University Jab School Observation Guidelines

Department of Teacher Education
Spring 2012

Expectations for Classroom Observers

When university observers are involved in courses that require hours of classroom observations, the following expectations will prevail:

Sign-In Procedures

It is important for the safety of both elementary school and university students that we accurately account for everyone in the school building.

All observers will sign in the logbook in the Luhrs lobby. A valid university student photo ID card will be presented as identification. The ID card will be worn and visible while present in the Luhrs facility.

All observers will receive an observation sheet from the lobby receptionist after signing in. Observation forms do not require the classroom teacher’s signature at Luhrs. The observation form is your “pass” to the school.

Observation Etiquette

Observers will use the observation rooms adjacent to each classroom. Observations or projects conducted within classrooms must have the prior approval or invitation of the teacher or school director.

Each observation room has 4 chairs. Only 4 observers may be present in the room at any time – first come, first served. The observation rooms also serve as coat closets and for storage of instructional materials. Please do not disturb these items.

There are no observation rooms for specialist areas – art, music, physical education and library. Observers are welcome to follow classes to these subjects. When observing in these areas, sit where directed by the specialist teacher. All observers in any of these areas must still sign-in in the school lobby before proceeding to these classrooms.
Maintain professional demeanor, behavior and attire when observing – despite the screens, you can be seen and heard in the observation rooms. Hats should not be worn indoors, and clothing should not be distracting to students.

Do not bring food, gum or drinks into the school.

**Sign-Out Procedures**

Return the observation sheet to the receptionist. It will be countersigned and forwarded to your professor.

Sign out in the logbook immediately prior to leaving the building.

**Expectations for Participating Observers and Projects Involving Elementary Students**

When university students are involved in course-specific activities with GBLUES students, the following expectations will prevail in addition to the expectations for observers:

The children’s welfare and education are the first priority.

Before interacting with children or beginning any project with children, it is imperative that consent and permission be given by the school director and the classroom teacher.

Do not bring food or prizes as rewards for student achievement and/or behavior. Specific verbal praise and your attention are the most effective rewards for young children.

Teaching materials will be ready before the activity begins.

Arrive on time.

Use correct grammar and spelling.

Treat children in a positive and caring manner. Protect the confidentiality of children and their families. Use pseudonyms in any written or oral report that results from your project.

A form is attached for your use if you wish to carry out course-related projects or research with University Elementary students. Written project descriptions must be received and approved one week before the anticipated start project start date.

**Please note** - The end of the semester coincides with a traditional increase in out-of-classroom activities: field trips, assemblies, parties, holiday traditions. Plan accordingly and do not try to cram all of your observations in at the end of the semester.
Guidelines for Independent Non-research Projects Involving University Elementary Students

Occasionally students wish to carry out projects at Grace B. Luhrs University Elementary that go beyond typical classroom activities. Shippensburg University undergraduate students who wish to conduct projects involving children at GBLUES must conform with procedures to protect the safety of project participants. Approval for all projects must be received from the school director, the sponsoring faculty member and the GBLUES teacher.

The criteria for non-research project approval are:

- The project is conducted in partial fulfillment of a Shippensburg University course and is supervised by a Shippensburg University faculty member.
- Risks are minimized, and are reasonable in relation to anticipated benefits to participants and the importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result.
- Informed consent will be documented from each prospective participant’s parents or guardians.
- Student assent is required.
- Adequate provisions are made to protect the privacy of participants and to maintain the confidentiality of data.
- The selection of participants is equitable.

Items to Include with Application:

- A copy of the project proposal
- A copy of the participants’ parents’ consent form. The form should explain the project and all possible risks and should assure the parents that they are free to withdraw their children from the project at any time, without penalty. Written informed consent is required of parents or guardians for all University elementary students.
- The signature of the sponsoring faculty member.

In addition, the director may require further information about the project, including attendance at a meeting to supply additional information. Finally, at the discretion of the GBLUES director, the approval of the University Committee on Research on Human Subjects may be required.

All undergraduate, graduate and faculty research at GBLUES must be approved by the school director and the University Committee on Research on Human Subjects.

Anyone involved in research with human subjects is encouraged to pursue education on the protection of human research participants. As of October 1, 2000, the National Institute of Health has required education on the Protection of Human Subjects for all NIH grant submissions. The
educational requirement can be fulfilled by completing the NIH. Free on-line training program at http:\cme.cancer.gov/c01/ Successful completion earns the investigator a certificate – a good piece of evidence to add to a professional portfolio.