

Community Service Experience What It's All About

Candidates in **early grades, middle grades, and special education/dual majors** are required to complete a community service experience. For undergraduate candidates this is one of the requirements for Formal Admission to Teacher Education (FATE). **Please make certain that your clearances are up to date and complete.**

The community service experience requires that you complete a minimum of **20 hours of pre-approved, unpaid service** (not at your workplace) during the time that you are in your professional education program. This service must be provided to **non-profit agencies/organizations** serving children, youth, and adults, including those with disabilities. If you choose to serve at two agencies/organizations, you must complete a minimum of 10 hours at each organization/agency.

The nature of **your service must provide a direct, concrete benefit to the population/s** that an agency serves. Thus, for example, tutoring students would be qualifying service, but participating in a fundraising event may not. The 20 hours of your community service requirement may *not* also be used to fulfill any requirement of a credit-bearing course. Please remember that some of the volunteer opportunities require a serious commitment of time, energy, and emotion. Always determine first that you can meet the organization's expectations.

A Certificate of Early Completion is awarded to early grades, middle grades, and special education dual first year students (first time enrolled in college not counting dual high school enrollment or summer college courses) completing the Community Service Experience requirement in the first year (fall, spring, summer *or* spring, summer, fall) of enrollment at WCU and transfer students completing the Community Service Experience requirement in the first regular semester (fall or spring).

Early completion allows students to have a well-planned, meaningful service experience and enjoy purposeful engagement with the organization. Support is available through the Office of Candidate Services to explore and discuss service opportunities that the student will value and find of interest.

Up to eight of those students holding a Certificate of Early Completion will be selected by the Community Service Advisory Committee to be recognized for their early exemplary service. Recognition of early exemplary service includes:

- Free registration to the local Student PSEA Conference OR to the state Council for Exceptional Children conference (Fall 2018)
- The opportunity to become a Community Service Ambassador. Community Service Ambassadors will sharpen and expand their leadership skills while sharing the rewards of service with their peers.

Responsibilities include:

- Speaking to classes or at Formal Admission Information Sessions about the Community Service Experience
- Presenting or participating on a panel discussion at the Student PSEA conference
- Posting of photo and excerpt from reflective statement on CSE website

A Community Service Experience Award is presented on Teacher Education Day held during the spring semester. Nominations will be made from the Certificate of Early Completion awardees. This is a monetary award. The recipient is selected by the Community Service Advisory Committee on the basis of exemplary service.

Steps in Meeting the Community Service Experience:

1. Plan your community service experience. The Candidate Services Office, Wayne Hall, Suite 107, 125 W. Rosedale Avenue, will help you identify and locate appropriate service opportunities (if needed). Community service experience hours cannot be completed at your workplace.
2. Complete the community service experience pre-approval form. Submit your form for review and approval to the Candidate Services Office **prior to beginning your service hours**.
3. If your form is approved in person, you will be given a copy. You may leave the form in the drop-off box located in Wayne Hall, Suite 107, and you will be notified by email when it has been reviewed.
4. Read the prompts on page 6 before you begin your community service experience. These prompts guide the reflective statement that you will write at the conclusion of your pre-approved service.
5. After completing your hours, secure all signatures on the verification form, and write the *Reflective Statement* (2 ½ to 5 pages). (If your service was provided to more than one agency, please use a separate form for each. Your reflective statement should address only one organization; it is your choice.) Submit these together to the Candidate Services Office **within 60 days of the completion of the required 20 hours**. (Your reflective statement will be evaluated using the attached rubric. If your completed form and reflective statement are approved, you will be informed by email of your successful completion of the requirement. If they are not approved, you will be advised on how to address any deficiencies that are found.)
6. Attach a copy of your verification form ONLY with your application for Formal Admission to Teacher Education.

Ethical/Behavior Statement for the Community Service Experience:

- Interaction with the site-based professional (promotes a professional and effective relationship with the organization/agency representative; willing to accept written or verbal constructive feedback from the organization/agency representative).
- Interaction with other building staff (maintains a professional relationship; shows respect; values the positions of and is courteous to administrators and other building staff).
- Personal appearance, mannerisms, and values (appropriately dressed and groomed according to the culture of the organization; conducts him/herself professionally in speech through appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication patterns, in personal habits, and in mannerisms; exhibits fair, consistent, and equitable treatment of all; respects civil rights and confidentiality of all; maintains confidentiality of organization matters and child-specific information; demonstrates civility and respect for diversity; sees the worth and dignity of all; works effectively with organization staff in collaborative ways).
- Adherence to organization/agency policies (adheres to building and staff policies and procedures; punctual; observes schedules, regulations, and expectations of the university-organization relationship).
- Attendance and responsibility (reliable, regular in attendance and time on-site according to the standards set by the organization; fulfills community service obligations; notifies appropriate persons if absent; carries through on assigned responsibilities; shows good professional judgment).
- Level of preparedness (shows evidence of being well-prepared for community service duties academically and attitudinally; shows willingness to approach tasks in an organized and skillful manner; demonstrates enthusiasm for community service; uses time effectively; is able to adapt to changing situations).

Community Service Experience Pre-Approval Form

Candidate's Name _____ Phone _____

WCU ID # _____ WCUPA Email _____ Major/Dual Majors _____

Plan for Community Service

Name of the organization/agency, address, city, state, zip code that you will serve:

Name	Address	City	State	Zip
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Type of work you will do:

Dates (approximate ending date is sufficient) when you will be doing your service *and* total number of hours:

Dates	(CONFIRMED start date to approximate end date)	Total Hours
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(If you will provide service to a **second** organization/agency, provide information below on that plan).

Name of the organization/agency, address, city, state, zip code that you will serve:

Name	Address	City	State	Zip
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Type of work you will do:

Dates (approximate is sufficient) when you will be doing your service *and* total number of hours:

Dates	(CONFIRMED start date to approximate end date)	Total Hours
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REFLECTIVE STATEMENT DEADLINE:

Within 60 days of completing service hours

Signatures

Signature of Teacher Candidate: _____ Date _____
(student's signature)

Office of Candidate Services: _____ Date _____ ☐ Clearances on file

Community Service Experience Time Sheet

WCU College of Education

PLEASE PRINT:

Student Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Minimum number of hours: 20 hours or if split placement, 10 hours minimum with each organization

Non-profit organization: _____

Contact person: _____

Phone number: _____

Date	Description of activity	Time begin	Time End	Total hours

Total hours completed: _____

Community Service Experience Verification Form and Reflective Statement

Submit your completed verification form, with your reflective statement, to the Office of Candidate Services, College of Education and Social Work (Wayne Hall, Suite 107, 125 W. Rosedale Avenue). Directions and prompts for the reflective statement are attached.

(If your service was provided to more than one agency, please use a separate form for each. Your reflective statement should address only one organization; it is your choice.)

Candidate's Name _____ Phone _____

WCU ID # _____ WCU Email _____ Major/s _____

I completed _____ hours of service between the dates of _____ and _____

for (name of organization) _____

Address, City, State, Zip Code (organization) _____

My service work involved (describe very briefly the nature of your service work) _____

I attest that I have given an accurate account of my service to this organization.

Candidate's Signature

Date

↓↓ **WCU Student: Do not complete anything below the dotted line directly after this sentence.** ↓↓

Organization Verification

Name of Organization Official

Title/Position of Organization Official

Number of volunteer hours

☐ yes ☐ no
Service was unpaid

☐ yes ☐ no
Service was satisfactory

This statement is an accurate description of the type of service and time this West Chester University student provided our organization.

Signature of Official

Date

Phone Number

☐ Verified by Candidate Services

University Verification

The student has successfully completed the required service and reflective statement:

Office of Candidate Services

Date

Reflective Statement Prompts

Your reflective statement expresses your understanding of the organization you served and how you used your service to enhance your professional development. It should be between two and one-half (2 ½) and five (5) double-spaced typed pages with one (1) inch margins and twelve (12) point font. If you use the section headings, your written responses must equal the minimum of 2 ½ pages, not including the headings. If your community service was split between two agencies/organizations, write about only ONE experience. The reflective statement must be submitted for university verification within **60 days of the completion of the required 20 hours**.

Sections of the Reflective Statement

Introduction

Begin your statement with an introductory paragraph that includes your name, major/s, organization/agency for which you provided service, and the nature of your service work.

Section 1, The Organization

- A. Describe one way that this organization serves a community need/s.
- B. Describe one way that this organization benefits through collaboration with individuals, groups, or programs within the community it serves. (*Identify the collaboration and explain how the organization benefitted*).

Conceptual Framework: Knowledge Base & Outcomes - 4. School and University Professional: Applies knowledge of the context of education and engages in collaborative activities, partnership, service and advocacy – Item 3. Collaborates with school personnel, parents, and community.

Section 2, Showing Initiative

- A. Describe one way that you took initiative during your community service.

Conceptual Framework: Knowledge Base & Outcomes - - 4. School and University Professional: Applies knowledge of the context of education and engages in collaborative activities, partnerships, service and advocacy – Item 5. Participates in activities and services that advocate for children and families.

Section 3, Professional Growth and Lifelong Learning

- A. Describe one way that your community service contributed to your **professional growth** as a future teacher.
- B1. Based on this community service and other experiences you have had, what is a factor that you will keep in mind when planning **your future community service**/involvement/leadership?
- B2. Based on this community service and other experiences you have had, what is a factor that you will keep in mind when including community service participation in **your future classroom**?

Conceptual Framework: Knowledge Base & Outcomes – 5. Self-Directed Practitioner: Directs personal growth, professional practice and reflective practice – Item 7. Demonstrates skills of reflective practice.

The Office of Candidate Services' staff will use the authentic assessment rubric, found on the reverse, to evaluate the quality of your statement. If it is assessed as *target* or *acceptable* in the introduction and sections 1, 2 and 3, it will be approved. If it is found to be *unacceptable*, you will be notified and provided suggestions on how to improve your statement.

Student Name: _____
Date: _____

UPC, COE use:
Initial: _____ Revision: _____

**Authentic Assessment Rubric for
Community Service Experience Reflective Statement
B.S.Ed. Programs in Early Grades, Middle Grades, and Special Education**

Introduction

Target	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Provides a level of organization and detail that is consistent with high-quality professional writing. Writing is virtually free of errors in grammar, syntax, mechanics, and spelling.	Demonstrates attention to appropriate detail and organization of content. Writing may contain a few errors of grammar, syntax, and mechanics, but spelling has been checked.	Needs to develop an appropriate level of detail and/or organization. Writing contains frequent errors of grammar, syntax, mechanics, and spelling that may interfere with flow and meaning of text.

Section 1: The Organization

Target	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Description of organization is multifaceted, positive, demonstrates an understanding of the interrelationship of the organization and community, and highlights the strengths of each.	Description of organization clearly addresses the prompts and is positive.	Needs to develop a description of the organization that clearly addresses the prompts in a thorough and positive manner.

Section 2: Showing Initiative

Target	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Description of work undertaken clearly demonstrates “showing initiative” in a way that is relevant to the organization and community.	Description of work undertaken demonstrates consideration of the usefulness and potential impact of the work. May need to demonstrate understanding of the distinction between “doing work” and “taking initiative.”	Needs to develop a description of the work undertaken that clearly addresses the prompts with evidence of relevance of work to the organization and community.

Section 3: Professional Growth and Lifelong Learning

Target	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Description of professional growth and orientation towards future work is multifaceted, demonstrates reflection, and indicates understanding of the need for active planning of one’s professional development.	Description of professional growth and planning addresses the prompts and includes reflection on one’s professional development.	Needs to develop a description of professional growth and planning that addresses the prompts and provides evidence of reflection on one’s professional development.

FOR POSSIBLE SITES FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EXPERIENCE

Please see the website:

www.wcupa.edu/education-socialWork/communityservice

Please direct your questions to The Office of Candidate Services, College of Education & Social Work, located in Wayne Hall, Suite 107, 125 W. Rosedale Avenue.

Contact information:

First Year Students/New Transfer/Undeclared:

Mr. Paul Whalen, Academic Coordinator

Email: pwhalen@wcupa.edu
Telephone: 610.436.3408
FAX: 610.436.2874

Sophomores and above:

Mrs. Judith MacDonald, Associate Director

Email: jmacdonald@wcupa.edu
Telephone: 610.436.0042
FAX: 610.436.2874

Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 am to 4:30 pm during the academic year
Monday through Friday, 8 am to 4:00 pm during the summer

NOTES: