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Early Field Experiences at Indiana University

Early field experiences give you an inside look at teaching, and provide you with the opportunity to challenge prior beliefs and assumptions about teaching. Through these experiences, you will get to know more about yourself as a teacher, your strengths, weaknesses, and special interests - you may even find that you would prefer working with an age group or subject area that is different from what you originally expected. You will also begin to establish yourself as a professional - students are sometimes even offered a job based on their work in early field experiences!

As an early field experiences student, you are a guest in your host schools and classrooms. You are expected to accomplish your assignments professionally, without interrupting the schools’ and teachers’ programs. It is important for you to keep in mind that the reputation that you build in your field experiences will travel with you as you progress through the teacher education program, and into the world of teaching. We are here to help you put your best foot forward!

Program Objectives

Since each field experience is linked to a specific education course or cluster of courses, you must complete all field experience requirements while you are enrolled in that specific course or cluster. There are academic, professional, dispositional, and behavior expectations that must be met for successful course or cluster completion.

You will likely find your time in the schools to be exciting, interesting, informative, and sometimes frustrating. We hope you are eager to begin your field experience, and that you will be challenged in all the right ways. We are confident that you will see your field experience as an opportunity to learn more about yourself and the profession. The Office of Clinical Experiences will help you along the way.
To make the most of your experience, keep in mind the Six Guiding Principles of the School of Education and commit to implementing strategies that reflect them in your field experiences.

**The Six Guiding Principles of the IU School of Education:**

**Knowledge**: be well-grounded in student development, the content areas that are central to teaching, and assessment strategies.

**Learning Environment**: create and nurture positive physical, social, and academic learning environments

**Personalized Learning**: understand ability levels, interests, and learning styles. Demonstrate instruction that reflects the diversity among all learners.

**Community**: understand and be involved in the academic learning community. Build and develop relationships within the school, corporation, and community.

**Reflection**: reflect continuously on all aspects of the teaching experience to identify ways for improvement as an individual, as a part of the school community, and as part of the teaching profession.

**Growth**: develop a philosophy of teaching and learning, which demonstrates continuous professional growth in values, commitments, and professional judgments.

**The Placement Process**

The Office of Clinical Experiences (OCE) has developed partnerships with more than 100 area schools; and as such, makes all placement arrangements for IU early field experiences. It is important that you not try to make your
own arrangements. Specific requests for placements will be considered; however, these requests must be made before your placement is assigned. Please direct any concerns regarding field placements to our office before your placements are arranged.

OCE places early field experience students in schools within a 60-mile radius of Bloomington (unless you specifically request a placement out of that area). Placements close to campus are reserved for advanced field experience students who spend more time in the classroom, and are more closely supervised by university faculty. Students taking educational psychology and other exploratory courses are assigned to more distant sites.

The Office of Clinical Experiences works to ensure that you are assigned a variety of field placements during the course of your teacher education program. You will experience placements in a variety of locations, including urban and rural schools with culturally and socio-economically diverse student populations. In addition, you will likely be placed with different age groups within your certification area. In general, students are not placed in the secondary schools they attended.

Typically, the placement process begins with an orientation session presented by an OCE graduate assistant, or by the course instructor. During this orientation, you will complete a Request for Placement form. Any special considerations or requests must be noted on this form. The office considers all reasonable requests that are consistent with IU Teacher Education policies as stated in this handbook.

On average, it takes several weeks for the office to place all students within a course section. When all arrangements are complete, the office mails the completed information packet to each supervising teacher.
These packets usually contain:
- a letter from the Director of Early Field Experiences,
- the student placement form,
- a letter from the course instructor or faculty coordinator,
- student participation ideas and guidelines (see Appendix A),
- the student’s time sheet, and
- the student’s performance evaluation(s) (see Appendix B).

You will then receive notification about your placement, including details regarding your school, its location, transportation, and other pertinent information. If concerns arise regarding your placement, please e-mail the Office of Clinical Experiences to request an appointment.

Please note: Since folders have already been sent to teachers, placements cannot be changed at this time.

Before Your First Visit

There are several things that you must do prior to your first visit to your host classroom.

1. Complete your criminal history check application and other checks where required. All IU students who work directly with children are required to secure a criminal history check on an annual basis (see appendix C for instructions). Some field experiences have additional requirements such as a physical or a Mantoux/Tuberculosis test. You will be notified by your course instructor or a representative from our office of the specific requirements of your field experience, as well as the deadlines for completion of these steps.

2. Make initial contact with your cooperating teacher. It is imperative for you to contact your cooperating teacher prior to the start of your early field experience. Email is generally the best method of communication.
However, if you do not receive a response to an email within a couple of days, call the school receptionist, ask when the teacher has prep periods, and call at the appropriate time. Leave a message if you are unable to speak with them in person. Use this contact to:

- introduce yourself and explain some of the things that you are hoping to learn or experience during your field experience.
- confirm that you will attend on the initial reporting date, at the time specified on the form.
- verify the best way to communicate with your cooperating teacher. It is your responsibility to maintain communication. Be sure to ask the teacher what time and method of communication they prefer.
- set up a time to discuss topics such as grading, philosophy, teaching diverse learners, emergency procedures, and classroom management techniques.

In some courses, you may be required to write a letter of introduction that is provided to your cooperating teacher prior to your placement. Your course instructor will let you know whether or not this is an expectation for your course. See Appendix D for tips on completing this letter.

3. Make transportation arrangements to and from your designated school. If you plan to drive yourself to your field placement, please consider volunteering to give someone else a ride. Carpooling helps reduce crowding in school parking lots, is environmentally responsible, and lets you share the expense of driving. The office will assist in identifying carpools, bus routes, or other transportation options. If your transportation needs change during the semester, contact the office so that we may assist you with identifying potential solutions. It is
imperative that you do not stop attending your experience for any reason.

4. Take a “test drive” to your placement site. You should locate your host school in advance of your first day to familiarize yourself with the area, and get a good sense of the amount of time it will take you to get there. On your first day, be sure to leave extra-early to allow time to locate a parking place, find the visitor entrance, locate the school office, sign in, introduce yourself to the principal, and get to your classroom. Visitors are required to sign in at the school office each time they arrive. Many schools require guests to wear a visitor's badge: ask about this policy.

Professional Expectations for IU Pre-Service Teachers

• **Have a short meeting with your cooperating teacher.** It is important that you discuss your cooperating teachers preferred methods and classroom policies. Topics covered should include grading, philosophy, teaching diverse learners, emergency procedures, and classroom management techniques. This meeting can help to prevent any misunderstandings and problems in the future, and can help you to be as prepared as possible in the event of an emergency.

• **Always show up as expected.** It is very important that you show up to your field experience on time, and every time that you are expected. If you are unavoidably delayed, call the school to leave a message for your cooperating teacher. To maintain professionalism, always plan to arrive at least ten minutes before you are expected.
If you are seriously ill or have a major emergency, contact your teacher in advance of when you are expected. Make plans with your cooperating teacher to make up your absence.

Just as teachers must arrive in advance of the morning bell, and sometimes work when they are not feeling their best, you must also demonstrate the same level of dedication. The teacher and students will notice your absence, even if your assignment is primarily observational. Do not disappoint them.

*Please note: The Office of Clinical Experiences will remove you from your placement if attendance and timeliness become a problem.*

- **Be aware of your host school’s calendar and closings.** Area schools do not follow the same calendar as Indiana University, and calendars vary by corporation. School calendars are posted on the school corporation websites. It is your responsibility to find your school’s calendar, to discuss the school calendar with your cooperating teacher, and to plan for days when the school will be closed. You are expected to accrue a certain number of hours for your field experience, and must make arrangements to make up all missed days.

  Schools may close unexpectedly due to weather conditions, power outages, flooding, etc. Ask your cooperating teacher which radio stations broadcast school closings, or if there is a text messaging alert system that you can opt into for your school’s closings, delays, and emergency messages.

- **Keep track of your hours.** The Office of Clinical Experiences provides each cooperating teacher with a folder that includes a timesheet for recording your hours. Be sure to log your time of
arrival on this sheet. Ask your cooperating teacher if she would like for you to annotate this time sheet regarding the day’s activities, which may assist your cooperating teacher in making an accurate final assessment of your performance. Also be sure to record your departure times before leaving.

- **Demonstrate a professional attitude.** It is important for you to display a positive, enthusiastic, outgoing, and supportive attitude during your field experience. Other ways to demonstrate professionalism in the classroom include:

  - **Show up prepared.** Assist the classroom teacher with activities. If the teacher does not offer suggestions of things you can do, take initiative and offer to help. If you are presenting a lesson, be sure to come well-prepared with all necessary materials.

  - **Act responsibly.** If your cooperating teacher lends you materials, be sure to return them promptly. Put things back where you found them. Be clear about whether copies of papers are for you to borrow or to keep.

  - **Actively participate.** Most cooperating teachers appreciate students who engage in meaningful ways with students, and are not interested in having passive observers. At the same time, you are a guest and are in the classroom to observe and support the lessons and activities the teacher has planned. Be a participant, but not a distraction. Volunteer to help in small ways to demonstrate your eagerness and ability to follow the teacher’s lead. To become a successful participant in the classroom, you will likely need a combination of patience, gentle persistence, and a positive, respectful attitude. *For more*
information on ways to interact in the classroom, see Appendix A.

- **Interact with students; not peers.** If you are assigned to a classroom with other field experience students, remember that you must not disturb the classroom. Keep any conversations with your classmates to a minimum, and related to the activities taking place in the class.

- **Leave your cell phone off.** If someone needs to reach you during your field experience time, give them the phone number for the school. They can call the office and leave a message for you with the office staff. You should not be seen talking, texting, playing games, or using the internet on your phone.

- **Save snacking for later.** Students are generally not permitted to eat, drink, or chewing gum. Unless there is a special event or circumstance in which everyone is permitted, do not eat or drink in the classroom.

- **Be discreet – in the classroom, in the school, in the community.** Be thoughtful in what you share about students, teachers, and schools in all of your conversations and actions. Take care not to use the names of teachers, schools, or pupils when discussing your experience. You never know who may be listening in, or who may know someone who knows someone, who knows someone ...

While it is appropriate to be reflective and to dissect the practices you observe in the field, your critique must always be conducted professionally. One way to monitor this is to ask
yourself if you would be comfortable making your comments in front of the person you are discussing. If not, don't.

*Please note: This is a very serious issue. There are schools that no longer accept IU field experience students because of inappropriate comments made previously that breached confidentiality, or betrayed a trust held by the teachers, schools, and communities being discussed.*

- **Do not conduct research.** University students are not permitted to test or survey pupils in schools except with materials related directly to the student's work, and where previously approved by the classroom teacher. “Research” or “evaluative instruments” must be approved in advance by the school district. Visit http://education.indiana.edu/faculty/instructor-resources/mccsc-research.html for more information on the procedures for conducting research in MCCSC schools.

- **Dress for success!** First impressions matter. In representing Indiana University and yourself as a pre-service teacher, it is important to always dress your professional best when you are in the field. Using teacher dress codes from various schools, we have developed some *guidelines for field experience students to follow, as found in Appendix E.* Principals and teachers have asked IU teacher candidates be removed from their school because of inappropriate dress that didn't meet the expectations of the school and community.

*Please note: Dressing inappropriately can sabotage your overall professional image, jeopardize potential job offers or recommendations, and in some cases, can also result in dismissal from your field experience.*
At the End of Your Field Experience

On your final visit, be sure to remind your cooperating teacher to return your evaluation and time sheet to the Office of Clinical Experiences in the envelope provided, or by the method outlined in the teacher’s information materials.

It is also important that you take the time and effort to thank your cooperating teacher for welcoming you into his or her classroom. Different courses have different requirements regarding the completion of a thank you card or letter. You are expected to send a formal thank you in the form of a card or letter for all of your field experiences. Some classes require students to bring their cards in a stamped, addressed envelope* to the Office of Clinical Experiences so that you can be checked off our lists for this requirement. If in doubt, ask your instructor or your placement coordinator for the procedures required for your course.

* See Appendix G for instructions on completing this envelope.

Problem Solving

In addition to experiencing teaching and learning from the perspective of a teacher, sometimes students are exposed to situations that may be beyond their training. Your cooperating teacher can assist you in navigating through some of those events, and your field placement supervisor, course instructor, and placement coordinator are always available to speak with you and provide guidance and support should you need it after the fact.

If a student vomits, develops a bloody nose, or you encounter other bodily fluids:

You should avoid contact with any bodily fluids, and should not clean it up. Teachers and staff in Indiana schools receive Universal Precautions Training*
every school year – you will not receive this training prior to your field experience. Your cooperating teacher or another designated staff member is the responsible party in these situations.

*See Appendix H for more information on Universal Precautions.*

If standardized tests or other special activities forbid you to be in the classroom, or if they make your presence in the classroom awkward or intrusive:

You should take the opportunity to visit the school library or ask your cooperating teacher to introduce you to another teacher to observe or help. However, never assume you can visit another classroom without the advance permission of the teacher.

If you suspect child abuse:

In the case of suspected child abuse, it is the responsibility of the field experience student to report any signs of child abuse. Early field experience students should follow these steps:

- Take time to write complete notes regarding observations, conversations, etc., that have led to the suspicions of child abuse;

- Report concerns to the course instructor, the teacher, the school principal or director, and/or the school counselors;

- Together with the individual(s) listed above, determine the appropriate way to manage the issue. Suspected abuse must be reported to CPS and;

- Advise the Office of Clinical Experiences.
If you are harassed or find yourself in an uncomfortable/unsafe situation:

You have the right to feel safe and secure at all times. If you find yourself in a situation where you believe you are being harassed, or something occurs that makes you feel uncomfortable, or unsafe, it is important for you to take immediate action.

• Excuse yourself from the environment. Keep your comments short, and to the point. “Excuse me, I need to go now.”

• As soon as you are safely out of the environment, contact your field experience supervisor, course instructor, and the director of early field experiences immediately. They will advise you of what steps to take next. We are here to help.

If other problems arise:

Where possible, first try to work out any problems you are having with your cooperating teacher and/or your course instructor. If you have a logistical concern, contact your course’s placement coordinator. If further assistance is needed, make an appointment to meet with a member of our office staff. It is a good idea to take care of problems while they are still small. We are always here to help make your placement a success!

If you withdraw from your field experience course:

If you must drop your field experience course, notify your cooperating teacher (if you have received your placement), your instructor, and the Office of Clinical Experiences. The office may be working on a placement, or may have
identified a host teacher who will need to know not to expect you in the classroom.

You are urged to successfully complete all of your field experiences before the established deadline each semester. Most field experiences cannot be made up at a later time. If you do not complete the required field experience hours and/or assignments, you face the potential of earning a failing grade for the field experience.

*Please note: In most cases of failed or dropped field experiences, you would have to retake the co-requisite course(s) as well as the entire field experience.*
Appendix A – Participation Ideas and Suggestions

BE INTERACTIVE

Spend the majority of your time working with children:

- Get up and move around; be productive!
- NEVER SIT IN THE BACK OF THE ROOM!
- Shadow the children.
- Assume the role of teacher, not observer.
- Remind the children to stay on task.
- Help students complete work.

BE PROACTIVE

Take ownership of your experience:

- Do not wait for the teacher to ask you for help.

- Offer your assistance; try to put yourself in as many different situations as possible.

- Do not spend all of your time grading; try to complete seatwork as quickly as possible so that you can spend time with the students.

* Look for ways to be involved in the classroom *

* Be an active participant in the classroom *

Checklist for implementing your professionalism in the classroom:

✓ Find out what your supervising teacher thinks of teaching.

✓ Find a child that needs assistance.

✓ Supervise the hall between classes.

✓ Assist the teacher in planning a lesson.

✓ Review classroom materials.

✓ Grade a set of papers: Learn to record grades.

✓ Share a book with a child during independent reading time.

✓ Teach a lesson.

✓ Actively participate in a classroom routine.

✓ Create a bulletin board that supports a current topic of study.

✓ Assist children in selecting library books.

✓ Help students with independent work.
### Appendix B: Sample Early Field Experiences Student Evaluation

**IU Early Field Experiences Student Evaluation**

**Student Name:**

**Teacher Name:**

Cooperating Teachers: For each item, use the following scale to indicate the skill level or disposition you observed.

- N = not observed
- 0 = unsatisfactory, INTERVENTION NEEDED (PLEASE INCLUDE NARRATIVE)
- 1 = needs improvement
- 2 = satisfactory
- 3 = outstanding

*Designed as a dispositional & performance assessment of pre-service teachers based on INiTASC standards & School of Education “Six Guiding Principles”.*

#### Professional Responsibility

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. professional appearance</td>
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<td>2. timeliness &amp; attendance</td>
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<td>3. communicates with clarity, fluency and appropriate grammar</td>
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<td>4. displays good judgment and common sense</td>
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<td>5. demonstrates initiative, enthusiasm, and confidence in making the most of educational experiences</td>
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<td>6. treats students and colleagues with kindness, fairness, patience, dignity and respect</td>
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#### Growth and Reflection

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<td>7. accepts constructive criticism and makes appropriate modifications upon reflection</td>
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<td>8. displays an awareness of personal and professional boundaries in interactions</td>
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<td>9. develops informed teaching practices through study and collaboration</td>
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#### Personalized Learning

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<td>10. commits to all learners from diverse backgrounds, experiences, cultures, and ability levels</td>
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<td>11. displays respect and rapport toward students</td>
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<td>12. commits to the development of creativity and critical thinking for deeper understanding of content</td>
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<td>13. varies teaching strategies and materials to address learner needs</td>
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<td>14. promotes engagement of all students and checks for understanding</td>
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#### Knowledge

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<tr>
<td>15. demonstrates knowledge of student learning and development</td>
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<td>16. exhibits knowledge of content</td>
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<td>17. gives good, clear directions and communicates learning expectations</td>
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#### Learning Environment & Community

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<td>18. displays efficient use of instructional time</td>
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<td>19. manages group dynamics effectively</td>
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<td>20. maintains high expectations and implements them consistently for all students</td>
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Comments (please use the back for additional comments):
Appendix C: Directions for Background Checks**

**There are some school districts that work specifically and only with a different background check company than the one indicated here. Please be sure to follow the directions of the graduate assistant/placement coordinator working with your class. If you are unsure, ask.

Students in field experiences and student teaching are required to provide a criminal history check to their placement school that is updated, at minimum, every 12 months (some school corporations require more frequent checks).

For most field experiences and student teaching placements, students will need to order their checks through Select Check for Indiana University Students Volunteers in Programs Involving Children. This particular vendor has partnered with Indiana University to provide a consistent way to achieve compliance with the nation-wide and multiple-county level background checks school corporations require.

Some school corporations (such as Indianapolis Public Schools) require an additional check from a specific vendor (and want updates every 6 months) which may result in the need to purchase additional checks for placements in those districts prior to your field experience or student teaching.

How to Order Your Check

To obtain the required nationwide sex and violent offender check and multi-county criminal check for student teaching or field experience:

1) Go to: [http://www.backgroundchecks.com/solutions/indianauniversity](http://www.backgroundchecks.com/solutions/indianauniversity)

2) Create Your Account: Click Register Now

a. The promotional code fields should be kept as the default, prefilled information.

b. Make sure to check the box confirming you are registering as an individual/student/volunteer.

c. Once you've created your account successfully, you should receive a welcome to backgroundchecks.com notification.

d. Read and accept terms and conditions.

3) Intended purpose can be filled in as No resale under resale intent and then Other written consent under “end-user purposes”

4) Complete requested information, including name, social security number, etc.
5) Confirm order and purchase

a. The IU package should already be set at a base rate of $18.00 ***

b. The counties from which records will be pulled are displayed (include both local/Bloomington address and home address/county)

***Some counties charge additional fees to process checks. Notably, New York counties charge $65 for access. Please direct any questions regarding these extra fees to BGC.com. Their contact information can be found at the bottom of this form.

6) Processing your background check can take up to a week or two, depending on how quickly different counties respond.

7) To access your report, visit http://www.backgroundchecks.com/solutions/indianauniversity and log in using the account information you created earlier. Click on the link Manage Reports (seen in the blue highlighted tab below). From there, you will see your report. Click on your hyperlinked name to access the report.

8) Print the entire results report - NOT the grade certificate by clicking Print this Report on the lower right side of the screen (see below). You must present a copy of this report to your placement school on your first visit.
NOTE:

If you have any questions or issues with your order, please contact the company at 866.300.8524 or service@backgroundchecks.com.

If you have a criminal record, at minimum, a letter of explanation will be required. Contact the Office of Clinical Experiences at 812.856.8503, or fieldexp@indiana.edu as soon as possible to discuss how to proceed.

Criminal History Check procedures evolve continually at both the state and local/school corporation level. You should expect to be required to purchase criminal history checks for employment and throughout your teaching career.

Criminal records may have an adverse effect on your ability to obtain employment and the state will hold a hearing to permanently revoke the license of individuals who have specific convictions--see Indiana Code 20-28-5-8.
Appendix D – Letter of Introduction

A letter of introduction is your opportunity to introduce yourself to your cooperating teacher and to make a good first impression. Your instructor will give you instructions on when to have your letter written, and in what format. Please give your letter to your instructor on time and carefully edited.

The letter should be typed in a standard letter format (see the next page). It should be brief, upbeat, and friendly but not overly informal. Be sure to include:

- Your name, phone number, local address, e-mail address, and class standing.
- A summary of previous experiences working with children (e.g., summer camp, day care, Sunday school, babysitting).
- A bulleted list of your goals for this experience (see sample letter on following page).

You may want to include some of the following:

- A few favorite (and relevant) college courses that helped you learn about the growth and development of children or teaching children in general.
- A brief description of your background in your content area (e.g., high school/college achievements or honors in your major field).
- A list of other relevant interests, activities, and hobbies.

Keep your letter positive; do not make negative comments about other experiences, teachers, or classrooms. Be sure to proofread your letter carefully then ask someone else to look it over as well. An unacceptable letter may negatively impact your placement and reputation as a teacher candidate.

Go to http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/home.html for information about the Writing Tutorial Services that are available.
Sample Letter Format

Your full name
Your local address
Your local phone number
Your e-mail address

Dear Cooperating Teacher:

Write a paragraph that opens with a sentence in which you express your interest in or enthusiasm for your field experience. Then write a couple of sentences about your major and related interests.

Write a paragraph about your previous experience working with children. Keep it brief and positive.

Write additional paragraphs to address additional topics as suggested on the other side of this page.

Write a list of 2-4 goals for this field experience.

Examples:
• To gain experience working with small groups
• To learn more about grading and gradebook strategies
• To learn classroom management strategies
• To learn more about lesson planning
• To work with students individually who need special help

Close with an expression of appreciation.

Sincerely,

Sign and type your name
Appendix E – IU Office of Clinical Experiences Guidelines for Field Experience Clothing

As you move from being a student to becoming a professional, issues related to what is and is not acceptable to wear during field experiences often arise. While you may want to express your individuality, or wear clothing that is trendy, it is very important for you to understand the importance of appropriate dress when you visit placement schools.

We have had teachers comment on students wearing skirts that were too short, or shirts that were too revealing for a school environment. We have also had principals tell us that they have decided not to hire our students to teach in their schools – even when their experiences were great, their philosophy was right on with the school culture – because their dress was less than professional.

We want you to be remembered for all the right reasons – not for being the one who wore something that was interpreted as inappropriate. Our advice, then, is that when in doubt, err on the side of caution.

With that in mind, and using teacher dress codes from various schools, we have developed the following guidelines for field experience students:

- Wear clothing that is neat and clean. Clothing should not be tight, revealing, short, torn, tattered, dirty or excessively faded. It should not include visual, written, or implied messages that are likely to disrupt the school environment. Sweat suits, jogging/wind suits, overalls, or denim pants/jeans of any color cannot be worn.

- Noisy, distracting jewelry/accessories that could cause a safety hazard should not be worn. In keeping with professional decorum, ears are the
only exposed areas of the body on which pierced jewelry may be worn. Tattoos must be covered.

- Appropriate footwear should be worn at all times. Shoes traditionally worn around the home (i.e., house shoes) or to the beach (i.e., flip-flop design) are not appropriate.

- Women must wear dress or casual slacks, skirts, or dresses. Skirts and dresses should not be shorter than slightly above the knee. Any slits, flaps, or openings in skirts/dresses may not be higher than fingertip length. Leggings may only be worn under a dress/skirt – they are not appropriate to be worn as pants in a field experience.

- Seasonal/decorated shirts and blouses may be worn. Tank tops, backless apparel, midriffs, tops with straps less than 2 inches, sleeveless tops that are revealing (deep or low cut), or see through blouses are not acceptable.

- Men should wear dress or casual slacks. Shirts with collars and a tie, sweaters, or turtlenecks should be worn. Socks must be worn with shoes. Shorts may not be worn.

- Hair should always be well groomed. Men are permitted facial hair if neatly trimmed and moderate in style.
Appendix F – How to Conduct an Effective Observation

Many of the experiences encountered during observation/participation in early field experience will provide a rich background for your development as a professional teacher; therefore, journaling, recording, and analyzing events as they happen are all important parts of the pre-teaching experience.

It is important for you to plan observations and activities well in advance. Know the purposes and goals for each observation. Careful planning is critical to a valid observation.

The good observer is objective. This is difficult since each person’s past experience, value system, and relation to observed events serve to maximize certain aspects and minimize others.

Since your previous teaching experience is limited, you should not make premature judgments and pronouncements about the schools and teachers you observe. Your role is one of description, not criticism. Try to suspend your biases and strive for objectivity. In everyday life as well as in professional circles, it is not always necessary to express an opinion on each and every topic discussed.

The following observation instrument is designed to guide the observer to “observe with meaning.” Use these suggestions to make mental, and if relevant, physical notes of your observations.

1) Observe the learning environment. Note the size of the space, the arrangement, furniture, equipment, number of students, displays, storage of materials, noise level, etc.

2) Note pupil/teacher interaction. What are the teacher’s methods of building rapport and maintaining a positive learning environment?
What is the ratio of teacher-talk to student-talk? How does the teacher recognize good behavior or correct responses? How are transitions made between activities? How are non-verbal cues used by the teacher? The students?

3) Observe student activity. Are the students capable of completing assignments on their own? What activities are provided for students when regular assignments are completed? What types of activities are students engaged in with other students?

4) Observe teacher activity. Was evaluation of pupil work apparent? How? Is there evidence of teacher preparation of materials, lessons, etc.? How are record keeping, housekeeping, and other routine duties handled?

5) Note instructional specifics. What organization patterns are used (grouping, etc.)? Are the goals different regarding individual instruction vs. group activity? How does the teacher convey the goals? What content, or content areas, are being learned? What learning aids are being used?
Appendix G - Important Reminders for Addressing Your Thank You Letter

- Make sure the address is accurate, using a complete and correct address. If in doubt, check the school’s web site.

- Print the delivery and return address on the front of the envelope.

- Print or type clearly using a black ink pen.

- Don’t forget to add a stamp! The current cost (as of July, 2014) to mail a letter or card within the United States is $0.49.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your name</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your street address</td>
<td>Stamp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City, State, ZIP code</td>
<td>Here</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name of Teacher
Name of School
Street address of school
City, State ZIP code
Appendix H – Universal Precautions

Procedures for Handling Spilled Blood and Body Fluids

**Step 1** Put on disposable gloves (latex or vinyl).

**Step 2** Use paper towels to absorb spill.

**Step 3** Place used towels in leak-proof plastic bag. (Extensive spills – use RED plastic bag).

**Step 4** Flood area with bleach solution** or a dry sanitary absorbent agent.

**Step 5** Clean area with paper towels, vacuum, or broom and dustpan.

**Step 6** Place used towels, vacuum cleaner bag, or waste in a leak-proof plastic bag.

**Step 7** Remove gloves – pull inside out.

**Step 8** Place gloves in bag and tie.

**Step 9** Wash hands with soap and water for at least 10 seconds.

**Bleach Solution = 1 part bleach to 9 parts water.**
**Universal Precautions Expectations**

In general, early field experience students are not required to complete Universal Precautions training because they should never be solely responsible for pupils.

However, you should be aware of these precautions, the risks of handling bodily fluids, and your school’s policies. *Serious risks include exposure to HIV (AIDS), Hepatitis, and other blood borne pathogens.* You will be required to complete Universal Precautions training before you student teach.

To protect yourself, we encourage you to ask the cooperating teacher how incidents involving bodily fluids are handled in the classroom. You should at least know where the plastic gloves and first aid kits are in the classroom.

**Procedures for Early Field Experience Students**

As an early field experience guest in the classroom, you should follow the following procedure if a sick or injured student approaches you:

1. Without touching, try to calm the student needing assistance.
2. Hand clean tissues or paper towels to the pupil and ask the pupil to cover the wound or wipe his/her mouth or hands if vomiting.
3. Notify the teacher and let the teacher handle the pupil and the cleanup.

-OR-

You may choose to send another pupil to notify the teacher, so you can keep control of the situation and prevent other students from coming in contact with bodily fluids.

Make sure that the pupil receives the necessary attention from someone trained to provide care and that the other students are supervised.
Early Field Experiences
Professionalism Agreement

This field experience, and all of your future IU field experiences, require you to follow the professional guidelines as outlined in this handbook and below.

- I understand that during my field experiences I am a guest in the classroom, as well as a representative of Indiana University. It is my responsibility to use this opportunity to learn more about teaching with the objective of becoming a more effective educational professional.

- I agree to maintain professional, legal, and ethical conduct at all times. I agree to protect the confidentiality of the classroom, of the children, and of the teachers. As a guest in an established classroom environment, I understand that my pedagogies and strategies must be used as a supplement to the teaching style of my host teacher.

- I have read and agree to the procedures and expectations as outlined in the Early Field Experiences Student Handbook.

- I understand that failure to comply with this agreement may result in the termination of my field placement & failure of the course.
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