

**California State University San Marcos**  
**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**  
**EDUC 350 Foundations of Teaching as a Profession**  
**Guidelines for Field Experience & Classroom Observation Reports**

EDUC 350 requires **15 hours** of field experience in K-12 public schools. *You cannot receive credit in the course without completing this requirement.*

→ **Please divide your 15 hours as follows:**

- 3 hours – Elementary school setting
- 3 hours – Middle school setting
- 3 hours – High school setting
- 3 hours – Special setting (e.g. English language development, special education, gifted education, charter schools, court schools)
- 3 additional hours in any of the above settings– your choice

You are encouraged to observe in multiple school districts and schools with a range of socio-economic contexts, multilingual/cultural populations, etc.

- ✓ Choose the locations of your field experience thoughtfully.
- ✓ Make copies of the introduction letter to provide school staff and/or administrators.
- ✓ Call ahead and ask to speak to the principal or the person designated to assist observers.
- ✓ Explain any Special settings you would like to observe, and/or inquire about the special settings at that school site (“What types of special programs or classes might I be able to observe at your school--English Language Development, classrooms for students with special learning needs, etc.?”). Ask if you can observe different settings if you are at the school for an extended period (e.g., morning in first grade, afternoon in fourth grade).
- ✓ Although only 15 observation hours are required for this class, we hope you will find the time this semester, or prior to entering a credential program, to conduct additional observations at the grade level and content you are most interested in teaching...the more familiar you are with the environment of your prospective career, the better you will be able to assess whether teacher is an ideal career for you.

→ Be aware that before you begin your observation hours, you **MUST** complete a TB Risk Assessment (TBRA) and Certificate of Clearance (Live Scan) fingerprinting. You will be asked to provide your instructor with Certificate of Clearance completion – and sign a contract stating that you have secured both the TBRA and the Certificate of Clearance. Bring TBRA and Certificate of Clearance documents to each school site as you may be asked to show them.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**EDUCATION 350: Foundations of Teaching as a Profession  
CLASSROOM OBSERVATION RECORD**

Fill in this sheet each time you observe in schools. Turn this in on the assigned due date during the semester.

**You must have a minimum of 15 hours of observation for EDUC 350 in the specified areas.**

Highlight or mark with an asterisk the observations that you wrote up for your classroom observation reports.

Date	Grade/Setting e.g., 1st ELD or 7 <sup>th</sup> Math	School/District	Length of Time	Teacher's Signature

		<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS: (15 minimum)</b>		
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## **Classroom Observation Reports**

Choose four of your classroom observations/lessons to write up for credit. These reports will include one from each of the four required educational levels/settings (Elementary, Middle, High, Special). See syllabus for due dates. Each classroom observation report will follow the format below and will be approximately 1,000 words in length. Respect the confidentiality of the students and teachers by using fictitious names for persons in your entries.

*Please type and single space your report.*

### **Classroom Observation Report Template**

**Name:**

**Required Setting: (Elementary, Middle, High, or Special):**

**Context:**

- Day of the Week/Date/Time
- School Name/District
- Type of classroom (grade/subject/special program)
- Number of teachers and assistants/Number of students
- Describe the demographic characteristics of this school or classroom (gender, race/ethnicity, languages, ability...)

**Overview/Description of Class Session:** Describe what you saw chronologically. List the step-by-step activities in which the teacher and students were engaged. Include relevant information about focus areas such as classroom diversity, room arrangement, behavior management strategies, evaluation methods (see list on following pages for ideas).

**Analysis of Observation:** Identify 2 significant events and explain why you chose them for analysis. Analyze the observation and make specific reference (in quote form) to what you have learned/read in this course (e.g., Sadker & Zittleman, 2018, p. #).

**Personal Impact:** Articulate how this observation personally impacted your thinking about teaching, learning, and schooling. How will this observation inform your career as a teacher and why?

**Question(s):** Conclude with at least one unanswered question you have as a result of this observation.

## **FOCUS AREAS FOR EDUC 350 CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS AND REPORTS**

The following is a list of areas to guide you through your actual field experience. You may wish to focus on one or more of these areas during observations. Some areas will require you to obtain information from the teachers and some will be evident through the observation process.

**Room arrangement** (the physical lay-out of the room: does it support or get in the way of instruction? do the students move around the room for different phases of instruction?).

**Classroom rules and procedures** (are rules posted? who generated the rules? do you see them enforced consistently? do students seem to know what the teacher expects? has the teacher made his/her "invisible" expectations visible to the students?).

**Organizing student work** (how do students submit finished work? how does the teacher return work? are there provisions for redoing/resubmitting work? what provisions are in place for students who are absent?).

**Behavior management strategies** (how does the teacher get compliance from the students in the area of acceptable behavior? do students understand expectations? is the teacher consistent in attending to students' behavior?).

**Planning for instruction** (is there evidence of lesson planning? does the teacher do long range and short range lesson planning? are instructional materials readily available?).

**Conducting instruction** (does the teacher make provisions for active learning? how does the teacher view his/her role during instruction? do all students have a chance to participate? what materials were used in the course of the lesson? what variety of instructional approaches are used? does the teacher use wait time and prompting responses to increase involvement? is cooperative learning in evidence?).

**Managing small groups** (are there any small group instructional sections? how are students selected for small groups [assigned/choice; heterogeneous/homogeneous]? are the small groups permanent or flexible? what are the students doing who are not involved with the teacher?).

**Classroom diversity** (how diverse are the students—in ability, learning styles, ethnicity, linguistic background, socioeconomic status? how does the teacher attend to differences among the students? how does the teacher adapt instruction for students with special needs, or for English learners ["sheltered instruction"]?).

**Students** (how do you think students perceive their roles as learners in the room? what opportunities do they have for interactions with each other? do interests of learners help guide instruction? are students active participants in the learning process?).

**Communication skills** (comment on the clarity of instructions. do students understand what they are to do when a sequence of instructions are given? does the teacher depend only on verbal communication skills or are there also visual prompts to accompany verbal instructions? what does the teacher's non-verbal communication indicate [body language etc.]?)

**Evaluating student progress** (how does the teacher know if objectives for instruction have been met? does the teacher ask for response to oral or written questions during the lesson and/or observe students during the lesson? what informal documentation is maintained? what “counts” for grading purposes: worksheets, homework, tests, portfolios, presentations, projects? does the teacher “teach to the test,” whether teacher-designed or standardized?)

**Flexibility** (what evidence of flexibility do you see in the teacher's behavior and the learning environment? do you see evidence of any "teachable moments" [unplanned events being turned into effective learning experiences with students]? does the teacher use student remarks or interest to "reroute" or enhance a planned lesson?).