

Student Teaching Policies and Procedures

Absence / Attendance

The Student Teaching program at the University of Scranton requires the completion of a twelve-week placement in a local school. Student teachers are expected to be in attendance all day, every day during their assignment. Student teachers do not have a specified number of sick days or personal days, and there are no excused absences for student teachers. They are to follow the school district calendar and the cooperating teacher's daily schedule. Arrival and departure times are to mirror those required of the cooperating teacher by the school district. In addition, student teachers also must attend weekly professional seminar meetings with their university supervisor. These professional seminars are scheduled on campus at times determined by the supervisor; seminar meetings are scheduled after the school day and will not require early departure from the assigned school.

Although daily attendance is expected, serious illness, death within the immediate family, and attendance at job interviews might warrant an absence. In the event of such an unusual circumstance, the student teacher must notify both the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor as soon as possible. Prior approval of absences related to interviews or professional activities must be secured from the university supervisor.

The student teacher shall have plans and materials for any assigned lessons delivered to the cooperating teacher prior to the beginning of the school day on which the absence is to occur.

Absences in excess of three days may result in the extension of the student teaching experience or removal of the candidate from his/her assignment. Tardiness will not be tolerated. Unexpected or unreported absences reflect inappropriate professional conduct and have serious consequences, which may include a low grade in Professional Growth, disciplinary action related to Education Department Dispositions, and/or recommendation to TEC for dismissal from the program.

Calendar

During the student teaching placement, candidates will follow the school district calendar to determine days of attendance, early dismissals, or late starts. The calendars of many school districts do not correspond to the University of Scranton calendar. Candidates should review the school calendar with their cooperating teachers before beginning placement, noting possible changes in the calendar based on factors such as snow days. Student teachers should not plan vacations during student teaching, as local school calendars can and frequently do change.

Student teachers are required to adhere to the arrival and departure time expectations that the school district has for the cooperating teachers. Student teachers are expected to attend any professional development activities scheduled for cooperating teachers.

Clearances

Submission of a complete and current clearance packet to the field office is required before a student teaching placement can be released. Directions and links for completing the required forms can be found at <http://www.scranton.edu/academics/pcps/education/Field%20Folder/Clearances.shtml> A complete packet includes .pdf copies of:

- A negative tuberculosis test – note that some districts require a TB test current within three months of beginning the placement
- Act 34 Criminal Record Check indicating “no record”
- Act 151 Child Abuse Clearance indicating “no record”
- Act 114 PA FBI background check indicating “no record”
- A signed Act 24 statement

Clearances are valid for one year from date of issuance.

Some districts also require a physical exam. The field office will inform student teachers if this is the case; physicals can be obtained from the Wellness Center on campus.

Student teachers should plan to bring the original clearances with them to their assigned school on the first day of student teaching.

FALL semester student teachers must submit a complete, current clearance packet before AUGUST 1.

SPRING semester student teachers must submit a complete, current clearance packet before JANUARY 1.

Clearances which report violations will result in the student being denied a student teaching placement. Students convicted of any offense during the student teaching semester will be removed from their student teaching assignment.

“Student teachers are covered by the University’s insurance policies while they are teaching. That covers liability. However, it should be noted that in the case of physical injury to a student while the student is teaching, the student is not covered by the University’s worker’s compensation policy because the student is not an employee of the University. The student’s own insurance would have to cover any claims from such injuries, or, depending on the circumstances of the injury, the teaching site may be liable.” (D. Christiansen, 2000)

Confidentiality

During fieldwork, student teachers enter into a privileged situation where they are exposed to a variety of confidential information. Certain materials, student records, school or classroom issues, and conversations may be of a confidential nature. The dissemination of such information is considered a breach of professional ethics, which may lead to your dismissal from the school and even the program. When in doubt about an issue, consult with your co-operating teacher and/or your university supervisor.

Dispositions

Student dispositions are monitored by examination of professional behaviors. The professional behaviors necessary for entry to the teaching profession will be monitored by all of your instructors and addressed if a deficiency is noted. For example, such behaviors include acting responsibly and being dependable through active and positive class participation and completing work on time and in a professional manner.

Twice a year, the Education Department faculty engages in a frank and confidential discussion of the progress of education students. This semi-annual review is an attempt to assist students in positive professional growth, and it is at this time that the informal evaluations of non-academic criteria are made formal. The conduct discussed by the faculty is conduct that is critical to the professional development of students who hope to successfully enter the teaching program. For example, professional conduct that faculty will consider is reflected in the following:

- recognizes and practices proper professional behaviors, including punctuality and dependability
- demonstrates concern for appearance and professional dress
- has a positive attitude toward learning and demonstrates a willingness to try new methods and technologies
- deals ethically with colleagues, supervisors, students and families
- accepts and considers feedback from others
- reacts with sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others
- believes that all students can learn
- facilitates the social acceptance of persons by encouraging positive relationships and shows concern for peers and students
- shows an appreciation for diversity in backgrounds, experiences and abilities

A **first negative assessment** occurs when at least two faculty/professional staff members concurrently report concern in any professional conduct areas listed under dispositions at the semi-annual review or when at least two faculty/professional staff members report concern in any professional conduct areas listed under dispositions at the semi-annual reviews during two consecutive semesters. Two examples follow: 1) If two, or more, faculty/professional staff members, note that a student had several absences and report concern for the student in the professional conduct area “recognizes and practices proper professional behaviors, including punctuality and dependability”, that student would receive a first negative assessment. 2) If one faculty/professional staff member reports concern for a student in the professional conduct area “accepts and considers feedback from others” and a second faculty/professional staff member reports concern for a student in the professional conduct area “reacts with sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others”, that student would receive a first negative assessment.

The Undergraduate Programs Director will be the person to contact the student and request that the student meet with the Director. The student is expected to arrange a meeting with the Director so that, together, a plan of action can be made that will assist the student in remediation of the deficiency. At the meeting with the Undergraduate Program Director, the student will be provided with a template for developing their plan of action. The template will provide an outline of the five components that should be included in the plan, a sample student action plan, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)

Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators, and a copy of Appendix C from the Undergraduate Student Handbook (The Evaluation of Student Dispositions). The student must sign the plan of action. A copy of the plan will be placed in the student's file in the Undergraduate Program Director's office. Remediation could be as simple as attending classes more regularly. Remediation may also require more formal actions such as participation in career counseling or a counseling program.

It is important to note that the semi-annual review is an attempt to assist the student in professional growth. Should a student receive a first negative assessment and remediate the area(s) of deficiency. However, a second negative assessment would indicate that the dispositions deficiency remains and is cause for referral to the Chair of the Education Department. A **second negative assessment** occurs when at least one faculty/professional staff member reports concern in any conduct area listed under dispositions at the semi-annual review in the semester following the first negative assessment

Upon a second negative assessment, the Chair of the Education Department may recommend to the Teacher Education Committee (TEC) that the student be dismissed from the program. If the TEC concurs with the Chair, it will notify the student of its intent to recommend dismissal to the appropriate Dean. The student will then have ten calendar days from the receipt of notification to appeal to the TEC. If the TEC denies the appeal, the student will have ten calendar days from that receipt of notification to appeal directly to the appropriate Dean.

Monitoring student progress in the Teacher Preparation Programs at the University of Scranton is taken very seriously by the Education Department as it is a responsibility dictated to us by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Keep in mind that you are a member of the student body at the University and that all rules and regulations of that greater body of students also apply to you. Improper behavior by teacher candidates can impact their future certification potential as well.

Dress and Grooming

Dress and groom neatly at all times—a professional appearance testifies to the student teacher's attitude towards the hosting school, the co-operating teacher, the students, and him or herself. A good general rule is to determine what is acceptable or expected at the school site and then increase that level one step up.

Evaluation and Grading

Continuous feedback is crucial for student teachers. It provides the substance needed for critical reflection allowing for improvement, refinement of necessary skills, and opportunities for growth. Both cooperating teachers and university supervisors will be expected to provide feedback by observing, conferring with, and assessing the student teacher. The continuous feedback to the student teacher should facilitate self-evaluation and self-improvement by the student teacher.

Cooperating teachers and university supervisors should encourage the student teacher as he or she builds self-confidence, collect observational data, and conduct conferences that allow the student teacher to effectively engage in reflective practices, allowing for analysis of his or her lessons and implementation of modifications to instruction when needed.

Following are minimum requirements for formal evaluation and assessment of the student teacher:

Student Teaching Forms and Documents

Description	ST	CT	US	CS	Due Date
Lesson Plans – Required for every lesson	X				3 days before implementing
Journals	X				As determined by university supervisor
Advancement Toward Outcomes (3)	X				Weeks 3, 6, 9
Service Hours – Undergraduates only	X				One week before end of semester
Self-Evaluation	X				Week 12
Formal Observations		X – at least 4	X – at least 4		Suggested at weeks 2,4,8,10
Mid-Term Evaluation		X			Week 6
Final Evaluation		X	X (online w/ printed copy)		Week 12
PDE 430			X (online w/ printed copy)		Weeks 6 and 12
Content Evaluations (Secondary only)				X	Weeks 4, 8, 11
Mileage Logs			X	X	End of semester

Journal

The student teacher is required to maintain a daily reflective journal during student teaching. This journal should contain comments concerning the teacher's role, an understanding of that role, interesting events, unusual happenings, and personal reflections on the teaching task. The journal should not recap the day's teaching, but instead be an opportunity for reflection on the day's events and their effect on the student teacher as an individual and a professional. Confidentiality is of utmost importance. Therefore, student and teacher names should not be used.

Lesson Planning

Effective teaching requires both long-term and daily planning. The student teacher is required to prepare a detailed lesson plan for all subjects/lessons to be taught. Detailed plans are needed because:

- They help maintain direction in the event of interruptions or emergencies
- They objectives visible
- They provide freedom and flexibility while teaching by providing a solid framework for material to be covered
- They help to prevent issues that may arise due to lack of preparation

In order to gain the full value of the cooperating teacher's knowledge and experience, the student teacher is expected to discuss his or her plans with the cooperating teacher prior to teaching the lesson. Each plan, along with supporting materials, must be reviewed and approved by the cooperating teacher in advance of the scheduled lesson. This must be documented with the cooperating teacher's signature and date. These plans should be discussed well enough in advance for the student teacher to gain the full value of the cooperating teacher's knowledge and experience. Lesson plans will be submitted at least three (3) days in advance of teaching the lesson to give the cooperating teacher the opportunity to provide feedback.

Placement

The Director of Field Experience is responsible for placement of student teachers in the schools. These placements are contingent upon availability of supervisors and decisions of school administrators. Formal arrangement for those placements is a University function, and students are not to pursue arrangements on their own. Students may not student teach in a school from which they have graduated, or where the student teacher's siblings or children now attend. In addition, placements will not be made in schools where a student teacher has been employed or where family members are now employed. Students are expected to reside within driving distance from the University of Scranton when completing the student teaching semester. As per the University of Scranton Education Department Student Handbook, students are responsible for their own transportation to their placement.

The Director of Field Placement is limited by both the number of students requesting student teaching placement and the number of available positions in area schools. Therefore, student teaching school placements made by the Director are final.

When students receive their assignments, they should initiate contact with the cooperating teacher as soon as possible (unless directed otherwise). This not only shows professional courtesy to the host teacher, but will also help the student teacher begin preparing and planning for the experience.

Professional Seminar

The student teacher is required to attend the weekly professional seminar that is conducted by the university supervisor. Seminars are an integral part of the student teaching experience, providing the support necessary to successfully negotiate this important time in one's pre-service training. Seminars give the university supervisor an opportunity to provide resources, information, and guidance to the student teacher. All student teachers are expected to be active participants.

The university supervisor will require submission of the following materials periodically:

- Cooperating teacher observations/evaluations
- Self-evaluations
- Systematic observations of classroom students
- Student teaching journal

Final submission after completion of the student teaching experience includes the following:

- Final cooperating teacher evaluation
- Final self-evaluation
- Final systematic observations of classroom students
- Student teaching journal

Failure to submit records and designated items as scheduled will adversely affect your final student teaching grade(s).

Professionalism

Student teachers are considered professional educators under Chapter 235: Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators in Pennsylvania. Excerpts of Chapter 235 are provided below; the complete Code of Conduct can be found at

<http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter235/chap235toc.html>

§ 235.4. Practices.

(a) Professional practices are behaviors and attitudes that are based on a set of values that the professional education community believes and accepts. These values are evidenced by the professional educator's conduct toward students and colleagues, and the educator's employer and community. When teacher candidates become professional educators in this Commonwealth, they are expected to abide by this section.

(b) Professional educators are expected to abide by the following:

(1) Professional educators shall abide by the Public School Code of 1949 (24 P. S. § § 1-101—27-2702), other school laws of the Commonwealth, sections 1201(a)(1), (2) and (4) and (b)(1), (2) and (4) of the Public Employee Relations Act (43 P. S. § § 1101.1201(a)(1), (2) and (4) and (b)(1), (2) and (4)) and this chapter.

(2) Professional educators shall be prepared, and legally certified, in their areas of assignment. Educators may not be assigned or willingly accept assignments they are not certified to fulfill. Educators may be assigned to or accept assignments outside their certification area on a temporary, short-term, emergency basis. Examples: a teacher certified in English filling in a class period for a physical education teacher who has that day become ill; a substitute teacher certified in elementary education employed as a librarian for several days until the district can locate and employ a permanent substitute teacher certified in library science.

(3) Professional educators shall maintain high levels of competence throughout their careers.

(4) Professional educators shall exhibit consistent and equitable treatment of students, fellow educators and parents. They shall respect the civil rights of all and not discriminate on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, culture, religion, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, age, political beliefs, socioeconomic status, disabling condition or vocational interest. This list of bases or discrimination is not all-inclusive.

(5) Professional educators shall accept the value of diversity in educational practice. Diversity requires educators to have a range of methodologies and to request the necessary tools for effective teaching and learning.

(6) Professional educators shall impart to their students principles of good citizenship and societal responsibility.

(7) Professional educators shall exhibit acceptable and professional language and communication skills. Their verbal and written communications with parents, students and staff shall reflect sensitivity to the fundamental human rights of dignity, privacy and respect.

(8) Professional educators shall be open-minded, knowledgeable and use appropriate judgment and communication skills when responding to an issue within the educational environment.

(9) Professional educators shall keep in confidence information obtained in confidence in the course of professional service unless required to be disclosed by law or by clear and compelling professional necessity as determined by the professional educator.

(10) Professional educators shall exert reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions which interfere with learning or are harmful to the student's health and safety.

§ 235.5. Conduct.

Individual professional conduct reflects upon the practices, values, integrity and reputation of the profession. Violation of § § 235.6—235.11 may constitute an independent basis for private or public reprimand, and may be used as supporting evidence in cases of certification suspension and revocation.

§ 235.7. Certification.

The professional educator may not:

(1) Accept employment, when not properly certificated, in a position for which certification is required.

(2) Assist entry into or continuance in the education profession of an unqualified person.

(3) Employ, or recommend for employment, a person who is not certificated appropriately for the position.

§ 235.8. Civil rights.

The professional educator may not:

(1) Discriminate on the basis of race, National or ethnic origin, culture, religion, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, age, political beliefs, socioeconomic status; disabling condition or vocational interest against a student or fellow professional. This list of bases of discrimination is not all-inclusive. This discrimination shall be found to exist by an agency of proper jurisdiction to be considered an independent basis for discipline.

(2) Interfere with a student's or colleague's exercise of political and civil rights and responsibilities.

§ 235.9. Improper personal or financial gain.

The professional educator may not:

(1) Accept gratuities, gifts or favors that might impair or appear to impair professional judgment.

(2) Exploit a professional relationship for personal gain or advantage.

§ 235.10. Relationships with students.

The professional educator may not:

(1) Knowingly and intentionally distort or misrepresent evaluations of students.

(2) Knowingly and intentionally misrepresent subject matter or curriculum.

(3) Sexually harass or engage in sexual relationships with students.

(4) Knowingly and intentionally withhold evidence from the proper authorities about violations of the legal obligations as defined within this section.

§ 235.11. Professional relationships.

The professional educator may not:

- (1) Knowingly and intentionally deny or impede a colleague in the exercise or enjoyment of a professional right or privilege in being an educator.
- (2) Knowingly and intentionally distort evaluations of colleagues.
- (3) Sexually harass a fellow employee.
- (4) Use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence professional decisions of colleagues.
- (5) Threaten, coerce or discriminate against a colleague who in good faith reports or discloses to a governing agency actual or suspected violations of law, agency regulations or standards.

Self-Evaluation

Student teachers will conduct at least four (4) self-assessments addressing Planning and Evaluation, Classroom/Individualized Instruction, Classroom Management, and Professional Growth and Development. Assessments should be conducted at the third, sixth, ninth, and twelfth week of each assignment.

- The first three self-evaluations will use the Advancement Toward Outcomes form.
- The fourth and final self-assessment will be a two-page typed paper to be completed at the conclusion of the student teaching experience, reflecting upon the entire student teaching experience while still focusing on the same four areas.

Service Learning

Undergraduate student teachers are required to perform at least 10 hours of service learning. These hours are to be approved by the University Supervisor and submitted to the Dean's Office. Service hours are defined as a structured learning experience which combines community service with academic preparation and reflection. Therefore, the service hours completed by a student teacher should be above and beyond the scope of normal teaching and non-teaching duties. After-school tutoring would be considered service learning, for example, while lunch duty would not.

Strike or Work Stoppage by a Cooperating Teacher

Student teachers are forbidden from participating in any activities within a school district during a strike or work stoppage. The student teacher should contact his/her university supervisor for instructions as soon as such an event occurs. Student teachers are not to report to the schools during a strike or work stoppage by teachers. Student teachers shall not participate as substitute teachers and they shall not participate in picket lines or similar activities.

If the strike or work stoppage lasts more than three days, the Director of Field Experience will pursue placements for student teachers within another school district. Every effort will be made not to inconvenience the student teachers or the university supervisors. The time lost due to a strike or work stoppage will not have to be made up by the student teachers.

Substitute Teaching

Student teachers are not certified to teach in the state of Pennsylvania and are therefore not to serve as substitute teachers.

Systematic Observations

At the beginning of their classroom experience, student teachers are required to systematically observe, document, and report on five (5) students. A varied cross-section of pupils should be chosen as subjects, with real names not used for reasons of confidentiality. Each of the five descriptive paragraphs should include information regarding the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of the child. A second paragraph on each student will be written and submitted at the end of student teaching, noting any changes observed. Thus, a total of ten (10) observational reports are to be completed. Paragraphs will be submitted to the university supervisor according to the schedule given at the weekly seminar.

Termination of Student Teaching (adapted from *Mansfield University Teacher Education Field Experience Handbook*, 2012, and *Kutztown University of Pennsylvania Student Teaching Handbook*, 2004)

Though rare, occasionally a student teaching assignment will be terminated by either the student or the university.

Voluntary Student Withdrawal / Dropping Student Teaching

The decision to withdraw from student teaching is a major decision with severe consequences. Without student teaching, one cannot complete an education degree or attain Pennsylvania certification. Such a decision should not be made quickly or lightly.

- Student teaching is comprised of a series of University courses and as such, it follows the same drop dates as other University coursework.
- Students should discuss in person the decision to drop student teaching with the university supervisor and the cooperating teacher before initiating the necessary paperwork. If a student fails to do so, he or she will not be permitted to student teach in a later semester if he/she so desires.
- If a student drops student teaching in the middle of an assignment, he/she should say good-bye to the children before leaving. Children often become attached to student teachers and are confused and hurt when one leaves abruptly.
- A student who has dropped out of student teaching and wishes to complete student teaching in a later semester must reapply for student teaching and receive permission to retake student teaching from the Teacher Education Committee (TEC).
- If a student decides to leave the teaching field, he/she should contact an academic advisor to discuss options for completing other degrees.

University Termination of Student Teaching

If a student is found to be acting in a way that endangers children, is in violation of school and/or university policies, is in violation of the law, shows disrespect and insubordination towards local school

or university personnel, or has not made adequate progress under the guidelines of a Performance Improvement Plan, he/she may be removed/terminated from student teaching at the discretion of the university. The following conditions provide examples of (but are not limited to) what constitutes reasons for an unscheduled removal:

- The student's disregard for the Pennsylvania Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators.
- The student's failure to abide by the student teaching guidelines and schedule established by The University of Scranton Education Department and/or Field Experience Office.
- The student's failure to demonstrate appropriate teaching dispositions as established by the University of Scranton Education Department Dispositions Policy.
- The student's disregard for the policies, protocols, and procedures established by the host school district.
- The student's inability to build and maintain a positive relationship with the hosting school or cooperating teacher.
- The student's breach of confidentiality.
- The student's unsatisfactory academic performance within a school district.
- The student's inappropriate use of technology, including on-line activity.
- The student's failure to satisfactorily fulfill a Performance Improvement Plan.

When a problem develops with a student teacher that has the potential to be or become serious, the university supervisor shall alert the Director of Field Experience as soon as possible. The university supervisor, cooperating teacher, and Director of Field Experience will work to remediate or correct the cause for concern in accordance with the established protocol as outlined in this handbook.

The DFE will then alert the student's program director, department chair, and the Dean of PCPS.

If a situation deteriorates to the point that a student teacher decides to withdraw, is asked to leave by the partner school, or is recommended for withdrawal by the university supervisor, it is the responsibility of the university supervisor to notify the Director of Field Experience immediately.

The DFE will then notify the student's program director, department chair, and the Dean of PCPS of the pending withdrawal.

An unscheduled removal is a very serious matter and a student may be asked to leave (or not return to) a student teaching assignment without prior notice. Where applicable, a student may be temporarily suspended from student teaching until the necessary coordination of a meeting can be arranged between the university supervisor, Director of Field Experience, program director, and department chair, to determine the most appropriate course of action.

- Student teachers must complete the twelve-week student teaching assignment to receive a grade in the student teaching course components. Therefore, early removal of a student from student teaching leads to either a grade of "F" or an Incomplete. The assigning of an incomplete

grade is at the discretion of the university supervisor in consultation with the department chairperson and the Director of Field Experiences. A student receiving an Incomplete must write a formal request to the Teacher Education Committee (TEC) explaining the situation, discussing the actions he or she has taken to rectify the situation, and planning for future success. In addition the student must request another placement to finish the student teaching assignment. TEC will decide whether or not a student will be granted a second placement to remove the Incomplete grade or whether the Incomplete will revert to an "F."

- If a student teacher receives an "F" in any component of the student teaching semester and would like to repeat student teaching, he/she must present a request before the Teacher Education Committee (TEC). The decision to readmit a student to the program and allow the student to student teach is at the discretion of this committee.
- If a student decides to leave the teaching field, he/she should contact an academic advisor to discuss options for completing other degrees, such as the Liberal Studies degree. Also, he/she should contact the Career Services Center for further help in redirecting course study.

Program Removal

A student may be dismissed from the Education Department as a result of his/her termination from a student teaching assignment. In rare situations such as this, the department chairman recommends dismissal to the Teacher Education Committee, which considers the merits and evidence of the case. The student in question may appear before the TEC during this meeting to present evidence as well.

Appeals

Appeals may be made in writing to the Teacher Education Committee (TEC) by submission through the Director of Field Experience, who serves as liaison to the TEC, within ten (10) calendar days from the date the student was notified of the TEC's decision.

Final appeal is to the Dean of the Panuska College of Professional Studies. The Dean's decision is final.