

University of Alberta  
Faculty of Education  
Undergraduate Student Services

**Field Experiences Policy Advisory Committee Annual Report**

**July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016**

Submitted by:  
Robert Smilanich  
Assistant Dean, Field Experiences  
September 2016

## **A. Overview**

The Field Experiences 'team' is part of the Undergraduate Student Services (USS) unit and is responsible for successfully planning, implementing, and monitoring all Field Experiences for students registered in the Faculty of Education. The Assistant Dean provides leadership to the unit, which is made up of three placement coordinators, eight Field Experiences Associates (FEAs), and an Administrative Assistant.

The Unit is supported by many individuals in the faculty, most notably by the Associate Dean, Teacher Education; the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs and Services; and the Director of Student Support. (See Appendix A)

The *School Act* requires graduates of the faculty to be able to demonstrate Knowledge, Skills and Attributes (KSAs) at a level that meets those set out for interim certification. The Field Experience is integral in providing pre-service teachers with a context in which to develop and practice the KSAs that are addressed in all undergraduate program courses. Our goal is to provide student teachers with Field Experiences that fit their programs and optimize their development of skills and knowledge defined by the KSAs. The mid-point and final evaluation form for the Field Experiences has integrated these KSAs.

We maintain ongoing communications and work with other post-secondary institutions and the professional educational community on a number of issues, initiatives, and goals. These include ongoing informal communications as well as formal contacts through the Field Experiences Policy Advisory Committee (FEPAC), Edmonton Area Field Experiences Committee (EAFEC), Teacher Evaluation and Certification Committee (TECC), Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS), and the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA).

We greatly appreciate the ongoing support and communication we have with individual members and departments within the Faculty of Education, the Campus Saint Jean, and campus supports such as Student Accessibility Services (SAS).

The Field Experiences staff participates in weekly team meetings, other meetings with USS staff, regular FEA/University Facilitator (UF) meetings, and a variety of other professional development and conference sessions.

## **B. Statistical Information**

The Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta places the largest practicum cohort in Canada. The tables below provide information about our Field Experience placements for 2015-16. Historically, we place more students in the Winter Term due to student preferences and program flow. We greatly appreciate the service of teachers and school districts across the province in supporting our students in their Field

Experiences. These placements are made possible by the combined efforts of our staff, schools and schools districts, faculty members, and our students.

**Table One: Total placements by course**

	Fall 2015	Winter 2016	Total
EDFX 325	65	342	407
EDFX 350	23	133	369
EDFX 425	373	112	485
EDFX 450	126	304	430
EDFX 490		35	35
EDFX 498	5	1	6
EDFX 499		12	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>1744</b>

**Table Two: Local Placements by Jurisdiction**

	Fall 2015	Winter 2016	Total
Edmonton School District #7	332	381	713
Edmonton Roman Catholic Separate School District #40	139	160	299
Elk Island Public School Regional Division #14	42	43	85
Parkland School Division #70	17	15	32
Black Gold Regional Division #18	16	16	32
Elk Island Catholic Separate Regional Division #41	15	10	25
St Albert PSS District #6	11	14	25
Greater St. Albert Catholic Regional #29	13	3	16
Sturgeon School Division #24	10	6	16
St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Separate RD #38	4	8	12
Evergreen Catholic Separate Regional Division #2	5	4	9
New Horizons Charter School Society	1	4	5
Temp. Jurisdiction for Schools	4		4
Aurora Charter School Ltd	2	2	4
NULL		35	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>1312</b>

**Table Three: Collaborative Program and Regional Placements**

	Fall 2015	Winter 2016	Total
Aboriginal Teacher Education Program		29	29
GPRC Collaborative Program	25	38	63
Keyano College Collaborative Program		28	28
Red Deer College Collaborative Program	39	40	79
Regional Placements	130	103	233
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>432</b>

**Table Four: Completion Record**

Course	Grade	Fall 2015	Winter 2016	Total
EDFX 325	CR	65	333	398
	D		1	1
	M		1	1
	W		7	7
EDFX 350	CR	232	132	364
	W	4	1	5
EDFX 425	CR	355	105	460
	D	1		1
	M	3	2	5
	W	14	5	19
EDFX 450	CR	118	293	411
	D		1	1
	M	1		1
	NC	2		2
	W	5	10	15
EDFX 490	C		35	35
EDFX 498	CR	5	1	6
EDFX 499	CR		9	9
	M		1	1
	NC		1	1
	W		1	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>805</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>1744</b>

### C. Notable Accomplishments

Here is a partial list of notable accomplishments and initiatives undertaken during 2015-16 academic year:

1. Completed over 1700 placements; locally, regionally, and internationally.
2. Improved the supports our students receive during the on-campus portion of their professional terms:
  - a. Made improvements to the IFX seminar, including placing even more emphasis on managing the learning environment and developing more specific course outcomes, resources, and assignments, to ensure consistency from section to section.
  - b. Developed a more sustainable model for preparing IFX students in the use of interactive white board technology and we introduced IFX students to some of the Google applications currently being used in Alberta jurisdictions.
  - c. Offered a mandatory Friday session to Secondary AFX students where we reviewed strategies supporting success in their practicum, shared information regarding graduation and certification, and provided access to a number of workshops provided by the ATA.

- d. Replaced the IFX Orientation with a mandatory Friday session for all IFX students providing access to a variety of workshops covering topics relevant to their first Field Experience.
  - e. Refined our model of developing contracts for students unsuccessful in their first attempt at a Field Experience, the terms of which need to be satisfied prior to being placed for a second time.
3. Piloted the addition of an experiential component to our Faculty's introductory course, EDU 100/300. Participating students were required to fulfil a minimum of one hour of service a week over at least 10 weeks.
  4. Piloted the course *EDFX 490: Unique Urban Field Experience* as a regular session offering in the Winter Term. Students were required to commit to 15 full days (or 30 half days) in the classroom and complete a substantial assignment to satisfy the requirements of the course. The course was also offered again in Spring 2016, to both Elementary and Secondary route students.
  5. Continued to develop and refine a number of activities that were initiated the previous academic year; this includes making improvements to:
    - a. our website information and format;
    - b. our information management and internal processes;
    - c. our electronic evaluation documents and related processes;
    - d. the format and usefulness of other forms.
  6. Revised Faculty policy limiting the number of times a student may delete a Field Experience course after the general Add/Delete deadline has passed, with the aim of limiting the disruption caused to a school community in these instances.
  7. Piloted offering a cohort of Elementary students the opportunity to complete their EDFX 325 IFX in a school setting considered to have a very diverse population. As part of their participation in the cohort, they were provided with additional professional development opportunities and school inter-visitations.
  8. Helped establish a Spring Session section of *EDU 100: Contexts of Education* that was taught out of three different school sites. Students in this class spent one week at each of Highlands School, St. Alphonsus School and Centre High. Instructors were able to take advantage of the experience and made great use of guest speakers, class visits, and opportunities to work with students.
  9. Made some adjustments to the structure of the Field Experience team and the nature of the FEA secondments with the intention of achieving greater sustainability, improving succession and transitions, and increasing the overall functionality of the unit.

#### **D. Plans and Priorities for 2016-17**

This following is a partial list of priorities and supporting initiatives that the Field Experience unit has identified for the 2016-17 academic year:

1. Increase the general preparedness of all students going out on a Field Experience.

- a. Increase student rates of participation in the experiential component of EDU 100/300 in the Fall Term and move to mandatory participation for the Winter Term.
  - b. Continue to refine our contract process for students who are unsuccessful in their first attempt at a Field Experience.
  - c. Continue to develop the seminar, capitalizing on the skills and perspectives of our new FEAs, while maintaining the increased emphasis on developing student capacity related to 'classroom management' and the use of technology.
  - d. Continue to make improvements to the mandatory IFX and AFX information session and workshop events, including the addition of an Elementary information session delivered in a large group format.
2. Provide more opportunities for students to develop capacities in targeted areas.
- a. Increase opportunities for students to participate in EDFX 490. This will necessitate us increasing the efficiency of our processes related to the delivery of the course.
  - b. Set up the opportunity for a cohort of Secondary students to complete their IFX in school setting considered to have a very diverse population with additional professional development opportunities and school inter-visitations, similar to the model piloted with Elementary students in the 2016 Winter Term.
  - c. Continue to offer a section of EDU 100/300 taught in a school setting with refinements to the delivery of that model.
  - d. Provide an opportunity for students to receive information from representatives of the Human Resources departments of local district partners regarding areas of need, personal capacity building, employment projections, and application procedures and processes.
  - e. Explore possibilities for providing students with program advice in support of developing capacity in critical areas of practice identified by the field.
3. Improve the level of support provided to students out on their Field Experiences.
- a. Ensure greater Zone-to-Zone consistency in the sharing of information and procedures and practices.
  - b. Improve overall quality of placements, through the collection of more relevant information from students; one example of this would be the use of the new 'Extenuating Circumstances' form.
  - c. Improve University Facilitator (UF) screening and training with an emphasis on ensuring greater UF-to-UF consistency in student expectations and support.
  - d. Work with school leaders to improve practices in the identification, recruitment, preparation, and capacity building of Mentor Teachers.
  - e. Improve the experience of students wishing to do a regional field experience by ensuring earlier placement release, better access to bursaries, and more consistent support from University Facilitators.
4. Enhance relationships with the field and increase levels of collaboration.
- a. Provide better messaging and communication regarding processes and timelines.

- b. Increase consultation with the field on relevant matters related to the Field Experience.
- c. Improve alignment of our program with the needs of the field through the facilitation of meetings between representatives from the field and interested parties at the University.
- d. Continue to provide high levels of support with challenging placements and terminations.
- e. Maintain high levels of FEA time in schools once the Field Experiences begin; explore other ways of increasing exposure.
- f. Increase FEAs contact with jurisdictional central administrators with the goal of sharing information and building awareness of our program.

The Field Experiences team have enjoyed and appreciated the opportunity to serve our students and our partners in the field this past year. We have learned a great deal, had many successes, and hope to build on these as we move into the 2016-17 academic year.

***Appendix One: Undergraduate Student Services, Field Experiences Team: 2015-16***

**Administration**

Robert Smilanich	Assistant Dean, Field Experiences
Clive Hickson	Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs and Services
Bill Dunn	Associate Dean, Teacher Education
Carley Christianson	Director, Student Support
Maureen Sutton	Administrative Assistant, Collaborative Programs

**Placement Staff**

Linda Brittain	Placement Coordinator, Regional
Holly Craven	Placement Coordinator, Elementary Route
Gwen Penney	Placement Coordinator, Secondary Route

**Field Experience Associates**

Jacqueline Werstiuk	Edmonton Catholic Schools	(year 2)
Jonathan Sharek	Edmonton Catholic Schools	(year 2)
Karen Jacobsen	Edmonton Public Schools	(year 2)
Kim Gerke	Edmonton Public Schools	(year 2)
Patricia Wierstra	Parkland School Division	(year 1)
Tracy Tucker	Edmonton Public Schools	(year 1)
Caroline Lakusta	Edmonton Public Schools	(year 1)

***Appendix Two: Field Experiences Policy Advisory Committee 2015-16***

Elementary Education	Jerine Pegg
Secondary Education	Tom Dust
Educational Policy Studies	Bonnie Stelmach
Educational Psychology	Lia Daniels
Associate Dean, Undergraduate Students	Clive Hickson
Campus Saint Jean	Daniel Haley
Alberta Teachers Association	Monique Gravel
Alberta Teachers Association	Margaretrose Wilms
Alberta Teachers Association	Kim Frey
Alberta Teachers Association	Les Kirchner
Alberta Teachers Association	Brenda Cleland
Alberta School Boards Association	Glenys Edwards
College of Alberta School Superintendents	Roy Ripkens
Education Students Association	Waishing Lam
Field Experience Associates	Tracy Tucker
Field Experience Associates	Kim Gerke
Chair, Assistant Dean of Field Experiences	Robert Smilanich
Secretary	Amanda Brown