

**FIELD EXPERIENCE IN MUSIC:  
GUIDELINES & EVALUATION**

*NB: Students are also required to familiarize themselves with the document  
“Policies for Student Teaching in Music”*

**Approved by the Joint Department of Music Education  
School of Music, Brandon University**

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***\*to be completed by Cooperating Teacher and reviewed with the Student Teacher for each music placement.***

## **GUIDELINES FOR FIELD EXPERIENCE IN MUSIC**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of field experience is to provide music student teachers with an opportunity for observing the music teaching/learning process in the field and to provide a forum for graduated involvement in that process. Brandon University offers a distinctive pattern of field experiences for music education students, consisting of four placements in the schools, three of them in music. The student's first field experience occurs early in their program, at the end of their second year. This five-week placement (in the month of May) gives students a valuable and concrete orientation to the music education profession, and helps establish a practical context for ensuing studies in music education as well as identifying skills and abilities that warrant attention. Students' second and fourth placements (their third is in their "second teachable" subject) occur during March and April in their fourth and fifth years of study, and are both seven weeks in duration. A deliberate effort is made to provide students with music instructional experience in both urban and rural settings.

Regular observation and guidance by a music faculty supervisor, along with structured dialogue among supervisor, student teacher, and cooperating teacher, serve to identify strengths and weaknesses of the student for the purpose of encouraging growth.

The success of a student's field experience depends extensively upon the degree of cooperation among the student teacher, the faculty supervisor, and the cooperating teacher. It is important for all three to understand clearly their respective roles in the process. These Guidelines for Field Experience in Music are intended to serve that purpose.

### **Responsibilities of the Student Teacher**

Field experience is intended to provide you with opportunities to incorporate theoretical understanding and practical expertise. Never has the responsibility for your learning rested more squarely on your shoulders than in this setting. The cooperating teacher has no obligation to structure your work. That responsibility is yours. What you get from this experience depends almost entirely on the quality of questions you ask and the thoroughness of your observations. This is usually a very exciting but exhausting time, calling for flexibility, insight, creativity and conscientious focus.

As a student teacher you are expected to:

1. Contact your cooperating teacher prior to your first day in the school. A personal meeting is highly desirable. This is also a good opportunity to practice your resume writing skills: prepare a resume to present to the teacher. As well, during the first week of field experience, make a deliberate point of introducing yourself to school administrators.
2. Contact your Faculty Supervisor prior to your first day of school to discuss expectations. Provide the Faculty Supervisor with complete contact information (e.g., email and telephone

number) for the time of the practicum. Ensure that you have contact information for your Faculty Supervisor.

3. Provide the faculty supervisor via e-mail a detailed, accurate copy of your schedule **no later than the third day of field experience**. Visitations require careful planning in order to accommodate all student teachers. A visitation schedule cannot be arranged until **ALL** schedules have been submitted. It is often useful to plan subsequent visits while the faculty supervisor is in the school. The student teacher should be prepared to recommend a first and second choice of time and date in all discussions of visitation planning.
4. Regard your affiliation with the school as a contractual arrangement under which if you miss work, you will not be paid. Unexcused absences from field experience are not permitted, and any absences require the permission of both faculty supervisor and cooperating teacher. Because music instruction takes place outside the school day in many schools, you must be prepared to meet such demands. Student teachers are responsible for **all** instructional functions, whether scheduled in class time or outside (e.g., before school rehearsals, evening rehearsals, noon time events, etc.).
5. Be prompt, at least 10 or 15 minutes earlier than the start of instruction. Your cooperating teacher may want you there even earlier once you begin to engage in instruction.
6. Plan for regular consultation with your cooperating teacher. One of the most important potential benefits of field experience is the evaluation and direction you receive from your cooperating teacher. While some teachers will prefer to discuss your teaching informally, others will prefer to schedule regular conferences for that purpose. Determine your cooperating teacher's preference and take the initiative to arrange dialogue accordingly. Prompt feedback is invaluable, and a 20-minute daily conference at day's end is ideal.
7. One of your first tasks is to acquire class lists and learn students' names. Many music classes are large, requiring extra effort in this respect. First name recognition indicates to students that you care.
8. Gauge your dress by the attire of other faculty members. If in doubt, over-dress a bit. Jeans and sweatshirts are generally inappropriate attire.
9. Review and make mental and written notes on the materials you observe being used by the cooperating teacher -- everything from method books, repertoire, to bulletin board materials, brand names of effective instructional materials, etc. Anything potentially useful for future reference is to be recorded in your daily journal.
10. Your needs as a student teacher are important, but subordinate to those of the students in the school to which you are assigned. Your placement should benefit both you and the school to which you are assigned. Recognize that your presence as a student teacher requires that adjustments be made to accommodate you, and assure that your contributions enhance rather than impede the program's effectiveness during your presence. In other words, in return for the learning opportunities provided you, give your fair share to the school.

11. Become familiar with the Faculty of Education **Field Experience Handbook**. The policies and regulations apply to field experience in music. **Field Experience in Music: Guidelines & Evaluation** should be considered supplementary to the required **Field Experience Handbook**.
12. Take the initiative to become involved in every possible way during your placement. The more you do, the more you will gain from this experience.
13. Maintain a daily reflective journal and arrange to share this journal with your Faculty Supervisor at regular intervals throughout the practicum.
14. Do not hesitate to call the faculty supervisor if problems develop or you need extra assistance

### **Responsibilities of the Cooperating Teacher**

1. The student teacher's transition from observation to actual teaching is a crucial concern. Determining when the student teacher is ready to assume primary instructional responsibility is a decision that should be made carefully. It is recommended that the initial experiences involve small groups or one-to-one settings. The time for the student teacher to take a portion of a class will be determined by his/her comfort with the activity, pupils' acceptance of the student teacher as part of the institution, and your willingness to turn over valuable class time. Following are expectations for student teachers in music placements.

**01:271** (five weeks, 3 hours credit). Since this is their first field placement, students should begin by observing, assisting the classroom teacher with routine classroom tasks, interacting with individuals and small groups, and becoming familiar with the school environment. Bear in mind the importance of close supervision and constructive suggestions at this formative stage. Student teachers should have the opportunity to teach full classes by the end of the placement. Lesson plans are required for all classes taught by the student teacher.

**01:371** (seven weeks, 3 hours credit). Student teachers in this second music field experience have had the benefit of significantly more preparation than those in 01:271 and should be able to take on considerably more responsibility for instruction. The student teacher should be able to plan and teach several lessons each day. By the end of the placement, students should be capable of teaching multiple full classes. Experience in unit planning is desirable.

**01:474** (seven weeks, 3 hours credit). In this placement, music students teach in their second teachable subject area or in an elementary classroom, under the supervision of a Faculty of Education supervisor.

**01:475** (seven weeks, 3 hours credit). Students in this final music placement are expected to teach at a sophisticated level. While it may take a few days of observation and lower-level participation to become familiar with the program, the student teacher should be prepared to assume responsibility and take initiative early on. By the third

week the student teacher should be involved in planning the full range of classroom activities. By the conclusion of this field experience, the student teacher should be able to assume full control of all aspects of the classroom. Ideally, the student will have taught at least one week of full-time classes.

2. Any difficulties in field experience should be reported to the faculty supervisor at Brandon University School of Music as soon as they occur. The faculty supervisor does not normally observe until the second week of a placement.
3. Please develop a plan of consultation with the student teacher to share your observations of his/her progress. A question period at day's end is usually quite useful. Written comments on rehearsal/class observations as well as verbal evaluation are appropriate. In some cases the principal may wish to participate in student teacher evaluation.
4. Evaluate the student teacher during field experience in whatever way you consider most appropriate. You are requested to complete Music Field Experience Evaluation at the end of the term. This evaluation may be used as an employment reference, but only at the request of the student. The goal of student teacher evaluation should be the improvement of teaching skills through assessment of growth and identification of strengths and weaknesses. Discuss your final evaluation with the student teacher. If you have questions regarding evaluation, please contact the faculty supervisor

### **Responsibilities of the Faculty Supervisor**

A visit from the faculty supervisor normally involves a full morning or afternoon at the school. The faculty supervisor will complete an observation report at each visit. The visit is primarily to provide constructive feedback and to identify specific areas in need of improvement. A written summative report of field experience that synthesizes the cooperating teacher's report and the faculty supervisor's observations will be provided for the student, and a copy will be retained in the student's file. This report may be used as an employment reference, but only at the request of the Student Teacher.

The faculty supervisor will normally visit student teachers **four times** during a seven-week placement.

The format of the faculty supervisor's visit will be the following:

1. A conference between the student teacher and faculty supervisor to go over the lesson plans for classes to be observed.
2. The faculty supervisor observes one or two classes.
3. A post-conference involving the student teacher, cooperating teacher, and faculty supervisor will allow the supervisor to describe the successes and points that need attention based on observations.

### **DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED OF THE STUDENT TEACHER FOR FIELD EXPERIENCE IN MUSIC**

Keeping a precise, well-structured record of observations and activities in field experience is an important responsibility. Three types of documents are required: daily journal, teacher observation inventories, and lesson plans. The purposes of this requirement are to (a) focus your observing and teaching, (b) provide the faculty supervisor with a formal account of your work for objective evaluation, and (c) provide a reference resource for your own long-term evaluation of this experience.

These documents should be well organized, should demonstrate superior writing skills, and must be submitted for grading at the end of field experience.

### **The Daily Journal**

This is to record the major features of each day you spend in the field and should reflect what you saw, lessons given, rehearsals observed/conducted, literature or repertoire utilized, methodologies, student behavior, and anything else that might be valuable for future reference. Be objective, and record observations and concerns in a systematic, consistent manner. Allow time for making your journal entries at the end of each day.

### **Lesson/Rehearsal Plans**

Prepare lesson plans for each half to full class or rehearsal you teach. The faculty supervisor will discuss your lesson plan before each class observed. It is the main component of the pre-conference between student teacher and faculty supervisor.

*N.B.: A lesson plan is not simply a list of activities, or sections to be rehearsed.*

### **Weekly Goal-Setting Reports**

These reports are referred to in the Faculty of Education's Field Experience Handbook and various of their documents. The weekly goal-setting report is NOT required of music education students for their music placements (the reflective journal with the Faculty Supervisor is used instead). Students need to note, however, that this goal-setting assignment IS a requirement for the non-music placement. It will be important to familiarize yourself with this requirement before you leave for that placement.

**MUSIC FIELD EXPERIENCE EVALUATION**

**Brandon University  
Music Education Department**

Student Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Cooperating Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*This form is for use with Brandon University music student teachers at the completion of each music placement. Please complete it for submission to the Faculty Supervisor during the student's final week. It is expected that it will be discussed with and signed by the Student Teacher prior to his/her departure from the school.*

Please make allowances for the level of the field experience being assessed – it is anticipated, for instance, that students in their first placements will require improvement or considerable improvement in many or most areas. The reference group for the final (01.475) assessment is the population of first-year music education professionals.

- 5 = exceptional, outstanding
- 4 = strong
- 3 = room for improvement
- 2 = needs considerable improvement
- 1 = weak
- NA = *does not apply*

**MUSICAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE**

1. Detection of musical errors in rehearsals/classroom music

1 2 3 4 5

2. Sensitivity to discrepancies between score and actual performance

1 2 3 4 5

3. Theoretical and historical understanding of the music being taught

1 2 3 4 5

4. Musical modeling (voice, keyboard, wind/percussion instrument)

1 2 3 4 5

5. Musicality

1 2 3 4 5



6. Interpretation of musical scores

1 2 3 4 5

7. Conducting

1 2 3 4 5

8. Musical results of students (i.e. discernible musical improvement?)

1 2 3 4 5

9. Technical knowledge (fingerings, articulation, tone, etc.)

1 2 3 4 5

10. Knowledge of the principles of pronunciation of appropriate languages

1 2 3 4 5

11. Stylistic accuracy/ awareness

1 2 3 4 5

12. Stylistic and rehearsal approaches appropriate to jazz

1 2 3 4 5

**PLANNING AND EVALUATION**

13. Lesson objectives (as distinct from activities) clearly stated

1 2 3 4 5

14. Provision for sequencing, review, individualization, and evaluation in lesson plans

1 2 3 4 5

15. Level/age-appropriateness of lesson plans

1 2 3 4 5

16. Detail of lesson plans (specification of required materials, equipment, musical resources: Might the plan be used by another teacher?)

1 2 3 4 5

17. Appropriate, imaginative lesson “warm up”

1 2 3 4 5

18. Engagement of students in self-assessment activities

1 2 3 4 5

19. Provision for continuity between short, mid-range, and long-term plans

1 2 3 4 5

20. Provision for smooth, efficient transitions between activities

1 2 3 4 5

21. Provision for lesson closure

1 2 3 4 5

22. Focus on instructional strategies, not just activities

1 2 3 4 5

23. Awareness of relationship between stated objectives and actual results

1 2 3 4 5

24. Provision of assignments that reinforce lesson skills & concepts

1 2 3 4 5

25. Planning and execution of assessment strategies

1 2 3 4 5

### **TEACHING STRATEGIES**

26. Re-directs or re-teaches appropriately and effectively

1 2 3 4 5

25. Paces lessons appropriately for the age group and the subject/ type of class

1 2 3 4 5

26. Uses a variety of instructional strategies to assure student engagement

1 2 3 4 5

27. Adapts lesson plans where necessary

1 2 3 4 5

28. Uses logical, sequential approaches to musical skill development (e.g., developing rhythm & tonal 'readiness')

1 2 3 4 5

29. Facilitates active, creative learning situations for the pupils

1 2 3 4 5

30. Is familiar with and draws upon professional literature in music education

1 2 3 4 5

31. Uses instructional methods appropriate to the task and developmental level at hand

1 2 3 4 5

32. Uses of singing voice effectively in teaching

1 2 3 4 5

33. Is prepared to teach general music (i.e., music for the general student)

1 2 3 4 5

34. Develops appropriate vocal tone production (choral and elementary only)

1 2 3 4 5

35. Directs learning on classroom instruments (elementary only)

1 2 3 4 5

36. Demonstrates comfort with electronic media

1 2 3 4 5

37. Individualizes instruction

1 2 3 4 5

38. Provides specific, constructive, and appropriate feedback to students

1 2 3 4 5

39. Maintains a positive learning environment

1 2 3 4 5

40. Uses positive reinforcement where appropriate

1 2 3 4 5

**CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

41. Security and confidence as a conductor or classroom leader

1 2 3 4 5

42. Variety in motivational strategies

1 2 3 4 5

43. Fairness and consistency in dealings with students

1 2 3 4 5

44. Effectiveness maintaining classroom control

1 2 3 4 5

45. Appropriate, professional relationships with students

1 2 3 4 5

46. Non-verbal communication skills

1 2 3 4 5

47. Verbal communication skills

1 2 3 4 5

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/RESPONSIBILITIES**

48. Self-analysis of teaching (i.e. consistent, critical, reflective, effective)

1 2 3 4 5

49. Professional relationship with cooperating teacher (including effort to seek advice, feedback)

1 2 3 4 5

50. Involvement in school duties (hall or recess duty, parent meetings, after-school rehearsals)

1 2 3 4 5

51. Willingness to accept critical feedback

1 2 3 4 5

52. Interactions with students, parents, and general public (i.e. prompt, courteous, empathetic, etc.)

1 2 3 4 5

53. Professional interactions with faculty, staff, and administration

1 2 3 4 5

54. Appropriateness of attire

1 2 3 4 5

55. Awareness of school policies and procedures

1 2 3 4 5

56. Punctuality and consistency in attendance.

1 2 3 4 5

57. Consistency and thoroughness of daily preparation

1 2 3 4 5

58. Organization (materials, work area, etc.)

1 2 3 4 5

Which best describes this student's progress while working with you this term?

- initially weak, progressed to average
- initially weak, progressed to above average
- initially weak, remained weak throughout
- average throughout
- initially average, progressed to above average
- initially above average, continued to develop throughout

Compared to other student teachers I have known, I would rank this student in the:

- top 25%
- middle 50%
- lower 25%

Before beginning to teach, this student teacher would benefit from additional preparation in:

This student's strengths are:

**Please use this page to elaborate on your ratings and observations, or to comment on the student teacher's abilities more generally.**

Result of this Field Experience placement is (select one):  PASS  INCOMPLETE  FAIL<sup>1</sup>

Cooperating Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>1</sup> Amendment January 2024