

Dear Early Childhood Students,

You've probably noticed that Olympic College's Early Childhood Education courses are changing! Some courses have new course numbers, new titles and even some classes have changed credits. This Frequently Asked Questions handout will give you all the information about why the changes, and what to expect as you continue through the program.

As always, if you have questions, please ask Gayle, Kara, Erin, Vickie, Holly, Mike or any of our adjunct faculty.

**Q: Why the changes?**

A: The entire state of Washington has adopted a set of "common numbered courses" in early childhood programs. These are classes that have the same number, titles, credits and outcomes at every community college throughout the state. If you move or transfer, the classes will go with you and will be the same college to college.

**Q: What are all these new certificates?**

A: As a result of successfully obtaining the Race to the Top federal grant, the Department of Early Learning has developed a career lattice that places early childhood students on the lattice based on their educational achievements. Olympic College offers the Initial Certificate, five Certificates of Specialization, The State Credential and the ATA degree. The new certificates align with steps on the career lattice. You can see a copy of the career lattice here: [http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/PD/docs/Career\\_lattice.pdf](http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/PD/docs/Career_lattice.pdf)

**Q: Should I apply for the certificates as I earn them?**

A: YES! Each time you earn a certificate, apply for the certificate and then log on to MERIT to record your accomplishments. DEL is offering monetary incentives each time you move up a step in the career lattice! Get your piece of the pie! The chart on the back shows the certificates Olympic College offers.

**Q: What happens to my old classes on my transcript?**

A: The old numbers and titles will remain on your transcript, but rest assured the process for achieving certificates and degrees will be a smooth one—adaptions will be made seamlessly.

**Q: What happens if I am in the middle of getting my degree?**

A: Through careful advising, we will work out of the catalog that applies best with the courses you have taken, and adaptions can be made once you are ready to apply for graduation.

**Q: What else do I need to do?**

A: The first thing every early childhood education student needs to do is get a STARS (State Training and Registry) number. You can do this by logging onto the DEL website at [www.del.wa.gov](http://www.del.wa.gov) MERIT is the data base that stores your STARS numbers as well as your educational achievements. If you need help logging on, please contact Vickie at [vmackenzie@olympic.edu](mailto:vmackenzie@olympic.edu) or 475-7625.