Student Handbook: Child Development and Teacher Preparation

Brookhaven College is a member of the Dallas County Community College District (DCCCD). The district is comprised of seven independently accredited colleges with campuses located throughout various areas of the county. The DCCCD opened its first campus in 1966 at El Centro College in downtown Dallas and its last campus, Brookhaven College in 1978. The district provides affordable and high quality credit and non-credit education/training for more than 100,000 students per semester. The mission of the DCCCD is “to equip students for successful living and responsible citizenship in a rapidly changing local, national and world community.” Similarly, Brookhaven College’s mission is, “To prepare our students to value the individuals and organizations within our diverse community and to face the challenges as responsible and productive members of society.” The Brookhaven Child Development program strives to be consistent with these missions’ ideologies.

DCCCD has two campuses, Brookhaven and Eastfield, which offer the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree in Child Development. Although these two campuses offer a similar program they are independent of one another. Our program houses Teacher Preparation degrees for students seeking to gain an Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) and transfer to a university to obtain a Texas Teaching Certificate. Another component of our program is a student success course, EDUC 1300 Learning Framework, which is a foundation course required of students new to college. This unique composition of the program enriches the BHC Child Development department. With all of this in mind, the mission of Brookhaven College’s Child Development Program includes the following:

- To offer the most current information in the field of early childhood education and child development to our students.
- To encourage and assist students in applying what they have learned in the classroom to their work and life situations.
- To promote beginning students’ college success.
- To help students find gainful employment after graduation and/or during their study at BHC.
- To offer the child-care community a variety of classes, training and resources.

Our core values include:

- Respect for the learner
- Honor the individuality of the students
- Adapt to the learner’s needs for each class
- Collaborate with the early childhood profession and the community

WELCOME to our program, we are delighted that you have selected us as part of your professional journey. As a student in our program, we trust that you will gain rich experiences that will prepare your entry into our profession.
• Associate of Applied Sciences (AAS) CDEC students will readily receive training to become a contributing member of the child care/early childhood community. In addition, you may continue on with your AAS degree to a 4 year university.
• Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) students will gain critical foundation skills that will guide your journey into the transfer College of Education where you will complete your Teaching Certification Pathway.
• Certificate seeking students will gain either supplemental training for those already in the field or provide you with a baseline entry into the child care/early childhood education field.

Once again, we are pleased you have selected our program and hope to advise, guide and train you in your educational endeavors.

The Child Development and Teacher Preparation program has three student classifications: observers, cooperative education students and interns.

1. Observers

Observers are required to conduct various types of observations, including classroom observations, activities and teacher/child interactions, among others.

A. Student observers must complete 15 hours of field experience throughout the semester and are not limited to one observation location.

Total required hours by class:
• CDEC/TECA 1311, 1318 and 1303: 15 hours
• EDUC 1301 and 2301: 16 hours

Other child development courses require observation and activities but do not have the 15-hour requirement.

B. Students might be expected to implement a lesson plan or small-group activity for real-world experience. Students must plan, prepare and implement the materials, but should first consult with the classroom teacher. Check the course syllabus for more details on assignment requirements, as they vary for each course.

C. Some courses allow students to acquire a portion of their required field experience hours through service-learning in the Office of Student Life. Be advised, however, that work fulfilled through service-learning must be related to course content. Students with questions should consult their instructor.

D. Students are required to document their field experience hours using the Field Experience Record Form provided by the instructor.

E. Observers should never be left unsupervised or count in the staff/child ratio.
2. **Cooperative Education Students**
   Students participating in cooperative education are expected to work with the teacher they observe for an extended period throughout the semester.

   A. Coop students serve the function of an assistant teacher; however, they should never be left unsupervised or count in the staff/child ratio.

   B. Coop students are required to work in the same classroom throughout the semester, maintaining a consistent schedule.

   C. Coop students have objectives that are agreed upon by the student, supervisor and college faculty member. Those objectives must be planned for and implemented in the classroom.

   D. Coop students must keep track of their work hours, either by the provided time sheet or by the sign-in/out method used by the program. A copy of the student’s total hours will need to be provided at the end of the semester. CDEC 2380: 240 hours, minimum.

   E. Coop students are to fulfill any requirements mandated by the program and adhere to program policies.

3. **Interns**
   Interns are required to engage in work time not only in the classroom, but also in the field, as this is a capstone course.

   A. Interns serve the function of an assistant teacher; however, they should never be left unsupervised or count in the staff/child ratio.

   B. Intern students are required to work in the same classroom throughout the semester, maintaining a consistent schedule.

   C. Interns must keep track of their work hours, either by the provided time sheet or by the sign-in/out method used by the program. A copy of the student’s total hours will need to be provided at the end of the semester.

   Total required hours by class:

   • CDEC 2286 and 2287: 128 hours
   • CDEC 2188 and 2187: 48 hours
   • CDEC 2289: 160 hours

   D. Interns are to fulfill any requirements mandated by the program and adhere to program policies.
Criminal History Background Check Clearance

**Requirement:** All students enrolled in a Child Development or Education course must satisfy a clearance of criminal misdemeanor and felony records. This is crucial to protect yourself and ensure the safety of children and students in the schools, facilities and programs that you are asked to visit.

**Child Care Centers:** In visiting a child care center you may be asked to provide some sort of clearance record prior to setting up the visit. As a student, **you should never be left unsupervised** with children and are **NOT** part of the child to staff ratio. It is **recommended** you obtain the CH check via the Texas DPS for a nominal fee and provide them this documentation for their records.

If you are an **INTERN** or **COOP** student, however, you **MUST** obtain an additional FBI background check, as you will be observing consistently in the center. Students should consult with the program coordinator and sponsoring center to get more details about this mandate. **There is a fee for the FBI check, which you will be required to pay, if the program does not.**

**Schools:** Many of the school districts prefer that all student observers and volunteers obtain a criminal history check through them. Therefore, you should plan ahead and work with the school district or private school you are planning to observe to meet their requirements. You may also furnish them a copy of your completed DPS check, if they do not require you to do a Criminal History check with them.

**Note:** If you are an employee of a school district or child care center and they have run a check on you; then yes you are cleared for a visit. However, when you visit a program other than your own, you may be required to furnish some record of criminal history clearance.

**Obtaining a DPS report:** To obtain a report you must do so via the internet on the Texas Department of Public Safety webpage (a nominal fee applies). The web address is [https://records.txdps.state.tx.us/DpsWebsite/CriminalHistory/](https://records.txdps.state.tx.us/DpsWebsite/CriminalHistory/)

1. Create an Account
2. Purchase Credits
3. Search Database, you will need to provide your FULL name and Date of Birth (Be sure you full name is included and spelled correctly)
4. After you’ve completed the process, you will get a report and you should print 2 copies. Typically most reports come back, **No Matching Records.** Remit a copy for your records and one for the program where you will be observing. Note: if you go to multiple locations, you might need more than one copy.

*If you need additional help, there is a support tab with contact information from TXDPS*

Thank you for your cooperation in this requirement

If you have questions call Johnny Castro at 972-860-4136 or via e-mail at jcastro@dcccd.edu
Code of Conduct

Students should adhere to the National Association for the Education of Young Children Code of Ethical Conduct when working with children, staff and families. The code can be found at www.naeyc.org.

Professionalism guidelines:

1. **Be timely** and notify the program if you need to be late or absent.

2. **Remember to dress professionally.** You are a visitor to the school and need to act accordingly. Most school systems have a dress code, and you must follow it; be sure to ask about the dress code prior to your first appointment. Remember that you are representing Brookhaven College during each site visit, and we want to be proud of our students and their professionalism.

3. **Respect the teacher and children when you observe.** When you arrive at the teacher’s classroom, remember to be courteous. If you are observing, sit or stand in the back corner or in some other location that is out of the way. If the teacher invites you to participate (for example, help a child) you may do so if it does not interfere with your observation. Remember that the teacher is in charge of the classroom, and you are the visitor. You are never to be left alone with the children.

4. **Ask questions but only when appropriate.** As you observe, you may think of a few questions you’d like to ask the teacher. Write them down and ask them when the teacher is not involved with the children. Do not interrupt the teacher to talk or ask questions.

5. **Preserve teacher and student confidentiality.** You must never talk to friends or others about your observations in any way that would violate the teacher’s or children’s confidentiality. As a visitor to the school and classroom, you may see and hear things that should not be shared with others. During class-time discussion, you may share observations without naming the school, teacher or children. Remember, professional behavior is the hallmark of an ethical teacher.

6. **Take time to prepare your lessons and activities.** Be sure to plan your classroom lessons appropriately, based on the teacher’s or school’s needs. Present your lesson plan form to the teacher and discuss scheduling. Have all of your materials and supplies ready by the date of implementation. Be sure to have the supervising teacher provide you with feedback and guidance following the activity. Please be aware you should not expect to implement an activity without proper planning.

7. **Practice basic health and safety.** Be sure to adhere to the program’s policies for health and safety. This includes hand-washing, being absent when you are sick and contagious, reporting any unsafe behaviors and being familiar with crisis plans (tornado, fire drill, etc). Be aware that you should never accept or release children; this is a task only for the program staff.

**Frequently Asked Questions:** If an employee of the program has questions, please refer them to the FAQ Handout attached to this handbook.
To: Program/School Observation Partner  
From: Brookhaven College, Child Development/Teacher Preparation Program  
Subject: BHC college student observation/participation  

To Ours Educational Partners:

On behalf of our department, we would like to personally thank you for welcoming and allowing our student into your program. Our department is a composed of students in the fields of child development, early childhood education and education. The students in our program will have assignments ranging from observations, interviews or checklists, service learning to actually presenting an activity/lesson. In addition, some students in our child development program will be required to fulfill internship or practicum hours; these students will have been advised about placement before contacting your program. Feel free to ask the student to see their syllabus and/or ask them their role or capacity.

Students are expected to comply with any and all requirements of your particular program. In that, it is expected that they plan appropriately and in advance to meet these requirements. It is reasonable to expect the students to plan ahead for any observations or activities that they are required to complete, in conjunction with your program.

All students enrolled in a child development or education course must satisfy a clearance for criminal misdemeanor and felony records. To ensure that our department's requirement is satisfied, a self-disclosure form is submitted to the instructor by the 2nd week of class. However, students are advised that some programs or schools have additional requirements prior to participating or observing.

We do ask you to bear in mind that students are to NEVER be left alone in a classroom; this protects the student, the children and the staff in your program. Finally, students will be required to provide evidence of attendance through either a Field Experience Form or Internship/Coop form. This form requires a signature, typically of the person that supervised the student.

It is our expectation that students conduct themselves as professionals. They have been made aware of confidentiality, appropriate etiquette and so forth in our Student Observation Handbook. Please feel free to contact our program coordinator (Mr. Johnny Castro) should any problems, questions or concerns arise at 972-860-4136 or via e-mail at jCastro@dcccd.edu. Once again, we truly thank you for your efforts in our professional preparation of our students.
Brookhaven College Student Observations – Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Who are the students that observe?**
   All observers are college students in the Child Development and Teacher Education Department at Brookhaven College. They are undergraduate students, many of whom will transfer to a four-year university.

2. **What will the student do while observing my program?**
   Students perform a variety of assignments, ranging from observations, interviews or checklists, to actually presenting an activity or lesson. In addition, some students are required to fulfill internship or practicum hours; these students are advised about placement before contacting you. Please ask the student to show you his or her syllabus and/or ask his or her role or capacity.

3. **How often will they be coming?**
   Many students will observe your program once or twice for occasional assignments, while others – those who are in courses that require lab or coop hours – will need to make arrangements with you to come on a more frequent, scheduled basis. Be sure to ask students to explain their role.

4. **Which criminal history background checks are in place for these students?**
   All students enrolled in a child development or education course must satisfy a clearance for criminal misdemeanor and felony records. To ensure that our department's requirements have been satisfied, a self-disclosure form is submitted to the instructor by the second week of class. However, students are advised that some programs or schools may require their own clearances and requirements, prior to participating or observing. Many students complete a CH Background Check online through the Texas DPS and can provide this documentation to you. If your school or program has specific requirements for clearance, please request that information from the student.

5. **What if I have questions or concerns about a student?**
   Brookhaven College requires its students to conduct themselves professionally while observing your program. If any problems, questions or concerns arise, please contact Johnny Castro, program coordinator, at 972-860-4136 or jCastro@dcccd.edu.

6. **Why must these students observe or participate in my program?**
   Students are required by the Texas Coordinating Board for Higher Education to observe in various settings. In addition, it is critical to provide students with real-world experiences that engage them in all facets of the profession – the assignments they are given while observing allow them those experiences. Research suggests that early field experiences equip students to better understand the realities of the workplace. Your program’s role in their learning experience is greatly appreciated.