

CDA At- A- Glance



CDA PREP PROGRAM - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I have enrolled in the Rasmussen College Early Childhood Education Program. The CDA- Child Development Associate- Credential is an added component to the program and a distinct benefit to your College Coursework

Q: What is the CDA?

A: The CDA, or Child Development Associate, is a national credential awarded to those educators who demonstrate the ability to nurture children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth in a child development framework. The Council for Professional Recognition awards the Credential to qualified recipients.

Q: Is the Child Development Associate the same as the Associates Degree I am enrolled in at Rasmussen?

A: No. The CDA- Child Development Associate- is an independent credential awarded through the Council for Professional Recognition. Being awarded the CDA is an accomplishment which provides the basic teacher qualifications in many states. Some states or programs require more than the CDA to be considered teacher qualified. The CDA must be renewed every 3-5 years.

The Associate of Applied Science Degree (AAS)- which you may be enrolled in through Rasmussen College- is a college degree awarded upon completion of the Early Childhood Education Program Educational Requirements. The AAS is a college educational degree and never needs to be renewed. In many states and programs, the AAS is a preferred educational degree for teacher qualifications.

Q: Do I have to apply for the CDA Credential? Is it required?

A : No. Application for the CDA Credential is not required for completion of your Associates Degree or Certificate Program here at Rasmussen College. It is highly encouraged, but is still your choice. The achievement of the CDA Credential is a validation of the work you are currently doing in the field of ECE and a nice addition to your resume.

In order for the College to pay for your CDA Application you are asked to complete the Application process within 30 days after the end of your Health, Safety and Nutrition Course.

Q: How will I know the Competency Standards and Requirements?

A: Upon confirming your course schedule, you were asked to choose a category for your CDA; Infants and Toddlers, Preschool or Family Child Care. With your book order, you will receive a packet of information from the Council for Professional Recognition which will include a paper application, an Observation Instrument (packet), a pack of Parent Surveys and a colorful booklet which corresponds to the category you chose. Inside this booklet is the

entire procedure to apply for the Credential as well as all requirements and competencies. Keep the contents of the packet safe until you complete your CDA Application.

Q: What is the overall process to achieve my CDA Credential?

A: To earn the CDA Credential, an applicant must complete the CDA Resource File (binder), distribute and gather Parent Questionnaires, be observed by their Advisor and participate in a Validation visit- consisting of an interview, Resource File review and a multiple choice test. It is the determination of the Council for Professional Recognition to whether they will award you the Credential. Completion of the Rasmussen College program or application does not guarantee you will be awarded the Credential.

Q: What if I work as a nanny or as a PCA?

A: In order to apply for the CDA Credential, you must be working or regularly volunteering at a licensed early childhood program or licensed family child care center. The Council does not yet recognize hours worked as a nanny or as a PCA to qualify.

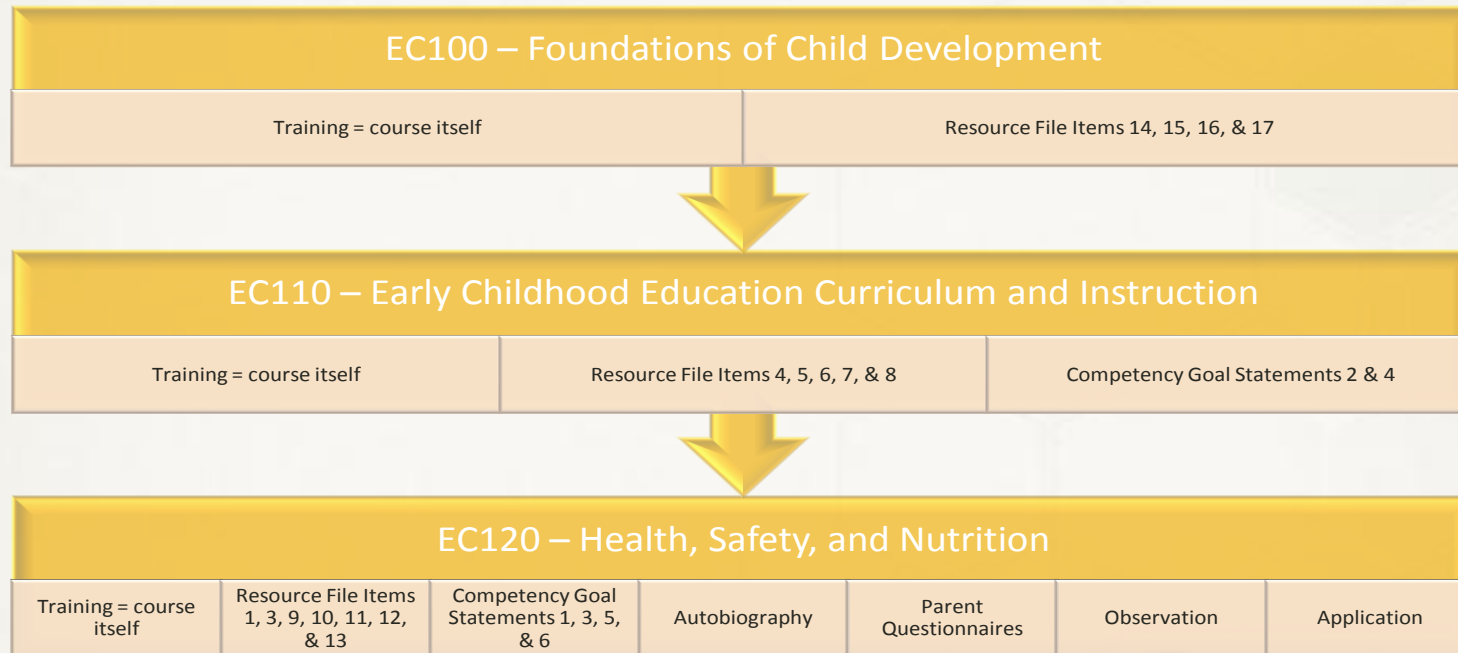
Q: How do I find an Advisor?

A: In most cases your Advisor will be your instructor for your final course or a Program Coordinator (if your campus has a Coordinator). Your instructor will review this with you when you prepare to host your Observation conducted by your advisor in Externship 3. If you are in the Rasmussen College Online Campus, you will determine an Advisor of your own choosing based up the requirements of the Council. You will receive more information about your Advisor in the Health, Safety and Nutrition Course.

Q: How I will reach the outcome of application to the Council for Professional Recognition to get my Child Development Associate Credential?

A: The work needed to apply for the CDA Credential is integrated into your program and coursework. See the chart below.

Rasmussen CDA Prep Program



Q: What if I am not eligible or already have my CDA- do I still need to complete all the assignments related to the CDA preparation?

A: Yes. As the CDA preparation assignments are integrally woven into the courses, you are still required to complete the assignments. Use this as an opportunity to create a professional resource binder or update your previous CDA resource file.

Q: Will the hours for my Externship apply to the total classroom hours needed to apply for my CDA?

A: Ideally they will count for the hours to apply for the CDA. However, if you are conducting your Externship at a non-licensed early childhood program or non-licensed family child care center or as a nanny or PCA, the Externship hours will not count.

Q: What if I am enrolled through the Rasmussen College Online Program and not enrolled with a physical Rasmussen Campus, therefore taking the Reflections Courses instead of Externship Courses? Where do I get the classroom hours needed to apply for my CDA?

A: The hours required for the CDA Application can be conducted within five years of your Application. You will need contact information for those locations where the hours were gained as verification. If you have not yet had any classroom hours, working with young children, you may not be eligible to apply for the CDA Credential. Remember, the CDA Credential is highly encouraged, but not a required part of the program.

Q: When I am ready- how will I apply for the Credential and what do I need to do?

A: Upon completion of the courses, corresponding CDA course work, your Observation conducted by your Advisor and gathered your Parent Surveys, you will apply for your Credential online. You will have 30 days to apply for the CDA Credential in order for Rasmussen to pay the application fee. If you do not apply within the 30 days, Rasmussen will no longer pay your CDA application fee. Your instructor will give you all the necessary steps for application and will discuss the remaining validation visit with you as well.

As you continue in the program, you will receive more information regarding the CDA Credential and the application process. Feel free to refer to the Council for Professional Recognition website at www.cdacouncil.org. As always if you have any questions, you can reach your instructor, Student Advisor or Program Coordinator.