

CURRICULUM VITAE

Erin M. Casey, Ph.D.

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EDUCATION

HarvardX Micro Bachelor of Introduction to Neuroscience April 2026

Ph.D., Curriculum and Instruction, University of Arkansas, 2010 (Emphasis: Early Childhood Education).

M.Ed., Curriculum and Instruction, University of Houston, 2003

B.A., Mass Communication, Louisiana State University, 1995

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Associate Professor, August 2019 - Present Early Childhood Education
Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum The University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

Assistant Professor, 2015 - 2019
College of Health Sciences and Education – School of Education
Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA

Clinical Assistant Professor in Childhood Education, 2010 - 2015 College of Education and Health Professions – Curriculum & Instruction The University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR

HONORS and AWARDS

The Taylor & Francis/NAECTE Foundation Outstanding Early Childhood Teacher Educator, 2024. Awarded yearly to one recipient in acknowledgement of outstanding leadership, professionalism, reflective practices, and mentoring in early childhood teacher education.

University of Oklahoma Provost Award for Outstanding Engaged Teaching, 2024. Presented to one faculty member for meeting the highest standards of excellence in teaching that demonstrates community collaboration, institutional impact, and high-quality learning.

Outstanding Junior Faculty Award (2020), Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum, Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education, University of Oklahoma.

PUBLICATIONS – Peer Reviewed

* direct work and guidance with graduate students

Casey, E. M. (in press). The Neuroception-Play-Integration (NPI) Cycle: How safety, free play, and neural integration reinforce one another. *American Journal of Play*.

Casey, E., Alvarez-Briglie, S.*, & Feille, K. (2026). Discovering Crosscutting Concepts in Science Through Free Play: A 12-Week, Two-Cohort Study of Elementary Students. *Education Sciences*, 16(9), 1514. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci16091514>

Casey, E. M., Mueller, A., & Abplanalp Ozaydin, L.* (in press). Play as pedagogy: Using the Go, Show, Flow, Glow framework for game creation in elementary social studies. *Social Studies and the Young Learner*.

Heddy, B.C., **Casey, E.M.**, Brown, C.L., Bhuiyan, M., Gill, K.S., and Nguyen, B. (2026). Transformative play: integrating outdoor adventure education and the NPI-cycle to facilitate transformative experience. *Front. Educ.* 11:1896240. doi: 10.3389/feduc.2026.1896240

Casey, E.M., Arledge, B., Naghash, F., Spivey, E.*, Norris, J.N., Zhang, H.*, Mahmoud-Elhaj, D., Rajala, R., & Ethridge, L.E. (2026). Free play's effect on elementary students' neural activity, affect, and behavior: A randomized crossover study. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 269, 106542.

Casey, E., 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*. 54. 5451-5464. 10.1007/s10643-026-02225-5.

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>

Casey, E. M., Spivey EM and Berube J* (2026). Experiential play training transforms elementary educators into play advocates. *Front. Educ.* 11:1788023. doi: 10.3389/feduc.2026.1788023.

Casey, E. M., & Berube, J.* (2026). The play-creativity connection: Constructive play provocations for early childhood teacher preparation. In E. A. Ethridge, A. H. Beisly, & K. Raymond (Eds.), *Constructivist practices in teacher education: Theory, methods, and challenges* (pp. XX–XX). Routledge.

Mueller, A. & Abplanalps-Ozaydin, L.* & **Casey, E.** (2026). Designing games, developing competencies: elementary students' engagement with ISTE standards through playful participatory game design using the GSFG framework. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*. 1-22. 10.1080/15391523.2026.2683791.

- Casey, E. M. & Dewhirst, C. (Eds.). (2026).** *Play across all spaces: Why the brain needs play and how to foster play in any context.* Kendall Hunt Innovative Ink.
- Naghash, F., Ethridge, L., & **Casey, E. M.** (2026). Play across neural spaces: Circuits, chemistry, and neuroplasticity. In E. M. Casey & C. Dewhirst (Eds.), *Play across all spaces: Why the brain needs play and how to foster play in any context* (pp. 15–34). Kendall Hunt Innovative Ink.
- Casey, E. M.** (2026). Play across interpersonal neurobiological spaces: Integration and the Neuroception-Play-Integration Cycle. In E. M. Casey & C. Dewhirst (Eds.), *Play across all spaces: Why the brain needs play and how to foster play in any context* (pp. 35–52). Kendall Hunt Innovative Ink.
- Casey, J. H., & **Casey, E. M.** (2026). Play across military spaces: The persistence of play behavior in combat and service contexts. In E. M. Casey & C. Dewhirst (Eds.), *Play across all spaces: Why the brain needs play and how to foster play in any context* (pp. 169–182). Kendall Hunt Innovative Ink.
- Dewhirst, C., & **Casey, E. M.** (2026). Play across the lifespan: A necessity for well-being. In E. M. Casey & C. Dewhirst (Eds.), *Play across all spaces: Why the brain needs play and how to foster play in any context* (pp. 53–72). Kendall Hunt Innovative Ink.
- Casey, E. M. & Dewhirst, C. (2026).** Play matters: Understanding the essential nature of play across all spaces. In E. M. Casey & C. Dewhirst (Eds.), *Play across all spaces: Why the brain needs play and how to foster play in any context* (pp. 1–14). Kendall Hunt Innovative Ink.
- Casey, E.M. & Spivey, E.* (2024).** Supporting the community through early childhood teachers playing together in the summer teacher play lab chapter in Winterbottom, C. et al. (Eds.), *Community-based Transformational Learning in Early Childhood Settings: Integrating Experiences of teachers, students, and the community.*
- Casey, E.M., Christie, T.*, & Waggoner, R.* (2024).** Liberty and justice for all: Play as a vehicle for democratic citizenship skills. *YC Young Children* 79(1), 41-49.
- Cooper, P. & **Casey, E.M.** (2023). Teacher Preparation for Democratic Early Childhood Classrooms: Do Anti-bias Education and Child Development Texts Fall Short? *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education* 21(1), 256-270.
- Dewhirst, C.B. & **Casey, E.M.** (2023). Listening to Mothers’ Voices of Children’s Play Challenges and Changes During Social Distancing. *The Journal of Early Childhood Research* 44(4), 1093-1121.
- Casey, E. M.** (2022). The Importance of Using Anti-Bias Education and Supporting Diversity in Early Childhood Education. EBSCO *Pathways to Research in Education*. Retrieved on 1/24/23 at <https://www.pathways2research.com/pte/The%20Importance%20of%20Using%20Anti-bias%20Education%20and%20Supporting%20Diversity%20in%20Early%20Childhood%20Education>.

- Casey, E. M. & Dewhirst, C. (2022).** Play: Important for Everyone at Every Age. EBSCO *Pathways to Research in Education*. Retrieved on 1/24/23 at <https://www.pathways2research.com/pte/Play%3A%20Important%20for%20Everyone%20at%20Every%20Age>.
- Casey, E. M., Dewhirst, C.B., Unsicker-Durham, S., Nahar, G. & Wescoup, S. (2022).** Factors affecting parent and child play experiences during the COVID-19 spread and initial social distancing efforts. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02568543.2022.2027581>
- Casey, E.M., Chester, S.*, Spivey, E.*, & Vandehei, K.* (2021).** Bullying, divorce, death, race, and poverty: An analysis of social studies pre-teacher candidates' experiences in presenting "Tender Topics" through read-alouds to children. *Social Studies Journal* 41(1), 39-50.
- Dewhirst, C., Cascio, C., & **Casey, E.M.** (2021). Young children's play during a time of social distancing. *Early Childcare and Development*. DOI: [10.1080/03004430.2021.1990907](https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2021.1990907)
- Casey, E.M.** (2021). Can pre-k use C3? Exploring the usefulness of the C3 Framework for prekindergarten students and their teacher in an inquiry on landmarks. *The Social Studies*, 112(4), 161-176. DOI: 10.1080/00377996.2020.1854162. (Impact Factor = 4.038).
- Casey, E.M.** (2020). What's my favorite landmark? Investigating pre-kindergartener's interest and ability during a C3 Framework inquiry. *Social Studies and the Young Learner* 33(2), 9-13.
- Casey, E.M., & Casey, J. (2019).** Building democratic citizenship competencies in K-5 economics through analysis of popular culture. *Social Studies Research and Practice*, 14(1), 135-149. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SSRP-12-2018-0048>
- Casey, E.M., DiCarlo, C., & Sheldon, K. (2019).** Growing democratic citizenship competencies: Fostering social studies understandings through inquiry learning in the preschool garden. *The Journal of Social Studies*, 43(4), 361-373 (Impact Factor=1.08).
- Casey, E.M., Tobin, K. J., & Cruz, M. (2018).** Chanting about citizenship: Using arts-integration in the C3 Framework. *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, 30 (3), 14-19.
- Casey, E.M. & DiCarlo, C.F. (2018).** Early childhood education teachers' constructs of teacher quality in Belize. *Early Child Development and Care*, 1-15. DOI:10.1080/03004430.2017.1337009 (Impact Factor = .968)
- Casey, E.M.** (2016). Her/Him, them, and me: Using a three-perspective format in social studies methods to promote intercultural education initiatives. *Journal of International Social Studies*, 6(3), 23-36.
- Casey, E.M. & DiCarlo, C.F. (2016).** Social studies surprises found in the garden. Focus on PK/K, *Early Years Bulletin*, 4(2), 7-10. <http://www.acei.org/sites/default/files/eybwinter2016.pdf>.
- Casey, E.M.** (2016b). Voices of parents: Early childhood education in Belize. In M. Berson & I.

Berson (Eds.), *Child advocacy and early childhood education policies in the Caribbean*, Vol. 6. (pp.125-146). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Hudson, M.K. & Casey, E.M. (2016) Assessing and planning for second language literacy success with middle-level refugee children. *Childhood Education*, 92(2), 158-160.

Casey, E.M. & DiCarlo, C.F. (2015, Fall). Play traditions in the Garifuna culture of Belize. *International Play Association*, www.Ipaua.org.

Casey, E.M. (2014). Finding treasures in play. *Early Years: Journal of the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children*, 35(2): 27-29.

Casey, E.M. (2014). Using literacy response activities with early childhood English language learners and immigrant students. In J. Keenwe & G. Onchwari (Eds.), *Cross-Cultural considerations in the education of young immigrant learners* (pp.50-66). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

PUBLICATIONS – Non-Peer Reviewed

Casey, E.M., & House, E. (Oct./Nov. 2024). Trusting in the Power of Play to Help Children Connect with Math. *Mathematical Association of America Focus Magazine* 44(5), 23-24.

Casey, E.M. (2016a) Life and play in the Garifuna culture of Dangriga, Belize. *Childhood Explorer* 3(4). <http://www.childhoodexplorer.org/new-page-1>.

Casey, E.M. (2009). Long-term effects of the summer learning environment. *Research and Policy Briefs for Educational Leaders*. March 2009, 9(2).

Casey, E.M. (2009). An introduction to character education. *Research and Policy Briefs for Educational Leaders*. June 2009, 9(3).

PAPERS IN PROGRESS

Casey, E. M., Cheng, W., & Zhang, H. [Manuscript under review]. *Impact of children's weekly free play on 1st–5th elementary teachers' practice, relationships, and student behavior: An interview study*. *Teaching and Teacher Education*.

Casey, E. & House, E. (under revision). Free Play, Mathematical Minds: Exploring How Unstructured Play Can Foster Mathematical Connections. *The Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*.

Casey, E.M. & Rylack, D. (in preparation) *Trusting in the Power of Free Play to Help Children Connect with Literacy*.

Casey, E.M. (in preparation). *Trusting in the Power of Free Play to Help Children Connect with Social Studies*.

Casey, E.M. (in preparation). *Using the Play It! Action Framework to Teach Any Standard Through Play*.

Casey, E.M. (in preparation). *The Brain Boost Zone: Unlocking the Neurological Benefits of Free Play in the School Week*. Book Proposal.

Casey, E.M. (in preparation). *The Parent Play Perception Gap: Where Parents Think Children Should Play and How Much They Value It*.

PRESENTATIONS Peer Reviewed

Casey, E. M. (2026, December 4). *Delivering Standards Through Play Is Possible: How the Play It! Actions Framework Built Teacher Confidence and Lifted Extraordinary Performance in Diverse Learners*. Paper presentation. National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Annual Conference, Washington, DC. Accepted to present.

Casey, E. M. (2026, December 4). *Neuroscience Rejects the Inevitable: The NPI Cycle and the Proof That Play IS Learning*. Poster presentation. National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Annual Conference, Washington, DC. Accepted to present.

Casey, E. (2026, November 4). *Need to Make the Case for Play? Research Tools and Findings to Support Ngā Mōtika o te Tamaiti—The Child's Right to Play*. Invited panelist. International Play Association (IPA) World Conference, Ōtautahi Christchurch, New Zealand. Accepted to present.

Casey, E. (2026, November 3). *Children's Brains Need Play: How the Neuroception-Play-Integration Cycle Creates Measurable Brain Changes in Primary Children and Transforms Teachers in Free Play Brain Boost Zones*. Oral presentation. International Play Association (IPA) World Conference, Ōtautahi Christchurch, New Zealand. Accepted to present.

Casey, E. (2026, November 3). “Sing, Play, Connect” — *Original Guitar Performance and Songs Singing Celebrating the Power of Play*. Play break. International Play Association (IPA) World Conference, Ōtautahi Christchurch, New Zealand. Accepted to present.

Casey, E. (April 2026). *The Neuroception-Play-Integration Cycle: A Neurobiological Framework for Play's Healing Power*. Research presentation at the US Play Coalition 2026 National Conference on the Value of Play, in Bloomington, IN, April 28–30, 2026.

Casey, E. (April 2026). *Zentangle Workshop: Playful Mindfulness Through Structured Pattern Drawing*. Poster presentation at the US Play Coalition 2026 National Conference on the Value of Play, in Bloomington, IN, April 28–30, 2026.

Casey, J. & **Casey, E.** (April 2026). *Inside Play's Magic Circle: Understanding Play Across Military Spaces and War*. Presentation at the US Play Coalition 2026 National Conference on the Value of Play, in Bloomington, IN, April 28–30, 2026.

Casey, E.M. & Berube, J. (November 2025). *Constructive Play Provocations: Bridging Theory and Practice in ECE*. Poster presentation at the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Annual Conference, in Orlando, FL, November, 2025.

- Casey, E.M. & Spivey, E.** (November 2025). *Free Play and Brain Development: Research-Based Strategies for Whole-Child Learning* paper presentation at NAEYC's 2025 Annual Conference, November 19-22 in Orlando, FL.
- Casey, E.M.** (October 2025). *Free Play Lab for 1-5th Graders*. Paper presentation at the International Association of Play US Annual Conference in Louisville, KY, October 2025.
- Casey, E.M. & Berube, J.** (October 2025). *Learning Through Play to Teach Through Play: Transforming Educators Through Experiential Play*. Paper presentation at the International Association of Play US Annual Conference in Louisville, KY, October 2025.
- Casey, E. M., Raymond, K., & Campbell, T.** (June 2025). *Teaching Teachers to See Math in Play: Evidence for Teacher Education*. Accepted paper presentation at the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Summer Virtual Conference, June 9, 2025.
- Dewhirst, C. & Casey, E.M.** (June 2025). *Every Child's Tomorrow: Reimagining Teacher Education Through a Reggio-Inspired Lens*. Accepted paper presentation at the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Summer Virtual Conference, June 9, 2025.
- Casey, E. M. & Ethridge, L.** (2025). *Supporting and Repairing through Play: Free Play's Effect on 1st-5th Graders' Neurological and Whole-child Development*. Accepted paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual conference on April 25, 2025 in Denver, CO.
- Casey, E. M., Spivey, E. & Berube, J.** (2024, November 6). *Making Play Believers: Takeaways from a Transformative Play Experience*. Accepted poster presentation at the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Annual Conference on November 6, 2024, Anaheim, CA.
- Casey, E. M. & Cheng, W.*** (2024, November 6). *Effects of Students' Free Play on 1st-5th Grade Teachers' Play Beliefs and Well-being*. Accepted paper presentation at the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Annual Conference on November 6, 2024, Anaheim, CA.
- Casey, E. M. & Dewhirst, C.** (2024, June). *Effects of Preservice Teachers Observing Children's Play in a Free Play Lab*. Presentation at the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Annual Summer PLI Conference on June 10, 2024, Virtual.
- Dewhirst, C., Casey, E.M., & Kwon, K.** (2024, June). *Building Your First Adult Atelier: Reflections Upon and Guidance for the Implementation of the Reggio Emilia Approach with Preservice and Practicing Teachers*. NAEYC Professional Learning Institute on June 3, 2024, in New Orleans, LA.
- Casey, E., Dewhirst, C., Spivey, E., & Jang, W.** (2023, November). *Just a TV Show? Understanding How Bluey Affects Parent Attitudes/Behavior About ECE Play*. Poster presentation at the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Annual Conference on November 15, 2023, Nashville, TN.

- Casey, E. & Spivey, E.** (2023, November). *Teacher Play is the Way! Developing and Discovering Teachers' Play Identities Through Their Own Personally-Meaningful Play to Create Stronger Play Advocacy*. Paper Presentation at the NAEYC Annual Conference on November 18, 2023 in Nashville, TN.
- Casey, E.** (2023, September). *SEL Activities for Global Citizenship and Environmental Stewardship*. Presentation at the Oklahoma Association for the Education of Young Children on September 30, 2023, in Oklahoma City.
- Cooper, P. & Casey, E. M.** (2023, April). *Preparing Democratic Early Childhood Teachers In A Don't Say Gay Era: How Course Readings Fall Short*. Paper presentation at the AERA Annual Meeting Conference on April 13, 2023, Chicago, IL.
- Cooper, P. & Casey, E. M.** (2022, November). *Preparing Democratic Early Childhood Teachers In A Don't Say Gay Era: How Course Readings Fall Short*. Paper presentation at the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Annual Conference on November 16, 2022, Washington, DC.
- Casey, E.M. & Spivey, E.** (2022, November). *The Playful Teacher: If Teachers Engage in Play, Can They Be Stronger Play Advocates?* Paper presentation at the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Annual Conference on November 16, 2022, Washington, DC.
- Casey, E.M. & Dewhirst** (2022, April). *Factors Affecting Caregiver and Child Play Experiences During COVID-19 Initial Social Distancing Efforts*. Poster presented at the 2022 AERA Annual Meeting.
- Dewhirst, C. & Casey, E.M.** (2022, April). *Parent and Child Play Behaviors During a Time of Social Distancing*. Poster accepted for presentation at the 2022 #LearnPlay22 Conference in St. Louis, MO.
- Cooper, P. & Casey, E.M.** (2021, November 17). *Examining ECE teacher preparation and anti-bias education curriculum needs*. Paper presentation at the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Annual Virtual Conference on November 17, 2021, virtual conference format.
- Spivey, E.* & Casey, E.M.** (2021, November 17). *That experience is canceled: EC preservice teachers and the COVID19 pandemic*. Paper accepted for presentation at the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Annual Virtual Conference on November 17, 2021, virtual conference format.
- Dewhirst, C. & Casey, E.M.** (2021, June 14). *Early childhood teacher preparation programs as supporters of parent-child play*. Paper presented at the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE) Annual Virtual Conference on June 14, 2021, virtual conference format.
- Dewhirst, C. & Casey, E.M.** (2021, April 8-12). *Play during social distancing* [Paper Presentation] AERA Annual Meeting (Virtual Conference).

- Casey, E.M. & Spivey, E.** (2021, April 8-12). *"Not in My School!" Understanding ECE principals' willingness to allow diverse literacy experiences in schools"*. [Roundtable Session] AERA Annual Meeting (Virtual Conference).
- Casey, E.M.** (2020, November 4 -7). *"The giant chicken means I'm almost at Grandma's!" Investigating Pre-Kindergartener's Interest and Ability During a C3 Social Studies Landmarks Inquiry* [Paper Presentation]. NAEYC Annual Conference (Conference Canceled).
- Casey, E.M. & Dewhirst, C.** (2020, November 4). *Play during social distancing: Learning about parents, kids, and play when stuck at home* [Paper Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference (Virtual Conference).
- Spivey, E. & Casey, E.M.** (2020, November 4). *Speed dating with books: Examining quick choices about diverse literature home* [Paper Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference (Virtual Conference).
- Casey, E.** (2020, June 9). *Embracing the community through C3 social studies inquiry in early childhood*. [Paper Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference (Virtual Conference).
- Casey, E.M.** (2020, Apr 17 - 21). *"The giant chicken means we're near grandma's!" Investigating pre-kindergarteners' interest/ability while using College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) geographic inquiry* [Poster Session]. AERA Annual Meeting San Francisco, CA <http://tinyurl.com/unt9s7o> (Conference Canceled).
- Casey, E.M.** (2019, November 20-21). *Can Pre-K do C3? Understanding young children's ability to conduct social studies inquiry* [Symposium Presentation]. CUFA Annual Conference, Austin, TX. Symposium proposal author and presenter.
- Casey, E.M. & E. Spivey.** (2019, November 20). *Cold feet? Principal feelings and beliefs about using tender topic storybooks* [Paper Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference, Nashville, TN.
- Brown, D. & Casey, E.M.** (2019, November 20). *How to write a differentiated lesson plan that meets the needs of all English Language Learners* [Paper Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference, Nashville, TN.
- Casey, E.M.** (2019, April 5-9). *Creating a continual cycle of justice-oriented citizens: Examining the use of inquiry learning in preK-16* [Symposium Presentation]. AERA Annual Meeting, Toronto, Canada. Symposium proposal author and presenter.
- Casey, E.M. & VanDehei, K.** (2019, April 5-9). *Racism, bullying, divorce, death: Pre-Teachers discuss presenting 'tender topics' to children to foster justice-oriented citizens* [Paper Presentation]. AERA Annual Meeting, Toronto, Canada.
- Casey, E.M. & DiCarlo, C.** (2019, April 5-9). *Examining teacher efficacy and politicized curriculums in Belize, Africa, and the Caribbean* [Symposium Presentation]. AERA Annual

Meeting, Toronto, Canada.

- Casey, E.M. & VanDehei, K.** (2018, November 30 - Dec. 2). *There's a book for that! Using bibliotherapy in social studies* [Poster Presentation]. NCSS annual conference, Chicago, IL.
- Casey, E.M. & Alborno Moraga, C.** (2018, November 14). *Burn-out In Belize: Reasons for leaving & loving global education teaching experiences* [Poster Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference, Washington D.C.
- Casey, E.M. & Eisworth, H.** (2018, November 14). *"That was a little weird.": Teacher candidates' reflections on discussing tender topics* [Paper Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference, Washington D.C.
- Casey, E.M., DiCarlo, C., & Sheldon, K.** (2018, October 17-18). *Growing democratic futures in the preschool garden: An inquiry project promotes social studies developmental goals and NCSS learning themes* [Paper Presentation]. Curriculum & Pedagogy Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Casey, E.M. & VanDehei, K.** (2018, October 17-18). *Death, divorce, bullying, and racism: Pre-Teacher Candidates reflect upon discussing "tender topics" in an inquiry project designed to shape more democratically responsible children* [Paper Presentation]. Curriculum & Pedagogy Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Casey, E.M. & DiCarlo, C.** (2018, April 13-17). *Early childhood education teachers' constructs of teacher quality in Belize.* [Paper Presentation]. AERA Annual Meeting, NY, NY.
- Casey, E.M. & DiCarlo, C.** (2017, November 17-19). *"Growing" social studies in the early childhood garden* [Poster Presentation]. NCSS Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA.
- Casey, E.M.** (2017, November 17). *Perfect pathway! Using Reggio Emilia curriculum in ECE social studies development* [Poster Presentation]. NCSS Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA.
- Casey, E.M.** (2017, November 15). *College, career, and civic readiness with young children: Using the NCSS framework to promote inquiry-based learning in early childhood* [Poster Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Casey, E.M., Eisworth, H., & Brown, D.** (2017, November 15). *Perspectives in poverty: Learning how to approach issues of poverty with young children* [Paper Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Casey, E.M., Eisworth, H., & Brown, D.** (2017, November 15). *Young children understanding issues of poverty: Transformational learning experiences for students in early elementary social studies.* [Paper Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Casey, E.M. & Tobin, K. J.** (2017, October 18-19). *Using arts-integration to shape responsible, caring democratic citizens* [Paper Presentation]. Curriculum & Pedagogy Conference, New Orleans, LA.

- Casey, E.M.** (2016, Dec.). *Which field experience design is best for social studies methods?* [Poster Presentation]. NCSS Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Casey, E.M. & Tobin, K.J.** (2016, Dec.). *Art-attack! Creatively conquering elementary civic learning with arts integration* [Paper Presentation]. NCSS Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Casey, E.M. & DiCarlo, C.** (2016, Nov.). *Growing a social studies garden - Using your state's crops to develop pre-school aged children's social knowledge of place* [Paper Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference, Los Angeles, CA.
- Casey, E.M. & DiCarlo, C.F.** (2016, Nov.). *Social studies in the garden! Teaching preschoolers about themselves and the community they live in through a social studies garden designed with early childhood and preschool social studies concepts and learning activities* [Paper Presentation]. NAEYC Annual Conference, Los Angeles, CA.
- Casey, E.M. & Eisworth, H.B.** (2016, Nov.). *Stimulating Transformation about Poverty through Multiple Perspectives*, [Paper Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference, Los Angeles, CA.
- Casey, E.M. & DiCarlo, C.F.** (2016, March). *Pedagogical inspirations revealed from analysis of play traditions in Belizean culture* [Poster Presentation]. Association for Childhood Education International, Costa Rica.
- Casey, E.M.** (2016, March). *Early childhood education in Belize: Using parents' perspectives to promote learning in a developing country* [Paper Presentation]. Association for Childhood Education International, Costa Rica.
- Hudson, M. & Casey, E.M.** (2016, March). *Assessing and planning for second language literacy success with refugee children* [Paper Presentation]. Association for Childhood Education International, Costa Rica.
- Sulentic-Dowell, M.M., Jolly, J. & Casey, E.M.** (2016, April). *The politics of education: Implications for global curriculum control and testing* [Paper Presentation]. World Education Research Association Annual Meeting, Washington D.C.
- Casey, E.M. & Brown, D.** (2015, Nov.) *Investigating teacher efficacy: A study of childhood education candidates' and mentor teachers' beliefs about their influence on student learning and behavior* [Paper Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference, Orlando, FL.
- Casey, E.M.** (2015, Nov.). *The parent perspective: Valuing the opinions of parents in early childhood education.* [Poster Presentation]. NAECTE Annual convention, Orlando, FL.
- Casey, E.M. & Brown, D.** (2014, Nov.) *Using art infused curriculum in early childhood social studies methods courses to be a reflective change agent* [Paper Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Casey, E.M.** (2013, Nov.). *Using culturally relevant pedagogy to build perspective in English as a second language teacher candidates* [Paper Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.

- Casey, E.M.** (2013, April). *Utilizing the arts to scaffold learning for English language learners and all students* [Paper Presentation]. Putting Literacy Center Stage Annual Conference, Little Rock, AR.
- Casey, E.M. & Brown, D.** (2012, Nov.). “*I’ve been teaching in Belize! What did I learn?*” -An analysis of early childhood pre-service teachers’ journal entries and experiences during a community service project in Belize [Poster Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Casey, E.M.** (2012, Nov.). “*Should we mention that Peter is an African American?*” Using explicit discussion with multicultural literature to improve white preschoolers’ racial attitudes [Paper Presentation]. NAEYC Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Casey, E.M.** (2011, Nov.). *Using “pops” to get students excited about social studies: How to teach young children about popular culture by using historical comics* [Paper Presentation]. NAEYC Annual Conference, Orlando, FL.
- Casey, E.M.** (2010, Nov.). “*Brown people drive old cars.*” —*The Construction of racial attitudes in young children and the role of educators and teacher educators in guiding development* [Paper Presentation]. NAECTE Annual Conference, Anaheim, CA.
- Casey, E.M.** (2009, April). “*Will you be my friend?*” - *Understanding racial attitudes in young children and encouraging diversity in the classroom* [Paper Presentation]. 3rd Annual Western Arkansas Childcare Conference, Fort Smith, AR.

GRANTS

- University of Oklahoma Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education Summer Research Grant.** (2026). *The Play Parent Perception Gap National Study*, \$4,300.
- Instructional Leadership & Academic Curriculum Department Global Engagement Fellowship,** Finland. (2025). \$2000.
- Department of Education.** (2022, 2023, 2024). OU Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program for Students’ Success Assistance. ALN 84.335A, \$2,999,016. Co-PI.
- University of North Florida, STEP into Learning Network Grant.** (2024). \$5,000. Awarded for the operation of the 2024 OU Summer Educator Play Lab. PI.
- University of Oklahoma Institute for Community and Society Transformation (ICAST) Grant Recipient.** (2023). Studying the Effects of Playing in the “OU Free Play Lab” on 1st-5th Graders’ Overall Well-Being, \$25,000. Lead PI.
- LET’S PLAY AMERICA Grant** from ChangeX.org. (2023-24). Play Day TX, \$5,000. Co-I.
- Instructional Leadership & Academic Curriculum Department Global Engagement Fellowship,** Italy. (2023). \$2000.

Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education Research and Scholarship Grant (2022). Summer Faculty Research Grant. Creating the *OU Summer Teacher Play Lab* to Foster Playful Teachers: The Effect of Teachers' Engagement and Immersion in Personal Play on Early Childhood Students' Well-being and School Achievement, \$6,000.

NAECTE Foundation Award for Research on Early Childhood Education: Established Career Research Award (2021), awarded for demonstration of meritorious leadership and professionalism in early childhood teacher education. Included a research grant of \$2000.

Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education Research and Scholarship Grant (2020), Title of research: Preparing Early Childhood Educators to Present Tender Topics through Children's

Literature and Learning from Their Experiences. Co-authored with graduate assistant Emily Spivey - \$1000.

RESEARCH/INSTRUCTIONAL PRESENTATIONS – Invited Keynote Speaker

Casey, E. M. (2026, June 13). *The Brain Benefits of Play*. Full-day professional development training for childcare providers across NE Oklahoma. NE Oklahoma ReCoup and ReGroup event, Pryor, OK. Invited Keynote Speaker.

Casey, E. M. (2026, June 6). *The Brain Benefits of Play*. Keynote presentation and two breakout sessions (delivered in Spanish). The Hispanic Conference 2026, Oklahoma City, OK. Invited Keynote Speaker. Approx. 150–180 participants.

Casey, E. M. (2026, May 30). *The Power of Imagination*. Invited Keynote Speaker at the Regional Reconnect event, South Central Child Care Resource & Referral, Ada, OK. Approx. 150 participants.

Casey, E. M. (2026, May 1). *The Brain Benefits of Play: Understanding Neuroplasticity Through Active Engagement*. Invited Keynote Speaker at the Thrive Summit, Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness, Norman, OK.

Casey, E. M. (2026, March 28). *The Brain Benefits of Play*. Invited Keynote Speaker to the University of Oklahoma Parent Partnership Advisory Committee (OUPPAC), Norman, OK.

Casey, E. M. (2026, January 17). *The Brain Benefits of Play*. Invited Keynote Speaker for NE Region Child Care Resource. Invited Speaker.

Casey, E. M. (2025, October 14). *Brain Boost Zone & PLAY IT! ACTIONS Framework*. Invited Keynote Speaker at half-day professional development training for faculty, The Catholic School of Saint Eugene, Oklahoma City, OK. Invited Speaker.

Casey, E.M. (2024, October 16). *Play! Why is it good for everyone?* Institute of Child Development, Norman, OK Parent Workshop. Invited keynote speaker.

Casey, E. M. (2024, September 14). *Play is essential, not optional: Legitimizing the necessity for*

play through neuroscience. Invited Keynote Speaker for the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Outdoor Learning Training.

Casey, E. M. (2024, Aug. 14) *Play is a Necessity*. Invited keynote presentation to 40 educators at Jackson Elementary School, Norman, OK.

Casey, E. M. (2024, Aug. 13) *Play is a Necessity*. Invited Presentation to 11 educators at The Institute of Child Development, Norman, OK.

Casey, E. M. & Spivey, E. (2023, Sept. 21). *Everyone Needs to Play!* Invited keynote presentation to educators at the Le Monde School in Norman, OK.

Casey, E. M. & Spivey, E. (2023, Feb. 27). *Hey Teacher! You need to Play Too!* Invited presentation to educators at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City, OK.

Casey, E.M. & Dewhirst, C. (2021). *Become a Play Warrior!* Key Conference presented to regional educators.

Casey, E.M. (2020, Sept. 23). *Play-Based Learning Interim Study Presentation*. Oklahoma State Legislature. Invited speaker to share the benefits of play on health and academic success with lawmakers for a future proposed bill.

Casey, E.M. & E. Spivey. (Feb. 2020) *They're too young to understand that! Discussing tender topics through literature in pre-k to third grade classrooms*. Key Conference presented to regional educators.

International and regional teacher trainings, Belize and Louisiana (2012–2018): literacy strategies, early literacy practices, and inquiry-based instruction workshops for regional and international teacher cohorts, Dangriga, Belize, and East Baton Rouge Parish, LA.

DIGITAL MEDIA

Casey, E.M. (2021). *Navigating CRT in Contentious Times*. Organizer of webinar with five national experts on critical race theory and its use or not use in classrooms. Attended by 115 online participants.

Casey, E.M. (2020, June 30). *How to Fight Racism with Books!* Zoom event. Bookish: An Indie Shop for Folks Who Read, Invited Guest Speaker.
<https://www.facebook.com/1668820766526388/videos/271150064338529>

TEACHING **INSTRUCTION**

Courses at OU (# of times taught; 2019-present)

- EDEC 3543 Teaching and Learning in Early Childhood Education (5)
- EDEC 3573 Science of Learning (1)

- EDEC 2203 Creative Expressions (7)
- EDEC 3573 Diverse Learners (7)
- EDEC 4513 Integrated Curriculum 1st- 3rd (1)
- EDEC 5573 Diverse Learners (6)
- ILAC 5143 Theory and Research in Education (1)
- ILAC 5233 Understanding Different Cultures (1)
- ILAC 6930 Advanced Research and Theory in Early Childhood Education (1)
- ILAC 6233 Implications of Diversity (1)
- ILAC 5970 Play, Creativity, and the Brain (4)

Courses at LSU (# of times taught: 2015-2019)

- EDCI 1001 Study Skills (1)
- EDCI 2030 Introduction to Education (1)
- EDCI 3217 Elementary Social Studies Methods (9)
- EDCI 3481 Early Childhood Social Studies Methods (2)
- EDCI 4900 English as a Second Language Methods (2)
- EDCI 7475 Research Project in K-12 Teaching (2)
- EDCI 7315 Multicultural Children's Literature (4)
- EDCI 7930 Inquiry-Based Learning Pre-K-12 (2)
- EDCI 7307 Social Studies Curriculum PreK-12th grade (1)
- EDCI 7311 Invitational Writing Institute (2)

Courses at UA (2010-2015)

Emergent & Developmental Literacy; Children's Literature; Language Development; Teaching a Second Language Methods; Multicultural Education; Supervision of Student Teaching; Measurement and Statistics in School; Early Childhood Education and Child Development; Acquiring a Second Language; Integrated Social Studies Methods; Study Abroad & Community Service Project in Belize; Masters of Arts in Teaching Student Internship; Graduate Level Action Research in Elementary Education Practicum.

GRADUATE COMMITTEES & ADVISING

The University of Oklahoma

Doctoral Advising:

Tabitha Christie, Doctoral Candidate Advisor (2020 – 2025, graduated)
Lindsay Insomya, Doctoral Candidate Advisor (2023 – present)
Huiying Zhang, Doctoral Candidate Advisor (2024 – present)
Emily Spivey, Doctoral Candidate Advisor (2019 – 2024, graduated)

Master's Advising:

Autumn Foster (Spring 2025- present)
Hayleigh Glasscock (Spring 2026 – present)
Kathryn Abbott (2024 – 2025 Fall) Michelli
Keith (2021 – 2023, graduated)
Huiying Zhang (2022- 2024, graduated)

Doctoral Committee:

Kitty Sylvester (2025- present)

Rachelle Johnson (2024 – present)

Wenqing Xue (2025- present)

Member, Shaylee Chester (2021- 2024)

Master's Comprehensive Exam Committee:

Nathan DeAngelis, Member (Graduated 2022)

Isabelle Van Gilder, Member (Graduated
2022) David Gray, Member (Graduated
2022) Melissa Yanni, Member, (Graduated
2021) Barhati Saha, Member, (Graduated
2021) Brooke Barnett, Member, Spring 2021
Elizabeth Buonoforte, Member, Fall 2020
Megan Rogers, Member, Fall 2020

Shane Spice, Member, Fall 2020 Nancy

Alexis, Member, Fall 2020 Frances
Simon, Member, Fall 2020 Jennifer
Nyguen, Member, Fall 2020 Diana
Busurto, Member, Fall 2020

Whitney Lawrence, Member, Spring 2020

Louisiana State University

Doctoral Level: 7 Doctoral Committees – advisor/member (completed, 2017–2018).

Master's Level: 10 Master's Committees – advisor/member (completed, 2016–2019).

University of Arkansas

2010-2015

4 Dissertation Committees – member (completed)

63 Master's Thesis Committees – member (completed) 22 Master's Thesis

Committee – chair (completed) over 100 Undergraduate Advisees

(over 5 years)

TEACHING CERTIFICATIONS

Texas – pre-K, Elementary Education, ESL, Bilingual Education

Louisiana – Nursery School, Elementary Education

SERVICE

Service to the Profession

President (Fall 2025 – present) - National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators Foundation, (Appointed Position).

State Chapter Affiliate Chairperson (Jan 2026- present) – International Play Association United States

Editorial Board Member (Fall 2025 – present)- *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*

Journal Reviewer (Fall 2021 – present)- EBSCO Publishing, *Pathways to Research*; *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*; *Journal of Global Education and Research*

Conference Proposal Reviewer (Fall 2024-present) National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators

Vice-President for Development (Fall 2023 – present) - National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators Foundation, (Appointed Position).

Treasurer (Fall 2019 – Fall 2023). National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators, (Elected Position - 2 terms).

On-line Conference Design Committee Member (Spring 2020 – Summer 2022). National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators (Appointed Position).

Chair (Spring 2021-Spring 2022). SIG Social Studies Research, American Educational Research Association (Elected Position).

Program Chair (Spring 2020 – Spring 2021). SIG Social Studies Research, American Educational Research Association (Elected Position).

Assistant Program Chair (Spring 2019 – Spring 2020). SIG Social Studies Research, American

Educational Research Association (Elected Position).

Chair (Spring 2018-Spring 2019). SIG School Effectiveness and Improvement, American Educational Research Association (Elected Position).

Secretary and Treasurer (Spring 2017 – Spring 2018). SIG School Effectiveness and Improvement, American Educational Research Association (Elected Position).

Awards Committee Co-Chair (Fall 2015-Fall 2019). National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators (Appointed Position, 3 terms).

Discussant (November 2018). College and University Faculty Assembly for the National Council for the Social Studies Annual Conference, Chicago, IL (Invited).

Chair (November 2018). College and University Faculty Assembly Graduate Student Forum for the National Council for the Social Studies Annual Conference, Chicago, IL (Invited).

Chair (October 2018). Curriculum & Pedagogy Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA (Invited).

Awards Committee Member for the award for Global Understanding (Summer 2018 – Summer 2021). National Council of the Social Studies (Invited).

Reviewer of Conference Proposal Submissions (Spring 2012-Spring 2018). National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators.

Conference Proposal Chair (Fall 2013-Fall 2015). National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators (Appointed Position).

Reviewer of Conference Proposal Submissions (Spring 2017 & 2016). National Council of the Social Studies (20 total/year).

Reviewer of Conference Proposals (2017- 2020). American Educational Research Association (20 - 30/year)

Peer Reviewer of Articles (2017- Present). *EBSCO Writing Project: Pathways to Research*; *International Journal of Social Studies*; *Pedagogies: An International Journal*; *Caribbean Educational Research Journal*; and the IGI Global Publication Service- *Learning Initiatives in Teacher Education Programs*.

Juror for Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Competition (Spring 2017 & 2016)

Oklahoma State Service

Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS) Assessment Creation – (Fall 2020): Collaboration for creation towards a rubric for the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS) for early childcare providers.

University of Oklahoma Service

Director, OU Summer Educator PlayShop (2022–present, offered four consecutive years). A 3–4 day national training on the neuroscience and pedagogy of play, open to educators nationwide (teachers, counselors, and administrators); typical participation of approximately 16 attendees per cohort.

ILAC Committee A Member, (2023–present)

ILAC Search Committee Chair RRT Assistant Professor ICD Director Position, 2024

ILAC Graduate Faculty Appointment Committee, Chair (2023-2025)

College (JRCoE) Expanded Advisory Council, (2023–present) College (JRCoE) Degree Completion Task Force, (2023–present)

ILAC Department Awards Committee Member and Chair, 2020-2023

College (JRCoE) Search Committee Member, Associate Dean for Research (2023) **ILAC**

Department Faculty Position Search Committee Member, Literacy Ed (2022-23)

ILAC Department Faculty Position Search Committee Member, English Ed (2021-

22) **Institute of Child Development (ICD) Renovation team member** (2021-22)

Playdagogy Play Club organizer (3 JRCoE Play events held in fall 2022)

JRCoE College Technology Committee Member (Fall 2020 – Fall 2023)

Presenter (January 2020) JRCoE Board of Advocates Meeting

Department Faculty Position Search Committee Member, World Languages Ed (2019 – 20)

Louisiana State University Service

Loving Louisiana & Literacy Program Supervisor (2017-2018) Managed EDCI 3127 Social Studies in Elementary Education students in service-learning project with the Boys & Girls Club of Baton Rouge.

Co-creator of elementary Social Studies CAEP assessment rubric (2017)

LSU Writing Project Advisory Board Member (2015-2019)

School of Education Dispositions Committee Member, (2016-2017)

University of Arkansas Service

Faculty Senator, College of Education and Health Professions (2014–2015).

Committee service: NCATE Assessment Team, Scholarship Committee, and Steering Board (University of Arkansas Nursery School) – College of Education and Health Professions (2010–2015).

Faculty Advisor, Kappa Delta Pi, Alpha Beta Chapter (2011–2015); Educational Advisory Board Member, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art (2011–2015).

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Educational Research Association, 2016 - Present

National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009 - Present

National Association for Early Childhood Teacher Educators, 2009 –

Present National Council for the Social Studies, 2015 – 2019
National Council for the Social Studies - College and University Faculty Assembly 2018 – 2019
US Play Coalition – 2025 - present
International Play Association - 2025 - present

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT for Personal Development

HarvardX Fundamentals of Neuroscience Parts (2025-2026)

Learning & The Brain Neuroscience for Optimal Learning Training (July 2025), Santa Barbara, CA.

Finland Council for Creative Education Educator Training (September 2025) Helsinki, Finland.

Inquiry Learning Model Summer Institute, (July 2018), National Council for the Social Studies, Washington, DC.

Population Education Institute, (July 2018), Leadership Workshop, NY, NY.

Reggio Emilia Learning Institute, (March 2017), Early Childhood Training, Reggio Emilia, Italy

Louisiana State University, (Fall 2017), Service Learning Scholar.

Louisiana State University, (Spring 2017), Communication Across the Curriculum Participant.

University of Arkansas Wally Cordes Teaching and Faculty Support Center Faculty
Enrichment Series Participant (Spring 2012)

LANGUAGES SPOKEN

English – native language

Spanish – speak, read, and write with near fluent proficiency.