

Field Experience

One goal of the Early Childhood Education Program is to provide students with a supportive environment to learn and apply skills and knowledge. Labwork takes place in a Professional Development School (PDS) setting, under the guidance of a “Lab Teacher” who acts as the student’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. It is a vital component of the student’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 students will complete five weeks of fieldwork. This fieldwork is a full time, full day experience. Preservice teachers in the state of Georgia are required to have the following types of lab placements: at least one placement in -

- Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten
- First, second, or third Grade
- Fourth or fifth Grade
- An urban school
- A rural school
- A suburban school

The Student:

The role of the student is to work in class and lab in developing the skills, knowledge, abilities, and attitudes indicative of an effective Early Childhood teacher. The student 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 key to the success in the program. The student must be responsible for facilitating this communication verbally, and in writing. The student should also alert the university faculty to any issue or concerns related to the experience. The university student is ultimately responsible to the students in the classroom in which they teach. An Early Childhood student does 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 student and provides activities and feedback related to achieving the goals within the instructional setting.

Professional Responsibilities:

Students report to school at or before the time required of teachers in the building. They are to follow the sign in procedure at their school. They are expected to wear a nametag at all times. They follow all building policies. Students should not be absent from school for personal reasons. Absences must be reported to the lab teacher, school secretary, and university coordinator, prior to the beginning of the school day. Students will be required to make up any time missed. During Block I and II courses, students will be required to visit their lab school 5 hours a day for 4 days a week (during the 5 weeks of lab). During Block III

courses, students will visit their lab school for 5 hours a day for 5 days a week. Students 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 you as a lab student or as an Apprentice, we do not have the authority to intervene.

