

Field Experience Handbook



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Building Character. Building Careers.

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Acknowledgments

This manual was developed through collaborative efforts of university administration, faculty, and PDS partners. The revisions will be ongoing and recursive.

Disclaimer

The Teacher Education Program policies are continually being re-examined to reflect the regulations and policies of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Pennsylvania Western University, and the College of Education. As such, PennWest California reserves the right to modify or cancel any statement in this handbook at any time, and such changes may not be immediately reflected in this publication.

The Educational Field Experiences handbook is intended for Initial Certification students only. While in some instances, this handbook may serve as a guide for Advanced Certification students, those who are not Initial Certification will refer to their Program Coordinator for appropriate and official policies.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
Progressive Components of Field Experience.....	4
Goals.....	4
Our Accrediting Bodies.....	4
Roles and Responsibilities.....	5
Field Student.....	5
Mentor Teacher.....	6
University Instructor.....	7
Office of Clinical Experiences.....	7
Professional Dispositions.....	8
Anthology Portfolio.....	9
Evaluation of Field Student by Mentor Teacher	9
Appendices.....	10
a. Progressions of Expectations of Clinical Practice	
b. Mentor Evaluation of Observation Teacher Candidate	
c. Mentor Evaluation of Field Teacher Candidate	

Introduction

Field experiences are characterized by communication, collaboration, and accountability in an environment in which candidates implement practices associated with professional learning. The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) requires all candidates to meet intensive, field-based performance competencies in four stages of field experiences (see Appendix). The four stages of field experiences at PennWest California include a variety of school-based opportunities that begin early in the program of study (Stage 1), are ongoing throughout the program (Stages 2 & 3), and culminate with a semester-long clinical practice of student teaching (Stage 4).

See Appendix a: Progressions of Expectations of Clinical Practice

Progressive Components of Field Experiences

Field experiences move through stages that increase in intensity and components.

Stage 1: Observation and reflection

Stage 2: Early field

Stage 3: Pre-student teaching

Stage 4: Student teaching

Goals

The field experience courses and the field-associated courses in the College of Education at PennWest California provide teacher education candidates the opportunity to meet PDE requirements, program requirements, and college-wide standards and outcomes established for field experiences in teacher education. These standards and outcomes reflect the College of Education Conceptual Framework. In field experience courses, candidates apply the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions gained in program coursework while they are in an actual school setting.

Each field experience has a unique design described in specific course syllabi and aligned to specific program standards.

Our Accrediting Bodies

We are held accountable for a variety of different accrediting bodies. First and foremost, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) grants teacher certification, so we are held accountable for their policies and procedures. Additionally, to earn national accreditation, we are held accountable to the standards of the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). CAEP standards guide our programs and assessment system. Additionally, each certification program meets the standards set by a specific Specialized Professional Association (SPA). For example, the PreK-4 program is guided by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and the National Council of the Teachers of Mathematics guides the secondary mathematics program. Thus, you can see that our programs are aligned (and cross-aligned) with a variety of standards and expectations. You may notice the reference to these associations on various forms and documents.

Roles and Responsibilities

Field Experience Student Role – This is the university student in a teacher education program, a student who meets all requirements to enroll and complete the Field Experience Course or participate in the field activity. The field experience student must not schedule any classes that are in direct conflict with assigned times within the field placement. A successful field experience is a collaborative effort between the University Instructor, The Mentor Teacher, and the Field Experience Student. Candidates must realize their responsibilities as learners studying the teaching-learning process. Throughout the classroom interactions, candidates will follow the same policies and expectations for regular teachers.

Field Student Responsibilities

- Give responsibilities of field activities first priority, even though there may be other personally compelling concerns
- Be punctual in arriving at school, at scheduled classes, and at meetings in accordance with school regulations
- Be aware of the school's safety policies and emergency procedures
- Notify the mentor teacher, as well as the university instructor, as far in advance as possible when absence cannot be avoided
- Conduct himself/herself in a professional manner at all times, including dress, speech and personal habits
- Become acquainted with, and abide by, school policies; keep information received about students or school personnel confidential
- Progress from a passive observer role to an active role in the field experience classroom
- Be prepared when responsibilities are assumed

Field Experience Student

To be a Field Experience Student, the individual must:

- Meet all prerequisite course requirements and course competencies as outlined in the individual course syllabus
- Register with the Field Experiences Coordinator and meet all timelines and other guidelines for obtaining a field placement
- Have all current clearances, described below and found at this link:
- [Clearances for Teacher Candidates](#)
 - Act 24: Arrest of Conviction Form
 - Act 34: PA Criminal History Record
 - Act 151: Child Abuse History Clearance
 - Act 114: FBI Criminal History Check
 - Mandatory Reporting Training as part of Act 31

The field experience student must present the required clearances to the principal or district administrator upon arrival to the assigned field placement.

Mentor Teacher Role – The role of the mentor teacher is to guide the field experience student throughout the experience. The mentor teacher is responsible for deciding what subjects and content the candidate will teach and for providing feedback on the candidate’s lesson planning and implementation. The mentor teacher is encouraged to model any and all aspects of effective teaching and to provide feedback to the field experience student as he/she assumes classroom duties and responsibilities. The mentor teacher is encouraged to offer professional advice and can serve best by being a caring educator and a guide.

Mentor Teacher Responsibilities

- Welcome the field experience student into the field placement classroom.
- Read and become familiar with the Field Experience Handbook.
- Orient the candidate to the school and the community.
- Orient the candidate regarding their classroom rules, routines, procedures, organization and other pertinent information.
- Inform candidate regarding building and district policies.
- Provide the candidate with a gradual introduction to teaching responsibilities.
- Allow the candidate to become acquainted with different instructional materials including technology and other audiovisual equipment.
- Create and maintain a positive learning environment that fosters the candidate’s personal and professional growth.

A Checklist for the Mentor Teacher

Before the field experience student arrives, the mentor teacher should:

- Prepare P-12 students for the arrival of the candidate.
- Provide a separate adult desk/chair or high table which will serve as a home base for the candidate. Please avoid the use of student desks if at all possible.
- Provide a class roster, daily schedule, and seating chart.
- Provide teaching manuals and textbooks.
- Plan a balanced sequence of experiences for the candidate.

The person most influential on the performance of a field student teacher is the mentor. Professionals who accept this responsibility are active participants in the development of new members of the teaching profession and contribute to the excellence of the quality of education we deliver to society’s youth. It is, therefore, imperative that the mentor teacher remains in the classroom with the student at all times. If the mentor teacher is absent, the student may remain in the room as long as there is a certified teacher in the classroom.

University Instructor Role - This is the university faculty person who is assigned to teach the Field Experience Course or who has designed the field-associated activity. The instructor presents content and pedagogy and assists field experience students in applying their knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions in the field placement classroom.

University Instructor Responsibilities

- Visit field placement classroom as needed and/or when appropriate.
- Conduct university-based class sessions to address content, skills, and professional dispositions.
- Ensure candidates are prepared to begin the field placement and to meet the field course expectations.
- Communicate with the mentor teacher regarding course materials and assignments.
- Provide opportunities for candidates to enhance reflective practitioner skills and dispositions.

Office of Clinical Experiences Role -- This office is responsible for upholding the policies approved by the College of Education and for making field placements for all teacher candidates.

Office of Clinical Experiences Responsibilities

- Work collaboratively with school-based personnel to place candidates in high-quality learning environments.
- Work collaboratively with programs to ensure a quality match with program expectations and field placements.
- Coordinate and communicate all aspects with candidates and school mentors and personnel.

Professional Dispositions

During field experience courses, candidates have the opportunity to develop and refine their knowledge, skills, and professional disposition in authentic classroom settings. Field experience students are invited guests in that school/classroom and are expected to present themselves in a highly professional manner. The way in which candidates behave is a reflection of themselves and the University. Included below is a list of elements that demonstrate a professional disposition.

Punctuality – Candidates are to arrive at their field placement at least 10 minutes before the arrival time determined by their mentor teacher. Upon arrival at the field site, candidates should report to the office, sign in, and obtain a visitor’s badge before reporting to their classroom. When leaving the school, the candidate is expected to sign out and return the visitor’s badge.

Confidentiality – Confidentiality is of utmost importance. Field experience students must keep any information they are privy to confidential with regard to students in their classroom and/or school, including, but not limited to: grades, health issues, IEP information, behavior issues, etc. Discussion regarding any aspect of the field placement should be limited to the mentor teacher and/or the University Instructor. Sharing information about students outside the field placement classroom is not only unprofessional and unethical but could also be a violation of federal law. In cases where there is doubt concerning the confidentiality of an issue, candidates should defer to the judgment of the University Instructor.

Personal Use of Electronic Devices – Personal use of technology for non-school related purposes is prohibited.

School and District Policies – Candidates are to be knowledgeable of and adhere to all school and district policies.

PA Code of Conduct—It is the responsibility of the teacher candidate to know, understand and adhere to “Pennsylvania’s Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators” located at <http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter235/chap235toc.html>

Professional Behavior

Proper professional behavior must be maintained by the student including appropriate behavior, observance of confidentiality, and professional attire and grooming. Unprofessional behavior is considered sufficient cause for removal from the experience and shall be addressed by the University Instructor and the Office of Educational Field Experiences. If there is ever cause for concern, please contact the university instructor or the Office of Educational Field Experiences immediately.

Anthology Portfolio

Thank you for agreeing to mentor a student in one of PennWest California's education programs. This process involves the use of Anthology Portfolio to gather evaluation information from you. Anthology Portfolio is a web-based tool that, among other things, compiles and organizes large amounts of data. We can then do a more effective job of analyzing the evaluation information you give us regarding the teacher candidates and make necessary changes to our programs. When your placement is made in the Anthology system, you will receive an automated email directly from the Anthology system.

Q&A

What can I do through Anthology?

- You can verify the student's hours spent in the field with you.
- You can complete an electronic rubric to provide feedback to the student and university faculty.
- You can communicate with your student and their instructor at PennWest California.

What if I did not receive an email from Anthology?

- Check your deleted folders and/or your junk/spam folders.
- Some school systems seem to have these emails filtered. If this is the case, please contact your IT department to have this issue resolved.

Evaluation of Field Student by Mentor Teacher

As a mentor teacher it is important that your field student receives honest and constructive feedback. Of course, at some point, there is a formal evaluation of the student teacher's practice. We ask our mentor teachers to assess the field experience students at the end of the semester. The Field Experience Mentor Teachers' evaluation rubric will be accessible in the Anthology system. You will use all the information available to you to inform the evaluation of the student teacher. You can use information gleaned from observations, from a review of the student work, and from the student work samples from lessons that the student taught. Responses to the following evaluation may be based upon the field experience student's direct observation or mentor teacher's consultation with the field student.

*See Appendix b: **Mentor Evaluation of Observation Teacher Candidate***

*See Appendix c: **Mentor Evaluation of Field Teacher Candidate***

Mentor Teacher Evaluation
Observation Teacher Candidate (PDE Field Stages 1/2)

Observation Teacher Candidate:

Mentor Teacher:

Date:

Planning and Preparation

Expectations: The observation teacher candidate is expected to arrive well-prepared and ready to engage in all activities and experiences.

- Met expectations fully
- Made satisfactory progress toward meeting expectations
- Made unsatisfactory progress toward meeting expectations

Comments:

Learning Environment

Expectations: The observation teacher candidate is expected to interact with all learners in a positive manner.

- Met expectations fully
- Made satisfactory progress toward meeting expectations
- Made unsatisfactory progress toward meeting expectations

Comments:

Instructional Delivery

Expectations: The observation teacher candidate is expected to actively engage in the assigned activities and assist the classroom teacher with instructional and non-instructional tasks as appropriate.

- Meets expectations fully
- Is making satisfactory progress toward meeting expectations
- Is not making satisfactory progress toward meeting expectations

Comments:

Professionalism

Expectations: The observation teacher candidate is expected to maintain ethical behavior, arrive to the classroom in a timely manner, and comply with all school policies and procedures.

- Meets expectations fully
- Is making satisfactory progress toward meeting expectations
- Is not making satisfactory progress toward meeting expectations

Comments:

Mentor Teacher Evaluation
Field Teacher Candidate (PDE Field Stage 3)

Field Teacher Candidate:

Mentor Teacher:

Date:

Planning and Preparation

Expectations: The field teacher candidate is expected to fully plan and be fully prepared for each lesson that is taught. Planning must include evidence-based instructional strategies and be cohesive in nature.

See the Clinical Practice Tool for specific performance indicators.

- Met expectations fully
- Made satisfactory progress toward meeting expectations
- Made unsatisfactory progress toward meeting expectations

Comments:

Learning Environment

Expectations: The field teacher candidate is expected to manage a positive learning environment.

See the Clinical Practice Tool for specific performance indicators.

- Met expectations fully
- Made satisfactory progress toward meeting expectations
- Made unsatisfactory progress toward meeting expectations

Comments:

Instructional Delivery

Expectations: The field teacher candidate is expected to implement effective and appropriately structured instruction with resources and materials that enhance student learning. Instructional techniques and strategies engage all learners and meet their diverse learning needs.

See the Clinical Practice Tool for specific performance indicators.

- Meets expectations fully
- Is making satisfactory progress toward meeting expectations
- Is not making satisfactory progress toward meeting expectations

Comments:

Professionalism

Expectations: The field teacher candidate is expected to demonstrate and engage in activities that promote professional growth and ethical practice and employ reflective practice.

See the Clinical Practice Tool for specific performance indicators.

- Meets expectations fully
- Is making satisfactory progress toward meeting expectations
- Is not making satisfactory progress toward meeting expectations

Comments: