# Professional Semester Frequently Asked Questions

**Spring 2012**

## What are the important dates for the semester?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory First Large-Group Meeting</td>
<td>Thursday, January 26, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. in Shippen Hall 224.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Experiences Begin</td>
<td>Tuesday, February 21 - Report to your assigned school for the beginning of Tuesday/Thursday field experiences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td>March 12 - March 16 (pro-sem students follow university schedule-inform cooperating teachers)</td>
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<td>Exhibition Day</td>
<td>Pro-sem students do not attend Exhibition Day. Workshops will be offered in the evening.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three Week Field Experience</td>
<td>Monday, April 2 through Friday, April 19 - Report to placement everyday; NO Professional Semester classes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Return to Professional Semester classes</td>
<td>Monday, April 23, 2012 - No more Tuesday/Thursday field experiences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Week of April 30 through May 4 - Professional Semester final exams are scheduled by the Teacher Education Department.</td>
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## What documents do I need to complete to get a professional semester placement?

You must have evidence of passing **Praxis I series and Fundamental Subjects**.
You must have evidence of **FBI Fingerprinting**.*
You must have current clearances (**Act 51** & **34**)*.
You must have evidence of a **TB Tine test**.*
You must have evidence of **Liability Insurance** (PSEA) or homeowners insurance that protects you with liability insurance.

*All clearances, TB Tine test, and liability insurance are due by Sept. 2, 2011. All required documents will be collected as stapled packets and delivered to the secretary of Teacher Edu Dept (Shippen 214) before Sept. 2. Only complete packets will be accepted. Missing package names will be reported to Dr. Minetola, and Professional Semester grades will be impacted for those people not meeting the deadline.

## What will I do while I am in my field experience?

Demonstrate your best performance in your classroom and school. Refer to the Professional Semester Handbook and talk to your mentor if you have any problems. You also need to **print the Coop Guidelines and deliver it to your coop and complete responsibilities assigned by your ProSem professors.**
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What responsibilities does my Professional Semester faculty mentor have?

You will be assigned a Professional Semester faculty mentor, who will collect your mentoree info and touch bases with you regarding your school performance. You need to contact your mentor if a problem arises that is connected with your placement. For issues concerning schools and school districts, please also inform Dr. Steffy.

How will my cooperating teacher evaluate me?

Your cooperating teacher will complete the Cooperator Teacher Evaluation Form located in the Professional Semester Handbook. This form must be mailed to the Teacher Education Department before Friday April 20, 2012 This evaluation impacts your final grade in all Professional Semester classes. See Professional Experience Component/Points Field Experience Evaluation in the Professional Semester Handbook.

Your cooperating teacher will also answer questions about your performance for the weeks previous to your full-time experience via a department survey.

What if I have problems with my cooperating teacher or a Professional Semester faculty member?

If you have problems during your placement with your cooperating teacher, alert your mentor.

If you have problems with a faculty member, follow the process outlined in the Conflict Resolution Process in the Professional Semester Handbook.

What happens if I miss a day in my field experience because I am ill or have other university responsibilities?

If you are ill or have a University related absence from the field (sports, conferences…), you must notify your mentor of the absence and you must make up the day(s) missed in the field. You can make up days during final exam week or breaks. If you do not make up days, professional points will be deducted as outlined in the Participation and Attendance section of the Professional Semester Handbook.

What if my school has a vacation day or in-service during my field experience?

Your cooperating teacher should inform you of special events, parent teacher conferences, closing due to weather, in-service days, and vacation days. Your cooperating teacher will decide if you are to attend in-services or parent teacher conference. If you miss a day in the field because of a school closing or vacation, you do not need to make up the missed day.
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## What should I wear during my field experiences?

You must **dress like a teacher**. Follow the lead of your cooperating teacher, but always consider that you are being judged by children, faculty and staff, not only for your teaching, but for your professional attire.

## What should I know about liability and technological ethics?

You must purchase **liability insurance** from either a private insurer or membership in Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA). See [www.psea.org](http://www.psea.org). You must show documentation to the Teacher Education Department.

You should not use e-mail or cell-phones while in your placement. Even if your cooperating teacher uses personal communication tools, you are strongly urged not to for fear of violating PA Code of Ethics. You are strongly urged to remove all unprofessional photos and documents from your Facebook or My Space account.

## What documents must I share with my mentor?

1. You must complete the **Mentoree Information Form** by Friday, February 24.

## What Praxis exams must I complete before student teaching?

You must have Praxis I and Fundamental Subjects completed before Professional Semester. During Professional Semester or Early Childhood Block, you must complete the **Elementary Education Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment** test and send a copy of your passing documentation to the Field Experiences Office.

## How and when will I know where I am placed? What should I do when I learn my cooperating teacher’s name?

Field placements will be posted in the bulletin board outside the Teacher Education Department (date TBA). You must contact your cooperating teacher via phone or e-mail to introduce yourself and inquire about the school’s start time. You must notify your teacher about your start date before going to school.