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Extended Practicum Handbook

Department of Learning & Teaching

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About this Handbook

The Extended Practicum Guidelines included here have been developed by the Office of Field Experiences to present information to the Extended Practicum teacher candidates, cooperating teachers, university supervisors, and faculty. By defining everyone's role and the intended outcomes of the experience, we anticipate that all participants will better understand their responsibilities and the significance of their roles.

While most pertinent forms and documents are located at the end of this handbook, you can also locate all up-to-date documents for download at: <https://sites.sandiego.edu/dlt/field-experience/>

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Introduction to Field Experiences

One of the hallmarks of a teacher education program is the time spent not only learning through coursework, but also learning alongside experienced teachers in the field. Therefore, in addition to coursework at USD, your time in the teaching field serves as a cornerstone for your development into an effective teacher. The field experiences you complete during your program are intended to scaffold increasing teaching responsibilities and align with your coursework.

The field experience component of your teacher education program consists of robust experiences in both special education and general education, regardless of the credential(s) being sought, across every semester of the program. It is our belief as faculty that all teachers can greatly benefit from a deeper understanding of the role of the Education Specialist, even if they are only credentialed in Multiple or Single Subjects.

Further, it is our mission to place you in diverse settings throughout your program. This diversity could mean different types of schools (i.e., public or charter), grade levels, socioeconomic makeup, districts, and percentages of students who are emergent bilinguals and/or special needs. For this reason, you should expect to be in a different setting each semester of your program.

Through both coursework and fieldwork, we want our students to understand that the United States is a land rich in diversity and this diversity is reflected in our nation's schools. According to the California Department of Education, the California public school student population in the 2021-22 school year was 21.1% White, 5.1% African American, 55.9% Hispanic, 2.3% Filipino, 9.5% Asian, and 0.4% Pacific Islander. In addition, 19.1% of students are classified as English Learners, more than half are eligible for free or reduced-price meals (FRPM), and approximately 12% receive special education services (www.cde.ca.gov).

The Progression of Graduate-Level Field Experiences

Placement	General Overview	Teacher Candidate Goals	Hours Required
Semester 1: Practicum EDTE 551	Introductory experience in the field observing teachers and students and gaining an understanding of San Diego-area schools from the teacher's perspective	Observe a classroom setting and complete field-based assignments from course instructors	A minimum of 20-30 hours minimum across one term spread across 8 or more weeks
Semester 2: Extended Practicum EDTE 552	Splitting weekly time with a general education and a special education teacher in observing and practice teaching small segments of learning	Observation and 4 observed practice lessons with supervisor feedback	20 hours per week for a total of 260 hours across one semester
Semester 3: Student Teaching, first credential area EDTE 553/ EDTE 554	Practice teaching alongside an experienced teacher in your content area. You will be responsible for teaching a minimum of 20 days on your own within the credential area	Practice teaching with at least 20 days of solo teaching and 6 formal observations and feedback	Full-time for the semester for approximately 455 hours
Semester 4 (depending on your program): Student Teaching, second credential area EDTE 553/ EDTE 554	Practice teaching alongside an experienced teacher in your content area. You will be responsible for teaching a minimum of 20 days on your own within the credential area	Practice teaching with at least 20 days of solo teaching and 6 formal observations and feedback	Part-time for the semester for approximately 150 hours

In your first semester, *Practicum* is an introductory field experience of approximately 20 hours. The hallmark of this experience is observation—this is likely your first time in a classroom focusing on the teacher's role and perspective. It will also provide you with an emerging understanding of local San Diego schools, curriculum, students, and communities.

Extended Practicum is the next field experience you will complete. This is an approximately 260-hour commitment over one semester. You are expected to spend 20 hours per week at a school; 10 hours will be with a general education teacher and 10 hours will be with a special education teacher. This is the same for students seeking one or two credentials. You will also work with an English Learner (EL) student during this time as aligned with your coursework.

For *Student Teaching*, you will spend a semester at the school site full-time. You may complete either of your credential areas first. You can find out more information about these placements in the Student Teaching Handbook.

Prerequisites to Placement for Extended Practicum

Before any teacher candidate may begin in an Extended Practicum field placement, you must:

- Pass the CBEST and file the results with the credential office,
- Have your Certificate of Clearance (CoC) and TB test on file with the credential office,
- Successfully complete a Practicum placement, and
- Have a B- or better in all coursework with no Incompletes.

The Extended Practicum Experience

Time at the school site: During Extended Practicum, teacher candidates will spend roughly ten hours in a Multiple Subjects or Single Subjects classroom, depending on their intended credential area, and ten hours with an Education Specialist per week, both at the same school site. Each candidate's schedule will be determined at the school site, but your time should be spread out over 4-5 days per week. During that time, the candidate will be expected to gradually shift from solely observation to taking responsibility for teaching some core content and practicing teaching.

University Supervisor: Extended Practicum candidates are assigned a University Supervisor who will observe them 4 times during the course of the semester, twice in General Education and twice in Special Education. It is important to know that these observations are opportunities to learn and grow from the critical feedback provided. An important component of being a teacher is being able to be reflective and improve our practice; whether we are a novice or experienced teacher, there is always room to improve.

Triad Meeting: The placement should begin with a triad meeting with the teacher candidate, university supervisor, and cooperating teacher(s) as early in the semester as possible. This might take place in-person or over Zoom. The university supervisor will lead this meeting and review expectations, timelines, schedules, observations, and the scope of the semester. They will also answer any questions to make sure that communication is clear and everyone's roles are understood.

Grading: Extended Practicum is graded on a Pass/Fail/Incomplete scale and serves as both a support to your coursework and a prerequisite to Student Teaching. You must pass Extended Practicum and have a B- or better in all credential coursework to move on to Student Teaching.

Increasing Responsibilities: During Extended Practicum, you should take on increased responsibilities as you work from observation toward practicing teaching. This will look different for everyone, but it is intended to scaffold the experience and prepare you for student teaching. All feedback you receive from your cooperating teacher(s) and supervisor is intended to be formative and help you grow and learn as a future educator. See below for a sample of how your responsibilities might change over the course of the semester.

<i>Sample Extended Practicum Experience – Multiple Subjects & Special Education</i>			
Gradual Assumption of Responsibility	Literacy Content	Mathematics Content	Special Education
Early in semester	Observe, provide individual and small-group support	Observe, provide individual and small-group support	Shadow cooperating teacher, observe, provide individual and small-group support
Mid-semester	Co-teach class on most days	Co-teach class on most days	Co-teach a lesson; teach an individual, small-group, or whole-class lesson when appropriate
By the end of the USD semester	Plan and teach a class	Plan and teach a class	Plan for and teach lesson(s) which relate to students' IEP goals

<i>Sample Extended Practicum Experience –Single Subjects & Special Education</i>		
Gradual Assumption of Responsibility	General Education Content	Special Education Class(es)
Early in semester	Observe, provide individual and small-group support	Shadow cooperating teacher, observe, provide individual and small-group support
Mid-semester	Co-teach class	Co-teach a lesson; teach an individual, small-group, or whole-class lesson when appropriate
By the end of the USD semester	Take lead on planning; co-teach class	Plan for and teach lesson(s) which relate to students' IEP goals

Requirements and Expectations

All teacher candidates are expected to comply with the following requirements for Extended Practicum. Failure to comply with these requirements could result in disciplinary action and may jeopardize the candidate's graduate status and/or their ability to earn a teaching credential.

Attendance – Candidates will be expected to attend the assigned classroom in accordance with the agreed-upon schedule and actively participate in the events of the class and professional activities of the school. They should utilize the Teacher Candidate Weekly Schedule form and adhere to the agreement throughout the semester.

Classroom observation and instruction – Candidates are expected to participate in classroom instruction as directed by the cooperating teacher through active observation. This means that you should be engaging with students, assisting the teacher, and learning about teaching and learning throughout your time in the classroom. When given the opportunity, you should start by leading instruction in one-on-one conferencing, small group support, and building into whole class instruction for small learning segments.

Curriculum and assessment planning – Candidates will be expected to teach the assigned curriculum. Candidates will be expected to assess students' learning using assessments designed and implemented in collaboration with cooperating teachers and/or university supervisors.

Being observed – Throughout your placement, you will be observed and evaluated by your cooperating teacher and university supervisor. A minimum of 1 formal triad evaluation conference will take place at the end of Extended Practicum (e.g., final evaluation). In addition, the candidate will receive formative feedback after each supervisor visit and cooperating teacher observations, and ongoing formative feedback from both. Candidates are expected to respond to this feedback and show evidence of learning and continued professional growth.

Course-related assignments – Assignments in classes will support and complement students' fieldwork experience. This includes the need to work with a student who is an Emergent Bilingual (e.g., English Language Learner) as well as students who are in special education to be able to complete your assignments.

What "counts" as Extended Practicum – A myriad of activities can count toward your hours. As long as you are doing the work of a teacher, then you may count those hours. A sample of activities include: preparing lessons, setting up materials for the day, working with small groups or one-on-one, attending staff or team meetings with your cooperating teacher, planning lessons or discussing students' needs over a free period or lunch break, etc.

Logging your time – You will receive information on Tevera, which will be the dashboard for logging your time and requesting your teacher's signature to verify your state-required hours in the field.

Placement Locations

Field placements will take place at carefully selected sites chosen for teaching excellence, faculty and administrative support for candidate learning, and diversity among the student body. Per CTC regulations, the teaching experiences are selected to reflect socioeconomic and cultural diversity and classrooms that include Emergent Bilinguals.

Placement decisions will be made at the discretion of the Office of Field Experiences. Although candidates are invited to share their preferences and make requests, decisions will be made in accordance with the goals of the program, the requirements of the state, and the professional judgment of the USD faculty and staff as to the placement site that best fits the experience and needs of the teacher candidate.

Supervision & Mentorship Structure

Throughout the field experience, the university supervisor and cooperating teachers act as both supervisors and mentors to teacher candidates. Some specific expectations are listed below.

University supervisor – supports and monitors the teacher candidate throughout the field experience. The supervisor provides an important link between the university and the placement. The university supervisor will:

- Meet with the teacher candidate and cooperating teacher at the beginning of each semester to establish an appropriate structure to support the candidate's integration into the classroom (e.g., Triad Meeting)
- Formally observe and provide feedback to Extended Practicum candidate
- Maintain regular contact with the Field Experiences Office and cooperating teacher, and alerting them to any concerns regarding the teacher candidate
- Facilitate the final evaluation
- Participate in field experience support meetings with USD faculty, the field experiences director, and the program coordinator as needed

Cooperating teachers – models content expertise and strong pedagogical practices while mentoring and providing practice opportunities for the teacher candidate. Cooperating teachers will:

- Establish an appropriate structure to support candidates' integration into the classroom
- Provide guidance in candidates' planning, instruction, and assessment of students
- Give regular informal feedback to teacher candidates
- Complete formal evaluations at the end of the semester
- Participate in triad evaluation meetings with the candidate and university supervisor
- Maintain regular contact with the university supervisor and alerting them to any concerns regarding the MCC candidate

Being Observed and Evaluated

It can be difficult to be observed and evaluated during field work for a number of reasons. Extended Practicum is graded on a Pass/Fail/Incomplete scale so that you do not have to worry about “perfection” in order to achieve a high grade in the course. In fact, one of the hallmarks of field work is the opportunity to try something, receive feedback, and then try it again, whether or not you did well the first time.

Observation is an essential component of teaching. You will be observed and evaluated in your teacher education program and when you’re a fully credentialed teacher, you will continue to be observed and evaluated by your administrator. Learning to discuss your lessons and receive constructive and critical feedback now will help you be a successful teacher. And remember, we always want to be the best teachers we can be for the benefit of our students. So ongoing feedback and improvement is an integral component of a strong teaching career.

Ongoing observation feedback: Your cooperating teachers will provide you with ongoing, informal feedback after you practice teaching or working with a small group or one-on-one with a student. They may provide you this feedback orally or with a written form or notes.

Formal evaluation feedback: Your university supervisor will visit your school site and/or ask you to record your teaching up to four times for Extended Practicum. During these observations, they will complete a Lesson Observation Form (Appendix A), which will be provided to you and also filed with the Field Office. This feedback will help you identify areas for improvement that you can bring into your student teaching placement(s) as you continue to improve your teaching practice over the course of your program.

Final Evaluations: Your CT and supervisor will collaborate on your final semester evaluation form (Appendix B). Again, Extended Practicum is scored on a Pass/Fail/Incomplete scale. You should welcome the feedback provided on this form as constructive criticism and know that it is intended to help make you a better teacher as you prepare for student teaching.

The Lesson Observation Form and Final Evaluation Form are both rooted in the California Teacher Performance Expectations, which are linked on the Field Office website.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Do I have to go every day to my school site for Extended Practicum?

A: No, but you should spread your hours out over 4-5 school days per week so that you can see some continuity in lesson and unit planning and the day-to-day operations of a classroom environment.

Q: Does my special education cooperating teacher need to hold a mild/moderate teaching certificate in order for me to work with them?

A: Yes. In fact, any teacher you're assigned to work with should hold a credential in that area, and that should be in line with the credential you're seeking so that you can observe and learn from a professional in your field of study.

Q: Who completes my 4 observation evaluations throughout the semester?

A: Your university supervisor is responsible for completing your 4 formal observation evaluations for the semester, although you will also get informal feedback from your cooperating teachers during the semester. Both of your cooperating teachers will also complete an Extended Practicum final evaluation for the semester performance. Your university supervisor will also complete the final evaluation for the semester.

Q: My special education cooperating teacher is concerned with sharing confidential information about students with IEPs, etc. What do I do?

A: The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, the school district/charter, and USD have created an agreement for teacher credential students to be trained, monitored, and supported in teacher credential requirements including supporting formal/informal assessment, IEP writing and meetings, academic and behavioral support, and working with families. Therefore, cooperating teachers are well within their capacity to share confidential educational information with the USD students working in their placement. USD has a responsibility (according to IDEA, 2004) to train teachers fully in all capacities of education. The placement has a responsibility to provide application of learning with the supervision of the CT and the university faculty. If you have a teacher still expressing concerns, you can reach out to your university supervisor and the Field Office for support.

Q: Am I the teacher-of-record for any of the students with IEPs when I work with my education specialist cooperating teacher?

A: No. For your ten hours per week with your education specialist cooperating teacher, you are mostly shadowing, helping, and completing the formal assessment of your case study student throughout the semester. During this semester, you will start working with assessments for students, with the guidance of your USD classes. You may also attend SST and IEP meetings, teacher/parent meetings, and/or wherever your education specialist feels this will be a valuable learning experience. The education specialist remains the teacher-of-record.

Q: My cooperating teacher has a question regarding our program. Who can they contact?

A: They can refer to our webpage at: <https://sites.sandiego.edu/dlt/field-experience/> If they cannot find the needed information, they can first contact your university supervisor and then the Field Office, who will help them find the answers to their questions.