

Guidelines for EDUC 350 Field Experience & Classroom Observation Entries

EDUC 350 requires 45 hours of field experience in public schools.

You must visit each of the following educational levels:

1. elementary school classroom (K-6)
2. middle school classroom (6-8)
3. high school classroom (9-12)

In these three basic settings, observe a variety of students with different instructional environments. These include multiple school districts and schools with a range of socio-economic contexts, multilingual/cultural populations, etc. Some of the environments you should see are:

1. English language development or primary language classroom
2. special education setting
3. primary (K-3) and intermediate (4-6) levels in elementary schools
4. general and advanced levels in high school subject fields
5. gifted education setting
6. sheltered instruction (SDAIE)

You may choose to make some of your observations in schools other than “regular” daytime schools. Consider observing in charter schools, alternative education sites, adult education schools, or court schools. For additional settings, obtain permission from your instructor before you do the observations.

Choose the locations of your field experience early and carefully. Make copies of the introduction letter, as you will meet with more than one principal. Call ahead and ask for an appointment with the principal. It may take them a week or so to arrange a meeting with you. Explain that you would like to observe several different educational settings. *However, remember you need to be with one teacher a significant amount of time if you plan to have him/her fill out your Field Experience Recommendation Form (for applying to the credential program).*

You must observe in varied settings to satisfy this course requirement. Each observation should last at least 30 minutes. Your observation entries must reflect these different settings. You will turn in a total of 15 classroom observation records throughout the semester (see syllabus for dates) and your Field Experience Record at the last class session.

Request to waive observation hours: If you have recent, significant experience with students in public school settings, you may request to waive no more than 20 of the 45 hours of field observations. Should the request be granted, you will still need to observe in the variety of settings described above. Examples of roles that might qualify for a waiver are: tutor, substitute teacher, teacher aide, parent volunteer, Casey Foundation participant, school aide. To request a waiver, complete the form in this packet and submit it to your instructor with supporting documentation no later than the third week of classes.

Your classroom observation entries should follow the format below:

- Your name
- School name
- Type of classroom/grade/subject
- Day of the week/date/time/number of teachers and assistants/number of students in class.
- Demographic characteristics of the site and classroom.
- Assumptions/expectations you have about this observation. What do you think you're going to see? What assumptions do you have about these particular kinds of students and teachers or about this class?
- Focus of your observation and a description of what you saw within this focus—don't try to observe everything. Zero in on a few key points and how they affect the big picture of the classroom.
- Analysis of the observation—comparison with classroom discussions and readings *and* ways in which your assumptions/expectations were accurate or inaccurate.
- Questions for discussion or exploration.

Type your entries on your own paper. Do not write them by hand. You should respect the confidentiality of the students and teachers by using fictitious names for persons in your entries.

Classroom Observation Entry # _____

Your name: _____ School name: _____

Type of classroom (grade/subject/special program): _____

Day of the week/Date/Time: _____

Number of teachers and assistants/Number of students: _____

Describe the demographic characteristics of this site/classroom: _____

Assumptions/Expectations/Questions I have about this observation (concerning the teachers, students, class, etc.):

Focus of observation/Description (highlights) of what I saw around this focus:

Analysis of observation—connect back to course work and to above assumptions, expectations and/or questions:

Questions for discussion or exploration:

EDUC 350 OBSERVATIONS: TOPICS FOR WRITTEN ENTRIES

The following is a list of areas to guide you through your actual field experience. You may wish to focus on one or more of these areas during observations. Some areas will require you to obtain information from the teachers and some will be evident through the observation process.

Room arrangement (the physical lay-out of the room: does it support or get in the way of instruction? do the students move around the room for different phases of instruction?).

Classroom rules and procedures (are rules posted? who generated the rules? do you see them enforced consistently? do students seem to know what the teacher expects? has the teacher made his/her "invisible" expectations visible to the students?).

Organizing student work (how do students submit finished work? how does the teacher return work? are there provisions for redoing/resubmitting work? what provisions are in place for students who are absent?).

Behavior management strategies (how does the teacher get compliance from the students in the area of acceptable behavior? do students understand expectations? is the teacher consistent in attending to students' behavior?).

Planning for instruction (is there evidence of lesson planning? does the teacher do long range and short range lesson planning? are instructional materials readily available?).

Conducting instruction (does the teacher make provisions for active learning? how does the teacher view his/her role during instruction? do all students have a chance to participate? what materials were used in the course of the lesson? what variety of instructional approaches are used? does the teacher use wait time and prompting responses to increase involvement? is cooperative learning in evidence?).

Managing small groups (are there any small group instructional sections? how are students selected for small groups [assigned/choice; heterogeneous/homogeneous]? are the small groups permanent or flexible? what are the students doing who are not involved with the teacher?).

Classroom diversity (how diverse are the students—in ability, learning styles, ethnicity, linguistic background, socioeconomic status? how does the teacher attend to differences among the students? how does the teacher adapt instruction for students with special needs, or for English learners ["sheltered instruction"]?).

Communication skills (comment on the clarity of instructions. do students understand what they are to do when a sequence of instructions are given? does the teacher depend only on verbal communication skills or are there also visual prompts to accompany verbal instructions? what does the teacher's non-verbal communication indicate [body language etc.]?)

Evaluating student progress (how does the teacher know if objectives for instruction have been met? does the teacher ask for response to oral or written questions during the lesson and/or observe students during the lesson? what informal documentation is maintained? what "counts" for grading purposes: worksheets, homework, tests, portfolios, presentations, projects?)

Flexibility (what evidence of flexibility do you see in the teacher's behavior and the learning environment? do you see evidence of any "teachable moments" [unplanned events being turned into effective learning experiences with students]? does the teacher use student remarks or interest to "reroute" or enhance a planned lesson?).

Students (how do you think students perceive their roles as learners in the room? what opportunities do they have for interactions with each other? do interests of learners help guide instruction? are students active participants in the learning process?).

Number of Observations

	ELD/Primary Lang.	Special Education	Sheltered/SDAIE	Gifted Education
Elementary K-3				
Elementary 4-6				
Middle 6-8				
High 9-10				
High 11-12				
Other				

Request to Waive Observation Hours-EDUC 350

EDUC 350 Section _____ Semester _____ Instructor _____

Name SS #

I request a waiver for the following experience in public schools:

- _____ Tutor
- _____ Substitute teacher
- _____ Teacher Aide
- _____ Parent volunteer
- _____ School aide
- _____ Casey Foundation participant
- _____ Other (describe):

The experience took place as follows:

School: _____

District: _____

Dates: _____

No. of hours in this experience: _____

Attach the following to this request:

1. A letter from supervisor/teacher verifying the experience, including the length of time spent in this experience.
2. Your reflection on the experience (1-2 pages typewritten). Describe the experience and convey what you learned from the experience that will help you to be an effective teacher candidate.

Do not write below this line.

_____ Approved Number of hours to be waived (20 max): _____

_____ Denied

Reason for denial: _____

Instructor Signature

Date

FIELD EXPERIENCE RECOMMENDATION FORM - Non Confidential

Applicant's Name: _____
SSN _____

Program: _____ Multi Subj ___ Multi Subj Mid Lev ___ Concurrent w/ Ed Spec ___ Sing Subj

This individual is considering applying for admission to a Cal State San Marcos Teacher Education Program. The applicant has indicated that he/she has worked with children/youth (class/groups) under your supervision. One of the criteria on which candidates are admitted to the CSUSM program is successful work experience with children (either paid or volunteer). All credential program applicants are required to submit a Field Experience Recommendation Form from a public classroom teacher.

In a brief narrative, reflect on this individual as a teacher candidate. When possible, please provide specific examples and details. If your narrative exceeds this page, or if a separate letter is used, please attach to this form and sign. In order to avoid questions of authenticity, do not cut and paste your narrative in the box below.

Consider the candidate's personal and professional attributes with the following in mind:

Dependability	Professional appearance/manner	Enthusiasm	Poise and self-confidence
Initiative	Interpersonal communication skills	Sensitivity to all learners	

Student Services Center welcomes your additional comments. (760)750-4277 or email:coessc@csusm.edu

Name of Public School: _____

Grade Level: _____

School District _____

Number of hours candidate has been in my classroom _____

Classroom Teacher's Name _____

Classroom Teacher's Signature _____

Date _____

College of Education • California State University San Marcos • San Marcos, CA 92096-0001 • (760) 750-4279