

BRENAU UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION FIELD EXPERIENCES

RATIONALE

Students enrolled in the Brenau University School of Education participate in three field experience opportunities during their teacher preparation program. The rationale for these experiences is to provide students with real-life classroom experience, in diverse cultural, rural, and urban settings. These experiences are structured in a developmental sequence spanning the chronological age range corresponding to each student's degree program. Our students have the opportunity to observe master teachers in classroom settings, as well as to develop skills in planning, implementing, and evaluating. They apply skills mastered in the Brenau University classroom and refine these skills in preparation for student teaching or internship, and a high level of success in the teaching profession.

The faculty and staff of Brenau University have identified and partnered with outstanding school systems in our geographic area to provide our students with high quality placement opportunities for the field experience portion of their preparation. These school settings offer our students experience with a wide age range of learners from diverse cultural and socio-economic levels, and pairs them with master teachers who are models of outstanding pedagogy and classroom management.

During the field experience placement each student observes and assists the supervising teacher, as well as interviewing the teacher to learn as much as possible about the school dynamic and teaching responsibilities. Our students also plan and implement a lesson and receive feedback on their performance from Brenau supervisors and the supervising teacher. Based on their experience, they review and reflect on current educational

literature that is pertinent to the classroom setting in which they have been placed.

Reflection and reflective teaching are the cornerstones of our teacher preparation program at Brenau University. Therefore, our field experiences are designed to encourage this reflection. Students do not attend field experiences on consecutive days, and must attend over a minimum of a four week period in order to have time to gain insight into the classroom and reflect over each day's activities and the entire experience.

Our three field experiences are structured so that students have the opportunity to work with students spanning the chronological ages of their degree program, thus providing them with multiple opportunities to observe and reflect on student characteristics, teaching styles, curriculum requirements, and classroom management prior to student teaching. The faculty and staff of Brenau University are committed to training the best teachers for the future and this program is a very important part of that training.