# A. Field Period Philosophy

Field Period is based on experiential learning theory. Experiential learning has been at the heart of Keuka College since George Ball founded the College in 1890. Field Period integrates and synthesizes theoretical and applied knowledge; it is a connection between the classroom and the external environment. Field Period, the most visible manifestation of experiential learning at Keuka College, was instituted in 1942.

Experiential learning is powerful because it requires student initiative and active learning skills. It is powerful because it involves application and students can see concrete results of their work and learning. The active aspect of the learning is challenging and it requires students to take risks. These risks can be intellectual, social, or physical. Because the learning takes place in the external environment, there are consequences to the risks. And because experiential learning thrusts students into new and challenging environments with risks and consequences, it also requires close Faculty advising and support.

**What is Field Period?**
Field Period is an experiential, three-credit academic course in which Keuka College students at all academic levels apply learning to external environment's challenges. By pursuing goal- oriented learning in a carefully selected setting, students integrate knowledge learned in the classroom with practical experience to make connections and enrich learning. Field Period provides opportunities for awareness of social responsibility, cultural literacy, personal growth, and career possibilities. Each student initiates and designs her or his learning experience in consultation with a Faculty advisor. The advisor, sometimes with the assistance of an additional evaluator, helps the student prepare for and reflect on the experience and evaluates the learning accomplished.

The out-of-class aspect of Field Period is a minimum 140-hour field experience. However, it is much more than simply the field experience. A Field Period is a student-initiated and -directed learning process, which includes:
a. Finding and securing an appropriate Field Period site;
b. Developing learning objectives, writing a learning contract, and gaining approval of the learning contract;
c. Real-world work during the field experience;
d. Reflection, synthesis, and experimentation during and after the experience;
e. Assessment and evaluation.

**Policy on Field Period (FP) Student Hours Allocation**

Each three-credit FP requires the instructional equivalent of 140 hours of class time. To meet this requirement, students should complete at least 120 active, on-site hours. The remainder of the 140- hour requirement should be met through preparatory activities, reflective assignments, and sharing FP outcomes through discussion and/or presentation (see table below for approximate instructional equivalents). Academic advisors have final discretion in determining that FP goals and objectives have been met.

| **Instructional equivalenthours (approximate)** | **Student activities (may vary by student and FP)** |
|---|---|
| 120 hours (min) | Engage actively in the on-site experience. |
| ~4 hours | Locate Field Period site(s) -- research, contacts, applications, interviews,etc. Meet with academic advisor to discuss proposal, site requirements, assignments, etc. |
| ~2 hours | Create course proposal—learning contract and thank you letter—and submit to academic advisor and Career Connections for approvals. |
| ~4 hours | Write reflective journal entries throughout the FP experience. |
| ~3 hours | Develop unique documentation. |
| ~1 hour | Complete final student evaluation at end of FP. |
| ~2 hours | Compose summary paper using Kolb Model of Experiential Learning. |
| ~3 hours | Develop e-portfolio or other structure to organize and submitreflective assignments. |
| ~1 hour | Meet with academic advisor to discuss FP experience and learning outcomes. Present FP using unique documentation/e-portfolio. |
| **Total 140 hours** | |

**When is Field Period?**

Individual and group Field Period placements generally occur during the two terms traditionally set aside for Field Period: January Field Period and Summer Field Period. Students who submit paperwork after the required due dates listed below may be assessed an institutional late fee.

**Principles of Good Field Periods**

1. Field Periods are experiences in which a student is in direct contact with the subject being studied. The learning is student-directed and largely unfiltered by "experts," teachers, etc. Good Field Periods involve the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains, and they generally immerse a student in some kind of community or

organization. They involve consequence and risk. In these significant aspects, Field Periods are different from independent study or research projects.

2. Field Periods are an opportunity for students to explore the world and open new horizons. As Hegel has said, “Any experience that does not violate expectation is not worthy of the name experience." Placements, which broaden a student's personal development, enhance cultural understanding or a diversity of socioeconomic or geographic experiences, develop a sense of service, or increase career development and/or career exploration are to be encouraged.
3. Field Periods involve a minimum of 140 hours of contact time. Longer Field Periods generally provide more opportunity and a better chance for students to understand the culture within which they are working, to experiment, to make changes and demonstrate improvements, and to grow. Because of this, individual Field Periods should generally not be broken into two or more separate experiences.

4. Field Periods help students fulfill the Mission of Keuka College, especially in encouraging curiosity, scholarship, and active participation in the learning process. Field Periods generally should involve all three learning domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. Field Periods help students achieve College goals, especially those relating to:

a. communications skills
b. thinking skills
c. breadth of knowledge
d. intellectual initiative
e. values
f. independence/interdependence
g. diversity
h. responsibility

5. Field Period is an example of experiential learning. Students should complete/engage in:

a. front loading and preparation
b. concrete experience
c. observation and reflection
d. abstract conceptualization and generalization
e. experimentation

6. As an example of experiential learning, Field Periods should include appropriate challenge, consequences, and risk (intellectual, social, and/or physical). Because of risks and consequences, students require support and assistance, particularly during their initial Field Periods. Communication and/or site visits are encouraged for all students.

7. The process of finding and securing a Field Period is an important part of the learning process. It is also a skill very transferable to career placement. Reflection, synthesis, experimentation, and evaluation are critical elements of a good Field Period. "Education is a journey, not a destination." Close support and critical advice from the faculty

advisor are critical here. The Experiential Education Office is a critical resource to the student.

8. Written communication is an important aspect of the learning and skill building involved with a Field Period. All written material, including correspondence, evaluations, reports, etc., should conform to the standards set forth by the Keuka College graduate student outcomes statement for effective written communication.

9. Sites, roles, tasks, and supervision should support the goals and objectives of Field Period as defined in the Student Handbook. In addition, the placement should support the College goals of developing breadth of knowledge, intellectual initiative, independence, and responsibility. Therefore, sites at which the student has worked, volunteered, or studied within the previous three years are strongly discouraged.

10. With each additional Field Period, students' learning should develop from relatively simple to complex (to use Bloom's taxonomy, from "knowledge" to "evaluation"). The level of challenge
inherent in the site should likewise develop toward the more complex. For service, diversity, or career-exploration Field Periods, students may be an "entry level" learner in a new and (to them) complex environment.

11. Goals and objectives, as specified in the Field Period Learning Contract, are critical measures of how the Field Period meets the College's mission and goals. The more measurable the learning objectives are, the easier evaluation of Field Period will be.

12. As for all course work, Faculty is ultimately responsible for approving, evaluating, and assessing the learning that takes place in a Field Period.