

August Experience

Welcome to the world of student teaching! Since you will not be student teaching until the second semester, you are required to participate in August Experience. Your cooperating teacher has been notified of this requirement. Please contact him/her before the start of the new school year to establish the date that you should first arrive at the school. August Experience is not taken for credit, but you do need to register for it.

Below are the requirements for the course:

1. You are required to spend a total of 30 hours in August Experience. These hours may be arranged according to your own schedule. If possible, you should try to attend the teacher in-service meetings at the start of the school year. Your teacher can inform you of the dates and times. It is assumed that you will spend the greatest number of hours just as your school is starting in order to see how classes are organized. From that point on, you should arrange your schedule around your Maryville courses. Please inform your teacher of this schedule and the reason for it. Spend enough time there during the semester to get to know the students and the curriculum.
2. You are required to keep a journal and to submit it for feedback. The journal must include journal entries which address each of the following sets of questions. Please write the question, followed by the response(s). You might want to give each set of questions a dedicated full page or more so that you might return and add observations to previous text. These entries will be given to your Maryville University supervising teacher after they are read by the August Experience facilitator. Remember to keep your entries confidential (use of names, etc).

A. Profiles: What have you learned about the profile of those students who attend this school? Talk about the neighborhood and those who might travel to the school from outside the neighborhood. Talk about the profile of those students who will be in your class(es). Address gender, special needs or challenges, ethnicity, etc. How will these factors impact your lessons and your assessment of these students? What do you think these students need to know and be able to do? What is influencing your answers? Observe and reflect about 1-2 students specifically that you encounter. How will you work successfully with them?

B. Culture: Discuss the culture of the building. What's the "written" culture (on the walls, in announcements, handbooks, etc)? What is the "induction" culture....how are new people/visitors greeted into the building? How does this impact the "feel?" What is the history of the building? Do they talk about success; are there building rituals? What is the culture of the present? Are there goals and initiatives in the building? How do you know? How do teachers in the building work with one another? What did your cooperating teacher do in the first few weeks to establish community? How were parents included? Detail one episode or event that supports your observations about the culture. Reflect upon that event.

C. Relationships: Discuss the building of the relationship with your cooperating teacher. What have you told him/her about yourself? How did you let them know about your goals and any major questions you have? What did you learn about what you will be teaching next semester? What were you able to learn about materials and labs that are available to you? Did you check out the library? The computer lab? The Cooperating School District materials available? The hands-on materials that are available? Do you have a copy of the school calendar? Did you ask for and see the district level standards?

How did the cooperating teacher work to establish relationships with his/her students? What strategies did he/she use? What seemed to be successful? Why? What strategies did you use? What worked well for you? Describe, analyze and reflect upon an encounter with a child or group of children that demonstrates your establishment of relationships.

D. Goals/Questions/Concerns: List your goals for the experience and how you plan to meet the goals. (Ex: I hope enhance my skill at higher level questioning: I will consult Bloom and Wiggins/McTighe as models and will ask for observations around this goal. I will plan out questions in advance and ask for feedback). You might want to consult the goals set on your last practicum evaluation form.

3. You will meet as a class to discuss what you are doing, problems, issues, etc. An announcement of the date for this meeting will be given at the annual Student Teacher/Cooperating Teacher Orientation meeting at the beginning of the fall semester. You will also be given a date at that time for when the journal will be due to the facilitator.
4. You will not be supervised or evaluated in your August Experience placement. The purpose of this course is to enable you to learn as much as you can and to be helpful, as well as to remove your fears regarding your January student teaching assignment. Please inform your cooperating teacher of this and that they will not be evaluating you in any way at this time.

Please contact your adviser if you have any questions or concerns.