

Observing, Interacting and Participating: Experiential Education in a Group Setting for Young Children

Welcome to the Towson University Child Care Center. We hope that your time with us will be beneficial and enjoyable. In order to help us serve you in your educational endeavors, please read and carefully consider the following information.

The goal of our center is to promote growth in our students across all areas of development in an educational setting that is stimulating and nurturing. We support families of our students' and their growth in knowledge of child development and research.

As an observer, your task is to document what you witness with individual students and the class as a whole. You will be a temporary member of a classroom community while completing your observations, and therefore, have certain responsibilities to that community.

Observer Responsibilities

In order to observe, you must first register with Navigate. Here you can pick your observation time and classroom. If you are scheduled for a time and must cancel, you are responsible for calling the Center to cancel the appointment. If you miss two appointments, you will not be allowed to return without a written request from your professor. Multiple "no shows" will result in your removal from the system and you will not be allowed to observe. It is also your responsibility to reschedule if you cancel an appointment. The office WILL NOT schedule observations for you.

Arrive at the school earlier than you start time to allow for time to sign in and obtain your observation log. When you arrive for your observation, stop at the front desk and present your OneCard to sign in. You will be given a name tag holder and an observation log sheet. At your designated start time, you may report to your classroom and begin your observation. Student arriving more than 15 minutes late will not be allowed to observe. On your first observation, you will need to turn in this signed form stating you understand and agree to the responsibilities outlined here.

Your role is that of a **passive observer** in the classroom. Find a place to watch that does not interfere with the activities of the day, but also allows you a view of students in multiple areas of the classroom exploration. We ask that you do not actively engage with any of the students, but you are free to respond to them if they ask questions or wish to say, "Hello". If you find yourself drawn to interacting in our learning environment, pick up an employment application at the front desk at the end of your observation so you may be brought on with all the training

and knowledge our student staff positions require to ensure we are always facilitating active learning.

You should practice “active documentation” when in your assigned classroom. You should be writing what you see, not only from the students, but the environment, teacher, and staff interacting. You need to balance being close enough to capture words and actions but distant enough not to interfere. We have found the best resource for this kind of documentation is a notebook and pen, but if you bring a laptop, make sure it’s fully charged so you are free to travel as the class travels throughout the morning.

Business casual dress is required. This is an educational setting so please make sure you treat it as such. Ensure you can sit in small chairs, step over rocks, and be outside in rain or snow. Put thought in to the shoes you wear, the length of shirt and shorts, and that everything can remain covered when getting up and down with small children.

Please no cell phones! If you have an emergency, you need to let the Lead know and take any calls out in the hallway. **You may not use phones for note taking.** Phone may be used for pictures only with the Lead’s permission.

Once your observation is completed you must have the Lead initial your sheet. If the Lead is occupied, you can have the sheet initialed by the front office staff. We reserve the right to refuse an initial if we feel you are not meeting your responsibilities as outlined above.

Please complete this document and bring it with you to your first observing session.

Course Name:	
Course Title:	
Course Section:	
Professor’s Name:	
Professor’s Email Address:	
Semester and Year:	
Your Printed Name:	
Your Email Address:	
Phone Number:	

OBSERVER RESPONSIBILITIES:

Be on time.

Dress appropriately.

No phones.

Passive observation