

GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY OBSERVATIONS

The following are some guidelines for you and your observation and participation in community early childhood and elementary classrooms:

1. For most ECE classes, students are required to visit community classrooms to observe children, teachers, and/or classroom environments. In order for students to be permitted out into the community, **it is necessary to be enrolled in the Oregon Criminal History Registry**. This registry is through the Oregon Child Care Division and is not the same used for the school districts. However it is an inexpensive, easy process that we ask all students to complete in order to screen your suitability for working with children in our community. It may be completed either **online (preferred for a quick response)** or a form may be printed out to be completed and mailed.

Go to the ECEE Department web page <http://go.roguecc.edu/departement/early-childhood-and-elementary-education> for further information on completing this step. Be sure to pay attention to the **specific instructions on that page** regarding how to complete a couple of items on the application! Links to the application forms are located on that page. The cost is \$3 (unless you have lived outside of Oregon within the past 18 months) and must be submitted with your application. You must complete this process **as soon as possible** so that you are ready with your registry number when you need to complete your observation assignments. Your registry enrollment is valid for 2 years. **As soon as you get the approval letter back, take a copy of it to the ECEE Secretary to be scanned into your record (Alice at RWC in F Building or Cindy at RVC in HEC-201) or scan and email it to chenney@roguecc.edu.** Be sure to keep the original. **This process must be completed prior to starting observation or practicum activities.**

2. You must complete a **Student Measles Immunization Status form** - go to the Department web page at <http://go.roguecc.edu/departement/early-childhood-and-elementary-education>. This is a State requirement for all community college students completing observation or practicum activities out in the community. **Complete the form right away** (it only needs to be done once) and **submit it to Alice or Cindy - see #1 above**. It will be scanned into your record.
3. **Obtain an RCC student identification card** if you don't already have one. RCC photos will be taken on a scheduled basis in the Student Services area on the Redwood Campus, Grants Pass (956-7090) or upstairs in G Building at the Riverside Campus, Medford (245-7560). Be sure to bring a printed copy of your schedule with you to obtain your ID. Take your ID with you each time you go to observe in an early childhood setting.
4. At some point in your studies here at RCC, **most ECE students will be completing observations or practicum experiences at our lab school, the Redwood Early Childhood Center, which is a Head Start site, or at other Head Start or Early Head Start sites**. Once you have completed the **Criminal History check (#1 above)**, you can find and complete the **remaining required forms** on the Southern Oregon Head Start website, <http://www.socfc.org>. Click on "Volunteer." **Both the Criminal Background Check and the Volunteer forms must be completed before observations or practicum experiences can begin**. We encourage you to **go through this process now**, even though you may not be observing at Head Start this term.
5. To observe or complete a practicum at a Head Start or Early Head Start site, **once the steps in #4 have been completed**, email volunteering@socfc.org (preferred means of contact). You can also call Caitlin Fernandez at 541-734-5150, ext. 1024; however email is preferred. State what class(es) you are taking

and what the purpose of your observation is. She will get you set up as soon as possible in a Head Start classroom. Please do NOT call centers directly if you are being newly placed at an observation site.

6. Once your practicum site has been arranged, **call or email your site at least a week ahead of time to arrange your observation time. Call and arrange an appointment prior to your first observation**, if possible, when the teacher or director/principal/area manager has time to meet with you to briefly acquaint you with the program.
7. Go at your scheduled time. If an emergency arises and you must miss your time, call the teacher prior to your scheduled time and reschedule - preferably at least a day ahead of time if possible.
8. Your role will primarily be observation, but you may be interacting with children for some assignments or classes. Ask the cooperating teacher what would be appropriate for you to do at that time. Follow the lead of the teacher.
9. **It is critical to maintain confidentiality**. You may learn information during your time in the classroom about an individual child or family that is sensitive. It is important that you respect them by not talking about such situations outside of the classroom. In our class discussions, for purposes of furthering our learning experience, we may talk about such sensitive situations. In this case, please use only first names or initials and, again, such information should not be shared outside of the class.
10. If there will be times when you will need to obtain further information from the cooperating teacher to complete your observations, please alert the teacher to that fact upon your arrival and ask for s/he to let you know when a convenient time might be for you to ask some questions.
11. **Talking on your cell phone and/or texting** in the classroom setting are not appropriate professional behaviors and **are not allowed**. Likewise, be sure to check with your classroom teacher about appropriate attire to be worn at your observation site (for example, wearing flip flops is not safe when working with children). Remember, you are a representative of Rogue Community College and the ECEE Department at your observation site.
12. Avoid jumping to conclusions. Be sure and ask the cooperating teacher about any questions you have and reasons for particular practices you may observe.
13. We need open, close communication to optimize the community lab experience for everyone involved. Please contact your instructor if problems arise or if you have any questions or concerns.

Enjoy your experience in the classroom setting!