

## Policies for Teacher Candidacy

The culmination of the student's professional preparation is the teacher candidacy experience. This experience is developmental in scope and sequence, occurs in school settings, and corresponds to one school district semester. Teacher candidacy is done on a full-time basis and is awarded 10 college credits. Additionally students must enroll in the **Teacher Candidacy Seminar** for 2 credits. Since school district semesters do not always correspond to the College's semester, teacher candidates may have to make special housing and meal arrangements for a week or two prior to or following the College semester.

Specific procedures related to student teaching are as follows:

1. Students must have completed and have approved by the Director of the School of Education an application for admission to the teacher candidacy program. Applications for teacher candidacy are distributed in EDU 493 – Portfolio Seminar that is taken the semester before teacher candidacy. Criteria for acceptance into the teacher candidacy program shall include demonstrated completion and competence in the:
  - Education Major(s)
  - Pre-teacher candidacy clinical experience
  - Foundations of Reading Test(K4-9 & SPED)
  - Conduct and Competency Questionnaire
  - Presentation of Portfolio-Stage Three
  - Meeting of the required WI score on the Praxis II or GPA equivalent if applicable
2. **“Full Semester” Placement Policy:** Depending upon the type of teacher candidacy assignment, subject area major/minor, and/or pre-teacher candidacy clinical experiences, a teacher candidate may have one of the following arrangements:

Full day, full semester (18 weeks) at one placement.

Full day, half semester (9 weeks) at each of two placements.

### Notes

- Students seeking licensure in regular education and special education complete 9 weeks in a regular education setting and 9 weeks in a special education setting.
- Students seeking licensure in music split teacher-candidacy time among choral, and instrumental settings.

### Wisconsin Improvement Program Internship:

*WIP internships are full-semester placements.* Consult the [WIP page](#) on the DPI website for further information.

3. **Placement Policy** - Students are given the opportunity to make special requests for placement into clinical/teacher candidacy locations. Such requests can also be made on the application for teacher candidacy. The members of the SOE discuss these requests and a final determination to grant a special request is made by the Director. Approval/disapproval of special requests is based on the following factors:
  - The SOE seeks a quality placement that is the best “fit” for each teacher candidate. This “fit” involves several considerations such as student ability, disposition, personality, licensure requirements, etc.
  - Cooperating teachers must meet specified qualifications according to PI34.
  - Schools/districts may have their full quota of teacher candidates already for the year.
  - The SOE does not place teacher candidates into a school they have attended.
  - Feedback on evaluation of previous placements may indicate limitations.

4. **Portfolio** - Students formally present their portfolio – stage 3 at the end of the semester immediately preceding teach candidacy.
5. **Duties** - The teacher candidacy experience includes various activities normally performed by a teacher in a school setting such as instruction, supervision, pupil evaluation, conferences with parents, and faculty meetings.
6. **Administration** – The Director is the administrator of the teacher candidacy clinical experience. The Coordinator of Clinical Experiences identifies and verifies teacher candidate assignments. Both enlist cooperating teachers and primary teacher candidate supervisors who have had at least 3 years of successful teaching experience at the appropriate grade level. The Director also provides access to other subject matter supervisors as needed. These supervisors are selected from the WLC faculty.
7. **Policy on Absences** – It is understood that a teacher candidate may need to be absent for a significant or serious reason. However, if a teacher candidate is absent more than two days she/he may be required to make up the time. After consultation with the Cooperating Teacher, Teacher Candidate, and College Supervisor, the SOE director determines whether additional classroom time is necessary and what that experience entails in terms of time and placement.

When absence is necessary, the teacher candidate should follow the procedure described below.

- A. The teacher candidate should inform the cooperating teacher as far ahead of time as possible. It is helpful if the teacher candidate has the phone number of the cooperating teacher in order to call him/her to inform of absence.
  - B. The teacher candidate should inform the school secretary before the school day begins. If the teacher candidate has not been able to contact the cooperating teacher, the secretary should be asked to give the cooperating teacher the message that the teacher candidate is absent.
  - C. The teacher candidate is to contact the college supervisor early in the day informing him/her of the absence from the assignment. **Undocumented absences put completion of teacher candidacy in jeopardy. After two absences reviews are held with the Director of the SOE.**
  - D. **Participation in Athletics during Teacher Candidacy** - Upon admission to the SOE candidates sign a statement that they understand that requirements for student teaching will limit or preclude participation in athletics during the student teaching semester. Please schedule a meeting with the SOE directors upon admission to the School of Education to ensure understanding of expectations and course planning.
8. **Visitation:** Each teacher candidate is visited at least four times by the primary supervisor for at least one hour per visit. The additional subject matter supervisor(s) mentioned in section 4 also participate in the evaluative visit, according to education department criteria and participates in at least two conferences involving the cooperating teacher, the student, and the education department college supervisors. Copies of these written evaluations are filed in the student's education file and become part of the permanent record. Release of these evaluations to potential employers occurs only upon request of the student.
  10. **Conduct and Competency Questionnaire, Background Check and Health Form:** Each student submits a physician's health report completed within 60 days of student teaching. This health report must include the results of a TB test.

The SOE requires a criminal background check conducted for all students upon admission to the program. The comprehensive background check includes a residency check, nationwide criminal background check, and a national criminal database. A Conduct and Competency Questionnaire must be completed prior to teacher candidacy. Failure to fully disclose criminal background information and/or submission of false information, behaviors and actions that are not in accord with SOE goals and dispositions, as well as convictions for crimes which would lead to the automatic revocation of teacher licensure under s. 115.31 (2g), Wis. Stats., may constitute grounds for denial of admission or removal from the program. Criminal history may disqualify a candidate from field placements and/or current and future employment opportunities. Districts or schools requiring their own background checks will inform the SOE and teacher candidates of the appropriate process/paperwork.

11. **Internship:** Students selected to participate in an internship placement through the Wisconsin Improvement Program may need to prepare special materials, present their portfolio, and/or interview with the district.
12. **Fees:** Interns pay \$275 (\$75 for license and \$200 for WIP fee).
13. The State of Wisconsin requires individuals who work in certain professions to report child abuse and neglect. [Wisconsin State Statute 48.981](#) lists school teachers as individuals who are mandatory reporters. Teacher candidates are not mandatory reporters for purposes of this statute but follow-up with your CT is required and perhaps the SOE director(s) based upon the individual case.
14. **Qualifications Policy of Cooperating Teachers and College Supervisors:**  
**Cooperating teachers** must:
  - Hold a regular Wisconsin license (or its equivalent) for the teaching assignment.
  - Have three years of teaching experience with at least one year of experience in the school system of current employment.
  - Have completed a course or seminar in supervision of teacher candidates.
 The **college supervisor** must:
  - Have taught in PK-12 schools for at least 3 years.
  - Be a member of WLC faculty (full-time or adjunct)
15. **Completion of Teacher Candidacy:** Upon successful completion of the Teacher Candidacy Clinical Experience, a student may file for a state license, following the specified procedures as stated on the DPI application.
  1. A **“wrap-up” conference** with the teacher candidate and supervisor must be held in the final weeks of the teacher candidacy placement. This meeting allows for the supervisor to overview the experience, check the *student* folder and highlight the student’s developmental growth in teaching. The college supervisor completes a grade appraisal form and submits it to the SOE Director.
  2. An **exit conference/interview** must be scheduled (after the supervisor meeting) with the Director of the School Education and certifying officer. Other exit surveys and evaluations may be conducted at this time. Evaluations of both school sites and cooperating teachers are conducted.

### **Expectations and Responsibilities of Teacher Candidates**

1. The teacher candidate attends an orientation meeting and seminars with WLC faculty throughout teacher candidacy.
2. The teacher candidate acquaints her/himself with the philosophy of education, general handbooks and general information about that school system(s) and specific school(s) to which she/he has been approved by the Director of the School of Education.
3. The teacher candidate spends approximately one week observing the cooperating teacher. *The student should use this observation time to begin learning the climate and culture of the school, learn student names, and become familiar with curriculum, resources, and procedures.*
4. Purpose of the initial visit: Some of the purposes of this visit include to:
  - Introduce the teacher candidate to the teaching situation.
  - Provide the teacher candidate with the opportunity to observe the climate of the school and class.
  - Discuss with the cooperating teacher specific courses for which the teacher candidate is responsible, particular units of study in the course, textbooks, and school procedural concerns.
  - Give the teacher candidate a particular focus for the teacher candidacy experience.

### **Performance Expectations of Teacher Candidates**

For teacher candidacy to be a successful experience, it is necessary that all teacher candidates clearly understand and demonstrate adherence to their responsibilities which include to:

- **Appear** promptly and regularly for teacher candidacy.

- **Cooperate** with the policies of the school and its personnel.
- **Prepare** thoroughly for the particular lessons s/he must teach.
- **Develop** each lesson plan and share with the cooperating teacher, and the college supervisor. This is often done through a shared electronic folder for the supervisor whenever that person observes.
- **Reflect** upon the experience on a daily basis for each day in the classroom.  
*Reflections are written as journal reflections and are shared with the supervisor weekly, and sent electronically by midnight of Sunday evening.*
- Prior to scheduled observation, to **provide** the college supervisor with lesson plans and other necessary materials at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled observation.
- **Arrange** a post-observation conference with that supervisor.
- **Arrange** for conferences with the cooperating teacher at the convenience of the cooperating teacher.
- **Follow** the standards of conduct and dress as deemed professional by the school system and the SOE.
- **Demonstrate** responsibility with confidential matter.
- **Report** legal concerns promptly to superiors (cooperating teacher and/or principal).
- **Accept** criticism in a constructive manner and **make** efforts to respond to that criticism positively and professionally.
- **Acquaint** oneself with the curriculum materials in the room/department, the library and other areas of the school district.
- **Work** with the cooperating teacher in setting goals and objectives, in determining and choosing suitable strategies and in selecting appropriate materials for instruction.
- **Maintain** a continuous self-evaluation of performance.
- **Participate** in parent-teacher conferences and other normally required functions of a regular classroom teacher as permitted by the cooperating teacher.
- **Attend** weekly seminars (EDU 496) at the college; **be punctual and prepare** for those seminars.
- **Exceed** the minimum expectations of teacher candidates in order to show enthusiasm for the profession.
- **Participate** in non-classroom duties if required of teachers: supervision of study halls, hall duty, attendance reporting, clinic supervision, etc. Note: these all need to be under the supervision of a licensed teacher or staff (Not Alone).

## Responsibilities of Cooperating Teachers

### 1. Orientation

The most helpful and natural situation for the teacher candidate is one in which s/he is made to feel that s/he is a professional. These suggestions include allowing the teacher candidate to be:

- Introduced to the class in some appropriate way (co-worker, associate teacher).
- Assigned a place for personal belongings and teaching materials.
- Introduced to other staff members as appropriate.
- Provided with a seating chart or list of student names.

- Given an overview of the required semester work and materials for the class.
- Informed about school policies: use of school facilities, the keeping and handling of school records and reports, contractual concerns.
- Acquainted with the school building--library, cafeteria, audio-visual room, etc.—and encourage him/her to use them as appropriate.
- Invited to attend professional meetings in the school and encouraged to observe other master teachers as appropriate.

## 2. Assignment of Teaching Responsibilities

- Getting Started

It is the cooperating teacher who decides when the teacher candidate should begin teaching a particular class. This decision is based upon the degree of competence which the teacher candidate displays, the nature of the project or topic or skill to be taught, and the readiness of the particular class of students. Sometimes it is best if the teacher candidate begins teaching as soon as she/he has had the opportunity to become acquainted with the procedures and methods--that is, within a few days.

During the first few days the teacher candidate might be asked to participate in various ways. Some suggested initial activities include: checking attendance, arranging bulletin boards, helping individual pupils, operating audio-visual aids, preparing materials, and teaching a segment of a lesson.

- Establishing the Teacher Role

It is hoped that when the teacher candidate begins teaching, s/he may have the feeling that, to some extent, "it is his/her class." Although the cooperating teacher is responsible for the education and well-being of the students, it is necessary for the teacher candidate's progress and success that some authority be delegated to her/him. If a cooperating teacher thinks that the teacher candidate does not have the competence necessary for some degree of responsibility, this should be discussed with the college supervisor. After the initial teaching of a subject has begun, the teacher candidate should continue in that class, taking it on a regular basis.

## 3. Planning

- Wisconsin Lutheran College Lesson Plan Requirement

It is expected that the teacher candidate presents to the cooperating teacher written plans covering the lessons to be taught. Although the Wisconsin Lutheran College format is required, adjustments and adaptations can be made after discussion with the college supervisor. This planning is to be worked out by the cooperating teacher with the teacher candidate. The cooperating teacher should **require** of the teacher candidate the kind of lesson plans that are meaningful to the two of them, that advocate student learning, AND that follow the prescribed WLC format. All lesson plans should provide the following information:

- > Establishment of Lesson Plan Deadlines

It is suggested that the cooperating teacher make clear to the teacher candidate how far in advance lesson plans are to be submitted with the college recommending at least a full day in advance. It is also helpful for the teacher candidate in long-range planning to know well in advance what units are expected to cover during the semester.

- > Expectations of Novice Teacher vs. Experienced Teacher

It is important to stress that the lesson plans of teacher candidates are expected to be more detailed than those of an experienced teacher. All lesson plans must be approved by the cooperating teacher before teaching.

- > Maintenance of a Lesson Plan Folder

The supervisors from the college, as well as the cooperating teacher, review the plans developed by the teacher candidate in advance of teaching. It is important that the teacher candidate keep a folder (this can be electronic) also for the cooperating teacher and supervisor of all plans so that these can be discussed with the cooperating teacher as well as with the college supervisor because the supervisor needs to understand the context of the observed lesson and needs to verify professional growth in lesson planning.

## 4. Observation and Conferences

- Conferences

It is in this aspect of teacher candidacy that the teacher candidate receives the individual guidance (from experienced, competent, and professional persons) that gives direction to professional development. Through conferences, the student is enabled to analyze the growing understanding of the relationship between theory and practice. In many significant ways the conference becomes the testing ground in which the teacher candidate organizes, assesses, and assimilates the experiences of teacher candidacy. It is here that the cooperating teacher and/or the college supervisor capitalize upon the opportunity to help the teacher candidate become more thoughtful, analytic, and reflective about teaching and about student learning. Conferences, of course, are held for various purposes. For example, before the instruction takes place, it is helpful for the cooperating teacher to discuss plans with the teacher candidate so that each knows what is to be accomplished.

- Observation and Analysis

It is expected that the cooperating teacher regularly and formally observes entire lessons by taking notes during this observation in order to convey, in the later conference, specific points of information relative to the **teacher candidate's** performance. Careful observation makes it possible to tell the teacher candidate the specific elements of the lesson that strengthened and/or weakened the lesson's effectiveness. Following the formal observation, the cooperating teacher helps the teacher candidate analyze the teaching by addressing questions such as the following:

*Were the objectives of the lesson clear to the learners and met successfully?*  
*Were adaptations planned for and implemented, if necessary?*  
*Was the necessary material available and properly organized?*  
*Did the teacher candidate exhibit passion for teaching?*  
*Did the students exhibit enthusiasm for learning the lesson?*  
*What elements of effective instruction were present?*  
*Was time used efficiently?*  
*Did the students learn the concepts? How do you know that they did?*  
*Is the teacher candidate able to effectively assess teaching and learning?*

- Cooperating Teacher Weekly Feedback Forms

Forms are included in the Cooperating Teacher packet used weekly to document professional growth and to make recommendations for the next week. (These are also available in electronic form on the WLC School of Education website.)

## 5. Evaluation

- Developmental in Scope

The evaluation of the **teacher candidate's** professional growth is a continuous process, involving the cooperating teacher, the college supervisor(s), and the teacher candidate.

It is expected that the teacher candidate brings new ideas, new methods, and enthusiasm to the classroom. Inexperience, however, causes teacher candidates to make mistakes, thereby giving the cooperating teacher the opportunity to show where and why the mistakes were made and how improvement can be made. The teacher candidate cannot be expected to conduct lessons with the skill of an experienced teacher, and therefore encouragement of initial attempts is essential.

- Mid-Term Evaluation

It is expected that at regular intervals the cooperating teacher provide a summary of the teacher candidate's strengths and areas for improvement. The cooperating teacher also should make known to the college supervisor(s) the teacher candidate's deficiencies, evidence of growth, and development of teaching ability. One means for this is the **mid-term evaluation form**. Both the cooperating teacher and the teacher candidate complete and discuss the forms. The completed form is submitted returned to the Director of School of Education via an electronic platform, where it is kept on file. The purpose of this evaluation is to assure that the teacher candidate and all persons directly responsible for development of the teacher candidate as a teacher have a clear understanding of progress at this point.

- Final Evaluation

At the end of the teacher candidate placement, the cooperating teacher is asked to complete the Teacher Candidate Evaluation--Final Form. The Teacher Candidate Evaluation Form becomes part of the student's permanent file and portfolio. The college supervisor also completes a Final Evaluation which is placed in this file via an electronic platform.

- Grades  
Teacher candidacy grades are determined by the college supervisor(s) and are based upon observations of and conferences with the teacher candidate during the semester; conferences with the cooperating teacher during the semester and evaluation of the cooperating teachers on the final evaluation mentioned above. Letter grades are assigned according to the WLC grading policy.
- Letters of Recommendation  
Teacher candidates are encouraged to seek letters of recommendation to build and maintain their credential file application for employment.

**Responsibilities of the Principal or Designee of Teacher Candidates in the Cooperating School**

The principal, or the principal's designee, is responsible for accepting the teacher candidate in the school. It is that person who approves the appointment of a cooperating teacher to work in the teacher candidacy program. The principal may wish to play an active role in planning the teacher candidacy experiences. This role might include working with the cooperating teacher to plan a balanced sequence of experiences for the teacher candidate, providing an occasional opportunity to observe other teachers in the school, and meeting with the teacher candidate to explain overall operations and the policies of the school.

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