

FAQ Sheet – TAs

Question: Why does this class have a community placement component?

The intent of the community placement component is to expose students to learning opportunities outside of the traditional lecture hall format, enriching their learning experiences. This course is centered on critically engaging and reflecting upon the various differences, the result of our distinctive identities, that inform education and schooling experiences. Therefore, community placements were viewed an opportunity to unite classroom knowledge and real-world experiences, the latter taking place with diverse populations in our local communities.

Question: How many hours are students expected to volunteer over the fall semester?

Students are expected to volunteer for 20 hours over the course of the semester. This is approximately 2 to 3 hours each week, beginning in the end of September.

Question: How will students learn about the course's community placements?

Students' main resource to learn about the course's community partners will be the Community Placement Guidebook, which they will receive during the first week of the semester. This will be their main tool introducing them to the course's community partners and the "community experiences" they each offer. Along with access to the Guidebook, students will attend the UIUC Office of Volunteer Program's Volunteer Fair on Wednesday, September 14th. All of the course's community partners will participate in the fair, and students' attendance will be mandatory (barring any class conflicts). Attending the fair will allow students to interact with representatives from each community organization prior to finalizing their community placement applications. The Volunteer Fair will take place in the Illini Union (ballroom A, B, and C) from 10:30-1:30pm.

Question: What does the application process entail for students to select a community site?

Students will be introduced to the course's community placement component during the first week of classes, in both the lecture and discussion. At that time, students will receive the Community Placement Guidebook and the community placement application via email from Jay Mann. Mr. Mann will be the main contact in the College of Education for the course's community placement component. He is the director of School and Community Experiences in the College of Education. Once all of the applications have been submitted to Jay Mann, he will determine community placements from the ranked preferences each student provided in their application.

All efforts will be made to place students with one of their preferred placements. However, it is not guaranteed that a student will be assigned to one of their 4 preferred placements.

Question: When will students be placed with a community partner?

Below is the schedule for students to transition into their community placements:

(note: SOAR and DMBGC will operate on a modified schedule)

-8/23: Classes begin

-8/24 & 8/25: DMBGC & SOAR presentation in EDUC 201 discussion sections

-8/30: Students access the Community Placement Application

-9/1: Jay Mann generates Official List of DMBGC & SOAR students

-9/2: DMBGC & SOAR Placement letters go out

- 9/14: Volunteer Fair & Students finalize Applications (by 5pm)
- 9/16: Site Supervisor letters go out (noting assigned students)
- 9/19: Student letters go out (noting assigned placement)

Question: How will I monitor my students' performance?

You will be able to monitor your students' performance, through the CTE Portal, in two ways. First, you will receive your students' finalized weekly timesheets. The timesheets will indicate your students' completed weekly hours, include short answer responses to questions about their experiences at their site, and commentary from their site supervisors confirming the reported hours. Secondly, you will use the Portal to obtain mid-semester and end-of-the term evaluations from your students' site supervisors regarding their performance.

We hope that access to this information will increase transparency regarding your students' experiences at their placement site. Hopefully, these measures will help you introduce conversations and/or activities about your students' community placements into discussion section sessions.

Question: What resources are available to help me navigate the course's community placement component?

The CoE's School and Community Experience website will be a main resource for TAs. The web address is listed below. The website's resources include: (1) Three FAQ sheets. They were created for the course's site supervisors, students, and TAs. You may find all of these documents helpful to you as you're becoming acclimated with the community placement component.

(2) Access to the CTE Portal, which will be used to obtain your students' weekly timesheets, the evaluations completed by site supervisors regarding your students' performance at their placements, and a link allowing you to provide feedback regarding your experiences with the course's community placement component.

(3) The Engaging Educators website, which was created by students previously enrolled in EDUC 201 and EPS 199. EPS 199 students created the website to present their experiences volunteering in Champaign-Urbana communities and to engage in a conversation about their budding identities as future educators. The EPS 199 students intended for the website to also be a resource for future students enrolled in EDUC 201 to help them learn more about local organizations and to support their efforts to successfully transition into their placement sites. A link to the EPS 199 website is also included below.

Jay Mann, Director of School and Community Experiences, will be your main contact in the College of Education regarding the course's community placement component. He can be reached at jaymann@illinois.edu.

School and Community Experience: <http://education.illinois.edu/sce/community-experiences>

Engaging Educators: <http://engagingeducatorsuiuc.weebly.com/>