**Wabash College**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STUDIES**

**SECONDARY LICENSURE PROGRAM**

**STUDENT TEACHING PRACTICUM**

**(CO-TEACHING MODEL)**

**POLICY MANUAL**

**2013-14**

**“THE TEACHER AS LIBERALLY EDUCATED PROFESSIONAL”**

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**Goals of Student Teaching (Co-Teaching Model)**

As the culminating experience in the Secondary Licensure Program (SLP), student teaching at Wabash College is a semester-long co-teaching practicum. It is intended to provide opportunities for the teacher candidate to develop his teaching skills and identity in the context of a secondary school under the tutelage of a mentor teacher and college supervisor. Grounded in the Department of Education Studies’ Guiding Principles, the goals of the student teaching practicum are listed below.

The co-teaching model will enable the teacher candidate to:

1. Develop and implement creative instructional methods and assessment strategies intended to engage diverse learners in relevant content, including appropriate use of technology and literacy instruction.
2. Develop and demonstrate professional conduct, skills, and abilities in all areas of teaching and classroom management.
3. Build and foster collaborative relationships with the mentor teacher(s) and other personnel in the school setting, utilizing and practicing effective communication skills.
4. Develop and exhibit passion and enthusiasm for teaching and the achievement and well-being of every student.
5. Reflect on, raise questions about, and intellectualize his daily teaching experiences.
6. Develop leadership skills and abilities within the classroom as well as the broader school and professional education community.

**General Requirements and Expectations**

During the senior year (typically spring semester) or as part of the 9th Semester Program, teacher candidates in the SLP complete a full-time (3.0 credits) professional student teaching practicum that begins as close to the start of the host school’s academic semester as possible and ends when Wabash College’s semester ends. The teacher candidate is expected to complete 12-14 (depending upon school calendars and holidays) weeks of full-time student teaching in a secondary public school setting and then at least two weeks of SLP work on campus at the end of the semester. He is also expected to attend all on-campus seminar meetings scheduled during the semester (approximately two per month).

In general, full-time student teaching will consist of the mentor teacher’s full load of courses, less the common preparation period and (as possible and appropriate) additional time during the day to devote to the CBR. Depending on the host school’s schedule, a full load of courses typically means the teacher candidate will be co-teaching in four or five classes. It is preferable for the teacher candidate to have no more than two different subject/grade level preparations. A full-time schedule may also be defined as two or three courses in a block schedule, depending on the arrangement of the block system. When possible, the teacher candidate should have one period he can devote to the classroom-based research (CBR) project work, and one common preparation period for co-planning with the mentor teacher(s).

The teacher candidate is expected to become involved in the life of the school by attending a variety of student activities and events. When/If it is possible and feasible, the teacher candidate is encouraged to accept leadership positions within the school setting. It is often the case that teacher candidates volunteer or are hired to coach athletic teams or supervise student clubs or other school-sponsored activities, which the SLP faculty/staff support. However, we expect teacher candidates will NOT be employed outside the school setting during the student teaching semester. The SLP Committee will consider each teacher candidate’s situation individually if he insists on holding a part-time job during student teaching. See formal statement about this below.

It is expected that the teacher candidate will not be employed as a substitute teacher in the host school during the student teaching practicum. As well, if the mentor teacher is absent from school, it is expected the host school will hire a licensed substitute teacher and not use the teacher candidate as the substitute.

**The Co-Teaching Model**

The Department of Education Studies borrows Bacharach, Heck, and Dank (2004) who define co-teaching as, “Two teachers (teacher candidate and mentor teacher) working together with groups of students; sharing the planning, organization, delivery and assessment of instruction, as well as the physical space.”

The co-teaching model for student teaching at Wabash College, comprised of the triad: teacher candidate, mentor teacher, and college supervisor, is characterized by especially close collaboration between the mentor teacher and the teacher candidate. The model allows the teacher candidate to fully engage in all aspects of what it means to be a secondary teacher with the added benefit of having the mentor teacher support and guide him through the experience. For his/her part in the triad, the college supervisor serves as a resource for the co-teaching team and supports and evaluates the teacher candidate.

Successfully managing the co-teaching model requires that the teaching partners share all aspects of teaching. Admittedly, a power structure exists in student teaching as the mentor teacher brings more teaching experience and is ultimately responsible for the achievement of the secondary students; therefore, the team must be proactive as they maneuver the sharing of students and instructional responsibilities in the classroom. Bacharach and Heck assert, “Co-teaching is an attitude of sharing the classroom and students. Co-Teachers must always be thinking: We are both teaching!’” (2011).

The teacher candidate will begin the semester in the role of “support teacher” and the mentor teacher will serve in the role of “lead teacher.” Over the course of the first 5-6 weeks of the practicum, however, a gradual shift in leadership and decision-making should occur wherein the teacher candidate becomes the lead teacher and the mentor teacher becomes the support teacher. The lead teacher is responsible for more decision-making tasks such as: choosing content, leading instruction, and designing assessment strategies. The support teacher is heavily involved and collaborating closely throughout the entire instructional process including daily co-planning and co-teaching, as well as assessment of student learning.

The triad should negotiate this shift for the teacher candidate’s role from support teacher to lead teacher. When in the support teacher role, the teacher candidate is expected to be involved in all aspects of the classroom management and the instructional program in all classes. Of course, on a daily basis and dependent upon the instructional activities of the class, the teacher candidate’s role as the support teacher and the mentor teacher’s role as the lead teacher will vary and should be discussed and negotiated between the two.

On occasion, the teacher candidate should have time to “solo” teach enabling him to establish his presence and identity as a viable partner in the co-teaching team. Then by Week 14 or 15, the mentor teacher should shift back in as the lead teacher, phasing out the teacher candidate as he ends the semester with SLP program work on campus.

Collaboration and communication are key as is flexibility in making the partnership of co-teaching work effectively. While we do not expect co-teaching teams to strictly employ St. Cloud State University’s seven strategies for co-teaching (outlined below), we do offer them as suggestions and recognize that teams may use a variation of any of the strategies. If co-teaching teams are struggling to work together as co-teachers, the college supervisor may use the seven strategies as a template for the team to practice. While the seven strategies are not meant to be implemented in any specific order, the nature of each does in some ways naturally progress from the first to the seventh depending on the context of the placement and the nature of the co-teaching team.

St. Cloud State University’s Seven Strategies for Co-Teaching:

1. One Teach, One Observe: One teacher has primary responsibility while the other gathers specific observational information on students or the instructing teacher. The key to this strategy is to have a focus of the observation.
2. One Teach, One Assist: This strategy is an extension of the One Teach, One Observe. One teacher has primary instructional responsibility while the other assists students with their work, monitors behaviors, or corrects assignments.
3. Station Teaching: The co-teaching pair divides the instructional content into parts and the students into groups. Groups spend a designated amount of time at each station. Often an independent station will be used along with the two teacher-lead stations.
4. Parallel Teaching: Each teacher instructs half the students. The two teachers address the same instructional material and present the material using the same teaching strategy. The greatest benefit to this approach is reduction of the student-to-teacher ratio.
5. Supplemental Teaching: This strategy allows one teacher to work with students at their expected grade level while the other teacher works with those students who need the information and/or materials re-taught, extended, or remediated.
6. Alternative/Differentiated Teaching: Alternative teaching strategies provide students with different approaches to learning the same information. The learning outcome is the same for all students; however, the instructional methodology is different.
7. Team Teaching: Well-planned, team-taught lessons exhibit an invisible flow of instruction with no prescribed division of authority. Using a team-teaching strategy, both teachers are actively involved in the lesson. From a student perspective, there is no clearly defined leader, as both teachers share the instruction, freely interject information, assist students, and answer questions.

The success of the co-teaching model and the teacher candidate’s development depend on an effective working relationship among the triad that is characterized by open and honest communication. The SLP faculty/staff expects the mentor teacher and school personnel to support the co-teaching model, and the college supervisor will serve as a resource and liaison between the host school and the College. If problems should emerge that necessitate changes being made in the student teaching placement, such decisions will be made by the Director of the SLP after consulting with the SLP Committee, the teacher candidate, the mentor teacher, and other relevant school personnel.

**Legal Status of the Student Teacher**

The General Assembly of the State of Indiana enacted the following act, which concerns student teachers, and other persons assigned to a school corporation by an accredited education institution. It reads:

House Enrolled Act No. 1328

Section 1. Public School Corporations are authorized to enter into agreements with institutions of high education accredited by the Training and Licensing Commission of Indiana, for the purpose of providing teaching experience for students thereof preparing for the educational profession and for the services of persons working jointly for any such school corporation and any such institution.

Section 2. Each agreement shall set out the responsibilities and rights of such public school corporations, such institutions, and such students or other persons.

*Wabash College enters into a legal contract with the host school system and, through it, with the mentor teacher in compliance with the above act.*

**General Expectations and Responsibilities of the College Supervisor**

As one part of the triad of co-teaching, the college supervisor’s main responsibility is as a resource and support person to both the mentor teacher and the teacher candidate. The college supervisor provides program information and helps guide the triad through the co-teaching model. Specifically, the college supervisor is expected to:

* counsel, support, and advocate for teacher candidates in all issues related to the student teaching practicum including co-teaching and the classroom-based research project.
* make a minimum of five site visits to observe the teacher candidate in the classroom, confer with him after the visit, and provide written feedback
* review, respond to, and assess lesson plans and weekly teaching journal entries
* encourage the teacher candidate to practice self-reflection and help him identify strengths and weaknesses in his practice.
* serve as a resource for teacher candidates and helps him to locate resource materials for both classroom teaching and for classroom-based research project.
* regularly confer with mentor teacher
* convene two formal conferences with the triad (one at mid-term and one at the end of the semester)
* communicate with the Director and Associate Director of the SLP on matters related to the student teaching practicum.
* facilitate or co-facilitate the on-campus seminar meetings for teacher candidates.

**General Expectations and Responsibilities of Mentor Teachers**

One of the most influential people in the education of the teacher candidate is the mentor teacher. The mentor teacher has the satisfying task of mentoring and inducting the teacher candidate into the many activities that characterize the life and work of a teacher, and the SLP faculty/staff appreciate the mentor teacher’s commitment to an attitude of sharing as he/she agrees to work within the co-teaching model. The SLP faculty/staff further recognize the mentor teacher is ultimately responsible for the achievement of his/her secondary students; however, we appreciate the seriousness in which the mentor teacher, as one part of the triad, takes his/her responsibility to guide and mentor the teacher candidate by means of the co-teaching model. As well, we acknowledge the important role of the teacher candidate in the host classes and the impact he will have on student achievement during the semester he is completing the student teaching practicum.

Beginning with participation in the co-teaching orientation meeting (held in the semester prior to the student teaching practicum semester), we expect the mentor teacher will be committed to:

* embracing and implementing the co-teaching model including an attempt to utilize at least some of the seven strategies for co-teaching
* collaborating with the teacher candidate regarding all aspects of classroom management, lesson planning, instruction, and student assessment
* encouraging the teacher candidate to become involved in the life of the school community
* guiding the teacher candidate in his study of adolescent development and diverse learners
* modeling for the teacher candidate best practices at the secondary level
* introducing the teacher candidate to a wide range of tasks both within the school setting and in larger community
* modeling professionalism in and out of the classroom
* inspiring confidence in the teacher candidate
* showing enthusiasm for and commitment to teaching and the field of education

Further, the mentor teacher is expected to be open to professional growth and development as a result of the collaborative partnership of co-teaching.

While the SLP faculty/staff will not dictate a strict process for mentoring, we will offer suggestions during the co-teaching orientation meeting and on-going support throughout the practicum semester.

**General Expectations and Responsibilities of Teacher Candidates**

The teacher candidate is the focus of the triad, and his main responsibility is to use the student teaching practicum and all the experiences it encompasses to develop his skills and identity as a teacher. The teacher candidate should expect guidance and support from the mentor teacher and the college supervisor, but he should also expect to be taken seriously as a contributing member of the triad. While all agree the student teaching practicum is intended to be a profound learning experience for the teacher candidate, the teacher candidate should expect a professional, supportive environment while he develops as a practitioner. It is assumed that as part of being confirmed in his student teaching placement, the teacher candidate has met all SLP requirements including passing the appropriate Praxis II content exam(s). The teacher candidate is also expected to participate in the co-teaching orientation workshop before the practicum semester begins.

In addition, the teacher candidate is expected to:

* familiarize himself with the host school’s employee handbook or policy manual and operate under the same policies as the mentor teacher is expected to do, including following the host school’s calendar and work day hours.
* participate in professional development days/workshops required of host school faculty and staff and attend faculty and departmental meetings.
* participate in parent/teacher conferences and special needs case conferences.
* notify the mentor teacher and/or principal (as directed) and college supervisor if an absence is necessary. Excessive absences (as determined by the Director in consultation with the SLP Committee) may require an extension of the student teaching assignment.
* conduct himself as a professional at all times in and outside the classroom and including professional dress.
* refrain from personally socializing with high school students outside of what is professionally appropriate at school. Inappropriate and unprofessional social contact (including on social media) is considered highly unprofessional, and will warrant a swift and serious consequences.
* bring a positive attitude and committed work ethic.
* be in close communication with the college supervisor, completing and turning in assignments on time and discussing your placement if it becomes unsatisfactory for any reason.
* work in close collaboration (co-teaching) and communication with the mentor teacher as one part of the co-teaching triad.
* become involved with the life of the school community (e.g. attend school events and be involved with extra-curricular activities).
* complete all required SLP work such as: submitting weekly lesson plans, weekly teaching journal (prompt and specific requirements will be provided), and other requirements outlined on the syllabus for EDU 423.

**Co-Planning Expectations and Responsibilities for Mentor Teachers and Teacher Candidates**

Strategic lesson planning is essential for effective instruction, and co-planning is essential for effective co-teaching. The mentor teacher should expect the teacher candidate to understand and be able to apply the fundamental elements of planning. Likewise, the mentor teacher is expected to support the co-teaching model and thus co-planning. While we will not prescribe one particular way to co-plan, nor will we prescribe a specific lesson plan format, we do expect both the mentor teacher and the teacher candidate to collaborate closely to plan units of instruction as well as daily lessons.

Open communication and being clear about teacher roles are key to successful co-planning. Initial and on-going and collaborative conversations about long-range unit plans wherein both the mentor teacher and the teacher candidate are contributing ideas and materials are expected. As well, the co-teaching team should make decisions together about their individual and collective roles for daily instructional activities in the classroom. On a weekly basis, the college supervisor will expect to see daily lesson plans submitted electronically by the teacher candidate, and will assume all submitted plans have been created collaboratively with the mentor teacher. Specific details for submitting lesson plans each week will be outlined in the EDU 423 seminar.

The SLP faculty/staff recognize that the lesson plans required of teacher candidates are likely to be considerably more detailed than those used by experienced teachers. The detailed plans are, however, necessary for the teacher candidate to exhibit his understanding of and ability to do long and short term planning. The lesson plans form an important basis for evaluating the comprehensive coverage of important content and the teacher candidate’s skill development.

The SLP faculty/staff recognize there are many appropriate forms for lesson plans and will not prescribe a specific format. However, we do expect the format chosen to be relevant, practical, and useful for the co-teaching team. Therefore, the triad (mentor teacher, teacher candidate, and college supervisor) will mutually agree on the particular format for unit and daily lesson plans. Regardless of the format, we will expect the lesson plans to contain the following elements:

* Statement of the content topic, date(s) of the lesson, class periods, etc.
* Statement of student learning objectives/outcomes with reference to standards
* List and brief description of instructional activities with estimated time blocks for each (handouts and materials should be included); lead teacher/support teacher roles should be clearly labeled
* Assessment (formative and summative) of student learning should be made clear in the plan

A general rule of thumb is that the plans should be explicit enough that a qualified substitute could teach from them and obtain the same learning results.

**Evaluation**

The college supervisor will serve as the evaluator of the teacher candidate’s performance. As the mentor teacher and teacher candidate collaborate throughout the semester, the mentor teacher is expected to provide the teacher candidate with on-going feedback and suggestions. The teacher candidate is expected to be open to constructive criticism and willing to implement suggestions from the mentor teacher and college supervisor. While the college supervisor will consult frequently with the mentor teacher and both are expected to complete the student teaching evaluation form (provided electronically and keyed to the SLP Guiding Principles), the mentor teacher will not be asked to assess a final grade for the teacher candidate’s performance. The college supervisor may ask the mentor teacher to suggest a final grade for the teacher candidate. However, it is the college supervisor who arrives at the teacher candidate’s grade for EDU 423 (student teaching practicum). If there is a discrepancy or uncertainty about the grade, the college supervisor will discuss the teacher candidate’s performance with the Director of the SLP, who can make the final decision regarding the grade.

The student teaching evaluation form is sometimes used at mid-term for the first of two triad conferences (mentor teacher, teacher candidate, and college supervisor) as a way to discuss the teacher candidate’s performance and development. For the final triad conference at the end of the semester, the mentor teacher and the college supervisor are expected to complete the evaluation form, which will be shared with the teacher candidate and kept on file with the SLP as part of its candidate and program assessment data.

***NOTE***: At the conclusion of the student teaching practicum, the teacher candidate may ask the mentor teacher to write a letter of recommendation. This is separate from the form described above.

**Communication, School Visits, and On-campus Seminar Meetings**

Although the SLP faculty/staff expect the mentor teacher and teacher candidate will be in constant and close communication on a daily basis because of nature of the co-teaching model, we expect the co-teaching team to have designated meeting times on a daily and weekly basis. Co-planning will take up much of the meeting time, but we expect regular on-going reflective conversations to occur as well.

There will be at least two formal triad conferences wherein the college supervisor, mentor teacher, and teacher candidate discuss the teacher candidate’s performance – strengths and areas of improvement. One of these conferences should be scheduled midway through the semester. A second conference should be scheduled at the end of the student teaching practicum. It is understood that additional conferences may be called at anytime by any of the triad members.

The college supervisor will make a minimum of five site visits to observe the teacher candidate in the classroom. While most visits will be planned and announced, it is possible for the college supervisor to make an unannounced visit. The college supervisor will review lesson plans (submitted on Sunday nights) prior to a site visit; therefore, if the co-teaching team expects substantial changes to the weekly lesson plans, the teacher candidate should alert the college supervisor if the change impacts the site visit (e.g. a test is scheduled or a field trip).

Teacher candidates are expected to attend all on-campus seminar meetings (approximately six over the course of the semester). Dates and times and agendas for these meetings will be provided in advance.

**Responsibilities of Others**

Director of the Secondary Licensure Program

* Oversees all aspects of the student teaching practicum
* Oversees and assists college supervisors in completing their work.
* When necessary, submits a final grade for student teaching practicum (EDU 423)
* Oversees entire Secondary Licensure Program
* Serves as chair/liaison to the SLP Committee
* Makes final recommendation of teacher candidates for secondary licensure with Indiana Department of Education

Associate Director of the Secondary Licensure Program

* Oversees student teaching application and placement process.
* Assists Director of SLP in all aspects of the student teaching practicum
* Serves as college supervisor
* Coordinates the work of the SLP as it relates to public school personnel involved in the student teaching practicum.
* Assists college supervisors in completing their work.

Principal and/or other School Administrator

* Makes the best possible placement of the student teacher in host school.
* Supports the co-teaching model.
* Assists in acquainting new teacher candidates with the school community, providing handbooks and school policy manuals.
* Provides adequate teaching materials, desk copies of textbooks, and other necessary materials for use by teacher candidates.
* Provides a calendar of events and school schedule information.
* Interprets and supports the student teaching practicum in relationship with the administrative office and the community.
* Shares information about student teaching practicum in the school with the college supervisor and makes suggestions for improving the student teaching practicum.
* Observes the teacher candidate in the classroom if possible, and makes suggestions or comments; may serve as reference.
* Communicates with the college supervisor, Director, and/or Associate Director of the SLP if there are problems or concerns regarding a teacher candidate or the SLP.

**Guidelines on Student Employment During Student Teaching**

Statement of Expectations

The student teaching practicum is the capstone experience in the Secondary Licensure Program. As such, student teaching requires the teacher candidate to employ all the knowledge and skills about teaching he has gained thus far. It is a full-time commitment that begins as close to the start of the host school’s semester as possible and ends approximately two weeks before finals week at Wabash College. Because it is such a labor intensive endeavor, the teacher candidate must commit fully to it and avoid as many distractions as possible.

Given the extensive demands on teacher candidates, the SLP Committee has adopted the following guidelines for working outside of the student teaching assignment during the practicum semester:

* It is a basic expectation of the SLP Committee that teacher candidates will not hold jobs outside of their student teaching assignments during the practicum weeks. If the teacher candidate desires to, or needs to work, he may be asked to submit a written rationale for his reasons to the Director or Associate Director, who will then discuss the case with the SLP Committee.
* Obvious and understandable exceptions to this include the kind of outside work that enhances candidate’s teaching skill in some way (working with young people and adults through other kinds of teaching, tutoring, etc., or working with them in clubs or sports).
* Should an outside activity or approved part-time job dilute significantly the candidate’s teaching effectiveness, the Director of the SLP, college supervisor, and/or another member of the SLP Committee will discuss the issue with the candidate, who may be asked to give up the outside activity and/or job.