

Willamette University School of Education

Strand 3
Master of Arts in Teaching Program

Pre-Student Teaching Guidelines
For Observation and Participation
In the Classroom

Student _____
School _____
Supervising Teacher(s) _____
University Supervisor _____
Grade Level/Subject Area _____

Classroom Observation and Participation Guidelines

The following “Observation and Participation Guidelines” are activities for you to do during your pre-student teaching and practicum. Keep notes on your observations and activities in the school and school community, your responses to what you observe, and reflections on your experiences. Your notes will serve as a basis for discussion and for written reports required by your university instructors or by your supervising teachers. The guidelines are grouped by categories, however, the categories are not intended to suggest a chronology.

Pre-Student Teaching Guidelines
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Student _____

School _____

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Observation Task	Date Completed
Physical Characteristics of the School and School Personnel	
School and Community	
Culture of the School	
Policies and Procedures	
Working With Family Members	
Extra Curricular Activities and Teacher Assignments	
Instructional Resources	
Meeting the Needs of Early Adolescents/Classroom Observation	
Classroom Participation	
Preparation for Teaching in the Second Year	

ASSESSMENT:

_____ Exceeds expectations (Completes all observation tasks and all journal reflections)

_____ Meets expectations (Completes at least 9 observation tasks and most journal reflections)

_____ Needs development (Completes less than 9 observation tasks and a limited number of reflections)

Observation Task

Completed

Physical Characteristics of the School and School Personnel

- What is the layout of the school? Locate key areas such as the library, media center, faculty or department offices, teachers' rooms and other areas of the school.
- Note where students congregate inside and outside of the school building.
- Identify the names, roles and locations of office staff, custodial staff, administrators, and all support staff.
- Interview: (with other student teachers at your site)
 - School psychologist and/or school nurse
 - Special program coordinator/Special Education teachers
 - Police liaison officer
 - Other specialists

What are your impressions of the facility and school personnel?

School and Community

- Walk through the school neighborhood at three different times of day. Who do you see? What are they doing? What inferences do you make?
- Identify relevant community service agencies and groups that provide services to the school community.
- Contact a community service agency and arrange to interview a staff member regarding the agency involvement with children and their families.
- Arrange to attend (if possible)
 - A school board meeting
 - A parent/teacher association meeting
 - Meetings of school site committee
- What after school activities are available for students and who sponsors them?

If you were a new student or parent to the school, how easily available is information regarding community services and community activities?

Culture of the School

- What are the most obvious manifestations of culture that you observe when you first walk into the school? (Name of school, language(s) of signs, language/appearance of people in office, bulletin boards, pictures, decorations, etc.)
- How do you think you would feel entering the school if you were a parent, or a child of color? Of a poor family? Non English speaking? Special needs? TAG?
- Observe student and teacher behavior before and after school, at break/recess, lunch.
- Observe attire and nonverbal behavior/ communication of students and teachers.
- Identify other evidence of a school culture.

Compare the culture of various school sites that you visit.

Policies and Procedures

- Familiarize yourself with appropriate school procedures that teachers need to follow if they are absent from school due to illness.
- Review faculty and student handbooks and discuss with several teachers.
- Examine the school improvement plan.
- Become familiar with school procedures dealing with:

- Suspected child abuse
- Lock down procedures,
- Sensitive subject matter
- Students flagged for confidentiality
- Medical emergency
- Substance abuse
- Sex education
- Fire drills
- AIDS/STDs
- Other emergencies

- Review all school rules that you will be expected to enforce as a classroom (student) teacher and discuss with your supervising teacher. _____
- Make an appointment with the appropriate administrator in charge of discipline and identify school guidelines in handling discipline problems. _____
- Interview the school counselor or appropriate administrator to learn the policies and procedures for referring a student to a counselor. _____

What questions do you have about school policies and procedures?

Working With Family Members

- Are there written policies that address family participation in the school? If there are get a copy and become familiar with them. _____
- How do teachers communicate with family members? Look at copies of written communication. _____
- Arrange to sit in on a parent conference (if possible). _____
- Which of the following are available for family members? Meeting rooms for family members? Resources on parenting? Directories of community resources for families? _____
- Are staff and/or faculty member assigned as a family/community liaison(s)? _____
- Are there organized opportunities for family members to volunteer at school in a meaningful way? _____

What other indications exist of the extent to which family members are welcome or not welcome in the school?

Extra Curricular Activities and Teacher Assignments

- Join a teacher during assigned supervision at lunch, break, bus duty, assembly, school dance, game or other event. _____
- What after school activities are available for students and who sponsors them? _____
- Attend an after school event. _____
How many teachers are there? Administrators? Students? Parents?
How does the behavior of the students compare with their classroom behavior? _____

What event did you attend and what did you learn?

Instructional Resources

- Introduce yourself to the librarian, media personnel _____
- Explore the school library and media center. Evaluate holdings in your subject area(s)/grade levels and familiarize yourself with procedures to make use of the materials. _____
- Conduct a survey of computer use in the school. _____
How are computers used? By teachers? By students?
Are the computers school owned? Teacher owned?
Which classrooms have computers? How many?
- Arrange to visit resource center at the district office and familiarize yourself with its services. _____

- Familiarize yourself with the services offered by the local ESD. _____
- Review films, tapes, and other materials available to you and familiarize yourself with ordering procedures from various sources. _____

What are your impressions of the adequacy of instructional resources?

Meeting the Needs of Early Adolescents/Classroom Observation

- Observe a minimum of two teachers outside your subject matter area or grade level. Note how subject matter and grade level impact teacher styles, strategies, and learning activities. _____
- Find out how time is organized for instruction (Blocks, 45 min. class sessions, AB Block, 4x4 Block, flexible scheduling, etc.) _____
- Is there a well developed advisory program with a curriculum? _____
- Do teachers team and have common planning times? _____
- Are there school wide programs that promote health, wellness, and safety? _____
- Identify how instruction is designed to meet early adolescent developmental needs. (* Ed. Psych, *Planning & Implementation) _____
- Request permission to observe the following types of classrooms: (as available) _____
 English as a Second Language Gifted and Talented Bilingual
 Limited English Proficiency Special Education Other special programs or classes
- Identify at least three teachers who use various instructional strategies such as cooperative learning, writers workshop, simulations, etc. and arrange observations. _____

Reflect on the strategies/activities observed that address the needs of early adolescents. What “best practices” did you observe?

Classroom Participation (as appropriate)

- Ask a teacher to assign you responsibility for some classrooms tasks. (i.e. taking attendance, correcting papers, assisting individual students) _____
- Ask a teacher to assign you responsibility for preparing instructional materials, searching out resources in the library and working with the media specialist, checking out materials for classroom use and unit preparation. _____
- Where possible, increase your interaction with students. _____
 Assist in class activities.
 Help individual students during class, before/after school.
 Work with small groups of students.
 Correct quizzes or tests
- With a teacher's guidance give up to three class presentations. _____
- With a teacher's guidance prepare and present a lesson or segment of a lesson for the whole class . _____
- Prepare, administer and analyze at least one assessment. _____

Based on your experiences so far describe your strengths as a teacher and what aspects of teaching are the most challenging for you.

Preparation for Teaching in the Second Year

- Talk with a teacher or department head and find out how long term course or unit planning is done and how these plans are tied to course outlines and/or curriculum guides/frameworks. _____
- Examine grade books and computer grading programs. Identify a number of _____

methods for computing grades and reporting progress to students and parents. _____

- Identify types of tests and specific tests, (standardized and teacher made) used in your school, in your classroom. _____
- Ask a teacher for ground rules in handling sensitive topics in the classroom. _____
- Familiarize yourself with all school forms and record keeping that you will be responsible for as a (student) teacher. _____
- Prepare a draft or letter to the parents/guardians of all of your students. Introduce yourself and say something about your plans and/or goals for the semester. Discuss the draft with your supervising teacher and guide group advisor. Be sure to get administrative approval before sending the letter. _____
- Review your classroom management plan with a teacher. _____
- Discuss detailed procedures for the first few weeks of the semester with a teacher. _____
- Discuss regular due dates for long and short term planning for one class and record them on a planning calendar. _____

Identify three specific goals for student teaching. Discuss why they are important and make a plan to achieve each goal.

Enjoy your time at your school site!