

Dear Cooperating Teacher,

On behalf of the College of Education, I want to thank you for your willingness to participate in our Professional Education Program. Through your involvement in this Student Teaching experience, you will have a profound influence on the future of our profession. Your example and expertise will, to a large extent, help shape the attitudes and actions of a new generation of teachers.

It is the expectation of the ORU College of Education that all parties associated with the Professional Education Program benefit from the Student Teaching experience resulting in increased student learning and the professional development of our Student Teacher and the receiving school. If at any time an issue or concern arises, do not hesitate to contact me or your assigned University Supervisor. Documentation of your experiences, positive and/or negative, with your Student Teacher will allow you to provide a reliable evaluation of the Student Teacher's performance over the course of his or her time with you. With our desire to graduate quality teachers and redirect those students who are better suited for other professions, your continued correspondence with the Student Teacher and University Supervisor is paramount to this endeavor.

The enclosed materials will provide you direction in your role as a Cooperating Teacher and serve to orient you with our program. In short, over the course of the semester, your Student Teacher's assigned University Supervisor will visit your room 3 times. The first visit will be an introductory meeting with you and your Student Teacher and last approximately 15 minutes. The following visits will be observations of your Student Teacher instructing and managing a lesson, lasting roughly 45 minutes to 2 hours. Upon completion of each observation, we ask that you assume responsibility of the classroom to allow for the University Supervisor and Student Teacher to discuss the evaluation forms. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns following your review of the materials, please contact me via email (laalvarez@oru.edu) or phone (918) 704.6518.

Again, thank you for taking on the role of professional mentor. Your dedication to the education of a future educator will contribute significantly to the future students under their charge.

Sincerely,

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**ROLE OF COOPERATING TEACHER
DURING STUDENT TEACHING**

According to Oklahoma Guidelines, the Cooperating Teacher must have a minimum of three years classroom teaching experience as a certified teacher and hold a standard certificate in the area in which (s)he is supervising. Serving as a Cooperating Teacher is a voluntary role that requires the ability to mentor adults and have a positive effect on student learners. These skills are critical to the development of future teachers.

The Cooperating Teacher is expected to create an enriching experience both for the students in the classroom and the Student Teacher by retaining responsibility for the classroom while guiding the candidate through such activities as learning students' names, tutoring individual students, working with small groups, developing a teaching unit, teaching one class/subject, and finally teaching multiple classes/subjects. To accomplish this goal, the Cooperating Teacher is expected to

- orient the Student Teacher to the learning environment and assist the intern in developing a professional attitude in his/her contacts with the larger school community.
- treat the Student Teacher as part of the teaching team by providing access to IEPs of students with whom (s)he will be working and gradually increasing responsibility for planning and implementation of lessons (*refer to Timeline of Responsibilities*).
- clarify the intern's responsibilities with respect to making lesson plans, securing and organizing appropriate materials, and other necessary activities.
- maintain an open line of communication between self and the assigned University Supervisor.
- conference regularly with the intern, making sure (s)he is free to ask questions and offer suggestions.
- offer feedback on lessons taught and the management of student behavior, preferably in writing to the Student Teacher on a regular basis.
- encourage the intern to reflect each day on class activities asking: "How can I increase student learning or performance?"
- support the intern in attending parent/teacher conferences and staff development programs planned for teachers.
- maintain a calendar of the internship experience, showing the intern's days present and days absent.
- complete all paperwork supplied by ORU College of Education.

Detailed explanations of the above bullets are provided on the following pages.

ORIENTATION TO THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- Acquaint the intern with the layout of the school and the classroom. Consider providing a copy of the fire escape route to help familiarize him/her with the building.
- Introduce the Student Teacher to administrators, faculty, and staff. It may be helpful to provide the Student Teacher with a copy of the faculty/staff page from last year's yearbook to help connect names and faces.
- Review the classroom and school routines (specials schedules, lunch schedule, recess, library, computer, etc.).
- Provide access to your teacher handbook, a student handbook, and other school policy manuals to ensure the Student Teacher is familiar with the expectations of teachers and students within your building.
- Provide a desk, table or other workspace for the Student Teacher to use throughout the placement. Consider stocking it with a few amenities to distinguish it from the students' work area. Suggestions include an adult-sized chair, stapler, tape dispenser, writing utensils, sticky notes, and the like.
- Provide access to curriculum guides, teacher's manuals, and commonly used instructional materials to help the Student Teacher gain an understanding of the programs expected to be used.
- Provide the Student Teacher with your contact information (phone numbers, email) and the school's contact information to ensure that you are alerted in case of an absence or emergency.

TEAM TEACHING

As a participant observer, the Student Teacher should generate questions to aid in his/her learning. Discussion of the observations with the Cooperating Teacher is invaluable in helping assure the intern's understanding of the obvious as well as the subtle occurrences taking place at a given time. Through these discussions, the intern should come to know the Cooperating Teacher's philosophy of education and the "hows" and "whys" of what the teacher does each day. The Student Teacher and Cooperating Teacher should routinely

- discuss the construction of lesson plans and all the considerations unique to this particular class, subject, level, etc.
- discuss various ways that lessons are introduced and closure is provided in differentiating learning for all students.
- analyze discipline cases that arise, suggest preventative discipline strategies, and discuss ways of handling problems within the guidelines of classroom rules and school policy.
- note the social and psychological characteristics of the class and the ramifications of such attributes.
- observe and discuss a variety of assessment techniques and how this information is recorded and reported to parents.

CONSTRUCTING LESSON PLANS AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The cooperating teacher should explain how (s)he makes curriculum decisions, locates materials for the lessons, and writes lesson plans. As the intern assumes responsibility, (s)he should still discuss lesson possibilities before planning and should submit completed plans for the cooperating teacher's final approval before the lessons are taught.

Each intern is required by the College of Education to develop, teach, and analyze a lesson in depth for purposes of inclusion in his/her ePortfolio. A discussion of and preparation for this assignment should take place early on so that there will be time to accomplish it during the placement.

TEACHING RESPONSIBILITIES

The Student Teacher should have ample opportunity to observe the Cooperating Teacher instructing each subject/period before assuming the responsibility. Induction into actual teaching should proceed gradually and be accompanied by feedback in which a regular debriefing time is established to review each day's performance. The following questions can be used to generate thinking and promote discussion of the Student Teacher's perspective on the experience:

- What were the strengths of the lesson/experience?
- What successes can be identified?
- What were the causes of the successes?
- What did not go as smoothly as I would have liked?
- What could I have done differently to improve the outcome?
- To what degree did I manage behavior and provide quality instruction?
- To what degree was my instruction differentiated?
- What evidence do I have that learning took place?
- What content needs to be retaught? How will I accomplish this? When?
- What **one** thing will I correct in my next opportunity to teach?

The intern should be encouraged to take notes during these conferences, provide specific comments rather than general ones (i.e. explaining that the use of humor was helpful in maintaining student attention is better than sharing that the lesson went well), and set improvement goals as (s)he strives to improve instructional/management abilities.

Following, the Cooperating Teacher should check to see that an attempt is made by the intern to implement the feedback and work toward his/her goals. The teacher should, as necessary, model additional lessons and discuss areas of accomplishments and concerns.

In a case where progress is not being made, the Cooperating Teacher should notify the University Supervisor immediately for further assistance. It is important that there is no delay in seeking assistance so that there would be time left during the placement for improvement to be shown. Documentation by the Cooperating Teacher of problem situations and efforts toward improvement is critical.

ATTENDANCE

Student Teachers are required to arrive in a punctual manner and are instructed to follow the school's check-in/check-out procedures. The Student Teacher should follow the district policy on teacher arrival/departure times and are expected to invest a *reasonable* amount of extra time before and/or after school as identified by the Cooperating Teacher for debriefing, planning, and lesson preparation. A discussion with the Student Teacher about the matter should take place within the first couple of days of the placement so that a regular routine can be established.

Additionally, Student Teachers are expected to attend functions outside of the regular school day with the Cooperating Teacher to include but not limited to PTA meetings, parent conferences, class musicals, Board Meetings, curriculum workshops, etc. Exceptions will be made on an individual basis and are allowed when the Student Teacher is enrolled in an evening course at the university.

Student Teachers are allowed ONLY 2 absences (including inclement weather, illness, and personal situations that may arise) during their placements. Any absences in addition to 2 MUST be rescheduled. Every absence must be reported to the Cooperating Teacher, school office, University Supervisor, and Coordinator of Student Teaching. The Cooperating Teacher should document attendance to identify patterns of behavior and provide evidence in the case that punctuality and attendance becomes an issue.

FORMAL EVALUATIONS

In addition to informal conferences and discussions of progress, the Cooperating Teacher is responsible for formal evaluations of the Student Teacher. During weeks 3 or 4 of the placement and weeks 5, 6, or 7 of the placement, the Cooperating Teacher should complete a Performance Evaluation on the Student Teacher.

It is critical that the comment section of these forms be completed with appropriate feedback. Additional comments may be inserted as needed in any of the rows in the upper portion of the form. The Cooperating Teacher should discuss the evaluation with the intern, pointing out strengths and weaknesses and helping to establish goals for improvement based on this information.

Other forms that will be required of the Cooperating Teacher to complete before or during the last week of the placement include a Disposition Evaluation on the Student Teacher and a Cooperating Teacher Response Form.

According to Oklahoma Guidelines, the Cooperating Teacher must have a minimum of three years classroom teaching experience as a certified teacher and hold a standard certificate in the area in which (s)he is supervising. Serving as a Cooperating Teacher is a voluntary role that requires the ability to mentor adults and have a positive effect on student learners. These skills are critical to the development of future teachers.

The Early Experience is designed for Student Teachers working towards certification in Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education, Teaching English as a Second Language, and Special Education. Placing these interns in their Student Teaching assignment early in the semester for one week allows them the opportunity to investigate beginning of the school year activities; become familiar with the school, Cooperating Teacher, classroom, and students; and learn standard policies, procedures, and routines. In turn, each Student Teacher will be responsible for completing a Contextual Information Sheet demonstrating their familiarity and understanding of the context in which they will be working.

This week will be primarily observational with the Student Teacher expected to take initiative in assisting the Cooperating Teacher and students with transitional and routine activities. At no time during this week should the Student Teacher be left in charge of the students. This is a shadowing week, in which the Cooperating Teacher and Student Teacher work in unison.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES for the EARLY EXPERIENCE WEEK

- Acquaint the intern with the layout of the school and the classroom. Consider providing a copy of the fire escape route to help familiarize him/her with the building.
- Introduce the Student Teacher to administrators, faculty, and staff. It may be helpful to provide the Student Teacher with a copy of the faculty/staff page from last year's yearbook to help connect names and faces.
- Review the classroom and school routines (specials schedules, lunch schedule, recess, library, computer, etc.).
- Provide access to your teacher handbook, a student handbook, and other school policy manuals to ensure the Student Teacher is familiar with the expectations of teachers and students within your building.
- Provide a desk, table or other workspace for the Student Teacher to use throughout the placement. Consider stocking it with a few amenities to distinguish it from the students' work area. Suggestions include an adult-sized chair, stapler, tape dispenser, writing utensils, sticky notes, and the like.
- Provide access to curriculum guides, teacher's manuals, and commonly used instructional materials to help the Student Teacher gain an understanding of the programs expected to be used.
- Provide the Student Teacher with your contact information (phone numbers, email) and the school's contact information to ensure that you are alerted in case of an absence or emergency.

Following the Early Experience, the Student Teacher will return to campus to complete coursework and will report back to your site in approximately 6 weeks.

TIMELINE OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Teacher (ST)

School

District

Cooperating Teacher (CT)

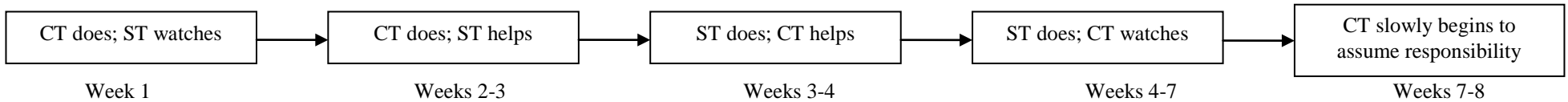
Phone

Email

Subject

Grade level

Gradual release of responsibilities with tentative timeframe *(adapted from Jeffrey Wilhelm)*



A. Complete the following timeline with your Cooperating Teacher

NOTE: Traditional students will be in the classroom for 7 weeks per placement; Cohort students will be in the classroom for 8 weeks per placement

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7 &/or 8
General expectancies	Observe; begin to supervise, monitor classroom activities; assist with routines; complete daily tasks	Supervise; perform general classroom routines; set-up, clean-up, prepare materials; assist with lessons following CTs lesson plans	Continue responsibilities while planning for and teaching 1 subject or class period; teach other subjects following CTs lesson plans	Continue building responsibilities & take an additional subject/class period (bringing your responsibilities for full planning and teaching to 2 subjects/classes)	Add 2 additional subjects/classes & the responsibility of creating a letter to parents explaining the academics & experiences to be covered over the next 2 weeks	Assume all responsibilities of all subjects/classes	Continue with full responsibility and slowly release responsibilities back to the CT one subject/class at a time or as appropriate for your context
Additional responsibilities/ specific subjects assigned by CT							

B. Enclose a copy of your daily schedule that clearly identifies when you are in and out of the room (lunch, library, computer, etc.).

C. Print 3 copies, sign each copy, retain 1 copy for your reference, give 1 copy to your CT, and submit 1 copy to your University Supervisor.

ST signature

date

CT signature

date