

# ECE CLINICAL HANDBOOK

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2024-2025



September 2024

## INTRODUCTION

This booklet contains the guidelines and procedures for participation in the Martin Luther College Early Childhood Education (ECE) clinical experience. If you have any questions about the information in this booklet, contact Professor Jennifer Mehlberg or Mrs. Carrie Schaefer. Contact information is listed on the last page of this booklet.

### Purpose

The goal of the ECE clinical experience is to provide MLC education students preservice opportunities in working with young children in a variety of ECE settings. ECE Clinical is among the following required experiences:

- Individual Field Experience (IFE) Hours – service learning opportunities working with children
- Early Field Experience (EFE I, EFE II) – two week-long classroom experiences
- ECE Clinical – an experience during J-Term in a preprimary setting completed in conjunction with EDU 3109 Preprimary Curriculum
- Literacy Clinical – an experience during J-Term in a primary grade classroom completed in conjunction with EDU3205, EDU3201, and EDU3210 language arts block courses
- Student Teaching in Early Childhood Education – a full-time, semester-long professional experience done at the infant/toddler level for at least 8 weeks, and at the preprimary level for 9 weeks)

Upon completion of the Minnesota State Board of Teaching approved program, ECE teaching candidates are eligible for a Minnesota Birth – Grade 3 teaching license.

### Student Eligibility

Students are eligible to participate in a clinical when they have met all program prerequisites, have been screened by the faculty, and have been retained in the education program.

### Background Screening Policy

1. Completion of a satisfactory background check is required for working with children. The first screening occurs in January of Year One for students registered for EFE I. A follow-up screening is performed for students registered for a clinical or EFE III in Year Three. A third check is conducted for fifth-year seniors registered for student teaching in Year Five.

#### *Background Check*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When conducted</b>
Year One	Students registered for EFE I	Year One - January
Year Three	Students registered for a clinical	Year Three - August
Year Five	Fifth-year seniors registered to student teach	Year Five - August

2. Each student must authorize the background check and give permission to release the results to MLC.

3. The Field Experiences Office receives the results, reviews the reports, and determines which students have satisfactory background checks. Students with satisfactory reports are approved for field experiences. Students with adverse reports are not approved for field experiences. Adverse reports are those which show criminal activity related to the care, treatment, education, training, instruction, or recreation of children. For example, criminal sexual conduct, assault crimes, and controlled substance crimes are considered adverse.
4. When adverse results are received, the director must give a copy of the report and summary of rights to the individual. The person has the opportunity to review, refute, and explain the negative information. The person with an adverse report receives a written notice informing them that they are not approved for field experiences because of the information in the report. The notice also contains the name and contact information of the company preparing the report. The individual can dispute the accuracy of the report with the company.
5. Students who are denied entrance to field experiences by the director can appeal the decision to the MLC vice-president for student life.
6. All results are kept in a separate file, aside from the main student file (electronic or paper). The results are not shared with other parties. The results are retained for five years past graduation.
7. The director produces a letter of good standing for each student working in those partner schools requiring verification of background screening. Some schools require a copy of the background check, in which case the student will be responsible for providing the school a copy.
8. MLC pays the costs associated with background checks. (Exception: MLC pays 50% of the costs associated with special background checks for the ECE teacher candidates at the Early Childhood Learning Center). For schools who must conduct background screenings of their own, MLC will reimburse the school up to our cost for the check.

## **MLC Expectations of Students**

### *A. Attendance*

1. The MLC clinical student should follow the MLC calendar, being present at the school all day, each scheduled day of the experience.
2. When a clinical student is ill and unable to go to school, the student should text or phone their cooperating teacher as soon as possible. In addition, the absence should be logged in the MLC Portal (Attendance > Schedule Field Exp Absence). When the absence is submitted, an email notification is sent to the cooperating teacher, school administrator, and college supervisor.
3. When a clinical student needs to be excused for athletics, a medical appointment, funeral, etc., the student should request an excused absence in advance of the day. The request is made through the Portal (Attendance > Schedule Field Exp Absence). When the request is approved, an email notification is sent to the cooperating teacher, school administrator, and the student.
4. The director of field experiences, in consultation with the college supervisor, is responsible for determining the length and amount of make-up days when absences exceed two times.
5. In the event of a snow day or in-service day that the clinical student is not expected to attend, the student should log into the Portal and report the

event under "School Closed." The absence does not count toward the maximum allowed.

6. Unexcused absences will be reported to the MLC Field Experiences Office by school district personnel.
7. On questionable weather days a student should check television and radio stations or school websites for information regarding cancellations and late starts. The MLC clinical student is expected to go to school in the event of a late start.

**B. *Dress/Conduct***

The MLC clinical student is expected to dress and work professionally in the building. The student should inquire of teacher dress code policies in the building. The student should adhere to the Code of Ethics for Minnesota Teachers (see following section). Cooperating teachers should not hesitate to contact MLC representatives regarding any concerns about the dress or conduct of any MLC student in the building.

**C. *Arrival***

A uniform start time will be determined for each building. A listing of start times by building will appear on the roster. Students are not to decide their own start times.

**D. *Dismissal***

The MLC clinical student should remain after school in order to receive feedback on the day from the cooperating teacher and to plan experiences for the next school day. Teacher dismissal times vary from building to building. Clinical students have been advised to inform employers that they may not be available until after 4:30 pm.

**E. *Transportation***

The MLC clinical student is responsible for transportation to and from clinical. Consequently, clinical students are encouraged to have a vehicle during the clinical term.

The college does not cover the cost of transportation. Arrangements may be possible in which students share rides and cost of travel with others going to the same school. However, in making placement decisions, the Field Experiences Office will not consider the individual transportation needs of clinical students.

## **8710.2100 CODE OF ETHICS FOR MINNESOTA TEACHERS**

### **Subpart 1. *Scope.***

Each teacher, upon entering the teaching profession, assumes a number of obligations, one of which is to adhere to a set of principles which defines professional conduct. These principles are reflected in the following code of ethics, which sets forth to the education profession and the public it serves standards of professional conduct and procedures for implementation. This code shall apply to all persons licensed according to rules established by the Board of Teaching.

## Subpart. 2. *Standards of professional conduct.*

The standards of professional conduct are as follows:

- a. A teacher shall provide professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner.
- b. A teacher shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to health and safety.
- c. In accordance with state and federal laws, a teacher shall disclose confidential information about individuals only when a compelling professional purpose is served or when required by law.
- d. A teacher shall take reasonable disciplinary action in exercising the authority to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning.
- e. A teacher shall not use professional relationships with students, parents, and colleagues to private advantage.
- f. A teacher shall delegate authority for teaching responsibilities only to licensed personnel.
- g. A teacher shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter.
- h. A teacher shall not knowingly falsify or misrepresent records or facts relating to that teacher's own qualifications or to other teachers' qualifications.
- i. A teacher shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about students or colleagues.
- j. A teacher shall accept a contract for a teaching position that requires licensing only if properly or provisionally licensed for that position.

### **Student Identification**

MLC students should display their MLC student identification card in the provided badge holder each day while participating in a clinical experience.

### **Lunch Procedures**

Each student on an MLC meal plan may make a sack lunch from the MLC cafeteria. Lunch items are available for making and packing by 6:00 am. Students who leave earlier than 6:00 am may make their lunch the evening before their clinical day. The lunch items should be packed in the white lunch bags provided.

An alternative to packing a sack lunch the night before is to pick dinner items for a green to-go container, a microwave container that can be refrigerated overnight. The container is obtained from the food service checker on duty for a \$5.00 deposit. When the container is returned, the student can receive the \$5.00 deposit or a clean container for use the next clinical day. MLC students should not leave their clinical setting during the school day to purchase lunch.

### **Personal Communication and Use of Social Media**

The MLC student should not use cell phones and computers for personal use during the school day. When emergencies arise requiring their need, ask the cooperating teacher for permission and seek his/her advice on how best to handle emergency communication inside the classroom.

Clinical students are not to use social media to contact students or parents or post photos of them. While local school policies may allow these things, MLC wants to be proactive in helping candidates avoid a potential problem area. Communicating with students via social media or posting photos of them may result in dismissal from the clinical experience.

### **Field Trips**

The MLC student should plan to attend and assist as a chaperone on any class field trip that begins and concludes during the regular ECE day hours. He or she has the option to attend a field trip that takes place outside the regular school day schedule. In cases in which the MLC student does not attend a field trip, arrangements will be made for him or her to observe in another classroom.

### **ECE Clinical Participating Teacher Qualifications**

The participating teachers who provide classroom experiences for MLC ECE clinical students are those licensed teachers who possess a minimum of two years of teaching experience.

### **Participating Teacher Honorarium**

As a token of appreciation for the willingness of ECE teachers to partner with MLC in the training of preservice teachers, an honorarium for work as a supervisor of MLC students is provided.

MLC is thankful for the willingness of participating teachers to open their classrooms to MLC students and for providing classroom experiences and guidance in developing skills in teaching and leading students.

### **Sexual Harassment**

MLC adheres to all guidelines regarding sexual harassment in the work place. A clinical student who feels an incident of sexual harassment has occurred should first report the incident to the cooperating teacher. If satisfactory resolution of the incident is not obtained, the clinical student should report the occurrence to the MLC director of field experiences.

Likewise, school district personnel will report any incidents of sexual harassment on the part of an MLC student to the cooperating teacher, and then to the MLC director of field experiences.

## **PROGRAM SPECIFICS FOR ECE CLINICAL**

### **Clinical Experience Dates for 2024–2025**

J-Term: January 6-22

### **Communication with the ECE Clinical Cooperating teacher**

Each student's roster contains the email and/or school phone information of his/her participating classroom teacher. The student has been encouraged to email in advance of the experience to introduce themselves and to ask for a time to meet on the first day to share goals for the experience, to discuss the reflection journal, and to ask questions related to teaching and classroom procedures.

The MLC student is to initiate communication with the classroom teacher to set a tone that shows he/she wants to make the most of the experience. Each student has been advised that the key to a good experience is the attitude they communicate.

Ample time each day should be scheduled for conferencing to reflect on the day's experiences and to plan for future experiences. Comments and suggestions are important to the growth of the preservice teacher.

Cooperating teachers are provided a copy of the clinical student's personal information, including the email address of the student. Supervisors should feel welcome to correspond via that address during the experience.

An MLC ECE professor will coordinate a summative, concluding visit with the cooperating teacher. Comments or concerns shared by the cooperating teacher will be shared and discussed with the MLC student by MLC personnel. Emails are ongoing, as needed, to check on progress.

Included on the last page of these guidelines are the college phone numbers and email addresses of all MLC personnel involved in the ECE clinical program. MLC personnel are available by phone or email for comments or concerns about the experience.

### **Classroom Experiences**

Clinical students have been advised that central to their having a good experience is their eagerness to become actively engaged in classroom experiences. The clinical student should be an extra set of hands in helping the children in their learning and should frequently ask how they can become involved.

Clinical students will be expected to do the following during the experience:

1. Be a willing helper in any way to assist the classroom teacher
2. Observe classroom routines and child development
3. Interact with individual children and small groups
4. Promote and encourage active learning
5. Plan and teach/co-teach small or large group experiences

### **Written Lesson Planning**

The clinical student will be designing written small group lesson plans as a component of the course EDU3109 Preprimary Curriculum. The MLC student should be able to plan and implement a minimum of 4 experiences independently under the guidance of the classroom teacher.

### **Connecting the ECE Clinical to Methods Courses**

The MLC clinical student is expected to write reflections in their MLC reflection journal using topics provided by the MLC college instructors. The student is also expected to share with the classroom teacher the process by which journaling takes place.

Cooperating teachers will read and sign several of the reflections throughout the J-Term. The college supervisor and student peers will also read the entries.

## **STUDENT EVALUATION**

### **ECE Clinical Experience Student Evaluation**

The ECE clinical experience is evaluated with a Pass or No Pass rating. A student must receive a Pass rating in the clinical to be eligible for graduation and candidacy for teaching. The rating is derived jointly between the student's college and cooperating teachers.

Students will be made aware of their progress by the college supervisor following the visit between the college and cooperating teacher.

Following the experience, the cooperating teacher will evaluate the student's overall development as a teaching candidate by rating the student on several summary statements on the MN Standards of Effective Practice. In addition, the cooperating teacher is requested to write narrative comments related to the student's development as a candidate for teaching. See an example of the online MN Standard of Effective Practice Clinical Assessment on page 14.

ECE clinical experience information related to each student's personal, teaching, and classroom management traits will be made available by the college supervisor to the MLC director of field experiences as helpful information in developing the student's teaching candidate biography.

### **No Pass Rating**

If a student completes the clinical but does not receive a Pass rating, a recommendation will be made by the college and cooperating teachers whether a second clinical experience term should be granted to the student. If granted, the time of placement for the second term will be at the discretion of the director of field experiences. Students who receive a No Pass rating must make up the experience with a successful clinical term in order to graduate and to be recommended as a candidate for the teaching ministry.

### **Dismissal from the Clinical Experience**

Not adhering to the guidelines outlined in this manual and/or unprofessional conduct are grounds for dismissal from the clinical experience at any time.

In such a circumstance, when the college and cooperating teachers agree that dismissal is deemed appropriate, the MLC student will be informed orally and in writing of their decision. A recommendation will also be made by the college and cooperating teachers whether a second clinical term should be granted to the student. If granted, the time of placement for the second term will be at the discretion of the director of field experiences.

An appeal of a recommendation to deny a second term for this experience may be made in writing to the vice president for academics. The student may use, but is not required to use, the Student Appeal/Grievance Form. All appeals must be in writing.



**MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE  
PERSONNEL AND CONTACT NUMBERS  
FOR THE CLINICAL EXPERIENCE**

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