WHEELOCK COLLEGE

HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT FIELD SITE MANUAL

A Manual for Practitioners
Fall 2015
HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT:
Summary of Roles and Responsibilities in the Field Experience

Student’s Roles and Responsibilities

Students give their field supervisor a completed Student Information Sheet.

Students confirm their schedule for a minimum of three hours each week with their field supervisor.

Students document their weekly hours on an HGD attendance sheet.

Students notify their field supervisor of observation assignments ahead of time so they can work together to carry them out most conveniently. Observations will take 20-30 minutes.

Students will regularly consult with the field supervisor about ways to be involved beyond observation. Students will discuss their ideas with the field supervisor before leading an activity.

Field Supervisor’s Roles and Responsibilities

Field supervisors assist the student in completing observation assignments by arranging observation times in 20-30 minute blocks. During this time students will need to concentrate on being observers rather than active participants with the children.

Field supervisors guide the students to participate as fully as possible. HGD students have typically been in charge of small group activities, e.g., sitting at an activity table, supervising a snack table, working with individual children, working with a group of senior citizens, serving lunch and chatting with clients in a social service setting. In addition, with prior consultation with the teacher or field supervisor, students may plan a special activity: a cooking project, learning about a musical instrument that they are familiar with, etc.

Field supervisors help shape the implementation of the student’s ideas for activities. Since students are not student teachers with training and time for curriculum development, they are not expected to do regular planning. On the other hand, from time to time, they may wish to bring in an activity or story.

Field supervisors help students in the HGD Intensive course to obtain consent from a legal guardian for the observations the student will do throughout the field experience. The student submits a signed, consent form to their HGD Intensive instructor. (For more details see page 3).

Field supervisors sign off on the student’s timesheet and complete the student evaluation form. A final meeting to share the evaluation and provide closure is very helpful. Students will return both forms to their HGD instructor.
HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT:
The Field Experience

Overview

The *Human Growth and Development* course (HGD) has two formats. One is an eight-credit, yearlong course for first-year students that examines major developmental shifts throughout the lifespan. First semester covers conception through early childhood and focuses on children under the age of six. Second semester of the yearlong course covers middle childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and aging. The second course, *Human Growth and Development - Intensive*, is a one semester, eight-credit course designed for transfer students. In the course, students explore changes in physical, cognitive, social, and emotional capacities throughout the life span. In both courses students study how social, emotional, physical, and cognitive domains change and interact to affect the life process. The courses highlight the role of socio-cultural context and cultural diversity in understanding human development.

The field experience connected to the Human Growth and Development courses helps to lay a foundation for all professional work at the college and is therefore critical to the course as well as to the development of students’ emerging professionalism. Placement sites include daycare centers, preschools, nursery schools, and kindergarten classrooms. We require our students to be in the field at least **three hours a week for the full semester**. We expect them to participate with the children in ways that will assist your staff and enrich your program as well as help prepare the students for education and human services careers. **Because of their relative lack of experience, students should not be asked to assume unsupervised responsibility, nor are they to be left alone without a staff member present at any time.** Moreover, since their coursework focuses on development rather than curriculum, students should not be expected to plan activities.

Fieldwork allows students an opportunity to develop skills in objective observation of children and to make connections among theory, research, and practice. Furthermore, students are able to relate developmental theory to the lives of real children in a variety of situations and contexts. For all students, observations and analysis provide the data upon which a number of written assignments are based.

The mission of Wheelock College is to improve the quality of life for children and families. We at Wheelock are committed to this mission and to shaping an ethical, caring, multi-racial, and multicultural democracy built on deep knowledge and understanding, shared values, inclusive practices, and principles of social justice.
Student Assignments

Students will have specific observation assignments to complete over the course of the semester. These observations will require 20-30 minutes without other responsibilities. During this time, it is important for the students to concentrate on being observers rather than active participants with the children. Your student will let you know in advance what his/her assignment is for a given day. We would appreciate your assistance in facilitating these observation times.

Students in the intensive section of HGD select one focus child and observe his/her language and cognitive and social development over the ten-week course of their placement. They learn to observe, record and interpret a child’s behavior across a number of domains. In order to undertake this assignment, students will need to obtain consent from a parent or legal guardian and submit a signed consent form to their HGD instructor. With your help, the student is responsible for getting this signature when he/she has chosen a child for her focus study.

Student Evaluation

All students in HGD courses benefit from the field supervisor’s feedback. Students will bring to their site supervisor an evaluation form to complete at the end of the semester. We hope that you will evaluate the student carefully with the understanding that fieldwork is an important part of his/her professional education. It is most helpful if you meet with the student at the end of the semester for a feedback session. The student will then take the evaluation form back to their HGD instructor, in a sealed envelope if you prefer.

Each week students are responsible for completing an attendance sheet provided by their HGD instructor. Should the student have to miss a session, he/she is responsible for notifying you and arranging a make-up time. Please initial the attendance sheet at the end of the term and the student will return it with the evaluation to the Wheelock instructor. To receive credit for this field experience, the student must meet the minimum time commitment and submit your evaluation to his/her instructor.

Should you need more of any of these forms you can find them on the Wheelock College Field Experience Web site at http://www.wheelock.edu/fld/fldprograms.asp.

Conclusion of the Field Experience

Saying good-bye may not be easy for any student. It is helpful for them to plan how they can best end their work with the children at the close of the semester.

In addition to saying good-bye to the children, students want a time to say good-bye to supervisors. That farewell should include a time to go over the student’s evaluation. While they will be obtaining a written form to carry back to their instructor, they can gain a clearer picture about how their strengths and weaknesses appear to professionals through a discussion of their time at the placement. The time you take to share the evaluation with students provides them with a way of learning about themselves as evolving professionals. We understand that as supervisors you are very busy, and we deeply appreciate the time you take to meet with students throughout their placement with you.
Glitches, Bumps, Questions

Students are aware that even with the best selected and planned placement experience, questions may arise once they are on-site. We encourage our students to deal with them before they become larger concerns.

1. **What if a student’s schedule needs to be changed?** They will immediately discuss the change with their field supervisor to see if an adjustment can be made. If this is not possible, the students notify the HGD Instructor and the Field Experience Office as soon as they are able so we can find a new placement. Both the student and the Field Experience Office will let the placement know about the change.

2. **What if a student is ill, detained, or unable to be at their placement?** It is the student’s responsibility as a professional to notify the placement as soon as possible and to arrange for a make-up time. The attendance sheet included in the student’s packet is the means of verifying attendance and will be included with the student’s evaluation.

3. **What if there is a severe storm on the student’s placement day?** Students should be informed about which radio station carries weather cancellation announcements for your site. In this event, as with any other unavoidable absence, it is the student’s responsibility to find a make-up time.

4. **What should I do if a student at my site is having difficulty?** Our students come to Wheelock and begin their field placement with varying levels of experience and comfort with working with children. Sometimes, a student will struggle with how to engage a child or assimilate into the placement environment. It is expected that students will complete a full 30 hours at your site. Because we would like all students to be successful in meeting this requirement, faculty and staff work to support all students so that they can successfully complete their placements. While a site is always welcome to contact the Field Experience Office at any time with concerns, we have learned that a few steps can be useful when working with our students. By processing events at the site and communicating with the student, he or she is often able to work through an issue and have a successful experience.

If a student is having difficulty at your site, we recommend taking the following steps:

- Meet with the student individually outside of the classroom to discuss concerns and give feedback
- Provide the student with constructive ideas or an action plan to improve his or her performance at the site

If after this stage a student is still having difficulty, we recommend that the site:

- Call the Field Experience Office. The FEO can then enlist the support of the student’s HGD instructor who has a relationship with the student, meet with the student, or direct the student to other supports at the College.

For further information, please call Arafat Akbar, Administrative Coordinator at (617) 879-2165, aakbar@wheelock.edu or Eleonora Villegas-Reimers, Coordinator of HGD at (617) 879-2168, ereimers@wheelock.edu.
Academic Calendar Fall 2015

September

**Wednesday, Sept. 2**  Classes begin

**Week of Sept. 14**  Students begin HGD Field Experience

October

**Monday, Oct. 12**  Autumn Holiday

November

**Monday, Nov. 11**  Veterans' Day Holiday

**Wednesday, Nov. 25**  Thanksgiving Holiday begins

**Monday, Nov. 30**  Classes Resume

December

**Wednesday, Dec. 16**  Last day for HGD Field Experience

Evaluation and time sheets due

**Tuesday, Dec. 22**  Fall Semester grades due