Guidelines for Classroom, School and Community-based Learning in
the CSUS MS Credential Program:  A Developmental Approach
Summer 2012

FIELD EXPERIENCES – SEMESTER ONE – 1.5 days per week through week 11

FEATURES

- Candidates affiliate with one school, beginning with their first field experience and continuing through their final student teaching activities
- Candidates complete a range of tasks that allow them to deepen and broaden their knowledge of their classroom, their school, and the key teaching and learning issues present in this context
- Candidates complete a range of tasks that allow them to deepen insights about the learning process by focusing intensively on specific students in structured ways

OUTCOMES

- Through hands-on experiences, simulations, readings, and structured reflection, candidates develop a philosophy of teaching and learning and begin to construct a detailed framework for implementing their philosophy
- Candidates identify mentors and other support that will assist them in developing the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary for full implementation of their teaching and learning philosophy and framework.
- Candidates can describe the key teaching and learning issues present in selected classrooms and at their school as a whole and can articulate the strategies teachers should use to address these issues.
- Candidates can document key needs of diverse learners and the strategies they have seen teachers use to address those learning and other needs.

POSSIBLE TASKS and RATIONALE

- Community Map Exercise: Candidates will engage in walk-abouts, community expert interviews, data analysis, inventory of community organizations and resources, and reflective journaling as they create a profile of their classroom, school, and school community. Rationale: Schooling occurs within and is impacted by the social, economic, cultural and political context of its surrounding community(ies). Future teachers must develop deeper and sophisticated understandings of these contexts and use an assets-
orientation to engage with community resources so as to fully support student learning and development.

- **Partner Rounds:** Candidates will pair off or work in trios and complete observations of select volunteer/nominated teachers at their school. Observations will be completed using a structured protocol that specifically focuses candidate attention on discrete questions or issues. An inquiry stance will be necessary – at the conclusion of observations or sets of observations, candidates will analyze observational data (notes, sample assignments, etc.) and connect their conclusions to theoretical and conceptual models introduced in courses. **Rationale:** This activity helps candidates to develop an inquiry stance (ask questions, seek data, draw conclusions), engage in professional discourse about teaching and learning, and gain exposure to a wide range of teaching practices which they will reflect on critically.

- **Guided observations:** In quads or octuplets, with supervisor guidance, candidates will visit specific classrooms that exemplify particular kinds of practices. These guided observations will have pre and post assessments (writing prompts, etc.) that will help candidates process their experience and make connections to other program activities. The selection of guided observation classrooms should be coordinated between supervisors and faculty so that coherence with coursework is assured. **Rationale:** Similar to that for partner rounds above, but completed in conjunction with a “expert” who will provide more structured focus to the tasks.

- **Experiences with individual students:** Faculty teaching in the first semester create a matrix of all activities/tasks/interactions that candidates have with individual students. Based on this matrix, all MS faculty design additional, complementary activities that can be completed during field experiences. **Rationale:** Experienced teachers have hundreds of “case studies” that allow them, eventually, to generalize from specific students, in productive and positive ways. Novice teachers typically do not. These exercises help candidates hone their “eyes for seeing students” and provide them with opportunities to more deeply understand the experience of single students while also putting those experiences into a broader and more theoretical context.

- **Self-designed activity:** Candidates can do this individually, in pairs or in a small group. They select a topic that they would like to explore further, through a combination of observation, participation, experimentation, interviews, and research. Candidates prepare a brief summary of activity, engage in their proposed activity, reflect on what they learned, write this up in a short summary and present to their supervisor and peers. These will be posted on a communal website for faculty and other candidates to access. **Rationale:** Successful teachers are continually engaged in inquiry and reflection. In addition, they are self-directed learners. So much of the credential program is pre-
determined for candidates. This is an opportunity to explore something of high self-importance.

CONTENT-SPECIFIC STUDENT TEACHING

FEATURES

- Structured and supervised opportunities for methods instructors to guide candidates in integrating theory into practice
- Settings may include one-on-one interactions and small group work
- Some activities will be completed by groups of candidates but individual candidate performance is also necessary
- Candidates demonstrate competence in planning, teaching, assessing, and reflecting on practice, thereby completing an important transition performance assessment that is documented in some form
- Occurs during the final 4 weeks of the first semester
- To the extent possible, all Fall methods course instructors should coordinate CSSTs so that there is continuity, coherence, and integration of tasks across the CSSTs for that month in the field

TASKS and RATIONALE: Still being determined by methods instructors

STUDENT TEACHING

New field placement coordinators are currently working on draft handbooks, to be presented at the July meeting.