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Student Teaching Handbook

Department of Learning & Teaching

University of San Diego

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About this Handbook

The Student Teaching Handbook has been developed by the Office of Field Experiences to present information to teacher candidates, cooperating teachers, university supervisors, and faculty. By defining everyone's role and the intended outcomes of the experience, we anticipate that all participants will better understand their responsibilities and the significance of their roles.

While most pertinent forms and documents are located at the end of this handbook, you can also locate all up-to-date documents for download at: <https://sites.sandiego.edu/dlt/field-experience/>

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The Progression of Field Experiences

Placement	General Overview	Teacher Candidate Goals	Hours Required
Semester 1: Practicum EDTE 551	Introductory experience in the field observing teachers and students and gaining an understanding of San Diego-area schools from the teacher's perspective	Observe a classroom setting and complete field-based assignments from course instructors	A minimum of 20-30 hours minimum across one term spread across 8 or more weeks
Semester 2: Extended Practicum	Splitting weekly time with a general education and a special education teacher in observing and practice teaching small segments of learning	Observation and 4 observed practice lessons with supervisor feedback	20 hours per week for a total of 260 hours across one semester
Semester 3: Student Teaching, first credential area	Practice teaching alongside an experienced teacher in your content area. You will be responsible for teaching a minimum of 20 days on your own within the credential area	Practice teaching with at least 20 days of solo teaching and 6 formal observations and feedback	Full-time for the semester for approximately 455 hours
Semester 4 (depending on your program): Student Teaching, second credential area	Practice teaching alongside an experienced teacher in your content area. You will be responsible for teaching a minimum of 20 days on your own within the credential area	Practice teaching with at least 20 days of solo teaching and 6 formal observations and feedback	Full-time for the semester for approximately 455 hours

At this point in your program, you have completed both a *Practicum* and *Extended Practicum* placement to help scaffold your experiences and prepare you for successful *Student Teaching*.

If you are planning on earning two credentials, you will complete two semesters of student teaching, one per credential area. It does not matter in which order you complete these experiences.

Prerequisites to Student Teaching

All candidates applying to student teach must be admitted into the DLT credential program.

Before student teaching, a candidate must:

- Have the following on file with the Credentialing Analyst: Certificate of Clearance, TB test, CBST, and CSET;
- Complete all required coursework, with a B- or better in credential coursework with no incompletes on their transcript;
- Earn a GPA of 3.0 or better for graduate students, a GPA of 2.75 and C- or better in upper division courses for undergraduates, or earn a grade of C or better in all major courses for Liberal Studies majors;
- Successfully complete Practicum and Extended Practicum placements and have evaluations and timesheets on file; and
- Be recommended by the Department of Learning and Teaching faculty.

Preparing to Teach in Diverse California Schools

Through both coursework and fieldwork, we want our students to understand that the United States is a land rich in diversity and this diversity is reflected in our nation's schools. According to the California Department of Education, the California public school student population in the 2021-22 school year was 21.1% White, 5.1% African American, 55.9% Hispanic, 2.3% Filipino, 9.5% Asian, and 0.4% Pacific Islander. In addition, 19.1% of students are classified as English Learners, more than half are eligible for free or reduced-price meals (FRPM), and approximately 12% receive special education services (www.cde.ca.gov).

To be fully prepared to teach in California schools, our candidates must have a variety of field experiences where they can experience a myriad of different curriculum, teaching styles, student populations, and grade levels. With this in mind, we have designated our fieldwork experiences to ensure our students are aware of and appreciate the diversity found in San Diego schools. Each student is required to participate in field experiences that are diverse with respect to school site, grade level, as well as cultural and academic backgrounds of the students.

Field placements will take place at carefully selected sites chosen for teaching excellence, faculty and administrative support for candidate learning, and diversity among the student body. Per CTC regulations, the teaching experiences are selected to reflect socioeconomic and cultural diversity and classrooms that include Emergent Bilinguals.

Placement decisions will be made at the discretion of the Office of Field Experiences. Although candidates are invited to share their preferences and make requests, decisions will be made in accordance with the goals of the program, the requirements of the state, and the professional judgment of the USD faculty and staff as to the placement site that best fits the experience and needs of the teacher candidate.

CalTPA & Student Learning Outcomes

During Multiple or Single Subject student teaching, candidates will record lessons and complete the requirements for their California Teaching Performance Assessment (CalTPA). You can find more information about CalTPA at our DLT website: <https://sites.sandiego.edu/dlt/caltpa/>

One of the most important challenges facing public education is to ensure that the nation's teacher workforce is prepared to meet the academic needs of all students. The CalTPA gives teacher preparation programs access to a multiple-measure assessment system aligned to state and national standards – including California Common Core State Standards and the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) – that can guide the development of curriculum and practice around the common goal of making sure new teachers are able to teach each student effectively and improve student achievement.

Our program meets the following learning outcomes, which are aligned with CalTPA, and InTASC Standards.

Outcome 1: Teacher candidates demonstrate specialized field knowledge as they integrate knowledge and technology across content areas and use differing perspectives to engage all learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

Outcome 2: Teacher candidates apply theories of learning, instruction, and motivation relating to the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, physical, and moral development of all learners, evidenced by developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences implemented in an inclusive learning environment.

Outcome 3: Candidates incorporate assessment and technology in their planning and instructional strategies as a means of obtaining continual feedback used to improve student learning, classroom management strategies, and pedagogical approaches.

Outcome 4: Candidates utilize and generate meaningful research on pedagogical practices, student learning, and educational issues and policies to actively investigate and consider new ideas that will improve teaching and learning and advance the profession.

Outcome 5: Candidates explore effective approaches for creating inclusive learning environments that are welcoming and accepting of diverse learners and students with learning differences who, because of gender, language, cultural background, differing ability levels, disabilities, learning approaches, and/or socioeconomic status may have academic needs that require varied instructional strategies to ensure their learning.

The Student Teaching Triad

There are three members of the student teaching triad who work together to ensure a successful and productive experience:

- **Student teacher:** the pre-service teacher who is working to earn a teaching credential by completing a field-based experience to learn about teaching practice from professionals

- Cooperating teacher (also called a mentor teacher): an in-service teacher who provides opportunities for the student teacher to practice teaching under their mentorship, as well as providing formal and informal feedback and evaluation for the student teacher they've agreed to host in their classroom
- University supervisor: acts as the liaison for the DLT Field Office and is the first point-of-contact for student teachers and cooperating teachers during the assigned placement.

Each person in the triad plays an integral role, and it is integral that all members of the triad have a clear definition of their roles and expectations as well as the roles and expectations of each other.

During the course of a semester, the triad will meet for the following:

1. Initial triad meeting. This will be a group meeting at the start of the semester where roles and responsibilities, student teaching times (Teacher Candidate Weekly Schedule Form), and expectations will all be discussed. It is through this explicit communication that everyone can be 'on the same page' for a successful placement.
2. During the semester, the university supervisor will arrange 6 observations, some on-site and some through the Tevera online platform. These are formal evaluations that must be completed as per CTC guidelines. The cooperating teacher will be invited to provide feedback and assessment both in-person and through the Tevera platform.
3. The university supervisor and cooperating teacher will complete a final evaluation of the student teacher and discuss their feedback with the student teacher.
4. The university supervisor is responsible for submitting the student teacher's final grade for the student teaching placement.

The Student Teaching Experience

The following descriptions provide an idea of how each semester's student teaching placement will look, depending on your credential area.

Multiple Subject Credential Experience (elementary school). The student teacher begins the placement by becoming oriented to the school community. As the semester progresses, the candidate takes on additional teaching responsibilities, starting with planning and teaching in one subject. When the student teacher and cooperating teacher feel that the student teacher is ready, the student teacher takes on another subject for planning and teaching. The experience continues this way until the student teacher is responsible for all classroom instruction and management about two months into the semester.

Single Subject Credential Experience (middle and high school). The Single Subject student teaching placement must include at least one of the following: either two different courses, two different grade levels, or two cooperating teachers. The student teacher starts the student teaching assignment by becoming oriented to the school setting. After an initial period of acquaintance, the student teacher begins taking on teacher responsibilities. This starts with

planning and teaching in one class period or section. When the student teacher and cooperating teacher feel that the student teacher is ready, the student takes on other classes or class periods, one at a time.

Education Specialist Credential Experience (K-12). Education Specialist student teachers are required to spend their placement working with groups of special education students in various settings, which might include resource room, push-in instruction, and/or team teaching settings. Attending IEP meetings and assessing students' needs is also an integral part of the experience. In some cases, such meetings occur after school hours. Student teachers should make every effort to attend when possible.

Student Teacher Expectations & Guidelines

The student teaching experience serves as a bridge from pre-service into the profession of teaching. It is an opportunity to try out instructional and management techniques as well as to get to know the intricacies of being a classroom teacher. In order to be successful, consider these guidelines.

- Student teachers are required to follow the calendar of the placement school, regardless of the USD calendar. The only exceptions are religious holidays and must be discussed at the start of the semester with the cooperating teacher and university supervisor.
- Student teachers must complete at a minimum four weeks (20 school days) of independent classroom teaching (e.g., “solo teaching”) for each placement as required by the CTC. This includes planning, instruction, and assessment of students.
- The student teacher is expected, upon principal approval, to participate in the full range of teacher activities, such as attending open houses, faculty meetings, and professional development.
- The student teacher is expected to be at the school for the same hours as the cooperating teacher. This translates to a “full-time” placement.

Be prepared. Be sure to arrive to school on time. Upon arrival, check in at the office and follow through on commitments. Be there for the entire day and come as early and stay as late as your cooperating teacher, as appropriate. If you are expected to present a lesson, have it prepared and shared with your cooperating teacher at least 24 hours in advance, in the format requested, with all materials ready, including a duplicate copy of your lesson plan for your cooperating teacher and/or university supervisor.

Maintain professional appearance. Dress appropriately and be well-groomed. Take cues from the staff regarding appropriate dress for staff in a given school community. Also, your behavior should be professional at all times.

Communicate and ask for help. Maintain a regular dialogue with your cooperating teacher and university supervisor. Ask your cooperating teacher to share his/her experiences and ideas. Actively participate in the observation and evaluation meetings with your cooperating teacher and university supervisor. Know that the triad as well as the Field Office and your faculty are here to support you during your experience, and ask for help when you need it.

Call in if you must be absent. If you become ill or need to be absent for other reasons, you must call your cooperating teacher, your school office, AND your university supervisor with a minimum of 12 hours' notice. If you were expected to teach, you are responsible for getting the lesson plans and materials to the cooperating teacher. Make arrangements early if you know that you will need to be absent. More than two or three absences will require extra time for student teaching.

Plan for curriculum and assessment. Candidates will be expected to teach the assigned curriculum. Candidates will be expected to assess students' learning using assessments designed and implemented in collaboration with cooperating teachers and/or university supervisors.

Be respectful. Follow all school policies associated with student contact, teacher responsibilities, and professional conduct. Respect and follow the procedures of the cooperating teacher. Follow the recommendations and expectations of the cooperating teacher(s) and university supervisor. You can always ask questions, but do so respectfully, inquisitively, and at the appropriate time. Remember that you're a guest.

Maintain confidentiality. Information about students must be kept confidential. Do not discuss student and parent issues except with your cooperating teacher.

Get involved. Attend faculty meetings, open houses, and other school events. Become as much a part of the staff as possible. For example, go to social functions when invited, and take treats to the staff lounge. Join a professional association and attend its functions.

Limit your other commitments for the semester. Student teaching requires a significant commitment of both hours on-site and in preparation. We strongly recommend that you do not take on additional coursework or have an after-school job. If you are in a situation where you have extenuating circumstances (e.g., you're a caretaker or you must maintain employment), notify the Field Office prior to the start of your placement semester and ensure appropriate communication regarding all aspects of the special circumstance.

Log your time. You MUST keep an accurate log of your placement hours each semester of your program. This will occur within the Tevera platform.

Student Teaching Evaluation Process

There are several aspects to the evaluation process for student teachers. This includes formal and informal evaluations both in-person and via Tevera by the cooperating teacher and supervisor, self-evaluation, and a final evaluation.

It is important to remember that the main purpose of student teaching is to learn and grow in professional practice throughout the course of the semester. Student teachers are not expected to have perfect lessons during each observation; rather, the reflective process is an integral component to the evaluation process.

Informal Observations, Reflection, and Self-Evaluation. To become a competent professional, the student teacher should begin to develop skills as a *reflective practitioner*. Reflection should be both in the form of oral conversations with the cooperating teacher and university supervisor as well as in written form, as in the student teacher log/journal. The ongoing process of practice/feedback/reflection allows the student teacher to analyze their progress, identify problems, and develop solutions to those problems. Developing these skills will help in the transition in becoming the decision maker in his/her own classroom. The Reflective Analysis of Lesson Form on the Field Experiences website may help in the reflection process.

Remember that the cooperating teacher and university supervisor both act as supportive mentors who have decades of teaching experience and expertise between them. It is important to consider critical feedback as part of their role in helping student teachers to improve their teaching practice. Learning how to accept and grow from such practice is the hallmark of a reflective professional teacher.

Formal Observations. The university supervisor provides six formal observations with the goal of providing feedback on general teaching practices as well as assessing a student teacher's mastery of the California Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs). To engage in this process, student teachers must submit lesson plans to their supervisor and cooperating teacher at least 24 hours prior to the observation. The length of the observation depends on individual class/subject schedule. Student teachers will upload videos of their lessons to the Tevera platform, where their supervisor and cooperating teacher will be able to review and provide feedback. (Additional information on the Tevera platform will be provided.)

Final Evaluation. At the end of the placement, the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor will complete the Final Evaluation. The triad will meet to discuss the student teacher's skills and abilities demonstrated during the assignment. This is a final evaluation of the student teacher's readiness for the Preliminary California Teaching Credential. A copy of the Final Evaluation Form is found in the appendix of this handbook so that student teachers can understand how they will be evaluated.

California Teaching Performance Expectations

To ensure that all teaching professionals across the state of California obtain the expected body of knowledge, skills, and abilities required for early-career teachers, the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) set out a required set of domains which must be met through a combination of coursework, clinical practice, and a Teaching Performance Assessment (CalTPA) prior to earning a preliminary Multiple Subjects or Single Subject teaching credential. The TPEs are aligned to the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) that guide early-career induction programs.

The six TPE domains include:

1. Engaging and Supporting All Students in Learning
2. Creating and Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning
3. Understanding and Organizing Subject matter for Student Learning
4. Planning Instruction and Designing Learning Experiences for All Students
5. Assessing Student Learning
6. Developing as a Professional Educator

Student Teaching Grading Rubric

It is ultimately the responsibility of the university supervisor to assign a grade to the student teacher for the semester. University supervisors should use the language of the rubric to provide a rationale for each candidate's final grade. Supervisors may add a "+" or "-" to indicate that a candidate's performance rests slightly above or below a particular letter grade. **Supervisors should also work to gather evidence to support the reasoning for the grade.**

A: *Student teachers who receive A grades stand out in all respects and show clear signs of becoming excellent teachers. (NB: A is the highest grade; there is no A+ option)*

- By the end of the semester, they score 4s and 5s on the final evaluation based upon the Teaching Performance Expectations.
- Willing to take risks, and they capably analyze their own practice, pinpoint their strengths and weaknesses and identify what they need to change to improve their practice.
- View their lessons in the context of big ideas and enduring understandings that guide instruction over time.
- Maintain high expectations for their students and for themselves.
- Demonstrate professionalism by organizing and keeping track of their work effectively, taking initiative, and understanding their role and responsibilities.
- Use student work along with research and theory to inform their decision-making and make the best choices they can to ensure high levels of student achievement.
- Lead instruction in their classrooms frequently and are capable of designing and implementing effective lessons and units of instruction.
- Go beyond and volunteer for additional activities on campus when it's feasible.

- Collaborate effectively and appropriately with their cooperating teachers and respond well to feedback from their cooperating teachers and coaches.
- Complete the semester well prepared to take on responsibility for their own classroom.

B: *Student teachers who receive B grades do well in a number of aspects of student teaching but not in consistent ways.*

- They meet, but do not exceed expectations (3s and 4s) in many or any of the competencies targeted on the final student teaching evaluation as based upon the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs).
- Are conscientious about meeting their responsibilities but do not take initiative.
- Tend to follow the lead of their cooperating teachers but do not take risks or attempt to add anything of their own to the methods of instruction already being employed.
- Are able to engage students and teach effective lessons (but not necessarily consistently), and they do not have a longer-term view of instruction, embedding their lessons in learning and skill development that comes before and follows the lesson.
- Do not consistently see their lessons as part of a larger body of instruction and are not able to identify big ideas and enduring understandings that guide them.
- Demonstrate their professionalism by doing everything that is expected of them, collaborating effectively with their cooperating teachers and using feedback from their coaches to influence their instruction.
- Complete the semester prepared to take on responsibility for their own classroom, but will possibly need some support in reaching the highest standards of the profession.

C: *Student teachers receive C grades for the following.*

- If students do not understand or meet the expectations for student teaching by attending school daily, participating actively in their classrooms, and collaborating effectively with their cooperating teachers and supervisors, they will receive a C grade (or lower).
- In addition, some student teachers may meet the basic expectations for student teaching but fail to engage students, to manage the classroom, and/or to plan and execute effective instruction.
- Students who receive a C demonstrate a lack of ability to appear professional in dress, communication, and/or relationship building.
- They often appear moody or insensitive, or possibly act in an awkward or inappropriate manner.
- They are not well-prepared to take on responsibility for their own classroom.

Communication Plan for End of a Placement

Student teachers are expected to spend approximately 14 weeks at their placement sites. During these weeks, the state requires that at least 20 days of “solo teaching” occur. The student teaching placement length might vary in order to address the developmental needs of student teachers who must be able to show quality evidence of Teacher Performance Expectations (TPEs) as well as complete the documentation of their CalTPA expectations. Additionally, teacher candidates must complete the required clinical experience hours as indicated by California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Procedures for Unsatisfactory Progress

Teaching is a challenging career that requires a variety of skills. These include the ability to constantly be aware of your surroundings, multitask, plan and deliver effective lessons, and assess student engagement and progress. It is not unusual for a student to struggle initially. However, in some cases, a student continues to struggle further into the placement.

In a case where the cooperating teacher and/or supervisor feel the student needs to put forth more effort, the Field Office should be notified immediately. In most cases a *Notification of Need to Improve for Student Teachers* form will be completed whereby the specific areas in which improvement is needed and the expected behavior outcomes are delineated. A meeting will be held to discuss the information on this form. If these outcomes are met to the satisfaction of the Field Office, the student will be successful in the placement experience.

If, however, the student teacher does not meet these expected behavior outcomes, the supervisor must complete the *Identification, Assistance or Dismissal of Candidate Enrolled in Student Teaching* form. At a meeting that includes the appropriate parties and the Director of Field Experiences, the information on the form will be discussed and the student will be informed that they will not receive a passing grade for student teaching and will not be recommended for a California Teaching Credential. Future options will be discussed at that time.

Phases in Student Teaching

Adapted from Caruso, J. (1977). Phases in student teaching. *Young children*, 33(1), 57-63.

Student teachers often go through different stages as they progress through their part-time and full-time student teaching experiences. With the added pressures of CalTPA and Action Research, the stages presented below might seem to repeat themselves in different field placements. As you read through the list, consider how you can identify and support candidates as they move through these stages.

Phase 1: Anxiety/Euphoria – During this phase candidates are concerned about acceptance from their cooperating teacher, supervisor, and students. They are also concerned about accepting their cooperating teacher, supervisor, and students. At the same time, there is great excitement about starting student teaching. They are excited about all the possibilities and change they will institute without knowing the realities of being a teacher.

Phase 2: Confusion/Clarity – Once the initial excitement has worn off and candidates begin to work with students in small group or whole group situations, panic sets in. They are uncertain about standards, curriculum, lesson planning, classroom management, and giving directions/instructions. In addition, they are gaining new real world experiences and university coursework information daily. This is the stage when a candidate will begin to demonstrate stamina, emotional/intellectual curiosity, and drive. Candidates begin to work with small pieces to form their understanding of teaching and learning. At this point their scope of understanding is fairly limited, but through grappling with small pieces, their understanding begins to grow.

Phase 3: Competence/Inadequacy – This is the moment when the candidate first experiences the “aha” of teaching, or when the students admit to liking them. While the candidate may intellectually know there is growth, the feeling of insecurity is also present. Teaching appears easy for the cooperating teacher and the supervisor might always have the answer. Candidates might also struggle with authority figures at this time as their competence grows.

Phase 4: Criticism/New Awareness – During this phase, the candidate moves attention toward the students and professional issues at the school site or in education as a whole. The candidate who has moved into this phase might say, “If this were my class, I would do it differently.” Candidates begin to find fault with their cooperating teacher. At this point, there is also a deeper appreciation of what is happening behind the scenes with teaching. A candidate at this stage is also more open to receiving criticism and areas of growth during lesson debriefs.

Phase 5: More Confidence/Greater Inadequacy – At this point, candidates are ready to move into assuming a greater role in the classroom. They have set higher expectations and standards for themselves, and will feel great inadequacy when they do not meet those expectations. They want to be the best, and in thinking this, are more accepting of criticism for growth. Candidates are more likely to demonstrate deeper levels of reflection.

Phase 6: Loss/Relief – As candidates prepare to leave a classroom, they will experience their first sadness of leaving a group of students. It is the loss of a relationship, and possibly guilt at not having done more for the students or cooperating teacher. There might be a feeling of anxiety if a candidate is now looking for a job or position.

Appendix A: Index of Student Teaching Forms & Guides

The following list of forms and documents can be located as individual downloads on the Field Experiences website.

DLT's Quick-Start Guide to the TPEs: a truncated, succinct version of the California Teacher Performance Expectations to help student teachers start to make sense of what's required of them during observations

Site Orientation Checklist: ideal for helping the student teacher acclimate to the new placement

Teacher Candidate Weekly Schedule Form: useful in communicating expected time of arrival and departure for each day of the week for the student teacher

UDL Lesson Plan Templates 1 and 2: optional but encouraged templates for designing lessons, especially for observation days, based on the Universal Design for Learning Guidelines which are taught in our credential coursework

DLT Tevera Guidebook: a quick-start guide prepared by DLT to help you utilize the online observation platform

Notice of Recording Letter: a letter for parents/guardians to sign to allow their student's image to be captured during CalTPA recording

Reflective Analysis of Lesson Questionnaire: an optional, informal tool for reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of a student teacher's lesson which can be used privately and/or during a discussion with the supervisor or cooperating teacher.