Focus of Field Practicum I
This field experience is the first of three upper level sequential field practica that Early Childhood Education students are required to complete successfully prior to student teaching. Field Practicum I will focus on the participating teacher’s strategies used with individual children, including students with special needs. Participating students will be meeting regularly on campus for a one-credit course to discuss the field placement experience.

Practicum Calendar
The field practicum generally begins during the fifth or sixth week of the college term and lasts for eight weeks. [Your school principal has received an information sheet containing the exact dates for the practicum this term.] Students will be required to be present in your classroom for one full day – either Thursday or Friday – each week throughout the practicum period. They are not permitted to compact this time period. In the case of a student’s unavoidable absence, the student will be expected to make up the lost time at your convenience prior to the end of the term.

Student’s Level in Teacher Education
The students participating in this practicum are in the first semester of their junior year. Prior to this term, all students completed an observational practicum, but most students have not had the opportunity to work with or to teach students in an actual classroom. This term, the student is enrolled in three methods courses: “Foundations of Early Childhood Education,” “Early Language and Literature,” and “Science, Technology, and Health.” Other courses required for this term include an Inclusion Strategies course and a course in statistics and assessment.

Expectations for Students
We have established expectations for the students based on their level of study in the Division. A sample evaluation form has been attached to this letter to inform you of those expectations. You also will find a list of assignments that the student must complete. The assignments reflect the student’s level of development and the Early Childhood Education methods courses in which the student is enrolled this term, including assignments for working with children with special needs in the regular classroom.

Although this is the student’s first semester of active participation in classrooms, we expect students to exhibit professional conduct including maintenance of confidentiality in all areas. In addition to the sample evaluation form, we have attached to this letter the Division of Education Professional Ethics Statement and Recommendations for Professional Appearance that are distributed to students. If at any time one of our students is not punctual, does not arrive at the assigned date, is not prepared for
assigned lessons or activities, or acts in an unprofessional manner, please call Ms. Loretta Zerby (814-269-7008) and give her the necessary information. We will deal with the matter promptly.

**Participating Teacher’s Role**
Please involve the student in as many ways as possible in your classroom, offer guidance that is consistent and frequent, and help the student to complete the required assignments. We also would like you to offer feedback on lessons that the student teaches and help the student to gain knowledge of adaptations made for children with special needs in your classroom. If it is not possible for the student to complete a required assignment in your classroom, please help him/her to make arrangements with another teacher in your building where the assignment can be accomplished.

Near the conclusion of the practicum, we will be sending you an official copy of the evaluation form for this first practicum level and a return envelope. Please rate the student on each criterion and provide written comments clarifying your assessment. Your written comments will be helpful to the student and to us as we guide the student appropriately in her/his development. Students who receive negative evaluations may be advised to seek another major. Therefore, your candid and specific feedback is crucial in this step of the teacher education program.