

Field Experience

One goal of the Early Childhood Education Program is to provide teacher candidates with a supportive environment to learn and apply skills and knowledge. Lab work takes place in a Partner School Network (PSN) setting, under the guidance of a “Lab Teacher” who acts as the teacher candidate’s mentor and an ASU course instructor. Lab experiences will enable Augusta State University students to develop skills in needed areas, and further refine areas of strength

Field experience is a vital component of the teacher candidate’s professional preparation before entering the field as a professional educator. Early Childhood Education Program students are required to successfully complete 450 clock hours of lab experience preceding Apprenticeship. Each semester, teacher candidates will complete five weeks of field work. This field work is a full time, full day experience. Teacher candidates are required to have the following types of lab placements in a variety of diverse school settings working with diverse student populations.

At least one placement in-

- Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten
- First, second, or Third Grade
- Fourth or Fifth Grade

The Teacher Candidate:

The role of the teacher candidate is to work in class and lab in developing the skills, knowledge, abilities, and dispositions indicative of an effective Early Childhood teacher. The teacher candidate should act responsibly and professionally throughout the experience, gradually taking on all of the roles of the classroom teacher, with support and intervention from university faculty and lab teachers. Communication is vital to the success in the program. The teacher candidate must be responsible for facilitating this communication verbally, and in writing.

The teacher candidate should also alert the university supervisor to any issue or concerns related to the experience. The teacher candidate is ultimately responsible to the P-5 students in the classroom in which they teach. Teacher candidates do best when self-directed, active, and committed to making the experience a beneficial and positive one for all concerned.

The Lab Teacher:

The lab teacher acts as a mentor to the student, guiding, coaching and instructing the student while providing critical feedback and evaluation. The lab teacher sets goals with the teacher candidate and provides activities and feedback related to achieving the goals within the instructional setting.

Professional Responsibilities:

Teacher candidates report to school at or before the time required of lab teachers in the building. They are to follow the sign-in procedure at their school. They are expected to wear an ASU ID or nametag at all times. They follow all building policies. Teacher

candidates should not be absent from school for personal reasons. Absences must be reported to the lab teacher, school secretary, and university supervisor prior to the beginning of the school day. Teacher candidates will be required to make up any time missed.

Teacher candidates usually have 3 classes with field experience hours. For every class that has field experience hours, teacher candidates are required to complete 30 hours of supervised field experience. These hours are to be divided evenly across the five weeks. Block I and II teacher candidates typically have 90 hours to divide across 5 weeks, completing 18 hours of lab per week. This is typically completed in 3 or 4 days per week.

Block III teacher candidates will visit their lab school for 5 hours a day for 5 days a week.

Block IV teacher candidates will have 4 classes with lab hours requiring a total of 120 hours across the five weeks, completing 24 hours each week.

Teacher candidates need to spend their time in class actively involved in the lessons being taught. Planning should occur during planning time or at home. Plans should be submitted well in advance of teaching to allow for input and feedback from the lab teacher.

Lab placements are not guaranteed. If schools refuse to accept a teacher candidate as a lab student or as an apprentice, we do not have the authority to intervene.