

Field Experience Guidelines

Participation in field experiences is a privilege; candidates are required to carry out their work in field placements in a professional manner. Candidates are visitors in school settings and must adhere to school policies and guidelines while completing course-related requirements.

Alabama State Teacher Education Code: Field experiences in Class B and Alternative Class A programs:

1. All Class B, Alternative Class A, Class A and Class AA programs shall require extensive field experiences in diverse settings. If permitted by written EPP policy, individuals who are employed in position appropriate to the area of their current program may complete field experiences on the job, but those experiences must be planned with specific purposes and assessment.
2. The majority of field experiences must occur in P-12 schools.
3. At least half of the field experiences shall be in the candidate's teaching field or area of instructional support.
4. For early childhood education and early childhood special education programs, field experiences shall include placements in at least two of the three main types of early education settings [early school grades (K-3), child care centers and homes, and Head Start programs]

University Expectations:

Field experiences are scheduled by the professor or will be your responsibility to acquire. Below are expectations for you to follow:

- **Begin your field experience immediately and attend consistently throughout the semester.** It takes time to make the initial contact and for the cooperating teacher to set up a schedule for your visits, so it is important to get started right away.
 - Send a well-constructed and grammatically correct email to the teacher. Be sure to include the content area, a timeframe for when you would like to start, and give contact information for yourself. Do not tell the teacher when you will be coming. Ask for times you can be in their room. Remember that you are a visitor in schools and must ask to be there.
 - Be on time and call the school if you are late or will be unable to attend.
 - Your tardiness in beginning the field placement should not be a concern to the teacher. It is your responsibility to work it out. Do not ask the teacher to accommodate you.
 - Clinicals should not be scheduled with immediate family members.
- **Professional attire is required.** You are now in the role of a professional and your dress needs to reflect the role. Unprofessional dress will not be tolerated by our public school partners. Principals will ask you to leave the premises if your attire does not meet their dress code. Please take a look at dress codes before entering the schools. Below are some general guidelines to follow:
 - **Hair:** Neat and natural styles. No extreme colors or cuts. No wet hair.
 - **Tops:** Shirt should be clean without wrinkles. Avoid tight fitting blouses, tank tops, hoodies, and t-shirts. Do not expose midriffs, undergarments, or cleavage. No clothing that promotes alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances or displays profanity or sexual words and symbols.
 - **Pants/Skirts:** Pants should be neatly pressed, clean, and should fit comfortably. Skirts should be no higher than an inch above the knee. Avoid jeans, yoga pants, and pants with rips.
 - **Shoes:** Clean shoes and no stilettos heels. Remember, teaching involves prolonged periods of standing, so take comfort into consideration when choosing footwear.
 - **Accessories:** Make-up should be natural and jewelry kept to a minimum. There should be no visible body piercings and tattoos should be covered. Keep perfumes to a minimum.
 - **Hygiene:** Appropriate grooming and bathing should be reflected in appearance and smell.

- **Your professional reputation is being established while in the schools.** Appropriate language and behavior is expected at all times. During field experiences, you are working in the local schools and representing the university. The following must be observed at all times to ensure you are presenting yourself in a professional manner:
 - Grammatically correct speech and writing
 - Adherence to the Alabama Code of Ethics and the university dispositions
 - Appropriate use of technology
 - Monitoring of all your social media
 - No cell phone use (including text messaging) while on school grounds
 - No smoking or tobacco use on school grounds
- **All lesson plans must be submitted to your cooperating teacher/university professor for approval.** If your requirements include teaching lessons, you must submit lesson plans in a timely manner to the cooperating teacher. This ensures that your lesson will support and fit the curriculum being taught in the classroom.
- **It is very important that you sign in at the main office as a school visitor and wear your Mane Card.** This way, all school personnel know who you are and why you are there. You must return to the main office before leaving the school to sign out after each visit.
- **Bring your Field Experience Verification Log to the school so that your teacher can sign and verify your hours/requirements after every visit.** Turn in completed forms to your course instructor once you have completed your field experience requirements.
- **Closing out a field experience is very important.** Verbally express gratitude for the use of the classroom to your cooperating teacher. A thank you note would be an appropriate gesture. Make sure the area you used each time is left clean and that any work samples are given back to the teacher (ask if you can make a set of copies). Discuss with the teacher what your strengths and weaknesses were during the process. These learning experiences will help you gain valuable information. The changes you make based off feedback will determine your success as a future intern and teacher.
- **Fire Arms/Medication:** Interns are not permitted to have a firearm, tobacco products, or other restricted items (knives, mace, pepper spray, etc.) on his/her person at any time while on school property. The use of prescription medication must be disclosed to the Director of Clinical Experiences, cooperating teacher, and school administration if consumed on school grounds. The medication must be in the original prescribed bottle with the label. The medication is to be kept in a lock area and away from students at all time.