



# GUIDE TO CLINICAL EXPERIENCES\*

*For: Teacher Candidates, Mentor Teachers, Clinical Coaches, Liaisons, and Principals*

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## OFFICE OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION

The Office of Educator Preparation is an integral part of the teacher education program in the Graduate School of Education through our relationships with PreK-12 schools throughout the Western New York community who work collaboratively with us to provide intensive mentored field experience and supervised teaching opportunities for our candidates preparing to become intellectually-curious, critically-reflective, and practically-informed educators for the profession of teaching. Additionally, the Office of Educator Preparation advances knowledge of teaching and learning through research related to teaching and teacher education and influences policy through participation in external policy-making bodies.

The University at Buffalo, The State University of New York, Graduate School of Education teacher education programs were granted accreditation by the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) June 11, 2012 and is pursuing accreditation with the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP) with site visit scheduled fall 2021.

## FIELD EXPERIENCE

### **Purpose of the Field Experience Course**

The field experience course is a key component in the initial teacher certification course sequence. Preservice teachers typically register for this course the fall semester prior to their supervised teaching. One of the primary goals of the fall semester field experience is to prepare preservice teachers to have successful supervised teaching experiences in the spring semester. Through extensive involvement that includes observation, participation, reflection, and discussion, candidates enrolled in the field experience course are expected to demonstrate the following:

- Connect theory and practice by exploring the ways in which their developing content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge relate to teaching and learning in Western New York preK-12 classrooms, schools, and communities;
- Think, talk, and write critically about teaching and learning in micro and macro contexts;
- Understand school cultures and communities, with a focus on diversity within these settings;
- Create a beginning sense of self as a teacher;
- Build professional relationships.

Upon successful progress towards these competencies during Field Experience, teacher candidates will apply and advance to supervised teaching.

### **Professionalism**

Professionalism comprises a variety of matters related to the ways in which preservice teachers are expected to approach their field experiences (including supervised teaching). Although it is often difficult to comprehensively define, teach, and assess professionalism, the following offers some concrete descriptions that set a minimum standard of expected professional conduct.

At the core of professionalism is an approach to one's professional development through reflective practice. This entails critical analysis of one's thoughts and actions and is informed by feedback from others. Only through reflective practice can one gain new knowledge that demonstrates a deep understanding of one's experiences and, specific to the profession of education, of the possibilities regarding processes of teaching and learning. Within the teacher education program, reflective practice is positioned as a connecting thread and preservice teachers have a myriad of opportunities to develop their skills of critical analysis. Preservice teachers are expected to engage in reflective practices and thus must recognize their need for development, take the initiative to self-critique, seek out and accept the critique from others, and adjust their thoughts and actions in response to this.

In addition to reflective practice, preservice teachers are expected to assume independent responsibility for their professional pursuits and to avoid unproductive inclusion of others, including family members, who may interfere with their preparation. This is a professional preparation program with the goal of producing teachers who are ready to assume the role of educational leader within their classrooms. The display of a lack of independent responsibility and/or the unproductive inclusion of others will serve as a sign that a preservice teacher is not ready to engage in professional preparation. Related to this, the sharing of information regarding preservice teachers' education records will occur in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which establishes boundaries regarding with whom we are able to share information (for example, we will not converse with family members regarding particulars of a preservice teacher's program experience).

As preservice teachers visit and work in schools, they acquire specific information about students, teachers, and school systems. This information is available for professional development only\* – there can be no sharing of information outside the professional context. In reacting to what is observed, preservice teachers are reminded that they have very limited experience in a setting about which they might be tempted to make judgments or generalizations. This means that while they are expected to share their observations and interpretations with other preservice teachers and their clinical coaches during the field experience course, supervised teaching, and seminars, such discussions are inappropriate with individuals who are not involved with the Office of Educator Preparation (except as described within applicable school<sup>†</sup> and UB<sup>‡</sup> reporting protocol regarding suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect) or in settings where others might misinterpret their comments. Without considerable experience as a teacher and observer and without full information about a particular situation, it is easy to misunderstand what is happening and why. Inappropriate sharing of information, including the public representation of students, teachers, and school systems through the Internet and/or other electronic/digital means, shall constitute unprofessional conduct.

In addition to a restrained approach to the sharing of information, preservice teachers are expected to demonstrate basic professional competencies as would be expected of practicing teachers, including the following: arrive to school in a timely manner, present themselves in a professional manner as related to their dress, personal appearance, and hygiene, and maintain a courteous and respectful relationship with school personnel, students, and parents/guardians. Failure to consistently demonstrate these competencies shall constitute unprofessional conduct.

Preservice teachers are reminded that they are guests in the schools and therefore they must follow all applicable school and classroom policies and procedures (including those that may be more restrictive than those of UB; for example, a prohibition of the use of cell phones). A school may refuse entry to a preservice teacher who has violated a school policy and/or procedure, and depending on the circumstances of the situation, the Office of Educator Preparation will determine whether a specific case rises to the level of unprofessional conduct.

Throughout their field experiences, preservice teachers are reminded that they are in a program that is committed to preparing them to teach *all students* in the public school system throughout the state of New York. As such, preservice teachers must approach their field experiences with a commitment toward this goal and must act in a manner that is consistent with this goal. Engaging in actions

inconsistent with this goal represents a lack of professional commitment and shall constitute unprofessional conduct.

Additional examples of unprofessional conduct include, but are not limited to, the following: disorderly, violent, or threatening conduct (verbal and/or physical), including conduct outside of the school; conduct that endangers the safety, health, or welfare of others, including conduct outside of the school; use of alcohol/drugs during school hours or at school events or preceding school hours/events such that they remain under the influence while attending school hours/events; provision of alcohol/drugs to students, including outside of the school; intimate and/or sexual contact with students; inappropriate social contact with students (including via e-mail, social media, text messaging, and/or other forms of electronic/digital communication); explicit violation of students' civil rights; failure to report suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect in adherence with applicable school and UB protocol; theft, including theft of intellectual property and theft committed via electronic/digital means; as well as an expressed intent (including via one's writings) or an encouragement of others to engage in any of the above conduct.

Throughout their program, preservice teachers are expected to interact with and represent UB faculty, staff, and students in a professional manner consistent with UB policies and in line with the above description of professional conduct. As with instances of unprofessional conduct within schools, unprofessional conduct demonstrated through interactions with and/or representations of UB faculty, staff, and/or students shall constitute unprofessional conduct within the program.

Instances that represent a lack of appropriate professional conduct, including not meeting stated expectations and/or violating prohibited actions, shall constitute good reason for removing a preservice teacher from field experiences, assigning a grade of F for the field experience course or U

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\* In cases of suspected child abuse and/or neglect, there are applicable school and UB reporting protocol that may require teacher candidates to share this information primarily for the purpose of child protection rather than professional development. In these cases, teacher candidates are expected to adhere to these protocols.

† Applicable school reporting protocol include protocol established within the school(s) in which teacher candidates are participating for field experience and supervised teaching; it is the responsibility of teacher candidates to know and follow the protocol for all schools in which they participate.

‡ Applicable UB reporting protocol includes the Child Protection Policy established on March 9, 2012 (this policy is available within the UB Policy Library under the section for General University Policies at [buffalo.edu/administrative-services/policy1/ub-policy-lib.html](http://buffalo.edu/administrative-services/policy1/ub-policy-lib.html)); this policy is applicable to instances that involve a UB student, faculty, or staff member as the suspected cause of abuse and/or neglect of a child within the school(s) in which teacher candidates participate.

for supervised teaching and the associated seminar in teaching course, and/or dismissing a preservice teacher from the teacher education program.

Related to professionalism, see [Appendix C](#) for an overview of the related professional standards for Educators.

### **Preparation for Supervised Teaching**

The field experience course complements other coursework in the program in order to well-prepare preservice teachers to begin supervised teaching. Above all, field experiences are learning experiences wherein preservice teachers are provided opportunities to learn, from within the context of particular schools, about the pedagogical and curricular operations that occur in schools.

TEAs will work with each preservice teacher throughout her/his field experience and will generate, collectively with input from the prospective mentor teacher(s), a list of goals and expectations for the upcoming supervised teaching experience. As a team, the clinical coach and mentor teacher(s) will support the prospective teacher candidate in planning for and thinking through the supervised teaching experience.

In order to be permitted to advance to supervised teaching, in addition to other requirements as described in the Supervised Teaching Application (including any applicable conditions of admission and/or continued enrollment), the preservice teacher must successfully satisfy *each* of the field experience course requirements and earn at least a grade of B- in the field experience course in order to receive approval of her/his Supervised Teaching Application.

## **SUPERVISED TEACHING**

Throughout supervised teaching, an essential priority is the beginning professional development of the teacher candidate. However, the *leading priority* is the learning of the PreK-12 students in the classroom. These coexisting dual priorities must guide all actions that occur in preparation for and within the supervised teaching placements and teacher candidates must understand that they will have a responsibility for their learning as well as for the creation of an environment that supports the learning of the students in the classroom.

In order to proceed to supervised teaching, each preservice teacher must submit to the Office of Educator Preparation a Supervised Teaching Application during the semester preceding supervised teaching, and this application must be approved prior to the beginning of supervised teaching

(because of the timing of the release of course grades, this review may occur simultaneous with the scheduled start of supervised teaching and in some circumstances a supervised teaching placement may be cancelled at this time; although this may require a last-minute change in plans that may be challenging, in the long run this will better serve all involved). To participate in supervised teaching, a preservice teacher must register for three closely related courses: Seminar in Teaching (LAI 674), Supervised Teaching I (LAI 668), and Supervised Teaching II (LAI 595), unless an alternate plan has been developed and approved by the Office of Educator Preparation (for example, if a preservice teacher holds a valid NYS Initial Teacher Certificate in another area of certification that was obtained through a recommendation from an approved teacher preparation program, the Office of Educator Preparation will consider, on a case-by-case basis, modifying program requirements as related to supervised teaching).

The Seminar in Teaching course (LAI 674) spans the entire supervised teaching semester and is intended to provide teacher candidates a space to collegially reflect weekly on the supervised teaching experience, support teacher candidates as they explore their roles and professional identities as beginning teachers, and assist in the certification and job search processes. Teacher candidates meet once a week as a large group and/or in small groups with their respective TEAs.

This course is an important part of the program, therefore teacher candidates are required to attend, even though this will mean an inability to participate in school activities during the afternoon that this course meets.

The Supervised Teaching courses (LAI 668 and LAI 595) are the supervised teaching components of the teacher education program. There are two fulltime supervised teaching placements, each of approximately the same length of time, totaling *at least* 75 supervised teaching days. The purpose of supervised teaching is to provide a mentored opportunity for teacher candidates to develop their teaching practice. Supervised teaching situations vary, and therefore the course content will vary according to the given situation, however, in each placement, it is generally expected that the teacher candidate will gradually assume responsibility (in collaboration with the mentor teacher) for the entire teaching day according to a plan developed jointly by the clinical coach and mentor teacher(s), and adjusted according to the teacher candidate's progress and the needs of the students in the classroom (in certain situations, it may be advantageous if a co-teaching approach is utilized and/or if a particular course is fully retained by the mentor teacher with the teacher candidate assisting as



needed). Throughout supervised teaching, the mentor teacher(s) and clinical coach provide feedback and assessment to guide the teacher candidate's beginning professional development.

During the supervised teaching semester, teacher candidates adhere to the daily schedules and calendars of the assigned schools (for school calendars, see [wnyric.org](http://wnyric.org) for links to school districts in the Western New York area), thus requiring supervised teaching to begin prior to the start of the UB semester (supervised teaching will commence in early January when schools return after New Year's Day) and continue through the UB final examination period. For all breaks, including spring break, teacher candidates will follow the schedules of their supervised teaching schools (including all schedule revisions; because revisions may occur, teacher candidates are encouraged not to make travel plans during the supervised teaching semester, as they may have to adjust their plans), and therefore will not be excused from supervised teaching during the UB spring break. For school cancellations, for the purpose of supervised teaching, teacher candidates will follow the school cancellations of the supervised teaching school. All placements begin and end on the same days, as indicated below (except under special circumstances approved by the Office of Educator Preparation, which may require extension and/or postponement of supervised teaching).

The anticipated beginning and ending dates of the two supervised teaching placements are as follows (in certain situations, these dates may be adjusted by the Office of Educator Preparation).

**Placement I Monday, January 2, 2023 – Friday, March 3, 2022**  
**Placement II Monday, March 6, 2022 – Wednesday, May 10, 2022**

During the first placement, if approved by the mentor teacher and clinical coach, the teacher candidate may be excused from up to one teaching day for the purpose of meeting with her/his assigned second placement mentor teacher. Ideally, this meeting should be scheduled for a time not to interfere with the first placement. If the teacher candidate intends to participate in Teacher Recruitment Day (TRD), tentatively scheduled for April 1<sup>st</sup>, s/he must notify the mentor teacher(s) and clinical coach by the first day of the second placement and the teacher candidate must work with her/his mentor teacher to plan for these days. For further information regarding TRD, see <http://trd.org/>.

Teacher candidates are to attend all scheduled teaching days, as well as exam and staff development days, and may only miss a day if s/he informs her/his mentor teacher(s) and clinical coach via an appropriate predetermined method and if the absence is supported by written documentation of a significant need

(i.e. personal illness or other emergency situation). Depending on the circumstance and number, absences from supervised teaching may have to be made up as per the direction of the Office of Educator Preparation (typically, more than a total of two absences throughout the entire span of both placements is considered excessive). Extended absences may result in the extension of supervised teaching during the current semester or postponement to a future semester. If a teacher candidate is summoned to jury duty, and if s/he chooses not to request a deferment of service, s/he may not be permitted to continue supervised teaching during the current semester.

The chart below indicates the typical grade range for the supervised teaching placements for each certification area. Typically, each teacher candidate will experience a placement primarily within each specified grade range. In certain situations defined by the Office of Educator Preparation, there may be modifications to this typical placement schedule.

Certification Area	Lower Grade Range	Upper Grade Range
Early Childhood	Pre-K or K	Grades 1 or 2
Childhood	Grades 1 – 3	Grades 4 – 6
Adolescence	Grades 7 – 9	Grades 10 – 12
<i>Pre-K – 12</i>	Pre-K – 6	7 – 12

Important notes regarding supervised teaching placements:

- The Office of Educator Preparation Coordinator of Field Experiences will secure all supervised teaching placements. No teacher candidate will be placed in a school where there is deemed to be a potential conflict of interest. **Teacher candidates are not to initiate contact with teachers or administrators for the purpose of securing their own placements or making adjustments to placements that are already secured;** violation of this policy may constitute good reason for removing the teacher candidate from a school, assigning a grade of U for Supervised Teaching I and II and Seminar in Teaching, and dismissing the teacher candidate from the initial teacher certification program.
- Transportation is the responsibility of the teacher candidate, and supervised teaching sites are located throughout the Western New York area. Lack of appropriate transportation is not an acceptable reason for non- completion of program requirements.
- The location of supervised teaching placements is solely at the discretion of the Office of

Educator Preparation; personal factors such as commitments external to supervised teaching, financial hardship, and travel distance will bear no influence on the location of placements.

- Refusal of an assigned supervised teaching placement may constitute good reason for revocation of the Supervised Teaching Application, assigning a grade of U for Supervised Teaching I and II and Seminar in Teaching, and dismissing the teacher candidate from the initial teacher certification program.

### **Supervised Teaching Activities Schedule**

Supervised teaching situations vary, and therefore the following schedule is a framework for each placement and is to be used as a guide.

#### *First week*

The first week will vary according to the specifics of the situation. For a placement that is a continuation of previous field experience within a liaison site, much of the first week activities described below will have taken place prior to supervised teaching. During the first week, the teacher candidate should accomplish the following:

- Observe her/his mentor teacher and students as a means of becoming familiar with the teacher's instructional methods, the course content, and the students' names, personalities, and needs;
- Become familiar with the established routines and environment in the classroom;
- Write 'retroactive' lesson plans for the lessons being observed (in other words, for an observed lesson, write what might constitute a lesson plan that would have been produced prior to the lesson; this will help a teacher candidate to deconstruct a lesson to its elements and will inform her/his development of future lesson plans);
- Become familiar with the curriculum;
- Observe other teachers;
- Assist the mentor teacher in classroom activities;
- Work with individual and small groups of students;
- Tour the school building and meet with faculty, administrators, and staff;
- Participate in the school, both curricular and extracurricular, outside of the classroom;

- As appropriate, prepare materials for the classroom;
- Become involved in the community in which the school is located;
- Demonstrate initiative.

During this week, the teacher candidate and mentor teacher should clarify the plans for the teacher candidate to assume increasing responsibility for the mentor teacher's courses (although the teacher candidate will increase responsibility, this does not mean that the mentor teacher will decrease responsibility; instead, it is expected that teacher candidates and mentor teachers share responsibility for the learning environment of the classroom).

#### *Weeks two through four*

During these weeks, the teacher candidate should assume increasing responsibility for preparing lesson plans and should assume teaching responsibilities for an increasing portion of her/his mentor teacher's schedule, as determined by the mentor teacher. The teacher candidate should become increasingly independent and confident, however, always recognizing that s/he is teaching in a classroom for which her/his mentor teacher ultimately has responsibility.

#### *Remaining weeks*

During these weeks, the teacher candidate should assume responsibility for teaching her/his mentor teacher's full schedule of courses (as noted above, in certain situations it may be advantageous if a co-teaching approach is utilized and/or if a particular course is fully retained by the mentor teacher with the teacher candidate assisting as needed). If there is another teacher candidate in the building, the teacher candidate should take time to observe that person's practice and engage in critical peer-review discussions. Toward the end of the placement, the mentor teacher may wish to step out of the room on occasion in order to allow the teacher candidate a greater feeling of independence (Section 3001, subsection 2 of the New York State Education Law states that a teacher candidate is legally permitted to student teach without the presence of a certified teacher in the classroom if the classroom certified teacher is available at all times and retains supervision of the teacher candidate). During the final week, teaching responsibilities should begin to shift back to the mentor teacher.

## Lesson Plans

There are various lesson plan formats to which teacher candidates have been introduced in their methods and instructional strategies courses, and various formats used across school districts; however, most have similar components. Although many experienced teachers do not write detailed lesson plans, it is important for beginning teachers, and especially teacher candidates, to write detailed lesson plans as a means of organizing their thoughts, to be as prepared as possible to teach and to serve as a catalyst for reflection. For supervised teaching, abbreviated lesson plans are not acceptable, because a full lesson plan is the best learning tool.

In general, lesson plans should contain the components listed below:

• Logistics	• Accommodations for Students Learning English as a New Language (ENL)
• Lesson Overview	• Differentiation Possibilities
• Contextual Factors	• Materials / Resources
• Learning Standards	• Pre-Lesson Preparation / Setup
• Essential Questions	• Instructional Plan
• Learning Objectives	• Assessment of Student Learning
• Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (SWD)	• Post-Lesson Student Work
	• Post-Lesson Reflection

The mentor teacher must approve of the lesson plan prior to each lesson. And, after the lesson, the mentor teacher should informally (and formally, if appropriate) talk with the teacher candidate as a means to inform the teacher candidate's reflections about the lesson and avenues for improvement. The mentor teacher should share materials and her/his previous plans in order to assist the teacher candidate, but the teacher candidate is expected to display initiative and increasing independence in the development of her/his lesson plans.

## Teacher Candidate – Mentor Teacher Relationship

The relationship between the teacher candidate and the mentor teacher is a key component in the supervised teaching experience. Toward the goal of a positive experience is a relationship between the teacher candidate and mentor teacher that is communicative, honest, and professional. There are a few points that teacher candidates should keep in mind throughout their supervised teaching experience:

- Experiences with mentor teachers and within schools will vary and are to some extent unpredictable;
- Supervised teaching is a learning process that will provide many new experiences and all experiences are potential learning experiences;
- The mentor teacher ultimately is responsible for her/his students and classroom and the teacher candidate is a guest in the mentor teacher's classroom and in the school;
- Coursework and field experiences are important parts in the process of the development of a teacher candidate, providing a foundation for daily teaching experiences. Throughout supervised teaching, it is the teacher candidate's responsibility to actively make connections in order to succeed in the supervised teaching placement;
- Preparation for teaching occurs throughout the school day, but also before and after the school day as well as on the weekends.

Typical points of conflict between the teacher candidate and the mentor teacher include the following: teacher candidates who do not approach their placement in a professional manner, do not show commitment, do not communicate in a clear, comprehensive, and timely manner, do not take initiative, do not follow through, and who are not academically well-prepared. In order for the supervised teaching experience to be successful, it is necessary for teacher candidates to approach supervised teaching with a seriousness of purpose and a commitment to do more than perhaps they ever had thought they could. Approaching supervised teaching in this manner will contribute to the development of a constructive relationship between the teacher candidate and the mentor teacher and thus a meaningful supervised teaching experience. Like all relationships, the relationship between the teacher candidate and the mentor teacher is one that requires work to make it mutually beneficial.

### **Selection of Mentor Teachers**

The Office of Educator Preparation, not preservice teachers, selects and assigns mentor teachers. Before a teacher can be considered to be a mentor teacher, the teacher must:

- Hold an appropriate New York State teacher certificate;
- Be recommended by the administration of the school district and/or individual school.

### **Split Mentor Teacher Assignment**

The Office of Educator allows split mentor teacher assignments (any situation in which the teacher candidate is officially assigned to two mentor teachers) only under special circumstances that have been organized by the Office of Educator Preparation, the mentor teachers, and the administration of the school district and/or individual school. If a teacher candidate has a split mentor teacher assignment, the following will occur:

- Each mentor teacher will be provided with informational packets regarding the teacher candidate and the placement;
- The responsibility for coordination of schedules rests with the teacher candidate, mentor teachers, and clinical coach (and school-based liaison, if applicable). This should be negotiated and finalized prior to the beginning of the experience;
- The mentor teachers are encouraged to communicate with one another frequently to ensure consistent and meaningful supervision of the teacher candidate and ideally only one STAR-MT should be submitted (this should include feedback from both mentor teachers);
- Only one mentor teacher stipend may be dispersed, as New York State allocates funds on a per-student basis, not a per-teacher basis, therefore the mentor teachers will need to arrange for the splitting of the stipend.

### **Co-Teaching Assignment**

The Office of Educator Preparation allows co-teaching assignments (any situation in which two

or more teacher candidates are officially assigned to one or more mentor teachers and are expected to work in coordination with each other) only under special circumstances that have been organized by the Office of Educator Preparation, the mentor teachers, and the administration of the school district and/or individual school.

If a teacher candidate has a co-teaching assignment, the following will occur:

- The teacher candidate will be responsible for her/his own supervised teaching, which includes the extent to which s/he is able to work well with others in a co-teaching arrangement;
- The mentor teacher will independently assess each teacher candidate and submit a separate STAR-MT for each teacher candidate;
- Teacher candidates (and their TEAs) will be provided specific guidance regarding co-teaching.

### **Absences**

If the mentor teacher is absent, a substitute teacher must be hired and the teacher candidate should report to her/his regularly assigned classroom. The mentor teacher and teacher candidate should have a plan as to what the teacher candidate will do in the mentor teacher's absence. Teacher candidates cannot be used as substitute teachers (a certified substitute teacher must be present in the absence of the mentor teacher); however, the teacher candidate may teach in the presence of a substitute teacher.

If the teacher candidate is going to be absent, s/he must contact the mentor teacher and clinical coach prior to the absence. It is expected that teacher candidates will be present each day of each placement. If a teacher candidate is absent more than two times, the mentor teacher must contact the clinical coach so that it can be determined if the teacher candidate needs to have an adjusted timeline for supervised teaching.

Teacher candidates are expected to arrive to the school by the time that their mentor teachers arrive and are to leave no earlier than the time their mentor teachers leave. If a teacher candidate deviates from this, the mentor teacher must inform the clinical coach.

### **Substitute Teaching Policy**



While participating in Supervised Teaching, teacher candidates may **not** accept any paid substitute teaching positions for days on which they are required to be present at their liaison schools by the school district or their clinical coach. Teacher candidates may not accept substitute teaching positions with their liaison school(s) until after the completion of their Supervised Teaching placement (May 10th).

### **Feedback and Assessment**

Teaching reveals much about a person, and therefore having one's teaching examined is a potentially uncomfortable experience. Few individuals can invite others to observe their classroom practices without some level of anxiety. This anxiety is often compounded for individuals whose practice is not as polished as they would like, as is usually the case for teacher candidates.

Although this anxiety may not be wholly diminished, in order to minimize this anxiety and to enable the teacher candidate to best demonstrate her/his ability, it is important that the teacher candidate, mentor teacher(s), and clinical coach establish routines, allowing time and a format for observation and a follow-up conference that provides substantial feedback.

In addition to the provision of ongoing feedback, the Office of Educator Preparation requires the mentor teacher(s) to complete and submit an interim and final Student Teacher Assessment Record – Mentor Teacher. These assessments will be composed by the mentor teacher(s) and shared with the teacher candidate and clinical coach. The interim will be used to assess progress and set goals for the remainder of supervised teaching.

The Office of Educator Preparation requires Clinical Coaches to formally observe each of their teacher candidates at least five times throughout her/his two supervised teaching placements. A conference involving the clinical coach, teacher candidate, and mentor teacher(s) should be held as soon after the observation as possible. Following this conference, the clinical coach will complete Student Teacher Assessment Record – Clinical Coach.

The goal of feedback and assessment is to motivate teacher candidates to become teachers who can and will self-evaluate, with collaboration from colleagues, throughout their career. In this respect, feedback and assessment are of most benefit if they are an ongoing tool used to create

habits that enhance strengths and reduce weaknesses.

### **Grades**

For the purpose of the UB transcript, supervised teaching is graded S or U (satisfactory or unsatisfactory). The grade is representative of feedback and assessment from the clinical coach and the mentor teacher(s) that has occurred throughout the supervised teaching experience. As a responsibility to the profession (with a focus on the learning opportunities for PreK-12 students) and to the teacher candidate, the clinical coach and the mentor teacher(s) must recommend a grade of U when deemed necessary. Under most circumstances, a grade of U will follow from ongoing feedback and assessment (see [Appendix A](#) for information regarding unsatisfactory supervised teaching performance.) At the discretion of the Office of Educator Preparation Director, upon a recommendation from the teacher candidate's mentor teacher(s) and/or clinical coach, the teacher candidate may be required to extend the completion date of a placement and/or s/he may be required to repeat a placement during the current or a future semester, in which case a grade of incomplete (IU) may be assigned.

Prior to the scheduled completion of a placement, the teacher candidate may be discontinued from a placement at the discretion of the mentor teacher(s), building administrator, clinical coach, and/or Office of Educator Preparation Director. If a teacher candidate is discontinued from a placement, the grade and program standing will be determined on a case-by-case manner, with outcomes depending on the timing and specific circumstance of the discontinuation, and may include the assignment of a grade of IU or U, as well as dismissal from the teacher education program.

Depending on the nature of the discontinuation, the process specified in [Appendix A](#) may be adjusted to meet the needs of the situation.

If a teacher candidate withdraws from supervised teaching, the grade and program standing will depend on the timing and specific circumstance of the withdrawal, and may include the assignment of a grade of IU or U, as well as dismissal from the teacher education program. In order to be considered for a future supervised teaching placement, the teacher candidate will have to submit and receive approval of a new Supervised Teaching Application, the approval of which may be contingent upon successful completion of a remediation plan developed by the Office of Educator Preparation.

A grade of U in the first placement will prohibit the teacher candidate from proceeding to a second

placement. It is imperative that if a grade of U is to be recommended for the first placement, the mentor teacher(s) must inform and meet with the teacher candidate and clinical coach on (or before) the final day of the placement, and the mentor teacher(s) and/or clinical coach must notify the Office of Educator Preparation on (or before) the final day of the placement.

A grade of IU is rarely assigned and only in a case-by-case manner according to the UB Graduate School policy, which is as follows: A grade of incomplete may be given only in those instances in which the teacher candidate has not been able to complete all the assigned projects and/or examinations in a course due to illness or other unforeseen and compelling circumstances. Incompletes are not available to teacher candidates who have not satisfactorily completed the other academic requirements of the course.

Grades for a supervised teaching placement cannot be entered until the Office of Educator Preparation has received both STAR-MT and STAR-CC. It is the collective responsibility of the teacher candidate, mentor teacher(s), and clinical coach (and where applicable, the school-based liaison) to ensure that all required assessments are appropriately submitted to the Office of Educator Preparation.

### **Teacher Candidates' Feedback Regarding the Supervised Teaching Experience**

At the conclusion of each supervised teaching experience, teacher candidates will be given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the experience via a form that will be submitted to the Office of Educator Preparation. This form is reviewed solely by the Office of Educator Preparation staff and is used to inform program improvements.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TEACHER CANDIDATE**

Supervised teaching will provide many opportunities to learn, and teacher candidates must engage productively with all such opportunities. All teacher candidates should be prepared to make an intensive commitment for the duration of their program, including, and perhaps especially, during the fulltime supervised teaching semester that is required to complete the initial and initial/professional tracks of the teacher education program.

The following list serves as a reminder to teacher candidates about their obligations to themselves, teacher candidates, mentor teachers, school districts, UB, and the profession. Please note, although the following is a detailed list, it is not an exhaustive list; additional responsibilities may be required.

- Prior to supervised teaching, each teacher candidate must:
  - a. Make sure all necessary forms and administrative obligations to the Office of Educator Preparation have been completed or fulfilled;
  - b. Read and be familiar with the contents of this *Guide*;
  - c. Contact and meet with her/his mentor teacher(s) in order to obtain schedules, receive any pertinent materials, and plan the upcoming experience;
  - d. Become familiar with the school's policies and procedures. Obtain and read faculty and student handbooks, as well as curriculum guides, and talk with the mentor teacher(s) and principal(s) about school policies and procedures;
  - e. As directed by the mentor teacher(s), write an introduction letter to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the students in the cooperating teacher(s)' classes;
  - f. Be knowledgeable of the applicable New York State learning standards and core curriculum, with a focus on the performance indicators (see <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/cores.html>);
  - g. Develop a beginning classroom management plan to be implemented and appropriately adjusted during the placement.
  
- During supervised teaching, each teacher candidate must:
  - a. Demonstrate dispositions of a high quality educator, including, but not limited to, the following: take initiative (do more than "just get by") and appropriate risks (do more than what feels familiar and easy); be open to critique and adjust in response to the provided critique; plan, but be flexible and creative when faced with unanticipated events; take responsibility for her/his learning and for the learning of her/his students; be communicative and express concerns in a productive manner; respect diversity and work equitably with others. Failure to demonstrate the above dispositions shall constitute good reason for removing a teacher candidate from a

- placement, assigning a grade of U for the placement, and dismissing a teacher candidate from the teacher education program;
- b. Be on time for each school day and to any after school events. At minimum, work the same hours as her/his mentor teacher(s); not arrive after or leave before her/his mentor teacher(s), unless an explicit plan has been discussed with and agreed to by the mentor teacher(s) and clinical coach. Failure to be timely in all work associated with supervised teaching shall constitute good reason for removing a teacher candidate from a placement, assigning a grade of U for the placement, and dismissing a teacher candidate from the teacher education program;
  - c. Adhere to the calendar of the assigned school (including all schedule revisions) and follow the school's vacation schedule, not that of UB;
  - d. Attend in-service meetings, staff meetings, open houses, and similar events that her/his mentor teacher(s) attend(s);
  - e. Attend extracurricular activities at the liaison school;
  - f. Be responsible for providing or arranging transportation to and from the liaison school (lack of transportation is not an acceptable reason for non-completion of any requirements associated with supervised teaching);
  - g. Prepare a lesson plan for each lesson taught, to be reviewed by her/his mentor teacher(s), and as requested by her/his clinical coach, and maintain a plan book;
  - h. As directed by her/his mentor teacher(s), develop and implement a unit plan;
  - i. As directed by her/his mentor teacher(s), maintain a grade book;
  - j. As appropriate, create a bulletin board, exhibit, and/or display or plan a field trip;
  - k. As appropriate, participate in parent-teacher conferences;
  - l. If approved by her/his mentor teacher(s) and building administrator, audio and/or video record a lesson to be used as a tool for reflection and professional development;
  - m. Maintain a daily reflective journal and seek critique from her/his mentor teacher(s), clinical coach, and peers in order to inform the reflection process;
  - n. In the event of an absence, which may occur only for substantial personal illness or other emergency reasons, contact her/his mentor teacher(s) and clinical coach as far in advance as possible, and provide the mentor teacher(s) with

- a plan for the day. More than two absences (including due to an extended personal illness and/or emergency reason) from supervised teaching will need to be made up as per the direction of the Office of Educator Preparation;
- o. Adhere to all school and classroom policies and procedures, including the school's code of professional conduct. Failure to adhere to such policies and/or procedures shall constitute good reason for removing a teacher candidate from a placement, assigning a grade of U for the placement, and dismissing a teacher candidate from the teacher education program;
  - p. Maintain confidentiality in conversations about school faculty, staff, and students; inappropriate breaches of confidentiality shall constitute good reason for removing a teacher candidate from a placement, assigning a grade of U for the placement, and dismissing a teacher candidate from the teacher education program;
  - q. Demonstrate professionalism and foundational capacities as described in the [Field Experience](#) of this *Guide*; unprofessional actions or evidence of a lack of foundational capacities shall constitute good reason for removing a teacher candidate from a placement, assigning a grade of U for the placement, and dismissing a teacher candidate from the teacher education program;
  - r. Be familiar with the STAR-MT to be completed by the mentor teacher and the STAR-CC to be completed by the clinical coach;
  - s. If the teachers' association of the supervised teaching school district calls a strike, do not attempt to cross picket lines. In this event, contact the Office of Educator Preparation immediately for instructions;
  - t. Report all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to her/his mentor teacher(s) and/or appropriate school administrator as well as to her/his clinical coach; if the instance involves a UB teacher candidate, faculty, or staff member as the suspected cause of abuse and/or neglect of a child within the school(s) in which you participate, follow the process described in the UB Child Protection Policy;
  - u. Understand that supervised teaching and Seminar in Teaching course are the primary responsibilities during the supervised teaching semester. Therefore, the Office of Educator Preparation strongly encourages teacher candidates not to enroll in any courses other than LAI 674, 668, and 595, not to be employed,

and not to be involved in university extracurricular activities. Additionally, the Office of Educator Preparation strongly encourages teacher candidates to adequately plan for personal needs, such as childcare. If other courses, employment, involvement in university extracurricular activities, and/or

personal needs negatively impact a teacher candidate's ability to fully commit to and focus on supervised teaching and the associated Seminar in Teaching course, a teacher candidate's path through the teacher education program will need to be modified, at the direction of the Office of Educator Preparation;

- v. Develop and revise a written statement of her/ his emerging educational philosophy;
- w. If a problem arises during supervised teaching, discuss this first with her/his mentor teacher(s) and/or clinical coach as appropriate. If the problem requires further attention, it should be brought to the attention of the Office of Educator Preparation Coordinator of Field Experiences and/or the Office of Educator Preparation Director (unnecessary involvement of others may exacerbate a problem and may hinder successful and timely resolution of a problem). Most problems are solvable and most problematic situations are salvageable; therefore, it is important to communicate and to work together to collectively problem solve so that a solution can be achieved;
- x. Check UB e-mail daily;
- y. Continue to make sure all necessary forms and administrative obligations to the Office of Educator Preparation are completed or fulfilled as required. If s/he is in a Master's degree program, maintain communication with her/his Master's degree advisor and the Department of Learning and Instruction and follow all procedures and policies, including the filing of appropriate forms relevant to her/his degree.

- By the end of supervised teaching, each teacher candidate must:
  - a. Complete all work, submit all student grades, and return all materials to her/his mentor teacher(s). Failure to complete these tasks shall constitute good reason for assigning a grade of U for the placement and dismissing a teacher candidate from the teacher education program;
  - b. As applicable, return keys, identification badges, parking tags, etc. Failure to complete

these tasks shall constitute good reason for assigning a grade of U for the placement and dismissing a teacher candidate from the teacher education program;

- c. Ask her or his mentor teacher(s) for a letter(s) of recommendation;
- d. Write thank you letters to her/his mentor teacher(s) and principal(s).

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CLINICAL COACH

The clinical coach (CC) is a key link between the teacher candidate, mentor teachers, and UB. In a liaison school, the clinical coach works in partnership with the school-based liaison to organize field experiences and respond to situations that may arise and need extra attention. As a partner with the mentor teachers, the clinical coach provides feedback and assessment to support the beginning professional development of preservice and teacher candidates. The clinical coach is not just a supervisor of supervised teaching; the clinical coach role is far more encompassing, as described below.

Guided by a commitment to mentoring, each CC has the following professional responsibilities:

- Teach the Field Experience course in the fall semester;
- Teach the Seminar in Teaching course in the spring semester;
- In collaboration with mentor teachers, mentor a group of students, from a variety of certification areas, throughout their field experience and supervised teaching;
- Provide systematic, data-based feedback and assessment to students throughout their field experience and supervised teaching;
- Work collaboratively with the school-based liaison and serve as a bridge between UB and the schools;
- Work with ad hoc task groups;
- Guide teacher candidates through their Reflective Inquiry Projects;
- Attend regularly scheduled clinical coach meetings (typically, the clinical coaches and the Office of Educator Preparation staff meet at least five times per semester);
- Provide basic teacher education program information to interested teachers and/or administrators;
- Gather feedback about the efficacy of the teacher education program and suggestions for its improvement. The qualifications for the clinical coach position are as follows:



- Permanent/Professional New York State teacher certification (or its equivalent);
- Minimum three years of successful teaching experience in the United States;
- Commitment to diversity;
- Commitment to critically reflective inquiry;
- Ability to mentor individuals new to the profession and to provide systematic, data-based assessments of preservice teachers and teacher candidates;
- Previous experience with teacher candidates.

During the supervised teaching semester, the clinical coach is responsible for the university-based supervision of teacher candidates. The Office of Educator Preparation requires that each teacher candidate be formally observed by her/his clinical coach a minimum of five times during her/his supervised teaching, three times during the first placement and two times during the second placement, with an additional structured planning session scheduled near the beginning of the second placement. The main purposes of these observations are as follows:

- To assist teacher candidates in critically examining their teaching;
- To assist mentor teachers in the supervision of teacher candidates;
- To assist in solving interpersonal communication problems that may arise between teacher candidates and mentor teachers;
- To provide feedback and assessment to teacher candidates through conferences and in writing;
- To keep mentor teachers abreast of New York State regulations, UB/GSE policies and procedures, and noteworthy innovations in the supervision of teacher candidates.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MENTOR TEACHER

The mentor teacher provides a key role in the teacher education program experience. University coursework and field experience previous to supervised teaching are two components of the initial teacher certification program experience that are integral to the development of the teacher candidate, but they do not substitute for supervised teaching. There are many aspects of teaching that cannot be learned or fully appreciated until the preservice teacher is involved in supervised teaching, and therefore supervised teaching should be understood as an integral and culminating part of the initial teacher preparation process, with the mentor teacher and clinical coach working together as a team to support the development of the teacher candidate in the classroom.

Throughout supervised teaching, an essential priority is the beginning professional development of the teacher candidate. However, the *leading priority* is the learning of the PreK-12 students in the classroom. Therefore, it is expected that the mentor teacher remains intimately involved in her/ his classroom in order to monitor and support the learning of her/his students while doing the same for the teacher candidate.

While it is clear that the teacher candidate gains from the experience of working with a mentor teacher, it is also the case that the mentor teacher gains from this experience. Having a teacher candidate in the classroom can provide another individual with whom the mentor teacher can interact and share ideas about classroom practice. Additionally, the teacher candidate can provide assistance with the many responsibilities of creating a productive classroom environment and thus enhance the students' classroom experiences. Further, working closely with a teacher candidate can be professionally stimulating for the mentor teacher who contributes to the continuing legacy of the teaching profession by importantly impacting the education of those emerging into the teaching profession. The following subsections provide information to guide the mentor teacher in her/his work with a teacher candidate.

### **Orientation to the School**

*What should the mentor teacher do prior to the teacher candidate's arrival?*

- Provide for a time to meet the teacher candidate and be available via phone and/or e-mail;
- Review the teacher candidate's introduction form provided by UB;
- Review UB's expectations in this *Guide* regarding [Supervised Teaching](#) and the [Responsibilities of the Teacher Candidate](#);
- Inform colleagues about the expected arrival of the teacher candidate;
- Inform students and their parents/guardians that there will be a teacher candidate working with them;
- Have a workspace available for the teacher candidate;
- Have additional texts, teacher's manuals or editions, and other materials ready for the teacher candidate;
- As allowable, obtain information technology access for the teacher candidate.

*What is necessary for the development of a functional relationship between the mentor teacher and teacher candidate?*

- **Communication:** From the beginning, it is important to establish a clear plan for effective communication. This plan should include the means for communication in school and after school hours (be sure to exchange contact information to be able to connect via the phone and/or e-mail) and the preferred format for communication (some mentor teachers find it useful to utilize a daily journal to exchange ideas with their teacher candidates and to schedule weekly formal meetings with their teacher candidates to review and plan). One of the primary features of the supervised teaching placement for which communication is essential is the establishment and reinforcement of expectations. When expectations are met, the mentor teacher should commend the teacher candidate. And, when expectations are not met, the mentor teacher must express concerns in a critical and constructive manner so that the teacher candidate is informed and provided an opportunity to adjust and develop. Effective communication will help the teacher candidate and the mentor teacher navigate the emotional mix of anxiety, anticipation, and excitement that both often feel in preparation for, during, and after the placement.

*To what other members of the school community should the teacher candidate be introduced?*

- Although the relationship between the mentor teacher and the teacher candidate is central to the supervised teaching experience, it is also essential that the teacher candidate establishes relationships with other members of the school community, and therefore the mentor teacher should introduce the teacher candidate to the following:
  - Principal
  - Assistant Principal
  - Department Chair/Team Leader
  - Other Teachers (especially those who work directly with students with disabilities, students learning English as a new language, and struggling readers/writers)
  - Administrative Assistants
  - Librarian/Media Specialist, School Counselor, Psychologist, and/or Social Worker
  - Nurse
  - Facilities
  - Union Representative

*What information does the teacher candidate need about school and classroom policy and procedures?*

- The teacher candidate will need to learn a lot about the school in which s/he is supervised teaching. Although it is expected that the teacher candidate will take the initiative to obtain information (especially that which is publicly available via the school's website) and/or ask for information, the mentor teacher should help the teacher candidate become acclimated to the school and classroom by providing the following:
  - Faculty and student handbooks
  - Curriculum guides
  - Community information
  - The school calendar
  - The mentor teacher's class schedule and responsibilities within the school
  - The mentor teacher's lesson and unit planning methods
  - Classroom seating charts
  - A map of the physical layout of the school building
  - School and classroom policies and procedures, including as related to:
    - Student attendance
    - Parking
    - Signing in/out of the building
    - Computer, photocopier, and other technology use
    - Supplies
    - Fire and other emergency drills
    - Attendance at faculty meetings
    - Lunchroom procedures and policies regarding food/drink outside of the cafeteria
    - Lesson plan book and grade book formats
    - Progress reports and report cards
    - Communication with parents/guardians
    - Communication with other school staff regarding special circumstances
    - Behavior management interventions and supports
    - Use of textbooks and other materials
    - The assignment of homework

- Library use
- Restroom and hallway use
- Use of phones, including personal cellphones
- Information regarding students with defined needs, such as:
  - Arrangements for students who are learning English as a new language
  - Arrangements for students with disabilities
  - Accommodations for students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
  - Professional issues
- Unique features of the school

*What should the mentor teacher do to encourage the teacher candidate to develop into a professional?*

- The teacher candidate will look to the mentor teacher as a guide for her/his emergence into the teaching profession; therefore, it is important for the mentor teacher to model professionalism throughout the placement. The mentor teacher can help the teacher candidate become acquainted with the profession and professionalism by encouraging the teacher candidate to engage in the following:
  - Investigate journals in her/his academic area
  - Attend extracurricular school activities
  - Attend PTA/PTO or related parent organization meetings
  - Attend meetings of local educator groups, including the school board
  - Join professional organizations
  - Discuss professional issues
  - Discuss the school's contract
  - Discuss the hiring process
  - Throughout the placement, sharing information about students and the school may help the teacher candidate.

Importantly, however, irrelevant private information about students, faculty, and staff should never be shared with the teacher candidate, and "inside politics" about the school should be shared with caution.

## **Assistance in Planning**

All quality teachers plan their instructional efforts. For experienced teachers, these plans range from elaborate, minute-by-minute guides, to a few words scrawled across a Post-it<sup>®</sup>. For teacher candidates, however, it is essential that they write comprehensive lesson plans as a means of organizing their thoughts, to be as prepared as possible to teach, and to serve as a catalyst for reflection. Clinical coaches will require each teacher candidate to write lesson plans (the format may coincide with or slightly differ from the format required by the mentor teacher). For supervised teaching, abbreviated lesson plans are not acceptable, because a comprehensive lesson plan is the best learning tool, especially given the following:

- The teacher candidate has had limited experience in planning for instruction and most likely little to no experience implementing her/his plans with real students;
- The teacher candidate needs to be able to clearly articulate the lesson's objectives and the ways in which these objectives will be met and assessed (the lesson plan will serve as an important tool to motivate data-based instruction);
- The teacher candidate needs a mechanism to enable her/him to anticipate individual student differences and the need for varied instructional approaches;
- The teacher candidate must be able to answer to the satisfaction of the mentor teacher, and the principal: what is planned; why, when, and how will the plan be implemented; and, how will it be known that students learned what was intended.

The mentor teacher should model sound planning and assist the teacher candidate in short and long range planning, providing a framework for the teacher candidate to develop her/his plans in alignment with existing plans.

## **Feedback**

Throughout supervised teaching, providing feedback to the teacher candidate is central to the role of being the mentor teacher. This feedback is an essential part of the reflective process for the teacher candidate that will enhance their development.

Feedback should be heavily descriptive, providing detail about what was observed. In addition, it should be interpretive, providing a lens through which the teacher candidate can reflect on her/his

practice and make adjustments in response to this feedback. In order to be useful, the feedback must be critical and supportive. Some mentor teachers have difficulty providing feedback to teacher candidates, especially feedback that may be perceived as negative. And, some teacher candidates have difficulty accepting feedback and adjusting in response. To ease these tensions, the mentor teacher and teacher candidate should keep in mind that for all work done in schools, including supervised teaching, the leading priority is the learning of the students in the classroom and all feedback is aimed toward developing the teacher candidate to become more effective in the creation of an environment that supports the learning of the students in the classroom. For a mentor teacher to refrain from providing feedback or for a teacher candidate to avoid adjusting in response to feedback would be a disservice to the students in the classroom and the students with whom the teacher candidate may work in the future.

As a means to aid the feedback process, the mentor teacher should keep in mind the following:

- Provide feedback gradually, yet timely;
- Be descriptive and specific;
- Critique should be followed by an action plan that offers concrete suggestion for improvement and a timeline for demonstrating improvement;
- Encourage the teacher candidate to engage in regular, critically-informed self-reflection;
- Be open, honest, and consistent so that there are no surprises on later formal assessments.

Some important points regarding feedback that deserve highlighting are as follows:

- Maintain written documentation of the feedback provided;
- The clinical coach is an integral part of the supervised teaching process and must be kept informed of how the placement is proceeding and especially included when a concern arises;
- Unless necessary, offer critique privately and refrain from interrupting the class while the teacher candidate is teaching;
- The teacher candidate is not an experienced teacher, therefore the need for extensive feedback should be understood as a necessary part of the supervised teaching process through which the teacher candidate will continue to learn about the teaching

profession and her/himself as an emerging educator.

### **Process to Express Concerns about the Teacher Candidate**

Rather than allow manageable concerns to escalate into uncontrollable concerns, the mentor teacher should express her/his concerns about the teacher candidate. If the mentor teacher has a concern about the teacher candidate that may jeopardize the teacher candidate's ability to successfully complete the supervised teaching placement, the following is a suggested path for dealing with this concern (because different situations require different plans for action, the following is offered as a suggested path, not the solely acceptable path to address concerns).

*What should the mentor teacher do if s/he has a concern about her/his teacher candidate?*

- If a concern arises (including as related to late arrival to school and/or excessive absences), the mentor teacher should express the specific concern to the teacher candidate, and identify an action plan that includes ways in which the teacher candidate can make improvements to successfully address the concern and the timing that evidence of improvement is expected. And, depending on the concern, the mentor teacher should inform the teacher candidate's clinical coach, including the specifics of the action plan. For future reference, if needed, the mentor teacher and/or clinical coach should begin to document the situation.

*What should the mentor teacher do if a concern about her/his teacher candidate persists?*

- If a concern persists, the mentor teacher should reiterate the specific concern and action plan to the teacher candidate. If not previously done, the mentor teacher should inform the teacher candidate's clinical coach and work together with the clinical coach to support the teacher candidate in meeting the goals of the action plan. If possible, a conversation between the mentor teacher and the clinical coach should take place with the teacher candidate present. Additionally, depending on the concern, the mentor teacher and/or clinical coach may deem it necessary to contact the Office of Educator Preparation Director and/or Coordinator of Field Experiences to inform her/him of the situation and involve members of the Office of Educator Preparation office staff in the development of an action plan akin to a letter of probation.



*What should the mentor teacher do if a substantial concern about her/his teacher candidate continues to persist without signs of acceptable improvement?*

- If a substantial concern continues, and if there is no evidence that the teacher candidate is able or willing to successfully address the concern, depending on the timing, the cooperating teacher should write a final assessment of the teacher candidate that includes a recommendation for placement discontinuation that is supported by previous feedback or an unsatisfactory mark on the final STAR-MT (described below) that is supported by previous feedback (see [Appendix A](#) for the Policy Concerning Unsatisfactory Supervised Teaching Performance). If this occurs in the first supervised teaching placement, it is imperative that by the final day of the placement the Office of Educator Preparation office is informed of an assignment of an unsatisfactory grade, as this will prevent the teacher candidate from advancing to the second supervised teaching placement.

### **Assessment**

While feedback occurs throughout the supervised teaching placement, there are two points of formal assessment for which the mentor teacher will use forms provided by the Office of Educator Preparation), an interim in which the mentor teacher will assess the teacher candidate's ability to continue in the placement and a final in which the mentor teacher will assess the teacher candidate's overall performance, including the extent to which the teacher candidate succeeded in the placement. These assessments are placed in the teacher candidate's Office of Educator Preparation file and are used to document/record the teacher candidate's progress throughout supervised teaching. Separate from these assessments, the teacher candidate may request a letter of recommendation from the mentor teacher for the purpose of including in future applications for teaching positions.

In these formal assessments, there should be no surprises; rather, these should reflect the ongoing process of feedback. As with the feedback process, the assessment process is an essential aspect of supervised teaching and the mentor teacher is in the best position to assess the teacher candidate's progress over the course of the placement. When necessary, the mentor teacher must select unsatisfactory (two interrelated questions that often guide mentor teachers in their assessments and

ease their concerns about selecting unsatisfactory are: beginning the next academic year, is this teacher candidate someone I would want to work with as a colleague and is this teacher candidate someone I would trust to teach my children?). Importantly, the Office of Educator Preparation is supportive of mentor teachers' assessments, and in circumstances that warrant a grade of unsatisfactory the Office of Educator Preparation will either implement an action plan to address deficiencies that are deemed remediable or counsel a teacher candidate toward another professional path.

The submission of the STAR-MT is to occur according to the following schedule:

**Placement I    Monday, January 2, 2023 – Friday, March 3, 2023**

**Interim due week of January 27th**

**Final due March 3rd**

**Placement II    Monday, March 6, 2023 – Wednesday, May 10, 2023**

**Interim due week of April 7th**

**Final due May 10th**

The final STAR-MT must be completed and submitted to the Office of Educator Preparation before the stipend can be released to the mentor teacher and before a grade can be submitted for the teacher candidate. Therefore, it is imperative that the documents are completed and submitted to the Office of Educator Preparation on time. The mentor teacher, teacher candidate, and clinical coach (and where applicable, the school Liaison to the Office of Educator Preparation) jointly assume responsibility for submission of the completed form to the Office of Educator Preparation.

***The mentor teacher should keep copies for her/his records and in the event that the STAR-MT becomes lost in transit to the Office of Educator Preparation and/or is needed to inform a future reference.***

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE *SCHOOL LIAISON*

The school-based Liaison is a teacher or administrator selected by the principal of a liaison school to work collaboratively between the school and UB as a key member in the liaison school model.

The responsibilities of the school-based liaison are as follows:

- Coordinate with the clinical coach all aspects of field experiences;
- Solicit the participation of teachers from across departmental areas for preservice teachers to be able to observe and participate with during the Field Experience course;
- Secure mentor teachers for a supervised teaching placement following the Field Experience course;
- Maintain a close working relationship with the mentor teachers, including the provision of support for first-time mentor teachers and/or mentor teachers who are new to the UB program;
- Serve as a resource for teacher candidates, mentor teachers, and clinical coaches, assisting in the supervised teaching process as necessary;
- Maintain a close working relationship with the Office of Educator Preparation Director and Coordinator of Field Experiences and communicate any questions and/or concerns about particular supervised teachingsituations;
- Provide feedback and assessment to the Office of Educator Preparation about the initial teacher certification program.

## **POLICY CONCERNING UNSATISFACTORY STUDENT TEACHING PERFORMANCE**

The Office of Educator Preparation at the University at Buffalo is responsible for the governance of the teacher education program as related to supervised teaching (as well as the preceding field experience and accompanying seminar in teaching). In conjunction with the programs and departments of the Graduate School of Education, the Office of Educator Preparation serves to admit and retain teacher candidates in the initial teacher certification program. The Office of Educator Preparation is responsible for assigning teacher candidates to appropriate supervised teaching sites and retains absolute rights regarding assignments to mentor teachers and school buildings and districts. Should a teacher candidate's performance be deemed unsatisfactory<sup>7</sup>, the typical process is as follows (certain situations may require deviation from the indicated sequence of events):

- A. The Office of Educator Preparation retains the right to remove a teacher candidate from the placement at any time.
- B. Should the teacher candidate lack sufficient teaching skills to receive a passing grade as determined by her/his mentor teacher(s) and/or the clinical coach, as applicable to the given situation, the teacher candidate shall have a conference with the mentor teacher(s) and clinical coach prior to the completion of the final STAR-MT.
- C. The teacher candidate will be informed by the Office of Educator Preparation of its decision about how to proceed, including, but not be limited to, the following possible options:
  - The teacher candidate will be encouraged to drop or resign from supervised teaching;
  - Supervised teaching may be extended beyond the scheduled completion date;
  - The teacher candidate may be assigned a grade of U for the placement;
  - The teacher candidate may be dismissed from the teacher education program.
- D. Should a teacher candidate wish to repeat supervised teaching after dropping,

withdrawing, being removed, or failing due to unsatisfactory supervised teaching performance, the teacher candidate must meet with the Office of Educator Preparation Director and/or Coordinator of Field Experiences, who will determine if repeating is possible and, if so, will outline an individual program designed to address the deficiencies previously demonstrated. The length of time allowed for the completion of the designated remediation program and reapplication for supervised teaching shall be left to the discretion of the Office of Educator Preparation. Such a program may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Personal and/or career counseling;
- Workshops;
- Coursework;
- Fieldwork;
- Directed independent study.

Successful completion of the entire remediation program is a prerequisite to reapplying to supervised teaching in a future semester, and if it is determined that the teacher candidate is unwilling to or incapable of successfully completing the designated remediation program, the teacher candidate may be dismissed from the teacher education program.

The teacher candidate has the right to appeal a grade and/or a recommendation for removal from the teacher education program according to policies and procedures established by the Graduate School of Education.

<sup>7</sup> Typically, such determinations are made during a placement; however, if new information is brought to the attention of the Office of Educator Preparation after a placement has ended (including after a grade has been submitted) and this new information supports the assignment of a grade of unsatisfactory, a teacher candidate's performance may be deemed unsatisfactory retroactively

## WEB RESOURCES

The following is a preliminary list of internet resources that may be useful throughout field experiences and supervised teaching. In coursework and while working with their mentor teachers, teacher candidates should seek to build on this list:

- University at Buffalo (UB) <http://www.buffalo.edu/>
  - o Graduate School of Education (GSE) <http://www.ed.buffalo.edu/>
  - o Learning and Instruction (LAI) <http://ed.buffalo.edu/lai>
  - o MyUB <https://myub.buffalo.edu>
  - o The Office of Educator Preparation <http://ed.buffalo.edu/edprep>
  - o UB Learns <https://ublearns.buffalo.edu/>
- New York State Education Department (NYSED) <http://www.nysed.gov/>
  - o Dignity for All Students Act <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/dignityact/>
  - o engage<sup>NY</sup> <http://engageny.org/>
  - o New York State Teacher Certification Exam (NYSTCE) <http://www.nystce.nesinc.com/>
  - o New York State Report Cards <https://data.nysed.gov/>
- o Office of Teaching Initiatives (OTI) <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/>
- o TEACH Online Services <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/teach>
  - ! Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) <http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/teachers-leaders/home.html>
  - ! NYS P-12 Common Core Learning Standards <http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/standards-assessments/ccls.html>
- Erie I Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) <http://www.erie1boces.org>
- Teaching Tolerance <http://www.tolerance.org/>
- Western New York Regional Information Center (WNYRIC) <http://www.wnyric.org>

## CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS

The following provides an overview of the New York State Code of Ethics for Educators. For further information, please see:

<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/resteachers/codeofethics.html>.

The Office of Educator Preparation also holds it students to the NASTDEC Model Code of Ethics for Educators: [https://www.nasdtec.net/page/MCEE\\_Doc](https://www.nasdtec.net/page/MCEE_Doc)

**Student Teacher Assessment Record (STAR) FINAL-- Mentor Teacher (MT)**

**Teacher Candidate:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**MT Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

STAR is intended to be a prompt for communication with your teacher candidate. The interim STAR is intended to be a formative assessment near the midpoint of the placement, whereas the final STAR is intended to be a summative assessment at the end of the placement. For each item, select a rating (proficient, competent, developing, or emerging) that best represents your teacher candidate’s skill/quality (if you require additional information in order to respond to an item, have conversation with your teacher candidate; please do not indicate ‘not applicable’ for any item). On the final page, indicate your overall rating and include a narrative.

	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Competent</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Emerging</b>	<b>Choose Below</b> (click on the appropriate criterion)
<b>Content Knowledge</b>					
<b>Content Knowledge</b>	Demonstrates thorough content knowledge.	Demonstrates sound content knowledge.	Demonstrates modest content knowledge.	Demonstrates weak content knowledge through substantial errors and/or incoherence in the representation of concepts.	
	Demonstrates ability to draw meaningful connections between particular lessons and the overall content curriculum.	Demonstrates the ability to coherently represent the content for particular lesson.	Demonstrates a surface understanding of the discrete content for particular lessons without thorough understanding of the foundational concepts.	Demonstrates substantial errors and/or incoherence in the representation of concepts.	
<b>State Standards</b>	Demonstrates complete understanding of the relationship between content and the performance indicators of the state learning standards.	Demonstrates a somewhat complete understanding of the relationship between content and the performance indicators of the state learning standards.	Demonstrates an increasing, but still incomplete, understanding of the relationship between content and the performance indicators of the state learning standards.	Demonstrates minimal to no understanding of the relationship between content and the performance indicators of the state learning standards.	
	Shows a complete understanding of connections across grade levels and/or content areas.	Shows a somewhat complete understanding of connections across grade levels and/or content areas.	Shows an increasing understanding of connections across grade levels and/or content areas.	Shows minimal understanding of connections across grade levels and/or content areas.	



<b>Content Knowledge Comments</b>	<i>Indicate relevant evidence regarding candidate knowledge of subject matter content. Please include suggestions for improvement on any criteria where candidate is developing or emerging.</i>	
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**Pedagogical Knowledge**

<b>Planning for Lessons</b>	Consistently develops lesson plans that are well-structured and coherent.	Somewhat consistently develops lesson plans that are well-structured and coherent.	Develops lesson plans that contain the basic structural elements.	Develops lesson plans that lack basic structure.	
	Lesson plans contain details necessary to support instruction focused on student learning.	Lesson plans somewhat contain details necessary to support instruction focused on student learning.	Lesson plans somewhat lack coherence and/or details to support instruction focused on student learning.	Lesson plans lack coherence and/or details to support instruction focused on student learning.	
	Requires minimal reliance on the mentor teacher.	Requires and acts on support from the mentor teacher.	Requires significant support and/or incompletely acts on the guidance from the mentor teacher.	Relies on the mentor teacher for all planning and/or does not fully incorporate the guidance that is provided.	
	Skillfully paces lessons such that all time is effectively used.	Paces lessons such that most of the time is effectively used.	Paces lessons such that there exist noticeable gaps with no instructional activity.	Poorly paces lessons such that there exist substantial gaps with no instructional activity.	
<b>Presentation of Lessons</b>	Adjusts as needed to support student learning.	Demonstrates attempts to adjust as needed to support student learning.	Demonstrates limited attempts to adjust as needed to support student learning.	Demonstrates minimal or no attempts to adjust as needed to support student learning.	
	Transitions seamlessly between the various parts of a lesson.	Transitions well between the various parts of a lesson such that students are able to successfully navigate the transitions with only minimal reinforcement.	Transitions tentatively between the various parts of a lesson such that students require extensive reinforcement in order to successfully navigate the transitions.	Transitions ineffectively between the various parts of a lesson such that students are unable to successfully navigate the transitions.	
	Instructional activities fully match the objectives.	Instructional activities mostly match the objectives.	Instructional activities stray from the objectives.	Instructional activities do not support the objectives.	
	Establishes effective classroom routines.	Establishes somewhat effective classroom routines.	Establishes an incomplete set of classroom routines.	Does not establish classroom routines.	
	Employs a productive behavior management plan that facilitates student learning.	Employs a productive behavior management plan that, with minimal reinforcement, works to facilitate student learning.	Inconsistently employs a productive behavior management that do not fully work together to facilitate student learning.	Does not employ a productive behavior management plan.	

	Appropriately prepares and makes readily accessible all necessary instructional materials.	Appropriately prepares and makes accessible all necessary instructional materials.	Prepares all necessary instructional materials, but they are not readily accessible.	Necessary instructional materials are unavailable.	
<b>Classroom Management</b>	Organizes the classroom space exceptionally well such that instructional activities flow seamlessly.	Organizes the classroom space well such that instructional activities flow.	Organizes the classroom space insufficiently such that instruction is interrupted by the need to reorganize.	Organizes the classroom space poorly such that instructional objectives cannot be met.	
<b>Classroom Management</b>	Requires minimal support from the mentor teacher.	Requires support from the mentor teacher.	Requires significant support from the mentor teacher.	Minimally incorporates guidance from the mentor teacher.	
<b>Pedagogical Knowledge Comments</b>	<i>Indicate relevant evidence regarding candidate knowledge of pedagogy. Please include suggestions for improvement on any criteria where candidate is developing or emerging.</i>				
<b>Pedagogical Content Knowledge</b>					
<b>Teaching Methods and Instructional Strategies</b>	Uses an extensive array of teaching methods and instructional strategies, including those that integrate technology, that demonstrate significant attention to key content ideas and students' various learning modes.	Uses multiple teaching methods and instructional strategies, including some that use technology, that demonstrate attempts to attend to key content ideas and students' various learning modes.	Relies on a select few teaching methods and instructional strategies that demonstrate limited attention to key content ideas and students' various learning modes.	Relies strictly on a single teaching method and/or instructional strategy that are/is limitedly attentive to key ideas and students' various learning modes.	
	Actively and independently seeks alternative approaches.	Incorporates new approaches that are suggested.	Adopts new approaches only after substantial prompting.	Unaware of and/or resistant to considering alternative approaches.	
<b>Materials</b>	Uses a wide variety of materials, including digital tools and resources that support and develop key content ideas.	Uses multiple materials, including some use of digital tools and resources that somewhat support and develop key content ideas.	Relies on a select few materials that limitedly support and develop key content ideas.	Relies strictly on a single resource.	
	Materials guide students' conceptualization of the content.	Materials guide students' conceptualization of the content.	Materials nominally guide students' conceptualization of the content.	Materials limitedly support and develop key content ideas and do not guide students' conceptualization of the content.	
	Actively and independently seeks alternative materials.	Incorporates new materials that are suggested.	Adopts new materials only with substantial prompting.	Unaware of and/or resistant to considering alternative materials.	

<b>Assessments</b>	Uses a broad range of formative and summative assessments.	Uses multiple formative and summative assessments.	Relies on a select few forms of assessment.	Relies strictly on a single form of assessment.	
<b>Assessments</b>	Assessments attend to key content ideas and student learning.	Assessments somewhat attend to key content ideas and student learning.	Assessments limitedly attend to key content ideas and students' learning.	Assessment does not attend to key content ideas and students' learning.	
<b>Assessments</b>	Thoughtfully reflects on students' assessment outcomes and in response adjusts instruction.	Requires support to reflect on students' assessment outcomes and/or to adjust instruction in response.	Requires significant support to reflect on students' assessment outcomes and to adjust instruction in response.	Unable and/or unwilling to reflect on students' assessment outcomes.	
	Actively and independently seeks alternative assessments.	Incorporates new forms of assessment that are suggested.	Adopts new forms of assessment only with substantial prompting.	Unaware of and/or resistant to considering alternative forms of assessment.	
<b>Pedagogical Content Knowledge Comments</b>	<i>Indicate relevant evidence regarding candidate knowledge of pedagogy. Please include suggestions for improvement on any criteria where candidate is developing or emerging.</i>				
<b>Professional Qualities</b>					
<b>Relationships with Mentors</b>	Collaborates with the mentor teacher.	Seeks feedback from the mentor teacher.	Seeks feedback from the mentor teacher only when prompted.	Rarely and/or with resistance seeks feedback from the mentor teacher.	
	Reflects on the collaboration and in response appropriately and independently adjusts instructional plan and practice.	Reflects on the feedback and in response develops a plan to adjust instructional plan and practice, but requires support to implement the plan.	Reflects on the feedback, but requires significant support to plan and implement adjustments to instructional plan and practice.	Does not reflect on feedback.	
<b>Relationships with the School's Professional Community</b>	Seeks opportunities for connections with other members of the school's professional community.	Often connects with other members of the school's professional community as required.	Sometimes connects with other members of the school's professional community as required.	Rarely connects with other members of the school's professional community.	
	Incorporates gained knowledge into instructional plan and practice.	Somewhat incorporates gained knowledge into instructional plan and practice.	Minimally incorporates gained knowledge into instructional plan and/or practice.	Does not incorporate gained knowledge into instructional plan and/or practice.	
	Consistently communicates effectively and fairly with students as individuals <b>and</b> whole groups.	Somewhat consistently communicates effectively and fairly with students as individuals <b>or</b> whole groups.	Inconsistently communicates effectively and fairly with students as individuals and/or whole groups.	Rarely communicates effectively and/or fairly with students.	

<b>Relationships with Students</b>	Communication demonstrates respect for students' various cultural identities.	Communication somewhat demonstrates respect for students' various cultural identities.	Communication barely demonstrates respect for students' various cultural identities.	Communication does not demonstrate respect for students' various cultural identities.	
<b>Relationships with Students</b>	Enacts a strong plan for how to improve communication with whole groups <b>or</b> individuals.	Has a plan for how to improve communication with whole groups <b>or</b> individuals.	Has a limited plan for how to improve communication with whole groups and/or individuals and requires significant support from the mentor teacher to develop and/or implement this plan.	Does not seem to have a plan for how to improve communication with whole groups and/or individuals and requires significant support from the mentor teacher to develop and/or implement this plan.	
<b>Responsiveness to Students</b>	Consistently responds effectively to students' questions and/or concerns.	Responds effectively to students' questions and/or concerns.	Requires support to respond effectively to students' questions and/or concerns.	Struggles with and is distracted by students' questions and/or concerns and requires significant support to respond effectively to students' questions and/or concerns.	
	Anticipates possible questions and/or concerns.	Requires support to anticipate possible questions and/or concerns.	Requires significant support to anticipate possible questions and/or concerns.	Unable to anticipate possible questions and/or concerns.	
<b>Flexibility</b>	Consistently responds effectively to interruptions and implements appropriate alternative plans.	Responds effectively to interruptions and implements appropriate alternative plans.	Requires support to respond effectively to interruptions and to implement appropriate alternative plans.	Struggles with and is distracted by interruptions and requires significant support to respond effectively to interruptions and implement appropriate alternative plans.	
	Anticipates possible interruptions.	Requires support to anticipate possible interruptions.	Requires significant support to anticipate possible interruptions.	Unable to anticipate possible interruptions.	
<b>Reflective Practice</b>	Demonstrates thorough reflection on how instruction impacts students' learning.	Identifies strengths and weaknesses in own instruction as related to students' learning.	Requires significant support to identify strengths and weaknesses in own instruction and how this relates to student learning.	Rarely reflects on how instruction impacts students' learning.	
	Modifies future instruction in response to reflection.	Has a plan for how to modify future instruction in response to reflection.	Requires significant support to plan for how to modify future instruction in response to reflection.	Rarely modifies instruction.	
	Instructional plan and practice is guided by research.	Instructional plan and practice is informed by research.	Instructional plan and practice is limitedly informed by research.	Instructional plan and practice is not informed by research.	

<b>Professional Development</b>	Seeks out and participates in elective professional development opportunities offered through and beyond the school.	Participates in elective professional development opportunities offered through and beyond the school.	Inconsistently participates in required professional development opportunities offered through the school.	Rarely participates in professional development opportunities offered through the school.	
	Applies knowledge obtained through participation in professional development opportunities.	Develops a plan to apply knowledge obtained through participation in professional development opportunities.	Develops a limited plan to apply knowledge obtained through participation in professional development opportunities.	Does not develop plans to apply knowledge obtained through participation in professional development opportunities.	
<b>Professional Qualities Comments</b>	<i>Indicate relevant evidence regarding candidate professional qualities. Please include suggestions for improvement on any criteria where candidate is developing or emerging.</i>				

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**Overall Rating**

Proficient    Competent    Developing    Emerging    Unsatisfactory (if selecting unsatisfactory, please call the office at 716-645-2461 to be sure we are immediately aware)

**Narrative** (attach additional pages to describe candidate performance as necessary):

**Mentor Teacher**  
*(please print) :*

**Date:**

**District:**

**School**

Before submitting this assessment to the Office of Educator Preparation, please be sure to discuss it with your student teacher and, as appropriate and when possible, also with the clinical coach. Save a copy for your records and provide a copy to your student teacher. This assessment may be submitted to the office in the following ways: 1. attach to an email sent from your school account to [ubedprep@buffalo.edu](mailto:ubedprep@buffalo.edu). 2. send a hardcopy (University at Buffalo, Office of Educator Preparation 375 Baldy Hall, Buffalo, NY 14260-1000 or 3. fax to 716.645.3631.

**Alternatively, you may complete and submit this assessment via the online survey format available at [ed.buffalo.edu/edprep/field-experience/mentor-teachers.html](http://ed.buffalo.edu/edprep/field-experience/mentor-teachers.html).**