

MINI CV – Selection of items**COURTNEY BEERS DEWHIRST, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education
 Department of Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum
 University of Oklahoma
 Norman, OK
 cbeers@ou.edu

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Courtney Dewhirst studies the systems around young children: how they develop, what teachers and programs need to support that development effectively, and what gets in the way when those conditions are not in place. Her work begins with the claim that early childhood classrooms *can be* high-quality, developmentally responsive, and genuinely enjoyable places for the children and teachers. She researches child development and the practices teachers use to support it.

EDUCATION

Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL

Ph.D., Curriculum and Instruction, August 2016

Mercer University, Atlanta, GA

Master of Arts in Teaching, Early Childhood Education, May 2009

Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Minor: Education, May 2006

GRANTS**Funded**

Grant Title	Role	Amount	Period
Second Step to Enhance Rural Students' Achievement and Wellbeing	Co-PI	\$3,945,003	2024–2029
<i>Funder: OESE EIR Grant, S411C230049 (Hott as PI)</i>			
Project Smart and Project Calm	Co-PI	\$323,515	2026–2027
<i>Funder: State of Oklahoma, Dept. of Education, OK-EDUC (Kirk; Hott as PI)</i>			
OU Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program for Students' Success	Co-PI	\$2,998,016	2023–2026
<i>Funder: ALN 84.335A (Kwon as PI)</i>			
Supporting Alternatives to Suspensions and Expulsions in OK's ECE Settings	PI	\$200,000	2025
<i>Funder: Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Foundation, Award A25-0195-001</i>			
Preschool Development Grant B-5	Co-I	\$1,226,036	2024–2025
<i>Funder: State of Oklahoma, Department of Human Services</i>			
Evaluation of Newcastle Public Schools ECE Comprehensive Academic, Social, and Emotional Supports Program	Co-PI	\$4,778	2025
<i>OK-DHS (McLeod as PI) award number A24-0244-004</i>			

<i>Funder: AERA Education Research Service Project Program (Hott as PI)</i>

Internal Grants

Grant Title	Role	Amount	Period
Self-Study for Early Education Directors	PI	\$6,000	2024
<i>Funder: JRCoe Summer 2024 Grant</i>			
ICAST Inaugural Seed Grant	Co-I	\$25,000	2023–2024
<i>Funder: Institute for Community and Society Transformation (Casey as PI)</i>			

AWARDS

Rainbolt Family Presidential Professorship – University of Oklahoma	2026
OU College of Continuing Education – State of Outreach Collaboration Award	2025
Institute for Community and Society Transformation (ICAST) First Time PI Award	2025
Faculty Recognition Investment Program Award, University of Oklahoma	2025
NAECTE Foundation Early Childhood Teacher Research Grant	2023
VP for Research and Partnerships Annual Award for Excellence in Research Grants	2023
VP for Research and Partnerships Award for Excellence in Transdisciplinary Research	2023
Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education Leadership and Citizenship Award	2022
ILAC Leadership and Citizenship Award	2022
ILAC Junior Faculty Award	2019
ILAC Junior Faculty Award	2018
NAECTE Outstanding Dissertation Award	2017
NAECTE Foundation (NAECTEF) Doctoral Scholarship Recipient	2016

FELLOWSHIPS

OU Vice President for Research and Partnerships Travel Award	2023
OU Presidential International Travel Fellowship Award	2023
Toppel Family Early Childhood Doctoral Scholarship	2015–2016
Toppel Family Early Childhood Doctoral Scholarship	2014–2015

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

University of Oklahoma , Norman, OK	2023–Present
Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education, Tenured	
Department of Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum	
University of Oklahoma , Norman, OK	2016–2023
Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education	
Department of Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum	
Florida Atlantic University , Boca Raton, FL	2013–2016
Instructor, Department of Curriculum, Culture, and Educational Inquiry and Department of Exceptional Student Education	
Florida Atlantic University , Boca Raton, FL	2012–2014
Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Curriculum, Culture, and Educational Inquiry	

REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

Accepted

Dewhirst, C. B., Kwon, K. A., Hott, B., & Martin, B. (accepted, to be published in 2027). Asset mapping to reduce early childhood expulsion and suspension: Leveraging community strengths. Chapter in *Handbook of Behavior & Guidance* (Springer).

Published Peer-Reviewed Book

Casey, E., & **Dewhirst, C.** (Eds.). (2026). *Play across all spaces: Why the brain needs play and how to foster play in any context*. Kendall Hunt Publishing Company.

Published Peer-Reviewed Articles

Wang, D., Beisly, A., Connelly, S., **Dewhirst, C.**, & White, L. (2026). The subsidy squeeze: How child care providers experience benefits, barriers, and the eligibility cliff in categorical programs. *Early Childhood Education Journal*.

Ethridge, L., Raymond, K., Fields, K., & **Dewhirst, C.** (2026). Preservice teachers' perceptions of advocacy before and after a day of experiential learning at a state capitol. *Action in Teacher Education*.

Casey, E.M., Jang, W., **Dewhirst, C.**, Spivey, E., & Zang, H. (2026). The Bandit effect: How caregiver engagement with *Bluey* influences play attitudes and behaviors. *Early Childhood Education Journal*.

Martin, B., Hott, B., & **Dewhirst, C.** (2026). Positive behavioral supports and interventions: The role of parent-selected classroom placements. Journal of Case Learning & Exceptional Learners. *Journal of Case Learning & Exceptional Learners*.

Hott, B., **Dewhirst, C. B.**, Heiniger, S., & Jackson, R. (2026). Implementing SEL with fidelity: Insights from rural special educators. *Behavior Analysis in Practice*.

Martin, B., Hott, B., & **Dewhirst, C.** (2026). Preference assessments: A proactive strategy for supporting young children and preventing classroom exclusion. *Beyond Behavior*.

Dewhirst, C. B., Connelly, S., White, L., Beisley, A., & McLeod (2026). Connected Care: Exploring Telehealth Use and Provider Well-Being in Family Childcare. *Early Childhood Education Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-026-02218-4>

Dewhirst, C. B., Spivey, E., Casey, E. M., & Zhang, H. (2026). Exploring the Heeler Effect: A thematic analysis of *Bluey's* influence on family play behaviors. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02568543.2026.2638237>

Dewhirst, C. B. (2026). Exploring self-study as professional development: Early childhood directors' learning experiences. *Early Childhood Education Journal*. 10.1007/s10643-026-02129-4

Casey, E., & **Dewhirst, C. B.** (2026). Play matters: Understanding the essential nature of play across all spaces. In E. Casey & C. B. Dewhirst (Eds.), *Play across all spaces: Why the brain needs play and how to foster play in any context* (pp. 1–14). Kendall Hunt Publishing Company.

Dewhirst, C. B., & Casey, E. (2026). Play across the lifespan: A necessity for well-being. In E. Casey & C. B. Dewhirst (Eds.), *Play across all spaces: Why the brain needs play and how to foster play in any context* (pp. 53–72). Kendall Hunt Publishing Company.

Dewhirst, C. B., Beisly, A., & Kwon, K. A. (2025). Early childhood education faculty perspectives on trauma preparation for preservice teachers. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10901027.2025.2599163>

Raymond, K., Fields, K., **Dewhirst, C.**, & Ethridge, E. (2025). Teacher educators fostering advocacy through state capitol engagement: A self-study. In S. R. Logan (Ed.), *Higher education classrooms as places for inquiry: Stories and methods from practitioner researchers*. IGI.

- Dewhirst, C., Hott, B., & Randolph, K. (2025).** Mixed-methods approaches to enhance rural special education research. *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, 44(4), 192–201. <https://doi.org/10.1177/87568705251332594>
- Lopez, L. D., Kwon, K.-A., Jeon, H.-J., **Dewhirst, C.**, Kim, S. G., & Jensen, F. (2024). Toddlers' emotion vocalizations during peer conflicts and contingent teacher interventions in early care and education settings. *Infant and Child Development*, e2550. <https://doi.org/10.1002/icd.2550>
- Dewhirst, C. B., Spivey, E., Jang, C. S., & Grimes, B. (2023).** Early childhood education interns' and cooperating teachers' discussions on trauma-informed practices. *Action in Teacher Education*, 45(3), 185–202. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01626620.2023.2209040>
- Dewhirst, C. B. (2023).** Exploring the cognitive apprenticeship approach: A case study of an early childhood practicum experience. *Early Child Development and Care*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2023.2187326>
- Dewhirst, C. B., & Casey, E. M. (2023).** Listening to mothers' voices: Parent-child play challenges during social distancing. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 21(2), 256–270. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476718X23115307>
- Casey, E., & **Dewhirst, C. (2022).** Play: Important for everyone at every age. *Pathways to Research in Education*.
- Casey, E., **Dewhirst, C. B.**, Wescoup, S., Durham, S., & Nahar, G. (2022). Factors affecting parent and child play experiences during the COVID-19 spread and initial social distancing efforts. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02568543.2022.2027581>
- Dewhirst, C. B., Cascio, C., & Casey, E. M. (2022).** Young children's play during a time of social distancing. *Early Child Development and Care*, 192(13), 2160–2174. doi: 10.1080/03004430.2021.1990907
- Dewhirst Beers, C. (2021).** Case study of a preschool transition: An example of building resilience in times of uncertainty. *Early Years: An International Research Journal*, 41(2–3), 275–290. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09575146.2018.1501554>
- Dewhirst, C. B., & Goldman, J. (2020).** Launching motivation for mindfulness: Introducing mindfulness to early childhood preservice teachers. *Early Child Development and Care*, 190(8), 1299–1312. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2018.1531853>
- Dewhirst, C. B., & Monroe, L. (2019).** DIY child-centered, natural playground. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, 47(1), 6–17.
- Beers, C. (2019).** The use of a developmental continuum in early childhood clinical experiences: Building preservice teachers' knowledge of cognitive development. *Early Child Development and Care*, 189(8), 1292–1305. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2017.1374260>
- Beers, C. (2018).** Seven layers of strength in a model early childhood teacher preparation program. *Action in Teacher Education*, 40(1), 3–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01626620.2018.1424661>
- Vaughan, M., & **Beers, C. (2017).** Using an exploratory professional development model to introduce iPads in the early childhood education classroom. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 45(3), 321–331. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-016-0772-3>
- Bjorklund, D. F., & **Beers, C. (2016).** The adaptive value of cognitive immaturity: Applications of evolutionary developmental psychology to early education. In D. C. Geary & D. B. Berch (Eds.), *Evolutionary perspectives on child development and education* (pp. 3–32). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-29986-0_1
- Vaughan, M., **Beers, C.**, & Burnaford, G. (2015). The impact of iPads on teacher educator practice: A collaborative professional development initiative. *International Journal of Technology in Teaching and Learning*, 11(1), 21–34.

TECHNICAL REPORTS

- Evaluation Results for the Newcastle Public Schools Early Childhood Center Comprehensive Academic, Social, and Emotional Supports Program (May, 2026), Hott, Heiniger, Atwood, & Dewhirst
- Suspension and Expulsion in Oklahoma's Early Childhood Settings (December 2025), Dewhirst, Hott, Ford, Kwon, & Gallagher
- Evaluation Report of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Projects (December 2025), PDG B-4 Evaluation Team
- Pyramid Model Implementation Evaluation Report (November 2025), PDG B-4 Evaluation Team
- Telehealth Pilot Program Evaluation Report (October 2025), PDG B-4 Evaluation Team

SELECTION OF RECENT CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Dan, W., Beisly, A., Connelly, S., Dewhirst, C., & White, L. (2026). *The subsidy squeeze: Child care provider experiences and the eligibility cliff* [Conference presentation]. Administration for Children and Families' National Research Conference on Early Childhood (NRCEC), Arlington, VA.
- Hott, B. L., **Dewhirst**, Courtney B., & Heiniger, S. (2026). *Implementing SEL with fidelity: Insights from rural special educators* [Conference presentation]. American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting, LA, CA.
- Dewhirst**, C. B., Kwon, K., & Hott, B. (2025). *Incorporating asset-based approaches into teacher education to prevent ECE exclusionary discipline* [Conference presentation]. National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Fall 2025 Conference, Orlando, FL.
- Hott, B., **Dewhirst**, C., Willis, T., & Attwood, J. (2025). *Tackling challenging behavior: Coaching the coaches* [Conference presentation]. Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) Conference, Oklahoma City, OK.
- Hott, B., **Dewhirst**, C., Attwood, J., & Heiniger, S. (2025). *Supporting positive behavioral interventions and supports with quality coaching* [Conference presentation]. OCALICONLINE 2025, Virtual.
- Dewhirst**, C., & Hott, B. (2025). *The state of suspension and expulsion in Oklahoma: A comprehensive mixed-methods investigation* [Conference presentation]. Oklahoma Early Childhood Research Symposium, Oklahoma City, OK.
- Martin, B., Gandy, S., Khalilipaji, K., Hott, B., & **Dewhirst**, C. (2025). *From isolation to integration: Connecting Oklahoma families, schools, and communities to prevent early childhood expulsion* [Conference presentation]. Oklahoma Early Childhood Research Symposium, Oklahoma City, OK.
- Wang, D., Connelly, S. E., **Dewhirst**, C., White, L., & Beisly, A. (2025). *The subsidy squeeze: How child care providers experience benefits, barriers, and the eligibility cliff in categorical programs* [Conference presentation]. Oklahoma Early Childhood Research Symposium, Oklahoma City, OK.
- Dewhirst**, C., & Casey, E. (2025). *Every child's tomorrow: Reimagining teacher education through a Reggio-inspired lens* [Conference presentation]. National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Conference, Virtual.

UNIVERSITY TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

Department of Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum

Undergraduate Courses:

- EDEC 3333 Social and Emotional Development and Guidance with Young Children
- EDEC 3413 Early Childhood Development
- EDEC 3541 Field Placement I

EDEC 3573 Diverse Learners
EDUC 4050 Teaching Experience
EDEC 4513/Level 3 Practicum Preservice Teacher Supervision
EDEC 4123 Curriculum in Early Childhood Education
EDEC 4533 Assessment in Early Childhood Education

Graduate Courses:

ILAC 6013 Proseminar in ILAC
EDEC 5970 Diverse Learners
EDEC 6033 Theory and Research in Early Childhood Education

Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL

Department of Exceptional Student Education

Undergraduate Courses:

EEX 3226 Assessment for All Young Children
EEX 3603 Positive Behavior Support in Early Childhood
EEX 3754 Family, School, and Community Partnerships

Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL

Department of Curriculum, Culture, and Educational Inquiry

Undergraduate Course:

EEC 4313 Blended Early Childhood Methods: Birth to Age 5