

UAGC Launches Virtual Simulation Experiences to Prepare Future Early Childhood Educators

CHANDLER, AZ, UNITED STATES, March 12, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The University of Arizona Global Campus \(UAGC\)](#) launched a new set of virtual observation modules and practice-based learning experiences designed to strengthen workforce readiness for students pursuing careers in early childhood education.

Developed through a collaborative effort between the [UAGC Early Childhood Education Center](#), [UAGC Library Services](#), UAGC Learning Services, and the University Center for Assessment, Teaching and Technology (UCATT), the initiative introduces students to realistic classroom and professional scenarios through interactive virtual modules.

"Our team includes Emmy award winning multimedia experts, Digital Maker Spaces loaded with multimedia tools and checkout gear, professional recording spaces, and more," said Georgia Davis, director of Multimedia and Creative Initiatives for UCATT at the University of Arizona. "We combine our expertise in multimedia production with the science of teaching and learning to help instructors create multimedia content and course activities that are compelling and effective."

The project was supported through the Online Student Success Initiative Fund and reflects a commitment to expanding innovative teaching and learning approaches in online education.

The modules allow students to observe authentic early childhood education environments, analyze educator practices, and participate in simulated professional experiences that mirror the



Stephanie Heald, UAGC faculty and department head of the UAGC Early Childhood Education Program

decision-making and collaboration required in real educational settings. Students then reflect on their observations through discussions, journals, and guided coursework activities.

“This project was designed to bridge the gap between theory and practice in online early childhood education,” said Stephanie Heald, UAGC faculty and department head of the UAGC Early Childhood Education Program. “By creating opportunities for students to observe and interact with realistic scenarios, we are helping future educators build the confidence and professional judgment needed to support young learners and collaborate effectively with families and colleagues.”

The virtual modules align with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) professional standards and support UAGC program learning outcomes related to professional competence, ethical practice, collaboration, and applied skill development.

Through the modules, students engage with structured learning experiences such as play-based learning observations, ongoing assessment scenarios, and family collaboration simulations. These activities provide students with opportunities to evaluate classroom interactions, analyze developmental strategies, and practice professional decision-making within safe, guided learning environments.

“Early childhood educators must be prepared to navigate complex classroom dynamics and meaningful partnerships with families,” said Michelle Otstot, assistant professor of Early Childhood Education at UAGC. “These virtual practice experiences allow students to engage with those realities before entering the workforce, giving them a deeper understanding of developmentally appropriate practice and inclusive teaching.”

The initiative reflects a growing emphasis across higher education on experiential and simulation-based learning, particularly in fully online programs where access to practice-based



Michelle Otstot, assistant professor of Early Childhood Education at UAGC



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
GLOBAL CAMPUS



This project was designed to bridge the gap between theory and practice in online early childhood education.”

*Stephanie Heald, UAGC
faculty member and
department head*

experiences can be limited. By integrating instructional design, research support, and student success resources, the collaboration aims to strengthen the quality and accessibility of early childhood educator preparation.

The new modules are now integrated into early childhood education coursework and will support students as they develop the skills needed to succeed in early learning environments and contribute to the broader education workforce.

###

The University of Arizona Global Campus is proud to offer over 50 associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs with accelerated online classes designed to help you gain the skills you need. At UAGC, you will be part of the University of Arizona community of students and alumni who support each other from game day to graduation day and beyond. For more information about UAGC, visit [UAGC.edu](https://uagc.edu).

Brian M. Mullen

The University of Arizona Global Campus

+1 480-916-0710

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube](#)

[X](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/898934185>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.