

FIELD EXPERIENCE AND STUDENT TEACHER PLACEMENT PRACTICES

The Missouri Baptist University School of Education is proud to be accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). In order to maintain these accreditations, which are beneficial to our students, MBU must maintain consistent practices with regard to placement of student teachers. Students requesting field experience and student teacher placements through MBU are hereby advised of the following field experience and student teacher placement practices. Your understanding of and adherence to these practices will enhance the placement process for students, school districts, and the Teacher Education Office staff responsible for securing the placements.

1. Preparation for Student Teaching begins long before students ever reach the “student teaching” semester. Students should be aware that school district administrators carefully review students’ transcripts and philosophies of education as part of the placement process. A few school districts now have a minimum GPA requirement of 3.0-3.5 for student teaching candidates. Students’ requests for student teacher placement have been denied as a result of even just a few D’s and F’s on their transcripts, even when those courses were repeated and/or if they did not apply to the students’ education major. Students are highly encouraged to be responsible for maintaining academic excellence in all coursework. Students who think that they may be struggling in a class to the point of making a D or an F are encouraged to consult with their advisor and financial aid counselor about withdrawing from the class rather than to suffer the consequences of a poor grade on their transcripts, and to take the course at another time when more effort can be devoted to the class. This is especially important for professional education, field experience, and major content area requirements (for middle/secondary majors), as a cumulative 3.000 GPA in professional education courses and in content area courses is required for certification.
2. Missouri Baptist University strongly believes that the student teaching experience is vital to the student’s authentic preparation for professional practice; therefore, students must be able to commit to student teaching for an entire school day, Monday-Friday, for a full semester. ***Students seeking certification in a single content area will complete one sixteen-week teaching experience. Students seeking certification at more than one level (K-12) or in more than one content area must student teach twelve weeks at one level or content area and four weeks at the other level or content area as approved by the Dean of Education or Director of Field Experiences.*** In addition, students are expected to attend Student Teaching Seminar concurrently in the semester in which they will be student teaching. Students are NOT excused from Student Teaching Seminar due to contractual obligations with a school district or due to work schedules. Student Teaching Seminar is also NOT offered via “directed study.” Therefore, students should not request permission to meet with the instructor individually at an alternate time. Students with contractual obligations in a school district will need to either make arrangements with the school district to leave early, if necessary, on class dates, or may need to consider taking the class at a location that offers the class at a later time during the day.
3. Students must be fully admitted to the Teacher Education Program [including submitting and having approval for all required documents for the Teacher Education Admission Packet, passing scores on all sections of the required general education assessment (undergraduate degree-seeking students only), minimum 2.75 cumulative GPA (or higher for those districts which require a higher cumulative GPA for student teacher placement), both interviews completed, and all probationary statuses from interviews cleared] **by April 1 for Fall placements and by November 1 for Spring placements.** Failure to be fully approved for student teaching by these dates will result in the student’s application for student teaching being moved to the following semester, which may delay the student’s graduation date, and/or eligibility for teacher certification. These deadlines are crucial to give the Teacher Education Office staff appropriate time to request and confirm student teacher placements for students. For optimal placements, students are encouraged to complete all requirements to be approved for student teaching as early as possible in the semester prior to student teaching, as many districts reach their capacity for student teacher requests by mid-semester. [Certain districts and/or schools (including Festus R-VI and Hillsboro Primary) have established specific deadline dates for applications. Students should consult the School Districts That Require Additional Information for Student Teaching Placement for more information.] **Please be aware that GPA requirements have changed. Students must have an overall cumulative GPA of 2.75 as well as a content area GPA of 3.00 and a professional education GPA of 3.00 for middle, secondary, or K-12 content areas or a 3.00 program GPA for early childhood, elementary, or special education (with no grades below a “C”) in order to be fully admitted and placed for student teaching. Students admitted under the previous 2.5 GPA requirement who did not complete certification requirements prior to 8/1/2017 will be held to the new, higher GPA standard.**
4. Students must complete Teaching Field Experience I and Teaching Field Experience II in two different districts. Early Childhood Stand-Alone candidates must complete one Field Experience in grades Pre-K/K and one Field Experience in grades 1-3. Elementary Education candidates must complete one Field Experience in grades 1-3 and one Field Experience in grades 4-6. Students seeking certification in both Early Childhood and Elementary Education should complete one Field Experience in Pre-K/K OR Grades 1-3 and one Field Experience in grades 4-6. Those seeking K-12 or dual certification should complete Field Experiences in Elem and MS/Sec. for K-12 certification and in appropriate grade levels/subjects for each area of dual certification. Students enrolled in EDCL 211 Teaching Field Experience I must be concurrently enrolled in EDUC 210 Teaching Field Experience I Seminar. Students enrolled in EDCL 411/511 Teaching Field Experience II must be concurrently enrolled in EDUC 410/510 Teaching Field Experience II Seminar. Successful completion of both seminar courses with a final grade of CR is required for degree completion and/or satisfaction of certification requirements.
5. Students who will complete the traditional Field Experience II and student teaching must complete their student teaching in a district different from their Field Experience I and II placements. Students will be placed in the most highly diverse settings possible within MBU’s geographic service area, and should carefully plan Field Experience and Student Teaching assignments accordingly. Students will not be permitted to complete all of their Field Experience/ Student Teaching in the same district due to their children’s enrollment in that district or non-academic contractual employment in that district (such as coaching, before or

- afterschool employment, bus driving duties, etc.). Students should consider these obligations and make preparations as needed well in advance of applying for student teaching, so that they are prepared for the various "life" adjustments that may be required during their student teaching experience. Students may ONLY complete all of their student teaching in the same district if they are employed by the district as a paraprofessional or on a Temporary Authorization or Provisional Certificate. In these cases, the student will be responsible for demonstrating sufficient experiences working with diverse populations. In rare cases, the Education Office may approve a student to complete his/her student teaching in the same district and/or same classroom ONLY if all other attempts to place the student elsewhere have failed. In such cases, the Education Office will first examine the diverse experiences the student has already accumulated to determine if the student has had sufficient opportunities to work with diverse populations. Therefore, it is vital that students carefully plan all field experiences prior to student teaching, both formal (Teaching Field Experience I and II) and informal (those field experiences embedded in another course), to include diverse populations so that alternative accommodations can be considered, if necessary, during student teaching.
6. Placement requests will be submitted to only ONE district at a time. Students should be aware that a verbal "approval" from a potential cooperating teacher for placement does not guarantee official approval of the placement from the principal or district central office. The Education Office is responsible for contacting the appropriate district personnel in writing to officially request student teacher placements. Due to the busy schedules of school administrators who partner with Missouri Baptist University in student teacher placements, it can take a MINIMUM of three to four weeks to confirm a single placement. If a district is not able to place a student teacher, the process begins all over again with a new district, thereby once again, extending the time it may take to confirm a placement. Students will be notified via email and/or regular mail when a placement has been confirmed. Once students have been informed of their confirmed placement(s), they are expected to contact the cooperating teacher and building principal as soon as possible, well in advance of the start date, to get acquainted and to begin making any preparations (at the cooperating teacher's discretion) for the student teaching experience.
 7. Once the Teacher Education Office has submitted a student teaching request to a district, requests from students to make a change to their placement may not be considered until/unless the original district indicates that they are not able to accommodate the request. Once a placement is confirmed, requests from students to make a change to their placement will not be considered, except in very rare circumstances, which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If students encounter unforeseen circumstances which they believe will prevent them from fulfilling their student teaching in the district assigned, they have the option to choose to withdraw from student teaching. However, that does not constitute a necessity for the School of Education to reassign the student to another district in that same semester. Voluntary, self-imposed withdrawal or dismissal by the school district from a student teaching placement may result in the student's forfeiture of eligibility to complete student teaching in that semester, and may require that the student reapply for student teaching in a subsequent semester, if more adequate time is needed to devote to securing a new placement for the student. All requests for reassignment must be discussed in person with the Director of Field Experiences before any further action regarding reassignment will be taken. Please note that proximity of the placement to the student's home/daycare provider is NOT considered a valid reason for withdrawal from a confirmed placement. While the Teacher Education Office staff will make every effort to place students as close to their residences/daycare facilities/ children's schools as possible, due to shortages in districts with available openings for student teachers, it is not always possible to place students in neighboring school districts. Students should be prepared to travel up to 30-45 minutes to and from student teaching.
 8. All students are REQUIRED to attend Student Teaching Orientation held on the Main Campus (usually the first week in August for Fall semester student teachers and the week after Fall semester final exams in December for Spring semester student teachers) prior to beginning their student teaching. Letters are mailed to students approximately one month prior to the Student Teaching Orientation date informing students of the date, time, and location of the meeting. Students who cannot attend the established orientation, should notify the Director of Field Experiences as soon as possible and will be required to attend a make-up orientation, scheduled by the Director of Field Experiences, before they may begin student teaching. Failure to attend the initial orientation meeting may result in the student having to delay the start date of his/her student teaching; therefore, extending the ending date (which may occur after the semester officially concludes and/or graduation). Student Teacher Orientation (one day seminar) should NOT be confused with EDUC 471 Student Teaching Seminar (full-semester class). Attendance at both is required.

Missouri Baptist University is committed to providing pre-service students with a quality student teaching experience and desires to make the placement process as smooth as possible for all parties involved. Please understand that we strive to maintain positive relationships with the partnering school districts and value their time, effort, and hospitality involved in this process as well. It is only through their cooperation that field experience and student teaching placements are possible. These practices are as much to respect the school districts' needs for timely requests and quality candidates as they are to accommodate the needs of our students. If you should have any questions regarding field experiences, student teaching, and/or the placement process, please feel free to contact the Director of Field Experiences. We desire for all of our student teachers to be successful, and that begins with mutual collaboration in the placement process to ensure quality placements for all of our students.

Year-long Experience for Spartan Students (YESS)

Students chosen to participate in this field experience program will complete both Field Experience II and Student Teaching in the same school. In the first semester, candidates will observe teachers at all grade levels in the building and complete the co-requisite seminar on-site. In the second semester they will student teach in the same building. The main goal of the year-long experience is to provide the opportunity for candidates to learn about teaching by experiencing the school year from beginning to end, collaborating with the school faculty, and engaging in all aspects of teaching.