

Guidelines for Early Field Experience

Field experiences are an integral part of the teacher education program at Northwestern State University. Opportunities are provided for teacher education majors throughout their professional education courses to observe in a variety of instructional settings. Northwestern State University works closely with cooperating schools to provide high quality observation/participation experiences.

Northwestern students are guests in these schools and should remember that they represent the Gallaspy College of Education & Human Development. **All observations must be done in public schools in Louisiana and must be spaced throughout the semester in various grade and/or subject areas.** General rules for Northwestern students participating in field experiences are listed below.

1. **Field Experiences** – Observations should be conducted in public schools. Observations sites must be cleared through your instructor and approved by the Office of Clinical Practice & Partnerships. All field experience hours must be properly documented.
2. **Background checks**- State policy requires background checks for all candidates observing/working in district schools. All education candidates need to follow district policy concerning security checks. National background checks are a requirement for Teacher Candidacy.
3. **Schools for Observation** –Sites for observations must be approved by your course instructor and then through the Office of Field Experience. **Field experiences done in classrooms without prior approval will not be accepted by the instructor.**
4. **Field Experience Log** – Students should maintain a **Field Experience Log** to record their observations. **Please observe professional courtesy in classrooms.** Signatures should be obtained at the **end** of the observation/class. **Do not interrupt instructional activities or the teacher during class time.** Make arrangements to be at the school on time to observe from the beginning of class to the end.
5. **Observe cooperating schools' policies and procedures at all times.** Contact the cooperating principal in the school if you have questions about school policies or procedures. Sign in and sign out procedures will be necessary at each school in addition to your **Field Experiences Log**.
6. **Cell phones should not be in use** when conducting any field experiences at cooperating P-12 schools. Infractions, such as texting or use of a camera application, are in direct violation of the NSU Classroom Civility Statement and will be subject to disciplinary action under the Northwestern State University Student Code of Conduct and Sanctions.
7. **Dress appropriately** – Professional dress is required! No shorts, tank tops, hats or caps, cut-offs or jeans with knees out, flip-flops, bare feet, see-through shirts or blouses, miniskirts, etc. Also, no bare mid-drifts or low-cut tops. If not appropriately dressed, you will be asked to leave. **Please be aware that you are representing Northwestern State University as a future professional educator and are expected to conduct yourself accordingly.**
8. **Do not take** gum, candy, soft drinks, coffee, etc. into the classrooms when observing.
9. If more than one NSU student is observing in a classroom, please refrain from talking. This not only provides a distraction to the students but is extremely rude to the teacher. **Observers should pose as little distraction as possible to the students, teacher, and classroom instruction.**
10. All Northwestern students participating in field experiences must attend an orientation session (held during a class meeting) prior to observing in the public schools. Some cooperating principals may require an orientation session that will be held at their school.
11. **Specific requirements for observations and/or activities will be given by your individual instructor.** Follow the deadlines set by your instructor for completion of field experience hours. To receive credit for field experience hours and to successfully complete coursework, **field work must be properly documented.**
12. **Required observations for one class may not be used to meet required observations for another class!**

*Participants in NSU courses guarantee that all academic class work is original. Any academic dishonesty or plagiarism is a violation of student academic behavior standards and is subject to academic disciplinary action, such as receiving an "F" in the course and/or expulsion from the university and your graduate program. **Academic dishonesty includes infractions in documentation of field experience hours.** False documentation of field experience hours will result in receiving an "F" in the course and referral to appropriate University disciplinary committees.*