

CDE/ECE Faculty Initiative Project Instructional Guide

*California Preschool Curriculum Framework,
Volume 1 (2010)*

Introduction to the Instructional Guide

Introduction to The Faculty Initiative Project: *Supporting Faculty*

Responding to early childhood priorities in California, the Child Development Division (CDD) of the California Department of Education (CDE) has developed initiatives and published materials to support practitioners, young children, and families involved in early childhood education programs. The Faculty Initiative Project (FIP) has been charged with supporting faculty in institutions of higher education (IHE) across the state as they infuse these initiatives into their course work.

The purpose of the CDE/ECE Faculty Initiative Project is to align and integrate essential content and competencies of key CDE/CDD materials and initiatives with core early childhood education curriculum of the California Community College (CCC) and the California State University (CSU) systems. Faculty will have information and resources to integrate content of the CDE initiatives and publications into unit-bearing course work required for the attainment of college certificates, permits granted by the Commission for Teacher Credentialing (CTC), and campus graduation requirements.

About the Instructional Guides: *Activities and Resources for IHE Faculty*

To support faculty as they prepare the child care workforce in California to successfully meet the challenges and requirements of implementing recent CDD initiatives and publications, the FIP has been developing instructional guides to accompany several of these initiatives and publications. These instructional guides are intended to connect professional development in systems of higher education with the content of the CDD initiatives.

Among these initiatives and publications are *Preschool English Learners: A Resource Guide, 2nd ed.* (PEL Resource Guide); *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 1* (PLF, V1); and *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1* (PCF, V1). Instructional guides have been developed for the PEL Resource Guide and the PLF, V1 and are available on the FIP Web site, <http://www.wested.org/facultyinitiative>. The instructional guide for the PCF, V1 will also be available on the FIP Web site.

The instructional guides are developed to

- support the greatest possible utility across the complexity of California's systems of higher education;
- maintain fidelity to the content of CDD's initiatives;
- adhere to commonly accepted principles of adult learning;
- provide maximum flexibility for faculty;
- support faculty as decision makers; and
- allow faculty to select curricular content that suits their particular students, courses, and program needs.

The instructional guides are intended to help faculty acquaint college students who are preparing for work in preschool settings with CDD publications. In the instructional guides, the word “students” refers to college students and not children in the preschool setting.

Purpose of the Instructional Guide for the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1*

The purpose of the CDE/ECE Faculty Initiative Project’s instructional guide for the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1* (PCF, V1) is to support faculty as they deepen their students’ familiarity with the content of the publication and provide students with understanding and practice in how to use the PCF, V1 as a resource in planning curriculum and reflecting on intentional curriculum decisions. This instructional guide is designed to encourage students to consistently open up and explore the PCF, V1.

The *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1* has an organization that parallels that of the *California Preschool Learning Foundations Volume 1*. Both the PLF, V1 and the PCF, V1 address four domains of early learning and development: social-emotional development, language and literacy, English-language development and mathematics. Each domain has a specific organizational format, but generally domains are organized as strands and substrands. In the PCF, V1 there is also an introductory chapter with contextual information, information relating to several critical topics when planning curriculum, and a description of eight overarching principles that guided the development of the framework.

Within each domain of the PCF, V1 are sections relating to environments and materials and strategies and interactions that are appropriate for implementing. There are also vignettes to illustrate the strategies and interactions, as well as teachable moments. Each domain has reflective questions and ideas for connecting to families. In addition, there is information in each domain that is specific to that domain.

Organization of the Instructional Guide: *Flexible Use for Faculty in Individual Courses and Across Programs*

The instructional guide for the PCF, V1 is organized into instructional units, and each unit then consists of key topics. This design enables faculty to use the instructional guide in different courses in a variety of ways. The intent is to support faculty as decision makers as they piece together what will work in an individual course or across a program.

Faculty can explore individual domains, or they can explore some topics—such as environment and materials or interactions and strategies—across domains. To support working across domains, some of the suggested instructional content repeats across domains. This makes it easier for faculty to not only expand that topic and work across

all domains but also to work individually in each domain and be sure students are getting essential information and experience. For example, there are some similarities across the key topic relating to connecting to families, but there are some unique features of that topic for the domain of English-language development. Some repetition is also intended to deepen habits of exploration and reflection that students then carry into their work.

Topics in Chapters 1 and 2 of the PCF, V1, are addressed in Unit 1 and Unit 2 of the instructional guide and can be used with the domain units or independently of them. Unit 7 of the instructional guide provides support and practice for students in understanding how to use the PCF, V1 as a resource for curriculum decisions in their work. For most students, this will work best after they are familiar with the domain content. But there will be situations, perhaps with more experienced students, where that unit can be used to familiarize students with the domains in the context of curriculum planning.

A graphic illustrating the organization of the instructional guide is included immediately following the Table of Contents.

Wherever possible, relevant page numbers are provided as well as possible connections to the PLF, V1 and the PEL Resource Guide. Activities, approaches, and strategies are described broadly enough so that faculty can choose, adapt, tailor, and shape these to their own preferred teaching styles, students, and program needs. It was intended that each unit could be done in a three-hour class, but that will vary extensively based on faculty choices and student needs. This flexibility is offered in the hope of providing maximum utility for the initiatives and publications that CDD is preparing for the child care community in California.

Structure of the Key Topics in Each Unit: *Core Instructional Components*

Each key topic begins with a section titled “Before You Start.” This section provides an overview of the activity to help faculty decide if the exercises fit into their purpose and goals for a class session. Background information and a few tips for faculty preparation or reflection are also included.

Following this, the materials in each unit and key topic adhere to a framework of core instructional components and are organized as follows:

1. Motivator and Connection to Experience

These are available for each unit, and not for each key topic. These connect the content of the unit to the personal and/or professional experience of the learner. It establishes motivation by embedding the topic within a situation or question with which the learner might be familiar and suggests ways to extend learning by providing challenges or issues to consider. The Motivator and Connection to Experience may include the following elements:

- *Critical question*
- *Challenging situation: short vignette might be text or video or audio*
- *Challenging quote or text*

The Motivator and Connection is often accompanied by a set of guiding questions for reflection. These are not assessment questions but are intended to engage the learner in remembering and reflecting on (not evaluating) their own experiences, feelings, personal actions, or actions of others.

2. Information Delivery

For each key topic, this component is designed to introduce specific content to students in the class setting. The delivery of information may be brief or long and may be composed of a single topic or several related topics, such as key topics within a given chapter. Information Delivery may include lecture content and/or reading assignments.

3. Active Learning

In previous instructional guides there were activities designated to be used in class or out of class. In this instructional guide, these are part of the Active Learning instructional components. Many of these can be fashioned into work that is done in class or out of class based on faculty determination of what will work best for a particular situation. The intent is that the suggested active learning will engage students in the key topic through learning which will be active, thoughtful, challenging, and relevant to the content. This work might include these instructional approaches:

- Class discussion
- Small group work
- Demonstrations
- Observations
- Interviews or panels
- Internet resources
- Research on a particular topic

4. Deeper Understanding

This provides suggestions for independent research and/or ways to take students deeper into some important issues or concepts related to the key topic.

5. Questions for Reflection

These provide opportunities for students to reflect on the experience of working with this key topic. There are questions for reflection at the end of each strand in the PCF, V1, but they differ in that they generally ask students to reflect on the information in the framework. Across many, but not all, of the key topics in the instructional guide, there is a set of questions with a repeated structure. This is intentional and is designed to impart to students a useful set of questions to carry with them for reflection in their current or future work.

Organization of Each Active Learning Component: *Flexible Segments*

Each Active Learning component is organized in a sequence by which the work can unfold for students as they move deeper and deeper into the topic. These can be reviewed by faculty and then implemented as is appropriate.

Active Learning is divided into segments entitled “Getting it started,” “Keeping it going,” “Putting it together,” “Taking it further,” “Another approach/way,” and “Deeper Understanding.” Not every Active Learning component includes all of these segments for implementation, and faculty can choose not to use all of what is available.

Student Learning Outcomes

To support faculty in decisions regarding how and where they can best use the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 1* (PCF, V1) in their course work or across their program, the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) developed by the Curriculum Alignment Project (CAP) (http://www.childdevelopment.org/cs/cdtc/print/htdocs/services_cap.htm) for the eight core lower division early childhood courses have been mapped onto each instructional guide key topic by unit for consideration.

The Curriculum Alignment Project's SLOs, objectives, and examples of course content and topics indicated for this Instructional Guide for the PCF, V1 can be found in Appendix A on pages 243. These SLOs are organized by the CAP core lower division early childhood courses. This is not an exhaustive list and faculty might find ways to use the key topics to address SLOs in ways other than what has been indexed. Working through these selected key topics does not guarantee the achievement of any student learning outcome or objective; it is understood that students achieve student outcomes through repeated engagement with information and experiences that build competence.

To assist faculty in using these SLOs as supports for decision making, the instructional guide units/key topics are indexed by SLOs so that faculty can select what is most relevant to their particular needs. This SLO Index can be found after the Table of Contents on page ii.