

Early Field Experience Descriptions by Course

Undergraduate-Level Field Experiences

Introductory & Observation-Focused Courses

These courses emphasize observation, reflection, and limited interaction.

EDCI 201 – Teacher Leadership in a Diverse Society (14 hours total)

- **7 hours** completed as a **whole-class visit** to a school
- **7 hours** completed with an **assigned host teacher**
- Focused classroom observations
- Attention to instructional models and teaching philosophies
- Light participation (e.g., small group help, passing out materials)

SPED 240 – The Exceptional Child (14 hours)

- Observations focused on learners needing additional support
- Written reflections
- Optional focus on a specific student for a separate case study

BK 250 – Introduction to Birth–Kindergarten (4–8 hours)

- 4 observations connected to early childhood topics
- Each visit lasts 1-2 hours
- Reflective writing assignment

BK 312 – Kindergarten Curriculum (6–8 hours)

- 3 observations in Pre-K and 3 in Kindergarten
- Each visit lasts 1–2 hours
- Reflective writing assignments

Classroom Management & Methods-Focused Courses

These courses include deeper analysis and increased engagement.

EDCI 430 – Responsive Classroom Management (14 hours)

- Observation of classroom routines, rules, and expectations
- Attention to school-wide behavior and SEL practices
- Students may photograph classroom posters related to norms and expectations

Early Field Experience Descriptions by Course

HPE 430 – Responsive Classroom Management (14 total hours)

- Focused observation of classroom management strategies
- Some hours completed through whole-class university activities
- Reduced time in school placement compared to other courses

SPED 430 – Responsive Classroom Management (14 hours)

- Observation of classroom management strategies
- Focus on responsive practices
- Limited participation as approved by the host teacher

Block Practicum & Active Teaching Courses

These courses require **active participation and lesson teaching**.

EDRD 320 - Foundations of Literacy Development/Block I Practicum (At least 8 half-days)

- Observation and assessment of foundational literacy skills
- Small group fluency instruction
- Observe classroom management practices (students also taking EDCI 430)
- Interview host teacher and one student (students also taking EDCI 430)

EDEL 390 / EDMG 412 – Block II Practicum (At least 10 full days)

- Participation across multiple subject areas
- Planning and teaching lessons
- Full involvement in daily classroom activities

EDCI 500 – Introduction to Teaching (14 hours / 2–4 full days)

- Observation and assistance in the classroom
- Teacher interview
- Planning, teaching, recording, and reflecting on one lesson
- May use own classroom if currently employed in a school setting

Early Field Experience Descriptions by Course

Advanced & Graduate-Level Field Experiences

These experiences involve targeted instruction, assessment, and leadership.

EDCI 501 – Culturally Relevant Classroom Management (15 hours)

- Observation, tutoring, and lesson support
- Reflection on teaching and learning
- Written documentation through course learning modules

SPED 562 – Teaching Reading to Exceptional Learners (15 hours)

- Work with students with disabilities
- Analysis of reading curriculum or strategies
- Video-recorded lesson (with parent permission)

SPED 563 – Teaching Math to Exceptional Learners (15 hours)

- Small-group or one-on-one instruction
- Pre-, progress-monitoring, and post-assessments
- 3–5 mini-lessons planned and taught
- Video recording with parent permission

EDCI 609 – Assessment of Instruction (15 hours)

- Exploration of classroom assessment practices
- Focus on formal and informal assessments
- Reflection and documentation through learning modules

EDCI 616 – Advanced Studies in Teacher Leadership (8 hours)

- Observation of teacher leadership and school culture
- Conversations with teachers and administrators
- Focus on professional learning communities and school improvement

Key Takeaways for Host Teachers

- Student involvement **varies by course** and increases over time
- Most courses emphasize **observation first**, then participation
- Teaching, video recording, and assessments occur only in **advanced courses**
- All activities are completed with **host teacher approval and guidance**

Thank you for supporting Early Field Experiences and helping prepare future educators!

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

1 University Drive | Cullowhee, NC 28723 | wcu.edu