



# Early Childhood Education

## Field Experience Handbook

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## Field Experience Information

In our program, you will complete four field experiences. Each field experience includes content in Canvas and experiences in the classroom. The first field experience is Field Experience 1 which gives you an opportunity to practice your **OBSERVATION SKILLS** in a variety of settings. You will also complete your Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS) training in this course.

The second field experience is Field Experience 2. You will spend 108 hours in the classroom practicing your observation skills and begin developing lesson plans and carrying them out. For this field experience, the expectation is that you will teach four lessons. You will spend 108 hours in a preschool classroom (ages 3 to 5). If you wish, you will have the opportunity to complete your Registry Preschool Credential (not required).

The third practicum is Field Experience 3. For this field experience, the expectation is that you will teach four lessons. You will spend 108 hours in an early childhood classroom (ages birth to 8). You will have the opportunity to work up to leading the classroom for approximately 50% of the day.

Your final practicum is Field Experience 4. For this field experience, the expectation is that you will teach four lessons. You will spend 108 hours in an early childhood classroom (ages birth to 8) advancing your observation and teaching skills. You will work up to leading the classroom 100% of the day. You will also finish your Graduation Portfolio. Your final field experience is Field Experience 4. You will spend 108 hours in the classroom advancing your observation and teaching skills. You will work up to leading the classroom 100% of the day. You will also finish your Graduation Portfolio.

## Background Check Requirements

All students in field experience will need to complete background check requirements prior to any placement. The process varies depending upon if you are completing your field experience in your place of employment.

If you are employed in childcare and wish to complete your field experience there, you will need to have a waiver signed by your director. Instructions for this process will be in your Canvas course.

Here are the steps to complete this process:

1. Fill out the background request form in Canvas
2. Submit the completed form into the Canvas Assignment.
3. Your Instructor will email you with instructions for next steps, which includes having to get your fingerprints run through a field print location.
4. Make an appointment with one of the approved locations as soon as you get the information. There will be a code that is specific to you. You will need this when you make your [fieldprint appointment](#). You will need to pay a fee of \$37.75 when you make the appointment.
5. When the fingerprinting is complete, the results are sent to the DCF.
6. You will receive a letter in the mail in approximately 7 days. This is your preliminary results letter.
7. You will NOT be able to start your practicum hours without this letter. This is the preliminary check, which only looks at barred offenses. You will submit this letter in Canvas.
8. You will receive a notice within the next 45 days which are your final background check results. You will submit this final results letter into Canvas. It is possible to be cleared at the preliminary level but then not pass the final check. We do not make this determination, the federal government does. If this is the case, you will not be able to continue your placement at your center, and while you can complete the course work for the program, you will not be able to work in child care.
9. You will take the following information to your field experience placement site:
  - i. Preliminary/Final Eligibility Letter
  - ii. SIDS Certificate
  - iii. SBS/AHT Certificate
  - iv. CAN/Mandated Reporter Certificate
  - v. Staff Health Report

## Placement Criteria

Students may complete their practicum in the following settings:

1. Licensed group center
2. Licensed family provider
3. Certified family provider
4. A provider which is housed in a church, but not necessarily licensed
5. A school district
6. A home visiting program
7. Other special placement request based on individual circumstance

In order to be placed, the site must have a cooperating teacher willing to take a student meeting the qualifications set forth in this handbook (see section Cooperating Teacher Criteria). Students may work at their placement; however will be encouraged to seek placement elsewhere for a varied experience.

Special circumstances regarding working in your placement:

1. Students must have their director or principal sign off on a waiver prior to starting their hours.
2. Hours may be split between classrooms; however, it is the student's responsibility to discuss the schedule with all cooperating teachers, and a plan must be made with the person who is signing off on lesson plans and time sheets. This plan must be discussed and approved by your NTC instructor before starting your hours.
3. If you are the lead teacher, your cooperating teacher must meet the "Cooperating Teacher Criteria" listed on the next page.

Students may complete all practicums in the same setting; however, they are encouraged to vary their experiences for maximum benefit and learning opportunities.

## Cooperating Teacher Criteria

In order for someone to be a cooperating teacher, he or she must meet the following criteria. This ensures students' learning experiences are maximized.

1. Cooperating teachers must meet at least ONE of the following:
  - a. Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education
  - b. Bachelor Degree in Early Childhood Education
  - c. Registry Level 12 or Above
2. Cooperating teachers must be willing to provide written and verbal feedback to the student
  - a. Cooperating teachers will complete 2 written evaluations (see documents to share)
  - b. Cooperating teachers will observe the student teaching 4 lesson plans AND review these plans prior to the student teaching them. The cooperating teacher will complete an evaluation on each plan taught (See documents to share)
3. NTC students may NOT supervise other current NTC students.

## Student Expectations

- Adhere to the NTC Early Childhood Education Program Student Agreement
- Attend and document all scheduled hours, and report any absences to the site and the supervising teacher promptly.
- Work in the assigned program center or site for 108 consistent hours in the allotted semester time period.
- Help supervise children safely.
- Follow the host school's policies for regularly employed staff: be mindful of the arrival and departure times of your cooperating teacher, the parking restrictions for staff, use of the teacher's lounge, use of school-owned equipment and supplies, etc.
- Participate with your cooperating teacher in all aspects of their professional responsibilities including classroom, hall, bus, lunchroom, and playground duties. etc.
- Take initiative in planning learning activities, routines, and clean-up and in evaluating them.
- Submit lesson plans to your cooperating teachers well in advance of actual implementation.
- Keep confidential that information which is given to you in confidence by your supervisor.
- Maintain ethical conduct by refusing to speak in disparaging terms about another member of the staff, the students, school patrons, the administration, or another student's teacher. NOTE: This is especially important in informal meetings in the teacher's lounge or on breaks.
- Teach only subject matter that is approved by your cooperating teacher and/or site.
- Always ask permission beforehand from those people whom you would like to list as references on job applications.
- Engage fully in the nurturing and learning aspects of child care.
- Positively support the social, emotional, and all areas of developmental needs of young children.
- Interact cordially with families with direction and approval of the cooperating teacher.
- Communicate with your cooperating teacher when in doubt.
- Submit unit plans and/or individual lesson plans to your cooperating teaching prior to class presentation/implementation.
- Ask your cooperating teacher to schedule a time to meet with you and to provide you with feedback about your performance.
- Represent NTC well in your student teaching placement.
- Project a positive image of NTC's Early Childhood Education program.

- Follow NTC's policies and standards.
- Maintain a professional demeanor at all times.
- Attend all scheduled hours, and report any absence quickly.
- No cell phone use while completing your student teaching experience.
- Be prepared for scheduled observations.
- Work in cooperation with teachers and other staff members to develop a good working unit within the program.
- Provide your field experience site with a copy of: Eligibility Letter, Staff Health Report, and SIDS, AHT, CAN/Mandated Reporter certificate copies.
- -Review cooperating teacher evaluation prior to starting your hours so you are clear on the expectations of the percentage of your time you will be working as the lead teacher.
- Lastly, you represent yourself, your program, and the college. You are a liaison between the college and the field experience site. Please develop and maintain relationships for future students.

### Cooperating Teacher Expectations

- Review all NTC paperwork with student including the evaluation form.
- Interview and conduct an orientation with the practicum candidate.
- Introduce them to children, families, and staff as an NTC ECE Student Teacher.
- Role model professional behavior.
- Explain expectations and reinforce when needed.
- Guide the student in your classroom.
- Offer to be available for questions.
- Complete all NTC Cooperating Teacher Student Evaluations.
- Review student lesson plans and give feedback.
- Sign off on student time sheet.
- Plan with the student for their involvement in your daily schedule.
- Give the student constructive tips for improvement.

## Documents to Share with Cooperating Teacher and Director

All documents will be shared when placement is verified through an assignment in Canvas, called the Practicum Information Request. Here are the documents you will receive:

1. Student Teacher Responsibilities
2. NAEYC Ethical Code of Conduct
3. Student Evaluation (to be completed by cooperating teacher, 2x during the semester)
4. Attendance Record
5. Lesson Plan (student will be teaching 4 lesson plans. The student does NOT need to teach a lesson during the Instructor Observation. The student SHOULD work with the cooperating teacher to plan within their day)