



MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY MOORHEAD

Dear Cooperating Teacher,

Thank you for accepting a student teacher into your classroom community for student teaching. The experience candidates receive in real classrooms is valuable beyond measure. We know that it is no small task to have a student teacher in your classroom and we greatly appreciate the opportunity a new teacher will have to learn from you. It is our expectation that the student teacher working with you will be an asset to you and your students. The candidates we send into student teaching experiences are ready and excited to offer their knowledge and skills.

In this handbook you will find information about Student Teaching Requirements for Student teachers and Student Teaching Expectations for Cooperating Teachers.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have at any time. Our partnership is vitally important and I welcome a conversation with you.

**Sincerely,
Lisa Staiger
Director of Field Experiences
Minnesota State University Moorhead**

Qualifications and Responsibilities of Cooperating Teachers

Qualifications of the Cooperating Teacher

1. Taught for a minimum of 3 years
2. Recommended by the building principal
3. Willing to allow a student teacher to fulfill all student teaching requirements.
4. Attend Cooperating Teacher orientation, which is given by the University Supervisor

Responsibilities of the Cooperating Teacher

The cooperating teacher is someone who will offer a student teacher the benefit of his or her knowledge and skill. Even though student teachers are always observing the teacher, they are encouraged to become a part of the classroom community right away. It is very helpful when a candidate is introduced to the children as a teacher rather than as a student.

MSUM's expectation is that student teachers will be allowed to show their creativity and apply the knowledge and skills they have learned. That said, we do not want to disrupt learning for the children in any way. Student teachers need to work within the standards and requirements for the classroom in which they are placed.

Student teachers need to spend the bulk of their experience teaching and interacting with children, with the approval and guidance of the cooperating teacher. Co-teaching between the teacher and student teacher is highly recommended and students benefit most from this arrangement.

First Days

Sit down with your student teacher to discuss expectations and to create a timeline.

1. What is your classroom management style? What do you expect from the student teacher?
2. What are the expectations and procedures for your students?
3. What do you want the student teacher to do while you are teaching? What will you be doing when the student teacher is teaching?
4. What time should the student teacher arrive and leave for the day? They are required at a minimum to fulfill the teacher's contract day, but expect their day will extend beyond that time frame.
5. Where/when is lunch? Is there lunchroom or playground duty?
6. Is it ok to drink coffee or water in the classroom?
7. Timeline: Discuss when the student teacher will take on teaching responsibilities, increasing until ready for fulltime teaching for at least 2 weeks.
8. School-wide programs/expectations

Go over special circumstance topics.

1. Tornado drills
2. Snow days
3. Active shooter protocol
4. What to do if a mental health issue arises
5. What to do if a student becomes violent

Observations

Cooperating teachers are asked to observe the student teacher while teaching. Immediate feedback about the lesson is ideal, but we realize that is not always possible. Sometimes, “good job, let’s talk later” is all that can be done immediately. The student teacher is typically very anxious to hear what the cooperating teacher thinks about the lesson!

Please fill out 3 observation forms for 3 lessons taught by the teacher candidate. These are in TK20 and are very easy to fill out. A link to the forms you need will be sent to you before student teaching begins, along with instructions.

If your student teacher is going to be with you for only 5-7 weeks, we ask that you fill out 2 observation forms in TK20.

Lesson Plans

Student teachers are told to share detailed lesson plans with the cooperating teacher before they teach a lesson. Student teachers are required to utilize the template provided by MSUM as part of both their teacher training and the edTPA (Teacher Performance Assessment) they must complete as a requirement of the state of MN. Cooperating teachers know their students well and can head off an idea that might cause chaos! After the candidate has consistently demonstrated a high level of proficiency in lesson planning, it is ok to allow the candidate to prepare more abbreviated lesson plans and to discontinue the practice of sharing plans with you if you so choose.

Student teachers are required to write detailed lesson plans, even when the cooperating teacher is not required to do so.

Midterm

You are asked to complete a midterm assessment form around halfway through the placement. The university supervisor assigned to the student teacher will schedule a triad meeting to discuss the midterm evaluation with the cooperating teacher and the student teacher. At this meeting each member of the triad will share their scores for each item. In the case of any discrepancy in scoring, the supervisor will conduct a discussion of evidence in support of scoring to reach a consensus score. The supervisor must also record and submit a consensus score for each item on another form.

Final Evaluations

Towards the end of student teaching, you will be asked to complete a final evaluation form and dispositions assessment. The university supervisor will set up a final triad meeting. The process of sharing and discussing scores for each item on the final evaluation will again take place and the supervisor will record and submit consensus scores for each item.

Working with Families

Student teachers are required to participate in parent/teacher conferences. It is up to the cooperating teacher to determine the extent of participation.

Candidates need to assist with preparing for conferences as part of a collaborative team. They also need to at least observe a conference. The ideal situation would be for them to take the lead for one or more conferences.

Collaboration

As much as possible, candidates need to have opportunities to become members of instructional teams in the school and active participants in professional decisions. Please assist them in working with other faculty and staff in your building, particularly as that pertains to meeting the needs of learners in your classroom.

edTPA

The cooperating teacher is not expected to help the student teacher with the TPA. In fact, even the university supervisor can give very little assistance. This is a state requirement and must be done independently. The cooperating teacher only needs to provide the opportunity for the candidate to develop and teach a unit independently. Candidates are also required to videotape themselves teaching a lesson. Student teachers are not allowed to take a day off from student teaching to work on the TPA.

We ask that the cooperating teacher share pertinent information related to the curriculum being taught during edTPA and background information related to students in the classroom that may be relevant to planning and teaching the edTPA lessons.

If your student teacher is with you for a 5-7 week placement, the edTPA will not be done during this time

Stages of Student Teaching

Stage One. During the first week in the classroom, student teachers should spend time observing classroom procedures and learning the names of the students. They may begin assuming a few administrative and procedural tasks such as taking attendance and recording grades if the cooperating teacher feels it is appropriate. The student teacher may also begin assisting individual students or small groups with lessons or projects at this time. This is a transition time for the student teacher and open communication is essential in clarifying roles and expectations.

Stage Two. This stage will comprise the major portion of student teaching. The student teacher and the cooperating teacher may plan lessons cooperatively, with the cooperating teacher giving final approval prior to each activity or lesson. A gradual increase in teaching responsibilities for the student teacher should begin to occur at this time until a full teaching schedule is assumed. Feedback at this stage is very important so that the student teacher can effectively evaluate his/her teaching performance.

Stage Three. The Minnesota Board of Teaching requires a minimum of one week (or five consecutive days) of full-time student teaching. It is to the student teacher's advantage to teach more than the requirement indicates. MSUM requires 2 weeks of full-time student teaching. It is ok if there is more than 2 weeks as long as the cooperating teacher is still present most of the time and giving feedback.

Stage Four. At the close of the student teaching experience, the classroom responsibilities will gradually return to the cooperating teacher. Opportunities for the student teacher to observe in other classrooms in the building should be provided if at all possible.

If your student teacher is with you for only 5-7 weeks, this time frame is a bit different. The student is ready to become involved immediately with teaching and working with your students. The full-time student teaching is only 1 week in a shortened placement.

The following section is taken directly from the Student Teaching Handbook so the pronoun "you" is often used.

Qualifications and Requirements of Student Teachers

Student teachers must have a cumulative GPA of 2.75 (Early Childhood, Sped, Elementary Ed) or 2.50 (Secondary and K-12) at the time of application for student teaching. All courses required for the major must be completed with a grade of C or better. Successful previous field experiences must be documented. Attendance at Student Teaching Orientation is required.

Requirements (The following section on requirements is taken directly from the Student Teaching Handbook. It will read as if it is directed to the student teacher.

Attendance

Student teachers will follow the school calendar where they are student teaching and are expected to work the same hours as their cooperating teachers. They are also expected to be in attendance every day of the scheduled term (including in-service and conference days) except in the case of illness or emergency.

Exceptions to the rule.....

Sometimes student teachers have no choice but to schedule a job interview during the student teaching day. If this should occur, be sure that it is not during your full-time student teaching weeks. Schedule an interview either right away in the morning or at the end of the school day. If an interview is far enough away that you need to miss an entire day, you must make up the day.

Student teachers may choose 2 job fairs to attend during student teaching. The days missed must be made up.

There will be days scheduled during student teaching for edTPA help sessions. Student teachers are required to attend the sessions and are excused from student teaching on those days.

Dress Code

Clothing must be professional, clean and in good repair. Clothing should not portray anything political or potentially harmful to children. For example, a t-shirt advertising alcohol, a bar, cigarettes, a political candidate, or with a crude joke would be inappropriate.

Be aware of how you smell. It is important that teachers have good breath and body hygiene. If you are a smoker, be sure that your clothes or breath do not smell like smoke. Strong colognes are also distracting and even toxic to some students.

Language

Refrain from using slang, "y_o_u__g_u_y_s_" _a_n_d__grammatically incorrect language when speaking.

Swearing and inappropriate comments based on race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, body type, culture, religion, or political affiliation is absolutely forbidden. You may be removed from your placement for using inappropriate language.

Confidentiality

Never reveal sensitive information about your students, cooperating teacher, or other school personnel to anyone. DO NOT post pictures or information about your student teaching experience on any social media source.

Videos of you teaching should be **nowhere** on social media or YouTube. Make sure everything you have posted on social media about yourself is something you would want a potential employer to see.

If You Are Sick

If you wake up in the morning and you are not feeling well, contact your cooperating teacher and university supervisor right away. Be sure that you know your cooperating teacher received the message. Stay home until you are feeling better.

Follow your school's protocol for COVID-related illness or exposure.

Required Activities During Student Teaching

Journal Entries

A weekly reflection journal is required and will be shared with the university supervisor. The supervisor will make comments, answer questions, and follow up with any concerns. Typically, the journal is sent to the supervisor through email or TK20. The journal is an important part of reflecting on your experiences. A student teacher that does not submit a journal in a timely manner may fail student teaching.

Lesson Plans and/or Unit Plans

Lesson plans are required for every lesson you teach. You will use the template given to you by your university supervisor. Upload the 4 lesson plans your supervisor approves to TK20.

Teacher Performance Assessment (TPA)

The edTPA is a requirement from the state. All student teachers who are working towards their first teaching license will fulfill this requirement during student teaching. Student teachers will be supported with regularly scheduled workshops throughout student teaching. A timeline for completion will be handed out at the first workshop.

edTPA is completed in the first placement if the student teacher has two placements.

Collaboration

Student teachers are expected to collaborate with cooperating teachers and department or grade level teams. Participate in PLCs, department meetings, grade level meetings, and parent/teacher conference.

Working with Families

Student teachers are required to participate in parent/teacher conferences. It is up to the cooperating teacher to determine the extent of participation.

Candidates need to assist with preparing for conference. They also need to at least observe a conference. The ideal situation would be to take the lead for one or more conferences. Candidates are also required to participate in creating a class newsletter and/or letter home to parents, when appropriate.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Student teachers are required to participate in PLCs when they are being used in the school.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHING

If a student teacher **has a teaching license or a sub license**, the student can be a substitute teacher for up to 15 days, **in the student teaching classroom**. The student teacher can be a substitute teacher **up to 3 times** in the same building, in a different classroom. Student teachers **can be paid** for substitute teaching.

If a student teacher does not have a teaching license or sub license, a substitute teacher must be in the room with the student, when the cooperating teacher is absent. The student teacher can be allowed to be in charge of the classroom during that time and can be paid.

A Successful Student Teacher will.....

- Earn Proficient or better on at least 90% of the Student Teaching Final Evaluation
- Earn Proficient or better on at least 95% of the Professional Dispositions Assessment.
- Remain in the student teaching experience throughout the student teaching calendar.
- Have a successful (as determined by the cooperating teacher and university supervisor) independent, full-time student teaching experience for 10 consecutive days, as required by MSUM.

Failing Student Teaching

- A student teacher may fail student teaching if he or she does not meet the standards for a successful student teacher.

Extending Student Teaching

A student teacher may receive an "In Progress" if it is determined that more time is needed to demonstrate competence. In this case, the candidate will be given the chance to extend student teaching rather than fail. A remediation plan will be implemented and must be strictly followed by the candidate. If, after the extended time is completed, the student teacher is able to meet the standards for a successful student teacher, he or she may receive a grade of "Pass."

"In Progress" means that the student teacher has completed all of the requirements for student teaching, but needs more time to become "Proficient" in one or more of the areas on the Student Teaching Final Evaluation or Professional Dispositions Assessment. In addition, the candidate has shown growth and perseverance in troublesome areas and only needs more time to become "Proficient." The decision to assign "In Progress" grade is a rare occurrence and will be the decision of the Director of Field Experiences, in collaboration with the student teacher's

cooperating teacher and university supervisor. An "In Progress" will not be given if a candidate is unable to independently be responsible for all aspects of the classroom experience for at least 10 consecutive days, as required by the MSUM. Student teaching will have to be repeated.

Termination of Student Teaching

If a student teacher is asked to leave his or her student teaching assignment by the cooperating teacher or other school official, the student teaching experience will be immediately terminated.

A candidate who fails student teaching may be required to spend a semester in remediation as determined by Field Experiences faculty. When the candidate has successfully completed remediation requirements, he or she may be allowed to repeat student teaching. If a second student teaching experience results in failing, the candidate will not be allowed to student teach again. Field Experiences may only be repeated once.

A student teacher who has been removed from student teaching may file an appeal with the Director of Teacher Education. The appeal form is found on the Field Experiences website. Once an appeal has been filed, it goes to the Appeals Committee. Candidates may attend this meeting. Candidates will be notified of a decision within 2 weeks time.

Completing Student Teaching

Student teaching is graded P (Pass) or F (fail). The grade of P does not affect your GPA; a grade of F will lower your GPA. If you are doing unsatisfactory work in student teaching and improvement seems impossible, it may be best to withdraw so you receive a W (withdrawal) rather than an F. A grade of IP (in progress) is given only when satisfactory work is being done and it becomes impossible to complete the student teaching assignment before the end of the semester.

A grade of Pass must be attained on the edTPA in order to pass student teaching.

Guidelines For Student teachers

1. Begin your student teaching assignment with a positive attitude. Keep in mind, cooperating teachers are there to help you learn and grow.
2. Obtain and learn the policies of your school and classroom.
3. Take initiative! Consult your cooperating teacher first, and if approved, take action. Avoid having to be told everything you are to do.
4. Use your time efficiently. Plan your day; organize everything you are to do. Plan for success!
5. Be prompt or early. Notify your cooperating teacher and supervisor if you will be late or absent for any reason. Find out how your cooperating teacher wants to be notified.
6. Think of ways you can assist your cooperating teacher. Volunteer to get involved with as much as possible right away.
7. Remember that teachers have many commitments and duties. Your cooperating teacher cannot be available to you at all times. Be realistic. Jot down questions that you have and ask them during quiet time.

8. Refrain from cell phone and other electronic device usage during the school day. Do not check during class time.
9. Reserve eating for break times.
10. Never make a judgment about a cooperating teacher's methods, whether for teaching or classroom management. It is ok to ask about a certain method, but only for the purpose of learning.

What you can expect from the University Supervisor

Hold a preliminary meeting with each student teacher and cooperating teacher to go over requirements and procedures. This is important even when the cooperating teacher has had many student teachers. It is a first-time experience for each student teacher.

Check in regularly (at least every 2 weeks) with the cooperating teacher so that no one is surprised if a problem arises.

Hold a midterm meeting with each student teacher and cooperating teacher.

Formally observe each student teacher 4 times for a full placement, 3 times at each split placement, and twice at each 5-week placement. These observations must be spread out over the semester so that growth can be documented.

Schedule observations ahead of time and arrive when expected.

Schedule enough time for visits so there is plenty of time for touching base with the cooperating teacher and giving feedback to the student teacher.

Require detailed lesson plans for each observation. Evaluate the first two observation lesson plans. Rationale: At the novice level, candidates must develop the analytic thinking necessary for successful teaching and learning. Once candidates have shown proficiency in lesson planning and instruction, classroom management, etc. supervisors can allow candidates to include less detail in their full-time weeks of lesson planning.

Hold the candidates to very high expectations during early observations and address ALL issues or potential issues with classroom management and instruction during post observation conference. Rationale: This will better prepare candidates for success during their full-time teaching weeks.

Give constructive as well as reinforcing feedback after each observation. Always challenge candidates with some aspect for further growth.

Recognize when a student teacher is not doing well and inform the field experiences office, whether or not we become involved at that time.

Observe more often when a student teacher is not doing well.

Fill out final evaluations for each student teacher.

Give "ethical coaching" to student teachers in regard to TPA.

The university supervisor assigned to you is your first contact for questions and concerns. If you find that you are not having your questions and concerns addressed by the supervisor, please contact the Field Experiences office.

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