

Duties of the Cooperating Teacher

Classroom supervision is an integral part of the preparation of competent teachers. Cooperating teachers are selected based on the following criteria:

1. Effective September 1, 2013, Kentucky 16 KAR 5:040 requires, prior to student teacher placement, training approved by the Education Standards Board and provided at no cost to the cooperating teacher
 - a. Basic responsibilities of a Cooperating Teacher (Edmodo Quiz)
 - b. Best practice in supporting the student teacher (Co-Teaching) and
 - c. Effective assessment of the student teacher (TEP Handbook).

All areas must be completed to obtain the required certification to be able to host a clinical practice candidate.

2. Cooperating Teacher Eligibility Requirements:
 - a. A valid Kentucky teaching certificate for each grade and subject taught.
 - b. At least three years of teaching experience as a certified educator.
3. The cooperating teacher should demonstrate knowledge of best practice teaching and learning strategies and current research. They should also demonstrate a willingness to participate in the continuous improvement of the clinical practice candidate through effective mentoring.
4. The cooperating teacher must be recommended by the local school administration and by the University.
5. While not required, cooperating teachers who have been trained in the Kentucky Teacher Internship Program are preferred.

Benefits for the cooperating teacher in the past have been very limited in view of the contribution made in preparing teachers. The 2000 Kentucky General Assembly allocated funding for the compensation of cooperating teachers. The regulation requires the institution of higher education where the teacher education candidate is training to report the cooperating teacher and teacher education candidate to the Education Professional Standards Board. **The public school district that employs the cooperating teacher will facilitate processing and distribution of stipends.** The amount is determined by the Education Professional Standards Board at the end of the school year.

Senate Bill 77 provides a cooperating teacher mentoring a clinical practice candidate the opportunity to take a maximum of six (6) credit hours per term at a public postsecondary institution using a tuition waiver. The teachers identified in this legislation may exercise the tuition-free course option only if there is available space within a given course offering and the tuition-free courses may be used to partially satisfy requirements for an advanced degree. A tuition waiver is issued to the cooperating teacher upon request at the end of the clinical practice semester. Applications for tuition waivers may be obtained on-line. Waivers must be used within one year of the issuance, following completion of the semester for which the waiver is granted.

Collaboration between the Cooperating Teacher and the University: Cooperating teachers enter into a special working relationship with the university in preparing future teachers. Cooperating Teachers' fieldwork (i.e. recommendations, suggestions) are highly valued and are given careful consideration as the College of Education strives to address continuous improvement of the programs.

Collaboration between the Cooperating Teacher and the University Supervisor: A team approach should be used to assist the clinical practice candidate during the practicum period. The university supervisor will observe the clinical practice candidate's teaching practices and classroom management techniques. The continuous evaluation of Kentucky Teacher Standards provides document evidence in Teacher Performance Assessment, student results, the candidate's professional dispositions, and in the Kentucky Teacher Standards Mentoring Inventory. The final evaluation is determined based on all evidence collected during the clinical semester and mutual agreement of the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor. The ultimate responsibility for the final evaluation lies within the university supervisor.

Preparing the Clinical Practice Candidate: Success in guiding the teaching experience of a clinical practice candidate depends upon careful pre-planning on behalf of the cooperating teacher. Thoughtful consideration should be given to addressing the following:

1. Review what has been taught prior to the clinical practice candidate's arrival.
2. Review the subject matter to be taught in the assigned grade or area.
3. Prepare the materials to give to the clinical practice candidate on his/her first day. These may include:
 - a. School Policy Handbook
 - b. Class schedules
 - c. Technology Resources/Policies
 - d. Textbooks
4. Provide a work area for the candidate
5. Introduce the candidate as a professional teammate

As a cooperating teacher you should provide a welcoming environment for the clinical practice candidate and in doing so, familiarize them with your school, the classroom and community. Suggestions include:

1. Arrange a tour of the school facilities.
2. Arrange a tour of the community, if the candidate is not familiar with the district.
3. Acquaint the clinical practice candidate with your classes, subjects, policy and procedures.
4. Provide the clinical practice candidate a school schedule, student handbook, faculty handbook, and a copy of the school/district aligned curriculum document.

Orientation for Cooperating Teachers: An on-line orientation for cooperating teachers will be available on the Teacher Education Services webpage, as per state department requirements. These conferencing sessions serve as an ongoing in-service program for the cooperating teachers conducted by the Director or on-site by the MSU university supervisor.

The First Week of the Clinical Practice: Getting off to a good start is crucial. The first few weeks of the clinical practice should include scaffolding learning activities focused on standards mastery. It is during this time that the clinical practice candidate will make the adjustment needed to ensure a meaningful clinical practice experience. Cooperating teachers may find the following list of details useful in providing a comprehensive orientation to the school:

1. School
 - a. School Facilities
 - b. School Mission Statement and Policies
 - c. Custodial Personnel
 - d. Personal Data Forms
 - e. Discipline Policies and Procedures
2. Students
 - a. Individual Needs (IEP)
 - b. Behavior Patterns
 - c. Group Interactions

- d. Peer Group Interests
- e. Extracurricular Emphasis
- 3. Records
 - a. Attendance Patterns
 - b. Guidance Records
 - c. Conference Reports
 - d. Letters to Parents
 - e. Communicating Assessment Results
 - f. Achievement Profiles
- 4. Clerical Duties
 - a. Collecting Money
 - b. Recording Grades
 - c. Checking Attendance
- 5. Limited Teaching Duties (first week)
 - a. Clinical practice candidates should not be required to teach subjects unrelated to their fields.
 - b. Clinical Practice candidates should be given options of activities to be taught.

Conferences: The primary purpose of daily conferences is to provide direction, offer suggestions, and make recommendations. Techniques, methods, and strategies should be discussed during conference periods. The candidate may need encouragement and reassurance to build confidence. Use of the Kentucky Teacher Standards Mentoring Inventory is recommended as a tool to guide conferencing.

Participation: The clinical practice candidate should become actively involved in classroom activities from the first day. The majority of the participation should be completed during the early stages of the clinical practice in order to help the candidate gain self-confidence and become actively involved in working with individuals and small groups. Refer to the section on participation under the “Duties of the Teacher Education Candidate/”

Observation: Observing is an effective method of learning. Therefore, the cooperating teacher should provide the candidate with observation periods in a variety of teaching situations. This may be accomplished by providing observation periods in other classrooms or in special classes. Additional information concerning observations may be found in the “Clinical Practice Candidate” section of this handbook.

Organizing and Planning for Instruction: There is no substitute for good planning. The clinical practice candidate shall write daily lesson plans to include appropriate content, teaching strategies and assessments that include formative and summative evaluations of learning. The lesson plan mode for the clinical semester is aligned with Kentucky Teacher Internship Program design to prepare candidates for their intern experience.

Introduction to Teaching: The induction into the Clinical Practice experience should be gradual. It should follow a sequential pattern of orientation, collaboration, observation, teaching of several classes, participation in small group activities, progress toward the responsibility for a full day schedule and a week of solo teaching. Cooperating teachers are required to complete four (4) evaluations/formal observations. The university supervisor and cooperating teacher are encouraged to differentiate clinical practice experiences so that the semester’s activities provide for and individual candidate’s needs.

Documentation and Evaluation: It is understood that acceptance of a clinical practice candidate constitutes a responsibility on the part of the cooperating teacher to complete the documentation noted below in the MSU database.

- Cooperating Teacher Contract/Payroll Forms
- Teacher Education Candidate Record of Performance

- Disposition Evaluation

The cooperating teacher must document four (4) formal evaluations for a 16-week placement. The cooperating teacher must document two (2) formal evaluations for each 8-week placement. In addition, the cooperating teacher is responsible for documenting time on the Clinical Practice Timecard via Folio 180.

Evaluation of the Clinical Practice: Collaboration between the cooperating teacher and university supervisor is critical in assigning letter grades. **Ultimate responsibility for the assignment of grades is the responsibility of the university supervisor.** Review of the TPA, professional disposition, and observations will be considered in the evaluation process (see syllabus for grading guidelines).

Assignment of Letter Grades: The following general guidelines may be used in distinguishing among levels of performance during the clinical practice.

1. A grade of "A" means that the clinical practice candidate has demonstrated outstanding performance. The candidate demonstrates competency in Kentucky Teacher Standards and is creative, responsible, and highly capable of self-direction and practices effective classroom management skills. The candidate is a self-starter, organized and effectively implements lessons that are accomplished and/or above a satisfactory level. As addressed in the Kentucky Teacher Standards, the candidate should demonstrate a satisfactory level of achievement and professional behavior should be observed at all times.
2. A grade of B means that the clinical practice candidate is noticeably above average in ability to teach and demonstrates effective classroom management. This candidate can plan and implement effective teaching practices and has grown consistently with regard to self-direction and responsibility. The candidate demonstrates a level of satisfactory achievement as shown by indicators addressed in the Kentucky Teacher Standards and demonstrates professional behavior.
3. A grade of C means the clinical practice candidate can teach in an acceptable fashion. This candidate is an average candidate, who may need more supervision. The candidate's professional insights will need to be fully developed. Additional teaching and experience will be needed before the candidate may be considered a fully prepared teacher. The candidate is recommended for a teaching position and prospective employers may assume that this teacher will need supervisory assistance and grow in the area of professional disposition. The candidate demonstrates a level of satisfactory progress in meeting Kentucky Teacher Standards.
4. A grade of D means that the clinical practice candidate has demonstrated unacceptable lesson preparation and/or limited classroom management skills. The candidate demonstrates a need to develop creativity and self-direction. There is a need to develop effective teaching skills before being placed in a classroom situation and improvement in demonstrating a professional disposition related to the teaching career. The teacher education candidate will not be eligible for certification.
5. A grade of I means the clinical practice candidate did not completed the required work. A student has until mid-term of the next clinical practice semester to fulfill course requirements and receive a grade.