



Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and related Disabilities (LEND) Program Overview of Neurodevelopmental Disabilities and Systems of Care

Course Description 2025-2026

Course Director: Jenean Castillo, PhD

Course Description

The WIHD LEND Training Program consists of three courses: Neurodevelopmental Disabilities and their Systems of Care; Seminar in Evidence-based Methods, and Interdisciplinary Leadership in Action. The Neurodevelopmental Disabilities and Systems of Care course (NDSC) provides a population-based perspective and epidemiology of childhood disabilities and examines key issues in assessment and treatment of children with or at risk for neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families. It also examines the broad context of health care systems and service delivery for children with disabilities from birth through young adulthood with a strong emphasis on family centered practice and family partnership. In addition, a module on policy and advocacy provides an understanding of the history of the disability rights movement, landmark federal and state legislation, and court decisions as well as strategies for community advocacy. This two-semester course is taught in ten modules: 1) Early Intervention and Special Education, 2) Autism Spectrum Disorder/Developmental Disabilities, 3) Genetics and Genomics, 4) Family Partnerships, 5) Policy and Advocacy, 6) Vulnerable Populations, 7) Health Disparities, 8) Behavioral Health Integration, 9) Developmental Concerns and Assistive Technology, and 10) Transition and the Lifespan.

Course Goals

The learning activities of this course assist trainees with developing a higher level of competency in the MCH Leadership Competency areas.

Course Objectives

Learning Objectives for this course are found in individual module descriptions.

Course sessions

Early Intervention (EI) and Special Education (SE); Module Coordinator: J. Lequia, PhD

- Early Intervention 1: Low Birth Weight
- Early Intervention 2: Systems of Care and Intervention Settings
- Overview of Special Education
- Social Skills Intervention
- Essential Elements of Inclusive Education

Autism Spectrum Disorders/Developmental Disabilities (ASD/DD); Module Coordinator: N. Turygin, PhD

- Autism Spectrum Disorder 1: Epidemiology, Diagnosis, and Etiology
- Autism Spectrum Disorder 2: Treatment Options
- Autism Spectrum Disorders 3: Research
- Introduction to Disabilities
- ADHD



Genetics and Genomics (Gen); Module Coordinator: J. Villiers, MS, CGC

- Genetics 1: The Vast World of Genetics
- Genetics 2: Finding Red Flags in the Family History
- Genetics 3: Genetic Testing: Impact of a Diagnosis and Social and Ethical Issues

Family Partnerships (FP); Module Coordinator: Family Faculty (TBD)

- Introduction to the Family Partnerships and Family Mentorship
- Family-Centered/Family-Directed Practices
- Family-Professional Collaboration
- Family Quality of Life and Self-Advocacy Presentations
- Family-Focused Disability Organizations: Panel Discussion
- Family Mentorship Experience Share-back
- Siblings of Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

Policy and Advocacy (PA); Module Coordinator: K. Leader, MS

- Overview of Disability Policy I
- Overview of Disability Policy II
- Disability Issues and Policy: Puerto Rico & the USVI
- Impact of Community Advocacy on Policy
- LEND Trainee Report-back from AUCD meeting
- LEND Trainee Report-back from Disability Policy Seminar
- Research & Policy Discussion
- Community Advocacy and Leadership: Policy Assignment Share-back
- NYS DOH Poster Session - Virtual

Vulnerable Populations (VP); Module Coordinator: T. Rao, PsyD

- Child Abuse/Welfare: A Public Health Perspective
- Developmental Risks Resulting from Exposure to Abuse and Neglect
- Child Abuse and Neglect: A Multidisciplinary Model for Assessment

Health Disparities (HD); Module Coordinator: J. Castillo, PhD

- Cultural and Linguistic Competency
- Health Disparities among Individuals with I/DD
- Disability and Other Cultural Identities
- Bilingualism
- Cultural Responsiveness in Special Education

Behavioral Health Integration (BHI); Module Coordinator: N. Turygin, PhD

- Behavioral Health Integration for the IDD/MH Population
- Coordinated Care and Services at WIHD

Developmental Concerns and Assistive Technology (DCAT); Module Coordinator: J. Castillo, PhD

- Application of Power Mobility Devices for Pediatric Users
- Clinical Practice in OT



- Identification, Evaluation and Habilitation of Pediatric Hearing Loss

Transition and the Lifespan (TL); Module Coordinator: Family Faculty (TBD)

- Life Course Theory and Social Determinants of Health
- Person-Centered Planning for Transition from School to Post-Secondary Education, Integrated Employment and Community Living
- Health Transition and the Medical Home
- Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy
- Aging and Disability

Course Assignments and point values:

1. Attend in-class sessions (5 points)
2. Participation and Completion of pre-assignments for each session (10 points)
3. Family Focused Disability Organization Interview (10 points)
4. Family Mentorship Experience (20 points)
5. Mid-year Reflective Writing Exercise (20 points)
6. End of Year Reflective Writing Exercise (20 points)
7. Community Advocacy and Policy Assignment (15 points)