



**EASTERN  
CONNECTICUT  
STATE UNIVERSITY**

**School of Education & Professional Studies**

# **Clinical Experience & Student Teaching Handbook**

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## **I. THE SCOPE OF THE STUDENT TEACHING PROGRAM**

### **A. ACADEMIC PROGRAM AND FIELD EXPERIENCES LEADING TO STUDENT TEACHING**

#### **1. Introduction**

Candidates in Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU) Teacher Education programs have a range of experiences in classrooms, and work directly with students and classroom teachers as they develop their skills to become exemplary educational professionals. Classroom experiences, such as clinical placements, are designed to deepen candidates' understanding of teaching practices and connect educational theory to practice. Eastern requires clinical experiences to be completed by all candidates before student teaching. Candidates are assigned to a classroom for weekly visits. During these visits, they complete guided observations and initial teaching experiences. Although some assignments include brief, small or whole group teaching, these clinical experiences are very different from student teaching. At the Core I and II clinical level, candidates are not expected to meet the challenges of whole-day instruction, but are expected to meet a consistent progression of competencies defined by Unit protocols.

Candidates are actively engaged in clinical practice for four semesters. Each successive semester provide opportunities for candidates to build pedagogical and student management skills, merging theory and practice in the classroom. Teacher candidates are required to develop a portfolio that serves to reflect their fieldwork. The portfolio allows candidates to apply principles of learning theory while employing standards to guide their practice in schools. During pre-student teaching (CORE III) teacher candidates engage in a co-teaching model with a focus on differentiation in their content discipline and a range of disciplines for Early Childhood and Elementary during student teaching.

#### **2. Core I**

Clinical practice during CORE I provides an initial classroom experience where candidates acclimate to a school setting and begin to understand the elements of best practices. Candidates are required to construct a classroom learning profile of a P-12 clinical placement to focus on diverse learning traits (e.g., age gender, culture, and ability) related to one or more content area(s). Candidates will observe and reflect on lessons with an emphasis on learner traits, student engagement, content learning, classroom materials, technology and instructional questions and discussion techniques as they impact student learning.

During CORE I Clinical Practice candidates participate in and reflect upon developmentally appropriate classroom management tasks. These are co-selected by the classroom teacher. Candidates synthesize their clinical experiences during CORE I using a Looking Backward, Looking Forward analytical reflection to identify their strengths, benchmarked with program standards. They also identify at least two areas relevant to program standards outlined in an action plan for CORE II. CORE I Clinical is the foundation for the subsequent clinical and pre-student teaching experiences. It allows the candidate to explore and understand the range of competencies necessary for a successful student teaching experience.

## CORE I CLINICAL COMPETENCIES (Effective Fall 2016)

Candidates are expected to demonstrate proficiency in the following:

- Creating a class climate that is responsive to and respectful of the learning needs of students with diverse backgrounds, interests and performance levels.
- Supports and contributes to the learning environment.
- Fostering appropriate standards of behavior that support a productive learning environment for all students.
- Selecting appropriate assessment strategies to monitor ongoing student progress.
- Providing meaningful, appropriate and specific feedback to students during instruction to improve their performance.
- Continually engaging in reflection, self-evaluation and professional development to enhance their understandings of content, pedagogical skills, resources and the impact of their actions on student learning.
- Collaborating with colleagues to examine instructional strategies and curricula [to support student learning.
- Conducting themselves as professionals in accordance with the Connecticut's Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators

### 3. Core II

During CORE II clinical practice candidates apply principles of Scientific Research Based Intervention (SRBI) to design and implement an instructional intervention plan for an individual student or a small group of students within the host teacher's classroom informed by pre-assessments and an analysis of pre-assessment data. As in CORE I clinical practice, candidates participate in and reflect upon developmentally appropriate classroom management tasks. These are co-selected by the classroom teacher.

Candidates synthesize their clinical experiences during CORE II revisiting the Looking Backward, Looking Forward analytical reflection to identify their strengths benchmarked with program standards. They also identify at least two areas relevant to program standards outlined in an action plan for CORE III. CORE II Clinical practice is designed to strength student understanding and competence in lesson design, assessment and intervention with students who require support. The experience fosters candidates' sense of working with *all students* and meeting their diverse learning needs in preparation for CORE III pre-student teaching and special education practicum.

## **CORE II CLINICAL COMPETENCIES (Effective Fall 2016)**

Candidates are expected to demonstrate proficiency in the following:

- Creating a class climate that is responsive to and respectful of the learning needs of students with diverse backgrounds, interests and performance levels.
- Supports and contributes to the learning environment.
- Fostering appropriate standards of behavior that support a productive learning environment for all students.
- Selecting appropriate assessment strategies to monitor ongoing student progress.
- Providing meaningful, appropriate and specific feedback to students during instruction to improve their performance.
- Continually engaging in reflection, self-evaluation and professional development to enhance their understandings of content, pedagogical skills, resources and the impact of their actions on student learning.
- Collaborating with colleagues to examine instructional strategies and curricula [to support student learning.
- Conducting themselves as professionals in accordance with the Connecticut's Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators

### 4. Core III

Our pre-student teaching model focuses on 16 of the 30 student teaching competencies and is an extensive opportunity for candidates to work with their cooperating teacher for one semester prior to the formal student teaching experience. During CORE III clinical experience the candidate is expected to increase site visits to at least two full days per week. This provides continuity for the teacher candidate and their capacity to positively impact P-12 student learning. Our expectation is for candidates to have a more comprehensive understanding of curriculum, assessment, classroom climate and professional collaboration as they develop teaching competencies for the student teaching semester.

CORE III is understood as a precursor and complement to student teaching. A university supervisor will conduct a minimum of three formal visits and monitor the candidate's progress throughout the pre-student teaching experience. For Early Childhood Candidates, CORE III consists of a Special Education Practicum. This practicum is state required for Early Childhood (113) certification. This practicum offers candidates the opportunity to work closely with a child who has special needs, within a developmentally appropriate early childhood program.

## **CORE III Candidate Competencies (Effective Fall 2016)**

- Actively participate in all indoor and outdoor classroom activities with children and demonstrate warm, responsive, and positive interactions.
- Scaffold children's play, facilitate the peer interactions, language, persistence, and

play skills of a “focus child”  
(A child identified with special needs).

- Complete a standardized assessment on the focus child and write a report to summarizing the findings.
- Understand the process of the identification of special needs children in the classroom.
- Look and analyze a child’s IEP goals and Objectives.
- Plan and implement daily transition activities that assist all children and the focus child with special needs to move smoothly move from one activity to another during a lesson and during the school day.
- Plan and conduct 2 whole or small group learning experiences in science, social studies, the arts, motor play, or other curriculum areas, and differentiate teaching of these for the focus child and other children with diverse learning needs.
- Demonstrate understanding and reflection of a regular education and special education teacher’s role in identifying children with special needs.
- Provide or identify a resource to a family or all families that is needed.
- Demonstrate positive dispositions through professional, respectful, and ethical interactions with children, teachers, other school personnel, family members, and the university supervisor.
- Reflect on their own professional practice and show a desire to continually learn and grow as a teacher in their interactions with supervisors, responses to feedback, and application of ideas and readings form the ECE program.

#### 5. Core IV

Student teaching, CORE IV, is the culmination of all clinical practice in ECSU’s Teacher Education Unit. It is an opportunity to refine all skill sets and emerge a true professional. Teacher candidates work closely with a cadre that includes a cooperating teacher, university supervisor and a faculty member to maximize their full time student teaching experience and positively impact pre-k-12 student learning. Student teaching is a pivotal experience where a candidate immerses himself/herself into a full-time professional environment and begins the shift from candidate to professional. Eastern candidates are often recognized for their exemplary work as student teachers leading to teaching positions at numerous clinical sites.

### **B. CORE IV STUDENT TEACHING TERMINOLOGY**

The following terms and their definitions may provide clarification, as needed, for the professional vocabulary used for the student teaching experience:

*Student Teacher*: The University student who is enrolled for the professional term

*Student Teaching Experience*: A full term of guided teaching during which the student teacher takes increasing responsibility for classroom/school work with a given group of learners in a cooperating school district

*Cooperating Teacher*: The certified, experienced teacher of students in grades P-12 who cooperates with the University in supervising student teaching, in communicating the student teacher’s progress to the student teacher and to the

university supervisor throughout the term, and in providing a recommended grade and evaluation for the student teacher at the conclusion of the term.

In the secondary academic program, cooperating teachers are also responsible for scheduling the distribution of their student teacher’s time between their own classroom and the classrooms of other cooperating teachers, and for arranging observation and/or participation in co-curricular activities.

*Student Teaching Site:* A school that is not controlled or supported by the University but that has historically provided facilities for student teaching as an established center determined by University personnel and school district administrators

*University Supervisor:* The University representative who is responsible for supervising a student teacher or a group of student teachers, for communicating with student teachers and their cooperating teachers about the students’ progress throughout the term, and for determining the final grade for student teachers

*Coordinator for Educational Experiences:* The University faculty member who is responsible for coordinating all field and clinical experiences work, including arrangements for CORE I, II Clinical Practice, CORE III Pre-student teaching, and CORE IV Student teaching.

| <b>Clinical and Student Teaching Roadmap</b>                                                 |                                                                          |                                                                              |                                                                                 |                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                              | <b>CORE I<br/>Clinical</b>                                               | <b>CORE II<br/>Clinical</b>                                                  | <b>CORE III<br/>Pre-student<br/>Teaching</b>                                    | <b>CORE IV<br/>Student Teaching</b>                                                      |
| <b>Key Assessment</b>                                                                        | <i>Clinical I Portfolio</i>                                              | <i>Clinical II Portfolio</i>                                                 | <i>Clinical III Portfolio</i><br><br>16 of 30 Student Teaching Competencies     | <i>Student Impact Portfolio or edTPA (pilot)</i><br><br>30 Student Teaching Competencies |
| <b>Early Childhood Education</b>                                                             | Pre-kindergarten setting (24 hours min)                                  | Field setting in a first, second or third grade level (24 hours min)         | Inclusive setting at the pre-kindergarten or kindergarten level (135 hours min) | Full time experience in a first, second or third grade classroom (12 weeks min)          |
| <b>Elementary Education</b>                                                                  | Initial placement in grades 1, 2 or 3 (45 hours min)                     | Assigned to grade level 4, 5 or 6 (45 hours min)                             | Pre-student teaching in grade level 1-6 (45 hours min)                          | Student Teaching in grade level 1-6 (12 weeks min)                                       |
| <b>Physical Education</b>                                                                    | Initial experience in an Elementary setting grades Prek-6 (24 hours min) | Second directed experience in a Secondary setting grades 6-12 (24 hours min) | Pre-student teaching Elementary and Secondary (45 hours min)                    | Full time student teaching at both the Elementary and Secondary settings (12 weeks min)  |
| <b>Secondary Education</b><br>(Biology, English, Earth Science, Mathematics, Social Studies) | Initial placement at the middle level, grades 7-8 (45 hours min)         | Assigned to high school setting grades 9-12 (45 hours min)                   | Pre-student teaching in grade 1-6 level (135 hours min)                         | Full time Student Teaching (12 weeks min)                                                |

## C. STUDENT TEACHING PROGRAM

The present form and philosophy of the student teaching experience through ECSU has developed as a result of many years of experimentation and planning leading toward the goal of developing an effective program that encompasses the following basic assumptions:

1. An effective student teaching program should include the optimum amount of full-time student teaching experience.
2. An effective student teaching program will provide involvement of students in full-time student teaching responsibilities commensurate with their abilities and specific program. Initial teaching might be on a day-at-a-time basis, but this schedule should develop into regular planning and teaching of a considerable body of content and skills.
3. An effective student teaching program will provide for a planned schedule of observation and participation (e.g., co-teaching) in a variety of school experiences in addition to teaching activities.
4. An effective student teaching program will coordinate supervisory activities of university supervisors and the school personnel at the student teaching site in guiding student teachers as they (1) reflect on and improve their teaching competencies in light of their students' learning, and (2) develop and refine their own methodological and philosophical approach to teaching. Thus, the student teaching term allows the student to design, implement, and evaluate learning experiences in light of students' needs and abilities and in conjunction with school district requirements.

In light of these assumptions, student teachers are expected to spend a full college term (12 weeks minimum) at their student teaching sites. Contact with university supervisors and other professors occur through the student teaching seminar, supervisory visits to the school, and other means of communication. Of primary importance to the students' development during the student teaching term is the encouragement they are given, under the guidance of cooperating teachers and the university supervisory and instructional personnel, to reflect on, experiment with, and evaluate their own ideas about teaching.

## D. STUDENT TEACHING CALENDAR

In both the fall and spring terms, the beginning of student teaching coincides with the beginning of the University term or when the school district term begins if that occurs after the University's opening date. Student teachers have the responsibility to contact their cooperating teachers for specific dates. In the spring term, students are given the option of taking the University's one-week spring recess/break, although this is strongly discouraged and few student teachers select this option. Those who do take spring break will not complete their student teaching term until one week after their peers. It is the students' responsibility to inform their college supervisors and cooperating teachers at the beginning of student teaching if they intend to be absent during the spring recess.

Student teachers follow the calendar of the student teaching site in which they are placed. They are expected to participate in *all* planned events during the term, including open house, in-service days, departmental meetings, parent conferences, IEP meetings, and similar activities **unless explicitly told not to attend by the cooperating teacher or a school administrator.**

## **II. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **A. PROFESSIONAL ETHICS FOR STUDENT TEACHING**

Student teachers serve as representatives of ECSU. School district personnel may judge the quality of ECSU's education program on the basis of the attitudes and performance exhibited by student teachers. The Education Unit is committed to maintaining the positive relationship it has developed with area school districts. Therefore we expect each student teacher to strive for excellence to help ensure the continuation of this relationship.

The following professional ethics policies apply to student teaching as well as to all types of pre- student teaching field experiences. Candidates who violate any of these policies may be asked to withdraw from student teaching, and they will be ineligible for application for certification.

1. Student teachers must maintain the confidentiality of any privileged, sensitive, and/or confidential information gained directly from a member of the school staff or indirectly through any other means.
2. Student teachers may not make critical mention of the name of any student, teacher, administrator, or other staff member in class discussions or in any other venue.
3. Student teachers may not use the name of any school student in any written assignment.
4. Student teachers are required to follow the absence and punctuality policy included in the Student Teaching Handbook.
5. Student teachers must promptly return any materials that belong to their cooperating teachers or to the school.
6. Student Teachers must adhere to the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers
7. Student teachers must uphold the values of Eastern and its education preparation programs

### **B. REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO STUDENT TEACHING**

As specified in more detail in the Education Unit Handbook, ECSU candidates must meet the following requirements before being permitted to student teach:

- (1) Submission of student teaching application by stated deadline;
- (2) Successful completion of all education courses with minimum C grades;
- (3) Cumulative GPA of at least 3.00;

- (4) Successfully complete CORE I, CORE II, and CORE III;
- (5) Submission of evidence of current background check processing

### **C. STUDENT TEACHING PLACEMENT AND TRANSPORTATION**

Each term, the Office of Educational and Clinical Experiences arranges for student teaching placements in area schools after consultation with University supervisors and/or other Education Unit professors. In the initial contact, the schools receive information about the dates of the student teaching term and the number and types of placements desired in those schools. Cooperating teachers are selected within the schools based on Unit established criteria. Careful professional judgment is exercised in the placement of student teachers. Students pursuing more than one area of certification may be placed in more than one classroom; they also may be required to extend the length of their student teaching term.

The Education Unit determines all student teaching sites; students are not granted permission to student teach in a site that has not been established by the University. Student teachers generally are not assigned to the school district from which they graduated; nor are they assigned to a district where they have relatives employed or children attending the school. Student teachers are also not assigned to school districts in which they may be employed or serve as volunteers. **Transportation to and from student teaching sites is the responsibility of student teachers.**

### **D. ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

Regular and punctual attendance is **required** for student teachers. Candidates are to arrive at the school and be present in the school for the same time periods, within reason, as the other teachers in the student teaching site.

When absence is unavoidable, due to illness or an emergency, student teachers must notify the cooperating teacher, the university supervisor, and the school **as early as possible**. Students should obtain all necessary telephone numbers and e-mail addresses for this purpose at the beginning of the term. Student teachers are responsible for assuring that all lesson plans, textbooks, and materials needed for teaching are delivered to the school before the beginning of the school day if those materials are not already in the classroom.

The university supervisor in collaboration must approve absence for reasons other than illness or emergencies in advance with the cooperating teacher. During the student teaching term, student teachers are permitted a maximum of two days absence for professional purposes such as participation in job fairs, scheduled interviews, competency exams, and similar types of events without having those two days added to the student teaching term. It is not permitted, however, to take these two days absence for personal reasons. Absence due to inclement weather may occur during student teaching. Student teachers must follow their school district's policy for delays and cancellations due to inclement weather.

Student teachers who exceed two days' absence for any reason may be required

to extend the student teaching term to make up missed days. Decisions about extending the student teaching term rest with the university supervisor in collaboration with the cooperating teacher.

In the event that a student teacher does not report to his/her placement without prior notice or approval, it is required that the Cooperating Teacher or a School Administrator contact the Office of Educational and Clinical Experiences immediately. The University will document the incident and follow established procedures to investigate the absence.

## **E. WITHDRAWAL FROM CLINICAL PRACTICE OR STUDENT TEACHING**

### **1. Student Request for Withdrawal**

Once a prospective student teacher has a confirmed student teaching assignment, if for any reason, the prospective student teacher is not able to begin or continue student teaching during the assigned semester, **a letter including the reason(s) for withdrawal must be written to the CARE committee**, indicating the need to withdraw from student teaching. The student teacher must discuss this with the Coordinator of Educational and Clinical Experiences. Should this occur before the semester is to begin, professional courtesy **demand**s that the student contact the cooperating teacher informing him/her of the decision to withdraw from student teaching. Failures to withdraw from the student teaching assignment in a timely manner may jeopardize re-assignment when the candidate feels that he/she is ready to student teach.

All decisions about the successful completion or failure of the clinical experience are determined by the university supervisor or the course instructor, based on appropriate documentation such as the *Observation Evaluation*, cooperating teacher reports, and other related evaluation instruments.

### **2. Administrative Withdrawal from Clinical Experiences**

The hosting/cooperating teacher, university supervisor and Coordinator of Educational and Clinical Experiences must document major concerns regarding teaching and professional performance of student teachers. An official review, conducted by Office of Educational and Clinical Experiences, or a university designee will occur prior to official action.

In the event the decision is made to administratively withdraw a candidate, his or her course grade may be affected along and the candidate may be in jeopardy of program completion. For more information on Administrative Withdrawals see the CARE policies and for grade appeals, see the University policies.

**A student teacher may also be removed from a student teaching assignment for any of the following reasons:**

- a. If indicted for a felony, student teacher will be removed from the school assignment until the matter is cleared. When the student is cleared of the indictment, the student teaching assignment will be extended to cover the time missed during student teaching.
- b. If convicted of a felony, the student teacher will be withdrawn from the student teaching assignment and will forfeit the time spent during the student teaching experience.

- c. If the behavior exhibited by the student teacher is not acceptable to the school district, the School Administrator/Principal should document it in collaboration with the cooperating teacher, the university supervisor, and Coordinator of Educational and Clinical Experiences. If after discussion with the student, improvement is evidenced, CARE will take no further action.
- d. If it is determined either by the cooperating teacher or university supervisor that the teaching competency of the student is at an unsatisfactory level, a Professional Development Plan may be implemented. If timely evidence of remediation is not demonstrated, the candidate may be in jeopardy of removal from student teaching.

## F. EMERGENCY TEACHING

In cases where cooperating teachers need to leave their classrooms for a brief period of time, student teachers may assume responsibility for continuing the pupils' educational program. **Nevertheless, student teachers may not be used as substitute teachers.** The school district must provide approved substitute teachers in the event of cooperating teachers' absences from school.

## G. PROFESSIONAL APPEARANCE

The faculty members of the Education Unit offer the recommendations for professional appearance listed below. Student teachers need to be aware that clothing considered appropriate and "stylish" for social events may not always be appropriate in school settings where professional dress styles are expected. In the student teaching site, student teachers are invited guests and representatives of the Education Unit. Through their dress and behavior, they are expected to convey a sense of dignity and respect for themselves and for all others in the school.

1. Professional personnel are clean and well-groomed with hairstyles that do not cause a disruption to the educational process.
2. Appropriate dress may include the following: dress shirts, ties, clean dress shoes, sport jackets and blazers, dress pants, dresses, pant suits, skirts, blouses, and sweaters. Appropriate dress would **exclude** jeans, sweatshirts, sneakers, T-shirts, shorts, and tank tops. Students are advised to observe the teachers at the student teaching site and use that dress as a gauge to appropriate attire.
3. For all schools, professional attire **excludes** clothing that is excessively tight or revealing, bare midriffs, or excessively short skirts.
4. Some schools object to jewelry that is worn in excessive amounts, that impedes diction (e.g., tongue piercing), that distracts students by the noise that it makes or by its placement (e.g., eyebrow piercing), or that causes a disruption to the educational process in any other way.
5. Most schools object to visible tattoos. Student teachers who have tattoos are advised to make them as unobtrusive as possible.

6. Some school districts have “dress down” days. Student teachers may participate in these “dress down” days if they wish. Appropriate jeans may be worn.

## **H. CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES**

Candidates with disabilities who require academic or environmental accommodations should notify both *Eastern’s Office of AccessAbility Services (OAS)* and the Coordinator of Educational and Clinical Experiences prior to or during the student teaching application period. Candidates will be expected to provide the appropriate documentation of their disability.

The Education Unit will make every effort to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations for candidates with documented disabilities during their student teaching experience. Whether the disability can be accommodated in a student teaching situation will depend on the nature of the disability, as inherent in the role of the teacher is the ability to adequately manage an entire classroom, to control off-task behavior, and to react quickly and appropriately to a student’s actions and questions. All student teachers must demonstrate that they can perform acts of instruction and classroom management and safety both reflectively and spontaneously in a satisfactory manner.

## **I. PLANNING**

### **1. Lesson Planning:**

Student teachers are required to write formal lesson plans throughout the entire student teaching experience unless otherwise directed by the university supervisor. Candidates must follow the Unit’s lesson plan format when submitting lesson plans for coursework, unless otherwise instructed. Cooperating teachers may prefer to have student teachers use the school district’s format if it is comparable.

Student teachers are expected to plan teaching assignments carefully and to submit those plans to their cooperating teacher at least 24 hours in advance for guidance and approval. Student teachers should not be permitted to assume responsibility for a class until their cooperating teachers have approved the candidates’ lesson plans.

### **2. Unit Planning:**

Depending on the expectations of the university supervisor and/or the cooperating teacher, student teachers may be expected to plan and implement at least one complete teaching unit. Prior to writing the full unit, student teachers are expected to submit a comprehensive outline of their ideas for the approval of their cooperating teacher. The length of a unit may vary with the subject and grade

level. Since unit planning involves a considerable level of responsibility, student teachers are encouraged to seek and accept the guidance and supervision of their cooperating teacher so that the best interests of the students and the school's program can be served.

## **J. EVALUATION OF TEACHING**

### **1. Evaluation by the Cooperating Teacher**

- (a) Formative Evaluation -- It is essential that student teachers receive evaluation and guidance throughout the student teaching term if maximum progress is to be achieved. Cooperating teachers should provide written feedback frequently for student teachers, for example, after significant teaching experiences or at the conclusion of other important assignments. Written feedback (1) allows student teachers to reread cooperating teachers' comments for further reflection, (2) assists university supervisors in assessing the progress made by student teachers in between the supervisors' visits, and (3) provides documentation of candidates' work. The comments can be used as the basis of daily or frequent conferences between student teachers and their cooperating teachers. Feedback generally includes areas of strength and suggestions for improvement. As student teachers progress, reflective questions can replace more directive comments to help students develop the important skill of self- evaluation.

There are several effective ways for cooperating teachers to provide written evaluations of student teachers' instructional abilities. Many cooperating teachers prefer using an interactive journal wherein they comment on students' lessons and other topics needing discussion, and student teachers respond to those comments. Some cooperating teachers use university provided forms. Other teachers prefer attaching to the student teachers' plans post-it notes or a sheet of paper with comments on the lesson.

In addition to ongoing types of formative evaluation, cooperating teachers are expected to complete the "Cooperating Teacher's Evaluation of Student Teaching Performance," at the midpoint of the students' teaching experience as well as at the end of the experience. The results are to be used at the midpoint for an in-depth conference emphasizing areas of strength and those areas needing more improvement.

- (b) Summative Evaluation – At the conclusion of the student teaching placement, cooperating teachers provide summative evaluations of their student teachers' overall performance using the same "Cooperating Teacher's Evaluation of Student Teaching Performance" by which the students' midpoint progress is evaluated. As with the midpoint evaluation, cooperating teachers are to write a descriptive analysis of their student teachers' instructional and professional competencies on the back of the evaluation form or on a separate sheet of paper.

### **2. Evaluation by the University Supervisor**

Throughout the student teaching term, student teachers will have their lessons observed on six or more occasions by their university supervisors. Supervisors complete typed or written evaluations of the observed lessons using one of the university forms or some adaptation of those forms. The evaluations are used as the basis for conferences held between university supervisors and student teachers. Copies of the typed/written evaluations are provided to student teachers and to cooperating teachers. Additional evaluations required by the Connecticut Department of Education are completed by the university supervisors at the midpoint and the final point of the student teaching semester.

## K. GRADING

Teaching candidates will be evaluated in the following ways

1. *Approximately once every two weeks* the university supervisor will observe the teaching candidate. These observations will focus on the candidates' knowledge, skills and dispositions (e.g., lesson planning, content area knowledge, teaching style, and classroom management). The supervisor will prepare a narrative record of his/her observations and will share it with the teaching candidate at a post-observation conference. During this time the supervisor will share strategies to help the student understand the strengths and areas of need in his/her classroom practice and offer guidance to help him/her improve all facets of his/her teaching.
2. Midway through and at the end of student teaching, teaching candidates, cooperating teachers and the university supervisor will complete an evaluation form based on Connecticut's Common Core of Teaching.
3. The cooperating teacher, university supervisor and the teacher candidate will complete an online midterm and final evaluation report.

The letter grades or credit assigned to student teachers must reflect the abilities those students demonstrate for entering their own classrooms as beginning teachers. Students are to be judged, therefore, on their competence in teaching students knowledgeably and effectively, relating to students appropriately, managing a classroom in an orderly fashion, and working cooperatively and professionally with administrators, colleagues, parents, and school staff members. While motivation to teach is a crucial factor, and the development and effort students demonstrate is very important, **the most important criterion upon which students' final student teaching grades are determined is their effectiveness in the classroom.**

Cooperating teachers are asked to recommend student teaching grades to university supervisors based upon the level of proficiency student teachers have reached on the criteria listed in the "Cooperating Teacher's Evaluation of Student Teaching Performance." It is advisable for cooperating teachers to refrain from sharing those grades with their student teachers since the final grade will not have been determined at that point. More than one letter grade may be recommended if cooperating teachers wish to indicate alternative grades that would be acceptable.

Communication (conference, e-mail, phone call) between university supervisors and cooperating teachers may be conducted at the conclusion of the term for the purpose of discussing student teachers' grades.

Determining final grades is the responsibility of the university supervisors or course instructor. Grading decisions are based on supervisors' observations of students' work throughout the term, on their ongoing consultations with cooperating teachers, and on the written evaluations and grade recommendations submitted by cooperating teachers. If student teachers have received frequent and consistent feedback about their performance from cooperating teachers and university supervisors, their final grades should not be unexpected. Early Childhood student teachers receive two separate grades for the Pre- primary and Primary grade level placements. The two grades are not averaged together to produce one final grade.

Not all student teachers earn A's, and some do not earn B's. Student teachers must work diligently and demonstrate excellence in teaching to earn an A. The grade will be based on the following criteria:

1. *Planning and Preparation*: knowledge of content and pedagogical skills in planning and preparation
2. *Instructional Delivery*: knowledge of content, pedagogy, and skill in delivering instruction and in using a variety of instructional strategies
3. *Classroom Environment*: establishment and maintenance of a purposeful and equitable environment for learning
4. *Professionalism*: qualities that characterize a professional person in aspects that occur in and beyond the classroom/building

### **III. THE STUDENT TEACHER**

*Note: In addition to reading this section of the handbook, student teachers will want to read carefully section II, "Policies and Procedures."*

#### **A. THE STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

##### 1. The Scope of the Student Teaching Experience

The student teaching experience provides an opportunity for Education students to obtain practical experience with classrooms of learners under the guidance of experienced and competent school and university personnel. Student teachers begin with a brief period of guided observation and limited teaching assignments and then move gradually into full-time teaching responsibilities. Early Childhood student teachers or student teachers pursuing two areas of certification, who may be placed in two classrooms during the term, may be expected to assume teaching and other varied responsibilities earlier in the term than secondary student teachers with one area of certification.

In addition to classroom and school building responsibilities, student teachers

will be required to attend and successfully complete the Student Teaching Seminar.

2. Employment / Extracurricular Activities During Student Teaching

Student teaching is a full-time, challenging responsibility. Student teachers need to devote all of their energies to their student teaching duties. They will be held accountable for demonstrating an exemplary level of performance for all instructional and other responsibilities to which they are assigned. Past experience has indicated that employment and/or active participation in numerous extracurricular activities jeopardizes candidates' classroom performance. Student teachers are strongly discouraged from maintaining part-time or full-time employment. Student teachers are not permitted to leave their student teaching sites early to report to their places of employment or extracurricular activities during the semester. Candidates also should limit their participation in extracurricular activities to those for which they have a serious obligation.

**B. BEGINNING THE STUDENT TEACHING TERM**

1. Initial Meeting with the Cooperating Teacher

After student teaching assignments have been made, student teachers are expected to contact and meet their cooperating teacher. This initial meeting at the student teaching site also provides an opportunity for student teachers to introduce themselves to the principal of the school. The candidate should make the cooperating teacher aware of his/her goals derived from CORE III. Candidates are advised to dress appropriately for this occasion. Depending on availability of materials at this initial meeting, students might obtain available copies of teachers' manuals and other materials that will be used on a regular basis during the student teaching experience. It is the responsibility of student teachers to return all books and materials in satisfactory condition at the end of their student teaching placement in a given school.

In the initial meeting, students generally are informed about their teaching duties and other responsibilities they will have during their placement, and they are given relevant information about the school and the students. Students are advised to demonstrate initiative, enthusiasm, and a willingness to learn from and to work diligently with their cooperating teacher and other personnel at the student teaching site.

2. Period of Orientation

Each student teaching experience is unique. Teaching responsibilities will vary among student teachers depending upon their instructional abilities and certification programs, their cooperating teachers and student teaching sites, and their university supervisors.

The first week in the student teaching site will be primarily a period of

orientation; however, some teaching may occur. A list of suggested activities for the orientation period follows. In discussions with cooperating teachers and university supervisors, student teachers can determine which activities are relevant to their student teaching experience.

- (a) Candidates who teach in the fall may be invited to participate in the in-service meetings that occur before the commencement of the school year.
- (b) Candidates should volunteer to do things and to make the commitment to perform those activities to the best of their ability. The orientation period is an important time for earning the trust of the cooperating teachers who will be turning over their classrooms to the student teachers.
- (c) Candidates should read the policy manual and other information about the student teaching site to become knowledgeable about the philosophy of the school, the general objectives of instruction for the district, and the community background of the pupils.
- (d) Candidates will benefit from establishing a good relationship with their cooperating teacher, discussing with them professional goals set during CORE III and any problems encountered during the orientation period.
- (e) Candidates should meet other faculty and staff members at the school including the secretary, nurse, guidance counselor, maintenance staff, and others, as appropriate.
- (f) Candidates should observe the teaching techniques and classroom procedures of their cooperating teacher, paying particular attention to procedures for managing homework papers, tests, quizzes, and other student work.
- (g) Candidates will gain valuable information from observing teachers other than their cooperating teacher. These teachers may teach the same grade/subject as the cooperating teacher or they may teach subjects and students different from the student teachers' area of certification.
- (h) Candidates should learn the names of all students by obtaining a copy of the classroom seating charts or by making seating charts of their own.
- (i) Candidates should learn the routines of record maintenance such as taking attendance, recording names of students who are tardy, keeping track of different time/bell schedules, and recording grades.
- (j) Candidates should learn about the school's emergency care procedures, fire drill procedures, and other procedures deemed relevant by their cooperating teacher and/or their university supervisor.
- (k) Candidates should discuss with their cooperating teacher pupils with

Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs).

- (l) Candidates should become acquainted with the textbook(s), reference books, course outlines, and other instructional materials used by their cooperating teacher.
- (m) Candidates should familiarize themselves with resources in the library, audio-visual department, and computer/technology resource room.
- (n) In many situations, student teachers will have teaching responsibilities in the first week of the student teaching experience.

## **C. TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Teaching Schedule**

After a brief period of orientation, the length of which may differ by subject and grade level, cooperating teachers will give their student teachers regular teaching assignments. Policies for planning these assignments are explained in section II, "Policies and Procedures." Most cooperating teachers continue to add to these first assignments on a gradual basis leading to the student teachers' assumption of full-time teaching and full-time management of other classroom responsibilities. It is important for students to know the tentative schedule that their cooperating teachers have planned for their weekly teaching responsibilities. The actual schedule of teaching assignments that is followed, however, will depend on each student's demonstration of their readiness to assume each new responsibility.

### **2. Varied Responsibilities**

The student teaching experience introduces students to the variety of tasks required of teachers. Students should use every opportunity to observe and participate in all the activities associated with teaching. In order to develop competency in all school tasks, student teachers ordinarily will be expected to become proficient at performing such activities as the following:

- (a) Taking attendance, collecting lunch money, recording and maintaining information on pupil records and report cards, and similar clerical duties
- (b) Preparing tests, quizzes, rubrics, other assignments, and using these instruments to assess student development and report academic progress
- (c) Working with students who need special attention
- (d) Designing seating charts, organizing classroom seating arrangements, and managing other homeroom activities
- (e) Accepting responsibility for bulletin boards and displays

- (f) Preparing multimedia materials
- (g) Arranging and chaperoning field trips
- (h) Gathering materials for instructional purposes
- (i) Using the library effectively
- (j) Using community resources effectively
- (k) Participating in the supervision of study halls, playgrounds, and cafeterias

In addition to performing teaching activities, student teachers also will want to become familiar with the total educational program of the school. They will find it beneficial to participate in homeroom programs, co-curricular activities of various kinds, dances, assembly programs, opening exercises, PTA meetings, health services, and guidance services. Arrangements for observing and participating in these various educational experiences should be made with the cooperating teacher.

#### **D. DOCUMENTATION OF STUDENT TEACHING**

##### 1. Weekly Teaching Schedule

Student teachers inform their university supervisors weekly and in advance about their teaching schedules and other events at the school so that supervisors know when it will be most profitable to visit student teachers. Some supervisors prefer that students submit the schedule as an electronic mail attachment. Supervisors who prefer the e-mail attachment will provide the appropriate format to their student teachers. Regardless of the manner in which students are instructed to submit their schedules, the information must reach the supervisor prior to the first day of the week that is on the schedule. In addition, supervisors need to be informed of any changes in the teaching schedule.

##### 2. Clock Hours

Each week throughout the term, student teachers are expected to record their hours for student teaching, using the Clock Hour Form. For each area indicated (e.g., direct teaching, routine duties) candidates must indicate the actual hours. Candidates must not list activities in lieu of hours completed.

#### **E. PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

##### 1. Professional Relationships with the Cooperating Teacher

It is necessary for student teachers to work closely with their cooperating teachers who wish to assist and guide students as they prepare for their teaching assignments. While class work during student teaching is a joint responsibility, cooperating teachers are the individuals who are ultimately responsible for the academic progress of their students. Close collaboration between cooperating teachers and student teachers is crucial to best serve the interests of the students in the classroom.

As guests in their cooperating teachers' classrooms, student teachers need to be consistent in upholding and maintaining their cooperating teachers' policies. Furthermore, it is important for student teachers to remember that they are not in the classroom to judge their cooperating teachers; rather, it is the role of the cooperating teacher to evaluate the work of student teachers. It is important for students to develop their own style of teaching and managing a classroom, but they need to have these ideas and methods approved by their cooperating teachers before they are implemented.

2. Professional and Nurturing Relationships with P-12 Students

Student teachers need to maintain a friendly/nurturing, but objective and professional, attitude toward students. Interest in students, their problems, and needs is an important mark of the effective teacher. The developing relationship between student teachers and their students, however, should be professional, with student teachers remembering that they are responsible for everything that occurs in the classroom when they are in charge of the activity or instructional segment.

3. Professional Relationships with Faculty and Staff Members

Student teachers need to meet and interact with as many of the faculty and staff members as appropriate and possible at the student teaching site. Professional acquaintances and contacts, as well as informal associations, are important as student teachers make the transition from the role of student to the role of teacher. Faculty rooms often are conducive to interesting and professional discussions, but student teachers are wise to be discreet when voicing their personal views there.

#### **IV. THE COOPERATING TEACHER**

*Note: In addition to reading this section of the handbook, cooperating teachers will want to read carefully section II, "Policies and Procedures."*

##### **A. THE ROLE OF THE COOPERATING TEACHER**

Cooperating teachers are among the most influential persons in the student teaching program. Although university supervisors provide a link with the University for cooperating teachers and student teachers, cooperating teachers are in the unique situation of consistently observing student teachers in every aspect of their development as professional educators. The planning cooperating teachers do for student teachers' learning, and the guidance cooperating teachers offer on a daily

basis are essential sources of development for student teachers throughout the term.

The following section includes effective practices for working with and evaluating student teachers as suggested by experienced cooperating teachers. Statements for educational practices will need to be considered in light of different school situations and modified as necessary. A basic assumption underlying the guidelines is that the welfare of individual pupils and the class as a whole is paramount. It is the responsibility of cooperating teachers to assess the appropriateness of various suggestions and to refuse permission for student teachers to engage in activities or practices that are judged as operating against the progress of an individual, a group, or a school's philosophy or objectives. Questions about any of the guidelines or policies can be directed to the university supervisors or to the Coordinator of Educational and Clinical Experiences.

## **B. ORIENTATION OF STUDENT TEACHERS**

### 1. The Initial Conference

Many cooperating teachers have stressed the importance of an early conference with their student teachers under conditions that are free from interruption and distraction. When student teachers receive written confirmation of their student teaching placement, they are instructed to seek a conference with their cooperating teacher prior to the beginning of the student teaching term.

At the initial conference, it is beneficial for student teachers to review their Goals from CORE III and to receive the following information:

- (a) A timeline of how the cooperating teacher envisions the student teacher's duties from the first days in the classroom to the point of teaching and managing the classroom on a full-time basis, provided the student is progressing as expected
- (b) The lesson and unit plan format that is preferred and a time when those plans are to be submitted to the cooperating teacher for approval
- (c) Teachers' manuals or textbooks
- (d) The school policy manual
- (e) The location of the student teacher's working space in the classroom
- (f) Written guidelines outlining the cooperating teachers' expectations for student teachers.

### 2. Early Observations and Activities

During the early days of the term, student teachers will profit by guided observation of their cooperating teachers' instructional techniques and classroom

procedures and by becoming oriented to the school in general. Because student teachers lack the wealth of classroom experience that cooperating teachers possess, they often are unaware of specific types of observations and activities that may be of benefit to them. The list below, submitted by experienced cooperating teachers, contains ideas for early observations and activities toward which cooperating teachers can guide their student teachers. Candidates should be involved in these activities and in teaching assignments as soon as they are capable of doing so. Many of these situations can be used as topics for early conferences between cooperating teachers and student teachers. Some discussions may lead to more involved observations on the same topic.

- (a) Student teachers should memorize or prepare seating charts and take attendance to learn the names of the students.
- (b) Student teachers should jot down specific procedures or classroom routines when they observe their cooperating teachers.
- (c) Student teachers should observe and determine their cooperating teachers' classroom management techniques during both instructional and non-instructional times.
- (d) Student teachers should observe their cooperating teacher's lessons and outline the sequence of those lessons using one of the lesson plan formats. These observations are often heightened when the lessons are for the subjects or classes that will be the student teachers' first teaching assignments.
- (e) Cooperating teachers should introduce student teachers to other faculty and staff members and administrators in the school.
- (f) Cooperating teachers should arrange for student teachers to complete observations in other classrooms.
- (g) Cooperating teachers should arrange for students to observe homeroom activities, study halls, assembly programs, and other co-curricular activities.
- (h) Cooperating teachers should offer guidance to student teachers about appropriate speech and actions in the classroom, in the teachers' lounge, and in other school locales.
- (i) Cooperating teachers should provide opportunities for student teachers to become acquainted with the general administrative procedures of the school, with auxiliary phases such as the guidance conferences and health services, and with the physical plant, particularly the library.
- (j) Cooperating teachers should work with student teacher to create a schedule for meeting Goals set during CORE III.

### 3. Introduction to Teaching Activities

Initial teaching assignments ordinarily consist of duties involving only a portion of a class or relatively less complex teaching activities. Student teachers from the Eastern Connecticut State University, however, will have had several field/clinical placements and/or other teaching experiences prior to the student teaching term. Many of the student teachers will be ready to advance from simpler to more complex assignments fairly early in their term. Student teachers can advance in their instructional responsibilities as rapidly as their cooperating teachers feel that they are prepared to do so at a minimum risk to the welfare of the students. Development cannot occur without suitable opportunities for teaching, followed by reflection on the part of student teachers and conferences between student teachers and cooperating teachers.

## C. TEACHING EXPERIENCE

### 1. Adequate Teaching Experience

- (a) Total Teaching Time -- It is important for student teachers to have both a continuity of teaching experiences and a sufficient amount of experience during the student teaching term. They need adequate experiences with full-time teaching, observation, and reflection time in order to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions essential for assuming their responsibilities as regular members of the teaching profession. Student teachers are expected to log their clock hours during student teaching to be reviewed and confirmed by the cooperating teacher.
- (b) Progress Toward Full-Time Teaching -- Whether student teachers are assigned to one or two placements for the student teaching term, they should be progressing toward at least one to two weeks of full-time teaching and classroom responsibility before the end of their time in the student teaching site. The rapidity with which student teachers add new classes or subjects and other teaching responsibilities to their initial schedule depends, of course, on the progress students demonstrate. Nevertheless, cooperating teachers should have a tentative schedule of how and when their student teachers will assume all of those responsibilities, and that schedule should be shared with student teachers.
- (c) Student Teachers in Two Placements -- Student teachers who have been assigned to two placements generally are ready to assume some teaching responsibilities from the beginning of their time in the second student teaching site. Moreover, second placement student teachers can be expected to assume full responsibility for the classroom and courses/subjects more quickly than student teachers who are in their first placement. Cooperating teachers who are uncertain about whether the teaching assignments are adequate for their student teachers should discuss this situation with their student teachers and/or with the university supervisors.

### 2. Varying Instructional Strategies

Student teachers will benefit from experiences using a variety of instructional strategies, procedures, technology, and materials. Not only does this approach develop students' teaching creativity, but it also allows them to discover the relative effectiveness of various strategies for different types of students, content, and class sizes. Considerable freedom may be afforded to student teachers who appear to be professionally ready for it, but cooperating teachers will need to use their own good judgment in these situations based on their knowledge of their own pupils and of their student teachers' progress. At no time should such experimentation with strategies be permitted to stand in the way of students' progress since the needs of children and youth are of primary importance.

### 3. Conflicts Between Theory and Practice

Occasionally conflicts may develop between the educational theories that student teachers acquire in their university courses, or their interpretation of given theories, and the classroom practices in a specific student teaching site. Where conflicts appear to be developing, cooperating teachers need to prevent student teachers from becoming confused and frustrated. An informal discussion to clarify misunderstandings is often very helpful. The application of educational theory to the classroom calls for a degree of professional insight that inexperienced student teachers often do not possess. Therefore, cooperating teachers may wish to confer with the university supervisors if problems arise regarding this matter.

### 4. Additional Teaching Responsibilities

Within reason, student teachers should be given the opportunity to participate in all phases of their cooperating teachers' work through actual experiences rather than only through observation. Listed below are suggested responsibilities and activities with which student teachers should become familiar.

- (a) Evaluation Techniques – Students need experience with the development and grading of rubrics, quizzes, and tests.
- (b) The Homeroom – Student teachers should observe and participate in homeroom management duties.
- (c) Clerical Duties – Students should take attendance, mark pupil records, record grades in a grade book or on the computer, and prepare report cards.
- (d) School Duties – Student teachers should assist their cooperating teachers with activities such as bus duty, lunch duty, recess duty, study hall monitoring, hall bulletin board preparation, organization of a school event, and the like.
- (e) Meetings and Events – Student teachers should accompany their cooperating teachers to the variety of meetings they attend such as interdisciplinary meetings for special needs students, PTA meetings, extracurricular activities,

and professional development experiences.

## D. CONFERENCES REGARDING THE PROGRESS OF STUDENT TEACHERS

### 1. Conferences Between Cooperating Teachers and Student Teachers

In addition to the written feedback provided to student teachers' lessons, cooperating teachers should meet with their student teachers for daily conferences at times when there will be few interruptions. The lesson or lessons evaluated during the day can be used as the basis for the conference. Student teachers should be treated in a sensitive, yet professional and candid manner in the conferences.

In the beginning of the term, student teachers may need more prescriptive advice. However, as student teachers mature, they need to be guided toward self-evaluation. It is beneficial for cooperating teachers to ask guiding questions that students need to be asking themselves at some point: "Would you use the same approach/materials again with this lesson and this class? Why?" "Can you think of an alternative approach to this lesson that might be equally or more effective with this content or this group?" "I did not think that this part went well during the lesson. Why do you think there was difficulty? What else could have been done?"

Frequently, student teachers are more critical of the overall lesson than are their cooperating teachers. Some student teachers may express their lack of self-confidence through defensive attitudes. Ultimately, however, student teachers need to become reflective, insightful, and honest about their performance if they are to continue developing as professionals. This self-evaluation is the goal that cooperating teachers and university supervisors seek in their conferences with student teachers.

### 2. Conferences Between Cooperating Teachers and University Supervisors

(a) Ongoing Conferences – Throughout the student teaching term, cooperating teachers and university supervisors have the opportunity to confer about the progress of student teachers by way of personal conversations, telephone calls, written notes, and/or electronic messages. Generally, unless there are problem situations or questions that need to be answered in a timely manner, most conferences between cooperating teachers and university supervisors take place during the biweekly visits that supervisors make to observe student teachers.

(b) Special Conferences -- If a student teacher is not making satisfactory progress, it is imperative that the university supervisor **be informed as soon as possible**, particularly if there is some question of the student teacher's ability to complete the student teaching term. This contact is of vital importance because the successful completion of student teaching is directly related to a student teacher's future as a professional educator. Many problems can be corrected easily if handled promptly. Cooperating teachers

may wish to arrange for a private discussion with the university supervisor, or they may desire a conference involving themselves, the supervisor, and the student teacher.

It is also important to have written documentation of problem situations for future reference. The “Cooperating Teacher’s Evaluation of Student Teaching Performance,” completed at the midpoint and at the conclusion of student teaching, is one document that is used for a more detailed evaluation of progress during student teaching.

- (c) Confidentiality Regarding the Progress of the Student Teacher – In a situation where a student teacher is not progressing or performing as expected, the cooperating teacher is expected to maintain the confidentiality of the relationship with the student teacher by refraining from engaging in conversations about this student teacher with anyone other than the particular student teacher, the college supervisor, and the principal of the respective student teaching site. The cooperating teacher should not demean the student teacher or predispose the student to failure by discussing the student’s progress with other faculty members, staff, paraprofessionals, or other persons inside or outside the school.

## **E. HONORARIUM FOR COOPERATING TEACHERS**

In appreciation for the professional guidance that cooperating teachers provide to student teachers during their student teaching term, the Education Unit offers an honorarium to each cooperating teacher each term. Cooperating teachers guide a student teacher for an entire term and receive an honorarium and are expected to attend a Clinical/Student Teaching informational session(s).

## **V. ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL OF THE STUDENT TEACHING SITE**

### **A. ROLE OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL**

School administrators foster professional norms of competence and quality learning environments for teachers and students. The Principal/Administrator does the following:

- Oversees the process for identification of quality placement classrooms for student teachers
- Include student teachers in scheduled meetings, orientation training, and staff development activities, as appropriate
- Serve as an intellectual resource for cooperating teachers, university supervisors, and student teachers
- Align organizational structures and resources to reinforce the stated goals of school (e.g., ensures that cooperating teachers have access to available

technology training and application within the classroom)

- Support supervisors, cooperating teachers, and others to improve instructional outcomes
- Involve student teachers as part of the school community
- Ensure that mechanisms are in place to help parents participate in and understand the goals of student teaching
- Work for continuous school improvement and the professional growth of administration, faculty, and student teachers

## **B. ORIENTATION OF STUDENT TEACHERS BY PRINCIPALS**

Without the cooperation of principals and other administrative personnel, it would be impossible to develop excellent student teaching sites in which student teachers could complete their professional preparation. Principals hold a strategic position in the induction of student teachers into the field of education. The following topics may be used by principals in their introductory meeting with student teachers:

1. The philosophy, objectives, and overall organization of the school
2. The community and its significance to the program of instruction
3. The wide range of responsibilities that student teachers must accept in the school
4. The procedures and ethics in such matters as handling discipline and confidential records
5. The availability of facilities for teachers in the school
6. School district policies and state laws regarding student teachers

## **C. SELECTION AND QUALIFICATIONS OF COOPERATING TEACHERS**

Principals of schools used as student teaching sites are responsible for selecting those individuals who are eligible to serve as cooperating teachers, subject to approval by school district superintendents. Principals select the cooperating teachers based on specific criteria. Among the criteria to consider in the selection process are the following requirements stipulated by the state: (a) cooperating teachers must have successfully completed TEAM training, excepted when otherwise mutually agreed upon with the University; (b) cooperating teachers must have taught a minimum of three years, with at least one year's service in the building where they will be supervising student teachers; (c) cooperating teachers must be certified in the area that the student teacher is pursuing; (d) cooperating teaching must have a record of positive impact on P-12 student learning; and (e) for returning cooperating teachers, a record of positive impact on the development of student teachers is a must.

The following additional criteria have been found to be valuable in the choice of an effective cooperating teacher:

1. Commitment to the student teaching program at the Eastern Connecticut State

- University
2. Evidence of superior teaching skills and abilities
  3. Flexibility and adaptability in the use and acceptance of various instructional approaches
  4. Ability to relate well to and communicate effectively with student teachers
  5. Commitment to continuing professional development
  6. Willingness to attend the University's cooperating teacher seminar(s)

#### **D. PRINCIPAL'S COMMUNICATION WITH UNIVERSITY FACULTY**

Open communication needs to be maintained among principals, the Coordinator of Educational and Clinical Practice, and university supervisors assigned to the buildings for which those principals are responsible. University supervisors and the Coordinator of Educational and Clinical Practice welcome comments and suggestions about the Eastern Connecticut State University student teaching program. Feedback from principals is beneficial to the University's commitment to preparing exemplary teachers for the schools. Likewise, the Coordinator of Educational and Clinical Experiences and the university supervisors appreciate the invitation offered by many principals to assist in the selection of cooperating teachers. Principals and other school district personnel are welcome to contact the Coordinator of Educational and Clinical Education and/or the university supervisors at any time regarding concerns that have arisen with student teachers or ideas for improving student teaching arrangements between the districts and the University.

#### **E. RANGE OF EXPECTED EXPERIENCES FOR THE STUDENT TEACHER**

The experiences and abilities of student teachers vary considerably. Teaching assignments should be based on expecting maximum growth, building upon the strengths of the student teacher while diminishing the weaknesses. **The Connecticut Common Core of Teaching standards** should guide experiences as well as best-practices within the profession and general expectations for teachers within the school.

The focus of the student teaching experience should be on **quality and not quantity** with the aim of supporting student teachers' growth toward effective educators who are able to positively impact the learning, growth and development of P-12 students.

Student teachers will assume responsibility commensurate with ability, and will probably begin teaching one class. A student teacher should maintain a reasonable schedule that will challenge him/her and be developed so that s/he is able to experience teaching all subjects for which the cooperating teacher is responsible.

The student teacher's assigned classes/subjects may be changed periodically so that he/she gains more experience and is able to adjust to varied class sizes, abilities, and personalities. If a student teacher is successful, he/she may benefit from teaching classes of other sections or subjects.

While co-teaching is encouraged, near the end of the experience, as success and

confidence are evident, student teachers should be assigned to teach the cooperating teacher's entire schedule for a period of time, but not to exceed one week unless done in consultation with the university supervisor. **The student teacher is not expected to replace the cooperating teacher from any of his/her assigned duties.**

#### **F. THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

In the event that a candidate is rated unsatisfactory or is recognized as needing improvements by a supervising faculty, cooperating teacher, or a school principal, the candidate must be provided with a professional development plan, with the approval of CARE. The professional development plan is designed to serve as an additional support mechanism to foster growth and represents an intervention to assist the candidate toward meeting program standards. The professional development plan is not a punitive action; however, in the event that adequate growth is not demonstrated, the candidate may be in jeopardy of dismissal from the program.

The professional development plan shall consist of clear guidelines for improvement to include, at minimum, goals, (a) rationale(s), activities, milestones, resources, and a statement of consequences in the event that evidence of growth is not adequately demonstrated.

While the professional development plan is intended for use during field practicums and clinical experiences, it may be implemented at any appropriate time during a program of study. However, if initiated by a faculty during any clinical experience, the professional development plan is typically offered no later than the mid-point of a placement. Each professional development plan is individualized and the final approval rests with CARE. A copy of the plan shall remain on file with the Education Unit.