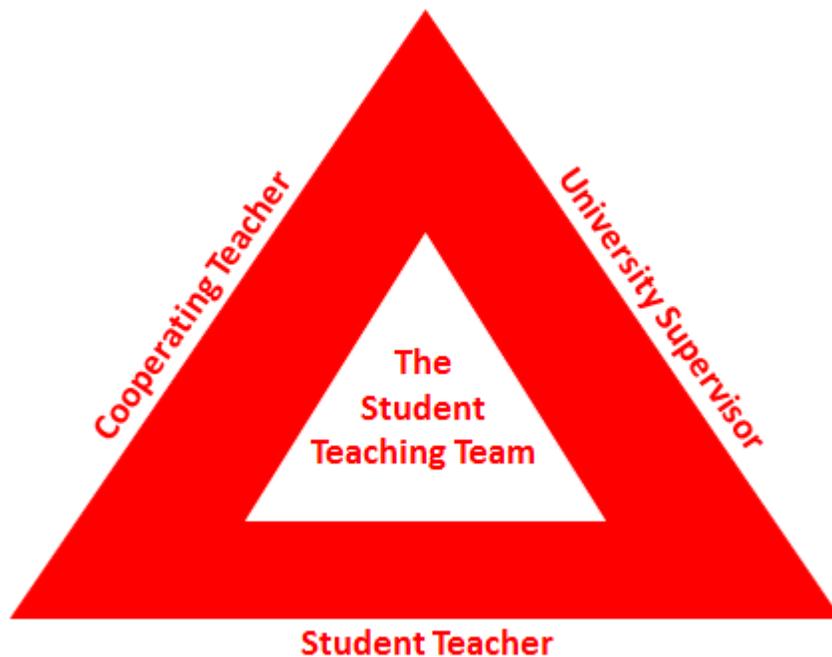




STUDENT TEACHING HANDBOOK
Initial Certification

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
College of Education and Human Sciences



Welcome from the Office of Field Experiences

Congratulations! You are about to be part of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Student Teaching Experience. Student teaching facilitates your transition from a student to a professional educator through collaboration with your cooperating teacher, university supervisor, and school administrator. During this semester, student teaching must be your primary responsibility. This handbook describes the student teaching procedures and policies of the College of Education and Human Sciences. Additional policies and procedures specific to your teaching endorsement area(s) will be given to you in a separate document. After reading this handbook:

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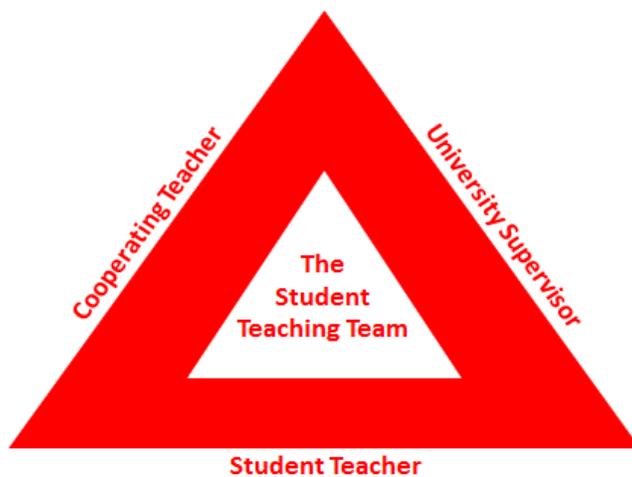
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1. Overview of Student Teaching

Student teaching is the capstone field experience in the teacher education program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). This full-time, culminating experience is the final step in the sequence of courses and practica in the teacher education program. Research suggests that student teaching is the single most important activity in the process of becoming a teacher. Student teaching is a full-day, semester-long experience through which university students transition to being a professional educator while working under the supervision of a university supervisor and a cooperating teacher who are experienced educators. Student teachers are carefully matched to work with highly effective cooperating teachers so that professional growth can be maximized. Student teachers are placed in environments that provide them with opportunities to refine the skills and abilities necessary to become effective teachers as well as to learn new skills and perspectives. University supervisors representing UNL are experienced classroom teachers who have a proven record of effective instruction and learning.

The student teacher, university supervisor, and cooperating teacher work as a team to determine the pace at which the student teacher can progress through the experience. It is essential that the three members of this team create a partnership that is based on sound communication, honesty, and support throughout the experience. Student teachers are expected to progress through the early phases of this experience to the point where they will take on the full-time responsibilities of being a classroom teacher. Then, during the last component of the experience, the student teacher will be phased out as the primary teacher and the class will be returned to the cooperating teacher.

Figure 1: The Student Teaching Team



Graduates of the College of Education and Human Sciences are expected to be effective teachers upon completion of the program. They are also expected to be life-long learners whose teaching continues to grow and improve throughout their lives. This expectation can only be accomplished through the integration of professional development

activities with current experiences so that what is learned is applied to the graduate's own teaching.

The student teaching experience is one of joint cooperation. All partners in student teaching are expected to act professionally, responsibly, and competently. Without the assistance of quality teachers and schools, it would be impossible for effective teacher development to occur. Schools and their teachers allow the university and its student teachers to use their sites as a training ground. Student teachers and university supervisors are privileged guests in these schools. Student teachers will complement and expand student learning in school settings. They are expected to take constructive criticism from other teachers and supervisors as it is intended -- to enhance their teaching. The basic role of team members is to work cooperatively through constant communication to support, enhance, and prepare the student teacher to become a reflective professional.

2. Preparing for Student Teaching

A: Admission to Student Teaching

Students who plan to student teach must complete the student teaching application form and submit it to the Director of Professional Experiences in 116 Henzlik Hall by the following application deadlines:

March 1 to student teach in the following fall semester
October 1 to student teach in the following spring semester

Figure 2: Admission to student teaching requires the following:

- Enrollment in a teacher education program in the College of Education and Human Sciences, the Graduate College, or dual matriculation in the College of Education and Human Sciences and another college.
- Admission to a specific teacher education program.
- Senior standing (89 hours or more) with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75.
- Minimum grade point average of 2.5 in the endorsement area with no grade below a C.
- A minimum grade point average of 2.5 in pre-professional and professional education courses, with no grade below a C in pre-professional education courses, and no grade below a C+ in professional education courses.
- All endorsement, pre-professional and professional education course work must be completed prior to student teaching. No additional course work, other than courses associated with student teaching, can be taken during the student teaching semester unless prior approval is obtained from the Certification Officer, the Director of Professional Experiences, or the Department Chair who oversees the program. In exceptional cases, up to 6 hours of general education (ACE) or elective classes can be completed after the student teaching experience.
- Approval of a criminal background review completed within six months prior to the student teaching application.

B. Criminal Background Review

The regulations of the Nebraska Department of Education prohibit K-12 educator certification of any person who has a felony conviction or a misdemeanor conviction involving assault, abuse, neglect or sexual misconduct. In compliance with those regulations, students in any College of Education and Human Science (CEHS) experience in schools and with children must successfully pass a

criminal background review. Students in programs leading to teaching certification must submit to two reviews of their criminal history. The first of these reviews is conducted prior to students' beginning any practicum experiences. The second review must be completed within a few months prior to student teaching or another culminating experience. Students are responsible for the cost of these reviews, and will be told how to obtain a copy of their completed report.

Personnel in the CEHS Field Experiences Offices review the results of the background check using a process that ensures student confidentiality. If the report identifies any incident or conviction that is of concern, the student will be asked to meet with the Director of Professional Experiences to discuss the specific issue. Subsequent to this meeting, the Director of Professional Experiences will decide whether the student has passed the criminal background review and is eligible to continue in the program.

In the event that a CEHS student is charged with any felony or misdemeanor while engaged in a practicum, student teaching, or another culminating experience, the student is required to report the offense to either the college's Director of Professional Experiences or the Certification Officer. An immediate determination will be made about whether the incident has made the student ineligible for further supervised experiences with children in schools.

C: Student Teaching Placements

The placement of student teachers in schools and classrooms is a collaborative effort involving the college's Office of Field Experiences and school administrators in school systems or other agencies that are approved by the Nebraska Department of Education. The staff in the Office of Field Experiences has the sole responsibility of contacting school districts to seek the placement of individual student teachers.

The University of Nebraska College of Education and Human Sciences selects cooperating teachers who meet six essential criteria:

1. Cooperating teachers must have three years of successful teaching experience in the endorsed field of the student teacher they will be supervising.
2. Cooperating teachers must be master teachers who demonstrate innovative and effective practices, set high standards for their teaching, and whose students make expected academic progress.
3. Cooperating teachers must have a track record of strong mentorship. They must be adept at monitoring and guiding a student teacher while still letting them implement innovative educational practices and evaluate the

- impact of these practices on the students. Effective cooperating teachers understand the developmental stages of emerging teachers
4. Cooperating teachers must be able to share ownership of the class with the student teacher and to transfer primary responsibility of the class to the student teacher for the period of time indicated by the program.
 5. Cooperating teachers must have enough flexibility in time and personal responsibilities to permit them to provide sufficient attention to the student teacher.
 6. Cooperating teachers must have the approval of all appropriate school officials.

The Office of Field Experiences and program faculty work closely with local school districts to select cooperating teachers who meet these criteria. First, the Office of Field Experiences contacts the school officials to secure permission to place student teachers in their district. Then, the local school officials identify the teachers on their faculty who are available to supervise student teachers and who have expressed an interest in doing so. The Office of Field Experiences and CEHS faculty carefully review the candidates to verify that they meet the six criteria for cooperating teachers. Subsequently, the Office of Field Experiences invites qualified cooperating teachers to supervise a student teacher, extending this invitation through the designated school officials of that district. If the cooperating teacher accepts the invitation, their student teacher will be asked to meet with the cooperating teacher before the end of the semester preceding the semester when he or she will student teach.

Teacher education students may request a placement location as part of the application to student teach. The field experience staff will consider these requests in addition to the criteria described above when making student teaching assignments. The educational needs of the student teacher, the fit with the cooperating teacher and school, and the needs of the school also determine the assignment of student teachers. In some cases, the student teacher will be assigned to a different school than the one requested.

Student teachers will not be placed in settings in which personal relationships could interfere with objective evaluation of their student teaching experience. Therefore, teacher education students cannot student teach in a school they attended or in a school in which a family member works or is a student.

Teacher education students who are seeking an assignment at a school outside of Nebraska must meet with the Director of Professional Experiences *in advance* of submitting their application for student teaching. Opportunities to student teach out-of-state are very restricted. In many cases, these require affiliation agreements that would need to be reviewed by the University of Nebraska's legal counsel. In some cases, students might be responsible for additional costs associated with an out-of-state placement.

When assignments are finalized, student teachers will be notified and contact information will be provided. Student teachers are expected to meet with their cooperating teacher before the end of the semester preceding the semester when they will student teach.

3. Description of Student Teaching

The successful completion of student teaching is a requirement for graduation from any program leading to teacher certification at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. In order to become certified as a teacher in the State of Nebraska, candidates must complete a student teaching experience that is full time (Rule 20, Nebraska Department of Education, Section 005.11). *Student teachers must be registered for student teaching credit hours during the semester when they complete their experience.*

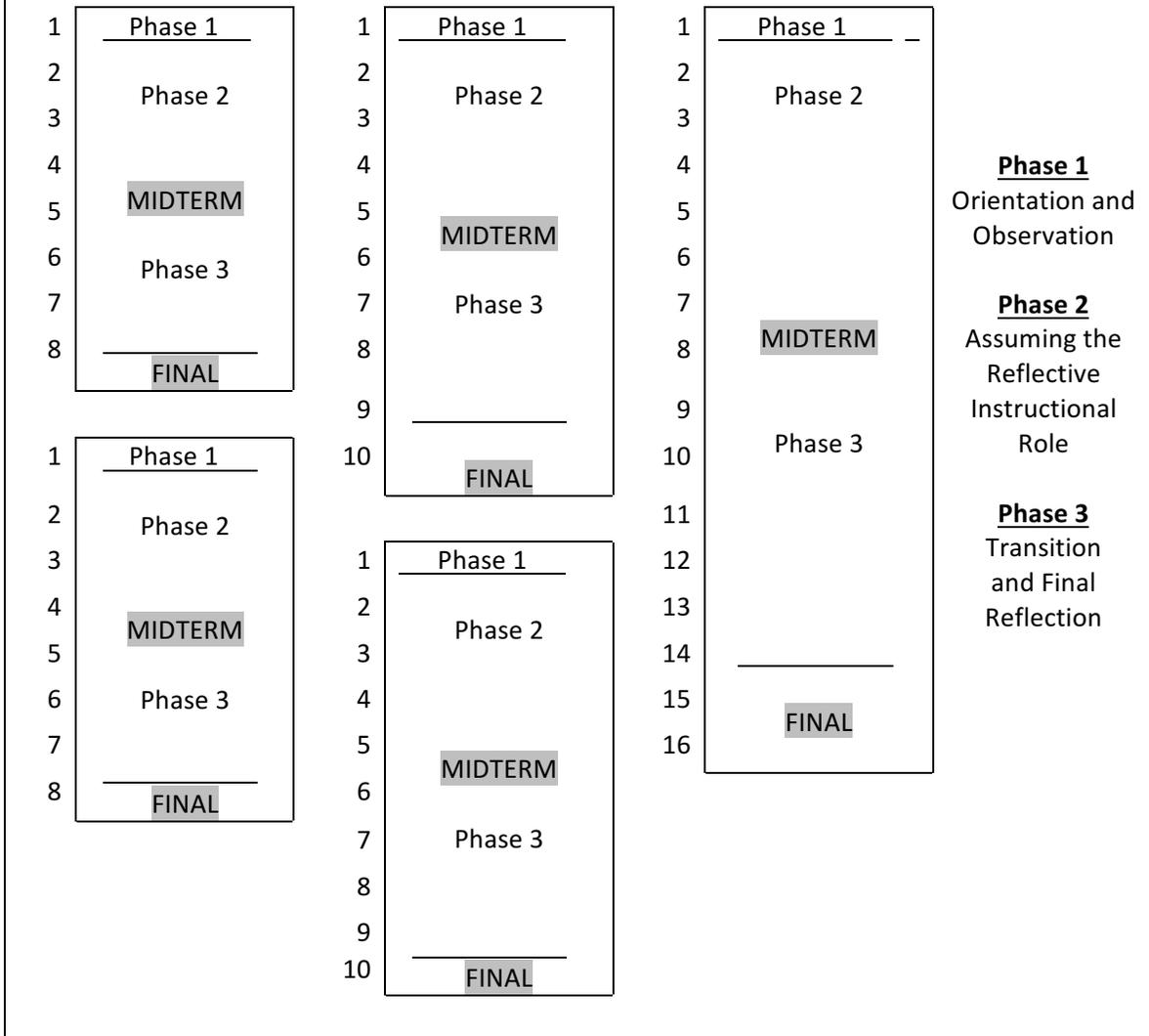
Student teaching is a full day experience for a required number of weeks. The number of weeks will vary depending upon the student teachers' program of study and the areas in which they are preparing to teach. The University faculty has established standards describing the number of weeks required for each student teaching experience, consistent with the requirements of Rule 20. The Office of Field Experiences will determine the beginning and ending dates of each student teaching experience based on the requirements for the student teacher's program and the schedule of the cooperating school district. Student teachers will follow the calendar of the school and district to which they have been assigned and will be present in the school on all days on which teachers are on duty. This implies that student teachers may be required to work at their assigned school during the University's term break.

Student teaching is a full-time endeavor. It must be the student teacher's first priority. By virtue of their participation in student teaching, students have made the commitment that there will no conflicts in their daily schedule. No additional courses (other than courses associated with student teaching) can be taken during the student teaching semester, and students are strongly discouraged from working or volunteering in other settings during this semester.

Figure 3 outlines a sample placement timeline based on two 8-week sessions, two 10-week sessions, and a 16-week placement. Other placement assignments can adjust the allocated time accordingly. These sample placement timelines serve only as guides; the actual timeline will be determined by the student teacher's program of study and endorsement areas and by the educational needs of students in the classroom. For each student teacher, the student teaching team will collaboratively determine specific lengths and activities of each phase. The number of weeks designated by UNL complies with the rules of the Nebraska Department of Education and is tied to the endorsement being earned by the student teacher. A common goal for this experience is that each student teacher has full responsibility for the instruction of students for a significant portion of their experience.

To maximize the growth of the student teacher, the student teaching experience must be unique to each individual student teaching team. Student Teaching

Figure 3: Phases of Student Teaching



Team members will collaboratively develop a written plan early in Phase 1 with the goal that the student teacher will assume full instructional responsibility for a substantial period of time. This plan should address the need for an orientation to the school and classes of students, the assumption of extensive teaching responsibilities, and the transition back to the cooperating teacher as the primary instructor. Adjustments may be made as a student teacher demonstrates his or her level of skill and knowledge.

A: Phase 1 – Orientation and Observation

In most cases, the student teachers are new to the schools to which they have been assigned. An orientation to the school and its community and to the

expectations of cooperating teachers and school administrators is essential so that student teachers can be comfortable and successful during their experience.

Ideally, the student teaching team will quickly establish an effective and positive approach to communication. At least one meeting of the student teaching team is required during this phase and the university supervisor will observe the student teacher at this time. Communication needs to be ongoing with the intent that everyone understands each other's perspectives. Talking about topics such as those listed in Figure 4 facilitates communication and begins the orientation process. These topics are examples of the kind of information that a teacher must understand to be most effective. Cooperating teachers are encouraged to share additional information that may be appropriate for their classroom.

Often, student teachers can broaden their understanding of the classroom by simply observing their cooperating teachers interact with their colleagues and students. This observation period allows student teachers to become familiar with the students and classroom environment, implementation of curriculum, and managing student behaviors. It also allows student teachers time to reflect with their cooperating teachers on practices and communicate important issues regarding expectations and responsibilities.

Figure 4

1. Expectations about arrival and departure times
2. Appropriate professional attire
3. Most effective ways to communicate unexpected circumstances like illness and supplying substitute lesson plans when required
4. School security requirements
5. Emergency procedures (i.e., Code Red, tornado, fire drills)
6. Student and teacher handbooks of local site
7. Classroom rules and behavioral management
8. Special needs of specific students (learning and health)
9. Socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds of individual students
10. Acceptable use of technology within the school
11. Technology use requirements & availability
12. Teacher duties associated with supervision, meeting buses, and office support
13. Availability of instructional resources (e.g., Reading Specialist)
14. Use of school and teacher resources
15. Access to student records
16. Grading policies and practices
17. System of communication with parents
18. Routines (e.g., attendance taking, lunch procedures)
19. Upcoming meetings, activities and special events
20. Available extra-curricular activities for students and potential involvement for the student teacher without impacting time in the classroom

B: Phase 2 – Assuming the Instructional Role

The opportunity to assume full instructional responsibility is an essential aspect in the development and growth of a new teacher¹. In Phase 2, student teachers will fully experience the rigor and challenges associated with planning and implementing lessons and assessing student learning. It is important that the experience of student teaching replicate, to the greatest degree possible, the ongoing daily work of a teacher.

Using the written plan developed during Phase 1, the student teacher will work collaboratively with the cooperating teacher to assume increasing responsibility for learning. This process can occur in a variety of ways. The student teacher can be integrated into instruction by working with individual students or groups of students as a part of the cooperating teacher's lesson plan. Other activities that allow student teachers to use their capabilities are maintaining attendance records, grading student work, leading a portion of a lesson, and co-teaching. (See Figure 3: Phases of Student Teaching, pg. 7).

The University of Nebraska Lincoln College of Education and Human Sciences recognize that the cooperating teacher maintains both ethical and legal responsibility for learning. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the student teacher to perform in a highly professional manner. The student teacher is to present thoroughly developed lesson plans that meet the standards of the district, cooperative teacher, and the university supervisor. The student teacher is responsible for the collection, preparation and creation of all needed instructional resources. The student teacher must maintain a focus on the standards, curricular goals, and objectives which students are expected to meet. Finally, the student teacher will assess the students' learning and adjust instruction as required. Carrying this full instructional load for several weeks is important to the development of the student teacher.

University Perspective

Ideally, the student teacher will assume full instructional responsibility as soon as possible for as long as possible.

All of this is done with the guidance and support of the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor. During Phase 2, the university supervisor will observe the student teacher on four occasions. The cooperating teacher may be present in the room to offer support, co-teach, or simply watch. While sharing perspectives and ideas is very important, it is also important that the student teacher "go it alone." These observations provide the student teacher with constructive feedback from the cooperating teacher and the supervisor, including

¹ In some instances, team teaching may occur, leading the student teacher and cooperating teacher to share teaching responsibilities. The student teacher must learn to "co-teach" in these settings.

suggestions on strategies and reinforcement for things done well. The Formative Assessment document will be completed to describe student teachers' performance after these Phase 2 observations.

Everyone who teaches recognizes the importance of Phase 2 of student teaching. Student teachers who work in a collaborative environment benefit greatly from the guidance offered to them. This is the time when they use their talents, skills, and knowledge in positive and productive ways to learn the work of teaching and the rewards associated with it.

Concurrent with student teaching, students are engaged in ongoing reflective activities, such as seminars or online meetings. The student teacher is expected to reflect continuously on all aspects of the teaching experience to identify ways for improvement as an individual, as a part of the school community, and as part of the teaching profession.

Reflection – University Perspective

Reflection allows the student teacher to continually evaluate how choices and actions affect students and others in the learning community and actively seek opportunities to grow professionally.

C: Phase 3 – Transition and Final Reflection

Once the student teacher has led instruction for a significant period of time, it is important that the student teaching team develop a deliberate plan to transfer all teaching responsibilities back to the cooperating teacher. This must be a thoughtful plan so that instruction continues seamlessly. This transition can be handled in a variety of ways. In an elementary setting, the cooperating teacher may resume instruction in one content area at a time. In middle and high schools, a student teacher may relinquish their leadership role one class at a time. As with all aspects of the student teaching experience, clear communication among team members about the transition is essential.

While this plan is likely to be unique to each team's approach, every transition plan should address the following:

- Completing all grading of students' work
- Returning all instructional resources such as school materials, security badges, parking permits
- Returning technology resources, such as laptops, email accounts, student record system access
- Helping students with the departure of their student teacher

If student teachers have not already done so, the transition plan could arrange for their observation of other faculty members, including teachers, counselors

and others working in support roles. Observations may include other grade levels or content areas.

During Phase 3 the student teaching team members should conduct the final evaluation conference. This conference should focus on the student teacher's strengths and areas for continued growth. As part of this conference, student teachers should reflect on their experiences and seek input from all others involved in their experience.

Student teaching is critical in the growth of a new teacher. However, student teachers need to recognize that no one expects them to be "a finished product." Instead student teaching sets the stage for their ongoing development as a professional educator.

4. Responsibilities

A: The Student Teacher

To be successful, the student teachers must:

- Read the Student Teaching Handbook.
- Uphold the policies and regulations of the school where they are placed.
- Recognize that their primary responsibility is the education of the students. No other activities should interfere with this experience.
- Prepare sound lesson plans and submit them to the cooperating teacher for approval well in advance of actual classroom teaching, and to the university supervisor as required, including substitute lesson plans needed for illness or other absences.
- Become acquainted with the instructional activities in which the teacher and students engage during the year, not merely those for which they might be directly responsible.
- Prepare each day so that they will be able to take over the class in an emergency, and so that they may continuously identify with the work of the class and of the cooperating teacher.
- Complete a formative assessment of themselves and discuss the assessment with the student teaching team.
- Act, talk, and conduct themselves professionally as an educator in the local community.
- Dress professionally as appropriate for the school culture and as a representative of the University.
- Act in accordance with sound professional ethics and the requirements of good citizenship.
- Adhere to school faculty arrival and departure times and dates. In the case of an illness or other unavoidable absence, student teachers must notify both the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor as far in advance as possible.
- Learn about each pupil as fully as possible, using observation, consultation with the cooperating teacher, school records and whatever other sources of information are available.
- Participate in professional activities such as staff meetings, parent conferences, committee, professional learning community, departmental and grade level meetings, and lunchroom and outdoor duties.
- Participate in other extracurricular school activities whenever possible. However, this participation must not interfere with their student teaching experience.

The primary role of the student teacher is to learn how to be a truly effective teacher in a typical classroom setting.

- Learn about the various physical facilities of the school building, the resources available in the school system and the community.
- Arrange for a conference with the university supervisor after each observation to discuss the class activities observed.
- Remember that cooperating teachers are legally responsible for their students. Student teachers cannot assume authority which has not been specifically delegated by the cooperating teacher.
- Refer all parental requests for pupil data or evaluation of progress to the student's classroom teacher.
- Attend university pre-student teaching conferences and seminars for orientation and continued growth of prospective student teachers.
- Participate in open, honest communication with the cooperating teacher and university supervisor.
- Practice acceptable teacher relationships with students.
- Learn to communicate with parents through parent-teacher conferences, after school meetings, telephone calls, and other communication methods.
- Be aware of procedures regarding confidential and privileged information (See Rules and Policies, page 16).
- Be aware of procedures regarding behavior management (See Rules and Policies, page 26). In particular, student teachers may not participate in corporal punishment or physical restraint at any time during their placement.
- Be aware of procedures for reporting suspected child abuse and neglect, and other legal reporting obligations (See Rules and Policies, page 16).
- Use technology responsibly and ethically according to University and District policies (See Rules and Policies, page 16).

B: The Cooperating Teacher

Cooperating teachers have three primary responsibilities to their student teachers: (1) act as role models, (2) pass on expertise and experience, and (3) encourage the developing professional to reflect on the educational process.

Effective cooperating teachers will:

- Ensure adequate instructional continuity, class contact, and supervision of the student teacher.
- Define the student teacher's role in terms of their duties and responsibilities. To accomplish this, the cooperating teacher should:
 - Provide opportunities for the student teacher to observe the kinds of methods that are appropriate to the teaching profession;
 - Help the student teacher develop a professional attitude in contacts with the school and community; and

“My cooperating teacher was amazing. She gave me feedback, advice, and plenty of control over the classroom. She even helped me prepare for interviews.”

- Clarify the student teacher's responsibilities with respect to writing lesson plans, securing and organizing appropriate materials and other necessary activities.
- Ensure that the student teacher's transition into active teaching proceeds at an appropriate pace consistent with the Phase 1 plan.
- Make certain that the student teacher has planned adequately before being permitted to teach.
- Observe the student teacher's instruction on a regular basis and give specific feedback.
- Conduct regularly scheduled conferences to keep the student teacher informed of their progress, making suggestions and constructive criticisms as necessary.
- Allow the student teacher to use the teaching style that best fits their individual strengths and is consistent with the culture of the school environment.
- Complete a formative assessment of the student teacher and discuss the assessment as a Student Teaching Team.
- Complete a final evaluation of the student teacher in collaboration with the university supervisor. Discuss the evaluation as a Student Teaching Team.
- Ensure the student teacher understands the importance of confidentiality of records and student information.
- Participate in open, honest communication with the student teacher and university supervisor.
- Communicate immediately with the university supervisor and/or other university personnel if there are serious concerns about the performance of the student teacher.

C: The University Supervisor

A university supervisor is assigned to each student teacher. The university supervisor is expected to:

- Assist the student teacher and cooperating teacher in all phases of student teaching.
- Meet with the cooperating teacher and student teacher during Week 1 or 2 of student teaching to develop the Phase 1 written plan.
- Make a minimum of five on-site visits to the student teacher to ensure adequate supervision and evaluation. (One visit with observation will occur during Phase 1 to establish team expectations and four observations of full lessons will occur during Phase 2.) This may vary depending on the

“The supervisor assigned to my student teacher is terrific. He is insightful and is able to communicate expectations in a clear and concise manner. He sets his expectations high and is able to support the student teacher’s growth and development.”

program.

- Conduct a conference with the student teacher as soon as possible following each observation.
- Hold periodic meetings with the student teacher and cooperating teacher so that issues of mutual concern may be discussed.
- Be available to consult with cooperating teachers and student teachers when necessary.
- Designate the grade (pass/no pass) for the student teacher based on the final evaluation.
- Assist the cooperating teacher in completing university requirements.
- Become acquainted with the principal and inquire about his/her impression of the student teacher.
- Participate in open, honest communication with the cooperating teacher and student teacher.
- Communicate immediately with university personnel and/or the Director of Professional Experiences if there are serious concerns about the performance or conduct of the student teacher.
- Submit the summative evaluation as required by the university.

D: The School Principal / Administrator

The principal/administrator can play a number of roles in the student teaching experience. Some take a very active role in shaping the student teacher through observations and conferences. Other principals/administrators choose to let the cooperating teacher and university supervisor take the lead and instead take the role of problem solver. Each of these roles is perfectly acceptable. Having the school principal/administrator observe and critique the student teacher will enhance the learning situation for the student teacher. We strongly encourage student teachers to initiate a conversation with the principal/administrator and request that the principal/administrator observe them and provide them with feedback.

5. The Evaluation Process

Student teaching is the culminating experience for the teacher education program at the University of Nebraska. It is a time when teacher education students use their knowledge about student learning, content, and instruction to teach in a classroom setting. It is expected that previous coursework focused on sound theories of instruction, research-based teaching practices, and practica experiences have prepared individuals to be ready to assume instructional leadership. At the same time, the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor recognize that the student teacher is an emerging professional who will benefit from sound guidance and support. The *formative assessment* process should help the student teacher be as successful as possible. Ongoing feedback from the cooperating teacher and supervisor is essential to that effort. The *final evaluation* must reflect the level of performance demonstrated by the student teacher at the end of the experience.

A: Observation of Lessons

As the student teacher begins to work directly with students, the cooperating teacher should be present in the classroom and observing instruction. It is important that cooperating teachers offer constructive comments about the student teachers' approach to forming relationships, questioning skills, focus, and enthusiasm. As the student teacher assumes more instructional leadership, the cooperating teacher will have more opportunity to provide specific feedback on performance. It is important that this feedback be ongoing and candid with suggestions made about how the student teacher might use techniques and strategies to improve student learning. Generally, this feedback is informal and does not need to be documented in writing. However, if serious concerns arise about a student teacher's overall performance, corrective feedback should be documented in writing as well as in discussions. In that case, the cooperating teacher should immediately contact the University supervisor to seek assistance so that a plan for corrective action can be developed. In addition, the University supervisor will conduct at least one observation during Phase 1.

During Phase 2 of student teaching, when the student teacher has significant instructional responsibility, the university supervisor will conduct at least four additional observations. These observations will be scheduled in advance. The university supervisor will observe an entire lesson and then provide verbal and written feedback to the student teacher identifying the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching. A copy of the written feedback will be provided to the cooperating teacher and the cooperating teacher is encouraged to participate in the post-lesson feedback session.

B. Formative Assessment

Near the mid-point of Phase 2 when the student teacher has instructional responsibility, all three members of the team will complete a formative assessment of the student teacher's strengths and most significant areas for growth. Since it is formative, this assessment is not submitted to the Office of Field Experience or used for grading purposes. Therefore, candor and clarity in the assessment and discussion among team members regarding the student teacher's progress are extremely important. Critical to this formative assessment is the identification of any concerns the cooperating teacher or university supervisor have regarding the work of the student teacher. A plan of action should be developed to address concerns so that the student teacher will be fully prepared to meet the expectations of the Student Teaching Team and the university.

C: Summative Evaluation

At or near the completion of the student teaching experience, a summative evaluation will be completed by cooperating teacher and the university supervisor. This evaluation documents the completion of the student teaching experience and provides an assessment of the level of performance demonstrated by the student teacher. The final evaluation should be the result of collaboration between the cooperating teacher and university supervisor, with the supervisor submitting the official evaluation.

If the cooperating teacher and supervisor disagree on any statements made in the evaluation, they should submit separate comments concerning the performance of the student teacher. If the student teacher disagrees with any part(s) of the final evaluation, s/he will be allowed to write a rebuttal statement.

In the final evaluation, the performance of the student teacher is assessed against that expected of a professional first-year teacher. The final goal is that student teachers be prepared to work independently as new teachers starting their career. The evaluation allows the cooperating teacher and university supervisor to designate the student teacher's proficiency, identify competencies with which the student teacher requires modest assistance, and describe aspects of the student teacher's work that is unsatisfactory.

When the final evaluation has been submitted, the Student Teaching Team will review the assessment and narrative of the evaluation. That discussion will include both generalized and specific comments. Open and constructive suggestions are critical to this last step in the student teaching experience, and provide additional opportunities for the student teacher to grow and develop.

Summative evaluations will be submitted via LLiveText by the established deadline. Students will have access to their evaluation at the conclusion of their

placement. If they disagree with any statements in the evaluation, student teachers may submit a written rebuttal of the final evaluation form to the Office of Field Experiences.

D: Grading

Student teaching is graded on a Pass/No Pass standard. The mark received is based upon the student teacher's performance as described on the final evaluation form.

E. Unsuccessful Student Teaching Experiences

If student teachers are receiving unsatisfactory evaluations at any point during their placement, the university supervisor will work with them to identify the difficulties and propose strategies to strengthen their progress. If the evaluations continue to be poor or if they cannot successfully complete their student teaching experience within the allotted time, the university supervisor will notify the Director of Professional Experiences and the director will meet with the university supervisor and the student teacher to develop an improvement plan. This will be a written improvement plan that precisely describes expectations for improvement together with the time by which these improvements must be made. Student teachers who meet the expectations in their plan and improve their performance in student teaching will receive a grade of 'pass' for the experience. Student teachers who do not meet the expectations in the plan will be removed from student teaching.

Student teachers will be removed from their student teaching placement if their level of performance is unsatisfactory, or if their conduct or behavior warrants such removal. When school officials, in consultation with the cooperating teacher, determine that a student teacher's performance is inadequate, they can ask that the student teacher be removed. The Director of Professional Experiences will always remove a student teacher when school officials request that this be done. In some cases, school officials will make this request because the student teacher has violated important school policies. If this transgression also violates the policies of the College of Education and Human Sciences, the student teacher could also be subject to discipline by the university which could include dismissal from the program. If the request was prompted by an act or performance that does not violate university policies, the student will be removed from student teaching without further discipline.

The Office of Field Experience will respond in one of five ways when students are removed from student teaching after an unsatisfactory experience:

1. Student teachers may be given a grade of 'I' for 'incomplete' for the semester together with an individualized plan for growth that describes the activities that the student teachers must complete to prepare them for a second semester of student teaching. Students who successfully complete all requirements of the plan will be allowed to enroll in student teaching for a second time during a subsequent semester. Students are generally not permitted to enroll in student teaching for a third time when they have been unsuccessful in their first two experiences.

2. Student teachers who choose not to take a grade of 'I' for the semester despite receiving very poor evaluations will be given a grade of 'no pass.'
3. Student teachers who receive passing but mediocre evaluations and choose not to take a grade of 'I' for the semester may be given a grade of 'pass' but their mediocre evaluations would probably make it very difficult to secure employment in the field. In these cases, the Director of Professional Experiences and university supervisor will frankly encourage the student to repeat their student teaching experience instead.
4. Student teachers may elect to graduate from the program without certification. Students generally choose this option when they do not expect to be successful in satisfying the individualized plan for growth. In some cases, the university supervisor and the Director of Professional Experiences may counsel students to choose this option if they believe it is in the students' best interest.
5. Student teachers maybe dismissed from the program if they commit a transgression that violates university policies.

In some rare cases, a student teacher receives poor evaluations but the university supervisor understands that limitations in the placement contributed to the unsatisfactory progress. In this event, the Director of Professional Experiences in consultation with the university supervisor can elect to remove the student teacher from that setting and promptly assign him or her to a different supervising teacher and/or another setting. The Director of Professional Experiences works in cooperation with the new school to ease the student teacher's transition into the new setting.

If a student teacher is cited for an incident that could lead to a misdemeanor or felony conviction, the student teacher must report the incident immediately to the Director of Professional Experiences.

6. Other Rules and Policies for Student Teaching

A. Attendance

- Given the professional expectations, student teachers are required to be in attendance and prepared every day, following the schedule established for the school faculty.
- There are certain designated days when the student teacher is expected to participate in student teaching course activities at the university; these days are identified at the beginning of the student teaching experience.
- The student teacher must notify the cooperating teacher and university supervisor about an absence before the absence occurs. Student teachers are to act in a highly professional manner.
- If cooperating teachers have serious concerns about a student teacher's attendance or punctuality, they should immediately notify the university supervisor. The university supervisor may in turn notify the Director of Professional Experiences.
- Absences totaling more than 3 days (not including required University events or other events identified by the Director of Professional Experiences as required) will be deemed excessive and may result in an extended student teaching experience. In some cases, excessive absence may contribute to an unsatisfactory performance and result in the student teacher's removal from a student teaching placement. Absences due to substitute teaching, will be included in the 3 day total even if it is for the student's cooperating teacher.

B. Substitute Teaching

- In some limited situations, student teachers may substitute for their cooperating teacher or another faculty member within the school who has the same endorsement being sought by the student teacher. Students who choose to substitute teach will be considered absent for those days. In order for student teachers to serve as a substitute teacher, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) must certify them as a "Local Substitute Teacher". Adherence to all of the provisions identified by NDE is required. The Director of Professional Experiences is the only person with the authority to make exceptions to this rule.

C. Legal Liability

The University provides legal defense and pays for the costs and damages of civil (not criminal) charges or claims that are brought against student teachers as a result of activities within the "course and scope" of their student teaching experience. In order to receive this benefit, the student must provide the University with honest information and cooperate with the University legal team. Further detail and explanation are contained in Regents Bylaw 6.8

www.nebraska.edu/board/bylaws-policies-and-rules.html.

While the meaning of “course and scope” can sometimes be unclear, if student teachers are simply “doing their job,” and an accident happens, the University will defend them and pay for damages. For example, if a child accidentally trips over some boots in the hall and hurts himself, the student teacher would almost certainly be provided with defense and indemnification by the University. On the other hand, if the student teacher was present at the school site under the influence of alcohol and therefore unable to properly supervise children, the student teacher would not receive these benefits when a child sustained an injury, because inebriation is not a behavior within the “course and scope” of student teaching duties. Note that criminal charges are not covered. If student teachers engage in an activity that results in criminal charges, they will be required to provide their own defense.

Student teachers may want to become a member of the Student Education Association (SEA). Members of this organization can apply for liability insurance, which covers student teaching. The amount of liability covered varies, but we suggest that student teachers select as close to \$1,000,000 as possible (www.nea.org). Another resource would be to contact an insurance agent about adding professional liability insurance to the student teacher’s existing policy.

Student teachers are expected to act in a prudent, responsible manner. Although there is no foolproof formula to guarantee avoidance of a lawsuit, student teachers should follow the responsibilities, rules and policies included in this handbook. As a final reminder:

- Under no circumstance will student teachers transport any student(s) in a private vehicle.
- Unless accompanied by their cooperating teacher, student teachers will not visit students in their homes or other private settings.
- Student teachers must use technology responsibly and ethically according to University and local district policies. As one very important example, student teachers should never engage with their K-12 students and parents in social networking.
- Student teachers must act in accordance with school system policies in regards to confidential and privileged information.
- Student teachers must act in accordance with school and district policies in regards to behavior management. Student teachers are not permitted to participate in corporal punishment or physical restraint with students.
- Student teachers should ask the cooperating teacher about procedures and protocols to follow concerning student behavior and emergencies.
- Nebraska law mandates reporting suspected child abuse or neglect to law enforcement or the Department of Health and Human Resources. The report can be made by calling the Child Abuse Hotline at (800) 652-1999. Student

teachers should also report any concerns they have about suspected child abuse or neglect to the cooperating teacher and/or principal, as well as the University supervisor.

- Student teachers should use common sense and exercise professional judgment. When in doubt, ask!

7. Additional Information for Student Teachers

Student teachers will attend the Professional Development Day that is sponsored by the University's Career Services Center. During this day-long event, a variety of important tasks are completed and important information about the search for a teaching position is shared. If you cannot attend the seminar because of unforeseen circumstances, you will need to contact Career Services to make other arrangements. As part of the Professional Development Day, student teachers will complete the following tasks:

A: Graduation paperwork

Complete and submit a degree application along with the required fee to 109 Canfield Administration Building by the published deadline.

B: Certification paperwork

Apply on-line at: www.education.ne.gov/tcert. Student teachers who have not been a continuous Nebraska resident for the past five years can pick up fingerprint cards and instructions from 116 Henzlik Hall and send their cards to the Nebraska Department of Education.

Near the end of their experience, student teachers will complete an **evaluation form** related to the work of their university supervisor and the student teaching experience. This form will be sent to student teachers with a date by which the evaluation is to be returned to the Office of Field Experiences.

C: Videotaping Information

The College of Education and Human Sciences makes every effort to prepare students to be reflective professionals. Student teachers are encouraged to be reflective through the use of videotaping their instructions to see themselves and evaluate their teaching.

Videotaping instruction can help students capitalize on their strengths and look for better ways to improve. This is a valuable instructional tool and can allow a student to see his/her teaching in action and better understand critiques and suggestions received. The value increases when the video is viewed with the cooperating teacher and/or university supervisor.

The videotaping of classroom activities by the cooperating teacher and/or other school district personnel is also common practice in many schools districts. Student teachers may be included in those tapes, made in accordance with the specific district policy.

Please make sure that prior to all videotaping there is an understanding of the district-specific videotaping policies and all formal paperwork and processes have been completed as appropriate.