

Community Partner Guide

EDUC 442: Community Field Experience



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Okanagan School of Education

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This guide is for community partners collaborating with the Okanagan School of Education to offer field experience for students in non-traditional educational settings.

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Contact Information

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Impact of COVID-19 on Community Field Experience

On behalf of all of us at the Okanagan School of Education (OSE), we hope you and all those in your organization are safe and healthy.

We are so appreciative of our community partners and their willingness to support our students in their learning journey during these challenging times.

While we hope that placements will take place on-site/face-to-face, given the evolving circumstances of COVID-19, we ask that your organization consider how the placement could take place online should the situation change. Organizations are also welcome to design their student's placement activities or project to be entirely online from the beginning.

We believe that regardless of whether the experience takes place in-person or online, that both the community partner and the student will receive the same benefits. For many organizations, COVID-19 caused a major impact on operations. Our students may be able to assist partners in creating online guides, activities, or events to ensure that your organization is prepared to meet your organization's needs regardless of the world's environment.

For partners that have participated in the past, we know you may have been expecting to participate in an Opportunity Fair this year. Due to the current limitations on events in B.C., we will not be hosting the Fair. In its place, we ask that you fill out an online form. The information you provide in the form will be posted on our website and based on the information, the students will select their placement choices. Please review the detailed instructions on page 5 under Student Selection Process.

We are committed to supporting our community partners and students through these challenging times. If you require any additional information or assistance, such as brainstorming how a project could be shifted to an online format, please contact Rob Johnson at rob.johnson@ubc.ca.



Goals and Learning Objectives

After completing this experience, which involves participation in one of a variety of non-traditional educational settings, the students will be able to:

- imagine aspects of non-formal, alternate, or international education that might inform their classroom practice;
- develop questions to frame an inquiry into “places of learning”;
- engage in inquiry and reflection on practice; and
- improve on their research skills.

Overview of the Experience

After completion of the Formative (school-based) Practicum, students complete a community-based field experience in their choice of local, regional, or international settings. The Community Field Experience is designed to complement students’ school-based practicum experiences with experience in an alternative or additional setting and offer varied theoretical understandings and pedagogical perspectives.

Competencies and Experience of Students

Students in EDUC 442 have previously completed a Bachelor’s degree in a subject area of their choice and are currently completing their Bachelor of Education. They bring a broad range of skills and knowledge to their field placement. In general terms, a student can be described as someone with emerging competency in areas such as:

- Program development
- Problem analysis
- Project leadership
- Curriculum development
- Learning facilitation
- Mentorship
- Public speaking and presentations
- Planning and organizing
- Time management
- Research
- Collaboration and teamwork

In addition, many will have specific skills or knowledge related to prior experiences. For example, some will have knowledge of IT systems, additional languages, or the creative arts.

Community Field Experience and Organizational Fit

Community partners are asked to provide students with educationally-oriented activities and responsibilities that help demonstrate how teaching and learning can occur in diverse teaching and learning contexts. This often requires advanced planning on the part of the community partner. The following is a list of key questions that community partners might ask themselves in preparation for their work with students.

- How will the work of the student(s) support our mission/priorities?
- If the student is assigned a project, is it well-defined? Is it in line with their learning objectives, skill-set(s), and interest(s)?
- What can feasibly be completed during the three-week experience? Can it be completed online if necessary?
- Who is the contact person in our organization that the Okanagan School of Education can communicate with throughout the duration of this experience, including preparation, service, and reflection?
- To what extent will our staff and organization be involved in the development and implementation of this experience (e.g., how many staff or staff hours can we dedicate to this experience)?
- What resources will be required for this project? Do we have the space?
- How might future students build on this year's work?
- Will the activities/project/responsibilities fit within the time constraints of the three-week placement?
- Will students need to be made aware of any extra costs, documents, expectations and protocols (e.g. TB Shots, First Aid Training, etc.)?

Community Field Experience Examples

There can be many different types of community field experiences. Possible scenarios that illustrate what these experiences might look like include:

Students serve within the existing structure of the community partner Example: The student completes their CFE at the Clubhouse Farm facilitating school visits and supporting daily work at the farm.

Students work with a community partner to create a new component of a partner's work

Example: The student completes their CFE at the local art gallery working with the educational program team to develop an online teacher's guide for upcoming exhibits.

Students design educational tools that will be delivered by the community partner

Example: The student completes their CFE at the local science centre to design an online learning activity to complement a new virtual exhibit on reducing single-use plastics.

Students are placed in a school setting substantially different from their Formative Practicum

Example: The student completes their CFE in the school's library to better understand the role of the library to the overall educational focus of the school's program.

Timeline

September 2021	Invitation of returning and potential partners sent
September – October 2021	Community Partners (CP) submit their forms
October 15, 2021	Form deadline if partner wishes to participate
November, 2021	Students submit partner requests to CFE Coordinator
January 2022	Students and partners are notified of pairings
Early February 2022	Initial meeting between student and partner (arranged by student)
February – April 2022	Additional meetings as necessary (arranged by student)
May 4, 2022	Community Field Experience begins
May 4 – 5, 2022	Student and partner submit <i>WorkSafe BC Orientation & Checklist</i> form
May 22 – 24, 2022	Student and partner jointly complete and submit the online <i>Community Partner Feedback Form</i>
May 25, 2022	Last day of Community Field Experience

Student Selection Process

In the previous years, we hosted an Opportunity Fair to give students and community partners a chance to meet and discuss the partner's organization, program, or projects. Due to the uncertainty regarding events in B.C. this fall, we have decided not to host the Opportunity Fair.

Instead, we ask that you provide us brief descriptions* of your organization and/or of the three-week field experience. These descriptions will be placed on our website to help our students know if a placement is right for them. We ask that you submit this information online at https://ubc.ca/1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6R36kNbFHofdy05 by Wednesday, Oct. 15.

**If your organization submitted a placement description last year, you can find it on [our website](#) to see if it is still accurate or if changes need to be made. If you have no changes to make, you may leave the section blank.*

Providing this information is very important as it helps to ensure you attract a student with the skill set and interests needed to complete the project successfully. It also will help

students have a clear understanding of what will be expected of them, what they can expect, and how to best prepare for their CFE.

Here are a few things you might consider when completing the form:

- The type(s) of work to be completed (e.g. program development, program execution, instruction, curriculum development, or research)
- The skill sets you anticipate would be needed to successfully complete the work
- If applicable, the expected product at the end of the CFE (e.g. program content, a report, curriculum, a video, etc.)
- An overview of what a typical day would look like (e.g. hours, expected interactions, etc.)

Before the Community Field Experience

To help the student(s) to think through how they can maximize their impact during their time with the organization, we encourage the community partner to focus on and emphasize the strengths within the organization and within the community they serve. Some questions that previous students have found helpful to discuss before they start their experience include:

- What is your organization's vision? What is your organization seeking to accomplish?
- What are the strengths of your organization?
- What experience and /or expertise does your organization have?
- Which networks does your organization belong to?
- What populations does your organization serve?
- Where do you believe your organization is making a difference or having success?
- How do you see the student(s) contributing to your vision?
- What competencies could the student gain by taking part in your organization?

Initial Meeting

Students will contact their community partners to set-up an initial meeting, either in-person or via a video chat platform, on a mutually agreed upon day in early February. We encourage you to notify the staff at your organization about the student's meeting and role so everyone is greeted with respect and enthusiasm.

During this meeting, it is recommended that community partners:

- give a brief orientation to your organization's mission, current priorities, programs, relevant policies and procedures;
- if possible, give a tour of your facility, so that the student may learn about the overall work of your organization;
- if possible, introduce key staff members assisting with the project;

- sit down with the student to discuss the overall goals for the field experience, as well as plans for regular progress meetings and any specific milestones to be reached along the way; and
- collect names and contact information for both the student(s) and their field advisor(s).

This visit will help the community partner and the student(s) articulate and share the reasons why each are involved in this experience. At one level, it will allow for the exchange of ideas, build a deeper understanding of each other's motivating factors, establish ground rules and trust, and begin the process of aligning the work to best meet both the community partner's needs and the student's learning outcome expectations. On another level, it will allow for an understanding to be created about expectations for communications, project delivery and evaluation.

Logistical Considerations Immediately Prior to the Start of the Community Field Experience

- If necessary, is there a workstation ready for the student?
- Are any needed electronic communication connections in place (e.g., internet access, remote/VPN access, username & password, telephone, long distance PIN, etc.)?
- If any special training is required, has it been arranged?
- Has the mandatory WorkSafe BC form been reviewed for easy completion on the first or second day of the CFE?
- Have other staff been reminded of the date of arrival of the student?
- If a parking pass or registration is required, has it been arranged?
- Other site-specific considerations?

During the Community Field Experience

During a Community Field Experience, there are many activities that community partners are encouraged to do with their students to maximize the student's time and to ensure that they are meeting expectations. Examples might include, but not be limited to:

- hold regular Check-in Meetings – we suggest at least once a week. These can be used to provide feedback on the student's performance and/or to highlight issues that might arise;
- encourage students to note their own questions or observations and bring them to these meetings. In addition, they should document the outcomes of the meeting in some way;
- be available to answer questions;



- keep track of progress towards the final goal of the field experience. Sometimes the actual work might take a different course from what you originally planned. If this happens, discuss the situation with your student and consider revising the goal;
- enable and encourage independence while participating in your organization's objectives/activities;
- note the student's contributions to the organization and what kinds of qualities they bring;
- note the student's learning and demonstration of new ideas, information and skills;
- complete the online [Community Partner Feedback Form](#). *Please do this before the end of the third week.* This form may be completed collaboratively with the student or not. *Note: The teacher cannot receive a PASS for their Community Field Experience until this feedback form has been completed and submitted by the partner;*
- the student will have provided you with contact information for their field advisor (email address and phone number). Please contact the field advisor with any questions or comments;
- you also have contact information for the Community Field Experience Coordinator – please feel free to contact him with additional questions and comments.

Work Expectations

Over the course of the Community Field Experience, the students are required to be engaged for a total of 15 - 20 days. Moreover, community partners are encouraged to keep their student(s) engaged for a minimum of five hours per day, to a maximum of eight (8) hours per day. The exact dates, working times, and location of this experience should be negotiated between the community partner and the student, with the final approval from the field advisor.

For example, in some placements such as after-school programs, the students might be working from 10:30 am – 6:30 pm. Some placements might include weekends

and/or evenings; others will involve regular business or school hours. Students will be expected to adapt to their community partner's hours of work.

The workday protocol should be established prior to the start of the Community Field Experience. It is not appropriate for the student to tell the community partner that he/she only works "teacher hours". At the same time, and because the student's time with a partner is governed by the regulations of the Workers Compensation Board, if a partner runs a program where a student works more than eight hours daily (e.g., some outdoor camps), the partner must come to an agreement for this type of work with the student in consultation with the field advisor.

Students are required to alert (text, phone, email) their community partner and field advisor as soon as possible if the student finds they will not be able to arrive at the experience on time (e.g. buses not running, traffic jam, illness, etc.).

Students are also required to discuss any required time off and the reasons for such absence with their field advisor and inform their community partner well in advance of the Community Field Experience start date. All missed time must be made up before the student will receive a Pass/Fail grade for EDUC 442. Students will discuss options with the field advisor if the time cannot be made up. (e.g., student returning from an International Community Field Experience).



After the Community Field Experience

Most community partners will feel that the end of the Community Field Experience comes very quickly. As a result, it is recommended that community partners plan ahead for a final meeting with their student to:

- explain the specific impact the student made through their field experience;
- offer the student constructive feedback. Where did they excel? What contributions did they make? Where is there room for growth and contribution?
- reflect on the experience and how to advance the student's learning. Ask the student(s): How did they apply their classroom learning during this field

experience? To what degree have they achieved their learning goals? What was reinforced and/or brought into question for them? What surprised them? What skills and tools did they gain from the experience that they might take with them to the classroom?

- ask the student for feedback. What went well? What might be improved and in what way?
- thank them for their time, energy and contributions to the organization.

The Role of the Community Field Experience Coordinator

The Community Field Experience Coordinator serves as the conduit between the community partners and the Okanagan School of Education. Once the student has begun the Community Field Experience, the coordinator's role relative to the partners is one of oversight, rather than supervision, and communication rather than evaluation. The community partner may contact the Community Field Experience Coordinator at any time.

Following the Community Field Experience

- Maintain communication between the community partner and the Okanagan School of Education and give feedback about how to improve future experiences.
- Discuss future involvement in the Community Field Experience. Are you willing to be involved in future experiences and in what ways?

For Further Information

We would love to hear from you! Please feel free to contact us for further information, to pass along feedback, and/or to have your questions answered.

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