Student Teaching Handbook - Fall 2013 / Spring 2014

Student Teacher Roles & Responsibilities

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Student Teacher Roles and Responsibilities

I. Overview of Student Teaching

Student teaching is often characterized as the most transformative experience in teacher education. During student teaching, you will enact in the classroom the teaching theories, strategies, and standards you learned in your core courses. To help you make the transition from student to teacher, you will share the classroom with an experienced professional who will impart to you his or her knowledge of best practices and the wisdom acquired from years of experience.

Although this is a most exciting time in your developing career as an educator, it will not be easy. You may experience days of thrilling success with the lessons that you teach; but you will also experience frustration, as you struggle to teach your students and shift “to the other side of the desk.” These successes and struggles, highs and lows, are a common aspect of teacher development that many other teachers have experienced and continue to experience throughout their careers.

As a developing teacher working hard to enact Temple’s Standards for Skillful Teaching, however, you will not be alone. You will have not only your cooperating teacher, but also your university coach to guide and support you. Remember that teaching is collaborative and dynamic and everyone’s teaching can constantly be improved. Both your cooperating teacher and your coach can be excellent resources to help you improve your teaching and to ensure that your students are learning.

As the semester continues, you will acquire more and more responsibility in your teaching assignment. You will begin your work in the classroom by working with individuals and small groups of students and gradually begin to teach lessons with your cooperating teacher and on your own. You will work with your cooperating teacher to co-plan in order to enable you to meet both the host school’s academic standards and Temple University’s teaching standards. Later on in the semester you will be teaching or co-teaching with your cooperating teacher for the entire day.

While it may seem a daunting task, your professors, seminar instructors, and university coaches are all confident that your course work, previous fieldwork, and emerging knowledge about schools and classrooms have prepared you well to meet the challenge. Through conscientious planning to develop active and engaging lessons, teaching to ensure equity and understanding for all of your students, collaborating with other professionals and community members in the school, and constantly reflecting on your own practice as you strive towards improvement, you will emerge at the end of this experience a fully qualified and confident professional teacher.

As you continue to gain responsibility in the classroom and learn more about your students and the school, you should also reflect on your practice. Professional educators are able to evaluate their own and others’ teaching practices using a variety of assessment tools, including research and theory, in order to improve learning. Using the knowledge, theories and best practices from your coursework, you should develop both self-awareness and also
awareness of the political and social contexts that influence schooling, placing you on a path toward teacher leadership.

**Core Principles in Student Teaching**

Whether in a comprehensive high school in an urban district or in a small, suburban grade-school, successful teachers recognize the diverse needs of their students; use a variety of strategies, materials, and methodologies to effectively respond to these needs; continuously monitor their effectiveness through reflection; and develop valuable relationships through professional communities to support their lifelong learning. You will likewise encounter the need for such expertise throughout your student teaching experience and are encouraged to pay special attention to developing it. In particular, you should consider the following prescriptions for successful student teaching, which are closely related to the Temple Teaching Standards and which your instructors have emphasized throughout the program.

**Respect Diversity and Differentiate Instruction:** The same principles of respect that regulate the ways that citizens relate to each other in the larger society should operate in all classrooms. Respect for and an open-minded attitude toward your teacher colleagues, school staff, and students are key to successful student teaching.

Effective teachers demonstrate a belief that all children can learn and set high standards, meaningfully and appropriately including all students in classroom activities. They provide individualized support to help students meet such standards, including teaching in ways that are both culturally responsible and responsive.

Being a student teacher will provide you plenty of opportunities to work with students from diverse backgrounds who have diverse needs and interests. You should be prepared to recognize and address the issues that your students and their community, home, school, and classroom contexts present, whether in learning about other cultures or selecting classroom materials. Supporting inclusive education and honoring diversity requires purposeful differentiation, including adaptations for children who learn in different ways, at different rates, with different supports, and/or who demonstrate their knowledge and skills in different ways.

**Connect with Students:** Learning is best facilitated through well-structured activities that challenge learners intellectually, academically, and socially and bridge students’ learning to their real world experiences. Effective teachers pose real, substantive problems for learners and set explicit expectations for learning; they actively engage students in learning and draw on a variety of resources, including innovative technologies and the students’ own lives, communities and prior knowledge to support these efforts.

In your student teaching, you should strive to relate learning to the real world by making your lessons applicable to your students’ every day interactions and to real-world events. Creating maps of their neighborhoods, interviewing relatives and members of the community about their backgrounds, taking surveys of their peers or members of the school community about school lunch and its nutritional value, and setting up recycling centers in school or in their communities are examples of activities that focus on the real world.
**Maintain High Expectations and Academic Rigor:** Given well-structured activities, all children can engage difficult material successfully. At all levels of schooling, effective teachers ground learning in thorough knowledge of subject matter and in the ways of knowing that characterize academic disciplines. Effective teachers connect subject matter and ways of knowing to students’ prior knowledge and provide meaningful opportunities for them to engage and construct new knowledge in the classroom.

As a student teacher you will be challenged by the demands of teaching students who are both academically under-performing and those who achieving well beyond the level of their peers. While it’s often easier to plan for and focus lessons on the needs of the students in the middle, you should work to identify the specific needs of students across the spectrum and provide instruction that ensures academic rigor and supports for meeting the standards of such rigor for all of your students.

**Use Data to Make Decisions:** Effective teaching is demonstrated through successful learning. To ensure that students learn, effective teachers make use of a wide variety of demonstrably effective teaching strategies and methods of assessments, and they base their instructional decisions on these data. In particular, effective teachers know and use differentiated approaches to instruction, as well as a variety of methods for assessing the needs and progress of all of their students and communicating that progress to students and their parents as appropriate. Furthermore, teachers gather, analyze, and use the data from student performance (both informal and formal) to make instructional and curricular decisions.

As a student teacher, you should continue to ask yourself how you are held accountable for the performance of your students. Set specific goals for what you expect your children to learn and use available data to monitor progress toward achieving your goals. Engage students in this process to encourage ownership of their own learning.

**Use Technology to Enhance Instruction:** Our world is largely driven by the use of technology to garner information. Effective teachers must make consistent and appropriate use of technology to support the educational goals they have for themselves and their students. Whether it is through the use of wikis and blogs to facilitate discussions, or using a smart board to locate countries around the world, teachers and students benefit from the purposeful use of technology for educational objectives. In their planning and reflective processes, teachers continue to ask themselves if there are additional available resources, including specific education technologies that can help them more efficiently or effectively meet the needs of their students, particularly in presenting information in multiple ways and providing students multiple ways of finding, working with, and constructing, new knowledge.

In your student teaching experience, you are strongly encouraged to look for opportunities to use technology in the classroom whether it is to create a web page, to use Skype to chat with an expert in the field, or to teach and review the alphabet. Technology is a valuable resource for attending to each of the above themes. It is an important part of education today, and it will play an increasingly important role in supporting teaching and learning the future.
**Reflect on Your Practice**: Effective teachers are life-long learners. They connect their day-to-day activities to coherent social, philosophical, and political frameworks. They research their own practice. They participate in the professional and academic activities of their academic and professional communities. This is not only to ensure expertise and understanding of the art of teaching, but also to help teachers persist during periods of tumult and struggle. Successful teachers reflect on their daily lessons and their classroom experiences in order to ensure equity and excellence for all learners.

In your student teaching experience, take advantage of the professional learning opportunities afforded you via the school and district, professional associations, and community-based organizations. Seek specific advice from your cooperating teacher and his/her colleagues; join them in professional conversations, both formal and informal. Engage other student teachers (and/or practicum students) at your school, as well as their cooperating teachers, in regular discussions of your progress, the challenges you are facing, and the strategies you have employed. This discourse about struggles and strategies will not only benefit you, but other teachers, both novice and experienced, with their own practice.

As a student teacher you will have to find ways to improve what you teach and convey it successfully to the students. Maintaining a portfolio is one way of assessing your knowledge and skills as a teacher. You should also keep track of your students' progress, most importantly, what they have learned in your class. This will allow you to better understand the different needs of the children in your class and continuously improve your practice.

**Student Teacher School Orientation Guide: Getting Started**

Here are some important ideas and information you should pursue prior to and during your initial days at your placement. You will use this information to become more familiar with your school and your students, but also to learn how to work effectively in your placement.

- **PHYSICAL SURROUNDINGS (Before the first day)**
  - Get to know the school community. Research the neighborhood on-line, do a walk-through or driving tour of the neighborhood, and/or talk to representatives of area community-based organizations.
  - Tour the school building. Identify your classroom and the emergency exit(s) and any barriers to accessibility for students with disabilities.
  - Identify the location of the main office, the bathrooms (for students and staff), the counselor’s office, the nurse’s office, the custodian’s office, the department office (secondary schools), the copy room, etc.
  - Identify the locations of the cafeteria, library, and auditorium.

- **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**
  - Become familiar with state and district content and performance standards.
  - Ask for and review curriculum guides, textbooks, pacing charts.
  - Ask about specific instructional models or programs in use.
- Check out availability and use of technology.
- Review state and district assessments.
- Review student performance data (where possible, student teachers should use student assessment data to identify target areas for instruction and progress monitoring).

☑ SCHOOL PERSONNEL
- Learn the names and faces of the principal, assistant principal, your department head (secondary students), office staff, school nurse, guidance counselor, custodial staff and food service staff.
- Get to know the other teachers in your grade or department.

☑ SCHOOL PROCEDURES AND POLICIES
- Locate the your cooperating teacher’s email address and phone number as well as the email address and phone number of your university coach.
- Check out the starting and ending hours for staff and students (e.g., bell schedule for secondary schools, time for dedicated literacy block for elementary schools).
- Review the school calendar, including the schedule for staff meetings and parent-teacher conferences.
- Get guidelines for parking, dress, lunch and leaving the building.
- Get guidelines for what to do in an emergency.
- Get guidelines for school closing and late openings.
- Get guidelines for handling medical needs of students (medications, injuries, allergies).
- Get guidelines for reporting abuse or other difficult situations.

☑ CLASSROOM INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES
- Ask for your cooperating teacher’s schedule.
- Ask for a class list so you can learn your students’ names.
- Review procedures for attendance, recess, lunch, end of day.
- Discuss with your cooperating teacher the procedures for classroom management (e.g., student movement, materials distribution, rewards systems) and discipline (e.g., in class, school/district reporting, communicating with parents).
- Ask about procedures for working with special needs students and their support team(s).
- Review homework guidelines, e.g., when assigned, parents’ input/signature, how collected and graded.
- Become familiar with grading criteria and procedures.
- Learn your cooperating teacher’s guidelines for grouping students.
- Know the process for getting (locating and requisitioning, when needed) and storing supplies.
FORMS AND RECORDS

- Learn about student records (academic records, IEPs, disciplinary records): where they are located and what restrictions there are due to confidentiality.
- Find out when and how grades are issued; review report card format.
- Ask for information about school forms (roll sheets, attendance, hall passes, discipline forms, and any special education documentation or other important paperwork).

SCHOOL SERVICES

- Ask your cooperating teacher or school staff for the location and the procedures for using the copiers, telephones, laminating machines, computers for students and staff, and the audio-visual equipment.
- Ask about procedures for requesting custodial assistance.

Deepening Your Relationship with Your School and Community

While teaching requires a large amount of procedural knowledge, teaching is also built largely on the positive relationships you establish within the community you serve. Therefore, it is suggested that you become actively engaged in school sponsored activities, projects, or initiatives that enable you to understand the community, school, families, and students that you will work with during your placement. Some suggested activities include:

- family literacy programs
- school beautification/improvement programs
- activities to improve school-wide attendance
- after school tutoring or recreational programs
- sports or coaching activities
- home and school meetings

Such experiences will provide additional opportunities for you to learn about and support the school community and the larger educational context. Your intent to participate in extracurricular activities should be communicated to, and approved by, the cooperating teacher and university coach. Student teachers should keep their university coach informed of the extent of their involvement in extra-curricular activities at their schools.
II. Responsibilities of Student Teachers

We assign student teachers to a particular placement in a district and school because that institution has agreed to work cooperatively with Temple University. As a student teacher, when you accept your placement you indicate to us that you are willing to abide by the regulations, procedures, and instructional practices for the school to which you have been assigned. In addition, you have specific responsibilities as a Temple University student teacher.

Relationships with Cooperating Teachers and University Coaches

The success of your student teaching experience rests heavily on the positive, professional relationships you develop with your cooperating teacher and your university coach. Your cooperating teacher has expressed a willingness to share his or her professional experience and knowledge as well as a commitment to work with new teachers. Your university coach has valuable experience as a teacher and often as an administrator. Although your university coach is responsible for assessing your growth as a teacher, his/her responsibility also involves coaching you in your development as a teacher, and providing detailed, formative feedback about your teaching and planning. Both your cooperating teacher and your university coach will serve as expert sources while you teach. You should actively seek them out with questions about instruction, planning, assessment, and reflection.

Attendance

Student teachers must follow the schedule of the cooperating school and not the university calendar. You should observe the professional practices of the school, which often require teachers to sign in and out of school each day. Student teachers should be available before the children arrive in the morning and after their dismissal in the afternoon to facilitate opportunities for instructional planning and other educational interactions with cooperating faculty. Evening hours are required for activities such as grading pupil work, developing instructional units, writing lesson plans, preparing bulletin boards or learning centers, and participating in professional after-school meetings. Student teachers must also attend all meetings and in-service opportunities required of their cooperating teacher. You may reference the Student Teaching Calendar for key dates.

You should be in attendance every day during your student teaching placement. We recognize, however, that emergencies do happen. If an emergency should require you to be absent or late, it is your responsibility to contact the cooperating teacher and the university coach, as far in advance as possible or as soon as possible. No more than three absences are allowed during the student teaching semester; this includes attendance at job fairs and participation in professional interviews. All requests for planned absences must be submitted in writing to the university coach and approved by the university coach and cooperating teacher in advance.

In addition, attendance at all student teaching workshops, orientations or conferences scheduled by the university, university coach, or seminar instructor is mandatory.
Professional Dress and Behavior

The success of your student teaching experience rests primarily with you. Your attitude and work habits have a huge impact on the nature of your experience.

Remember to maintain a professional appearance at all times. Check to see if the school has a professional dress code. Always adhere to the standards of dress adopted by the school faculty.

Learn the culture of the school and be sure to address the school staff and faculty by whatever forms are customary within the school. Your professionalism and ability to understand the school culture will facilitate your assimilation into the school community.

If and when you communicate by e-mail with students, teachers, or parents in the school, make sure to use your Temple email address.

Finally, although the use of cell phones is ubiquitous and somewhat necessary in many instances, many schools have adopted specific rules regulating or banning the use of cell phones in schools. Make sure you not only familiarize yourself with the school’s policy on cell phones, but also exercise professional restraint in checking any messages or email while in the classroom. Remember that your behavior serves as a model for your students’ behavior.

Student Teaching Seminar

The Student Teaching Seminars are an integral part of student teaching. Every student teacher working in schools is placed in a seminar with other teachers in the same or similar schools. The student teaching seminar is a time to collaborate and problem solve with other teachers in the field who experience similar struggles and successes. This is a time for you to give and get support and develop the type of professional community that helps sustain and motivate all teachers at varying levels of experience. As this is a supportive community of practice, your attendance is beneficial to all other student teachers and your seminar instructor. Your participation, sharing, and support of other teachers are integral for the seminar. The opportunity to reflect and recharge during student teaching is not only helpful, but also necessary.

Another integral aspect of the student teaching seminar is to provide guidance and preparation for your student teaching portfolio and your Senior Performance Assessment (known as the “SPA”). Your seminar instructor will actively guide you in reflecting on your lessons and enacting Temple’s teaching standards. Through weekly check-ins, reflective activities, and lesson planning workshops, the seminar instructor offers a variety of activities and workshops to better prepare you to teach the students in your class(es) and build your portfolio so that it reflects your development throughout and the strengths of your student teaching experience.
III. Assessing Your Student Teaching Performance

Over the course of the student teaching semester, you will gradually take on more of the classroom teacher’s responsibilities (see the Student Teaching Observation Calendar and Guide). Eventually, you will teach for longer periods of the day and continue to co-teach and co-plan with your cooperating teacher. Your cooperating teacher is providing you with more than just a classroom within which to teach. In fact, your cooperating teacher was selected because of his/her professional experience, commitment to the field of education, and willingness to work with a developing teacher. Therefore, your cooperating teacher can be both a professional model and a mentor for teaching. Thus your cooperating teacher not only helps you navigate the procedures of the school, but also provides you with feedback and insight into developing and honing your own teaching techniques.

To assess your progress, a university coach will observe you a minimum of four times during the semester. The university coach will help you navigate your relationship with your cooperating teacher and assist with other questions you may have about instruction and methods. Your cooperating teacher will also evaluate your student teaching. Your coach determines your final grade for student teaching with the help of evaluations completed by your cooperating teacher. Individual conferences with your cooperating teacher and coach follow each observation. It is during these post-observation conversations that the team (consisting of you, your coach, and your cooperating teacher) will chart goals for growth that will help you focus on improving targeted aspects of your teaching over time.

A large part of your performance, as with all teaching, is contingent on effective and detailed planning for your classes. Therefore, it is necessary that you have lessons prepared and submitted to your coach prior to the observation. In preparing lesson plans for your coach and for review by your seminar instructor to include in your portfolio, follow Temple’s Lesson Planning Framework, which requires you to explain your thinking and reflect on your practice. At other times, when co-planning with your cooperating teacher or preparing lessons for your principal, follow the lesson planning template used in your school or by your cooperating teacher.

Although your coach is responsible for grading your student teaching, he/she is also your mentor and cheerleader. In this role, your coach will not only offer suggestions and target areas for improvement, but will also note positive developments in your growth as a teacher. No one, including your coach and cooperating teacher, expects your lessons to go perfectly, especially when you’re just getting started. What matters most is your developing capacity to evaluate your own teaching through reflection and to take action to strengthen it. Being able to reflect on your performance in the classroom and the feedback that your coach and cooperating teacher provide will help you make adjustments for future classes. Therefore, you should look to your coach and cooperating teacher for formative feedback and incorporate their suggestions for improvement into your teaching.

Temple University has established specific performance standards for the teacher preparation program. Students, as well as their coaches and cooperating teachers, should focus on development toward meeting these standards and providing evidence of the student teacher’s ability to enact the standards as required in the Senior Performance Assessment (SPA). These skills and habits of mind, which are aligned to those of the Pennsylvania Department of Education and with national teaching standards, will also serve as criteria by which the university
coach and cooperating teacher evaluate the progress of student teachers and provide specific feedback and support. As you gain experience and become more skilled, you should strive to meet the six Temple Teaching Standards.

**Student Teaching Portfolio and Senior Performance Assessment**

As part of the expectation that you master the standards for teaching and enact these standards through your teaching, planning, assessment, and reflection, every student teacher must collect evidence, data, and other artifacts of their student teaching experience for their electronic portfolios. Your seminar instructor will review the portfolio requirements with you and provide details as well as access to the electronic portfolio template, but in general you should include student work samples, graphic organizers you designed for a specific activity, assessments and rubrics, and any other examples that show how you met your objectives and enacted the standards in your classes. You may also want to include videos of classroom activities and pictures of bulletin boards and other visuals. Although you are encouraged to take pictures of student work, if you want to take pictures or videotape students working in the classroom, remember that your school has policies regarding recording images of students. Please be sure to check with your cooperating teacher or school staff before videotaping or taking photos of students.

Towards the end of the seminar, you will need to pass the Senior Performance Assessment (SPA), which is designed to evaluate your mastery of Temple’s teaching standards. For the SPA, you will submit a teaching portfolio that contains a number of documents (lesson plans, a unit plan, a copy of your IPA, your teaching philosophy, a reflective essay, a child study, etc.) to your seminar instructor via TK20. A rubric for the Temple standards will be used to assess your ability to utilize and explain the standards as they have become part of your teaching practice. You will need to pass the SPA in order for Temple to recommend you for certification. Your seminar instructor will guide you through this process.

You should be familiar with the Temple Teaching Standards and the rubrics used to assess your portfolio as they are similar to the ones you encountered in your Intermediate Performance Assessment.

**Reporting Progress**

Teacher Candidates, Cooperating Teachers, and University Coaches will access TK20 (http://edtemple.tk20.com) to complete the forms used for progress monitoring and evaluation during student teaching. Reference copies of the blank forms are available online and linked below. You can also find links to the grading criteria your cooperating teacher and coach will use to observe and report progress in your development as a teacher. These include:

- **Student Teacher Teaching Observation Report (ST-TOR)**, to be used by the coach in observing your classroom practice (TOR) and a **Summary TOR** to be used by the coach in evaluating your progress in student teaching over the entire semester
Pennsylvania Statewide Evaluation Form for Student Professional Knowledge and Practice (PDE 430 form), to be used by your university coach in reporting on your professionalism and classroom practice at mid-semester and at the end of the semester.

Student Teacher Growth Plan, to be used, if necessary, by your university coach to facilitate a conversation between you, the cooperating teacher, and the coach about areas of concern in regards to your progress with student teaching; and

Mid-Semester Summary / End-of-Semester Evaluation, to be used by your cooperating teacher to provide his or her assessment of your overall progress at the mid-point of the semester (Mid-Semester Summary) and at the end of the semester (End-of-Semester Evaluation).

Determining the Grade for Student Teaching

University Coaches determine the final grade for student teaching with input from cooperating teachers. Coaches assess achievement by:

- observing the student teacher's lessons in the classroom;
- conferencing with the student teacher about his/her classroom experience to learn about his/her knowledge of teaching, content, and classroom management;
- reviewing lesson plans and other materials generated by the student teacher; and
- consulting with the cooperating teacher and, at times, other school faculty and the school principal.

See the Student Teaching Grading Guidelines for more information.

Special Aspects for “On the Job” Student Teachers

Some of the material contained in this manual does not apply to graduate students who are completing their student teaching in “on the job” paid positions.

These students will be assigned a university coach who will observe them at least four times over the course of the semester. Graduate student teachers in paid positions are required to submit detailed lesson plans for each of the lessons during which they are observed by the Temple University coach and prepare all other lesson plans in accordance with the guidelines and procedures established by their school or district employer. The evaluation forms and grading criteria outlined in this manual also apply fully to graduate student teachers in paid positions. “On the job” graduate students in paid positions should work closely with their seminar instructors to prepare and maintain a teaching portfolio.
Appendix: Safety Tips

Many of you will be student teaching in locations that are new to you. Therefore, please adhere to the safety tips listed below:

- Stay alert and be aware of the people around you.
- Remember to trust your instincts. Leave an area or situation in which you feel uncomfortable, and speak with your cooperating teacher or your coach about any discomfort you experience in school or in the surrounding neighborhood.
- When possible, use school parking lots, or park in well-lit and well-traveled areas.
- Lock your vehicle, make sure windows are closed, and keep all valuables out of sight.