



Southeast Missouri State University

College of Education

Field & Clinical Handbook

Teacher Candidate
Mentor Teacher
Edition



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Welcome to Field and Clinical Experiences

Candidates -

Field Placement teaching is the crossover experience in your preparation as a professional in the field of Education. It is an application and integration of all content and pedagogy courses, as well as all field experiences that have been completed. Field placement will be an intense experience, so it is important that you devote your time and energy to this endeavor with minimal distractions. You will have an opportunity to develop professional relationships with your Mentor Teacher (MT) and building principal; their recommendations will provide important information to prospective employers. This experience will also provide an opportunity to grow professionally by re-assessing your commitment to teaching, your knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and practicing continuous reflection.

On behalf of the faculty and staff of Educator Preparation and the Office of Field Experiences, we wish you a successful field experience. Have a rewarding career!

Dr. Shannon Clapsaddle, Interim Associate Dean
Office for Educator Preparation

Dr. Rodney Pensel, Field Director
Field & Clinical Experiences

Section I - Field and Clinical Placement Experiences

Conceptual Framework for Field & Clinical Experiences

The Teacher Education Program strives to prepare teachers to be competent professional educators. Future teachers acquire knowledge of the human condition, world, and subject matter he or she teaches. Other courses enable students to acquire skills in the art and science of teaching and encourage them to continue as active learners.

The preparation of teachers at Southeast Missouri State University is field-based with a minimum of 225 hours of pre-student teaching experience in a school classroom with a properly certified and experienced teacher. Student teaching consists of a total of 70 days in the appropriate content area. When teacher candidates complete the education program, they have had ample time and experiences to become competent professional educators.

Student Learning Objectives

Student Learning Objectives are based on nine standards with a total of thirty-six indicators on the Missouri Educator Evaluation System (MEES) as mandated by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

1. Standard 1: Content knowledge aligned with appropriate instruction. The teacher candidate understands the central concepts, structures, and tools of inquiry of the discipline(s) and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful and engaging for students.
2. Standard 2: Student Learning, Growth and Development. The teacher candidate understands how students learn, develop and differ in their approaches to learning. The teacher candidate provides learning opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners and support the intellectual, social, and personal development of all students.

3. Standard 3: Curriculum Implementation. The teacher candidate recognizes the importance of long-range planning and curriculum development. The teacher candidate implements curriculum based upon student, district and state standards.
4. Standard 4: Critical Thinking. The teacher candidate uses a variety of instructional strategies and resources to encourage students' critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
5. Standard 5: Positive Classroom Environment. The teacher candidate uses an understanding of individual/group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages active engagement in learning, positive social interaction, and self-motivation.
6. Standard 6: Effective Communication. The teacher candidate models effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques with students, colleagues and families to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
7. Standard 7: Student Assessment and Data Analysis. The teacher candidate understands and uses formative and summative assessment strategies to assess the learner's progress and uses both classroom and standardized assessment data to plan ongoing instruction.
8. Standard 8: Professionalism. The teacher candidate is a reflective practitioner who continually assesses the effects of choices and actions on others. The teacher candidate actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally in order to improve learning for all students.
9. Standard 9: Professional Collaboration. The teacher candidate has effective working relationships with students, families, school colleagues, and community members.

Teacher Candidate Expectations

- Actively participate in **all duties**, including playground observation, lunch supervision, study hall supervision, teachers' meetings, etc.
- Exercise complete professionalism regarding any personal relationships with students, staff, and parents at all times, including after school hours.

- Full commitment. Remember, field experience placements will require additional time restraints as the possibility of travel is involved.
- Develop a receptive attitude toward feedback from your MT and university supervisor. This feedback is essential for your growth as a professional.
- Keep communication lines open. Your MT and university supervisor are there to help you. Ask for their advice and suggestions.
- Communicate with your supervisor immediately if there are any problems with your placement or your relationship with your MT. Supervisors view themselves as advocates for their teacher candidates.
- Follow your MT's lead in the amount of time and daily hours spent at school.
- Get to know support staff, including administrative assistants, custodians, and resource people such as school counselors and instructional media center directors.
- Ask your principal (or a designee) to observe your teaching and/or to conduct a mock interview.
- Give yourself some quiet time at the end of each day after the students go home to reflect on the day's activities.

Field Placements

First impressions are important. Many school administrators hire teacher candidates in their building. Having a teacher candidate in the classroom provides the administrator an opportunity to observe and determine if the teacher candidate merits consideration for future employment. The first impression may solidify or eliminate you as a candidate for a position. All communication should demonstrate professionalism, including oral or written documents. Discuss performance expectations with your MT and university supervisor, especially at the start of the experience.

Section II - The Role of the Student Teacher

Preparing to Student Teach

How to Apply for Student Teaching

Refer to the following website for the Student Teaching Application Process:

<http://www.semo.edu/studentteach/apply.html>

Guidelines for Placements

As you prepare to apply for student teaching, please adhere to the guidelines below that we use to find placements for you.

1. a 30 mile radius from the 270 bridge to Illinois (includes Belleville, Collinsville, and Edwardsville)
2. a 30 mile radius from the Cape campus (includes Anna and Cobden)
3. a 30 mile radius from the Sikeston campus (just gets a little into KY and TN; we might consider just going to the river in this region)
4. a 30 mile radius from the Kennett campus (includes Paragould and Blytheville)

[Map of Placement Areas](#)

Triad Seminar

Prior to the beginning of the semester, teacher candidates are required to attend a Triad Seminar. It is ideal to have the Mentor Teacher (MT) and university supervisor (the triad) in attendance as well, but not required. In the seminar, each member of the triad will be updated on the co-teaching method of student teaching and complete interrater reliability training with the Missouri Educator Evaluation System (MEES). Here, you will meet your student teaching “team” and begin your professional relationships that will last for the entirety of the upcoming semester. Please see [Sample 16 Week Schedule](#) for a guide to the 16 week semester.

Here you will find a suggested list of your expectations and due dates. Keep this guide handy as it may assist you for the duration of the semester.

International Student Teaching

If you are traveling abroad for student teaching, your calendar for student teaching may differ from those solely in Missouri. You should be conversing regularly with the Director of Field pertaining to dates and expectations. More information concerning international student teaching, contact the Field Experience Office.

Beginning Your Experience

First impressions are important. Many school administrators hire teacher candidates for their districts. Having a teacher candidate in the classroom provides the administrator an opportunity to observe and determine if the candidate merits consideration for future employment. The first impression may solidify or eliminate you as a candidate for a position. *All* communication should demonstrate professionalism, including oral or written documents. Discuss performance expectations with your MT and university supervisor, especially at the start of the experience.

Be prompt and go immediately to your classroom daily duties. Your MT has been encouraged to help you get acquainted and oriented. They have been requested to provide a table or desk and a shelf or file drawer for you to use. If there is minimal physical space, make adaptations. Some classrooms or buildings will have ample accommodations and some will have less. MTs have been asked to let you observe for a day or two. Observation does not mean that you do not interact. It may mean you listen, observe, and make notes of students who have special needs, learn names of students, check spelling, math, or some formative assessments, review text books, etc. Teacher candidates are to remain an active observer in the class and should refrain from any distracting behavior. Your MT will indicate their expectations of your responsibilities on a weekly or daily basis in the classroom. Take the time to study the curriculum, plan, and gradually team teach, or assist, before you assume responsibility for a small part of the day. Your university supervisor may visit during the first week.

He or she will visit with you and the MT to get acquainted and answer any questions you or the teacher may have.

Teacher candidates should utilize course work knowledge, the expertise of the MT, and classroom experience to gain knowledge and skills needed to teach. Teacher candidates can experience and evaluate various values and beliefs about the profession when they assume the role of a co-teacher with the MT.

Policies

Substitute Teaching

Due to the extreme need our regional schools have for substitute teachers, teacher candidates may substitute teach in a limited capacity.

- Teacher candidates may NOT substitute during the first two weeks of their placement.
- After the first two weeks, if the teacher candidate is comfortable doing so and the mentor and University Supervisor feel the teacher candidate is ready, the teacher candidate may act as a substitute teacher in the classroom in which they are placed if the teacher is absent or is covering another class up to five times during the first 70 days of student teaching. These days count toward their required 70 days. University Supervisors must be notified in advance if possible when the teacher candidate is going to substitute for their mentor teacher.
- During days 70 of student teaching, the teacher candidate may substitute in other classrooms in the building where they are placed only if doing so will not interfere with the teacher candidate's final evaluation.
- Any time a teacher candidate substitutes for their mentor or in another classroom, lesson plans should be provided by the regular classroom teacher as needed.
- School districts should plan to pay teacher candidates for any time they provide substitute teaching in a classroom other than the one to which they are assigned.

Dress and Appearance

Southeast Missouri State University expects candidates to be in compliance with the policies in the

assigned school system. Their expectations primarily indicate the exercise of good taste and common sense.

Teacher Candidates are expected to dress as professionals.

Confidentiality

Teacher candidates and university field supervisors are cautioned about the confidential nature of student records and the need to avoid public criticism of students, teachers, or other school personnel. Administrators may want to consider putting "teacher candidates" on their student record access list since it may be necessary for the teacher candidate to view records in order to plan instruction. Teacher candidates are also encouraged to observe confidentiality regarding the information to which they are exposed while in a classroom setting which may pertain to the mentor teacher. Further information can be found at [FERPA](#)

Social Media

Teacher candidates are encouraged to exercise caution when sharing information, both pictorial and verbal content, in social media of all kinds. Setting security to private is highly suggested on all social media platforms. Hiring agencies review prospective employees' social media presence. Teacher candidates should make their public image as professional as possible in all settings.

Teacher Candidates should be aware of the Amy Hestir Student Protection Act, a state law that limits teacher-student interactions. Teacher candidates are *not* to post pictures or videos of their students on social media and are not to embark in communications with students via social media. Teacher candidates should also be mindful of the written commentary they make public in social media concerning their student teaching placement.

Teacher candidates should remember they are professionals who are guests in the school and are to be respectful of their host. Concerns about your placement should be communicated to your university supervisor and/or the Director of Field Experiences, not publicly in social media.

Attendance

Daily attendance at school, barring emergencies, is required. Report absence(s) to the school, the MT, and the university supervisor. If the teacher candidate starts their placement early, they are still expected to be in the classroom for the entire 70-day semester **according to the university calendar**. University supervisors will not begin supervising until the official start of the semester, therefore a teacher candidate's time officially begins when Southeast Missouri State University's semester begins.

Teacher candidates are expected to report regularly and on time every day for the entire assignment. The calendar of the host district will be followed, with the exception of university orientation, work days, and required seminars of EF400. Failure to meet your daily obligations will adversely affect the final grade. Only in cases of serious illness or professional obligations, such as job interviews or professional development, are teacher candidates to be absent from their placements.

Candidates missing more than 2 total days are required to make up additional absences at the end of the semester. Students will be provided an incomplete until all required days are made up.

Professional Development: All professional development pertaining to education is considered as an **excused absence** from field placements. The Regional Professional Development Center (RPDC) at Southeast Missouri State University offers professional development for teacher candidates **FREE OF CHARGE**. If teacher candidates choose to take advantage of this opportunity and attend one or more of these "classes" teacher candidates should follow protocol by informing their MT and university supervisor *at least a week in advance* for each class and provide documentation as proof of attendance. Teacher candidates are encouraged to attend these with their MTs. Further information can be found at [SEMO RPDC](#)

Holidays and School Closures

There are no vacation or personal days during the student teaching semester other than those holidays recognized by the host district. Your attendance is required when your host district is in session.

School Closings: It is important to contact the university supervisor as soon as you are aware of this

type of situation. If the school is closed for snow or other issues, students are reminded they are to follow the school's calendar. Students will not be penalized or expected to make up these days unless the number of days exceeds the minimum time required by DESE for student teaching.

Candidate Competencies in Technology Use

Through the EdVolution® initiative, Southeast Missouri State University has created a technology rich learning and teaching environment for education majors. Students have had access to technology as well as curricular expectations throughout their coursework centered on the latest technology innovations. The infusion of effective educational technology is encouraged and expected during student teaching.

Assignments

Teacher Candidate Lesson Planning Expectations

A teacher candidate should present the MT with all lesson plans for the forthcoming week each **Wednesday prior to the week the plans will be implemented** for approval. This will allow for review and approval by the mentor teacher. This is for *all* lessons, not just those being officially observed. Once the plans are approved by the MT, the teacher candidate will then send an electronic copy of the lesson plans to the university supervisor no later than the Friday prior to the implementation of the plans at 11:59 p.m. This practice will continue until the MT and university supervisor agree the teacher candidate has demonstrated a level of competence without a negative impact on the quality of instruction in the classroom. At this point in time, a short daily lesson planning template, located at [Sample Student Teaching Lesson Plans](#) can be utilized. The shorter daily lesson plan will also be turned in **each Wednesday prior** to the week the plans will be implemented for approval by the MT and to the university supervisor the Friday before implementation by 11:59 p.m. Failure to comply with lesson plan expectations will negatively impact your student teaching grade.

Reflective Journal

Teacher candidates will keep a reflective journal with entries **at least once a week**. Journal topics will

be prompted by the supervisors each week. Supervisors will read and respond to these weekly. Items in the journal may include lessons which went especially well and what you think made the lesson a positive experience for the students; lessons which did not go well, and how you can improve them; how discipline problems were handled; and other items of reflection on your experience. If a specific prompt is provided by the Director of Field Experiences or the university supervisor, please address that prompt as directed. Failure to comply with reflective journal expectations will negatively impact your student teaching grade.

Grades

The basis for evaluation is quality and consistency of demonstration of the teaching competencies as reflected in the 9 indicators identified on the Missouri Educator Evaluation System (MEES). [MEES Form](#)

The following grading system will be used as a guideline:

Midterm Grade:

- An "A" indicates demonstration of a superior level of competence. In the “midterm” column, a teacher candidate must earn a score of 3 or above on 7 of the 9 standards AND earn no ratings lower than 2
- A "B" indicates demonstration of a strong level of competence. In the “midterm” column, a teacher candidate must earn a score of 3 or above on 5 of the 9 standards AND earn no ratings lower than 2
- A "C" indicates that the teacher candidate has met the minimum criteria for passing the course and has met the basic expectations of the Teacher Preparation. In the “midterm” column, a teacher candidate must earn a score of 3 or above on 3 of the 9 standards AND earn no more than two scores lower than 2.
- A “D” indicates that the teacher candidate has met the University’s minimum criteria for passing the course but has NOT met the minimum standard for progressing in the Teacher Preparation Program. In the “midterm” column, a teacher candidate must earn a score of 3 or above on 2 of the 9 Standards AND earn no more than three scores lower than 2.
- An “F” indicates that the teacher candidate has not met the University’s minimum criteria for passing the course AND has not met the minimum standard for progressing in the Teacher Preparation Program.

An “F” will be assigned if, in the “midterm” column, a teacher candidate fails to earn a score of 3 or above on 1 of the 9 standards OR earns more than three scores lower than 2.

Final Course Grade:

- An "A" indicates demonstration of a superior level of competence. In the “summative” column, a teacher candidate must earn a score of 3 or above on all 9 standards.
- A "B" indicates demonstration of a strong level of competence. In the “summative” column, a teacher candidate must earn a score of 3 or above on 8 of the 9 standards AND earn no ratings lower than 2.
- A "C" indicates that the teacher candidate has met the minimum criteria for passing the course and has met the basic expectations of the Teacher Preparation. In the “summative” column, a teacher candidate must earn a score of 3 or above on 7 of the 9 indicators AND earn no more than a single score lower than 2.
- A “D” indicates that the teacher candidate has met the University’s minimum criteria for passing the course but has NOT met the minimum standard for progressing in the Teacher Preparation Program. In the “summative” column, a teacher candidate must earn a score of 3 or above on 6 of the 9 standards AND earn no more than two scores lower than 2.
- An “F” indicates that the teacher candidate has not met the University’s minimum criteria for passing the course AND has not met the minimum measurement for progressing in the Teacher Preparation Program. An “F” will be assigned if, in the “summative” column, a teacher candidate fails to earn a score of 3 or above on 5 of the 9 standard OR earns more than two scores lower than 2.

Definition of Rating Descriptors

- N/A - Not Attempted: The teacher candidate did not attempt the standard.
- N/K: The teacher candidate does not possess the necessary knowledge and cannot apply or demonstrate the performance
- 0: The Teacher candidate does not possess the necessary knowledge, therefore, the standard is not evident or is incorrect in performance.

- 1: Emerging Candidate: The teacher candidate is able to articulate the necessary knowledge, but does not demonstrate in performance.
- 2: Developing Candidate: The teacher candidate is able to articulate the necessary knowledge and demonstrates in performance with some success
- 3: Skilled Candidate: The teacher candidate is able to articulate the necessary knowledge and effectively demonstrates in performance. *Expected level of performance by the end of the student teaching semester*
- 4: Exceeding Candidate: The teacher candidate adapts and develops the lesson according to the teaching environment/ student response which include all the descriptors in the Skilled Candidate category and at least one descriptor in the 4 category

Student Teaching Intervention Plan

Students who score a combined score (mentor teacher and university supervisor) below 27 on the first MEES observation will begin a process designed to assist the student in their experience. Further steps for a Student Teaching Improvement Plan may be discussed with the office of Field Experience. Teacher Candidates who earn a combined score (University Supervisor and Mentor Scores) of 33 or less on MEES 2 will be required to have an improvement plan in place within one week of the evaluation. Teacher Candidates who earn a combined score (University Supervisor and Mentor Scores) of 41 or less on the MEES 3 may be referred to the Field Committee.

Courtesy Placements

In general, all students will be expected to do student teaching in Southeast Missouri or in sites within reasonable driving distance for university supervisors. However, in hardship situations, candidates may be considered for an out-of-region placement.

Students who wish to be considered for placement outside the area must fill out a request form provided

by the Field Experiences Office in Scully 308 within two (2) weeks of the beginning of the semester immediately *preceding* the student teaching semester.

Students will be considered for teaching outside the university service area if:

- a. The candidate is married before the student teaching semester begins and the spouse is required to live outside the area for employment, or military commitment.
- b. A hardship exists due to a serious, long-term illness of a member of the immediate family which would require the candidate to relocate immediately.
- c. Another documented hardship exists as determined by the Director of Field Experiences.

If a candidate is deemed to qualify under the above terms, the Field Experiences Office must have assurance that another university in the requested area will be willing to place and supervise the student in a manner which meets Southeast Missouri State University's requirements. If the university that is to provide the supervision is not accredited, the placement may be denied.

The Director of Field Experiences will determine if a candidate meets the requirements for student teaching outside the region. Exceptions or appeals can be made to a committee made up of the Director of Field Experiences and the Chairs of the Department of Middle and Secondary Education and the Department of Elementary, Early, and Special Education. Students must be able to assure that the need is valid and that all requirements are met. The committee will not rule on other issues of placement not covered under those regulations.

Approved students must pay a non-refundable fee of \$200.00 to the Office of Field Experiences to cover costs related to the additional time related to coordinating out-of-area placements. The Field and Clinical Experiences Office will begin the placement process on the candidate's behalf once this fee is received. Additionally, any fees over and above the normal amounts that would be paid on the candidate's behalf for an in-area placement for MT stipends, field supervisor salaries, and mileage reimbursement for these personnel

will be the responsibility of the teacher candidate. Any additional fees related to the placement will follow the mentor district's refund policy if the placement is canceled.

All formative, summative and disposition MEES forms used by the College of Education must be used by the MT and courtesy supervisor. In addition, the same criteria to serve as MTs and supervisors that are required by Southeast Missouri State University will be met.

Termination

Suspension/Termination of Students from Clinical Settings

The Director of Field Experiences is given the authority to suspend students from the clinical setting for the causes set out herein. Actions shall be taken when, in the judgment of the Director, the best interests of the university and the mentor clinical site will be served by immediate suspension of the student from the clinical experience.

Steps for Removal

1. Meeting with district personnel regarding request for termination of placement.
2. Meeting with Director, Supervisor, and department chair regarding university support of termination at the site, if yes, then appeal notice provided, if no- Director will work to secure a new site.
3. Appeal to Associate Dean. A meeting with the Associate Dean, Director, Supervisor, Student to share the reasons for termination and allow the student to contest permanent removal from the teacher education program. Students may be provided an opportunity to request to repeat student teaching in a future semester. If the appeal is granted a plan of correction may also be expected. If the appeal is denied the student will be terminated from the teacher education program.

Students in a clinical setting may be suspended from a placement in a private or public setting for one or more of the following causes:

- Violation of state laws.

- Violation of University policies, regulations or directives.
- Violation of policies, regulations, or directives of the party providing the clinical experience.
- Physical or mental conditions making the teacher candidate unfit to instruct or associate with clients, patients, children, or youth.
- Immoral conduct or unethical behavior.
- Incompetence, inefficiency, insubordination, or other performance deficiencies while assuming the duties involved in the clinical experience.
- Excessive or unreasonable absence from attendance in the clinical setting.
- Charges or conviction of a felony or crime involving moral turpitude.
- Charges or conviction of child abuse or neglect.
- Failure to maintain academic standards or progress required for graduation.
- Any cause which would prevent licensing (or suspension of license) in the profession for which the student is preparing.

Schools reserve the right to refuse assignment of any student and the right to terminate a teacher candidate's placement. Once a placement has begun an informal hearing including consultation with the Director of Field Experiences, the University supervisor, the teacher candidate, a representative of the school (if possible) will occur. Causes for termination may also include consistent unprofessionalism, breaches of school district policy, illegal activity on the part of the teacher candidate, inability to perform duties required of a teacher candidate, escorting or being escorted by pupils from the schools in which they are student teaching, etc.

After termination, a hearing will be held, if requested in writing by the student, to determine the appropriateness of placement in another district the following semester. This appeal may be denied. A teacher candidate who leaves an assignment before the ending date without consultation and approval of the Director of Field Experiences will be dropped pending an appeal process. If grades must be posted prior to rendering a final

decision, a grade of “Incomplete (I)” will be assigned until a final decision is made. Further policies and procedures may be adopted by the university at any time that may impact the removal of teacher candidates from their assignments.

Section III - The Role of the Mentor Teacher

The Mentor Teacher

Student teaching may be viewed as a partnership in teaching. Teacher candidates have the opportunity to experience and evaluate various values and beliefs about the profession when they participate as partners and co-teachers with the mentor teacher.

Student teaching also marks the beginning of a critical transition from student to professional during the final clinical experience. The mentor teacher models professional behavior for the teacher candidate and guides him or her toward a deeper understanding of school cultures.

Each teacher candidate brings to the experience a unique combination of teaching characteristics and skills. Therefore, the goal of the student teaching experience is to provide the teacher candidate with maximum opportunity to perform to the degree that personal interest, abilities, and individuality will allow. Teacher candidates who experience a high degree of involvement in teaching and other school-related activities report a successful student teaching experience.

Requirements of Mentor Teachers

1. Mentor teachers must be a full-time staff member in a mentor school with five years teaching experience in the candidate's content field; with at least one of those years in the current mentor school.
2. Mentor teachers must have state-approved certifications in the content areas and grade range in which they will have a teacher candidate.
3. Mentor teachers should hold a master's degree. If the proposed mentor teacher does not hold a master's degree, the principal of the mentor school should discuss this with the Director of Field and Clinical Experiences.

4. Mentor teachers must accept the students voluntarily and be willing to provide required supervision and evaluations.
5. Mentor teachers must be recommended and approved by the principal. This recommendation should be based on acceptable levels of performance according to the State of Missouri, personal characteristics which contribute to the establishment of a collegial relationship with teacher candidates, and acceptability as an ethical and professional model for candidates.
6. Mentor teachers are expected to mentor throughout the entire 16 week field experience.

Orienting the Teacher Candidate to the Classroom and School

Early in the experience, the mentor teacher should:

- Inform your class that they will have another teacher who will be working with you and them. Be sure the students know they are to respect and follow the instructions and corrections of the teacher candidate in the same way they respond to you, and that they will be held accountable.
- Introduce the teacher candidate to the principal and people who work in the school. Include administrative assistants, custodians, nurses, counselors, and cooks, and encourage the staff to make the candidate feel welcome. As time permits, orientation to the school's programs will be very important.
- Provide the teacher candidate your contact information.
- Establish a workstation for the teacher candidate in the room. This may be a desk or table *and* a shelf or file drawer.
- Provide the teacher candidate with the school's organizational structure; school policies, such as emergency procedures, harassment policies, and curriculum; Internet restrictions; and cell phone usage. Discuss regulations and expectations relative to dress, parking, smoking, coffee, workroom, etc.
- Prepare seating charts or other materials to help the teacher candidate learn the names of the students along with information on individual pupils, particularly those having educational accommodations.

- Plan to confer regularly with the teacher candidate about the duties, responsibilities, planning, and evaluation expected during the teacher candidate assignment.
- Provide the candidate with curriculum, content, and materials.
- Give the teacher candidate some classroom responsibilities immediately.
- Orient yourself with the co-teaching methodologies and the Missouri Educator Evaluation System

It would be helpful if the mentor teacher would:

- Assist the teacher candidate to feel free and at ease in discussing problems.
- Assist the teacher candidate in realizing that you are concerned about her/his personal and professional future.
- Develop a communication plan for regular discussion and how the teacher candidate may be involved in decision-making, as well as parental involvement in school affairs.
- Most of all, make the teacher candidate feel welcome; get to know and take an interest in her/him. This may be the most rewarding part of the experience.

During the First Week

- Conference with the teacher candidate to determine what and when the teacher candidate will teach a lesson. The teacher candidate should be given access to materials for preparation. Explain how the lesson fits into the unit. A curriculum guide will be helpful at this point. The teacher candidate should submit lesson plans for the first lesson; conference with the teacher candidate in regard to the plans before the lesson is presented.
- The teacher candidate should examine examples of student work to become familiar with the achievement level of the class. Some correcting of formal evaluations may be helpful.

- Before the first lesson is taught by the teacher candidate, it is suggested that the teacher candidate work with individual students or small groups under your direction and participate in team or co-teaching. The teacher candidate may be asked to present special information, demonstrate or illustrate a concept, give the introduction of a lesson, or provide closure for a lesson. Ample notice should be given.
- Provide some time for the teacher candidate to observe various kinds of strategies you use and point out things that have worked well for you.
- The university field supervisor will conduct an informal visit during the first or second full week. The first visit is to get acquainted, give you an opportunity to ask questions, and suggest when the first of your formative evaluations will take place. They will also conference with you at each evaluation to discuss progress.
- Please discuss your methods and beliefs about discipline with your teacher candidate. Beginning teachers surveyed listed discipline as their most common weakness. Likewise, principals who were surveyed listed classroom management as the most common problem area for beginning teachers. The teacher candidate needs to know your expectations and school regulations in regard to discipline. It may be wise to help the teacher candidate develop proactive strategies to support students with behavior concerns.

Cooperating teachers may find the need to assist teacher candidates with concerns after they spend a few days in their assignment. The following items might be pertinent. (If the problem is too personal but has to be resolved, it is possible that the university supervisor may be able to provide a satisfactory third-party solution that will preserve the desired relationship between you and the student). Some of these topics might include: professional dress, classroom voice, handwriting, and self-analysis. Your mentorship in all areas is important and appreciated.

The Steps to Teaching

There are differing philosophies as to how early the teacher candidate should begin teaching. If the teacher candidate has not yet been given responsibility for solo-teaching in at least some classes or activities on a regular basis by the third week, there would seem to be some reason for concern on our part – either the mentor teacher, for personal reasons, is unwilling to relinquish time and classes to the teacher candidate, or the teacher candidate has not provided the necessary feeling of confidence. Certainly in the latter circumstance questions should be raised and decisions made as to the student continuing in the setting. These concerns should be brought to the attention of the university supervisor. If you are not satisfied with the direction of the university supervisor, you can always contact the Director of Field and Clinical Experiences at 573-651-2125.

Teacher candidates should be informed what the mentor teacher has planned and what objectives are generally being sought, as well as some of the problems to be overcome. The candidate should be encouraged to take notes and ask questions following all observations (One teach-one observe). Discussing what has been done and what the teacher candidate has understood about the progress of student learning can be a valuable learning experience in itself. [16 Week Student Teaching Suggested Schedule](#)

The teacher candidate should have responsibility for planning and presenting learning activities and should also be responsible for evaluating their success. One objective of student teaching is to enable the student to get a complete overview of the teacher's task professionally; and certainly the whole-day teaching experience for some definite period of time is necessary for that objective to be reached. The mentor teacher, students, and the teacher candidate alike will benefit from actively engaging in the co-teaching model. In this way, the teacher candidate gains a feeling of competence as well as constant support and assistance from the mentor teacher and the mentor teacher is able to provide more extensive differentiation for the students; time for reflection and synthesis is gained. The mentor teacher also maintains close contact with the classes that must be a continuing responsibility after the teacher candidate leaves.

Planning

Planning with a teacher candidate is considered imperative in student teaching. Some reasons are:

- Planning with a teacher candidate increases her/his status to that of a partner in the teaching process. This tends to give her/him added confidence and security for teaching success.
- A teacher candidate is expected to accept a major share of the responsibility for her/his professional growth.
- Planning together is more likely to clarify objectives. A teacher candidate needs to know what he/she is trying to do, and why he/she is doing it. The give and take of planning sessions should contribute to the focus on objectives.

Teacher Candidate Planning Expectations

A teacher candidate should present the mentor teacher with all lesson plans (MoPTA model or the equivalent of) for the forthcoming week each **Friday prior to the week the plans will be implemented** for approval. This will allow for review and approval by the mentor teacher. This is for *all* lessons, not just those being officially observed. Once the plans are approved by the mentor teacher, the teacher candidate will then send an electronic copy of the lesson plans to the university supervisor no later than the Sunday prior to the implementation of the plans at 11:59 p.m. This practice will continue until the mentor teacher and university supervisor agree that the teacher candidate has demonstrated a level of competence without a negative impact on the quality of instruction in the classroom. At this point in time, a short daily lesson planning template can be utilized (see Appendix G for an example of a short lesson plan template). The shorter daily lesson plan will also be turned in **each Friday prior** to the week the plans will be implemented for approval by the mentor teacher and to the university supervisor the Sunday before implementation by 11:59 p.m.

Provide Opportunities to Observe and Analyze

The mentor teacher typically provides the teacher candidate a variety of classroom episodes to observe, analyze, and discuss. This on-the-spot observation of an experienced teacher handling a class in a variety of situations is invaluable to the teacher candidate. Additionally, the teacher candidate needs the assurance that the mentor teacher is available for help, especially initially as they begin to assume responsibilities. Teacher candidates and mentor teachers should engage in daily informal conversations designed to assist and support the teacher candidate. Lengthier conferences (at least once a week) should also take place that promote reflection of overall performance and professional growth.

Reflection on Teaching

It is critical for the mentor teacher to discuss with the teacher candidate why particular choices were made and others rejected about curriculum, classroom management, etc. In this way, the teacher candidate will better understand the motives and rationales underlying particular choices. Since many policies and procedures were in place prior to their arrival, understanding the "history" of the classroom and school will help teacher candidates make their own decisions in the future, when the school and classroom environment may be very different.

Identify New Challenges for the Teacher Candidate

Many teacher candidates are effective in the classroom as they have had approximately 225 field hours prior to this experience. While recognizing their skills, mentor teachers can help these teacher candidates by identifying new challenges, e.g., encouraging them to try different classroom management techniques, work with particular students, teach a less familiar content area or topic, or experiment with new instructional approaches. Teacher candidates have often been successful by staying within their strengths and "comfort

zones." Cooperating teachers who push teacher candidates outside those "comfort zones" offer valuable opportunities for growth and reflection.

Individualized Education Plan Meetings (IEP's)

Participation in a student's individualized education program (IEP) meeting often comes up as a question from mentor teachers. Observing an IEP setting is an excellent experience for teacher candidates; however, these meetings are often sensitive. If all parties involved with an IEP are willing to allow the teacher candidate to observe, such an experience would give the student even more insights into the professional life of a teacher. Please make it extremely clear to the teacher candidate that what is said in these meetings is confidential. Special Education majors should be provided this opportunity.

Evaluate the Teacher Candidate

Teacher candidates need regular communication and feedback from their mentor teacher. Candidates feel reassured when they know there will be regular opportunities for them to discuss their progress. For this reason it should be a high priority to establish methods and times for communicating early in the experience. It is also recommended that the mentor teacher participate in as many of the post-observation conferences with the teacher candidate and supervisor as time will allow. It is critical that the mentor teacher share any concerns about the teacher candidate as early in the placement as possible with the university supervisor or the Director of Field and Clinical Experiences, if it is determined needed.

The Missouri Educator Evaluation System (MEES)

The mentor teacher will be completing four formative observations during the course of the semester using the Missouri Education Evaluation System (MEES). [MEES Form](#) The evaluation is based on the following Standards:

1. Standard 1: Content knowledge aligned with appropriate instruction. The teacher candidate understands the central concepts, structures, and tools of inquiry of the discipline(s) and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful and engaging for students.
2. Standard 2: Student Learning, Growth and Development. The teacher candidate understands how students learn, develop and differ in their approaches to learning. The teacher candidate provides learning opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners and support the intellectual, social, and personal development of all students.
3. Standard 3: Curriculum Implementation. The teacher candidate recognizes the importance of long-range planning and curriculum development. The teacher candidate implements curriculum based upon student, district and state standards.
4. Standard 4: Critical Thinking. The teacher candidate uses a variety of instructional strategies and resources to encourage students' critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.
5. Standard 5: Positive Classroom Environment. The teacher candidate uses an understanding of individual/group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages active engagement in learning, positive social interaction, and self-motivation.
6. Standard 6: Effective Communication. The teacher candidate models effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques with students, colleagues and families to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
7. Standard 7: Student Assessment and Data Analysis. The teacher candidate understands and uses formative and summative assessment strategies to assess the learner's progress and uses both classroom and standardized assessment data to plan ongoing instruction.
8. Standard 8: Professionalism. The teacher candidate is a reflective practitioner who continually assesses the effects of choices and actions on others. The teacher candidate actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally in order to improve learning for all students.

9. Standard 9: Professional Collaboration. The teacher candidate has effective working relationships with students, families, school colleagues, and community members.

Tips on Pre/Post Conferencing

- Allow the teacher candidate to take the lead in the pre/post conferences. Allow them time to synthesize/reflect on the experience and come up with their own plan of improvement.
- The mentor teacher and university supervisor should be concise and emphatic with her/his suggestions as teacher candidates can be sensitive to suggestions
- The mentor teacher and university supervisor should share with the teacher candidate practical instructional strategies and relate them to research and theory. It is important to model how theory and current research can be applied in the classroom.
- As with any feedback, make sure to schedule the post meetings as soon as possible after the actual teaching as possible. This way, the experience is fresh in everyone's mind.

Feedback Suggestion

In general, it is suggested that the mentor teacher, as the true mentor, provides ongoing daily feedback to the teacher candidates.

Grading

Please see the section on grading located on page 16 of this document.

Issues

If problems arise, first talk with your teacher candidate. Be candid. Teacher candidates are encouraged to accept professional criticism. If the problem persists, then:

- Talk with the university supervisor about the issue(s). If you feel the issue needs immediate attention, you can wait for the next supervisory meeting, call or email the supervisor directly. The supervisor is

there to not only support the teacher candidate, but the mentor teachers as well. If there is need for further action,

- Contact the Director of Field and Clinical Experiences. While you may call the office to voice your concerns, it will be necessary for you to put them in detailed writing and email them as well. The phone number is 573-651-2125. Email: rpensel@semo.edu. The Director will set up a meeting with the mentor teacher, teacher candidate, university supervisor, and if needed, the building principal to discuss the matter and solutions.

Terminating Assignment

Schools reserve the right to refuse assignment of any student and the right to terminate a teacher candidate's placement for cause. After the meeting with the Director of Field and Clinical Experiences, mentor teacher, university supervisor, and teacher candidate, termination of placement may be determined. Causes for termination may include consistent unprofessionalism, breaches of school district policy, illegal activity on the part of the teacher candidate, inability to perform duties required of a teacher candidate, escorting or being escorted by pupils from the schools in which they are student teaching, etc.

Please see the section on termination on page 18 of this document.

Honorariums

There is an honorarium paid to the mentor teachers who supervise teacher candidates each semester. This serves as a token of our appreciation for the valuable assistance mentor teachers provide in helping prepare candidates for the profession. We believe that the satisfaction received from making a contribution to the profession far exceeds the value of the honorarium.

Rights of Host Schools

Schools reserve the right to refuse assignment of any student and the right to terminate a teacher

candidate's placement for cause. After the meeting with the Director of Field Experiences, MT, university supervisor, and teacher candidate, termination of placement may be determined. Causes for termination may include consistent unprofessionalism, breaches of school district policy, illegal activity on the part of the teacher candidate, inability to perform duties required of a teacher candidate, escorting or being escorted by pupils from the schools in which they are student teaching, etc.

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