

# THE MIDDLE PERIOD OF STUDENT TEACHING

## Duration

The middle period of student teaching is both crucial and lengthy. It extends from about midway of the second week to the beginning of the seventh week for student teachers who have an eight-week assignment, and from approximately the third week to the fourteenth week for those with a sixteen-week assignment. During this time the student teacher will move from limited responsibility to assuming the majority of the teaching load and its related duties.

## Assuming Increased Responsibilities: Student Teacher and Cooperating Teacher

Assuming full responsibility for the classroom should be a gradual process. The rate at which the student teacher increases responsibility for the teaching load should be based on a joint agreement between the cooperating teacher and the University Coordinator. A schedule should be established that will allow flexibility for unexpected changes or interruptions.

The cooperating teacher will provide considerable guidance and direction in the early stages of this middle period. Toward the end of this period, as the student teacher's responsibilities are increased, the cooperating teacher will leave the student teacher in charge of the room for short and then increasingly longer periods of time, provided that the student teacher is demonstrating progress in the development of teaching and classroom management skills. The cooperating teacher will communicate the elements of effective teaching to the student teacher: verbal explanation, demonstration, printed material, video taping, role modeling. The cooperating teacher will demonstrate "Best Practice."

Just after the midpoint of the student teaching experience (early in the fifth week for student teachers who have an eight-week assignment-during the ninth week for those with sixteen-week assignments) the cooperating teacher and student teacher will each complete a detailed midterm evaluation of the student teacher's progress and discuss them with each other. This provides the cooperating teacher with the opportunity to assess the student teacher's strengths and weaknesses. As with the daily observations, it is extremely important that the cooperating teacher and the student teacher share their perceptions of the student teacher's progress and needs.

## Independent Teaching

When the cooperating teacher determines that the student teacher is ready to assume all responsibilities of teaching, the student teacher will assume the planning, implementation, and evaluation of all aspects of the lesson and classroom. The purpose of independent teaching is to provide the student teacher the opportunity to assume the role and all responsibilities of a full-time educator in the classroom for an extended period of time.

## When problems occur...

Problems may arise from time to time. All problems should be addressed as soon as possible, but not in the presence of students. The cooperating teacher and the student teacher should work collaboratively to resolve the issues at hand. The University Coordinator will be consulted if the problem persists.

## Policy On Observing, Evaluating And Documenting The Work Of All Student Teachers

### The University Coordinator will:

1. Make formal and informal visits to the assigned classrooms/schools to observe and assess the student teacher's work based on identified criteria;
2. Record observed strengths and needs of each student teacher;
3. Share observed strengths and needs that have been recorded with the student teacher and provide copies to the cooperating teacher and Student Teaching;
4. If needed, discuss and establish a plan of action for addressing the identified needs.
  - a. Continue to give feedback on progress toward addressing identified needs.
  - b. If the student teacher does not show appropriate progress in addressing needs, discuss continuing concerns with the student teacher and cooperating teacher and notify the TEPD Department Chair, or designee.
  - c. Inform student teacher that the TEPD Department Chair, or designee, will be apprised of the situation.
  - d. Provide copies of observation evaluations to the TEPD Department Chair, or designee.
  - e. If the student teacher is a secondary certification candidate, contact the subject matter specialist to arrange for observations and feedback.
  - f. Copies of the subject matter observations and feedback are to be sent to the University Coordinator, the cooperating teacher, the student teacher, and the TEPD Department Chair, or designee.
  - g. Develop an extensive action plan with the student teacher and the cooperating teacher to address the area(s) of concern. Action plan requirements should be signed by all parties involved and a copy sent to the TEPD Department Chair, or designee.
  - h. After a period of time as specified in the action plan and additional observations by the University Coordinator and cooperating teacher, progress should be assessed. If no significant progress occurs, the TEPD Department Chair, or designee, will be contacted to determine the next course of action for each situation.

5. Students who have a valid concern relating to their placement or evaluation by their University Coordinator or the TEPD Department Chair, or designee, must utilize the appeal process for students. There is an appeal form in the “Forms” section. Initiation of the appeal process is the responsibility of the student and must be commenced within five days of the disputed decision. Students who have a concern should contact their University Coordinator.

## **THE FINAL WEEKS OF STUDENT TEACHING**

### **Completion/Phasing out of the Field Experience**

During the final few weeks of the field experience, there will be a gradual transition of responsibilities from the student teacher back to the cooperating teacher. This will allow time for the student teacher to:

- Complete all classroom teaching responsibilities;
- Observe other teachers;
- Complete the student teaching final evaluation;
- Self-reflection;
- Complete the electronic portfolio.