



## Professional Dispositions in Early Field Experiences

### Tips for Success!

September 2010

Field work is an important part of the Teacher Education Program. It is very important to remember you are representing Hanover College and the Education Department during your field work time. Please pay close attention to the following guidelines:

- **Be punctual:** Leave early on the first day to allow time for getting lost, locating a parking space, finding the right door into the school building, and locating the classroom. If you are unavoidably delayed, do phone the school and leave a message for your cooperating teacher. As a rule of thumb, always plan to arrive ten minutes before you are expected.
- **Sign in:** Sign in at the school office each time you arrive at the school. Wear your name tag/college ID at all times.
- **Always show up as expected:** Remember that teachers often have to work when they are not feeling their best; and that they will expect the same dedication from you. So, if you are seriously ill, make sure you contact the cooperating teacher in advance of when you are expected. Make plans with the teacher to make up your time. Keep absences to a minimum. It is the teacher's prerogative or that of the college field supervisor to end the experience if you have as **few as one unexcused absence**. *You will be missed when you are not present – do not disappoint the teachers or the students in the classroom!*
- **Be aware of the school's calendar and closings:** This is your responsibility. Discuss the calendar with your cooperating teacher and plan for days when the school will be closed. Plan to make up all missed days.
- **Display a professional attitude during the field experience.** Be positive, enthusiastic, outgoing, and supportive of the cooperating teacher. Do not complain about class assignments or other personal matters.
- **This experience is what YOU make it:** Take initiative and become involved in the classroom activities and with the students. Be flexible and accommodate the teacher's schedule when needed; be willing to visit on different days if needed. Earn your cooperating teacher's trust and respect by volunteering in small ways to demonstrate your eagerness and show your ability to follow the teacher's lead. To become a successful participant, you will likely need a combination of patience, gentle persistence, and a positive and respectful attitude.
- **Be discreet:** Be mindful of your conversations and actions. This applies in the school, community, and class. Take care not to use the names of teachers and/or pupils when discussing your observations in class. This is a serious privacy issue!
- **Be prepared:** Field experiences are an important part of your academic course work. Assist the teacher with class activities. If you plan to present a lesson on a particular day – be certain you are there, with a well-prepared, pre-approved if needed, and all the materials required.
- **Be responsible:** If the teacher lends you materials, be sure to return them. Be clear about whether copies of papers are for you to borrow or to keep. Check on the school policy about use of the school copy machine before making copies.
- **No visiting:** Hanover students are in classrooms/schools to observe and be helpful and are not there to socialize with peers.
- **No smoking prior to or during field work:** Clothing should not smell of smoke when working with students. School grounds are completely smoke free zones.

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- **Leave your cell phone in your car:** If you must take it into the school for some reason, be sure that it is “off” while you are inside.
- **Make sure all communication is professionally done:** This includes all written and spoken communication as well as email, Facebook, My Space and other forms of electronic communication.
- **Evaluation:** Feedback from the cooperating teacher and the Hanover College supervising faculty will be gathered at the end of the field work experience. Questionable student performance (low scores on the evaluation) will be addressed by the College faculty and/or the Teacher Education Committee (TEC). This information will be considered at Decision Point 1 (Admission to the Program) or Decision Point 2 (Approval for Student Teaching Assignment).
- **Dress professionally at all times:** First impressions are extremely important in field work. To be seen in a teacher-like role, one must look and act in a professional manner. Your attire is very important during field work. The dress code for teachers in Southern Indiana is very conservative. Appropriate attire for women includes dress slacks (not tight), skirts (not short), and dresses. Men should wear dress pants, dress shirts/collared polos, sweaters. Teachers are on their feet all day, so wear sensible shoes appropriate to the activities of the classroom, yet still professional in appearance.
  1. Campus fashions such as jeans, sweat pants, tank tops, tee shirts, gym shorts, wrinkled or frayed pants or shirts, sneakers, flip flops, spike heels, etc. are not appropriate.
  2. All body art/tattoos should be covered. Special make-up should be used to cover any tattoos that cannot be covered by clothing.
  3. No hats indoors.
  4. Remove all jewelry from piercings except for a traditional pair of earrings. Small bandages should be used to cover pierced jewelry that is not removable. The midriff of the body should never be exposed.
  5. Clothes should be loose enough to avoid gaps in buttons, panty lines, etc.
  6. Undergarments should not be seen (men and women).
  7. Pants should fit at the waist and be worn with a belt.
  8. Shoulders must be covered – no spaghetti straps or muscle shirts.
  9. No cleavage of any kind should show. Test outfits in a mirror. Can you bend over without revealing that which should remain private - in front or in back?
  10. Good quality professional attire can be obtained at various locations very inexpensively (Goodwill, Salvation Army, thrift and consignment shops) for a minimal price. Please contact the Education Department if obtaining appropriate clothing is an issue.

Everything you do as a pre-service teacher affects how you are perceived by the people around you. These perceptions may affect the opportunities you are offered now, and the ability to get to a teaching job in the not-too-distant future. Principals often comment that they ruled out some otherwise qualified candidates because they did not have a professional appearance.



I, \_\_\_\_\_, currently enrolled in EDU \_\_\_\_\_, have read and agree to abide by the guidelines listed above for my field experience.

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_