



Childhood Education and Family Studies

Field Experience and Practicum Manual

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Southwestern Oregon Community College is an Equal Opportunity Educator and Employer.

Welcome to the NAEYC Accredited Childhood Education & Family Studies Program!

The following field experience manual has been developed to assist teacher candidates in understanding the purpose, expectations, and requirements associated with field experience placements at Southwestern Oregon Community College.

It is our hope that by providing you this comprehensive resource, field experiences at every level will go more smoothly and will result in the teacher candidate having more opportunities to develop his/her skill in working with young children. It is also hoped that by presenting a comprehensive view of the many varied field experiences a teacher candidate has, individuals working with candidates at a later stage in their field experiences will better understand and build upon previous opportunities.

Field experiences for Southwestern Oregon Community College’s Childhood Education and Family Studies (CE&FS) certificate and degree programs consist of:

Preschool Practicum Courses: ECE 163, ECE 209, ECE 102, ECE 261	Infant Toddler Practicum Courses: ECE 161, ECE 162, ECE 262		Field experience in Education: ED 180/280 HV ED 180/280 P/K/I
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The Childhood Education and Family Studies faculty at Southwestern would like to welcome you to your upcoming field experience and wish you the best in the coming quarter.

Sincerely,

Childhood Education and Family Studies (CE&FS) Staff

Faculty and Administration

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Introduction

The field of Early Childhood Education is concerned with the development and learning of children from birth through age eight. This program focuses on early children's education through a theoretical orientation, which places early childhood education within broader social, historical, political, and cultural contexts. Coursework at Southwestern provides a context for teacher candidates to critically examine early education and childcare as well as a practical opportunity for teacher candidates to experience this learning in a real school setting. Themes of inclusion, bilingual and multicultural education and care, critical thinking, and reflective teaching are infused throughout the Early Childhood coursework. Early Childhood Education is an exciting and dynamic field in which standards for teachers are being raised and career opportunities are constantly developing.

The Southwestern CE FS program offers a range of coursework encompassing infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and primary-aged children. Through field placements at Early Head Start, Educare Laboratory School, local elementary schools, community placements and teacher candidate teaching, candidates develop competence in the use of culturally relevant and developmentally appropriate practices.

Field Experiences are aligned with NAEYC Standard #7:

Students engage in field experiences and clinical practice to develop the knowledge, skills and professional dispositions necessary to promote the development and learning of young children in a variety of early childhood settings and with multiple age groups.

Key elements of Outcome 7

7a. Observe and practice in at least two of the three early childhood age groups (birth – age 3, 3-5, 5-8).

7b. Observe and practice in at least two of the three main types of early education settings (primary school grades, childcare centers and homes, ECEAP/Head Start programs).

Childhood Education and Family Studies at SWOCC - Guiding Principles & Goals

Principles:

Main themes within the program include understanding children as the leading role of their own learning, supporting families in their roles with young children, respecting diversity, and addressing the needs of children with diverse abilities in inclusive settings

Themes of inclusion, bilingual and multicultural education and care, critical thinking, and reflective teaching are infused throughout the Early Childhood coursework.

Coursework and field experiences, at every level, recognize the social, historical, political, and cultural contexts that have impacted the profession.

Goals:

To provide opportunities for teacher candidate-child, teacher candidate-classroom teacher, teacher candidate-content and teacher candidate-faculty interaction supporting teacher's professional growth and development.

To provide model early care and education programs and staff for teacher candidates to develop effective knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Graduates of the Southwestern Childhood Education & Family Studies Program will possess broad general education and content area knowledge, remain effective and reflective practitioners and problem solvers, apply innovative learning technologies and participate in opportunities for professional growth. Through its efforts, the CE&FS Program seeks to empower its graduates by enabling them to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will allow them to excel in their careers or further educational goals.

Southwestern Conceptual Framework and Application of Theory in Practicum Courses

"The Big Ideas"

Our students' confidence is built through their success with the rigor of the course via the assignments and activities requiring collaborating, creating, presenting, writing, and testing. We encourage individuals to engage in ongoing self-reflection and exploration of their strengths and challenges for delivering the critical, complex services needed by young children beginning during the pre-service phase of their career. We are a "Community of Learners" in which we all (including children, their families, staff, and college students) learn and grow together.

There are a variety of different program designs addressing the education and care of young children across a rather wide continuum of quality. The SWOCC CE FS program emphasizes developmental theories as the basis for practices and curriculum.

There is a professional organization (NAEYC) that provides guidelines, books, a journal, and professional development opportunities for individuals committed to offering the highest quality programs for young children. Our program aligns with, and is accredited by, and supports the principles, standards, ethics, and teachings of NAEYC.

The acknowledgement / recognition that the domains of development of the whole child are, or should be, addressed in their learning processes dates back many centuries and was central in the thinking of several well-known and respected educational philosophers.

Play is the natural vehicle through which young children learn and is at the heart of developmentally appropriate educational practice. The provision of ample time for child-directed free play in the daily schedule is critically important to the healthy development of the whole child. Teacher-directed, structured learning experiences are set-up using effective transitions, brief, carefully constructed and

skillfully executed in order to facilitate learning for young children. The outcome for children is an equal time allotment for free play activities combined with an equal time for directed experiences within the day.

Theorists have identified and studied patterns in each domain of development that educators of young children understand and know how to support through rich, sensory curricular applications. Concrete, hands on experiences are engaged by children in order for them to construct an understanding of abstract, symbolic representations of their world (words, letters, numbers and the like). Children build their knowledge of the world around themselves through active and sensory experiences that are carefully planned through curriculum.

Children move through the stages of development individually at their own pace based on biological maturation, experience in their environments, and do not receive external pressure to “hurry. Readiness is a major concept and theme in the program. Addressing an individual child’s special need may be an exception, as waiting for readiness may not provide the needed support. Respect for children and the protection of childhood are central themes of the program and are demonstrated within each domain of development studied in the course. These are perhaps most clearly demonstrated as we refrain from hurrying children in the developmental domains. Again, intervention for special needs may be the exception.

We value childhood, and do not regard it as a time to prepare children for the future or next stage; but as a time to enjoy in and of itself. Children are not miniature adults, they are real people now.

Cognitively respect is shown as we support children’s major developmental task of discovering the world around themselves through exploration, investigation, and problem solving; and we understand that each individual must construct conceptual understanding of the operations of the world for himself / herself.

We offer learning opportunities through which the child may experience both successes and challenges in an appropriately resourced, child-centered environment. We accomplish this through a rich, well-considered and researched curriculum.

Physically respect is shown as we create child-sized environments, learning centers and a variety of experiences that allow large motor and small muscle movement and encourage children to actively engage the indoor and outdoor learning environments.

It is also shown through provision of healthy, nutritious foods and safe surroundings. Our habit of hunkering and conversing with children eye-to-eye is a physical manifestation of our deep respect for the child.

Based on the research regarding brain development in infants and young children, we recognize that movement and sensory interaction with the environment throughout the day is a critical need for young children and facilitates both physical and cognitive development. Therefore, curriculum ideas are strongly related to the processes of brain development and the consequent critical impact on the development of the whole person.

Emotionally respect is shown as we build trust with children by allowing them to choose and initiate action in and on the environment, and at the same time being present to provide opportunities to extend and challenge the child’s interest and abilities.

We understand the need for children to feel lovable, capable, and worthwhile and use the skill of encouragement instead of praise to deliver those messages. We build children's security when they overtly see our partnership with, respect for, and inclusion of their parents or guardians in the program.

Socially respect is shown with positive guidance strategies, modeling of empathy/affirmation of feelings, and the provision of an environment that encourages social play and honors individual differences in the ability to socialize.

Learning centers and equipment are designed to encourage collaboration and cooperation as children work together; and adults practice patience with children who are just beginning to learn social skills and self-regulation. Adults carefully explain that we all play together at our school when children's words or actions indicate bias-based exclusion such as, "You can't play in the block area because you are a girl," or, "No boys allowed in the house."

Respect is also shown as multicultural and linguistic diversity are integrated across all disciplines within the curriculum and families are encouraged to share their culture and language within the classroom. Our program is an inclusive anti-bias program committed to promoting the acceptance and appreciation of human diversity. We welcome children and families of all racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious backgrounds and family compositions. We strive to reflect this respect for diversity in our educational programs and services, our policies and practices, and our interactions with families and the community.

Mission: Our Family Center provides young children with a nurturing, supportive environment that fosters their love of learning and their development as happy, healthy, responsible human beings who can achieve their fullest potential in society.

Guided by current research and sound educational practices from the fields of child development and family studies, we are committed to providing a resource for the people of Coos County that strengthens child, parent, and community well-being.

Program Goals:

1. To provide a model facility which promotes education, training, and support for children, families, staff, and students.
2. To view the family as the child's primary nurturer, educator and caretaker.
3. To work with families as a team and share expertise in the healthy development of the child.
4. To employ only qualified, trained educators knowledgeable in the field of child development, early childhood education and family studies.
5. To provide resources for children, families, staff, and the community.
6. To provide a model teacher training program which emphasizes excellence in education.
7. To work with partners and clients of the Newmark Center and Southwestern Oregon Community College to assist in providing needed support for parents to facilitate their self-sufficiency and independence.

NONDISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT

Southwestern Oregon Community College seeks to develop degree credit programs, courses, community service offerings, provides open admission, counseling, placement services for all persons regardless of religion, sex, national origin, physical or mental disabilities, age, or veteran status.

AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT

If you need course adaptations or accommodation because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with your instructors, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with your instructor as soon as possible.

CODE OF ETHICS

The Childhood Education and Family Studies Program follows and adheres to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct. These ethics may be accessed [here](#) or online at <http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSETH05.pdf>

Forms Required Prior to Field Experience Placement

Students may participate in field experience when the following forms have been completed and returned to the field experience instructor. These forms are available in Appendix 2 of this manual.

These forms required for ALL students:

<p>1. Emergency Information Form Student will complete form listing family and doctor that should be contacted if an emergency arises at a site</p>	
<p>2. Background Check link to online process: https://oregonearlylearning.com/providers-educators/providers-educatorscbr/#apply1 Students will also be required to complete criminal records checks if they are 18 or older. Students completing field experiences in other states must complete that states' background check requirements. Note: If you are completing your practicum at the Family Center here is the information necessary for completing the background check form SECTION 4A: Facility Name: Southwestern Community Partnership Center Physical Address: 1988 Newmark Avenue, Coos Bay, OR 97420 OCC License or ID#: CC000812 Phone Number: 541-888-7257</p>	
<p>3. CIS Health Immunization Form Students are required to complete an immunization form, and may be required to submit a current health form according to licensing regulations.</p>	
<p>4. Statement of Agreement for the Field Experience Manual</p>	
<p>5. Release of Information Form The form allows the course instructor to share information about the teacher candidate with the Mentor Teacher. (requires mentor teacher signature)</p>	
<p>6. Statement of Confidentiality (requires mentor teacher signature)</p>	
<p>7. Essential Functions of the Field Signed</p>	
<p>8. SWOCC Field Experience – Child Portfolio Parent Permission Form (requires parent signatures)</p>	
<p>9. Photography and Video Release Form (requires parent signatures)</p>	
<p>10. Field Experience Time Log (requires mentor teacher initials/turn in at end of term)</p>	
<p>11. Photocopy of your Food Handlers Card - if you do not have a Food Handlers card email Natalie.lo@socc.edu for information on how to obtain one.</p>	

These additional forms are required for all students NOT placed at the Family Center:

<p>1. Application for Placement Form Educare Laboratory School is automatically accepted for placement, but the field experience course instructor must approve any other site. Early Head Start is the designated site for infant/toddler practicums if the student is in the Coos Bay area.</p>	
<p>2. Mentor Teacher Application Form (requires mentor teacher signature)</p>	

For Placement with South Coast Head Start:

Student must provide copies of the following documents:

- Current Central Background Registry standing letter
- Food handlers card
- Immunization Record (must include DTaP for infant/toddler placement)
- Emergency contact information

There will be an orientation that goes over the following topics: (usually takes 1.5-2 hours)

- Policies & procedures for South Cost Head Start (manual to be given to student for reference)
- Blood-borne pathogens/universal precautions
- Confidentiality
- Emergency procedures
- Building Orientation

During orientation, we will conduct a Placement Interview to determine needs & best fit for student, discussing the following items:

- Students Schedule
- What they would like to learn / accomplish in their time with us
- Develop a Monthly Work Plan to assist with their goals, to be revisited monthly with supervising staff member to assess progress & make any necessary adjustments
- Fill out any necessary program paperwork for placement

Information for all Practicum Students and Student Teachers

Professional Expectations

Background Check

Each field experience teacher candidate is expected to show proof of a background check coordinated through the Oregon Childcare Division. Your instructor will provide you with information on this process. Proof of this background check is to be displayed at all times in the back of your field experience lanyard if you work at the Educare site or Early Head Start in Coos Bay. It must be renewed if you take more than two years' to complete your program.

Ethics-Familiarize yourself with the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct

All early childhood professionals are expected to demonstrate ethical practice consistent with this code. If you have questions regarding the Code of Ethical Conduct, your course instructor may be able to provide assistance. The Code of Ethical Conduct can be downloaded from <http://208.118.177.216/about/positions/pdf/PSETH05.pdf> It is also available [here as a hyperlink](#).

Core values of the Code of Ethical Conduct

Standards of ethical behavior in early childhood care and education are based on commitment to the following core values that are deeply rooted in the history of the field of early childhood care and education. We have made a commitment to:

- Appreciate childhood as a unique and valuable stage of the human life cycle
- Base our work on knowledge of how children develop and learn
- Appreciate and support the bond between the child and family
- Recognize that children are best understood and supported in the context of family, culture,* community, and society
- Respect the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each individual (child, family member, and colleague)
- Respect diversity in children, families, and colleagues
- Recognize that children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust and respect

National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2005). Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment: A position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Retrieved from: <http://208.118.177.216/about/positions/pdf/PSETH05.pdf>

Arrival and Self-Presentation

Before you arrive - Understand your instructor's field experience expectations and write your 'Dear Teacher Letter.' This letter should be written to the classroom you are being placed in and can be addressed to the individual teachers or classroom (i.e. Dear Ms. Puckett, or, Dear Bobcat Teachers). The letter should introduce yourself briefly, provide your personal contact information and explain any course assignments that you will be working towards while in their classroom. You should have this letter written before your first day of field experience and delivered to the teachers on the day of your orientation. If you do not attend an orientation, you should deliver the letter at least one day in advance of starting your field experience. A sample letter is available in the appendix.

Dress & Personal Items - As an early childhood professional, your dress is expected to reflect the same professional standard that your work does. Depending on the setting you will be working in, different expectations may exist. Please consider these expectations and discuss with your mentor teacher the most appropriate way to reflect them in your dress.

- All Southwestern field experience teacher candidates at Educare and Coos Bay Early Head Start are expected to wear an apron and nametag.
- Teaching is an active profession. Your shoes, clothes, and jewelry must not inhibit you from moving and interacting with the children or expose views that may be deemed inappropriate by the children/families you serve. Please wear sturdy, close-toed shoes that will allow you to move quickly should the need arise. Sandals, flip-flops, and bare feet are prohibited. Teaching is a profession; you are expected to dress as a professional in the field.
- Teaching requires close contact between adults and/or children. Arriving to your field placement emitting a strong/distinct smell is unprofessional and can be uncomfortable/unhealthy for children/adults with respiratory sensitivities. Be sure you, your clothes, and your belongings do not give off strong/ distinct smells (i.e. smoke, body odor, perfume). Be respectful of any scent allergies children or workers at your placement site may have. The Family Center is a "No-Scent" facility.
- **Technology** - Technology should be integrated into your teaching to enhance it but it should not distract you from your teaching responsibilities. Please silence your cell phone/any other communication device and refrain from text messaging. Cell phones/communication devices should only be used for taking pictures in the practicum environment.
- **Illness** – If you are unable to attend your regularly scheduled practicum hours, it is your responsibility to telephone and email your supervising teacher immediately. If you are ill, do **NOT** come to work! Stay home and get healthy.
- If you are unable to adhere to any of the guidelines in this manual, have a conversation with your supervising teacher immediately. Student teachers will be reminded if they are not adhering to these guidelines.

Attitude - Each person you meet will be left with a lasting impression of you as a professional. Be sure the impression you leave is a positive one in which you are seen as a dedicated, responsible and caring early childhood professional. Keep in mind, field placements often last the entire quarter. Just because you have a passing evaluation at mid-term, does not mean you can become lax in professional preparation, delivery, and initiative.

Attendance & Documentation - Show your professional commitment to teaching by being punctual for each day in your field experience. You are expected to arrive before the start of your assigned experience and stay through the duration of the placement. Taking breaks during field placement are only permitted during times when the mentor teacher is taking a break (unless medically documented as necessary). If you are going to be late to your scheduled field experience, contact the school/program prior to the scheduled arrival time and advise them of your late arrival. If you are ill and need to be absent for a scheduled visit, contact the school/program/classroom and advise them of this. It is your responsibility to contact your supervisor or cooperating / mentor teacher and ensure he/she is also aware of your absence/tardiness. Please remember, your absence is your responsibility and should not cause inconvenience or hardship for the mentor teacher or course instructor. Please be patient and flexible in arranging to make-up missed hours.

It is your responsibility to obtain any required documentation of your attendance using the course form for this purpose (located in appendix 2) at the field experience when you are there. If your instructor requires a signature by the cooperating/mentor teacher, when he or she is not busy, ask for their signature. If you forget, it is both unprofessional and inconvenient for the teacher to go back later to obtain that documentation. The classroom sign-in sheet provides the program documentation of visitors, and it is not intended to be used as documentation of your attendance. Do not remove your time log from your practicum site – if it gets lost, it cannot be re-written.

Parking - Each field placement will have specific parking needs and policies. Please learn about those policies before you arrive at your placement.

Arrival - Upon arrival at the classroom, please enter the classroom, carefully looking for children or adults who may be behind the door. If the door is locked, knock. Introduce yourself and ask where to sign-in. If you have not already done so, provide your 'Dear Teacher Letter' and, briefly share with the teacher/staff member what you will be doing that day. Wash your hands thoroughly before beginning your duties. Join in the flow of the classroom, developing your relationship with the children, and begin your assigned work.

Interactions with Children, Families and Colleagues

While in the classroom, please remember you are there to enhance the experience of the children and learn while doing it. Should a teacher make a request of you, you are expected to comply with their request. It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure the safety of all children enrolled in the program, as well as maintain compliance with program/school requirements. What may appear an 'odd' request may have an understandable/appropriate rationale behind it. If you have any questions or concerns about a request that you do not understand or deem unreasonable, please discuss it privately with that teacher after the session ends or at a scheduled meeting. It is never appropriate to engage in a tension-filled discussion when children are present. Doing so may result in immediate and ongoing removal from field experiences. Also, if the teacher communicates to you that it is not possible for you to complete the tasks assigned by your instructor, please contact your course instructor. It is important that if you have questions about your field experience, you have the opportunity to discuss them with the classroom staff. Please hold any questions for the teacher until s/he is free. If you are unable to ask while you are there, consider e-mailing the teacher or leaving a note.

Confidentiality - In completing assignments for your field placement, ensure the confidentiality of all children, families, teachers and individuals you interact with. All documentation and reporting of events should maintain anonymity (i.e. Child X walked from the block area to the dramatic play area. Child X said ‘can I play’ to child Y. Child Y said “no.” Teacher 2 said, “Remember our rule...”). Discussion of children, families, teachers, etc. should only occur with the staff of the program, or in your college classroom, nowhere else. If your course requires that you obtain artifacts (pictures, video, work samples, access to the child’s enrollment file) from the classroom, be sure you have written permission from the individuals involved to do so. It is your responsibility to work with your mentor teacher and obtain that permission; failure to respect confidentiality policies creates irreversible consequences for SWOCC, the program, your placement in the program, and the individuals involved. As such, the consequences are significant and may include removal from the CE FS program.

The only exception to this policy occurs when there is a reason to believe that a child has disclosed child abuse or neglect. Any incident that leads you to believe that a child is being abused or neglected should be shared with the supervising teacher as soon as possible. If a report needs to be made to Child Protective Services it must be done within 24 hours to ensure safety for the child. All requirements for reporting Child Abuse and Neglect are covered in the CE FS required class ECE 170.

Food Experiences - During your field experience, food and drinks may be served. Please look to the cooperating/mentor/classroom teacher for guidance on how you should participate. In some classrooms, you will be encouraged to sit and visit with the children as they eat. In others, you will be invited to, also, enjoy some of the snack foods. Please do not eat or drink the snack foods unless you are invited to do so by the teachers. Each program has specific rules and availability regarding food. When in doubt, ask! Also, please do not bring food from home unless you have permission from the teacher to do so. Some children may have food allergies and outside food may compromise their safety.

If you see something that is concerning or unsafe, gain a staff member’s attention immediately. If, time does not allow for that, directly intervene and protect the children’s safety until a staff member can arrive. **If you observe an adult inappropriately interacting with children, immediately inform your mentor teacher or another staff member.**

Responsibilities - Field experience teacher candidates are never to be left alone (out of sight of a staff member) with children. This includes taking children back and forth from the playground into a classroom where no teacher is present; taking children to the bathroom; etc. If a teacher asks you to be in a situation where you would be alone with a child, inform her/him that you are not permitted to be alone with children. This rule exists for your safety. Student Teaching is the only field experience when you are permitted to be the sole supervisor of children.

Leaving your field experience - When it is time for you to leave your field experience, be sure you have cleaned up any areas you worked in. If appropriate, say good-bye to the children; however, always be sure the teacher is aware you are leaving. Sign-out and ensure that after you leave the exit door is securely closed. Please close all outdoor gates as you exit. Remember to complete your sign out log.

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## **What to Do When You Have a Problem or Concern**

### **Problem Solving Plan - A problem is a challenge to be addressed!**

Classrooms are busy places where adults work together closely in flexible and sometimes chaotic environments. This requires a good deal of communication and understanding - You may notice something that does not seem quite right to you, you do not quite understand the reason for, or simply does not work for you. **When you have a concern, it is important that you address it for your own understanding, and for the benefit of the teachers, you are working with.** Your instructor will help you implement this plan if you are not sure what to do.

*Consider who is involved in the area of concern that you will first address the issue with. Who is responsible for planning for the area or situation? Who is causing you to be concerned?*

**1. Decide when and where would be a good time and place to address the issue.**

Consider a time and place where the person you choose to talk with is not involved with children, surrounded by parents and other staff members, involved in an activity requiring their full attention, etc.

**2. Let the person know that you would like to talk with them. Suggest your idea for time and place. Decide if meet time will work for both parties.**

Ex. "I'd like to speak with you about snack. Can we talk about it after rest today?"

**3. When you meet – Use "I" statements to present your view, or concerns.**

I am having a problem with snack in the morning. I feel that we really need to have a teacher sitting with the children during snack so I can take care of refilling pitchers, etc.

**4. Draw in anyone else needed to thoroughly address the issue - Lead Teacher, Assistant Teachers....**

**5. Develop a "next step" plan together - Let's try this ... tomorrow...**

**6. Implement your plan, including passing on any information needed to other staff people. *If the plan affects the center or the program operations within the center, please include the director in the process.***

**7. Evaluate your plan after implementation.**

How did it work? Did the plan address the issue? Is the concern taken care of? Is the new system working well?

## **What does a Practicum Course require of me in an early childhood classroom?**

Merriam Webster Dictionary Definition: prac-ti-cum *noun* \ 'prak-ti-kəm \

: A course of study for teachers, doctors, nurses, etc., that involves actually working in the area of study and using the knowledge and skills that have been learned in a school

You are to work in an early childhood classroom during practicum. Most students do this on a volunteer basis, but if you are already working in an accredited site or Head Start, you may be able to use your workplace as your practicum site. The course instructor decides this on a case-by-case basis. If you live in the Coos Bay Area, you will use Educare, the on-campus program. For Infant / toddler practicum courses, if you live in the Coos Bay Area, you will use Early Head Start as your practicum site.

### **What kind of work will I do?**

Although you are never to be solely in charge of students, you are to do what you see the other teachers in the classroom doing. Please do not be shy to ask what they would like you to do.

If all you are being asked to do is clean up tasks like cleaning tables, please contact your instructor.... This is not what practicum is meant for.

### **Some Tasks I Should Be Doing**

- You will play with children, facilitating their play to scaffold learning... Apply principles and philosophy of course work regarding child development, theory and developmentally appropriate practice.
- Problem-solve when children have conflicts... Using Classroom Management coursework, begin to employ a wide array of management and communication strategies to positively influence children's learning and development.
- Supervise children (but never alone)
- Take the initiative to help and attend to any need the teacher or students may have. Ask the teacher for guidance in what is expected in this area
- Read to students; Talk with students... encouraging literacy skills.
- Observe, listen, and effectively use feedback from mentor teacher and university supervisor
- Respect confidentiality at all times
- Starting with ECE 102, you will begin to design, implement, and evaluate lesson plans that promote positive learning and development for all children. Align curriculum activities to appropriate Head Start Outcomes.
- In an organized and timely manner, meet all requirements and assignment deadlines of the practicum syllabus
- Demonstrate responsibility and initiative for communicating practicum requirements to the mentor teacher.

### **Early in the first week, we request that the student and mentor teacher find an opportunity to:**

- Orient the student to the policies and regulations of the program/building.
- Introduce the student to the children and other staff members.
- Discuss general ideas for practicum assignments listed in syllabus. (Bring your syllabus and copies of your assignment instructions to the meeting)
- Get to know each other.
- Mentors are encouraged to offer the practicum student classroom responsibilities that will help him/her establish him/her as one of the classroom teachers.

***One Reminder: There must be another teacher (or staff member) in the classroom with the student at all times.***

## **GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE/LAB EXPERIENCES**

(Adapted from “Student Teaching: Early Childhood Practicum Guide”)

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The following suggestions are offered to help you maximize your personal growth during field experiences. Taking the time to read the following information and acting on the suggestions will help you develop your knowledge and skill in working with young children, as well as, promote positive working relationships with the classroom teachers.

1. Examine your attitude and decide you are going to expend every effort to learn new skills. Risk trying new ways and making mistakes. Communicate your desire to be given added, and more challenging, responsibilities. Welcome and encourage feedback from those supervising your experience.
2. When in doubt, ask questions. Select the time and place most convenient for your course instructor or mentor teacher or write questions down for them if conferencing is immediately impossible. Be willing to come early or stay late.
3. Being professional involves a timely arrival and telephone calls when you need to be late or absent. Inform your course instructor of field trips, testing, or special events when his or her observation of your work would not be possible. Your dress, personal appearance and manner represent your professional image.
4. Make decisions using your best judgment. Seek clarification if you are uncertain of rules or expectations.
5. Realize the mentor teacher’s first priority is the needs, safety and welfare of children. You are an added responsibility. Be aware there are times when the mentor teacher cannot focus on your concerns.
6. See what needs to be done and do it without waiting for directions. Observe and study the children, program, and environment. Familiarize yourself with all aspects of the situation. Know where equipment and materials are stored. Be alert to daily schedules and routines.
7. See yourself as a needed assistant being increasingly responsible and alert to where you are most necessary.
8. Be friendly, learn names, and fit into classroom life quickly by being helpful and sensitive to school staff members.
9. Watch teacher’s skills, techniques, and behaviors with children and parents. Try to identify the goals of instruction behind works and actions.
10. Avoid socializing with other adults during work periods, and, instead, be watchful observant, and ready to learn from children and classroom situations. Scan the area, and develop “eyes in the back of your head”. When sitting, choose positions that allow the best classroom views.
11. Remain nonjudgmental if site politics are present Try to inwardly evaluate staff conflicts. Discuss with your course instructor your position as a “fence sitter” who avoids taking sides if a difficult situation or power struggle between adults arises.
12. When viewing new techniques or methods, remain open-minded and reflective. If ethics are involved, ask for a course instructor consultation quickly.
13. Receive input from supervisors with the belief that both compliments and suggestions for growth will enable you to become a more skilled and valuable early childhood educator.

Metropolitan Community College. (2009). Early Childhood Education Practicum Manual. Obtained 8/15/2009 from: <http://www.mccneb.edu/ecp/manual.asp?Theme=2>

## Overview & Goals of Field Experience Levels

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Your field experiences are integrated into courses to provide an introduction to various aspects of early childhood education. They familiarize you, the teacher candidate, with a.) how young children think, act and feel, b.) the roles and responsibilities of teachers who work with young children and c.) Roles and responsibilities of professionals who work in the field. The goal of any field experience is to develop familiarity with children, teaching, and the field so that teacher candidates can draw on those experiences as they construct pedagogical and content knowledge. Depending on the course associated with the field experience, teacher candidates may be asked to:

- Observe young children and teachers in the classroom and then analyze those observations and make connections to coursework
- Interview professionals in the field
- Begin interacting with children, teachers and other professionals

Specific field experience placements are built into courses and require an intensive field experience component. In ECE 161, 162, 102, 163, & 209 teacher candidates spend 66 hours in the field directly interacting with young children, families and early childhood professionals in addition to the other course requirements. ECE 261 and 262 require 132 hours in the field. These experiences move beyond developing familiarity with young children, their families and the field, and expect teacher candidates to be interacting with young children, families and teachers. These interactions are intended to contribute to the teacher candidate's: a.) understanding of young children and how they develop, b.) ability to plan and implement early childhood learning experiences, c.) pedagogical skill and ability to engage children in meaningful learning experiences, d.) reflective practices as a means to developing as a teacher. The expectations these field experiences may include:

- Observing young children
- Developing lesson plans for early learning centers and experiences
- Assessing the outcomes of planned lessons
- Providing positive guidance to young children
- Examining existing educational components/systems
- Reflecting on field experiences through journal responses, etc.
- Portfolio assessment of a young child

## **Teacher Candidate Responsibilities**

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The responsibilities of the Teacher Candidate are as follows:

1. Observe and practice ideas and skills in working with young children.
2. Develop skills to function as a team member of a professional staff.
3. Develop skills in working with families of children.
4. Develop an understanding of daily operation and evaluation.
5. Continue to develop areas of strength and to self-assess areas in which more learning, practice, and/or experience is needed.
6. Expand awareness and knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of professional team members.
7. Complete required hours and assignments.
8. Participate in regular feedback meetings with the course instructor.
9. Complete related assignments maintaining professional tone and confidentiality. Skipping or waiving assignments in any Childhood Education and Family Studies course is never an option. If you do not complete one or more assignments, the Instructor has the right to lower the final course grade.
10. Complete and submit to course instructor documentation of all hours spent in each classroom.

## **Corrective Action Policy for Field Experiences**

Course requirements (syllabus) determine the minimum number of practicum hours, but if at midterm there are portions of the midterm evaluation that indicate the student may be having difficulty, the course instructor may determine that the student needs more time in a particular placement, or needs to be moved to a different site. For instance, if it is apparent that the student does not yet exhibit the kind of professional behavior expected of a teacher, or that he or she consistently uses ineffective teaching methods or is not participating in the role of teacher in the classroom, such a situation may require an extension of classroom time or even a formal intervention plan. (Extremely Concerning Behaviors Can Result in Termination of Practicum.) The Childhood Education Director must approve extensions and intervention plans, and a conference call will be set up involving the student, instructor, and mentor teacher to go over and finalize the plans. A conference call is also mandatory if a student requests an incomplete for Practicum, because practicum courses are designed to be completed within the term to help the student see a typical classroom over a period of eleven weeks.

## **Removal from a Field Experience Site**

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Students who are asked to leave a field experience site by a site coordinator will be given a “warning”. The teacher candidate will be withdrawn from the field experience site (sites) for a minimum of one week. A CE&FS department meeting will be held to determine if the teacher candidate will be placed at another site. The teacher candidate also might be given an “incomplete” and allowed to complete the course during the following quarter. SWOCC CE&FS Faculty will communicate clearly with teacher candidates if any such action is taken.

### **Field Experience Termination**

1. Reasons for discharge from field experience include the following:
  - Breaking confidentiality.
  - Displaying inappropriate or unprofessional behavior.
  - Use of illegal chemical substances or alcohol.
  - Not meeting the site's policies and procedures.
  - Violations of professional code of ethics.
  - Unsatisfactory performance/evaluations as determined by the mentor teacher or course instructor
  - Excessive absences at the field experience site and/or field experience classroom sessions (seminars)
  - Violation of the site, agency/organization's policies and procedures
  - Violation of standards of practice consistent with the profession including:
    - Maintaining accurate records and reports
    - Appropriate and professional clothing
    - Using appropriate language and behavior
    - Adherence to code of ethics, relevant laws, and agency policy
    - Use of alcohol or other mood altering, non-prescription drugs prior to or at a class or field experience site.

Termination from field experience is not limited to the listed factors.

**Substance Abuse** - If it is determined that a field experience teacher candidate has inappropriately used alcohol or other non-prescription drugs in such a way as to adversely affect the field experience, he/she will automatically be suspended from his/her field experience class and may receive a grade of "F" for the course. The teacher candidate will be referred to the faculty student affairs committee if circumstances appear to warrant further disciplinary action and/or referred to Dean of Students' office for appropriate action.

**Alcohol and Drug Use** - Any indication of drug and/or alcohol use will result in removal from the school. Please be aware that strong indications of cigarette, cigar or pipe use, cologne, after-shave or perfumes may be offensive to colleagues and teacher candidates in schools.

### **Mentor Teacher/Program Responsibilities**

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The responsibilities of the MENTOR TEACHER or PROGRAM are as follows:

1. Orient the teacher candidate to the philosophies and policies of the program.
2. Provide guidance to the teacher candidate as he/she completes course requirements and, when appropriate, gradually assumes increasing responsibility by:
  - a. Acquainting and guiding the teacher candidate to the availability and use of resources that may aid in understanding the program and the children and families it serves.
  - b. Acquainting the teacher candidate with individual and group goals for children
  - c. Communicate to the teacher candidate your experiences in working directly with children and their families, as appropriate.

3. Providing the teacher candidate with experience in working with a team of professionals, when possible.
4. Observing the teacher candidate in varied situations, provide same-day feedback regarding his /her areas of strength, and need for improvement, as appropriate.
5. Assisting the teacher candidate as he/she makes observations, develops, implements, and evaluates activities in the classroom:
  - a. Suggest pertinent events/areas/activities for observation
  - b. When teacher candidates inquire, discuss the context, purpose or teacher's understanding of events without performing the teacher candidate's analytical work.
6. Review and approve activity plans before the teacher candidate implements activities in the classroom. Allow teacher candidates to complete course requirements – ex. – implement lesson plan, facilitate circle time.

***Out of District Filed Experience Mentor Teachers additionally agree to:***

- Complete (2) evaluations of the teacher candidate's work. (It is your responsibility as the teacher candidate to make sure your mentor teacher has the paperwork for these evaluations. It is also your responsibility as the teacher candidate to make sure the evaluations are turned in to the course instructor).
- Meet weekly with the candidate for at least 30 minutes.
- meet the minimum qualifications of the Child Development Associate (CDA) Advisor requirements as developed by the Council for Professional Recognition as follows: <http://www.cdacouncil.org/>

## **Mentor Teacher Expectations**

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The mentor teacher is the qualified preschool classroom teacher who supervises the teacher candidate during field experiences. Dan Birkovich is the mentor teacher at The Family Center. Mentor teachers for other approved field experience sites must be pre-approved by the course instructor.

The role of the mentor teacher is complex because he/she is responsible for evaluation as well as mentoring. The mentor teacher guides the teacher candidate throughout the experience and is responsible for evaluating. Finally, although the mentor teacher may want to tell the teacher candidate how to teach, he or she will realize that the candidate must experience the challenges of developing a personal teaching style. As a mentor, be prepared to spend a few hours observing the student teacher weekly. Are you able to organize your schedule so that you can be in the room when the student teacher is present? The student will probably be submitting video segments of their teaching; will you be available to assist? Will you have time to watch the video segments with the student teacher when they receive feedback from their instructor?

Think carefully about your time and availability – developing teachers need and deserve a rich and thorough mentoring experience. Are you well positioned personally and professionally to mentor?

The mentor teacher can serve best by being a mentor and a guide. Specifically, the mentor teacher's responsibilities include:

- ✓ Accepting the responsibilities required of this role.
- ✓ Communicating with the teacher candidate and the college instructor for an orientation session during the first week of the experience

- ✓ Becoming aware of the purpose of the field experience and the objectives the teacher candidate must meet.
- ✓ Preparing the class for the arrival of the teacher candidate.
- ✓ Orienting the teacher candidate to the school and the community.
- ✓ Providing the teacher candidate with a gradual induction to the teaching responsibilities.
- ✓ Providing the teacher candidate with instructional materials and building and district policies.
- ✓ Creating a positive learning environment that fosters the teacher candidate's personal and professional growth.
- ✓ Supervising and guiding the teacher candidate as he/she develops and implements teaching plans.
- ✓ Acquainting the teacher candidate with the backgrounds of the children, the curriculum and the various types of plans for instruction used in the school.
- ✓ Modeling effective teaching strategies and techniques.
- ✓ Providing continual verbal and written feedback that includes encouragement, constructive criticism and recognition of success.
- ✓ Assisting the teacher candidate in implementing the recommendations following evaluation
- ✓ Keeping written records of all evaluations.
- ✓ Communicate with the course instructor and teacher candidate whenever needed.
- ✓ Keeping the course instructor informed about the teacher candidate's progress and/or encountered problems.
- ✓ Collaborating with the course instructor in preparing and conducting three-way or mid-term and final conferences; and
- ✓ Preparing assessment forms provided by the Course Instructor half way through the term and at the end of the term.

## Field Experience Selection

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Students will complete field experiences in a variety of settings. All sites are to be approved by the course instructor. After approval, forms are submitted; a preliminary visit may be required. During the approval process, the purpose of the field experience is explained to the person primarily in charge of the site. The Family Center on the Coos Bay SWOCC Campus is the designated placement site for local students.

The CE FS Program tries to select sites that:

- Serve a variety of ages of children.
- Serve children both with and without disabilities.
- Are willing to help foster skills of volunteers who are training to be professionals in the field of early childhood education program.
- Serve children with diverse backgrounds.
- Follow early childhood best practices within their program.

NAEYC Accredited programs and Head Start programs are preferred sites. Field experiences may be completed at public schools, Head Start programs, early childhood programs operated by faith-based organization, and non-profit and for-profit early childhood programs.

### ***Utilization of Students***

Field experience teacher candidates are to serve as support help to the employed staff at the site. Field experience teacher candidates are not to be responsible for groups of children unless the paid staff is in the room.

The site is encouraged to allow the teacher candidate to be responsible for groups of children for short periods under the supervision of the teacher. When a teacher candidate is placed at a field experience site, the requirements for that teacher candidate will be presented at the beginning of their placement.

### **Placement of Students**

Placement of teacher candidates at field experience sites will be a collaborative experience between the teacher candidate and the course instructor. In the event that field experience sites are limited, the decision of the field experience placement may need to be made by the course instructor. Once a teacher candidate is given a placement, it is up to the teacher candidate to introduce him/herself to the director of the program and agree upon specific procedures to be followed and times to be worked.

### ***Field Experience/Experience at Current Worksite***

Students must complete one field experience at a site other than the one in which they are employed. Students may complete part of their field experience experiences at their current place of employment under the following conditions:

- The place of employment is willing to cooperate with the field experience course instructor and sign a field experience agreement.
- A staff member at the worksite is qualified and willing to supervise the experience.
- The place of employment is utilizing interest centers and developmentally appropriate practices.
- The teacher candidate understands that he/she must work at least at one other site in the community.

## **Role of the Field Experience Course Instructor**

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The CE FS field experience course instructor will monitor each field experience teacher candidate. Generally, a minimum of three visits or three video submissions made for review will occur between the field experience teacher candidate and field experience course instructor. Teacher candidates are to notify the course instructor when they will be implementing lessons, so the field experience instructor can observe or arrange for observation of the teacher candidate during the experience. Lesson plans are to be shown to field experience course instructors before activities are done.

### **Observations & Evaluations**

Depending on the course requirements, each field experience will have different observation requirements. The format and outcome of those observations will also vary. Please discuss these requirements with your course instructor. One consistent element of all field placement observations is the confidential nature of the observations. Unless you have written permission from the family/teacher/etc. and consent from the child, you must maintain confidentiality of the child, teacher, program, etc. A sample permission form is provided in Appendix 2 of this manual.

## **Professional ePortfolio:**

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### ***Information about Your Childhood Education and Family Studies ePortfolio***

***All students graduating with an AS or an AAS in Childhood Education and Family Studies must present a Professional ePortfolio to Childhood Education Faculty at the time they apply for graduation. Here is information on why and how...***

*Developing a professional e-portfolio makes a statement about who you are as an early childhood professional.*

What is a professional e-portfolio?

A professional e-portfolio is a collection of electronic documents that demonstrates your competence as an early care and education teacher. It provides a picture of your career, your knowledge, your abilities, and your philosophies about working with young children. Developing your e-portfolio is an on-going process. The e-portfolio creates a record of professional growth and development throughout your career.

#### **A Professional e-Portfolio is:**

- A tool for collecting and showing growth and achievement over time in your career field
- Not a scrapbook, but a representation of your early childhood abilities
- Like an expanded resume
- A very common requirement for teaching placements and to help in seeking jobs in schools
- A good exercise in self-evaluation

**How can you use a professional e-Portfolio?** Once you gather the materials for your portfolio and take the time to put it together, there are many ways you can use the portfolio – use it:

- To highlight your work experience for prospective employers.
- To share with your supervisor.
- To share your accomplishments and expertise with co-workers.
- As a storage system. (When your employer asks for documents for your employee file, they are available!)
- As a record of your ongoing professional development, education, and experience.
- As an advocacy tool.
- AND: Display your ePortfolio page for others to see your commitment to ECE.

#### **Why create an electronic portfolio?**

- Many people have found them a helpful way to more clearly present portfolio items - not only through text, but also through visuals, audio, and video formats
- Information can be stored on the Internet – privacy settings keep others from seeing your work.
- It takes up very little room and is easy to update or make changes
- It can include: sound, pictures, graphics, and even video
- It is convenient to use your portfolio to apply for jobs, sending your portfolio link to highlight your accomplishments in the field.

Keep  
**Keep**

Track.  
**Track.**

Keep developing  
**Keep developing**  
yourself.

Keep  
**Keep**  
organized.