



Student Teaching Handbook

**For Student Teachers, Cooperating Teachers, and
University Supervisors**

The University of Rhode Island School of Education



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STUDENT TEACHING HANDBOOK

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PLEASE NOTE: Material in this handbook is subject to change in accordance with state, university, or college mandates. It is the responsibility of the student to follow up as necessary to be sure that the most up-to-date information is presented. URI School of Education makes every attempt to keep this handbook updated on the School of Education website: <http://web.uri.edu/education/>



STUDENT TEACHING OVERVIEW

This section outlines some basic responsibilities of the student teaching experience. Many of these responsibilities are shared between the student teacher, the cooperating teacher, and the university supervisor.

In this section: *general responsibilities, TaskStream electronic portfolio tasks, and program completion*



General Responsibilities

All student teachers have been formally accepted into the URI School of Education and have completed all program requirements prior to student teaching.

The University of Rhode Island requires that student teachers complete the following components during the student teaching assignment:

Teaching

- a. Implement whole-class, cooperative group and individual instruction that reflects knowledge of content area standards, research, and developmentally appropriate practice.
- b. Create and teach lessons and reflect about their own strengths and weaknesses
- c. Prepare instructional materials, e.g., charts, bulletin boards, centers, student materials
- d. Manage student behavior and classroom routines
- e. Assess student work
- f. Co-plan and co-teach one lesson with a special educator

Other professional activities – classroom routines

- a. Supervise lunchrooms and playground - where done by teachers
- b. Attend faculty meetings, and other meetings with the teacher
- c. Participate in parent conferences, open-houses, and IEP meetings if parent permission is granted
- d. Maintain student records, e.g., grade books, report cards
- e. Attend a professional conference relative to this teaching assignment

Enrollment in the course EDC 485, "Student Teaching Seminar"

This three-hour course meets one evening each week and is led by the university supervisor. The purpose is to provide support among student teachers through sharing common experiences. It is also a time to discuss problems and solutions to questions and issues encountered and to fine tune skills of:

- a. managing classroom routines and classroom discipline.
- b. writing and teaching effective lessons using a variety of approaches.
- c. creating motivational lessons and developing critical questioning skills.
- d. recognizing and providing for individual differences in the classroom.
- e. evaluating student progress and keeping records to show evidence.
- f. communicating with other professionals and parents.
- g. following district standards-based curriculum.

(Note: Detailed assignments for the various levels of licensure will be addressed in the practicum class prior to student teaching. This is purely an outline of portfolio requirements)

TaskStream Electronic Portfolio Tasks

To assess the performance of student teachers relative to the Beginning Teacher Standards, four electronic portfolio entries are required:

Task 1: Planning an Instructional Unit

(written the semester prior to student teaching in a methods class)

Effective teaching calls for planning of initial ideas for learning experiences that are appropriate for curriculum goals, relevant to learners, and based upon principles of effective instruction.

This interdisciplinary unit should include:

1. the formal evaluation of student learning.
2. lessons that help students develop higher cognitive skills.
3. curricular modifications or adaptations when needed.
4. the use of technology to support student learning.

(A detailed assignment and rubric sheet will be provided to the student teacher in their methods class.)

Task 2: Informal and Formal Assessment of Learning

Effective teaching requires assessment of student learning on an ongoing basis.

Student teachers will reflect on the ways in which students are evaluated regarding what students know and are able to do as a result of teaching. Student teachers will select one example of informal and one of formal assessment to use with students.

(A detailed assignment and rubric sheet will be provided to the student teacher in their methods class.)

Task 3: Four Observations of Teaching

Effective teaching is dynamic, rather than static. It requires making changes in practice based on feedback from experienced teachers.

Each student teacher will be observed a minimum of four classroom observations (two by the university supervisor and two by the cooperating teacher). Each standard must be addressed by each observer at least once.

Task 4: Midterm and Final Evaluation of the Student Teacher by the University Supervisor and the Cooperating Teacher

These formal observations will assess student teachers on all 11 RIPTS. If the student teacher completes a split placement, the midterm will be completed at the end of the first placement, while the final evaluation will be completed prior to completion of the

second placement. Students completing the middle level endorsement will also have a final evaluation addressing the 8 RI middle level competencies. The University Supervisor with feedback from the cooperating teacher will complete these evaluations on TaskStream at the end of each placement, or twice in the semester for those only completing one placement.

Program Completion

In preparation for (evaluation for) licensure, the candidate must successfully complete the following:

1. All portfolio assignments and observations must be uploaded to TaskStream, the electronic portfolio system for the School of Education, and assessed by the instructor.
2. Passing scores for each appropriate professional test are required. A copy must be provided to the Office of Teacher Education, in person.
3. Final evaluations must be completed by the cooperating teacher and university supervisor.
4. Attestation letter must be completed by your cooperating teacher and submitted by your URI supervisor (elementary only).
5. All undergraduate degree requirements must be satisfactorily completed (undergraduates only).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This section provides details regarding the roles and responsibilities of each party in the student teaching relationship.

In this section: *the student teacher, the cooperating teacher, the university supervisor*



The Student Teacher

The student teaching experience is designed primarily to give you an opportunity to experience the day-to-day responsibilities, tasks, joys, aspirations, disappointments, and opportunities of a classroom teacher. The stage is constantly changing because it is filled with human beings - you, your cooperating teacher and the students. Your flexibility, adaptability and personal insight will be challenged daily in both subtle and obvious ways.

You will be both a learner and a teacher. You will test your discipline knowledge and your teaching techniques, but, most important of all, you will learn much about people, especially about your students and yourself. Self-evaluation and reflective thinking as both a learner and a teacher will be expected if your student teaching is to be an insightful and successful life experience.

Your university supervisor will offer help when needed. Your cooperating teacher is a skilled and experienced person who will encourage you to explore your potentialities as a teacher, and guide you in your evaluation of your day-to-day teaching experiences. Ultimately, you are responsible for making the student teaching experience a positive and meaningful learning experience. Student teaching is best viewed not as a culminating experience, but as a *beginning of an exciting and demanding career* that will require a lifelong commitment to your personal and professional growth.

The following guidelines and policies have been developed by experienced teachers and URI faculty to help you on your journey toward becoming a teacher.

Confidentiality:

Student teachers must be particularly careful not to discuss student information with anyone other than personnel within the school who have a right to know about a student. Topics such as student grades, performance, etc. in settings where they can be overheard (e.g., in a hallway, in the teachers' room, etc.) should be avoided.

The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) regulates access to and disclosure of student informational privacy. FERPA's main purpose is to ensure that students' "personally identifying information" is not disclosed to unprivileged parties without written consent of affected students and their guardians.

Disclosure of confidential information is NOT to occur.

Classroom Management

Student discipline can be a challenge for student teachers. Your university supervisor and cooperating teacher can offer helpful suggestions, but ultimately you must take charge of the classroom and develop your own classroom management style. Clear classroom rules and careful lesson planning are a good beginning, but you will find the challenge of classroom control will take a lot of your energy and time as a beginning teacher. Try to be fair, and to act professionally and humanely as you learn these important skills.

Planning

Daily lesson planning and unit planning are essential to good teaching practice. You should review and discuss all materials with your cooperating teacher prior to teaching the lesson, including: lesson plans, handouts, audiovisual materials, etc.

Lesson plans and unit plans should follow the format provided in the RI Beginning Teacher Standards Portfolio Development Tasks. Your cooperating teacher will be your best guide in developing these plans. As the semester progresses you will be given more responsibility and more teaching time so that your planning time will be gradually reduced at school, and you will find yourself having to do more at home without the guidance of your cooperating teacher, thus working toward the goal of becoming a self-reliant, independent teacher.

Attendance

You are required to be at your school during the entire school day and after school if necessary.

If you are going to be absent, you must:

- Telephone and email your cooperating teacher as soon as possible

- Notify the school's main office

- Contact your university supervisor (early childhood student teachers only)

- Elementary and secondary student teachers: call your university supervisor only if he or she is scheduled to visit your school on the day you are absent

Many absences may result in a longer student teacher semester for you. You must notify your university supervisor and the URI Office of Teacher Education if you have missed more than 5 days of student teaching due to illness (consecutive or non-consecutive).

Snow days or other cancellations will be announced on the local TV and radio stations for your school district.

Evaluation

You will be observed and evaluated many times during the student teaching process. These evaluations will be done primarily by your cooperating teacher on a regular basis and by your university supervisor about every two weeks.

Observation and evaluation are the two most difficult and important tasks of your cooperating teacher and your university supervisor. They are attempting to give you constructive feedback that will help you grow as a professional without making you feel judged as a person. You can help this evaluation process by taking the feedback in the spirit in which it is given and taking the time to reflect carefully about it. Evaluation conferences with your cooperating teacher and your university supervisor are an important part of your training. You will probably never again receive as much concerned and helpful feedback about your teaching skills as you will during the student teaching experience.

Your final grade for student teaching will be "S" (satisfactory) or "U" (unsatisfactory) and will be assigned by your university supervisor in consultation with your cooperating teacher.

As you are preparing to complete your student teaching experience, you may want to:

~ask your cooperating teacher and your college supervisor for **a letter of recommendation**

~**invite your department chair and/or building principal** to observe a class or two. This is especially important if you expect to apply for a teaching position in this school district.

~**involve your students** in the evaluation process. This takes some courage, but the feedback you get from students is often well worth the effort.

Note: Please refer to your syllabus for EDC 484 for further details pertaining to the role and responsibilities of the student teacher.

Strategies for using feedback for professional growth

1. Reflect on your own performance. It tends to put comments from others in perspective and to indicate that you are aware of strengths and weaknesses and are willing to discuss them.
2. Anticipate feedback and suggestions, and take a positive attitude toward them.
3. Maintain openness toward other points of view. A positive attitude will maximize the potential for learning.
4. Incorporate suggestions discussed and agreed upon into your teaching quickly and consistently.
5. Ask questions, when needed, to clarify criticisms and suggestions. Since your ability to incorporate suggested changes into your teaching is important, make sure you understand the suggestions.

Student Teacher Checklist

Prior to starting your student teaching experience, you must submit the following:

____ “Intent to Graduate” (undergraduate students only – in the CHSS Dean’s office or the Arts and Sciences Dean’s office) form

____ “Program of Study” form (graduate students only)

Prior to starting your student teaching experience, you must submit to the Office of Teacher Education (Chafee 701) the following:

____ your BCI check and TB test

____ your passing PLT and Praxis II test(s) scores for your licensure area

During the first two weeks of student teaching, you must accomplish the following:

____ review the Student Teacher Handbook and course syllabus with your cooperating teacher

____ submit a copy of your classroom’s schedule to your university supervisor

____ create a pacing calendar with your cooperating teacher

____ obtain any release forms needed for collecting student work from the students

At the culmination of student teaching, you must complete:

____ an evaluation of both your cooperating teacher and your university supervisor

____ all RI Professional Teaching Standards-coded products satisfactorily

____ all TaskStream Portfolio Tasks required for licensure

The Cooperating Teacher

Thank you for mentoring and coaching a URI student teacher. As a professional teacher, you have many duties and responsibilities that involve a full-time commitment. In addition, you are making a special contribution to the teaching profession by participating in the training of future teachers. Graduates of the program in teacher education often say that the most valuable experience in their education was their student teaching experience. It is where knowledge and theory meet the reality of practical application. You, in offering to be their guide through this journey, have taken on the role of master teacher for an apprentice. This role can be both frustrating and rewarding. You may wear many hats; colleague, critic, confidant, protector, diplomat, instructor, guide, and friend, to name just a few.

We need, and greatly appreciate, your help. Thank you, again, on behalf of our students and our faculty at URI. Please know that you can always contact your student teacher's URI supervisor for advice or guidance.

The following theoretical and practical suggestions should be helpful to all involved with the student teacher (from A Handbook for Practicum Programs, published by the Faculty of Education of the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada).

Benefits for the Cooperating Teacher

The primary benefit of being a cooperating teacher is usually related to the personal enrichment of helping a novice teacher become a beginning teacher. The cooperating teacher will experience both the challenges and rewards from helping a student teacher develop teaching skills and strategies.

Once the student teacher has become familiar with classroom procedure and has assumed some of the planning and instructional responsibilities, there is time for the cooperating teacher to have the opportunity for additional individual instruction.

In addition, student teachers bring into the classroom new ideas and new perspectives that can enrich the curriculum and routine. They bring with them an integrated unit that includes research, lessons, subject and topic webs, and resources on a specific topic that may be shared with the cooperating teacher.

Enthusiasm and Confidence

Research on effective teaching shows that enthusiasm is an important element. Enthusiasm can be shown through tone of voice, the comments and questions offered, and body language. It seems to be "catching," and if student teachers can "catch a little bit" from cooperating teachers, the experience should be positive for both.

The following suggestions may help student teachers feel more secure and confident.

1. Keep the students informed as to how you think they are progressing. Comment on their strengths and identify specific areas to work on.

2. Introduce the students to other teachers and school personnel.
3. Allow the students to teach what they plan to teach. Avoid giving last minute assignments requiring preparation.
4. Let the students know where you are at all times.
5. Ask the students regularly how they feel things are going.
6. Encourage the students to be creative and encourage new ideas.
7. Correct the student teachers after the lesson rather than during the lesson.
8. Recognize a job well done, whether a lesson or a bulletin board. Put a note of praise on the student teachers' desk.
9. Give the student teachers a place or desk where they can put their own things.

Getting Started

Reflecting on your own first days as a student teacher is helpful in preparing for your student teacher. It was probably an exciting, challenging and somewhat frightening time. "Do I know the content material?" "Will I be able to handle discipline?" "Can I really teach?" These questions of self-doubt are common in student teachers, thus confidence building becomes our first task. Confidence is built by becoming familiar with the teaching environment and by experiencing initial success at first attempts in teaching tasks.

A cooperating teacher's first responsibility is to his/her assigned school and students. Consequently, it is both prudent and fair to all to be very sure that the student teacher is well prepared for that first lesson and that the student teacher feels some measure of success at this first attempt. Lots of encouragement and little criticism are good ideas at first - there will be lots of time for constructive feedback as rapport with your student teacher grows.

Structuring Lesson Observations

While student teachers can learn much from making a seating chart, examining samples of students' written work, examining texts and curriculum materials, and reading professional articles during their first week "on the job", they also need to observe the cooperating teacher in action. Plan to model such aspects as:

- a. ways to introduce a lesson
- b. techniques used to motivate
- c. research-based instructional methods used to encourage greater student participation
- d. clear instructions
- e. techniques used to maintain class discipline and organization
- f. various strategies to use a textbook in teaching

- g. use of overhead projector, computers, and other audiovisual aids
- h. various means of student evaluation
- i. approaches to handling individual student evaluation
- j. ways to modify a lesson to meet individual student needs.

Prior to teaching a demonstration lesson, present the student with a 5" X 8" card or observation form that guides the student to observe specific elements. The form can be completed by the student during the lesson. Later in the day, the form can serve as a basis for discussion of what the student teacher observed. Such forms can be prepared very quickly, adding little work for the busy classroom teacher. These forms can also be used or modified when the student observes other classrooms.

Adapted from Working with the Student Teacher by Robert C. Putt (1971).

Planning

Most teachers, either formally or informally, map out and sequence the large blocks of time required for units and content area teaching; they develop the long-range goals which will pace and give direction to their teaching throughout the school year. Skills are identified and sequenced, and specific objectives are developed within the established blocks.

Your student may need some help in the area of planning at the beginning of the student teaching experience. As the semester progresses and the student teacher gains knowledge of the students' ability levels and skill in timing and pacing, hopefully the student teacher will become more independent in this important area. The student teacher will be expected to use the Rhode Island Professional Teaching Standards Portfolio Development Tasks guidelines for unit and lesson planning.

Student teachers have had limited experience in long-range planning and will benefit by having a cooperating teachers share their long-range plans with them. Student teachers are required to implement their integrated unit of study, which spans an approximate three week time period.

Daily Block Plans

Block planning is the format commonly provided in published lesson plan books. It is important to note that block plans do not support detailed lesson plans. Please encourage your student teacher to not only use a "plan book," but also to write detailed lesson plans.

Lesson Plans

For prospective teachers during their methods course work at URI, emphasis is placed on the importance of developing detailed lesson plans that will be implemented during their student teaching placement. They are encouraged to be creative in organizing a variety of materials and methods. Student teachers are expected to develop and implement lesson plans upon entry into the student teaching experience.

Formal lesson plans will be developed for the lessons which the supervisor will observe. Typically, this includes one lesson in each content area. This lesson plan format is also used for the two formal evaluations the cooperating teacher performs.

The format of all other lesson plans (e.g., amount of detail, etc.) will be decided by the cooperating teacher. There should be a written plan submitted to the cooperating teacher at least one day prior to teaching each lesson.

The Weekly Schedule

Have the student teachers use an identical weekly planning book to become familiar with the classroom schedule. Student teachers will begin to add their own teaching plans and develop a workable system.

Classroom Management

Share your approach to classroom organization and discipline with the student teacher. This will enable the student teacher to know where to start as well as provide for consistency for your working together.

The student teacher may be developing a personal style different from yours. When teaching, it is usually best to allow the student teacher to take the authority and responsibility for classroom discipline. Based on the professional judgment of the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor, you might leave the student teacher alone for short periods at the beginning so the children will realize this person is more than “your assistant.” When you do leave the room, however, leave a note on the desk telling where you can be found in case you are needed. As you know, you, not the student teacher, are ultimately responsible for the class.

Share research-based practices with the student teachers to help them apply sound principles of classroom management. They will be developing their own strategies. Relate any disciplinary issues to a philosophy of education; teachers do what they do because they believe in it. The student teachers will employ those measures they believe in and feel comfortable applying. Guide the student teachers in developing their own strategies throughout the placement. School and classroom policies will mean more when what is “behind them” is understood.

Consider the following questions:

1. How is responsibility taught?
2. How do I most effectively handle an upset child?
3. What teacher behaviors can contribute to discipline problems?
4. How can my knowledge of children’s characteristics at a given grade level help to maintain discipline?
5. What does freedom in a classroom mean? How much is too much? How much is enough? How do I decide?
6. Can the application of theoretical principles of learning be seen in my classroom? How?
7. How does knowledge of developmental growth and child psychology help me in my teaching and classroom management?

Evaluating Student Progress

The total evaluation process involves much more than “correcting papers.” Student teachers are beginning to comprehend the complexity of tasks involved in evaluating student progress. Involve the student teacher in as many aspects of assessment as possible. Methods of both recording and reporting student progress could include:

1. observations
2. discussions
3. student participation
4. standardized test results
5. informal test results
6. interest growth
7. written work
8. anecdotal records
9. use of SALT data
10. student portfolios
11. parent-teacher conferences
12. report cards
13. teacher-student conferences
14. permanent records
15. IEP records
16. rubrics/skill checklists
17. class projects
18. oral presentations

Student Teacher Evaluation

It is our philosophy that the primary purpose of evaluation is to provide the basis for dialogue and improvement. Communication among the student teacher, the cooperating teacher, and the university supervisor is necessary if growth and progress are to be made. A copy of all formal evaluation reports is kept on the TaskStream e-portfolio system.

The best kind of evaluation of a student teacher is the day-to-day, informal interaction between the cooperating teacher and the candidate. Here is where questions are answered, suggestions are given and the joys and disappointments are shared. It is suggested, that a specific time be allotted each day when the student teacher and the cooperating teacher can confer together, preferably alone, about past accomplishments and future plans. It is also suggested that a formal written evaluation be conducted every two weeks and a copy turned into the university supervisor at his/her next visit. Evaluation is a mechanism to provide growth-producing feedback to the student and therefore should always be discussed with the student.

If you have concerns that you do not feel you can discuss with the student teacher, please contact the university supervisor at URI *as soon as possible*.

Mid-Term Student Teacher Evaluation

The mid-term evaluation is completed separately by the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor. The results are then discussed with the student at which time areas of strength will be acknowledged and areas of improvement will be identified.

Final Student Teacher Evaluation

The final evaluation is completed separately by the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor. These evaluations will be discussed with the student teacher.

Observation and Providing Feedback

Ultimately, the function of observing student teachers is to help them grow in their ability as teachers. The purpose of the conference is to help student teachers analyze, reflect upon, and evaluate their own

teaching. Positive feedback, support, and encouragement are essential parts of the supervision process.

During the first few days of school, the cooperating teacher should observe various aspects of the student teacher's activity, view the reaction of the class, and consider how the student teacher might best be guided toward more effective interactions. Activities for the student teacher could include reviewing, assisting individuals or small groups, circulating among students working on a task, etc. After the "settling in," the cooperating teacher can, with the student teacher, determine focuses for observation based on the cooperating teacher's perception of areas requiring attention, the type of lesson being given, and the student teacher's personal concerns about his or her own teaching skills.

The general process of observation and providing feedback consists of three steps:

1. Pre-conference and planning (for both the teaching and the observation of teaching)
2. Observing the student teacher.
3. Post-conference and analyzing the teaching in conference.

As soon as possible after the teaching activity, the student teacher and cooperating teacher and/or university supervisor should discuss the lesson and analyze the observational data collected. This session, which should serve as the basis for the improvement of future teaching, should involve the following as related to the RIPTS:

- A. Have the student teacher reflect and share perceptions of the lesson (both strengths and weaknesses). Encourage the student teacher to be self-analytical, capitalize on strengths, identify and attend to weaker areas, and develop an individual teaching style.
- B. Explore the reasons for various classroom events and discuss some possible alternative approaches.
- C. Provide positive reinforcement and constructive comments directed towards the student teacher's performance.
- D. Plan for future lessons focusing on specific areas that need practice and development.

Critiquing

Critiquing is a way of giving help; it is a mechanism for individuals who want to learn how well their behavior matches their intentions, e.g., to better understand the gaps in their communication with others.

Constructive feedback has the following characteristics:

1. **Descriptive rather than evaluative.** Reporting specific, observable actions without placing a value on them leaves the other individual free to use or not use feedback. Avoiding evaluative language reduces the need for the other individual to react defensively.

2. **Specific rather than general.** Quoting examples of specific situations will be more useful to the student teacher than making general statements.
3. **Identifies recurring patterns of behavior** (such as constantly turning to the same students for answers). Use as a subject for the conference rather than isolated occurrences.
4. **Focused.** Provide three or four main recommendations. Too much feedback all at once can be overwhelming.
5. **Timely and frequent.** In general, a critique is most useful at the earliest opportunity after the given behavior (depending, of course, on the person's readiness to hear it, on support available from others, privacy, and so on).
6. **Clearly communicated.** One way of doing this is to have the receiver rephrase the critique given to ensure that it corresponds to what the sender had in mind.

Dealing with Problem Areas

Growth is most likely to occur if the student teacher is led to identify the problem areas, rather than simply be confronted with them. Attempt to ask the kinds of questions that will allow the student to see the difficulties for themselves, and resist the temptation to do most of the talking during the conference. Begin with areas of strength, focus on the problem areas, and end with another area of strength and a brief summary.

The use of "evidence" from observation notes seems to be more effective in bringing students to a realization of difficulties than the use of general statements. In addition, suggesting alternatives helps to set a more positive tone by giving the student teachers a way out of their difficulties. Planning for future lessons can proceed from the analysis of the student teacher's present situation.

If you have concerns that you do not feel you can discuss with the student teacher, please contact the university supervisor at URI *as soon as possible*.

Absences

According to Rhode Island policy, the student teacher is not allowed to act as the substitute for an absent cooperating teacher. A certified substitute teacher should be called in by the school administration. The substitute will teach the classes not ordinarily assigned to the student teacher and help supervise the student teacher's classes.

If the cooperating teacher is expected to be absent for a lengthy period, the university supervisor should be consulted.

Working Effectively with the University Supervisor

The university supervisor is an important team member who can help the cooperating teacher assume the role of teacher educator. As the university liaison, the supervisor can discuss the philosophies and principles that underlie the Teacher Education Program and how they relate to instructional practice. The following suggestions are offered as a framework for working together:

- a. Confer with the supervisor at the beginning of the placement to discuss goals and strategies for monitoring the student's progress (e.g., timeline for phasing into teaching, system for observation and evaluation).
- b. Keep a log of the student teacher's daily activities, successes and problems.
- c. Confer with the supervisor at school to discuss your perceptions regarding progress and collaborate about suggestions.
- d. Keep a copy of written observation reports to share with the supervisor.
- e. Share with the supervisor the outcome of conferences with the student teacher.
- f. Call the supervisor for help with problems and/or concerns.
- g. Convey information to the supervisor that will improve the teacher preparation program.
- h. Complete the University Supervisor evaluation form at the end of the semester.

Honorarium

A small honorarium or stipend will be paid to the cooperating teacher by URI. This sum is not a reflection of the amount of work or effort the cooperating teacher has contributed. It is a token of thanks and appreciation to you who have volunteered to make a special contribution to our future teachers. In order to receive payment, the cooperating teacher must complete both the voucher and the W4 form provided and return it by mail, email (janet@uri.edu), or fax (874-9102) to:

University of Rhode Island
Office of Teacher Education
701 Chafee Hall
Kingston, RI, 02881.

Cooperating Teacher List of Responsibilities

The cooperating teacher's responsibilities include:

1. Understanding, facilitating and assessing student progress and performance with regards to the University's Core Beliefs about Teacher Education, which reflect the Rhode Island Professional Teaching Standards.
2. Making two formal lesson observations and uploading them to the TaskStream efolio system; observing and providing constructive feedback for lessons on a regular basis (at least biweekly); and conferring regularly with the student teacher and the university supervisor to analyze performance.
3. Becoming thoroughly acquainted with the student teacher's skills, abilities, and knowledge base, and using this information to provide specific and personalized guidance and support.
4. Orienting the student teacher to school and classroom policies and procedures.
5. Reviewing the contents of the Student Teacher Handbook with the student teacher and planning a pacing calendar.
6. Providing the student teacher with instructional materials, a desk, access to student records, and audiovisual equipment as appropriate.
7. Planning ongoing activities to allow the student teacher to become involved in the classroom routine.
8. Guiding the student teacher to teach and analyze lessons and improve teaching based on this analysis.
9. Increasing teaching responsibility as the student teacher shows evidence of ability to assume it.
10. Helping the student teacher to plan and self-evaluate lessons taught.
11. Articulating the core beliefs and discussing how they are reflected in practice.
12. Providing frequent written progress reports for observations, documenting areas of strength, areas of professional growth, and areas of concern.
13. Communicating on a daily basis and planning regular conference times in order to provide feedback on the student teacher's teaching skills.
14. Working closely with the university supervisor to ensure consistency and harmony.
15. Scheduling time for the student teacher to observe other classrooms and schools.

16. Conducting formal midterm and final evaluations and meeting with the student teacher and university supervisor. Final evaluation is uploaded to TaskStream.
17. Evaluating the university supervisor's performance.
18. Attesting to the student's adherence to professional ethics and standards.

The University Supervisor

University supervisors are faculty members or instructors affiliated with the School of Education at the University of Rhode Island. In addition to leading weekly student teaching seminars, they serve as liaisons between the university and the local school systems to which student teachers are assigned. They ease the transition of the student teacher from college student to prospective teacher and provide a support system during the student teaching experience.

As seminar leaders, university supervisors are responsible for establishing requirements for the student teachers they supervise. These requirements, which may be planned in collaboration with the cooperating teacher, enhance and enrich the student teaching experience. In addition, university supervisors serve as a resource for student teachers and provide suggestions and support as needed.

Open, honest communication among cooperating teachers, university supervisors, and student teachers is essential for a successful teaching experience. On-going communication with cooperating teachers, awareness of and sensitivity to potential difficulties and frequent feedback to student teachers are critically important in the supervisory role.

Working Effectively with Student Teachers

The university supervisor's primary responsibility is to guide the professional development of the student teacher. This involves establishing a structure to promote professional development and to monitor progress throughout the semester. The following suggestions are offered to help supervisors successfully carry out this charge.

1. Develop a syllabus that clearly defines expectations, seminar topics, and assignments.
2. Organize seminars to be held at regular intervals throughout the semester. While seminar topics and timelines are left to the discretion of the supervisor, they should be relevant and provide ample opportunity for student teachers to express concerns and explore viable solutions.
3. Attend supervisors' meetings which are held three times each semester. The purpose of these meetings is to disseminate information and discuss pertinent issues.
4. Conduct an orientation seminar in order to establish rapport, define the student teacher's roles and responsibilities, and communicate expectations. Specifically, the supervisor should:
 - a. review the syllabus.
 - b. discuss format and timelines for lessons, unit plans, portfolio entries, and other assignments.
 - c. discuss observation/consultation visits.
 - d. outline policies and procedures.
 - e. explain evaluation procedures and instruments.

Working Effectively with the Cooperating Teacher

The strength of the team effort lies in the ability of the university supervisor and cooperating teacher to communicate well. The supervisor must assume a **leadership role** in establishing and maintaining an effective communication system. To do so, the supervisor should:

1. Confer with the cooperating teacher during the first visit to get acquainted and establish a routine for working together. This is a time to share experiences, state expectations, answer questions, and show appreciation. Share a copy of the syllabus and indicate how, when, and where you can be reached.
2. Discuss the Midterm and Final Evaluation Forms with the cooperating teacher. Explain the importance of these instruments and the observation/consultation sequence on which they are based.
3. Discuss the two formal Professional Teacher Standards Observation Forms required to be completed by the cooperating teacher.
4. Provide the cooperating teacher with a copy of your Observation Form during each visit to the student teacher. Discuss the cooperating teacher's Observation Forms also. Meet, if only briefly, with the cooperating teacher during each visit to discuss progress, and/or areas of concern, if any.
5. Discuss final evaluation and final grade with cooperating teacher at the end of the student teaching period.

Overview of Meeting/Conferencing Responsibilities

1. "Hello" visit first week to meet the student teacher and the cooperating teacher.
2. Minimum of five observations and conferences with the student teacher, (two pre-lesson conferences and two post-lesson conferences are required for the RIPTS using form "Student Teacher Lesson Evaluation")
3. Minimum of five conferences with the cooperating teacher, one during each visit.
4. One mid-term three-way conference.
5. One final three-way conference.

Observation and Conferencing

Observation allows the supervisors to help and support the student teachers in their attempts to apply teaching skills to the classroom. The supervisor is expected to observe and conference with the student teacher every two to three weeks during the semester; however, this number may increase according to the needs of the student.

The supervisor is responsible for meeting with the student after each observation visit to discuss the student's performance. A minimum of two three-way conferences comprised of the student teacher, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor will be scheduled during the semester, one at mid-term and one at the end. The supervisor may counsel the student teacher during conferences about professional concerns and will help the student teacher relate experiences to sound educational research, theory, and practice.

Pre-Conference and Planning

The first step of the supervision cycle planning includes discussing and planning for teaching lessons. **Lesson plans should be required** and student teachers should not be permitted to teach without first having discussed the plans with the cooperating teacher. Lessons to be formally observed by the cooperating teacher or university supervisor must be prepared according to the RIPTS and presented in a typed format. Help the student teacher think carefully through the process of instruction by discussing the following:

1. What are your lesson objectives?
2. How will you present the content?
3. How do you plan to evaluate the lesson?
4. How much time do you expect to give each part of your lesson?
5. In the event you run short of materials or time, how might you respond?

Before this conference occurs, the student teacher is expected to have thought through and planned the lesson carefully, but may have questions about the lesson, and there may be changes in the lesson resulting from the planning conference.

Putting the Student Teacher at Ease

At first, it is often quite disconcerting for a student teacher (or cooperating teacher) to have someone at the back of the room taking extensive notes. In order to alleviate this concern, the supervisor should make clear in the planning session that extensive note-taking will occur.

Observing the Lesson

The main objective in observing a lesson is to record what is happening in the classroom - what the students and the teacher are doing - rather than your reactions to what is happening. The purpose is to keep a record of the class, which you can use later for analysis and commentary. Try to record as much as possible about what is said and done, but particularly the information that relates to the agreed upon standards for observation. The result will be a sufficient amount of evidence to draw on during the conference when you analyze what went on during the lesson. The more specifics you have to draw on, the more meaningful the analysis will be. It is particularly useful to note and record patterns of behavior so that they can be dealt with in the conference, too. Refer to standards listed on the Student Teacher Observation form included in this manual.

Intervening

Generally, it is advisable to avoid intervening in a class unless serious problems might otherwise ensue.

1. Correct the student teacher's error in private after the lesson. Allow the student teacher to correct the error in subsequent lessons.
2. If you want to "team teach" a lesson, arrange to do so in advance, rather than spontaneously.
3. If you must intervene, try to do so tactfully, at a convenient point. It might be useful to have a "signal" arranged in advance, so that the student teacher can seek help discreetly, if necessary.

Location of Conferences

Conferences should occur in a situation where privacy is ensured as much as possible. Much of the value of conferences depends on the quality of the relationship between the university supervisor and the student teacher, so interruptions and distractions from others must be minimized. An exception to this point, of course, is a planned three-way conference among cooperating teacher, university supervisor, and student teacher.

Frequency of Conferences

It is necessary to make a distinction between the more formal conferences discussed here and the more casual discussions between supervisor and student teacher that will occur on a regular, or "ad hoc" basis.

While "formal" conferences are time-consuming, they are fundamental to the improvement of teaching on the part of the student teacher. Conferences should be held for specific purposes and will vary with the abilities of the student teacher, the nature of the teaching assignment, and the amount of the student teacher's experience. However, some feedback should be provided on a regular basis to ensure that the student teacher is receiving sufficient and immediate communication and critique.

Helping the Student Teacher to Get the Most Out of the Conference

In addition to the suggestions already made, it is important to be aware of the emotional state of the student teacher. Remember that this experience is often highly laden with emotion for student teachers - a career may depend upon it. Sometimes the student teacher will be overly defensive. It may become necessary to deal with these emotions first so that the conferences can be as productive as they should be. In many cases, a "breathing space" is necessary between the teaching of the lesson and the conference. The supervisor's observation notes allow the lesson to be recreated, so the conference does not have to follow immediately.

Grading

The student teacher earns separate grades for the field placement and weekly seminar. The university supervisor is responsible for submitting a letter grade for assignments and participation in the seminar, and a grade of "S" or "U" -- Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory -- for the student teaching field experience. This latter grade reflects the total placement experience:

- teaching effectiveness
- lesson and unit plans
- participation in meetings and conferences
- professional behavior
- attendance
- attitude/disposition
- enthusiasm
- attainment of RIPTS
- attainment of relevant content standards

Grades will be determined in collaboration with the cooperating teacher; however, the ultimate determination of such grade is the responsibility of the university supervisor.

Course Number	Course Title	Hours	Grade
EDC 484	Supervised Student Teaching	12	S or U
EDC 485	Student Teaching Seminar	3	A, B, C, D, or F

Letter of Reference

Reference letters from university supervisors and cooperating teachers are critical elements considered in future employment. Supervisors typically write letters of reference, which include specific information and examples of students' areas of strength, particularly in regard to teaching, behavior management, and communication skills.

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