

General Information for Together We Learn

Guidelines, Procedures and Professional Expectations

Rationale for TWL Semester

- This semester is an opportunity for public school educators, university professionals, and preservice teacher to work collaboratively to strengthen both the profession of teaching and the opportunities for university students to engage in exceptional learning experiences.
- The emphasis of *Together We Learn* is for preservice teachers and their instructors to discover how they can assist each other in enhancing student learning.

Purpose for Handbook

The purpose of the handbook is to inform TWL students of their expected roles while in school settings.

Overview

- Through partnership schools, teachers, administrators, preservice teachers, and university instructors work together to build a learning community.
- These school partnerships exist between Bryan ISD, College Station ISD, other districts within a 50 mile radius, and Texas A&M University.
- The TWL semester opportunity allows for the following:
 - Hands-on experiences in classrooms prior to student teaching
 - Implementation of ideas related to planning, instructing and assessing
 - Evolution of a philosophy of education
 - Evolution of a definition of classroom management
 - Peer interaction and reflection on observations and experiences
 - Experiences with applications of educational technology
 - Supervised teaching responsibilities when applicable
 - Interaction with all various of the educational community

Guidelines and Procedures

Attendance

- TWL students are expected to be in attendance at their assigned schools every day unless the campus calendar indicates otherwise.
- TWL students should arrive on time and remain at their assigned campus until the end of the teacher workday.
- Arrival and departure time for teachers is set by each school. TWL students should adhere to these times.

Absences

- It is the responsibility of the TWL student to inform the mentor teacher and the methods instructor of any absence. Contact should be made as far in advance as possible. Notification should include:
 - Phoning the school office leaving a message for the mentor teacher
 - Contacting the mentor teacher through e-mail
 - Contacting the liaison and Program Coordinator through e-mail using the following site.
http://tlac.tamu.edu/articles/twl_field_experience_absence_report
(This site is located in the Together We Learn site, under absence report)
- Absences must be made up by the within two weeks of the absence. If absences are not made up by this time, you will receive a grade of incomplete in each methods course.
- If the absence occurs within the last two weeks of field experience, it should be made up by the end of the final week of field experience.

Tardiness

- Teachers are expected to be punctual. Arriving late reflects poorly on you as a preservice teacher, your professionalism, and the TWL program.
- In case of an emergency, contact your mentor and TWL liaison immediately.

Leaving Campus

- TWL students may not leave the public school campus during the day. Leaving for a TAMU class, however, is permissible with mentor notification.
- If you must leave due to an emergency, notify your mentor and your TWL liaison.
- You may be asked to make up the time missed from your field experience.

Professional Attire

- TWL students should, at all times, represent the teaching profession by dressing appropriately.
- Check the dress code at your assigned school. Jogging suits, beach wear, shorts or other extremely casual dress is inappropriate, regardless of dress code.
- Blue jeans should be worn only on designated jean days or for field trips. If you participate on a field trip with students, your clothing may need to be modified for that experience, depending upon the nature and location of the trip. Mentor teachers will advise you in this situation.
- No tattoos or body piercing, other than earrings, should be displayed at any time.

Name Tags

- To help ensure the safety of all, TWL students are required to wear name tags while at a field campus. This name tag will identify you as a TAMU preservice teacher to students, other faculty members, staff, and parents.
- Each name tag will include a designated title (i.e., Mrs., Mr., Miss, Ms.), the student's last name, and Texas A&M University. Name tags may be purchased at *Awards and More* on Rosemary (across from Luby's cafeteria).

Calendar

- For your field experience, follow the calendar for your assigned school. If the university has a holiday but the school does not, you are expected to be at your assigned campus.
- If the assigned school does have a holiday, but TAMU does not, follow the calendar of your assigned campus for your field experience only. TAMU classes will meet as usual.

Parking

- Every school has a designated parking area for faculty and staff. Do not park in this area unless directed to do so.
- Schools may indicate a specific area for TWL students to park.
- **Do not** park in areas designated for **visitors**.

Substitute Teaching

- TWL students may not substitute teach on scheduled field placement days.
- Field placement days may not be rescheduled or changed in order to allow you to substitute teach.

Professional Expectations

Your Role in the Classroom

- You are expected to assume an active role in the classroom as instructed by your mentor teacher and this handbook.

Teaching

- It is strongly recommended that you teach as often as you are permitted.
- You might teach using the TWL lesson plan format, or you might use your mentor's lesson plan.

Commitment Contract

- By the second week of the semester, every TWL student will sign two copies of Commitment Contract included in this handbook. One copy will be kept by the TWL liaison and the other copy will be given to the mentor teacher.
- Failure to fulfill this Commitment Contract raises doubts as to the student's readiness to be a teacher and will result in disciplinary action with possible academic penalties.
- Actions include, but are not limited to, the following (singularly or in combination):
 - ✓ Being placed on a growth plan
 - ✓ Reduction in the final course grade
 - ✓ Transfer to another mentor
 - ✓ Grade of incomplete in the course
 - ✓ Grade of F in the course
- The final decision will be made by the Field Placement Coordinator after conferring with the TAMU instructor and the mentor.

Removal from the Field Classroom

- If inappropriate behavior, dress, language, or other actions by a TWL student prompt the mentor to request removal of the student from the field classroom, that student will be dropped from the TWL program and will receive a grade of incomplete in the TWL courses.
- The student will repeat the courses and the field experience.

Non-Instructional Duties:

- Your mentor is expected to assume many non-instructional duties. You will be asked to assist with these. Examples might be before or after school duty, playground supervision, cafeteria supervision, etc.
- You should not be expected to supervise without the presence of a teacher or school assistant.
- It is generally permissible to walk students from one class or location to another, but you must be familiar with the school regulations and guidelines.
- Guidelines may differ from school to school, so be sure to read the teacher handbook at your assigned school and ask questions.
- Notify your TWL liaison if you are left alone with the students for more than a few minutes.

Committee, Parent or Program Meetings

- TWL students are expected to attend a variety of meetings in the school setting. These might include PTO, grade level, department, faculty, staff development, parent conferences.
- During the days you are on campus, you should attend any function which your mentor teacher is expected to attend.

Confidentiality

- Preservice teachers have the same ethical obligations as licensed teachers related to information about a school, the staff/faculty, and the students.
- Discussions outside the school setting about students, teachers, or staff are unethical and may be illegal.
- All written records should be held in the strictest of confidence. Student records may never be removed from the school.

Co-Curricular Activities

- TWL students will attend one co-curricular activity during the TWL semester. Examples include OPAS, Story Telling, Community Theatre, and Bush Library/Museum functions.
- TWL students will write a one-page minimum reflection about the experience and include proof of attendance (ticket stub, receipt).

Service Project

- The purpose of the service project is to further enhance the TWL student's place in the educational community by recognizing the needs of the community or the school and developing and implementing strategies to meet those needs.
- Evidence of the service project will be included in the i-Folio.

Evaluation

- Grades in the methods block are based on in-class assignments, field experience, and methods block requirements.
- The mentor teacher will complete a written mid-term evaluation and also an end-of-semester evaluation.
- For field based classes, sixty percent of your grade is derived from the successful completion of course requirements.
- The remaining 40 percent is outlined in the following chart:

Grade Percentages

	Methods Course
I-folio Service Co-curricular Activity	8% 5% 2%
<i>Classroom Performance</i> University Instructor Mentor Teacher	15% 10%
Methods Class Assignments	60%
Total	100%