Framework

The Olive Harvey Early Childhood Associate degree program is based on a conceptual framework that is linked to the program's mission and values.

**Rationale:** Strong early childhood degree programs are more than a collection of courses. Strong programs gain coherence by developing, sharing, and implementing a clear, overarching mission and set of values.

In line with the mission of Olive-Harvey College, the Child Development faculty is committed to helping Child Development students make connections between teaching, learning, and assessment, in order to inform their growth and development as early childhood professionals. Students who enroll in our program, are encouraged to make a conscious decision to become life-long learners.

Faculty strive to model this framework as they develop a strong assessment plan that involves not only improving student learning in the classroom, but also having students reflect upon their experiences throughout the program. Students are from diverse backgrounds and academic experiences; within the context of this dynamic educational environment, all are deemed by faculty, to have the potential to achieve their educational and professional goals.

The emphasis on lifelong learning and the reflective assessment processes for our program directly align with NAEYC Standards. All students are provided with ample learning experiences to apply their growing knowledge of child development and methodology. OHC's strong community connections, affords many opportunities for students to learn how to build family and community relationships.

Our commitment to ongoing, authentic assessment of student learning in the adult classroom communicates to students that we value appropriate practices for their learning as well as the learning and development of young children. Our constant advisement that they plan and reflect upon their own educational experiences is one way that we support their teaching and learning, in addition to their understanding the teaching and learning of young children. From our perspective of the adult student as a life-long learner, the ability to make informed decisions via self-assessment strategies is the key to becoming a professional.