

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT SUPERVISED FIELDWORK  
IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS  
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**How do I plan for fieldwork?**

If you have not already done so, you should make an appointment to meet with your Program Director as soon as possible to complete a program plan. You may do fieldwork at the beginning of your program or later in your course sequence, depending on your individual needs. This is usually determined through discussion with your Program Director.

**Can I take courses during fieldwork?**

The numbers of courses taken during fieldwork are determined by your own tolerance for workload. You should talk with **your** Program Director about this as part of the program plan (above).

**What fieldwork experiences are required for certification?**

The State of New York requires experiences with

- Specific age-groups within the general age band (three for Early Childhood, two for Childhood and Middle Childhood);
- Children in high-need public schools (all of New York City public schools qualify);
- English Language Learners; and,
- Parents and caregivers.

**When does fieldwork begin and end?**

Fieldwork will begin early in September. It may be divided into two or three placements that will provide you experiences that are required to meet certification requirements. You should plan to contact your cooperating teacher and be available to help set up the classroom whenever the school year starts in the school where you are placed. The first official day of placement begins on the first scheduled day of the Bank Street College calendar.

**How will I be assigned to an advisor?**

Your program director will work with other members of the faculty to develop conference groups that reflect diversity of cultural, ethnic and experiential backgrounds. Your advisor will be assigned based on group characteristics and faculty expertise and experience. Students may not select their own advisors. Announcements of advisor assignments and conference groups are not made until the beginning of the Fall term.

**Do all fieldwork placements last a full year?**

If you presently hold a valid New York State teaching certificate, you will be required to complete a one-semester fieldwork experience. In all other cases, fieldwork is required for two consecutive semesters.

**Where will I be placed? Can I choose placement?**

If you are a student teacher, you will be placed in settings selected by your Program Director. Placements are selected based on the skills of the cooperating teacher, the particular type of experience you'll need for certification, and to give you experience in a variety of types of settings. Students should not be making arrangements for placements independently. If you have a particular interest in a placement, please discuss this with your Program Director. Bank Street College attempts to match student preferences, but this is not possible in all situations. Students are expected to work with their advisors and cooperating teachers to insure that each placement provides valuable professional development experiences.

**Can I meet with my cooperating teacher and visit the school ahead of time?**

In most instances, student teaching placements are made as early as possible in the semester prior to the placement. You will be notified, if possible, in time to make contact with your cooperating teacher and visit the school before actually beginning your fieldwork placement. For a variety of reasons, this does not always occur (changes in teacher assignments, unanticipated student needs, etc.) but you will be notified as soon as possible in any case.

**Can I do my fieldwork experience in a setting where I am employed as a head teacher or assistant teacher?**

In general, yes, if the placement has been pre-approved by your Program Director. There are some limitations in Bank Street's ability to supervise fieldwork placements outside of New York City. Your Program Director will discuss these with you on an individual basis. If you do work as a head teacher or assistant teacher, you will need to be prepared to complete an intensive summer practicum in order to meet all certification requirements.

**What activities are associated with fieldwork?**

You will be assigned an advisor who will work with you and a group of 5-6 other students. You will meet with your advisor and this conference group on Wednesdays between 4:45 and 6:45 PM weekly throughout the fieldwork period. Your advisor will meet with you and observe you monthly at your fieldwork placement site and you will have an additional individual meeting with your advisor monthly.

**How will my fieldwork experiences be evaluated?**

Fieldwork is a required part of the Master's program. Grading is Pass/Fail and is based on your ability to demonstrate that you can meet specific goals at the different stages of SFW. (This includes not only successful work with children across the program age band, but the ability to work collaboratively with cooperating teachers, your advisor, and members of your conference group. Refer to Areas of Focus handout for more specifics. You will receive a Supervised Fieldwork Handbook with additional details when you begin your fieldwork experience.

**If I still have more questions?**

Contact your Program Director with additional questions. (E-mail is usually the most efficient approach) Our e-mail addresses are listed at the top of this FAQ.