

# Teacher Education Student Teaching Handbook

(For Student Teachers, Cooperating Teachers, and  
University Supervisors)



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\*Note: This handbook is available on the URI SOE web site at (Rev. 11/08):  
[www.uri.edu/hss/education/](http://www.uri.edu/hss/education/)

# STUDENT TEACHING HANDBOOK FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

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

[www.uri.edu/hss/education/](http://www.uri.edu/hss/education/)

# I. Teacher Education Unit and Program Assessment Plans for Student Teachers

After formal acceptance into the School of Education and completion of all benchmark assignments prior to Student Teaching, students will complete the following practicum tasks:

## **A. Task Assessment by Completion of Student Teaching**

### Overview of Student Teaching Assignment:

The University of Rhode Island requires that student teachers have completed the following components during the student teaching assignment.

#### 1. Teaching

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

#### 2. Other professional activities - classroom routines

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

#### 3. Enrollment in the course EDC 485, "Student Teaching Seminar".

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

- a. managing classroom routines and classroom discipline.

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

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

### **TrueOutcomes Electronic Portfolio Tasks**

To assess the performance of student teachers relative to the Beginning Teacher Standards, several electronic portfolio entries are needed as follows:

**Task 1: Planning an Instructional Unit** (completed the semester prior to student teaching in a methods class)

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

**Process:** Begin by selecting a unit topic you intend to teach to a class during student teaching. Your plans, like any draft, are always subject to change. Select the specific content and goals for the unit. Your instructional unit should represent a cohesive set of lessons that includes the introduction and development of an idea, a skill, or a concept.

This interdisciplinary unit should include:

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

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

**Task 2: Informal and Formal Assessment of Learning:**

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

**Process:** Reflect on the ways in which you evaluate what students know and are able to do as a result of your teaching. Select one example of informal and one of formal assessment that you use with your students.

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

### Task 3: Four Observations of Teaching (2 submitted electronically)

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

**Process:** A minimum of four classroom observations (two by the university supervisor and two by the cooperating teacher) should be included for this entry. Each standard must be addressed by each observer at least once.

### Task 4: Midterm and Final Evaluation of the Student Teacher by the University Supervisor and the Cooperating Teacher (Submitted electronically)

**Purpose:** To formally observe the student teacher and assess them on all 11 RIBTS. If the student teacher completes a split placement, the midterm will be completed at the end of the first placement, while the final evaluation will be completed prior to completion of the second placement. Students completing the middle level endorsement will also have a final evaluation addressing the 8 RI middle level competencies.

**Process:** The University Supervisor with feedback from the cooperating teacher will complete these evaluations on TrueOutcomes at the end of each placement, or twice in the semester for those only completing one placement.

## **C. Program Completion**

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

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

## II. Student Teaching Roles & Responsibilities

### A. The Student Teacher

#### Confidentiality:

The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) regulates access to and disclosure of student informational privacy. FERPA's main purpose is to ensure that students' "personally identifying information" is not disclosed to unprivileged parties without written consent of affected students and their guardians. Disclosure of confidential information is NOT to occur. This means that teacher education candidates must be particularly careful not to discuss student information with anyone other than personnel within the school who have a right to know about a student. URI's candidates should be careful not to discuss student grades, performance, etc. in settings where they can be overheard (e.g., in a hallway where students and others not involved are passing).

#### The Classroom

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

You will be both a learner and a teacher. You will be able to test your knowledge of your discipline and your skills of teaching technique, but, most important of all, you will learn much about people, especially about your pupils and yourself.

Student teaching is considered by some to be the culminating experience of all the educational training previously received; to others it is the time when one finds out much about the self in the role of teacher: one's professional and personal strengths and weaknesses. This teaching experience may result in the confirmation of teaching as the correct professional choice. For others it may clearly indicate a need to pursue another profession and for some others it may raise doubts, thereby calling for serious re-evaluation. Self-evaluation and reflective thinking as both a learner and a teacher will be expected if your student teaching is to be an insightful and successful life experience. Student teaching is best viewed not as a culminating experience, but as a beginning of an exciting and demanding career that will require a lifelong commitment to your personal and professional growth.

Your university supervisor will offer help when needed. Your cooperating teacher is a skilled and experienced person who will encourage you to explore your potentialities as a teacher, and guide you in your evaluation of your day-to-day teaching experiences; however,

ultimately you are responsible for making the student teaching experience a positive, meaningful learning experience. The following guidelines and policies have been developed by experienced teachers and URI faculty to help you on your journey toward becoming a teacher.

### ***The Seminar***

During your student teaching semester you will meet together weekly with your fellow student teachers and your university supervisor in seminar (EDC 485).

The purpose of these seminars includes the sharing of insights about teaching and methodology that can be best explored while actually teaching. The seminar is intended to link theory with practice through the portfolio tasks based on the Rhode Island Beginning Teacher Standards; to link the university experience with the public school experience and serves as a time to examine issues, to solve problems, and to pause for reflection together with your colleagues and your university supervisor. Regular attendance is important and required.

### ***Planning***

Daily lesson planning and unit planning are essential to good teaching practice. Plans should be written out and discussed with your cooperating teacher before you teach the lesson. Handout materials should be checked carefully before distribution. Audiovisual materials should be previewed by you before presentation to the class. Lesson plans and unit plans should follow the format provided in the RI Beginning Teacher Standards Portfolio Development Tasks. Your cooperating teacher will be your best guide in developing these plans. As the semester progresses you will be given more responsibility and more teaching time so that your planning time will be gradually reduced at school, and you will find yourself having to do more at home without the guidance of your cooperating teacher, thus working toward the goal of your becoming a self-reliant, independent teacher.

### ***Classroom Management***

Pupil discipline is by far the most common problem for student teachers. Many books and theories on this subject are available to you. Your university supervisor and cooperating teacher can offer helpful suggestions but ultimately you must take charge of your classroom and develop your own classroom management style. Clear classroom rules and careful lesson planning are a good beginning, but you will find the challenge of classroom control will take a lot of your energy and time as a beginning teacher. Try to be fair, to act professionally and humanely as you learn these important skills.

"It is the weak who are cruel.  
Gentleness can only be expected from the strong."  
Leo Rosten

## ***Attendance***

You should plan to be at your school during the entire school day and after school if necessary. If you are ill, you must telephone your cooperating teacher as soon as possible so that plans for your classes can be coordinated. Elementary and secondary students should not call the Education Department at URI or your university supervisor unless a visit from your university supervisor is planned for this day. Early childhood education candidates should contact their university supervisor if they are ill.

If you cannot reach your cooperating teacher, call the school office to let them know. Many absences may result in a longer student teacher semester for you. Snow days will be announced on the local TV and radio stations for your school district.

## ***Evaluation***

You will be observed and evaluated many times during the student teaching process. These evaluations will be done primarily by your cooperating teacher on a regular basis and by your university supervisor about every two weeks. You might also invite your department chair and/or building principal to observe a class or two. This is especially important if you expect to apply for a teaching position in this school district.

Close to the end of your student teaching experience you may wish to involve your pupils in the evaluation process. This takes some courage, but the feedback you get from pupils is often well worth the effort.

Observation and evaluation of you is one of the most difficult tasks of your cooperating teacher and your university supervisor. They are attempting to give you constructive feedback that will help you grow as a professional without making you feel judged as a person. You can help this evaluation process by taking the feedback in the spirit in which it is given and taking the time to reflect carefully about it.

Often the best evaluation is self-evaluation. Take time each day to reflect on your experience and assess your success through the success of your students. Actively seek feedback from others on areas of your teaching that you would like to improve.

Evaluation conferences with your cooperating teacher and your university supervisor are an important part of your training. You will probably never again receive as much concerned and helpful feedback about your teaching skills as you will during the student teaching experience.

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

It is customary for you to ask your cooperating teacher and your college supervisor for a letter of recommendation at the end of your student teaching experience.

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

### ***Suggestions for Success***

Evaluation, reflection and change are important and consistent elements of a teaching career. Frequent observations by supervisory personnel and student teachers' self reflections regarding their teaching are important events in new teachers' lives.

Student teachers are in a position to explore and try various strategies for teaching children and handling the overall classroom situation. Some of these efforts will succeed where others will be ineffective. In teaching, as in most activities (especially art, music and sports), practice is an important part of learning new skills. Feedback and suggestions from informed observers (cooperating teachers, university supervisors) can help student teachers improve their skills and support individual efforts.

### ***Benefits of Feedback***

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

## ***Student Teacher Checklist***

**Have you...**

\_\_\_\_\_ obtained your BCI check and TB test and submitted them to the Office of Teacher Education (Chafee 701) prior to starting your practicum?

\_\_\_\_\_ passed the PLT and/or Praxis II test(s) for your licensure area and handed in a complete copy to the Office of Teacher Education?

\_\_\_\_\_ reviewed the Student Teacher Handbook and course syllabus with your cooperating teacher?

\_\_\_\_\_ submitted a copy of your classroom's schedule to your university supervisor?

\_\_\_\_\_ created, with your cooperating teacher, a pacing calendar?

\_\_\_\_\_ obtained any release forms needed for collecting student work from the students?

\_\_\_\_\_ picked up your certification application from the Office of Teacher Education?

\_\_\_\_\_ completed your evaluation of both your cooperating teacher and your university supervisor, and returned the completed forms?

\_\_\_\_\_ filed an "Intent to Graduate" (undergraduate students only - in the CHSS Dean's office or the Arts and Sciences Dean's office.) form, or completed your "Program of Study" form (graduate students only)?

\_\_\_\_\_ completed all Beginning Teacher Standards-coded products satisfactorily?

\_\_\_\_\_ completed all TrueOutcomes Portfolio Tasks required for licensure?

## **B. The Cooperating Teacher**

### ***To The Cooperating Teacher:***

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

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

### ***Getting Started***

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

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

### ***Planning***

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

## ***Evaluation***

The best kind of evaluation of a student teacher is the day-to-day, informal interaction between the cooperating teacher and the candidate. Here is where questions are answered, suggestions are given and the joys and disappointments are shared. It is suggested, that a specific time be allotted each day when the student teacher and the cooperating teacher can confer together, preferably alone, about past accomplishments and future plans. It is also suggested that a formal written evaluation be conducted every two weeks and a copy turned into the university supervisor at his/her next visit. Evaluation is a mechanism to provide growth-producing feedback to the student and therefore should always be discussed with the student. If you have concerns that you do not feel you can discuss with the student, please contact the university supervisor at URI as soon as possible. Your student teacher will probably be asking you for a letter of recommendation near the end of the student teaching experience.

## ***Absences***

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

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

## ***Benefits for the Cooperating Teacher***

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

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

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

## **The cooperating teacher's responsibilities include:**

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

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

### ***Supervising***

The following theoretical and practical suggestions should be helpful to all involved with the student teacher, including the university supervisor, but are included here, since the cooperating teacher will have the most frequent contact with the student teacher. We have found that adherence to a cycle of supervision is the best form of problem prevention; (from A Handbook for Practicum Programs, published by the Faculty of Education of the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.)

### ***Structuring Lesson Observations***

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

- a. ways to introduce a lesson.
- b. techniques used to motivate.
- c. research-based instructional methods used to encourage greater pupil participation.
- d. clear instructions.
- e. techniques used to maintain class discipline and organization.
- f. various strategies to use a textbook in teaching.
- g. use of overhead projector, computers, and other audiovisual aids.
- h. various means of pupil evaluation.
- i. approaches to handling individual pupil evaluation.
- j. ways to modify a lesson to meet individual student needs.

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

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

Supervision should be done on a daily basis. Conferencing should occur regularly, with a note containing informal comments between conferences.

The process of supervision consists of three steps:

1. pre-conference and planning (for both the teaching and the observation of teaching).
2. observing the student teacher.
3. post-conference and analyzing the teaching in conference.

It may be best that no specific focus be taken by the cooperating teacher during the first few days of observation. During the first few days of school, the cooperating teacher should observe various aspects of the student teacher's activity, view the reaction of the class, and consider how the student teacher might best be guided toward more effective interactions. Activities for the student teacher could include reviewing, assisting individuals or small groups, circulating among students working on a task, etc. After the "settling in," the cooperating teacher can, with the student teacher, determine focuses for observation based on the cooperating teacher's perception of areas requiring attention, the type of lesson being given, and the student teacher's personal concerns about his or her own teaching skills.

### ***Evaluating Pupil Progress***

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

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

### ***Classroom Management***

As a new student teacher begins, it is likely that one of your concerns is over the skills of the pre-service teacher in the area of classroom management. It is probably a concern of the student teacher as well! Share your approach to classroom organization and discipline with the

student teacher. This will enable the student teacher to know where to start as well as provide for consistency for your working together.

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

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

Consider the following questions.

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

### ***Enthusiasm and Confidence***

Research on effective teaching shows that enthusiasm is an important element. Some say that an effective teacher must sometimes be an "actor." We can expect children to be enthusiastic about school if we are. Enthusiasm can be shown through tone of voice, the comments and questions offered, and body language. It seems to be "catching," and if student teachers can "catch a little bit" from cooperating teachers, the experience should be positive for both.

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

1. Keep the students informed as to how you think they are progressing. Comment on their strengths and identify specific areas to work on.
2. Introduce the students to other teachers and school personnel.

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

### ***Evaluation of the Student Teacher***

It is our philosophy that the primary purpose of evaluation is to provide the basis for dialogue and improvement. Communication among the student teacher, the cooperating teacher, and the university supervisor is necessary if growth and progress are to be made. A copy of all formal evaluation reports will be placed in the student teacher's permanent record file at URI.

### ***Mid-Term Progress Report***

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

### ***Final Progress Report***

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

Cooperating teachers should provide a general letter of recommendation addressed to "Dear Educator" and give a copy to the student teacher. The most successful letters provide specific details highlighting the talents and skills of the student teacher.

## ***Working Effectively with the University Supervisor***

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

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

## ***Daily Block Plans***

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

## ***Lesson Plans***

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

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

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

### ***Long Range Planning***

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

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

### ***The Weekly Schedule***

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

### ***Analyzing the Teaching in Conference***

Ultimately, the function of observing student teachers is to help them grow in their ability as teachers. The purpose of the conference is to help student teachers analyze, reflect upon, and evaluate their own teaching. Positive feedback, support, and encouragement are essential parts of the supervision process.

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

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

## ***Critiquing***

Constructive feedback has the following characteristics:

1. **Descriptive rather than evaluative.** Reporting specific, observable actions without placing a value on them leaves the other individual free to use or not use feedback. Avoiding evaluative language reduces the need for the other individual to react defensively.
2. **Specific rather than general.** Quoting examples of specific situations will be more useful to the student teacher than making general statements.
3. **Identifies recurring patterns of behavior** (such as constantly turning to the same pupils for answers). Use as a subject for the conference rather than isolated occurrences.
4. **Focused.** Provide three or four main recommendations. Too much feedback all at once can be overwhelming.
5. **Timely and frequent.** In general, a critique is most useful at the earliest opportunity after the given behavior (depending, of course, on the person's readiness to hear it, on support available from others, privacy, and so on).
6. **Clearly communicated.** One way of doing this is to have the receiver rephrase the critique given to ensure that it corresponds to what the sender had in mind.

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

## ***Dealing with Problem Areas***

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

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

## ***Honorarium***

A small honorarium or stipend will be paid to the cooperating teacher by URI. This sum is not a reflection of the amount of work or effort the cooperating teacher has contributed.

It is but a token of thanks and appreciation to you who have volunteered to make a special contribution to our future teachers.

In order to receive payment, the cooperating teacher must complete both the voucher and the W4 form provided and return it by mail or fax (874-9102) to:

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

## **C. The University Supervisor**

### ***Responsibilities***

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

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

### ***Working Effectively with Student Teachers***

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

1. Develop a syllabus that clearly defines expectations, seminar topics, and assignments.
2. Organize seminars to be held at regular intervals throughout the semester. While seminar topics and timelines are left to the discretion of the supervisor, they should be relevant and provide ample opportunity for student teachers to express concerns and explore viable solutions.
3. Attend supervisors' meetings which are held three times each semester. The purpose of these meetings is to disseminate information and discuss pertinent issues.
4. Conduct an orientation seminar in order to establish rapport, define the student teacher's roles and responsibilities, and communicate expectations. Specifically, the supervisor should:

- a. review the syllabus.
- b. discuss format and timelines for lessons, unit plans, portfolio entries, and other assignments.
- c. discuss observation/consultation visits.
- d. outline policies and procedures.
- e. explain evaluation procedures and instruments.

### ***Working Effectively with the Cooperating Teacher***

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

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

### ***Observation***

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

Open, honest communication among cooperating teachers, university supervisors, and student teachers is essential for a successful teaching experience. On-going communication with

cooperating teachers, awareness of and sensitivity to potential difficulties and frequent feedback to student teachers are critically important in the supervisory role.

### ***Conferences***

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

### ***Meetings - Observations - Conferences***

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

### ***Pre-Conference and Planning***

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

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

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

### ***Putting the Student Teacher at Ease***

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

### ***Observing the Lesson***

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

### ***Intervening***

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

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

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

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

### ***Location of Conferences***

Conferences should occur in a situation where privacy is ensured as much as possible. The staff room is the least desirable setting. The presence of a third party who "drops by" can be most unsettling. Much of the value of conferences depends on the quality of the relationship between the university supervisor and the student teacher, so interruptions and distractions from others must be minimized. An exception to this point, of course, is a planned three-way conference among cooperating teacher, university supervisor, and student teacher.

### ***Frequency of Conferences***

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

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

### ***Letter of Reference***

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

### ***Grading***

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

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

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

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

## **III: Additional Endorsement Options**

### **Middle Level Endorsement:**

#### **Rationale**

Over the past several decades there has been increasing recognition of the unique educational needs of early adolescents and the often "profound mismatch" that has existed, in the past, between these needs and the educational contexts in which they are attempting to learn (Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1989). The publication of *Turning Points* by the Carnegie Corporation of New York in 1989, and the subsequent *Middle Grades School State Policy Initiative*, the work of the National Middle School Association, major initiatives by the Kellogg, Clark, and Lilly Foundations have all sought to address the issues of improving education during the middle grades, for students ages 10 through 14. From this work research findings have emerged that have provided guidance about the nature of changes in schools, teaching, and the learning context that are required to improve the educational experiences of young adolescents. Of particular emphasis have been enhancements in the teaching and learning context that attend to both the developmental needs of students and the requirements of more rigorous, meaningful, and integrated instruction and context. To address the developmental needs of students there has been increased emphasis on creating and maintaining high levels of personalization and small learning communities, attention to the physical, social, and emotional well-being of students, and enhancements in parent and community involvement to both provide necessary supports for students at this age as well as connect in-school experiences to meaningful experiences in the other domains of their lives. Instructionally, middle level reformers have argued for the need for instruction that has challenging context, and that focuses on skills, problem-solving and concept development in order to enable students to both be reflective scholars and effective members of a democratic society. Excellence in instruction at these levels is seen as thematic, meaningful, and connected across content domains. In both developmental and instructional domains the importance of high standards and high expectations for all students are seen as essential to enhancing the education of all students.

These defining elements of middle level education have emerged in a larger context of educational reform and renewal in Rhode Island and the nation. Defining characteristics of these larger efforts have been a focus on developing and conveying to students content and performance standards that are high and clear for all students and schools. So too have been increased emphases on instruction in core gateway domains of literacy and mathematics students, and the greater incorporation of assessments and assessment procedures and integral to instruction. Here, schools, districts, and teachers are being

asked to clearly articulate not only what students must know and be able to do, but also how they continuously assess and refine the procedures they will use to assess student progress in these areas as well as how these use considerations of these assessments of student work to further refine teaching.

Clearly, all of these changes require that the preparation of educators be such that there is clear alignment between the above requirements of the conditions that should characterize middle grade teaching and learning environments and the experiences, coursework, fieldwork, student teaching, and assessment of pre-service teachers.

Given these framing issues, the School of Education at the University of Rhode Island URI has developed a middle level endorsement-program that is well-grounded both in the lessons learned from research on middle level education and in the literature and lessons about enhancing the professional preparation of pre-service teachers. It seeks to reflect what the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education has called the fundamental paradigm shift in teacher education from a courses/credits/hours only "inputs" based system of teacher education and assessment or preparation to one that reflects a performance-based "outputs" approach to teacher education. The latter is the approach that is reflected in the new Beginning Teacher Standards and Middle Level Competencies of the State of Rhode Island, the emerging NCATE review standards, and such other critical new elements of teacher preparation and certification as the INTASC assessments.

At the core, the program is built around the State of Rhode Island requirements that all students will be required to take 21 credits in one of the following academic areas: Mathematics, English, Science, Social Studies, or Foreign Language, as well as the coursework that addresses the competencies identified by the state as necessary to teach in a middle school. But, it should also be noted all student are encouraged and now able, to take a second degree with a full major in one of the context domains.

The University of Rhode Island (URI) has a long-standing tradition of preparing educators to teach pre-kindergarten through grade 12 as well as adult education. Indeed, URI has prepared thousands of teachers certified in elementary and secondary education, many of whom stay in Rhode Island and teach in public education. Our efforts to develop the middle level endorsement-program build on and are consistent with this tradition.

### **English as a Second Language Endorsement:**

#### **Practicum: Rhode Island requirements:**

#### **Completion of a supervised practicum in an ESL program.**

University of Rhode Island students can meet this requirement through the following:

- Supervised internship (3 credit hours) approximately 3 full weeks or 100 clock hours in an ESL classroom. Placement must match current or future area of teacher

certification (Early Childhood, Elementary, Secondary English or Foreign Language Education).

- Students will enroll in LIN 497 - Directed Study for 3 credits. Typically students will complete this requirement during the first summer semester each year while the public schools are still in session. Students must complete coursework requirements prior to their internship.
- Applications for the internship are to be completed as early as possible in the spring semester of the year in which the internship is to be completed.

### **Foreign Language and Culture: Rhode Island requirement:**

Completion of college level study of a second language.

- Elementary and Intermediate *Grammar and Conversation*
- *Culture and Civilization*

University of Rhode Island students can meet this requirement through one of the following options:

- Proficiency through intermediate level 104 for modern languages such as:
  - Spanish 104 Intermediate Spanish II
  - French 104 Intermediate French II) or
  - equivalent to be determined by the Department of languages.
- This proficiency may be met with a proficiency test and may not require any additional course work.

\*Note: Please contact The School of Education

<http://www.uri.edu/hss/education/endorsements/esl.htm> for detailed information regarding course work and pacing calendar for ESL Endorsement.

## IV: Faculty & Staff

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