What is the difference between practicum and student teaching/clinical practice?

Practicum is an introduction to the classroom. Depending on your program, practicum could range from 9–20 hours a week. Depending on your program, students may be required to observe, make lesson plans, or generally assist students. Student teaching allows students to gradually increase their role in the classroom. Students will eventually teach the class for a designated amount of time as they develop lessons, create assessments and develop classroom management techniques.

What can I do to prepare for field experience?

Before students can enter the field, they must complete preservice requirements.

Can I participate in field experience without completing preservice and the Tort and FERPA forms?

No, students cannot participate in field experience without the required information.

Will I be required to complete a background check for field placement?

Some counties or organizations will accept a students’ preservice as a background check. Others may only accept the university’s approved background check, Pre-Check. Contingent upon the district that a student is placed, an additional background check may also be required. Some districts cover the cost while others do not. Students who will need to purchase an additional background check will be notified by OEL. Other students, such as Athletic Training majors, require a Pre-Check background check. Those students will also be contacted by OEL for more information.

How do I request to complete my student teaching overseas?

Candidates may complete a portion of their student teaching abroad through COST.

Are students allowed to arrange their own placements?

Students ARE NOT allowed to arrange their own placements. Placement requests are created by program coordinators and submitted to the Office of Experiential Learning (OEL) for processing.
How do I schedule my hour requirements for practicum?

Unless designated days are noted by the program on the confirmation email, students will make arrangements with their mentor teacher.

When will I receive my field placement information?

Students may refer to the “Placement Notifications” section found on the “Placement, Student Teaching and Clinical Practice” web page for specific time periods in which field placement confirmations are made. College of Education students should receive a confirmation email from OEL. Non-COE students may receive the information from their program coordinator.

I was told I was supposed to complete a FERPA and Tort form. Where do I get the forms?

Students will receive an individual email for each form from OEL. Students will need to complete the Qualtrics forms. Each student will have their own individual link. **Therefore the form should not be shared.**

Where do I purchase Tort insurance?

The Tort form will contain information for students who will need to purchase liability insurance. Insurance can be purchased through SPAGE, NEA/GEA or private insurance. Depending on the company, insurance may be purchased from 1–2 years. Students will need to make sure they retain a copy of their membership card as it is required to show proof of coverage. Students are responsible for making sure their insurance is current.

Am I required to purchase Tort insurance?

All College of Education (COE) students are required to purchase tort insurance. Students who are not in the COE may be given the option to waive insurance.

If I am taking a service-learning course or non-cohort course such as EDIT, will I be required to pay for Tort insurance or complete a FERPA form?

As a general rule, College of Education students are required to complete a FERPA and Tort form. However, students in service learning or non-cohort courses will receive a form that will give the option for the Tort insurance to be waived. FERPA forms will only be sent to those service learning or non-cohort students that need it for their placement.
My teacher is absent. Am I allowed to be a substitute teacher?

Candidates are not allowed to be substitute teachers for their mentor. Candidates should reach out to school’s administration to locate a substitute teacher to be in the classroom while the mentor teacher is absent.

I am currently employed by a district. What should I do?

Please notify OEL and your coordinator so that the appropriate request can be made to the county or district.

What are my options if I have limited transportation?

Students are responsible for getting to and from their placement site. If a student has a concern about transportation, they should reach out to their coordinator.

Am I allowed to work during my field experience?

Working during a field experience such as student teaching is highly discouraged. Student teaching in itself is a full time job. However, if you must work, please manage your time wisely.

What should I do if my placement experience isn’t going well?

Students should discuss any concerns with the mentor teacher, university supervisor, program coordinator, or contact the Director of OEL at 706-583-8146.

What if I have an issue that impacts me from continuing my placement?

Students experiencing any difficulties will need to reach out to their university supervisor, program coordinator, and OEL. Arrangements will be made to cancel the placement.

What schedule should I follow during my placement?

Candidates should follow the schedule of their assigned school for holidays and in cases of inclement weather.

Can I be placed in a school where I have a relative?

Candidates may not be placed in schools where they have relatives employed.
For more information please view the Guide for Clinical Practice.