



General Information

Description of Student Teaching

Student teaching is the culminating field experience of the teacher education program in which the prospective teacher works full time for 16 weeks in a placement with one supervising teacher or full time in two 8-week placements with different age groups and supervising teachers. During this time, the student teacher observes, assists, and gradually assumes full responsibility for classroom instruction under the direction of the supervising teacher and university supervisor. Student teaching is considered by many to be the most important phase of the university student's professional preparation program because this is the time the student applies and tests the principles, theories, and methods learned in the teacher education program. Through student teaching, the student experiences the many facets of a professional teacher's role and gains a deeper understanding of teaching, students, and schools.

Schools that serve as sites for student teaching are located in close proximity to Mississippi State University. Student teachers are placed in public school settings that include students with exceptionalities and diverse ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Objectives

The student teaching experience will provide students with opportunities to:

- 1. Assess personal/social suitability for teaching and evaluate choice of major/concentration and grade-level interest.**
- 2. Experience all roles of a professional teacher (instructional and non-instructional) through planned, sequenced activities in a 16 week program.**
- 3. Apply principles and methods from the knowledge base of the professional program.**
- 4. Gain experience working with students with special needs.**
- 5. Experiment with alternative strategies to increase student learning.**

6. **Gain experience working with students from different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.**
7. **Observe and practice classroom management strategies.**
8. **Communicate about and discuss all phases of experience with both the school site supervisor and the university supervisor.**
9. **Receive feedback from structured observations, including conferencing and suggestions for improvement, from the school site supervisor and university supervisor.**
10. **Practice the skills identified in the Student Teacher Assessment instrument.**
11. **Gain knowledge of classroom and school practices and policies.**
12. **Gain knowledge of parent involvement activities and practices.**
13. **Become a professional teacher through self-evaluation, problem solving, and reflection about teaching and learning.**

Introduction to the INTASC Standards

The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) was established under the umbrella of the Council of Chief State School Officers to strengthen the teaching profession. The INTASC task force began its work by articulating standards for a common core of teaching knowledge and skills that should be acquired by all new teachers. The ten INTASC standards that resulted from the task force's work set forth the knowledge, dispositions, and performance skills that beginning teachers should know and be able to do. These national standards have been adopted by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) for use in preservice teacher education programs. In Mississippi, the INTASC standards have replaced the Mississippi Teacher Assessment Instrument (MTAI) competencies.

The INTASC task force based these standards on a number of beliefs: for example, all children have the potential to learn rigorous content and achieve high standards; our educational system must guarantee a learning environment in which all children can learn and achieve their own kind of individually configured excellence; and the standards and opportunities should enable teachers to support the intellectual, social, emotional, moral and physical development of students, respond with flexibility and professional judgment to their different needs, and actively engage them in

their own learning so that they can use and generate knowledge in effective and powerful ways. Teaching and learning comprise a holistic process that connects ideas and disciplines to each other and to the personal experiences, environments, and communities of students. Consequently, the process of teaching must be dynamic and reciprocal, responding to the many contexts in which students learn.

The INTASC standards are also based on the belief that professional teachers assume roles that extend beyond the classroom and include responsibilities for connecting to parents and other professionals, developing the school as a learning organization, and using community resources to foster the education and welfare of students.

The Student Teacher Assessment instrument included in this handbook is based on the INTASC standards. The ten standards are as follows:

- 1. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.**
- 2. The teacher understands how children learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.**
- 3. The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.**
- 4. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.**
- 5. The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.**
- 6. The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.**
- 7. The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.**

8. The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of the learner.
9. The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.
10. The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being.

There are specific expectations for each teaching field. These objectives are listed on a separate form to be completed during each student teaching placement.

Professional Seminar/Meeting Schedule

All student teachers participate in a three-credit hour professional seminar during the student teaching semester. The purpose of the seminar is to link the university/school experience and practice to the knowledge base of the professional program. Student teachers are encouraged to engage in problem solving, self-analysis and reflection about teaching and learning. The seminar focuses on classroom and school issues and includes opportunities for discussion with peers, school faculty and university faculty. Topics may vary depending on licensure area and student teacher needs, e.g., classroom management, methods of teaching, working with parents, etc. The expertise of classroom teachers and others may be used to extend learning and enhance the growth of student teachers.

Orientation and professional seminars for each major are held on campus the first three days of the semester. After students begin their student teaching, seminars meet every other week at 2:00 p.m. or according to the schedule established by the instructor. All student teachers are required to participate in Education Interview Day and Wrap-Up Day as part of their seminar hours. Student teachers must attend all scheduled seminars and complete portfolio and other assignments. Make-up assignments will be required for any absences. The seminar schedule will be provided to the supervising teacher by the student teacher. Student teachers should leave their assigned schools early enough to be on time for seminar.