

Cooperating Teacher Orientation

Pittsburg State University
Office of Teacher Education

WELCOME

- Welcome to the Pittsburg State Teacher Preparation Family! Together we can help teacher candidates succeed.
- We appreciate your willingness to partner with us to help candidates move from theory to practice.
- Thank you for being openly reflective with our students!

MISSION

- The Mission of the College of Education at Pittsburg State University is to prepare competent, committed, caring professionals, provide services to the various communities of which we are a part, and expand the body of knowledge through research and dissemination activities.



YOUR ROLE AS A COOPERATING TEACHER

- Support the Teacher Candidate
 - Teacher candidates benefit from cooperating teachers who provide both instructional guidance and opportunities for independent teaching.
 - Share your students and classroom, help your students to view the candidate as another “teacher”.
 - Help the teacher candidate succeed, allow them to make mistakes.
- Be willing to challenge the candidate to be the best they can be, stretch them to become better, encouraged them to grow, both personally and professionally.
 - Meet weekly to plan, discuss and reflect.
 - Allow the teacher candidate to try things you may not try yourself.
 - Evaluate their progress systematically
 - Communicate: Give feedback (both positive and negative)

PHASES OF STUDENT TEACHING

- Phase 1
 - Weeks 1-4
 - Get to know each other. Orient to the school, class, and role. Candidate involved in basic procedures.
- Phase 2
 - Weeks 5-8
 - Candidate begins planning lessons and teaching subjects or classes. Candidate gradually takes over all responsibility.
 - Weeks 9-12
 - Candidate fully responsible for classroom including planning, implementation and management of curriculum and students.
- Phase 3
 - Weeks 13-16
 - Candidate begins to phase out of full responsibility. Candidate is allowed to visit other classrooms and observe.

HOW TO BEGIN

- Orient your students and their parents to the new “teacher” in the room. Perhaps a letter home to introduce the teacher candidate.
- Provide a separate work space for the teacher candidate to work and store materials.
- Orient the teacher candidate to the school.
 - Provide school and class schedules, building map, handbooks, bell schedule, etc.
 - Introduce the teacher candidate to your colleagues.
- Share procedures
 - Building/District: emergency, discipline, attendance etc.
 - Classroom: discipline, homework, materials management etc.

OBSERVING AND CONFERRING

- One of the most important pieces of the student teaching process is the feedback you give the student.
 - Allow the teacher candidate to observe you, and you observe the teacher candidate in a systematic way.
 - Don't be afraid of WHY questions. The teacher candidate doesn't know the history of your classroom. Allow the teacher candidate to question why you do things the way you do. It gives them insight about how you handle a particular student, class group or use a specific class procedure. It is not a personal attack on how you handle issues.

OBSERVING AND CONFERRING CONT.

- Conferring
 - Meet weekly with your teacher candidate (or more often as needed).
 - Require written lesson plans for any lesson they are planning to teach (Remember they are learning the process of planning lessons. A formal plan helps them to think through all of the necessary steps). You may no longer need to write formal plans, they do!
- Give feedback as soon as possible
 - Be constructive in feedback, non-judgmental, but willing to have difficult discussions.
 - Be sure to tell them what they did well!
 - Be sure to tell them what they need to improve on.
 - Be clear on what needs to improve, prioritize items that need to be improved and work on them in appropriate steps/chunks

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

- Pre Observation
 - Require lesson plan to be complete
 - Talk through the plan, discuss areas that are of concern for you, allow time to rework.
 - Discuss how the instructional decisions were made
 - Decide how you will record your observations
 - Tools provided in your handbook
 - Anecdotal records
- Observation
 - Watch for specific items each time
 - Some examples include: Interaction with students, movement around the room, student on-task/off-task behaviors, teacher questions, closure of lesson, real life connections, management of behavior etc.

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL CONT.

- Post-conference
 - Engage the candidate in **reflective thinking** about the lesson itself, effects on pupil learning, procedural items, sequence, flow, management etc. (Experienced teachers usually do this naturally, candidates need to learn how!)
 - Ask clarifying questions
 - Listen more, talk less
 - Give specific praise
 - Discuss how content/delivery might change for “next time”
 - Discuss change strategies
 - Give “something to work on”
 - Have a Plan or goal for improvement in the next lesson or overall.

“OTHER DUTIES AS ASSIGNED”

- Allow your candidate to shadow you in whatever duties you are assigned. If you have extra duty, so do they, including: bus, recess, cafeteria, committee meetings, faculty meetings, etc.
- Allow your candidate to decorate bulletin boards, grade papers, record grades/attendance, check out textbooks etc.
- Allow your candidate to shadow you for parent conferences.
- Any duty you have, they have!!

EVALUATING THE CANDIDATE

- For **formative data**, observe the teacher candidate throughout the semester, take notes or use the tools provided in your cooperating teacher handbook.
 - At the end of the session, have a conference with the teacher candidate and discuss what you noticed.
 - It will not always be perfect (they are students, remember when you were a candidate!)
 - Be truthful about what you saw and what needs improvement. They cannot improve if they are not aware!
 - Give praise where deserved!

EVALUATING THE CANDIDATE CONT.

- For **summative data**, we require that you do 3 formal, online evaluations of your candidate; an Initial, mid-term and final evaluation based upon our Professional Knowledge Base.
- You will receive a separate handout with the step-by-step procedures for completing these evaluations.
- Due Dates are listed on the “suggested timeline” included in your handbook.

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE BASE

- The Professional Knowledge Base (PKB) reinforces skills, values, attitudes, beliefs and dispositions necessary to be a successful teacher.
- The PKB is reinforced throughout the teacher education program and students will be evaluated using the PKB multiple times during their program.
- Each teacher candidate will be required to display an understanding and belief in the PKB by the end of their training program.

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE BASE CONT.

- The PSU Professional Knowledge Base consists of 6 categories
 - Professional Characteristics
 - Relationships with Students
 - Instructional Planning
 - Instruction
 - Classroom Management
 - Evaluation
- As the cooperating teacher you will be observing and evaluating the teacher candidates on these categories and specific indicators within each. A paper version of the PKB is included in your handbook.

STUDENT TEACHER REQUIREMENTS

- Student Teachers have a variety of assignments to complete during the professional semester
 - Thursday Seminar Sessions (first 8 weeks, last 2 weeks)
 - Interview and Observation Assignment (weeks 1-2)
 - Shadow Study (weeks 4 and 5)
 - Teacher Work Sample (throughout the semester)
 - Professional Portfolio (end of the semester)

RESOURCES

- Student teaching handbook
 - You will receive a copy of the student teaching handbook during the first visit by the university supervisor
- Assessment forms
 - Optional assessment forms are found in the back of the cooperating teacher handbook.
 - A paper copy of the formal online instrument is included in the back of the cooperating teacher handbook.
- University Supervisors
 - The university supervisors are your first line of contact with PSU. They serve as a liaison between you and the University. Work with the supervisor to solve any issues with your teacher candidate.
- Office of Teacher Education
 - The OTE is who you contact first in the first two weeks of the semester if you are having problems with your teacher candidate, or if there is an issue that you feel is not being resolved by the university supervisor.
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