**Practicum Handbook**

**2014-15**





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**Introduction to the Practicum**

In the University of Idaho teacher education program, EDCI 302 and all secondary and elementary methods courses consist of both an on-campus and an “in school” component. Students register for

these courses and the accompanying practicum. During the semester, students attend class on campus learning teaching strategies, lesson planning and identifying possible resources. At the same time, they are placed in a local K-12 classroom for their practicum experience. Concurrent enrollment in education courses and the practicum emphasizes the relationship of theory to practice and enables students to more effectively analyze and reflect upon their classroom experience.

**Standards Addressed**

**Idaho State Teacher Preparation Standards:**

1. **Learner Development. The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.**
2. **Learning Differences. The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.**
3. **Learning Environments. The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.**
4. **Content Knowledge. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.**
5. **Application of Content. The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.**
6. **Assessment. The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher’s and learner’s decision making.**
7. **Planning for Instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.**
8. **Instructional Strategies. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.**
9. **Professional Learning and Ethical Practice. The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.**
10. **Leadership and Collaboration. The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.**

**NCTQ Standards Addressed**

**Standard 10: Classroom Management**

* 1. **Ability to establish and /or reinforce expectations regarding appropriate behavior.**
  2. **Ability to establish a productive learning environment by maintaining student engagement and managing time, materials, and the physical classroom environment.**
  3. **Recognition of appropriate behavior through meaningful praise and other forms of positive reinforcement.**
  4. **Appropriate use of overall classroom awareness and/or the least intrusive means to prevent or manage minor student misbehavior. (Examples may include but are not limited to proximity, adjustment of the physical setting, eye contact.)**
  5. **Appropriate use of disciplinary action to handle escalating or disruptive misbehavior.**

**Standard 11: Lesson Planning**

**11.1 Identifying technology applications that will boost instruction and how they will do so.**

**11.2 Anchoring instruction in the state’s K-12 learning standards.**

**11.3 Addressing the needs of English language learners.**

**11.4 Accommodating students with special needs.**

**11.5 Extending instruction for students who have demonstrated proficiency in relevant standards.**

**Standard 12: Assessment and Data**

**12.2 Teacher candidates are required to prepare formative and summative classroom assessments.**

**Standard 15: Secondary Methods**

**15.2 Methods courses focus on specific instructional strategies that will improve the delivery of content and include field work or a concurrent practicum that holds teacher candidates individually accountable for mastering instructional skills.**

**Placement information**

When students get the name and contact information for their mentor teacher they are responsible for contacting them to set up an initial meeting. Students should contact their mentor teacher as soon as possible. Teachers requested having a practicum student because they want someone in their classroom all semester, not just for a few weeks. If students wait too long to contact their mentor they risk losing the placement and failing the class. **If students attempt to make their first contact via email and the mentor does not respond within 48 hours, they should call them by phone to set up the first meeting.** Some teachers use email infrequently, and the school’s spam filter will sometimes keep messages from getting through. If students email the mentor teacher they should be professional and use proper spelling and punctuation.

At the initial meeting, students and mentors can discuss expectations and set up the specific schedule of days/times to do their practicum. Stick to that schedule as much as possible once it is set. If students find that their schedule will not work out with their assigned mentor, they should not try to arrange another placement on their own. Contact **Ingrid Spence** (ispence@uidaho.edu) in the College of Education Targhee Hall, 202, **(885-0123)** or your methods instructor as soon as possible to arrange a new placement.

Placement spots are limited, particularly on the secondary level. There is a pretty good chance that students, especially those in EDCI 302, may not get the first choice of the placement they requested. **Students should not complain to the mentor teacher that their class was not their first choice.** Students should make the best of the situation and be thankful for the opportunity. The mentor teacher most likely loves the subject and grade level they are teaching and they don’t want to hear how a student really wanted to be somewhere else.

**Responsibilities of the Practicum Student**

Students are required to complete a minimum of 45 hours of observation, preparation, and participation in the K-12 classroom. For students, this is a unique opportunity to gain experience and hopefully to help make decisions about their commitment to the teaching profession. They should remember at all times that they are not only representing themselves but the University of Idaho. Students are guests in the schools, very similar to being invited into someone’s home. As such, it is crucial that they understand the responsibilities involved with this opportunity. Below are some general guidelines for the practicum experience to help students to make it as successful as possible.

**Dress**

It is extremely important that students dress appropriately and professionally. **If a mentor teacher or building administrator does not feel that students are dressed appropriately, they have the right to ask them to leave and not work with their students that day.** Here are some guidelines to help students dress professionally:

 No hats

 No shirts that promote alcohol, drugs, or any other inappropriate topics

 No clothes that show cleavage, midriffs or underwear

 No pants with holes, low crotched pants, or pants that ride low on the hips

 No spaghetti straps unless there is have another top on over them

 Collared or dress shirts are preferable to t-shirts

 No flip-flops - dress sandals are appropriate.

 Nothing too sexy or provocative - student dress should not draw attention

 Keep jewelry and piercings to a minimum

 Tattoos should be covered up if at all possible

 Keep perfume and cologne to a minimum - some students are allergic

**Attendance**

Students will set up a schedule with the mentor teacher as to the days and times they will visit the classroom. Students should honor this commitment and **stick to the schedule that is agreed upon at the start of the semester**. It is a good idea to build a few extra hours into the schedule to deal with emergencies. Students should watch TV/listen to radio stations in the morning for weather- related school cancellations. Students should not try and cram all of their hours into a few days at the end the semester to make up for missed days. Mentor teachers are not obligated to arrange make-up days for students with absences.

**If students will be absent on a scheduled day or will be late, they are expected to notify the teacher as soon as possible – preferably at least a day in advance.** Teachers make lesson plans based on the expectation that practicum students will be there. This is common courtesy. Notify the office by **phone** if something unexpected happens. Students should not send an email that day

and expect teachers to read it. Once the school day starts many teachers simply do not have time to check their email.

If students miss a practicum session without notification, the mentor teacher should contact the Community Partnership Coordinator (Ingrid Spence) **On the second absence without notification students will be removed from the practicum.** Students may also be removed from the practicum for excessive absences even if they have notified the mentor teacher in advance.

**Any student who has not completed at least five practicum hours within the first month of their placement will be removed from their assignment unless they have given notice to their mentor teacher and instructor of extenuating circumstances.**

**Professional Behavior**

**Students should always check in at the school office on arrival.** Ask the secretary what the procedures are for visitor passes. Schools today are very concerned with safety and almost all will require visitors to wear identification tags. For your own protection do not take valuables – purses, IPods, cell phones into the classroom with you.

Students are expected to honor all classroom and building rules, regulations and procedures. **Most local schools do not allow cell phones , so students should make sure their phones are completely out of sight and turned off – no texting either!!!** An even better idea would be to leave the phone outside entirely.

Students should be actively observing or working with students. Do not bring books, textbooks or course work to your practicum. Even if students are just observing they should be attentive and professional. **Repeated reports from your mentor teacher of sleeping, disinterest, cell phone use, etc. will result in you being removed from your practicum.**

**ACCORDING TO IDAHO CODE STUDENTS MAY NOT WORK ALONE (UNSUPERVISED) WITH STUDENTS AT ANY TIME UNLESS THEY HAVE PASSED A FINGERPRINT-BASED CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK.** Mentor teachers should take care to not have practicum students working unsupervised with students. They may work individually or with small groups of students within sight of the mentor teachers or other school personnel such as a librarian.

Under absolutely no circumstances should practicum students try to contact K-12 students outside of class – either in person or electronically. Student should watch what they say - absolutely no use of profanity. Students should also maintain confidentiality – what happens in the classroom should not be a topic of discussion outside of class. When discussing issues in class, do not use the real names of students.

**Evaluation and Evaluation Forms**

Feedback provided both formally and informally in the classroom is an essential component of the practicum experience. Practicum students should **keep a time sheet in the classroom** to record their hours. Mentor teachers should verify the hours by initialing the time sheet after each practicum

visit. The completed time sheet should be returned to the Community Partnership Coordinator (CPC) or methods instructor at the end of the semester along with the final evaluations. **Failure to complete a minimum of 30 hours and 10 hours of seminar (or 40 hours for Methods) for the practicum will result in the student failing the class**.

Practicum students are required to teach at least one lesson but are encouraged to do more if the mentor teacher allows. Mentor teachers have the discretion to not allow practicum students to

teach a lesson if they feel that they are not prepared, have not exhibited adequate skills, or they feel that to do so would be detrimental to the students in their classroom.

The mentor teacher completes both a lesson evaluation and overall practicum evaluation forms at the conclusion of the experience. Evaluations are **returned to the Community Partnership Coordinator (CPC)** and become part of the student’s official teacher education file. If a mentor teacher chooses to have a student not teach a lesson, they should indicate that on the evaluation form.

**Lesson Planning**

The University of Idaho requires practicum participants to have written lesson plans prior to the teaching of any lessons. At a minimum, all lesson plans should include objectives, learning activities and assessments. In other words, what does the teacher want students to learn, how are students going to learn it, and how will the teacher know if the students got the concepts they were supposed to learn? Other important aspects of lesson planning are standards, materials and supplies to be used, accommodations for high and low students, and the overall pace of the lesson. The specific

format to be used should be established by the mentor teacher but should follow the general U of I

template that will be provided to students.

Practicum students should prepare two copies of each lesson plan and submit one to the mentor teacher for review at least **24 hours *before*** the lesson is taught. This allows time for suggestions and revisions prior to the actual teaching of the lesson. Following the lesson, mentor teachers should meet with the practicum student and give feedback on any positive aspects as well as areas for improvement and submit a Lesson Plan Evaluation Form to the Community Partnership Coordinator.

**Mentor Teacher Responsibilities**

The mentor teacher determines the exact responsibilities of the practicum students in the classroom. They may have them work with your students in any way they feel comfortable. This could include simply observing, giving one-on-one help; helping with bulletin boards; taking attendance, etc. However, we would like practicum students to have as much contact with students as is possible. Please be mindful that like any other volunteer, they have not yet undergone a fingerprint background check, so please keep them supervised or in public areas at all times. **Do not leave your practicum student in the classroom unattended.** Other mentor responsibilities include:

 Meet with the student and develop a schedule for the semester that is beneficial to both the student and for the activities the mentor wants assistance with in the classroom.

 Keep the practicum students’ time log in the classroom and initial it after each visit.

 Notify the CPC, Ingrid Spence ([ispence@uidaho.edu](mailto:ispence@uidaho.edu) ; 885-0123) if students miss any scheduled times without prior notification. On the second unexcused absence students will be removed from their practicum.

 Notify the CPC of any student with excessive excused absences.

 Notify the CPC of any other student issues such as tardiness, inappropriate dress or behavior, cell phone use, etc.

 Students are expected to teach at least one lesson this semester (methods students are encouraged to do 3-5. The topic and timing of the lesson is up to the mentor teacher. The mentor teacher has the right to determine whether or not a student is ready to teach a lesson to their students. Students are encouraged to teach more than one lesson but again, that is at the discretion of the mentor teacher.

 Review the student’s lesson plan and give feedback prior to teaching.

 Give feedback after the lesson and help the student reflect on their teaching.

 Complete the final evaluation and lesson evaluation and return it to either the CPC or the methods instructor.

 Return the completed time log to the CPC after the student has completed his/her hours.

**Removal from Practicum**

Unfortunately, there are behaviors which can result in termination of a practicum experience. A

practicum teacher may be removed from an assignment under the following circumstances:

1. School personnel (either mentor teacher or administrator) request termination of the

student’s assignment

2. Unprofessional behavior including frequent absence, tardiness, inappropriate dress and breaches of confidentiality (two unexcused absences will result in removal)

3. Inappropriate interaction with students, parents, or staff

4. Inadequate performance

5. Other behaviors or attitudes which negatively impact the learning of students

Removal is a very serious matter. Practicum students are guests of the school district and therefore do not have the same rights to due process as employees. If a practicum student violates the standard of reasonable and prudent behavior in interactions with students every attempt will be made to give them fair warning. However, this process may be modified and expedited when deemed necessary. **The University of Idaho must honor all requests from school personnel (administrator or mentors) for termination of a practicum placemen**t.

Students who are removed from a placement are usually not placed with another mentor teacher that semester. They may withdraw from the class if it is before the deadline to do so. If it is too late to drop the course they will receive a failing grade. **Students in EDCI 302 or 400 level methods who are removed from a practicum or do not complete their hours will fail the entire course including the classroom portion**. Students who are removed from an assignment or fail their practicum may retake the class and be placed again in subsequent semesters.

**Medical Coverage**

Practicum students are not employees of the school district and therefore are not covered by workman’s compensation insurance. Please be aware that if students are injured on school grounds during their practicum they are responsible for any medical costs incurred. It is highly recommended that practicum students carry their own medical insurance.

**Contact Information**

Please return all evaluations either to the course instructor or to Ingrid Spence, Community Partnership Coordinator. Employees of the Moscow School District may send evaluations through district mail to Ingrid Spence at West Park Elementary. For those outside of the Moscow District, please send them to:

Ingrid Spence

875 Perimeter Drive MS 3082 Email: [ispence@uidaho.edu](mailto:ispence@uidaho.edu)

College of Education Phone: (208) 885-0123

University of Idaho

Moscow, ID 83844-3080

**Evaluation of Practicum Student Performance**

**\*Please note that this evaluation is not confidential. It may be shared with the student and a copy provided upon request.**

Student Name EDCI #?

Mentor Teacher School Grade or Subject of practicum Date

This evaluation is to be completed by the mentor teacher and preferably reviewed with the student. Moscow School

District Teachers may print and send in district mail to **Ingrid Spence** at West Park Elementary. For all other schools, mail to **Ingrid Spence**, College of Education, 875 Perimeter Drive MS 3082, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho 83844-3082.

**Evaluations should be received no later than Tuesday, Dec. 9**

**Please confirm the student has completed 30 (302) or 45 (methods) hours. Yes No**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade** | **Reliability & Professionalism** | ***Comments:*** |
| 4 | Exemplary - Consistent attendance, student is punctual, dress is professional, has  appropriate interactions with students, teachers & support staff. |  |
| 3 | Proficient - Attendance & professionalism are good but student needs minor  improvement in one area – please identify in comment section. |
| 2 | Needs Improvement - Occasionally acts or dresses in an unprofessional manner  &/or attendance is unreliable. |
| 1 | Standard Not Met - Frequently acts or dresses in an unprofessional manner &/or  poor attendance & punctuality. |
| **Grade** | **Communication skills** | ***Comments:*** |
| 4 | Exemplary - Very effective using verbal & nonverbal communication; student is  clear, articulate, understandable, & communication is appropriate to the situation. |  |
| 3 | Proficient - Fairly consistent with verbal & nonverbal communication; clarity,  accuracy & appropriateness usually fit the situations encountered. |
| 2 | Needs Improvement - Demonstrates some effective use of verbal & nonverbal  communication; sometimes uses language that is confusing or inappropriate. |
| 1 | Standard Not Met - Struggles with verbal & nonverbal communication; often uses  language that is confusing or inappropriate. |
| **Grade** | **Relationship with students** | ***Comments:*** |
| 4 | Exemplary - Demonstrates caring, respect & fairness for all students; developed rapport &  communicated well with students; recognizes needs of & advocates for diverse learners in the classroom. |  |
| 3 | Proficient - Is fair & respectful & works to build positive relationships with  students; recognizes diverse needs of students. |
| 2 | Needs Improvement - Is fair & respectful towards most students & works to build  positive relationships with some. |
| 1 | Standard Not Met - Hesitates to engage & does not work to develop a relationship  with students &/or develops inappropriate relationships with students. |
| **Grade** | **Professional Growth/Reflection** | ***Comments:*** |
| 4 | Exemplary - Demonstrates an active interest in learning about the profession;  shows growth & improvement; seeks, actively seeks & responds well to feedback. |  |
| 3 | Proficient - Demonstrates interest in the profession, shows moderate growth &  improvement; responds well to feedback |
| 2 | Needs Improvement - Rarely asks questions; demonstrates a little growth &  improvement; does not seek feedback, but does listen to feedback & take suggestions when offered. |
| 1 | Standard Not Met - Seems uninterested in the profession; did not demonstrate growth  &/or does not seek feedback; seems to resist new ideas & suggestions &/or is defensive. |

Based on the ratings above, I recommend that this student receive an overall ranking for the field experience of:

Exemplary Proficient Needs Improvement Does not meet standard

Signature Date

**Evaluation of Practicum Student Lesson**

**\*Please note that this evaluation is not confidential. It may be shared with the student and a copy provided upon their request.**

Student Name EDCI #?

Mentor Teacher Grade level/Subject of lesson

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade** | **Planning/organization** | **Comments:** |
| 4 | Proficient - Lesson has clear goals, materials are ready; student is well-organized and prepared. |  |
| 3  2 | Emerging/ Needs Improvement - Lesson has somewhat clear goals; teacher is adequately  prepared with materials ready. |
| 1 | Standard Not Met - Lesson does not have clear goals and/or materials are not ready and student is not prepared. |
| **Grade** | **Knowledge of subject matter** | **Comments:** |
| 4 | Proficient - Knows subject well and is comfortable and accurate with the content |  |
| 3  2 | Emerging/ Needs Improvement - Is somewhat familiar with the subject and is mostly comfortable and accurate with the content |
| 1 | Standard Not Met - Has little familiarity with the subject matter; gave inaccurate information to students |
| **Grade** | **Teaching strategies/activities** | **Comments:** |
| 4 | Proficient - Uses effective strategies to motivate and engage students; activities are appropriate for grade level |  |
| 3  2 | Emerging/ Needs Improvement - Strategies engage most students; activities are mostly appropriate for grade level |
| 1 | Standard Not Met - Strategies fail to engage students and/or activities are not appropriate for grade level – too easy or too difficult |
| **Grade** | **Classroom management** | **Comments:** |
| 4 | Proficient - All or almost all students are well-behaved and on task; few or no disruptions |  |
| 3  2 | Emerging/ Needs Improvement - Most students are well-behaved and on task; disruptions are minor and do not affect lesson |
| 1 | Standard Not Met - Student behavior detracts from the learning of the class; classroom is  chaotic with many disruptions |
| **Grade** | **Assessment** | **Comments:** |
| 4 | Proficient - Lesson includes multiple strategies, either formal or informal, to assess student performance or understanding at different points during the lesson |  |
| 3  2 | Emerging/ Needs Improvement - Lesson includes general strategies, such as checks for understanding, to assess student performance at least once during the lesson, |
| 1 | Standard Not Met - No attempt is made to assess student performance or understanding  during the lesson |
| **Grade** | **Differentiation** | **Comments:** |
| 4 | Proficient - Lesson differentiates and scaffolds instruction to address diverse learning needs and styles including those of special needs students Lesson is designed to address diverse learning needs and styles including those of special needs students. |  |
| 3  2 | Emerging/ Needs Improvement - Lesson attempts to accommodate special needs students with mixed success. |
| 1 | Standard Not Met - Lesson fails to provide any differentiation for students with special  needs; aimed at the “middle” |
| **Grade** | **Personal qualities – voice, appearance** | **Comments:** |
| 4 | Proficient - Voice is clear and not rushed; student is confident and relaxed |  |
| 3  2 | Emerging/ Needs Improvement - Voice is somewhat soft or rushed and/or student is somewhat nervous but it does not affect the ability of students to learn as a whole. |
| 1 | Standard Not Met - Voice is so soft or rushed and/or student is so nervous that it is difficult for students to understand. |

**NOTE: If the student did not present a lesson in your class, please indicate why:**

**Lack of readiness Interpersonal skills Preparation Subject knowledge Other**

Signature Date