



**RIO SALADO COLLEGE**

A MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Rio Salado's Educator Preparation Program actively seeks to combine course content with "real world" application through required school observations and interactions in Pre-K-12 classrooms.

Field experiences are a critical component of the Educator Preparation Program. These experiences are a required component of specific classes and cannot be waived or substituted with previous experience.

## Educator Preparation Field Experience Overview

Contact Us

Field Experience Office

480-517-8140

[Teacher.ed@riosalado.edu](mailto:Teacher.ed@riosalado.edu)

### Instructional Requirements

- Field experience hours are threaded throughout the program and are based on the number of credits hours.
- Specific requirements are clearly outlined in each course syllabus, i.e. grade level or specific content requirements.
- Coursework with required Field Experience hours ARE NOT OFFERED between mid-March and Mid-August of any given year. Please plan accordingly.
- Teacher candidates will have access to request their Field Experience once they are registered for a course with a required in-person component. Information is provided in the course materials regarding how to make an online Field Experience request.
- Teacher candidates will be allowed to request placements that best suit their needs related to location and school type (public traditional, public charter, or private).
- Fingerprint clearance and/or background check is required in order to go into the school district to complete an in-person field experience.
- Students should view their desired program plan for verification regarding the required in-person opportunities.

- Teacher Candidates employed within a school system may utilize their own classroom with the approval of both Rio Salado College and the designated employer; this includes Teacher in Residence candidates, long-term substitutes, emergency certificates holders. Classroom content and grade level must match the requirement of the individual course in order to modify the field experience requirements.

## Request Policies:

- Teacher candidates WILL NOT be placed in an in-person field experience without verification of fingerprint/ background clearance. Rio Salado College will not accept a field experience request without documentation on file.
- Teacher candidates are required to submit an online request for Field Experience placements **within seven days of the course start date, see course syllabus for accessing the Online Student Field Experience Request Process.\*** Rio Salado will initiate the official placement request with the requested Local Education Agency (LEA) and notify the **teacher candidate** upon confirmation of the placement.
- *Field experience placements NOT coordinated through Rio Salado College will not be honored.*
- If a district/school declines a placement, students MUST accept this decision. This decision is final and will not be discussed further. Rio Salado will automatically move on to the student's alternate choice. Rio Salado will work with the specified schools in the order of preference provided in the original online placement request.
- Many education sites have schools with the same or similar names. Therefore, it is the teacher candidate's responsibility to identify the correct site where they desire to be placed.
- If none of the requested school choices are available, the Rio Salado College teacher candidate will BE REQUIRED to accept any available placement as confirmed by the Educator Preparation Program staff. Students must honor and accept the field experience placements that have been approved.
- As a Rio Salado College teacher candidate, you are a guest in the districts/schools. Therefore, all placement decisions made by the education site are final.
- Rio Salado requires a minimum of 21 business days to arrange placement.
- Teacher candidates will be notified by Rio Salado email of any specific instructions/requirements from the district/ schools. These instructions/requirements must be completed in order to receive placement and are the sole responsibility of the teacher candidates to complete, i.e. some districts will allow teacher candidates to reach out individually to school administrators or may have additional paperwork required before confirming a placement
- Teacher candidates cannot overlap or use the same hours for multiple field experiences and the hours must be aligned with the appropriate course content and grade level requirements. Violation of this policy will result in redoing all field experience hours.
- Once a placement is confirmed, teacher candidates may design their own schedule to complete the required hours. Teacher candidates will communicate with the approved mentor teacher the proposed schedule and will be evaluated based on professionalism, communication, and overall interaction with students and school personnel.

## Components:

The Rio Salado College Online Educator Preparation Program has a critical field experience component embedded in the program that allows the teacher candidate practical, hands-on classroom experience; this is in addition to the culminating student teaching experience. To become an effective teacher, one needs to do more than read and process information about teaching. An example of this concept would be teaching someone how to ride a bicycle by having them read about it; until you get on the bike and practice, you will not be able to perform this function effectively.

Field experiences may include up to four components depending on the coursework: observation, participation and reflection are embedded in every field experience and teaching will be required depending on the specific course. The focus of each field experience will vary depending on the objectives of the course. The beginning teacher education courses have more emphasis on observing students in the class, while the focus in the methods courses is more directed to teaching.

The Mentor teacher assigned for each field experience will be required to complete an evaluation and/or verification of the teacher candidate's time in the classroom.

## Required Hours:

All Level I (Foundational) courses follow the same guideline related to the breakdown of observation and participation hours. The chart below outlines the breakdown based on credit hours.

# of Credits	Total FE hours required	Breakdown	
		Observation *	Participation*
3+	20	5	15
2	15	3	12
1	10	2	8

All Level II (Methods) courses follow the same guideline related to the breakdown of observation, participation, and teaching hours. The chart below outlines the breakdown based on credit hours.

# of Credits	Total FE Hours required	Breakdown		
		Observation	Participation*	Teaching*
3+	20	4	12	4
2	15	3	9	3
1	10	2	6	2

For specific course requirements review the [program plan](#) for certification and click on the hyperlink for each course with a required field experience (FE).

## Definitions:

**Observation:** Teacher candidates must watch a mentor teacher facilitate a lesson, interact with students, and monitor/adjust student engagement. Teacher candidates are expected to move around the classroom in order to experience an up-close look at the learning process with the student(s) under the supervision of the mentor

**Participation\*:** Teacher candidates must actively contribute to student learning. Participation hours may include but is not limited to; working with individual, small or large groups of students, planning with the mentor, and creating curricular activities/visuals. To fulfill the participation requirement, the teacher candidate will interact with the student(s) under the supervision of the mentor.

**Teaching\*:** *The act of teaching employs best instructional practices to introduce a new concept, skill or strategy to a group of students. Effective lesson planning skills, core content knowledge, instructional delivery, student engagement, and assessment are all critical teaching components. • The teacher candidate is required to teach at least one of the three sequential lessons created for the 2A Signature Assignment to satisfy a portion of the teaching hours.*

- *Teaching time is calculated as the number of minutes it takes to deliver the entire lesson plan (from the anticipatory set to the closure).*
- *Most courses are only 50 minutes in length so it is appropriate to round up to one hour. Anything beyond 45 minutes can be rounded to an hour.*
- *The creation and preparation of the lesson plan is not considered "teaching time".*
- *Participation/Teaching hours must be focused on the specific course content area. The teacher candidate may design an integrated lesson which includes other content areas, if the lesson objective(s) align with the course content. For example, if the teacher candidate is taking a math methods course, it would be appropriate to create an integrated lesson which includes math and science content in order to maximize teaching time for students.*

- *Additional course content-specific teaching opportunities, beyond the lesson required as a part of the signature assignment, may need to be completed in order to satisfy the remaining field experience hours.*

*\*Teacher Candidates Employed in their own Classroom:*

*Teacher Candidates that have their own classroom must observe a mentor outside of their own classroom and are required to document participation and teaching (when required) hours within their own classroom. Teacher Candidates should review the classroom requirements as outlined in the course syllabus to verify field experience needs as related to the grade level and content. The Mentor Teacher will validate completion of the Observation hours only.*