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# Cooperating Teacher’s/ Mentor’s Responsibilities

# All cooperating teachers/mentors are certified teachers or other professionals who have at least three years of experience, have professional status, and are certified at the same level and in the same subject area the candidate is seeking. The cooperating teacher/mentor is the teacher candidate’s/intern’s major resource during student teaching/internship. It is under the cooperating teacher’s/mentor’s guidance that the candidate plans and implements lessons aligned with the WV College and Career Readiness Standards/Next Generation (CCSS) and/or West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives (if science or physical education) or other professional organization standards for interns. The teacher candidate should communicate daily with his/her cooperating teacher/mentor about lesson plans, instructional strategies, classroom arrangements, assessment and evaluation procedures, equity issues, students’ progress, and any other issues that might arise. In turn, the cooperating teacher/mentor will give the teacher candidate guidance and feedback. In addition, the cooperating teacher/mentor will observe the candidate, both formally and informally, and help him/her meet the University of Charleston’s Education Department Outcomes. In fulfilling this role, we ask that the cooperating teacher/mentor:

# Prepare materials and space for the candidate, assist students/learners in developing a positive attitude towards the candidate, introduce the candidate to school/community site personnel, etc.

# Provide continual supervision and guidance for the candidate. The cooperating teacher’s/mentor’s major task is to help the candidate become a skilled instructor. Therefore, he/she should share his/her expertise with the candidate and discuss teaching performance daily. Frequent conferences are required.

# Do not utilize the candidate as a substitute teacher or as a substitute professional.

# Consult frequently with the candidate for the purpose of monitoring progress or resolving problems. The cooperating teacher/mentor should use the Student Teacher Assessment Rubric (STAR) or Intern Assessment Rubric (IAR) to evaluate the candidate. These evaluations should be conducted concurrently with your candidate's self-evaluations and be used as the basis for scheduled evaluation sessions with your candidate. (See below for more information on evaluation procedures.)

# In collaboration with the candidate and the University supervisor, the cooperating teacher/mentor is to evaluate the candidate. The cooperating teacher/mentor, at times alone and at times in cooperation with the teacher candidate and the University supervisor, will conduct both formative and summative assessments of the teacher candidate’s/intern’s performance in meeting the University of Charleston Department of Education Outcomes as well as other indicators of performance.

# Confer with the University supervisor on a regular basis concerning the candidate’s problems and/or performance.

# At the end of student teaching/internship, the cooperating teacher/mentor will evaluate the candidate using the Student Teacher Evaluation. This evaluation should be given to the candidate in a sealed envelope.

# Formative Assessments

# The cooperating teacher/mentor is in the best position to conduct on-going formative assessment of the candidate’s progress. These assessments may be done both formally, using assessment instruments, and informally, using observation notes and comments, or by having informal conversations about the teacher candidate’s/intern’s performance and progress. The Education Department at the University of Charleston recommends that the cooperating teacher/mentor conduct both formal and informal formative assessments on a daily basis. That is, informally the cooperating teacher/mentor and candidate should have frequent conversations about the candidate’s performance in designing and implementing instruction and meeting the needs of the learners. More formally, the cooperating teacher/mentor should use the following instruments to guide formative assessment opportunities:

# Student Teacher Assessment Rubric (STAR) or Intern Assessment Rubric (IAR): The candidate will be observed multiple times during their student teaching/internship placement. These assessment instruments will be used to provide both quantitative and qualitative feedback. These instruments should be completed six times during the placement.

# Summative Assessments

# During the final three-way meeting (triadic conference) between the teacher candidate, cooperating teacher/mentor, and University supervisor, all parties will cooperatively complete the Student Teacher/Intern Assessment Rubric. The use of this instrument at this time will be the summative evaluation of the teacher candidate’s/intern’s performance in meeting the University’s Department of Education Outcomes. Based on the teacher candidate’s/intern’s performance on the STAR form, the cooperating teacher/mentor will recommend a rating for the student teaching/internship and complete and sign the Final Evaluation by Cooperating Teacher/Mentor Form.

# The teacher candidate is responsible for obtaining letters of reference for his or her credential file. Although a letter of reference may resemble the summative evaluation from a cooperating teacher/mentor, these two instruments are kept in different files and will be used for different purposes. Summative evaluations are public documents kept on file in the Department of Education office and are available for review whereas letters of reference filed with the University of Charleston’s Department of Education may be subject to a seal of confidentiality. For further information about the preparation of letters of reference, please contact the Department of Education office at (304) 357-4707.

# Cooperating Teacher/Candidate Discussion Form: This instrument has been designed to ensure that the cooperating teacher/mentor and candidate discuss the candidate’s ability to effectively perform certain teaching and non-teaching duties. The Education Department encourages the cooperating teacher/mentor and candidate to set aside time every week to review some of the items on the guide. Once they have discussed a particular item, the cooperating teacher/mentor and candidate should indicate this by initialing the space next to the item. By the end of the semester, the cooperating teacher/mentor and candidate should have discussed the candidate’s performance for each item.

# University Supervisor’s Responsibilities

# Once the Field Experience Coordinator has made the placement agreement between the cooperating school/community site and UC, the University supervisor will supply the cooperating teacher/mentor with the materials needed to fulfill his/her responsibilities. It is imperative that the cooperating teacher/mentor and University supervisor work cooperatively to assure a successful experience for the teacher candidate. Therefore, the University supervisor will do the following:

# Visit the candidate a minimum of three times during each 7-week placement to observe and conference with the teacher candidate. For each 7-week placement, one of the visits should include a three-way (triadic) conference with the cooperating teacher/mentor, teacher candidate, and University supervisor. The teacher candidate is responsible for arranging these visits with the approval of the cooperating teacher/mentor.

# Report to the principal’s/director’s office upon arrival at the school/community site, sign in and inform the staff of your presence. Obtain information concerning expectations for and/or regulations concerning visitors and abide by such regulations.

# Examine and evaluate daily lesson plans prior to the visit. For formal evaluations, the teacher candidate is required to submit via email a copy of his/her lesson plans at least 24 hours before the scheduled visit. The lesson plans and guides will help focus the supervisor’s observation and discussions with the teacher candidate before and after the observation.

# Complete the Student Teaching Assessment Rubric (STAR) or the Intern Assessment Rubric (IAR) during each visit when candidate is teaching/training and share during each post-observation conference.

# Evaluate the cooperating teacher using the Final Evaluation of the Cooperating Teacher by the Student Teacher or the Final Evaluation of the Cooperating Mentor by the Intern

# Chair of the Department of Education Responsibilities

# The Chair of the Department of Education is responsible for working with University faculty and instructors as well as cooperating schools/community sites and teachers/mentors to create a high quality education program. Administratively, the Chair serves as a communication liaison between the Department of Education at the University and public school/community site personnel. Therefore, the Chair does the following:

# Collects and reviews all applications for student teaching/internship and ensures that all teacher candidates meet the required qualifications.

# Approves all field-based assignments and makes the official arrangements for placement of candidates. It is the responsibility of the Field Placement Coordinator and the Chair to confer with cooperating school/community site personnel and coordinate the program. The Chair should be notified when serious problems arise which involve teacher candidates, the University supervisor, or the cooperating teacher/mentor.

# Though the University Supervisor assigns grades to each candidate for each assignment, the Chair must approve the grades.

# Though the University Supervisor and the Field Experience Coordinator collect the teacher licensure applications and appropriate fees and collect WVDE required certification documentation, the Chair must approve and sign all certification documentation

# STUDENT TEACHING/INTERNSHIP SEQUENCE AND TIMELINE

# The following section is meant to provide an overview of the sequence of events in a typical student teaching/internship term. There are various levels and approaches to this experience, and the notes provided here are meant to be generally applicable. Within these guidelines, the exact sequence that the candidate will follow will be determined by the planning and effort that the candidate will devote to it in collaboration with the cooperating teacher/mentor, the cooperating school/community site, and the University supervisor.

# Observations and Conversations

# During the first days of each student teaching/internship assignment, the candidate should conduct formal observations of the school/community site, students, teacher-student interactions, instructional procedures, etc. We want you to pretend that you are ethnographic researchers who wish to study and eventually become part of a culture that is not your own. Like any other culture, this school/community site culture is made up of people who follow specific rules and procedures; who display specific behaviors that are acceptable or not acceptable for this culture; whose members think, create, learn and teach in culturally appropriate ways. At first you will be outsiders who enter this new environment quite humbly, unassumingly, and open-mindedly. Your first objective is to attempt to understand the complexities of this culture. Therefore, you need to become an astute observer. This will require you to take detailed notes on your observations to assist you with your Action Research Project. Through detailed observations, you will be able to discover recurring patterns of behavior, learning needs, relationships, and actions.

# During your first week in the school/community site, your main job is to observe. Likewise, during the final week, you will have several periods each day to continue your observations. It is during these times that we ask you to become ethnographic researchers.

# Participation

# From the beginning of the experience, the candidate/intern should be ready to participate. This may take the form of working with individuals, small groups, or whole classes. It may also mean that teacher candidates will assist in grading papers, designing lesson plans, creating bulletin boards, overseeing recess or other non-teaching duties, and a host of other experiences.

# Planning

# As the teacher candidate’s/intern’s assignment proceeds, he/she should be assuming some responsibility for planning lessons. Usually, the teacher candidate will be responsible for a small group or class period within one subject area, adding more responsibilities as time passes and progress dictates. He/she should develop all plans in detailed format at this point, not only for reference by the cooperating teacher/mentor and supervisor but also so that the teacher candidate can gauge how well his/her planning works. Weekly plans and long-range unit plans should also be developed. The cooperating teacher/mentor and the teacher candidate should closely coordinate these long-term plans. The unit plan must be for a minimum of five (5) days and must include five (5) complete daily plans. The format chosen for submission of plans is at the discretion of the cooperating teacher/mentor and depends on individual school/community site requirements. However, the official UC lesson plan format and unit plan format must be used for the pieces submitted for the portfolio.

# Part-Time Responsibility

# The teacher candidate will gradually assume responsibility for an entire learning environment. By the midpoint of the placement (third week of each 7-week placement), teacher candidates should be teaching at least half-time. Increased demands upon the teacher candidate’s/intern’s time will affect how well he/she can prepare for lessons, especially those for which he/she might want to make learning materials. Advance preparation can help the teacher candidate avoid hitting a wall of fatigue and frustration.

# At this point, the cooperating teacher/mentor, candidate, and University supervisor should adjust their expectations accordingly. Units that are thoroughly researched and planned still need back-up alternatives, since students and learning environments can vary widely on short notice.

# The candidate should feel free to experiment, but do so knowing that his/her lessons will be evaluated on the basis of their success in promoting students’ learning as well as his/her own learning. Such methods as cooperative learning, full inclusion strategies, whole-language instruction, or inquiry-based instruction must be painstakingly tested. Observations by the cooperating teacher/mentor can help the teacher candidate analyze his/her teaching at this point and prepare materials and methods for full-time teaching.

# Full-Time Responsibility

# During the second part of each placement (weeks 3-7), an extended period (at least four full weeks) of full-time teaching responsibility is required. The teacher candidate will be leading lessons independently of the cooperating teacher/mentor, although the teacher candidate will remain under that cooperating teacher’s/mentor’s immediate responsibility. Some collaborative teaching may be possible during this time at the teacher candidate’s/intern’s initiative. The most crucial evaluations of the teacher candidate’s/intern’s professional competence will focus on his/her full-time teaching. At this stage, he/she should have fully prepared plans, materials, procedures and techniques. It is important that the teacher candidate show his/her personal style in taking full command over the teaching of subjects and student’s learning. Also during this time, the teacher candidate should conduct a short (at least one-week) action research project in which the teacher candidate conducts original research on his/her own practice.

# Final Week

# As each assignment draws to a close, the candidate should gradually disengage from teaching/training responsibilities and resume the role of observer. These last days are often difficult, and the candidate needs to prepare for the moment of departure. It’s a good time for the candidate to make professional visits, follow up on some questions about where these students will be going in their future, and evaluate his/her own progress. Moreover, it is a good time for the teacher candidate to gather K-12 work samples and work on his/her Student Teaching Portfolio/Internship Portfolio and Action Research Project.

# Teaching/Internship Responsibility and Timeline

# The candidate, cooperating teacher/mentor, and University supervisor should discuss and agree on the appropriate timeline for the candidate to assume responsibility for the class and students. The placement may be longer than due to school vacations and holidays.

# Timeline for teacher candidates in each 7 week placement and for interns during their 7 week school placement

# Week 1: Observe cooperating teacher’s classes and assist the cooperating teacher/ when appropriate.

# Week 2: Take on non-teaching duties (e.g., homeroom, recess, etc.).

# Gradually take full responsibility for planning, teaching, and evaluating classes or subjects one at a time as the teacher candidate and cooperating teacher feel that he/she is ready. Continue observing and assisting the cooperating teacher with planning, grading, tutoring, and team teaching. Review references for Action Research Project.

# Weeks 3-6: Gradually take full responsibility for planning, teaching, and evaluating the entire teaching load; conduct Action Research Project.

# Week 7: Gradually reduce the number of classes or subjects taught and return teaching responsibility to the cooperating teacher; conduct observations with other teachers in the building; complete Action Research Project.

# Each week, the candidate will participate in seminar by meeting on campus for post-student teaching activities, i.e. Action Research and portfolio presentations (required).

# Timeline for 7-week Internship

# Week 1: Observe cooperating mentor’s classes and assist the cooperating mentor when appropriate.

# Week 2: Take on non-training duties (e.g., scheduling, organization, etc.).

# Gradually take full responsibility for planning, teaching/training, and evaluating classes/training sessions one at a time as the intern and cooperating mentor feel that he/she is ready. Continue observing and assisting the cooperating mentor with planning, grading, tutoring, and team teaching/training.

# Weeks 3-6: Gradually take full responsibility for planning, teaching/training, and evaluating the entire teaching/training load.

# Week 7: Gradually reduce the number of classes/sessions taught and return responsibility to the cooperating mentor; conduct observations with other staff in the building.