

## Curriculum & Instruction – Field Experience/ Practicum FAQs

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### What is a practicum/field experience?

Field experiences are developed to provide opportunities for candidates in teacher education programs to observe and apply theory learned in an authentic classroom and practical setting. In addition, it provides candidates with opportunities to work with a full range of candidates including varying ages and abilities and different racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and linguistic backgrounds. At all levels of field experiences, candidates are asked to act as “participant observers”, and to closely monitor all classroom/setting interactions. Candidates are also asked to seek ways to contribute to the environment in which they are placed. Teacher candidates are required to complete a minimum of 100 clock hours of classroom experience prior to student teaching.

### I have a disability. How do I request special accommodations?

You will need to contact the Disability Support Services Office; the FPO will arrange accommodations for you based on their determination of needs. The Disability Support Services Office is located in 155 Campus Center, phone: 315-312-3358, email [dss@oswego.edu](mailto:dss@oswego.edu)

### Will I need transportation?

Candidates are responsible for arranging their own reliable transportation in advance. The commute may be as long as 50 miles so plan accordingly.

### How can I find transportation if I do not have a car?

Options candidates have for transportation if you do not have a car are:

- Renting a [zipcar](#) from the school
- Taking a bus via [Centro Bus Service](#)

- Send an email to the field placement office at [fpoffice@oswego.edu](mailto:fpoffice@oswego.edu) to obtain contact information for other candidates who will be placed in the same area as you

### **How do I sign up/register for a placement?**

Every semester, you will both register and sign up for your field placement.

- Registration takes place on MyOswego the same way you register for all classes.
- Sign-Ups will take place during Field Placement Sign Up days which occur at the end of the semester previous to each placement. The session dates and times will be advertised on posters, posted on the FPO's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and on the FPO's website.

### **Can I arrange my own placements?**

The Field Placement Office is responsible for making all experiential placements for teacher candidates. The FPO works hard to maintain excellent relationships with our cooperating schools; we abide by their placement procedures and comply with all school policies. Therefore, candidates must refrain from seeking their own placement; sometimes candidates can delay placement for everyone when they make an informal request for their own placement. Therefore, all field experience assignments must be arranged through the Field Placement Office.

### **I did observation hours at another college. Can those hours be used towards my 100 hours of observation for SUNY Oswego?**

Only hours completed while enrolled in your SUNY Oswego teacher education program count towards fulfillment of the New York State minimum 100 hour field experience requirement.

### **How will I be notified of my placement?**

The Field Placement Office will notify you of your placement via Tk20. Placements that are confirmed within 1-3 days prior to your start date will also be sent by email or phone call.

### **I know several other people already have their placement but I am still waiting for mine. What should I do?**

Please be patient. Securing a placement is usually a complicated undertaking! The FPO works with a great number of candidates, teachers, and school administrators. Additionally, no school or teacher is required to take a student teacher, so we ask you to be patient while we work to complete your placement. If you e-mail ([fpoffice@oswego.edu](mailto:fpoffice@oswego.edu)) or stop by our office (175 Wilber Hall) to ask about your status, please give us your name, your program and concentration information so we can respond to you appropriately.

### **What do I do on the first day of my placement?**

You should report to your assigned school's main office half an hour prior to the placement time. Be sure to follow all sign-in procedures in the main office every time you report. Introduce yourself to the office staff and the principal and ask for directions to your cooperating teacher's classroom.

You should begin attending your placement on the date noted in your notification email or on the next school day following your notification. For example, if your email arrives on Monday and your placement day is scheduled for Wednesdays, you should begin your placement on Wednesday of that week.

### **How long is my placement?**

You will be expected to attend your placement every week for the duration of the semester. Candidates in Block 1 and Block 2 are responsible for attending 2.5 to 3 hours weekly. CED Block 3 candidates are responsible for attending two full days weekly and ADO Block 3 candidates will attend 1 full day or 2 half days weekly (unless otherwise noted by the professor).

### **What should I do while at my placement?**

At all levels of field experience candidates are asked to act as a “participant observer” and to closely monitor all classroom/setting interactions. Part of being a participant observer is that you are ACTIVELY participating during your placement. Candidates are asked to seek ways to contribute to the classroom in which they are placed. The field experience is not limited to just one classroom setting. With the cooperating teacher’s approval, candidates may visit other places in their assigned school/ practicum setting to learn as much as possible about the profession.

You may also receive assignments (projects, reflections, etc) from your professors that directly apply to what you are doing while at your placement. Be sure to notify your assigned teacher well in advance of any assignments that will affect them (teacher interviews, mini-lessons, etc).

### **What should I do if I am sick or have an emergency?**

You are responsible for attending every week but in the event of an absence or tardiness due to illness or an unavoidable emergency, you will need to call the school as soon as you know you cannot attend and let the office know you will not be there:

- Identify yourself by name and college
- State the name of the teacher you are working with
- Indicate your reason for absence
- Ask that a message be given to your cooperating teacher

### **What do I do if my schedule changes and I cannot go to my placement during my scheduled time?**

You should go to the placement at your scheduled time and then work with your cooperating teacher to find a time that is mutually agreeable for the remainder of the semester. You would regularly attend according to this new scheduled time every week. Please notify the Field Placement Office of the change. If you and your cooperating teacher are unable to agree on another time, please contact the FPO immediately. Failure to notify the office in a timely manner will forfeit the placement.