

Extra-Credit

Fieldwork Experiences for Child and Adolescent Development

Field experiences allow you to gain “real world” experience with young people and compare those experiences to material presented during class. *Every 3 hours of fieldwork = 1% extra credit to a maximum of 9 hours/3% credit.* Field experiences must pertain to children, youth, and families. Either “discreet” or “ongoing” types of fieldwork is acceptable.

FAQs

What’s the difference between “discreet” and “ongoing” fieldwork? A *discrete fieldwork experience* is a “one time” activity or event. These experiences are meant to provide students with a new perspective on developmental issues facing particular populations of young people and their families (e.g., poverty, homelessness). Opportunities to interact directly with children and youth will vary by the experience chosen and are limited. By contrast, an *ongoing* fieldwork experience ordinarily involves a volunteer position where students are expected to work directly with young people on a regular basis (e.g., tutor, mentor, childcare assistant, etc.). In ongoing fieldwork, the relationships that students form with children and adolescents over time provide opportunities to gain a deep and rich understanding of varieties of development issues in the day-to-day lives of young people.

Where can I find a fieldwork opportunity? Students are encouraged to schedule a visit with staff at the Center for Civic and Community Engagement (<http://www.etaown.edu/centers/community-civic/>) to identify an appropriate fieldwork opportunity. Prior to the visit, please look over the Center’s webpage and make a list of opportunities that interest you. Bring this list along with a copy of the course syllabus so that Center staff can best match your interests and the course content with available opportunities.

Can I do both discrete and ongoing fieldwork? Yes.

When is my fieldwork done? Discrete fieldwork ends when the particular event or activity is over. The frequency and length of ongoing fieldwork varies by experience and students should understand what sort of commitment is required before beginning. Whichever type of fieldwork is chosen, *fieldwork reflection papers and signed verification forms are due on the final day of class.*

How do I get my fieldwork verified? All fieldwork experiences require both a signed Agreement and Verification form. These forms are available on Canvas under the “Extra Credit Fieldwork” module. Agreement forms are signed by the course instructor and fieldwork supervisor *before you begin*. Discuss your interest in fieldwork with the instructor early in the course. Verification forms are signed by course instructor and fieldwork supervisor *after you finish* and are due on the final day class.

Can I use a fieldwork experience I am already involved in or from another course? “Double dipping” is not allowed. Students may not count the same fieldwork experience from another course, volunteer position, or their employment for this course. However, a student already participating in fieldwork at an instructor-approved location can log extra hours at that same activity or program to fulfill fieldwork requirements for this course. Please contact the instructor to discuss making such arrangements.

Fieldwork Decorum

1. Dress and appearance. Favor on the conservative/professional side. Shirts with a collar, skirts or slacks and comfortable shoes are the norm at most programs. Shorts, short skirts, torn jeans, t-shirts with alcohol or other inappropriate messages, bare midriffs, spaghetti straps, short skirts, caps, sandals, etc. are usually not acceptable because they are distracting to persons with whom you will work. Dressing appropriately will also help you gain and maintain respect and attention. With regards to hygiene, you and your clothing should be clean (at least when you arrive).
2. Behavior. You are ambassadors and representatives of Elizabethtown College and often serve as role models for other people at the fieldwork location. You should only engage in behaviors and speech to which those you are working with should emulate and aspire.
3. Schedule your fieldwork. Schedule all of your fieldwork in advance. Do not just drop in unannounced. Programs can only permit a limited number of students. Having too many students can become a source of inconvenience, rather than assistance, for a program.
4. Be on time for your fieldwork. Programs often schedule activities and make staff assignments based on the number of volunteers that will be present. Therefore, arriving late or not showing up both reflects poorly on you and can disrupt, delay, or prevent planned activities from taking place. Accordingly, know the location of your field site and plan to arrive a little early on the first visit. If you need to cancel and reschedule your fieldwork, do this in advance (24 hours) by calling the site and letting them know you will not be coming.
5. Testing and clearance. Be sure to check with your program contact person about having any required TB testing, fingerprinting, or other clearances completed before you engage in the fieldwork.
6. Fieldwork attendance must be verified by a site supervisor. All fieldwork assignments require that the supervising program teacher or director verify your attendance (see above for information on required forms).
7. Do not bring electronic equipment or use cell phones at your fieldwork site. These can be a distraction to young people and staff, interrupt the flow of program activities, and prevent you from focusing on your job at hand.