University of Pittsburgh
Student Teaching Handbook
Guidelines and Policies
For
Student Teachers, University Supervisors, and Host Teachers

Revised 2007
After engaging in their coursework at the University of Pittsburgh, students enrolled in the Professional Year Teacher Education Program are not only prepared but are excited to enter the classroom to put their learning into practice. The student teaching experience is their opportunity to learn how the art and science of teaching actually marry to culminate in effective instructional practice. When in the classroom, the student teachers should be challenged to test the theories they have grappled with in their methods classes, to experiment with a myriad of instructional approaches to meet the needs of all learners, and at the same time, to begin to formulate their own educational philosophies about the teaching of their chosen specialties. These goals can only be accomplished within a supportive, well-established classroom environment, under the guidance of experienced educators who will provide supportive, constructive feedback as well as modeling of skilled, effective classroom practices.

For the student teacher, this culminating experience, which begins in the fall term with a structured Practicum, is their opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of the technical and humanitarian aspects of teaching. Without the support of our partners in the public and private schools in the Western Pennsylvania area, our students would not be able to develop into the confident, competent educators that our programs produce. We welcome that collaboration.

This handbook delineates the roles and responsibilities of the University of Pittsburgh student teachers, as well as the policies and procedures to be followed by the cooperating teachers, clinical instructors, school administrators, and university supervisors who guide these pre-service teacher candidates through their clinical experiences. It is important to note that the guidelines in this handbook are recommendations and that we recognize that our student teachers are individuals with unique talents and needs. It is not unusual for modifications to be made to these recommendations. Though flexibility is important and encouraged as needed, it is essential that any changes be made in consultation with the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor and the university supervisor as well as the student teacher.

Any questions or concerns can be directed to the Coordinator of Field Experiences and Supervision, Melissa Awenowicz.
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Coordinator of Field Experiences and Supervision
University of Pittsburgh
School of Education
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Mission Statement of the Department of Instruction and Learning
in the University of Pittsburgh's School of Education

The mission of the Teacher Education Program within the Department of Instruction and Learning, School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh is to produce outstanding beginning teachers who have demonstrated success in coursework as well as sequenced field experiences. The fifth year, post-baccalaureate initial teacher certification programs promote reflective practices in prospective teachers who possess a strong commitment to students and their learning, a firm grasp of content and pedagogy, a capacity to work with diverse groups of learners, the ability to integrate technology into teaching, and the knowledge and skills to link state, local, and national standards to curriculum and instruction.

- Developed in February 2002 in collaboration with representatives from various school district partners and faculty members from the University of Pittsburgh's School of Education, Department of Instruction and Learning.
ACCREDITATION

The School of Education is a member of the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) and the Holmes Group. The School of Education, as part of the University of Pittsburgh, is also accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

All pre-service teacher education programs at the University of Pittsburgh are housed in the Department of Instruction and Learning and have been approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). Students who complete an approved teacher education program and demonstrate satisfactory performance on the Praxis I and II exams as well as receive a satisfactory rating on the Pennsylvania Department of Education-430 evaluation are eligible for the Instructional I teaching certificate. The Department of Instruction and Learning currently offers four options in teacher education:

1. The Professional Year Certification only option for students in pursuit of initial teacher certification, but not a graduate degree.
2. Master of Arts in Teaching option for students in pursuit of the Master of Arts in Teaching degree and initial teacher certification.
3. Certification plus Graduate Degree option for students in pursuit of a master's degree (not the MAT) or doctoral degree and initial teacher certification.
4. Additional Field Certification option for students who already possess an Instructional I or Instructional II certificate and are in pursuit of teacher certification in an additional specialty area, but who are not pursuing a graduate degree.

To meet the professional needs of experienced teachers, the School of Education also provides a wide variety of advanced study opportunities (i.e., graduate degree and special certification programs) within its four academic departments -- Administrative and Policy Studies, Instruction and Learning, Psychology in Education, and Health, Physical and Recreation Education. In addition, the School of Education's two institutes--The Institute for Practice and Research in Education and the Institute for International Studies in Education--serve as coordinating support centers for a wide variety of research and professional activities. Both institutes offer special courses and workshops for professional educators. The majority of these advanced programs have been approved and accredited by state and national agencies dedicated to the improvement of teaching and teacher education.
It is important to note that all of our teacher preparation programs are currently post-baccalaureate programs taken at the graduate level. This means that all of the candidates in the teacher preparation programs in the University of Pittsburgh have undergraduate degrees that support their content area specialty or in educationally related fields like sociology, developmental psychology, and social work.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR STUDENT TEACHING
Teacher candidates must meet several requirements at the end of the term prior to student teaching. To be eligible for student teaching, the candidate must:

1. File a formal application for field placement with the Coordinator of Field Placements—this is typically submitted electronically upon acceptance of admissions into the program – www.education.pitt.edu/admission/py.
2. Demonstrate satisfactory completion of ALL prerequisite courses in general education, professional education, and the major subject field. These include the specialized pedagogical theory, methods, laboratory, and practicum courses in the certification area.
3. Earn a minimum overall QPA of 3.0 in their specialized theory, methods, laboratory, and practicum courses.
4. Receive the recommendation of the faculty in the certification program and by the Department of Instruction and Learning as a person who possesses personal and professional qualities in accordance with the Pennsylvania Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators.
5. Take a tuberculin test and file the results with the Department of Instruction & Learning and with the school district in which the candidate is assigned to student teach.
6. Possess a clear Criminal History Check from the Pennsylvania State Police and file a copy of the clearance with the Coordinator of Field Experience and with the school district in which the candidate is student teaching.
7. Possess a clear Child Abuse Clearance from the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare and file the clearance form with the Coordinator of Field Experience and with the school district in which the candidate is student teaching.
8. Possess a clear Federal Criminal Clearance issued from the PA State Police in coordination with the FBI and file a copy of the clearance with the Coordinator of Field Experience and with the school district in which the candidate is student teaching.

9. Successfully complete the Practicum experience and receive the recommendation of the Host teacher.

**Key Personnel**

The clinical experience is a collaborative venture established between the University of Pittsburgh and the School District. Though there are many individuals working to ensure the success of the collaboration, those who are most directly involved include the student teacher, the host teacher, and the university supervisor. The success of the student teaching clinical hinges upon the quality of social and professional relationships developed within this triad. Each partner is vested and contributes to the student teacher's total professional growth. Thus, it is essential that all members of the triad have a clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities. Continuous three-way communication is critical for the triad's operational effectiveness. Use the bookmark feature to locate specific responsibilities for each individual.

In addition to the basic triad, the student teaching clinical experience in each cooperating school district involves several key individuals who provide specialized support services throughout the year. One such person is the **Field-Based Contact**. This person may be a district administrator, building principal, or a clinical resident teacher (cooperating teacher, site liaison) at one of the school sites. This contact person is most knowledgeable about district level procedures and can be an additional resource for assisting the student teacher in understanding the particular districts' history, relationship, and individual contract with the Teacher Preparation Program and the University of Pittsburgh.

Another key person is **Coordinator of Field Experiences and Supervision** who is a member of the University of Pittsburgh faculty that functions as a liaison between the University and school district. The Coordinator of Field Experiences and the Field Based Contact at each district work closely together to maintain continuity among the various dimensions of the clinical experience. The Coordinator of Field Experiences (a) coordinates the orientation and placement of student teachers.
and confirms student eligibility for student teaching; (b) plans and conducts field site seminars for student teachers; (c) is available to assist districts in developing or conducting seminars with the district's orientation, induction, and staff development programs; (d) facilitates communication between university faculty who teach theory/methods courses and the student teachers and their host teachers; (e) oversees university faculty, employees, and GSAs who provide on-site clinical supervision for student teachers; (f) develops staff development programs to augment the clinical supervision skills of university supervisors and mentor teachers; (g) conducts disciplined inquiry, curriculum development, and school improvement projects within the district and nurturing research partnerships among faculty, student teachers, and host teachers; (h) helps student teachers with procedural matters (e.g., registration, program completion, certification, placement, etc.); and (i) participates in continuous evaluation and revision of clinical experiences; (j) conducts the Advisory Committee Meetings to help facilitate collaboration and discussion among the districts who host pre-service teachers and the University of Pittsburgh; (k) negotiates contractual and placement agreements with cooperating school districts. The Coordinator of Field Placements is assisted by the Program Administrator/Secretary, who helps with matters related to admission, certification, graduation, and registration.

The Student Service Center assists students with Pre-Admission Counseling, the Admissions Process, Financial Aid, and Graduation Application. It is under the direction of the Dean of the School of Education.

While the Coordinator of Field Placements and University Liaison perform specific roles within a particular school district, the Chairperson of the Department of Instruction and Learning and the Director of Teacher Education are responsible for the overall administration and governance of all the teacher preparation programs in the School of Education, including the MAT program. Each program is coordinated by a Program Coordinator who is a faculty member that oversees that coursework, instruction, and graduate students within that area of study.

Currently, at the University of Pittsburgh the following individuals fill these positions:
### Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dean of the School of Education</td>
<td>Dr. Alan Lesgold</td>
<td><a href="mailto:al@pitt.edu">al@pitt.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Student Services</td>
<td>Mrs. Joan Cutone</td>
<td>412.383.6865 <a href="mailto:jcutone@pitt.edu">jcutone@pitt.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson of Department of Instruction &amp; Learning</td>
<td>Dr. George Zimmerman</td>
<td><a href="mailto:giz@pitt.edu">giz@pitt.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Director of Teacher Education</td>
<td>Dr. Anthony Petrosky</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coordinator of Field Experiences and Supervision</td>
<td>Mrs. Melissa Awenowicz</td>
<td>412.648.7332/ <a href="mailto:mawenow@pitt.edu">mawenow@pitt.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Secretary</td>
<td>Mrs. Donna Rudman</td>
<td>412.648.7810/ <a href="mailto:drudman@pitt.edu">drudman@pitt.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**If issues or questions arise the first point of contact for individuals from the school districts should be the Coordinator of Field Experiences…don't hesitate to contact Melissa Awenowicz so that your questions may be promptly addressed.**

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT TEACHER**

The student teacher has many personal obligations and professional duties during the student teaching practicum and clinical experience. The first of these is to make the transition from being a student to being a professional. There are a number of meetings held at the University of Pittsburgh that they are required to attend: orientation, workshop to orient them to student teaching, an exit interview. All of these contain very pertinent information regarding the program, their field work, obtaining their certification, and completion of the program and their attendance and participation illustrates their commitment and sense of professionalism. It is also our expectation that the student teachers maintain a high level of professionalism while at the field site; this means establishing an open and honest line of communication with the school and their cooperating teacher/clinical instructor beginning with planning for and pre-arranging the first site visit. The following expectations will help ensure that the spirit of professionalism is maintained throughout the experience:

1. Become familiar with and follow the calendar of the assigned field site. This pertains to in-service days, orientation days, conference days, holidays, and workshops.
2. Follow the daily time schedule established for the regular faculty of the cooperating school.
3. Be punctual! Consistent tardiness is inexcusable.
4. Maintain regular attendance. Except for special classes or seminars which may be scheduled on campus, the student teacher is assigned to the field site on a full-time basis, five days per week for the entire semester (or, in some cases part of a semester). There is no designated number of sick days during student teaching. Days absent may need to be made up at the scheduled end of the experience. If a student teacher needs to be absent from the field site he/she must report that absence to the university and to the field site.

5. Report every absence and its reason to the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor through the school office or the preferred method established by the teacher, as early as possible. Report an absence to the university supervisor if it is on a day an observation has been scheduled. Any absence beyond the 2nd should be reported to the Field Site Coordinator, Melissa Awenowicz Clear every absence through the cooperating teacher.

6. Lesson plans should be provided to the cooperating teacher for absences.

7. Establish positive working relationships with all personnel in the field site and with the university supervisor.

8. Perform the same teaching and non-teaching duties as the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor. This includes attending faculty meetings, parent-teacher conferences, staff development programs, extracurricular functions, etc.

9. Design and implement instruction. Lesson and unit plans tied to Pennsylvania Chapter 4 Academic Standards must be prepared and submitted to the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor prior to implementation. This allows for conferences and suggestions and/or approval of the student teacher’s plans. The lesson plans should follow the format given by the University of Pittsburgh or established by the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor in consultation with the university supervisor. Block lesson plans are not acceptable for they do not allow for adequate thought and explicit planning for novice teachers. No lessons will be taught without a prepared lesson plan

10. Use the feedback offered by the cooperating teacher and university supervisor to improve your instruction.

11. Furnish the university supervisor with a complete classroom schedule.

12. Prepare a time sheet (weekly report) for each week of the student teaching experience and file weekly in 5300 Posvar Hall. THESE TIME SHEETS ARE CUMULATIVE. THE
FINAL TIME SHEET SHOULD CONTAIN THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ALL STUDENT TEACHING HOURS.

13. Schedule formal observation and conference periods with the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor and university supervisor.

14. Complete all professional tasks assigned by the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor and/or university supervisor.

15. Be a reflective practitioner - take time to self-evaluate your lessons on a regular weekly basis and implement the feedback provided by the host teacher and supervisor.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COOPERATING TEACHER/CLINICAL INSTRUCTOR

The cooperating teacher/clinical instructor is an instrumental person in the student teaching triad, for they are in constant contact with the student teacher. It is essential that clear, honest communication occur between the student teacher, the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor, and the university supervisor that focuses on the development and continuing progress of the skills and dispositions of the student teacher. The University of Pittsburgh provides training for the site teachers who serve as cooperating teachers; these are offered at the University of Pittsburgh every term. If a cooperating teacher is not able to attend a session, there is an on-line program available at http://mediasite.cidde.pitt.edu/mediasite/catalog/ [scroll the left to School of Education to find the session]. Completion of either will earn the teacher Act 48 credit. It is highly recommended that the cooperating teacher complete this training to better understand the program and the kind of mentoring supported by the University of Pittsburgh. The clinical instructors from the Pittsburgh Public Schools receive a similar training provided in their district but are also encouraged to attend this training. A website is available for supporting the work of the mentors and supervisors: http://epitt.pitt.edu It contains information on training and support for working with student teachers. Mentors and supervisors will also be able to find copies of all handbooks and forms on this site.

1. Prior to the arrival of the student teacher, inform the learners that there will be another TEACHER in the room. Please avoid using the label "student teacher." Your students will
take the lead from you in how they view and respond to the student teacher; it is our hope that you will welcome them into your classroom as a novice colleague.

2. Become acquainted with the student teacher and acknowledge him/her as a professional colleague who has much to contribute to the classroom and the students' experiences.

3. Familiarize the student teacher with the classroom and school cultures as well as the local community.

4. Orient the student teacher to the curriculum. Explain how the student teacher's experiences will be influenced by past and future activities within the classroom.

5. Clarify the student teacher’s roles and responsibilities at the very outset of the practicum and student teaching experiences. Tell the student teacher exactly what is expected and why. Use the University guidelines to insure a gradual phase-in of the student teacher into the classroom.

6. Provide ample opportunities to confer with and offer feedback to the student teacher each day. Try to offer feedback in a positive and constructive manner. **Complete one written formal observation per week on the student teacher’s performance. A copy of each of these will be placed in the students' file in 5300 Posvar Hall.**

7. Becoming a teacher is a gradual process. Provide the student teacher with encouragement and support. Remember this can be an emotional and overwhelming time as the student teacher becomes acclimated to the classroom, lesson and unit design, classroom management, and simply the excitement and stress that accompany teaching. Sometimes the student teacher just needs someone to listen and assure them that their experiences and feelings are normal.

8. Engage the student teacher in reflection and self-evaluation. Using questioning, ask the student teacher to describe, evaluate, and modify his/her own teaching performance. Initial the Formal Reflection Form (Formal Conference Feedback Form in Pittsburgh Public Schools)- in which the student teacher summarizes supportive and corrective feedback given by the Cooperating Teacher/Clinical Instructor following any conference and sets goals for the next lesson.

9. Confer with the student teacher and the university supervisor regularly concerning the progress of the student teacher.
10. If conflicts or problems arise, discuss them with the student teacher and the university supervisor quickly and honestly.

11. Consult with the supervisor in completing midterm and final evaluation forms for the student teacher. Submit these directly to the university supervisor or the Department of Instruction & Learning – these will be used by the university supervisor to help determine the student teacher's grade.

12. Maintain confidentiality regarding the work of the student teacher.

13. If you support the student teacher's entry into the profession, write a letter of recommendation for his/her University placement file.

14. Direct any concerns as soon as possible to the university supervisor or to Melissa Awenowicz, Coordinator of Field Experiences at 412.648.7332 or mawenow@pitt.edu.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR**

The university supervisor is a member team who serves as the vital link between the university and cooperating schools. Some of the university supervisors are program faculty members or adjunct instructors who are integrally involved in developing the program of studies and in teaching the student teachers while they are on campus. Some supervisors are graduate students pursuing master's or doctoral degrees in education. These individuals are generally certified and experienced teachers who work under the guidance of our full-time faculty. Other supervisors are educators who have left the classroom for personal reasons (family, retirement, etc.) and are valuable for their insight and experience. Many of the supervisors have also completed advanced graduate studies in teaching, teacher education, and staff development. In addition, all of them participate in regular clinical supervision training programs. Several members of our supervisory staff have even served as mentor teachers. A website is available for supporting the work of the mentors and supervisors: [http://epitt.pitt.edu](http://epitt.pitt.edu) It contains information on training and support for working with student teachers. Mentors and supervisors will also be able to find copies of all handbooks and forms on this site.

The university supervisor works closely with the student teacher and mentor. Recommended guidelines for supervisors are as follows:
1. Interpret University policies, procedures, and requirements to all personnel involved in the student teaching clinical experience.

2. Know the standards (i.e., the criteria) to be used in assessing the student teacher's performance.

3. Observe the pre-service teacher's teaching. Formal and informal data should be recorded on standard observation forms. To be most effective, this should be done on a regular basis throughout the year…minimally 5-6 times during the student teaching experience. However, if the student teacher is struggling, the university supervisor is to provide more support in and out of the classroom with observations, conferences, etc.

4. Confer with the student teacher following each observation. Share the data with the student teacher and host teacher. This will assist the student teacher in evaluating teaching strengths and weaknesses in an on-going manner and developing goals.

5. Vary the types of feedback provided to the student teacher. There are many options. Describe. Evaluate. Correct. Ask questions. Check for understanding. Mix and match feedback to fit the student teacher's level of development. File observation reports in the files located in the Department of Instruction and Learning Office (5300 Posvar Hall).

6. Plan specific areas that will receive attention in subsequent observations.

7. Conduct the periodically scheduled evaluations of the student teacher-Program Midterm and Final evaluations and the Pennsylvania Department of Education-430 (formative and summative).

8. Conduct group seminars and allow student teachers to exchange ideas, feelings, and perspectives with their peers.

9. Keep the Coordinator of Field Experiences and specialty area program faculty informed of the student teacher’s progress at appropriate times. Immediate notification is required when problems begin to surface.

10. Write a letter of recommendation for his/her university placement file.

11. Maintain confidentiality regarding the student teacher's progress and work with other faculty members at the field site.

12. If the student teacher needs to be moved to a new site, the university supervisor will remain the supervisor. This will ensure continuity of supervision, feedback, and understanding of progress.
The Student Teaching Experience

According to the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, "student teaching is an in-depth, direct clinical laboratory experience conducted in a school setting and is considered a culminating clinical experience for the basic teacher preparation program." In accordance with Pennsylvania Department of Education guidelines, certification programs at the University of Pittsburgh require a 12-14-week full-time assignment at one school site or multiple placements within the same school or at different school sites. The nature of each student teaching assignment is explained to local school districts when placement requests are made by the Coordinator of Field Experiences.

Student teaching enables novice teachers to move through stages of increased responsibility for planning and implementing classroom instruction, being immersed in the work of a classroom teacher. In addition, it provides opportunities to apply and evaluate theories of instruction and learning taught in university courses, as well as to profit from the professional expertise and modeling of experienced, tenured teachers in the field. The ideal experience enables students to observe, analyze, plan, and practice teaching methods that are appropriate for specific subjects, grade levels, and/or learner populations.

Pitt's student teaching clinical experiences are collaborative ventures between cooperating teachers/clinical instructors from local school districts and university supervisors from the Department of Instruction and Learning. Cooperating teachers/clinical instructors and university supervisors (a) elucidate and enrich student teachers' knowledge about theories and methods of instruction, (b) demonstrate alternative styles of effective teaching, (c) help student teachers design and evaluate instructional activities and materials, (d) observe and critique student teachers' classroom teaching performance, (e) confer with and offer constructive feedback to student teachers on a regular basis, (f) encourage student teachers to engage in reflective self-analysis and self-directed learning, and (g) sensitize student teachers to the many sociocultural factors that affect instruction and learning in the school context.
The primary goal of the student teaching experience is for the student teacher to obtain authentic classroom experience where they can put into practice the methods and theories they have been learning about in their coursework at the University; it is a place and time where they can experiment with instructional design and implementation in a safe and supportive learning environment. Though they are supporting the learning of students at the field site, their learning is also being supported by their supervisor and their cooperating teacher/clinical instructor.

GOALS OF THE STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE

1. To provide the student teacher an intensive period of growth in personal and professional attitudes, dispositions, knowledge, and skills.
2. To introduce the student teacher to the culture and services of the school and to explain the relationships between these services and the total educational process.
3. To provide the student teacher with opportunities to observe and to practice effective methods of designing, planning, and implementing instruction.
4. To provide the student teacher with supervised experiences in planning instructional programs, designing curricular materials, experimenting with advanced technology, evaluating learners' progress and achievement, and making data-driven instructional decisions.
5. To provide the student teacher with planned experiences in analyzing his/her own teaching performance and using feedback from others (e.g., cooperating teachers, clinical instructors, university supervisors, and peers) to enhance and refine his/her teaching skills.
6. To involve the student teacher in the academic and extracurricular activities of the school, when possible.
7. To encourage the student teacher to solve practicum problems by drawing upon appropriate theories of instruction and learning.
8. To encourage the student teacher to develop a set of classroom management techniques and procedures to enhance instruction.
9. To sequentially provide comprehensive and complex experiences leading to the student teacher assuming responsibility for classroom instruction.
10. To enable the student teacher to demonstrate competencies and professional growth identified on the University of Pittsburgh's evaluation instruments and the PDE 430 which are needed for recommendation for a Pennsylvania Instructional I teaching certificate.

**TEACHING COMPETENCIES**

The primary mission of the University of Pittsburgh's teacher education program is to prepare individuals who **can** and **will** be exemplary teachers in our schools. To accomplish this mission, we have designed our programs so that teacher candidates will demonstrate the following teaching competencies before they are endorsed for certification:

- A sound general liberal arts background in the humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences for elementary candidates or a solid content base of in-depth knowledge and skills in the academic discipline(s) associated with their intended teaching field.
- Skills and dispositions for working with diverse and special needs students
- The ability to map standards (state, national, and content based) onto lessons and units
- Knowledge of individual and cultural differences among learners and how these affect instruction and learning.
- The ability to plan and organize intellectually and developmentally appropriate instruction to appropriately challenge and supporting students' learning
- The professional knowledge and performance skills required to implement various styles of teaching in their specific subject field.
- Knowledge about and professional performance skills in classroom management, including the ability to provide supportive learning environments.
- Knowledge about and professional performance skills in appropriate procedures for student evaluation.
- The personal qualities (e.g., communication skills, flexibility, self-confidence, initiative, etc.) associated with effective teaching.
- The attitudes, dispositions, values, and skills required for being a reflective teacher and a self-directed, career-long learner.
- The personal codes of behavior indicative of a responsible member of a learning community.
In addition to these general proficiencies, individual programs have specific, content focused competencies that will be made available to the student teacher, the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor, and the university supervisor (see Forms 2— for Program Specific Observation and Evaluation Instruments that identify program specific competencies).

**SUGGESTED ELEMENTS OF A STUDENT TEACHING CLINICAL EXPERIENCE**

The professional development of student teachers occurs in stages, through a gradual assumption of more and more complex duties in the classroom. This developmental process begins with a period of observation and participation through a practicum experience during the term preceding student teaching, continues with increasing classroom participation and responsibility in the early weeks of student teaching, and concludes over a period of time when the student teacher assumes full responsibility for planning, implementing, managing, and evaluating classroom instruction.

Based on the unique needs and abilities of the student teacher, the amount of time spent observing, assisting, and assuming full responsibility and the order of these activities may vary from school to school. As the student teacher develops confidence and poise, additional duties and subject areas should be assigned each week until he/she has full responsibility for the classroom. However, it is usually the discretion of the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor in consultation with the university supervisor that determines the timing and type of activity undertaken by the student teacher. Refer to the Phase-In Chart (in Appendix) for guidelines.

**OBSERVATION AND PARTICIPATION — these primarily occur during the practicum experience prior to student teaching and perhaps the first week of student teaching**

Ideally, the student teacher begins with activities that involve observations of the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor, the learners, other classroom teachers, and the overall school environment. During this period, the student teacher should become familiar with the various classroom and school procedures. He/she should also become acquainted with the learners, faculty, resources, school personnel, and administration. A tour of the local community is also recommended. Active participation in classroom, school, and community activities should be encouraged during the early weeks -- and beyond—as the student teacher's schedule permits.
The following should be accomplished during this time:

- Read the school handbook. Become familiar with general policies and procedures governing the professional conduct of teachers.
- Learn the routines for carrying out duties and supervisory assignments.
- Make seating charts. Learn the names of students.
- Observe methods used by the host teacher to create and maintain a supportive, encouraging, attractive, and safe environment.
- Study the students. Get to know their abilities, needs, and special talents.
- Observe how the host teacher and other teachers create a community of learners and manages the classroom.
- Observe how the host teacher and other teachers carry out instructional duties in academic classes (e.g., develops rapport with students, introduces new material, gives directions, asks questions, guides individual and group practice, uses instructional materials and audiovisual aids, evaluates student progress, offers feedback, accommodates individual differences, reflects upon his/her own teaching, etc.).

INCREASED CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSIBILITY

The roles and responsibilities of student teachers change as they proceed through the clinical process. However, student teachers should be made aware of their roles and assume some regular duties early in the experience. These early duties should acquaint them with the learners and classroom procedures. Duties should be assigned according to the competency level of the student teacher and should be performed under the guidance of the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor.

As a guideline, the following schedule is offered:

For the first phase of the clinical process, all student teachers are often asked to perform such duties as the following-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Tasks</th>
<th>Individualized Instruction</th>
<th>Small Group Instruction</th>
<th>Episodic Teaching</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>preparing and duplicating materials</td>
<td>helping students complete</td>
<td>supervising a reading group leading a</td>
<td>planning 10-15 minute focused teaching</td>
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</table>
- grading papers and tests
- checking homework.
- setting up equipment
- taking attendance
- designing bulletin boards
- proctoring tests
- establishing learning centers
- requesting, distributing, collecting, and organizing materials (e.g., audiovisual aids, library books, art supplies, etc.).
- supervising hall, lunchroom, or playground activities.
- preparing learners for dismissal or movement to another area of the school.
- sharing special talents or experiences with the class.
- assisting with school clubs, field trips, or special events

- missed assignments
- tutoring students who are having problems
- listening to students read a story
- working with advanced students

- discussion
- monitoring small group activities
- providing remediation or enrichment to a small group of students

- episodes or mini-lessons
- preparing materials for the episodes
- reviewing plans and materials with the mentor
- teaching the episodes for part of a class period
- participating in feedback conferences with the mentor
**Elementary Student Teachers**

Elementary student teachers should begin with one lesson preparation for the first week of the student teaching term. Student teachers should maintain the first area as additional lesson preparations are added. By the seventh week the student teacher should be responsible for at least three different content areas.

The student teacher should continue to add time and/or content areas—whichever applies—until approximately the twelfth week. For at least two weeks, the student teacher should be responsible for the entire school day.

**Secondary Student Teachers**

During the first seven weeks of the student teaching experience, the secondary student teacher should assume responsibility for one class preparation. If possible, the student teacher should have multiple sections of that preparation. The secondary student teacher should maintain that schedule until the seventh week of the experience. At that time, a second preparation should be added and again, if possible, the student teacher should have multiple sections of the preparation. For a minimum of two weeks, the student teacher is required to assume responsibility for the teacher’s entire class schedule, including any duties the cooperating teacher is responsible for.

Again, it is to be noted that the phasing in of student teachers is always a joint decision and cooperating teachers and university supervisors have the discretion of adjusting the time frame if they feel it is too gradual or too fast to accommodate the student’s progress.

All student teachers should have full control of the classroom for a minimum of approximately two weeks. These two weeks of solo teaching do not have to be consecutive, but may occur in any combination. Two weeks is a minimum time requirement. Longer periods of solo teaching are strongly suggested.

- Each student teacher is also responsible for developing, implementing, and evaluating at least one complete unit of instruction at some time during the semester. This unit is usually conducted during the two weeks of solo teaching; however, it may occur independently of that period.
Student teachers are expected to provide detailed lesson plans and instructional materials for all formal teaching assignments. Such plans and materials should be presented to the cooperating teacher at an agreed upon time before the lesson is to be taught. All lesson plans should describe: (a) specific objectives; (b) content coverage; (c) sequence of activities, including introduction and closure; (d) instructional materials; (e) teaching methods; (f) evaluation instruments and strategies; and (g) accommodations for special needs students. Some programs have also found it helpful to ask student teachers to include a section in their lesson plans on critical moments which might impede the normal flow of a lesson. In this section, the student teacher might try to anticipate potential trouble spots in the lesson and develop contingency plans to overcome such obstacles. It is crucial to note that no student teacher is to be allowed to teach without a prepared lesson plan.

**Note the Phase-In Chart for a graphic representation of the recommended schedule of how a student teacher can assume classroom responsibilities. This should be manipulated with the input of all parties to respond to the unique skills and abilities of the student teacher.**

### Types of Student Teaching Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Practicum Experience</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Length</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>1 Pre-K placement</td>
<td>12-14 weeks 3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 K-3 placement</td>
<td>12-14 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Experience teaching all subject areas</td>
<td>12-14 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grades 1-6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>1 Experience in Content Area</td>
<td>12-14 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 7-12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>1 Low Incidence</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 High Incidence</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STUDENT TEACHER EVALUATION

Written midterm and final evaluations must be completed for each placement. The university grade option for student teaching is: Honors (H); Satisfactory (S); or Unsatisfactory (U). Standard evaluation forms for each subject area will be provided by the Department of Instruction & Learning. Cooperating teachers/clinical instructors and university supervisors may also use evaluation instruments of their own choosing [with the approval of the Coordinator of Supervision] as a supplement to the standard forms. The preparation and sharing of the standard evaluation forms is left to the discretion of the parties involved. However, it is recommended that this be a cooperative venture and that the student teacher have the opportunity to offer comments and reactions about the written evaluation.

All evaluation forms will be collected by the university supervisor, forwarded to the Department of Instruction & Learning, and placed in the student teacher's departmental file. The final evaluation form is submitted to the Student Service Center and becomes part of the student's permanent record. Copies of all evaluation forms must be signed by the mentor, the university supervisor, and the student teacher. Signature does not mean agreement—any of the parties may attach a note of explanation if he does not agree with the rating or evaluation.

The second form of official evaluation that teacher candidates must be evaluated on is the Pennsylvania Statewide Evaluation form for Student Professional Knowledge and Practice (PA 430), which Pennsylvania Department of Education adopted to replace the Praxis Principles of Learning exam. Each student will be evaluated twice during the student teaching experience on the PA 430 assessment. All student teachers are expected to collect evidence during the clinical experience to verify that they have demonstrated competencies in the four domains that are included in the PA 430 Evaluation. These domains or categories include: Planning and Preparation; Instructional Delivery; Classroom Environment; and Professionalism. A copy of the evaluation with an accompanying rubric that establishes criteria for each domain is included in Appendix. Though the mentor and supervisor should assist the student teacher in suggesting and selecting artifacts for inclusion as evidence, it is the responsibility of the teacher candidate to develop the portfolio and the supervisor to assess the portfolio. In 2006-2007 English, Foreign Language, and Science students will be compiling their portfolio electronically. Other programs will be creating a traditional
portfolio unless the supervisor has agreed to use the electronic portfolio system. Throughout the course of the year, workshops and support will be provided to explain and support the work for the PDE-430.

**Students who receive an unsatisfactory rating at the midterm evaluation are subject to the following procedures:**

- A written report detailing unsatisfactory areas of the student teacher's performance will be given to the student teacher by the university supervisor and the cooperating teacher. A work plan will be developed which delineates clear expectations for the student teacher and any needed support that will be provided. Additional observations should be scheduled. These documents should be filed with the Coordinator of Field Experiences, 5300 Posvar Hall.

- The university supervisor and the cooperating teacher in conjunction with the student teacher will set a reasonable timeline for improvement of these targeted areas.

- The student's faculty advisor will be informed about the student's unsatisfactory report and the recommended plan for improvement.

- If, at the end of the established time period, the student has not made satisfactory progress in the problem areas, the matter will be turned over to the program coordinator in the specialty area in which the student is enrolled. The program coordinator will determine whether the student will be permitted to continue in the student teaching experience.

The determination of final letter grades for the student teaching experience is the joint responsibility of the mentor and supervisor. However, the university is ultimately responsible for assigning grades and recommending if the University of Pittsburgh should endorse applications for certification. The subject area program coordinator submits the final grade after reviewing the recommendations of the cooperating teacher and university supervisor. The Honors grade (H) is awarded to a select group of student teachers who have demonstrated exceptional performance throughout the practicum. The Satisfactory grade (S) is awarded to student teachers who have demonstrated adequate performance throughout the practicum. The (U) grade is awarded to student teachers who have failed to meet minimal performance standards for the practicum. Incomplete grades (I or G) are given only to those students who are unable to complete the practicum requirements because of extenuating circumstances.
Individuals who receive a (U) unsatisfactory grade or an (I) incomplete are usually required to repeat all or part of student teaching. However, in some cases the program faculty may not approve a repeated student teaching experience and will instead recommend that the student be dropped from the program. Input from cooperating teachers/clinical instructors and university supervisors are routinely sought whenever a student’s status in the teacher certification program is in jeopardy.

**Removal from a Student Teaching Site**

Occasionally, a student teacher needs to be removed from a school site. This request may be made by the host teacher and the school district, the university supervisor, the student teacher, or the program faculty. It may be a decision for which all invested parties feel is a sound and reasonable decision. After the issues have been investigated by the Coordinator of Field Placements and the student teacher has received due process (if appropriate), the student teacher may be removed from the site and requests for a new placement may be made. All reassignments require the approval of the administration at the new site. Cases will be examined on an individual basis. Every effort will be made to develop a work plan to try to improve the situation either at the initial or new site. In some cases, performance may necessitate a review of the candidate's standing in the program.

It is a primary goal of the Department of Instruction and Learning to educate candidates to become skilled beginning teachers, eligible for teaching certification in the content area for which they are being trained. A significant component of the Teacher Education Program involves the student teaching experience. This clinical experience is designed to introduce candidates to the work of teachers in practice, requiring them to apply the theories, methods, and approaches to instruction learned in the program. Because the student teaching experience is the culminating experience of the Teacher Education Program, it is expected that the candidate is able to successfully perform as a novice teacher would under the mentorship of a mentor or cooperating teacher at the school site and the support and guidance of a university supervisor.
We understand that individuals learn differently and at different rates. We do support students who are experiencing difficulties in clinical placements in a variety of ways: increased observations, work plans with clear expectations for improvement, and increased communication between the university and the school site. **On occasion, a student’s problems in past placements or their external behavior may result in a situation in which they are not placeable and hence cannot complete requirements for certification.** It is, however, important to clarify that **if a student is not able to complete a placement satisfactorily in two different placements, he or she may not be recommended for certification by the University of Pittsburgh.** Students may certainly continue to take courses, pursue a degree, and/or apply to other programs of study, but he or she may be ineligible to apply for a teaching certification in the area for the Program in which he or she was unsuccessful.

**ENTERING THE TEACHING PROFESSION**

The transition from student teacher to beginning teacher can be challenging. Student teachers must apply for graduation and certification as well as secure employment. They must successfully complete the Praxis I and Praxis II Examinations. Many beginning teachers may even choose to pursue an advanced graduate degree before or during their first year on the job by enrolling in a MEd program following their preparation for certification.

The information provided in this section of the handbook should help to minimize the challenges, stresses, and confusion that can be associated with leaving the University of Pittsburgh and becoming a fully certified professional teacher. For additional assistance, students should refer to the School of Education Bulletin, consult their academic advisor or the Coordinator of Field Placements, or see a staff member in the Student Service Center, 5500 Posvar Hall.
**Graduation**

Early in the student's final term, **Professional Year students** should complete an application for graduation. This will ensure that their transcript reads “Certificate of Advanced Study in Teaching”. Graduation occurs three times each year (December, April, and August). Note: students can not apply for graduation unless they have achieved Full Status by fulfilling any pre-requisites attached to their admissions status. PY students are invited to participate in the School of Education graduation ceremony in April.

Application for **Degree students** must be filed in the Student Service Center at the time of registration for the term during which the student expects to complete requirements for graduation, but no later than ten calendar days after the beginning of that term. In addition to the application, students must file an approved plan of studies. Graduation occurs three times each year (December, April, and August); however, convocation is once a year, usually in late April. It is the student's responsibility to obtain, complete, and submit the application for graduation before the deadline. Fees will be assessed for late applications to the registrar. Candidates are invited to participate in the graduation ceremony in April but will officially graduate in August.

**Certification**

Application for a Pennsylvania Instructional I Certificate must be filed within a month of the term in which the student expects to graduate or complete the certification study. Forms are available in the Department of Instruction and Learning and Form xxx in the last section of this handbook. The completed form and required fee (U.S. Postal Money Order of $40.00) must be submitted to the Program Secretary, 5300 Posvar Hall. Upon successful completion of all certification requirements, the application will be endorsed by the subject area Program Coordinator and the Associate Dean of the School of Education. Prior to its submission to the Department of Instruction & Learning, a section of the form must be completed by a licensed physician attesting to the applicant’s physical and mental health. Incomplete applications accompanied by payment other than a U. S. Postal Money Order will not be accepted. The completed application for certification will then be forwarded to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). It is the student’s responsibility to obtain, complete, and submit the application for certification in a timely fashion. Depending on the
time of year, it may take up to 6 weeks for PDE to process and issue the official certification back to the student. The candidate MUST have achieved Full-Status in their program to apply for certification, having fulfilled all required prerequisites for admissions. This certificate is issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Education directly to the applicant.

The Pennsylvania Instructional I Certificate is issued to persons whose primary responsibility is teaching. It is valid for six years in the field for which it was endorsed. It is issued to applicants who: (a) possess a baccalaureate degree; (b) successfully complete a PDE-approved teacher education program; (c) pass the Praxis I and Praxis II (in chosen certification area) Examination Testing Program; (d) obtain a successful evaluation on 2 PDE-430 evaluations; and, (e) receive the recommendation of a college or university. The six year time limit begins when the teacher secures his/her first contracted position.

The Pennsylvania Instructional II Certificate is issued to persons who have completed: (a) a PDE-approved induction program for beginning teachers (typically provided by the employee's School District); (b) three years of satisfactory teaching in an approved public or nonpublic school, and (c) 24 credit hours of collegiate study or PDE-approved inservice courses or both. College credit acceptable for renewal of the Instructional I Certificate or conversion to the Instructional II Certificate must be earned at a PDE-approved baccalaureate degree granting institution, subsequent to the conferring of the baccalaureate degree. Students who complete the University of Pittsburgh's graduate level teacher certification program have met the 24-credit requirement.

Certification requirements in other states can be obtained through their individual websites for Department of Education. Typically, candidates will obtain initial certification in Pennsylvania and then apply to transfer their certificate to the desired state. It is highly unusual for a candidate to apply directly to another state for initial licensure.

Praxis I and II Certification Tests:

**Early Childhood Education**

*Effective September 1, 2003*

Praxis I

PPST Reading (#10710) or (5710 computerized)
PPST Writing (#20720) or (5720 computerized)
PPST Mathematics (#10730) or (5730 computerized)

Praxis II
Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge (30511)
Early Childhood Education (10020)

**Elementary Education**

*Effective September 1, 2003*

Praxis I
PPST Reading (#10710) or (5710 computerized)
PPST Writing (#20720) or (5720 computerized)
PPST Mathematics (#10730) or (5730 computerized)

Praxis II
Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge Test (#30511)
Elementary Education:
Curriculum Instruction and Assessment (#10011)

**SECONDARY EDUCATION**

*Effective September 1, 2003*

Secondary Certification allows you to teach grades 7-12. The only program in the Department of Instruction and Learning that issues a K-12 Certificate is Foreign Language.

Praxis I
PPST Reading (#10710) or (5710 computerized)
PPST Writing (#20720) or (5720 computerized)
PPST Mathematics (#10730) or (5730 computerized)

Praxis II—Look carefully and register for the test in your desired certification area.

Specialty Area Test in Subject Area

**English**—English Literature Language and Composition (#10041) or (0041 online)

**Communication**— (#20800) or (0800 online)

**Foreign Language**—

**Option I:**
Praxis II following tests:
Spanish: Content Knowledge (#10191) or (0191 online)
French: Content Knowledge (#20173) or (0173 online)
German: Content Knowledge (#20181) or (0181 online)
Italian: Foreign Language Pedagogy (#10840) or (0840 online)
Japanese: Foreign Language Pedagogy (#10840) or (0840 online)

and
Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge Test (#30511) or (0511 online) is needed for Foreign Language K-12 certification.

Option II:
Taking both the ACTFL OPI and the ACTFL Test of Writing (Intermediate High score required)
To register for the ACTFL test of writing call 1-800-486-8444 or testing@languagetesting.com

and
Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge Test (#30511) or (0511 online) is needed for Foreign Language K-12 certification.

Mathematics---Mathematics: Content Knowledge (#10061) or (0061 online)

Science---
Biology-----------------Biology: Content Knowledge (#20235) or (0235 online)
General Science-----General Science: Content Knowledge (#10435) or (0435 online)
Chemistry-------Chemistry: Content Knowledge (#20245) or (0245 online)
Earth and Space Science--Content Knowledge (#20571) or (0571 online)
Physics------------------Physics (#10265) or (0265 online)

Social Studies ---Social Studies: Content Knowledge (#10081) or (0081 online)

Verify the test number and score needed to obtain certification in the state where you desire to be certified as well as register for the exam at www.ets.org/praxis
Special Education-MPD

*Effective September 1, 2003*

**Praxis I**

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPST</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>(#10730) or (5730 computerized)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Praxis II**

Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge (30511)

Special Education: Hearing Impaired K-12 (10271)

Special Education-Deaf and Hard of Hearing

*Effective September 1, 2003*

**Praxis I**

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPST</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
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</table>

**Praxis II**

Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge (30511)

Special Education: Hearing Impaired K-12 (10271)

Special Education-Vision Education Certification

*Effective September 1, 2003*

**Praxis I**

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<tr>
<td>PPST</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>(#10730) or (5730 computerized)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Praxis II**

Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge (30511)

Visually Impaired-Teaching Students with Visual Impairments (10280)
Praxis I Qualifying Scores [Effective September 15, 2005] for PA:

I. Option I- Individual Scores on each subtest
   Mathematics, Test #730: score 173
   Reading, Test #710: score 172
   Writing, Test #720: score 173
   Current total required: 518

II. Option II – Composite Score of 521 (combined score of the 3 subtests) with
   Minimum Mathematics Test Score of 171
   Minimum Reading Test Score of 171
   Minimum Writing Test Score of 170

Requirements for Praxis II Exams and qualifying scores for PA and to be certified in other states are available at www.ets.org/praxis.

Beginning September 1, 2003, The Principles of Learning and Teaching Test (K-6) and (7-12) is being replaced by the Pennsylvania Statewide Evaluation Form for Student Professional Knowledge and Practice (PDE-430). The Pennsylvania Department of Education has determined the 430 form to be a more authentic assessment of a candidate’s knowledge of the Principles of Learning and the Practice of Teaching than the previously administrated Principles of Learning Test.

Each student will be evaluated twice during the field experience on the PA 430. The PA 430 forms will be kept in each student’s permanent record file for 5 years. Each student is encouraged to collect evidence during student teaching to verify that they have completed the four domains that are included in the PA 430 Evaluation. These domains or categories include Planning and Preparation, Instructional Delivery, Classroom Environment and Professionalism. A copy of the evaluation is included in the appendix of this handbook.

Multiple Certification Areas:

Individuals seeking Instructional I Certification in more than one area need to take a separate Praxis specialty test in each area for which certification is sought. Students may take any of the Praxis II examinations at any point during or after attendance at a postsecondary institution. However,
students should be aware of the fact that passing scores must meet the standards in place when they apply for certification. **Note:** Additional certification areas may only be added after initial certification is received. There are several areas that would require additional coursework and field experience to add certification [early childhood to elementary, elementary to secondary, secondary to elementary, adding special education to an existing certificate]. See Advanced Teaching Practicum.

If you have questions about the Praxis examinations, visit the ETS website or consult the Coordinator of Field Placements or a staff member in the Office of Measurement and Evaluation. You may also use the "hotline" (609-771-7395) Monday through Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. or directly contact:

**The Praxis Series**

Educational Testing Service  
P. O. Box 6050  
Princeton, NJ 08541-6050  
FAX# 609-771-7681 or 609-771-7906  
[www.ets.org/praxis](http://www.ets.org/praxis)

As it is a condition of admissions in the Department of Instruction & Learning, students will have successfully completed the Praxis I Examination prior to student teaching. The Praxis II Examinations must be taken and passed before applying for certification and interviewing for jobs. **Test scores are sent to the student. Scores must also be sent to the University of Pittsburgh. Code #R2927 in section 11 of the application form so that scores will be sent to Pitt. Educational Testing Service will also send Pennsylvania teacher candidate scores to the State Department of Education in Harrisburg, PA.**

**Advanced Teaching Experiences**

In order to obtain a second certification a student may need to complete an Advanced Teaching Experience in an assigned school site. This experience will vary in length depending upon the teaching experiences and goals of the candidate. This will be arranged by the Coordinator of Field
Placements in consultation with the Program Coordinator in the area where certification is being sought.

**Act 48 Credits/Hours**

In order for a certificate to be active and valid, a candidate who has acquired an Instructional I (or Instructional II) certificate in Pennsylvania is required to continue to engage in professional development. They can either participate in district sponsored activities (workshops and in-service trainings) or can take courses at an approved college or university to continue to educate themselves in their certification area. Act 48 hours can not be accrued until after Instructional I certificate is obtained. **These are referred to as ACT 48 credits or hours. A certified teacher is required to earn a minimum of 6 credits or 180 hours every 5 years from the time of certification. (not from the time of initial employment).**

**Placement Service**

As certification approaches, the search for a permanent teaching job will begin. One of the student’s first tasks is to develop a credential file to serve as a repository for important personal records (e.g., resume, transcripts, recommendations, teaching certificate, test scores, career goals statement, a professional portfolio). The University of Pittsburgh Placement Service (Room 224, William Pitt Student Union) offers comprehensive services for students and alumni. In addition to assisting with credential files, the office staff conducts workshops, evaluates resumes, announces employment opportunities, and arranges interviews. At the beginning of each term, the staff holds briefing sessions to explain the functions of the Placement Service, distributes registration packets, discusses interview strategies, and prepares students for their own job search. A staff specialist is also available to provide individual guidance and counseling for prospective teachers. Students are encouraged to attend briefing sessions and prepare credential files during the early part of student teaching. During the student teaching experience, the student should request letters of recommendation from his/her cooperating teacher and university supervisor. Most school districts consider credential files to be incomplete without such letters.

At this same time, students are strongly encouraged to create a professional portfolio to showcase their work and philosophy of teaching; this can be created from taking documents from the PDE430
as well as courses taken at the University of Pittsburgh. The Placement Office is a reputable agency that provides prospective teachers with a broad scope of information and services. Many professional organizations advertise jobs in their journals and newsletters, as well as at their annual conventions.

In addition, the Placement Service hosts an annual teaching job fair (Pittsburgh Educational Recruiting Consortium) in the Spring where school representatives from over 100 school districts from across the nation interview and hire prospective teachers.

Students interested in obtaining a job in Pennsylvania should also compile an application file on PA-Educator, an online clearinghouse used by many school districts in Pennsylvania as a first stop on their search to fill teaching vacancies. www.PA-Educator.net's vision encompasses two main objectives: it facilitates the application process for prospective teachers and improves school district procedures associated with applicant recruiting and screening. Hiring school districts, candidates looking for positions, colleges and universities with teacher training programs, and K-12 students will all benefit. PA-Educator uses the Internet to support sharing of applicant credentials across school districts. College Education majors and practicing teachers looking for new teaching positions throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania apply by filling out an electronic version of the Standard Teaching Application for Teaching Positions in Pennsylvania Public Schools. Participating school districts search the PA-Educator site for applicants who meet their criteria. PA-Educator works with colleges and universities, along with districts, to actively scout, screen, recruit, and rigorously evaluate teacher candidates for potential or actual openings in teaching.

**Letter of Verification**

There is often a time lag between completion of program requirements and the receipt of your PA Instructional I Certificate. During this period, most students are interviewing for teaching positions and employers will request verification of completion of degree/certification requirements. Once the student’s application for graduation and/or certification is endorsed, the Office of the Dean of the School of Education provides an official letter of eligibility that can be shared with prospective employers. For degree candidates, the letter is sent out routinely at the time of graduation.
GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A number of policies and procedures have been established to serve the best interests of the student teacher, the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor, and the university supervisor. These guidelines are designed to enrich the student teaching experience for all parties involved, including the students who attend the schools in the districts where the student teaching experience takes place. Many local school districts have additional standards to regulate the personal and professional conduct of student teachers. If and when the student teacher is confused about whether to follow Pitt’s guidelines or those of the local school, he/she should check with the cooperating teacher, university supervisor, and the Coordinator of Field Experiences.

Absences
Student teachers should report to the assigned school site every day that the school is in session during the scheduled student teaching experience. The only excused absences are: 1) a death in the family; 2) serious illness, or 3) jury duty. Student teachers must notify the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor and the university supervisor when they cannot report to school or perform their assigned duties. This should be done as far in advance as possible. It is the student teacher's responsibility to leave lesson plans and instructions for the classes he/she is responsible for teaching in the event that he or she must be absent. The student teacher should inquire as to what procedure the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor would like followed for notification. If the student teacher cannot reach the university supervisor on the day of a scheduled observation, a message should be left with the Coordinator of Field Experiences (412/648-7332). **Excused absences must be made up when they exceed three (3) teaching days. Excused absences that exceed 3 absences must be made up at the end of the student teaching experience. NOTE – student teachers do not get a pre-set number of sick or personal days.**

Academic Integrity Policy
All students at the University of Pittsburgh are expected to follow the guidelines and policies established by the University of Pittsburgh which govern Academic Integrity. These can be reviewed at [www.pitt.edu](http://www.pitt.edu).
**Attire and Appearance**
Professional attire and appearance are expected at all times. Though the University of Pittsburgh does not require a standard "uniform" for student teachers, most school districts have policies about dress and grooming. The cooperating teacher/clinical instructor and building principal are the sources of advice on these matters. As a general rule, business or business casual dress are recommended – jeans, T-shirts, shorts, short skirts/dresses, sandals are not considered professional attire. Any body art or piercing (beyond ear piercing) should be covered or removed.

**Audiovisual Materials**
The Media Resource Center, B10 Alumni Hall, has a rich collection of audiovisual media and materials that may be used by the student teacher for educational purposes. To borrow books, films, records, tapes, or other "software," the student teacher must complete a Student Permission Form and have it signed by the university supervisor.

It is also possible to obtain audio-visual equipment (e.g., projectors, tape recorders, TV monitors, etc.) from Media Services. However, since most school sites have their own equipment, the student teacher should use the "hardware" available at the field site whenever possible. Student teachers are responsible for the care and prompt return of items borrowed from Hillman Library. Students may also borrow digital video cameras from the DV office on the 5th floor of Posvar Hall – there is a limited supply so plan in advance – email Fiona Seels at fseels@pitt.edu for information and requests.

**Calendar**
The student teacher must follow the calendar of the cooperating school to which he/she is assigned. In cases of conflict between University and school holidays, the school district calendar must be followed.

**Child Abuse History Clearance**
All school districts require student teachers to have a valid, clear Child Abuse Clearance (Act 33/151) prior to the student teaching experience. The form used for this purpose is the Pennsylvania
Child Abuse History Clearance. It may be obtained from the Department of Instruction & Learning (5300 Posvar Hall).

After completing the form—identifying "School" as the reason for the request, the student sends it to the Department of Public Welfare along with a money order for $10.00. When the report is received, a copy must be submitted to the Department of Instruction & Learning and to the local school district, usually to the Superintendent or his/her district representative. It is the student's responsibility to be certain the district receives a copy of the clearance prior to the start of school.

**Classroom Observation Forms**
Whenever the student teacher is observed by the university supervisor, the supervisor will complete a Classroom Observation Form (see Appendix for Program examples) and place one copy in the student teacher’s file folder, which is kept in 5300 Posvar Hall. These forms enable the supervisor to describe, evaluate, and suggest improvements in the student teacher’s performance. They also identify the focus of subsequent observations. The observation forms should be duplicated so the student teacher, the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor, and the supervisor all receive copies. A fourth copy is placed in the student's file. Other data collection forms are also available for use by the cooperating teacher and university supervisor.

A Formal Reflection Sheet (Formal Conference Feedback Form in Pittsburgh Public Schools) is to be completed by the student teacher at the close of the conference. This form requires the student teacher to summarize the results of the conference and set goals for the future. It should also be distributed to all invested participants.

These forms may be copied from this Handbook or downloaded from [http://epitt.pitt.edu](http://epitt.pitt.edu)

**Course and Credit Requirements**
The course and credit requirements associated with student teaching vary across programs, but generally add up to 15 credits. Most programs require a 9 or 10 credit student teaching experience, a student teaching seminar, and a course on working with students with disabilities. Student teachers are not permitted to register for courses beyond the 15-credit maximum without the approval of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.
**Criminal History Report**

The Department of Instruction and Learning requires that the Pennsylvania State Police a valid Criminal History Report be submitted to the Coordinator of Field Experiences prior to student teaching. Any students not submitting this record will not be permitted to student teach. Complete Part I of the Criminal History Report. Indicate the reason for the request as clearance for student teaching/schools.

After completing the form—identifying "School" as the reason for the request, the student teacher sends it to the Pennsylvania State Police, along with a money order for $10.00. When the report is received, a copy must be submitted to the Department of Instruction & Learning (5300 Posvar Hall) and to the local school district, usually to the superintendent or his/her designated representative. Criminal History Report can also be accessed on line with a credit card number [https://epatch.state.pa.us](https://epatch.state.pa.us). It is the student's responsibility to be certain the district receives a copy of the clearance prior to the start of school.

NOTE: Candidates from outside of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania must complete a national clearance check through the FBI. A form for this can be obtained from the Department of Instruction & Learning and a fingerprint card can be completed on G1 Posvar Hall most days from 3:00-4:00 for a nominal fee.

**Digital Video Project**

An underlying component of all of our teacher education programs at the University of Pittsburgh is instilling the idea of becoming a reflective practitioner. This is a skill that needs to be modeled and instilled in student teachers and is carried out through the dialogues that students have with their cooperating teachers/clinical instructors, university supervisors, and faculty. Even so, it can be difficulty unless students are able to step back and take an objective look at their teaching. The use of video facilitates this process. The development of the Digital Video Project enables the student teacher to view segments of their teaching (lessons, isolated teaching moments) to take a focused look at how they implement instruction and, under the guidance of the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor or university supervisor, can deconstruct the instruction to determine what was effective...
practice and what needs to be improved upon. The lens that this provides students is essential. It allows them the analytical vehicle to reflect on their work from a more objective stance and see exactly what feedback others are providing. The districts that our student teachers work in may have indicated specific parameters regarding the use of video – the university supervisor and the coordinator of field placement can provide details regarding any restrictions or parameters in place in specific districts. You may copy or print the Permission Form in the Appendix of this document for use with your students for video use in your classroom). Be certain to discuss your work with your host teacher to be certain the district does not have a preferred permission slip.

Teacher candidates also find the video footage valuable evidence of teaching competencies identified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education in the PDE-430 evaluation instrument; they are able to provide actual evidence of their level of competency in such areas as instructional delivery, establishing an effective classroom environment, establishing a rapport with students.

These tapes are a valuable tool the methods instructors are able to use in teaching courses at the University of Pittsburgh. Many of the tapes demonstrate excellent examples of the techniques, methods, skills, etc. that are being discussed in the methods classes. With appropriate permissions, many tapes are archived on a password protected, intranet site and available for use in methods classes. This real world application is invaluable in making the theories and approaches of the university courses applicable and understandable in the real world applications of the classroom. It is important to note that there is no identifying information on the video pertaining to the student teacher, the school site/placement, or the students. In addition, the primary purpose of the archived tapes is for educational discussions.

Finally, we adhere to the District policy regarding obtaining parental consent for taping.

**Directory of Cooperating Schools**

The Teacher Education Program Office maintains a directory of names, addresses, and telephone numbers for cooperating schools in Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania. The directory also identifies school administrators, local school boards, and other personnel who provide a wide range of information and services for the teaching profession.
**Duration of Student Teaching**

General requirements for student teaching are 12-14 weeks of full-time experience at a cooperating school site with an experienced cooperating teacher/clinical instructor. However, the practicum is often reduced to 13 weeks due to orientation sessions, evaluation conferences, legal holidays, and/or schedule irregularities. The exact starting and ending dates for student teaching are noted in the placement request letters sent to cooperating school districts and presented to student teachers during orientation and workshop sessions. Some certification programs (e.g., special education and early childhood), split student teaching into different experiences and time segments to provide experience in teaching different subjects, grade levels, and/or learner populations. Occasionally, the student teaching experience may need to be extended beyond the anticipated 12-14 weeks; such reasons may include student illness, recommendation of the university supervisor and cooperating teacher/clinical instructor, contract disputes at the district level, or unanticipated absences.

**Email Policies**

(adapted from Dr. R. Donato 6/06). In communicating by email with faculty, instructors, or professionals at the field site, it is essential that the emails are courteous and show awareness that you are communicating with professionals. Email messages should not suggest an informal relationship with a professor, parent, professional colleague, supervisor, mentor, etc., but rather should respect professional protocol in writing.

Email is never to be assumed to be an official correspondence. You may not convey absences to the school site via email but should phone the mentor teacher personally to discuss the nature of the absence. Also, remember that email is not confidential correspondence. When you write an email, it may be saved, distributed, made public – with or without your knowledge. This is important for you to remember.

**Evaluation Forms**

In addition to the (PDE- 430) Pennsylvania Statewide Evaluation Form for Student Professional Knowledge and Practice there must be both a midterm and final evaluation of the student teacher.
The University of Pittsburgh provides standard forms for assessing the student teacher’s personal attributes and professional competence. The evaluation process is a collaborative venture. Whether the forms are completed independently or jointly by the cooperating teacher and university supervisor, the participants should then meet to share and discuss their perceptions of the student teacher’s progress and achievements. The form requires signatures of the student teacher, cooperating teacher/clinical instructor, and university supervisor-signatures do not necessarily indicate agreement but that all have read the documents – if disagreements exist, parties are encouraged to write an explanation of their assessment or points. It also has a place where the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor can make a recommendation about the student teacher’s final grade. Evaluation forms are usually collected by the university supervisor but may be mailed to the Coordinator of Field Experiences.

To meet University deadlines for reporting grades, final evaluation forms must be received in the Department of Instruction & Learning by the last day of student teaching. These forms are treated as confidential and private records. Copies of the final evaluation are permanently kept on file in the Office of Student Personnel Services. The forms are not released to the public but are routinely referred to by School of Education officials when it is necessary to verify a student’s completion of the student teaching requirements.

**Federal Background Check**

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, all pre-service teachers [observation students, practicum students, student teachers, interns, etc] are required to comply with established regulations documented in the Public School Code. **All individuals who are entering into a school site to work with students or teachers must obtain the required criminal and child abuse clearances PRIOR to beginning the clinical experience. These clearances MUST be on file in the Department of Instruction & Learning with the Coordinator of Field Experiences and must be presented to the school site upon initial visit.**

The regulation reads:
**ALL** students teachers (participating in classroom teaching, internships, clinical or field experiences) and prospective employees (including but not limited to administrators, teachers, substitutes, janitors, cafeteria workers, office employees) of public and private schools, IUs and area vocational-technical schools, including independent contractors and their employees and bus drivers, who have direct contact with children, must provide to their employer a copy of their Pennsylvania State Criminal History Background Check and their Federal Criminal History Record that can not be more than one (1) year old.

NOTE: this regulation also applies to University Supervisors working with pre-service teachers and to researchers who are working in classrooms with teachers and students.

Each pre-service teacher, supervisor, researcher working in a school must obtain

- a Federal Criminal History Record
- a Pennsylvania State History Background Check
- Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance

**Obtaining the Federal Criminal History Record**

**Fee:** $40.00

1. The applicant should register at www.pa.cogentid.com or at 1.888.439.2486 prior to going to the fingerprinting center. Payment is made at time of registration: credit or debit card, money order, or cashier's check. No Cash or Personal Checks Are Accepted.
2. The applicant then reports to an approved Fingerprint Center (University of Pittsburgh - 5512 Posvar Hall – open T, W, Th 12:00-3:00). Other sites in PA are identified on the cogentid website. **You must bring State or Federal Photo identification to the site with you. Applicants will not be processed if they can not provide an acceptable photo ID.**
3. The fingerprints are scanned; the entire fingerprint capture process takes approximately 10 minutes.
4. The prints are then electronically transmitted to the PA State Police, who then submits the fingerprints and demographic information to the FBI as required by federal statute.
5. Pennsylvania Department of Education will receive the Federal Criminal History Report from the FBI who will then return it to the applicant.

6. **If the applicant does not receive the Federal Criminal History Report from Pennsylvania Department of Education within 8 weeks after being fingerprinted, they should call 717. 783.3750 or email Pennsylvania Department of Education at dwolfgang@state.pa.us -- the applicant should NOT contact the fingerprint center nor Cogent Systems regarding the status of the Report.**

Further details regarding fingerprinting can be found on the cogentid site or the PDE site.

**NOTE:** The Regulation allows an applicant to enter into a school for a **single period not to exceed 90 days**, except during a lawful strike, provided that all the following conditions are met:

- The applicant has applied for the background checks and can provide appropriate documentation
- The administrator has no knowledge about the applicant that would disqualify the applicant from employment
- The applicant affirms in writing that they are not disqualified from employment
- If the information revealed in the background check reveals the applicant is disqualified, the applicant will be subjected to termination
- The administrator requires that the applicant not be permitted to work alone with children and does work in the vicinity of a permanent employee.

**File Folder-Student's Documentation**

A file folder is available for each student teacher in the Teacher Education Program Office-5300 Posvar Hall. This folder contains permanent records about the student teaching experience and serves as a repository for documents (e.g., time sheets, observation forms, evaluation reports, lesson plans, materials, tuberculin tests, etc.) that may be needed by future employers or state certification agencies. Though it is confidential, it is sometimes used by the Coordinator of Field Experiences and selected University faculty members for purposes of research and program evaluation or to verify that a student has completed requirements for graduation and/or certification. Names of students are never used in evaluation and research studies. Students can also obtain certificates for attending professional development workshops, as they are filed in these folders.
Grade Disputes
Occasionally, a university supervisor and cooperating teacher and student teacher may disagree regarding a student teacher's grade or evaluation of performance. When this occurs the following steps are advised: all parties are asked to document their perceptions of the student's performance and their expectations for that student; a work plan should be developed with input from the supervisor, cooperating teacher and student teacher, and Coordinator of Field Experience (if needed) that delineates clear expectations and how the student will demonstrate his work and growth in meeting those expectations; and a timetable for reassessing the work. After a defined period of time, all parties will discuss the student's progress and skills and will discuss a grade. Ultimately, it is the supervisor's responsibility to determine the final grade, however, he should rely on the feedback given by the host teacher.

Grade Option
In most programs, the grading system for student teaching is the HSU Option -- Honors/Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. Although the cooperating teacher plays a vital role in the evaluation process, the official grades for student teaching are assigned by the university supervisor. Courses taken under the HSU option carry credit toward graduation and certification but are not used in computing the quality point average. Grades of G, I, or W may also be given in special cases. The G grade is given when the student teaching assignment is unfinished due to extenuating circumstances, such as serious illness or injury. The I grade is given for incomplete work or when a student teacher needs more time to finish all student teaching requirements. The W grade is given when a student officially resigns or withdraws from the student teaching. Grades of G and I are only used for extreme hardship cases. They are never given in cases of clear incompetence or lack of effort.

A U grade can ONLY be given after the following steps have been taken:

- The student teacher has been notified of the areas of concern/weakness, in writing (copy to Coordinator of Field Experience)
- A work plan has been written that clearly communicates expectations and specific steps the student teacher can take to remediate deficiencies (copy to Coordinator of Field Experience)
A time line has been established that allows the student teacher a reasonable amount of time to work on the deficiencies/concerns/weaknesses (copy to Coordinator of Field Experience)

If the term is ending, an I should be given until reasonable time has been given for the student teacher to attempt to work through the prescribed work plan.

An intensive schedule of observation, feedback, and support should be delineated for the supervisor and host teacher to conduct to assist the student teacher in meeting expectations (copy to Coordinator of Field Experience)

NOTE: at any stage in this process the Coordinator of Field Experience can be asked to intervene (developing a work plan, timeline, providing observation/feedback, etc.).

Only after all of the above should a meeting between the student teacher, mentor, supervisor, and Coordinator of Field Experience be set to issue an unsatisfactory grade.

**Holidays**

Student teachers follow the school schedule of the assigned student teaching site once student teaching begins. They observe the same legal holidays, established by their assigned school. Exceptions may be made for religious holidays, when agreed to by the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor and university supervisor.

**Illness**

Cases of student teacher illness are evaluated on an individual basis by the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor and university supervisor. Consideration is given to the type, severity, and duration of the illness. When possible, the student teacher should submit written documentation from a physician to verify extended illness (3 or more days) or alert the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor and university supervisor of any other medical problems that may limit the student teacher’s performance.

**Lesson Plans**

**Student teachers are expected to prepare written lesson plans.** The format of the lesson plan may depend upon the subject, grade level, and learner population being taught. Cooperating
teachers/clinical instructors and university supervisors may also have special preferences for how lesson plans should be written. Individual programs also have guidelines/protocols on how lesson plans should be written in each discipline. Generally, a complete lesson plan requires the student teacher to make decisions about (a) objectives tied to PA Chapter 4 Academic Standards, (b) content coverage, (c) teaching models, (d) instructional materials, (e) organization and management, (f) evaluation criteria and procedures, and (g) reflection on the lesson.

Guidelines for the preparation of lesson plans should be obtained from the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor, university supervisor, and/or methods professors in each certification field.

Student teachers are responsible for submitting lesson plans to the cooperating teacher and university supervisor by a mutually agreed upon deadline prior to each teaching assignment. Copies of all lesson plans should be retained by the student teacher, preferably in a student teaching notebook. Samples of particularly effective/creative lessons and units should be included in the student's PDE430 and professional portfolio.

Under no circumstances will a student teacher be permitted to teach without a written lesson plan.

Ideally, feedback and suggestions on the planning should be given to the student teacher prior to the implementation of the lesson plan so that the lesson can be revised and has the greatest opportunity for success.

Liability Insurance

The Pennsylvania Political Subdivision Tort Claims Act of 1978 gives student teachers in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania protection against liability in most situations while they are student teaching in Commonwealth Schools. If any student feels the need to purchase additional insurance, various teachers' associations offer liability insurance at reasonable rates.

Maps and Travel Directions

It is recommended that students use the following websites to locate travel routes to the school sites:

for bus routes: www.portauthority.org for car routes: www.mapquest.org
PDE-430

This evaluation instrument was developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education as a performance based assessment to evaluate a teacher candidate's proficiency and skills in the areas of planning and preparation, classroom environment, instructional delivery, and professionalism. This assessment replaces the Principles of Learning Praxis Exam in Pennsylvania. Student teachers will be create a portfolio that will be formally evaluated twice: in February (formative) and in April (Summative). A score of 4 with a minimum of 1 point in each domain is required to be recommended for certification.

- E-portfolio will be used for all initial certification students to document their competencies for the state assessment
- Is Evidence Based
- Is Reflective
- Can be mined for Employment/Professional Portfolio
- Illustrates Competencies, Growth, Best Practices

Provisional to Full Status

If your admissions letter indicates that you have been accepted provisionally, you must complete certain requirements before you are fully admitted into your chosen program. In this admissions letter, you were also provided details regarding exactly what those conditions of admissions are and a time frame in which you are expected to complete them to be converted to Full Status and to finalize the admissions process. The following guidelines will help facilitate that process.

1. At the beginning of each term following your initial admission, the Program Coordinator of your Program or your advisor will contact you (email, phone call, or in person) regarding your status in the Program.
2. It is your responsibility to schedule any courses that you need and to take them in a timely manner, consistent with the time frame indicated on your admissions letter.
3. When you have fulfilled the conditions of your admission, it is your responsibility to complete a Change of Status Form (available at Student Services or from Donna Rudman – 5300 Posvar Hall) –also in Append ix)) and provide all necessary documentation
(transcripts, Praxis scores, course syllabi, etc.) to verify these conditions have been met. This form should be submitted to Donna Rudman.

4. If you require an extension, you need to submit a request in writing to the Program Coordinator of your Program or to your advisor in advance of the deadline. This letter should detail the reasons for the extension. You will be notified in writing if this request is granted.

Please note: You can not apply for Certification nor can you graduate on Provisional Status

**Registration in Other Courses**

The student teaching practicum, student teaching seminar, and working with students with disabilities course constitute a full-time load of 15 credits. Student teachers are usually not permitted to take additional courses during the practicum term. In some cases, however, permission to exceed the 15 credit limit may be granted by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Such permission is given selectivity, and only after a review of the student’s record and planned course work suggests that such an overload is academically justifiable.

**Schedule Cards**

At the start of the student teaching experience, the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor will establish a daily schedule for the student teacher. The schedule is usually the same as that of the cooperating teacher. It should be clearly written on a card to indicate the time periods, grade levels, and subjects the student teacher will be teaching. The card should also include information about home room assignments, planning periods, and supervisory duties. One copy of the schedule card should be given to the university supervisor. Another copy should be placed in the student teacher’s file.

**Second Certification**

If a candidate would like to obtain a second certification area, he must first obtain initial certification. Then, after taking and passing the required Praxis II exam he can file an application for certification to add the area of certification. The certification areas of Elementary Education, Reading Specialist, Early Childhood Education, Health and Physical Education, and Special Education require additional coursework and field work.
**Snow Days/Inclement Weather**

All classes at the University and at cooperating school sites are held unless official notification of cancellation is given. KDKA radio (1020 AM) is the official station for cancellations. If an announcement is not made over the radio, you should call the main University number (412/624-4141) and the main number of the assigned school district. The student teacher should become familiar with the snow day policy of the cooperating school. If the school is open, even if Pitt classes are canceled, the student teacher must report to his/her assigned school as usual. If the school district is closed and Pitt is open, the student teacher should report for scheduled classes on campus. Be certain to ascertain from the cooperating teacher/clinical instructor the policies for teachers for delays—often delays only apply to students and not faculty/staff.

**Staff Development**

Professional teachers participate in many educational programs sponsored by local school districts and/or teachers' organizations. These staff development activities include orientation and induction programs for beginning teachers, as well as continuing/inservice programs for veteran teachers. Student teachers are expected to take part in school-based staff development activities, especially those conducted for new teachers. In some cases, the student teacher may have to report a few days early for the practicum assignment. Student teachers will be notified, in advance, if the cooperating school district requires attendance at a pre-practicum orientation meeting. Student teachers are not eligible for ACT 48 hours.

** Strikes and Walkouts**

In cases where cooperating teachers/clinical instructors participate in strikes, walkouts, or other labor-management activities that result in their absence from the classroom, the student teacher will be contacted by the Field Site Coordinator with explicit instructions on how to proceed until such problems have been resolved. Student teachers from the University of Pittsburgh will not cross picket lines. Note: under extreme circumstances an alternative placement many need to be arranged or an extended student teaching assignment may need to occur to accommodate time out of the classroom.
Student Teacher Files

Several sets of files are maintained for each student teacher in the Department of Instruction and Learning. One folder contains permanent records about the student teacher experience and serves as a repository for documents (e.g., clearances, final time sheets, PDE-430 documentation, evaluation reports, tuberculin test results, FERPA releases, etc.) that may be needed by future employers or state certification agencies. This folder is kept on file in the Department of Instruction & Learning (5300 Posvar Hall) and is maintained by the staff. The information in this file folder is kept confidential and private and is maintained for five years. The information in this file is sometimes used by the Coordinator of Field Experiences, Program Coordinators, and selected University faculty members for purposes of research and program evaluation, or to verify that a student has completed requirements for graduation and/or certification. Names of students and identifying information are never used in evaluation and research studies.

A second student file is kept in 5300 Posvar Hall. This folder contains the student teacher's weekly time sheets, host teacher and supervisor observations, reflections, and certificates from workshops attended. The student teacher and supervisor are responsible for maintaining this file by depositing the required information on a regular basis. This file is not confidential and is accessible to other students in the program.

A third file is kept in the Student Service Center (5500 Posvar Hall). This file contains the student's admissions application and documents, student's letter of acceptance into the program, official transcript, registration forms and a plan of studies. It also documents all work to satisfy any conditions attached to a Provisional admissions. This file is confidential and is maintained by the staff of the Student Service Center. The Coordinator of Field Experiences and faculty from the students' program and the Department of Instruction & Learning have access to this information. After the student graduates, it is stored on microfilm.

Substitute Teaching

The student teacher may not be used as a substitute teacher. If the cooperating teacher is absent from school, the school must hire a substitute teacher who may act as a surrogate cooperating teacher until the regular cooperating teacher returns. If the substitute does not hold an Instructional I
or II Certificate, the school should appoint an interim cooperating teacher to assume legal responsibility for supervision of the student teacher. In the event of prolonged absence by a cooperating teacher, the school should consider reassignment of the student teacher to another certified teacher in the same school.

**Tuberculin Test**

Before the start of the practicum, the student teacher must pass a tuberculin test. The test can be taken at Pitt’s Student Health Service (3708 Medical Arts Building on Fifth Avenue) for a fee of $15.00. It is also given, free of charge, at the Allegheny County Health Department (3441 Forbes Avenue). Copies of the test results should be submitted to the Teacher Education Program Office and to the principal and/or nurse at the cooperating school. The student teacher should also keep a copy of the test results.

The tuberculin test is usually valid for 12 months. It is also required as part of the medical examination needed to apply for the Instructional I Teaching Certificate. A complete medical examination is needed to apply for the Instructional I Certificate. Student Health charges $50.00 for a complete physical.

**Varsity Athletics**

Participation in the Pitt’s varsity athletic program (or other student activities) during student teaching is strongly discouraged. Student teachers are expected to devote full time and energy to their assigned duties. We do not recommend participation in a full schedule of athletic practice and competition during student teaching.

**Visitations**

The university supervisor will visit the cooperating school early in the term and then schedule subsequent visits on a bi-weekly basis. In some cases, visits will be scheduled more or less frequently depending upon the student teacher’s progress. The student teacher must provide a schedule card to the university supervisor indicating the days, times, and locations of his/her activities and must inform the supervisor of any absences from the cooperating school. Minimally the university supervisor will contact the student teacher twice during the practicum experience and will observe a MINIMUM of 6 times during the student teaching experience.
**Weekly Report Form (Time Sheets)**

Student teachers must complete a weekly report form that enumerates the clock hours devoted to teaching, observation, participation, and conferences. The form requires the cooperating teacher’s signature and must be submitted each week to the Teacher Education Program Office. When the final weekly report is submitted, it must give the cumulative clock hours devoted to student teaching activities.

The accurate completion and prompt submission of weekly reports are critical to the success of the student teaching practicum. These reports serve three purposes. First, they verify attendance at the cooperating school. Second, they let the university supervisor know whether the student teacher’s time is being spent in appropriate ways. Third, they provide data about actual clock hours devoted to teaching. **Information about actual teaching time is requested by prospective employers and departments of education in other states where an individual wishes to be certified.**

**EPITT Website-Educational Partnerships in Training Teachers**

A website is available for supporting the work of the host teachers and supervisors: [http://epitt.pitt.edu](http://epitt.pitt.edu)  It contains information on training and support for working with interns and student teachers. There are professional development and Act 48 Opportunities for Mentors, Cooperating Teachers, and Supervisors in the EPITT site. Mentors and supervisors will also be able to find copies of all handbooks and forms on this site. To access, please go to  [http://epitt.pitt.edu](http://epitt.pitt.edu) and complete the request for an account. You will be sent an email with log in information.

**Work and Family Obligations**

Many student teachers have financial and family problems that result in considerable stress during the practicum term. Some must hold part-time jobs. Others have to worry about baby sitters, small children, a spouse, or public transportation. Regardless of your special problems, the University of Pittsburgh and its cooperating schools expect that you devote full time to the student teaching practicum. Our best advice is not to register for the practicum unless you are ready to manage your work and family affairs.
**Work Product**
As a student in the School of Education, Department of Instruction & Learning the work you produce may be used by the School's faculty for purposes of accreditation, research, or program evaluation. Names of students and identifying information are never used in evaluation and research studies. If you would not like your work to be used, you must inform the Coordinator of Field Experience as soon as possible.

**ENTERING THE TEACHING PROFESSION**
During the third term of the program, candidates must apply for graduation, certification, and/or employment. The information provided in this section of the handbook should help to minimize the problems sometimes associated with leaving the University of Pittsburgh and becoming a fully-certified professional teacher. For additional assistance, interns should refer to the School of Education Bulletin, consult their academic advisor or the Coordinator of Field Experience, or see a staff member in the Student Service Center, 5500 Posvar Hall.

**Graduation**
Application for degrees must be filed in the Student Service Center at the time of registration for the term during which the student expects to complete requirements for graduation, but no later than ten calendar days after the beginning of that term. In addition to the application, students must file an approved plan of studies. Graduation occurs three times each year (December, April, and August); however, convocation is once a year, usually in late April. It is the student's responsibility to obtain, complete, and submit the application for graduation before the deadline. MAT candidates are invited to participate in the graduation ceremony in April but will officially graduate in June.

**Certification**
Application for a Pennsylvania Instructional I Certificate (Appendix C) and an approved plan of studies must be filed near the end of the term in which the student expects to graduate or complete certification study. Forms are available in the Student Service Center or 5300 Posvar Hall. The completed form and required fee (U.S. Postal Money Order of $40.00), and plan of studies must be submitted to the Department of Instruction & Learning, 5300 Posvar Hall. Upon successful
completion of all certification requirements, the application will be endorsed by the Program Coordinator, Office of Teacher Education, and Dean of the School of Education. It will then be forwarded to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). Assuming the candidate has no I, G, U grades, the MAT candidate is typically eligible to apply for Instructional I certification after the Spring term. It is the student's responsibility to obtain, complete, and submit the application for certification before the announced deadline. Incomplete applications and forms accompanied by payment other than a U. S. Postal Money Order will not be accepted. The Instructional I Certificate (provisional certificate) is issued to persons whose primary responsibility is teaching. It is valid for six years in the field for which it was endorsed. It is issued to applicants who:
(a) possess a baccalaureate degree; (b) successfully complete a PDE-approved teacher education program; (c) pass the Praxis I and Praxis II Examination Testing Program; and, (d) receive the recommendation of a college or university. The six year time limit begins when the teacher secures his/her first contracted position.

The Instructional II Certificate (permanent certificate) is issued to persons who have completed: (a) a PDE-approved induction program for beginning teachers; (b) three years of satisfactory teaching in an approved public or nonpublic school, and (c) 24 credit hours of collegiate study or PDE-approved inservice courses or both. College credit acceptable for renewal of the Instructional I Certificate or conversion to the Instructional II Certificate must be earned at a PDE-approved baccalaureate degree granting institution, subsequent to the conferring of the Baccalaureate degree. Students who complete Pitt’s graduate level teacher certification program have earned the 24-credits required.

Act 48 Hours
Student Teachers are not eligible for ACT 48 hours. All professional educators certified in PA must complete continuing education requirements every five years to maintain their certificates as active.
You must complete **6 credits** [college or pde approved in-service credits] OR **180 continuing Professional Development education hours** OR any combination of these **every five calendar years**.

- **All Act 48 begins IMMEDIATELY upon issuance** of Certification
- **ACT 48 work must relate to the certification type or area of assignment, unless enrolled in an administrative program.**
- You are responsible for reporting these to Pennsylvania Department of Education and keeping track of your progress.
- Community College credits may not be used.
- Credits/Hours may not be transferred or carried over from one five year period to another.
- **You may make your certificate INACTIVE.**
- **NOT GOING TO TEACH NOW, TEACHING OUT OF STATE, OVERSEAS, ETC.**
  ONLINE FORM AT [www.pde.state.pa.us](http://www.pde.state.pa.us)

**Placement Service**

As graduation and certification approaches, the search for a permanent teaching job will begin. One of the student’s first tasks is to develop a credential file to serve as a safe repository for important personal records (e.g., resume, transcripts recommendations, teaching certificate, test scores, career goals statement, etc.).

The University of Pittsburgh Placement Service (Room 224, William Pitt Student Union) offers comprehensive services for students and alumni. In addition to assisting with credential files, the office staff conducts workshops, evaluates resumes, announces employment opportunities, and arranges interviews. At the beginning of each term, the staff holds briefing sessions to explain the functions of the Placement Service, distributes registration packets, discusses interview strategies, and prepares students for their own job search. A staff specialist is also available to provide individual guidance and counseling for prospective teachers.

Students are encouraged to attend briefing sessions and prepare credential files during the early part of the internship. During the middle and later parts of the practicum, the student should request
letters of recommendation from his/her mentor teacher and university supervisor. Most school districts consider credential files to be incomplete without such letters.

The Placement Office is a reputable agency that provides prospective teachers with a broad scope of information and services. Many professional organizations advertise jobs in their journals and newsletters, as well as at their annual conventions. In addition, the Placement Service hosts an annual recruiting consortium in the Spring, PERC, where districts from all over the country actively recruit MAT candidates.

**PA-Educator**

PA-Educator.net 's vision encompasses two main objectives: it facilitates the application process for prospective teachers and improves school district procedures associated with applicant recruiting and screening. Hiring school districts, candidates looking for positions, colleges and universities with teacher training programs, and K-12 students will all benefit.

PA-Educator.net uses the Internet to support sharing of applicant credentials across school districts. College Education majors and practicing teachers looking for new teaching positions throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania apply by filling out an electronic version of the Standard Teaching Application for Teaching Positions in Pennsylvania Public Schools. Participating school districts search the PA-Educator site for applicants who meet their criteria. PA-Educator works with colleges and universities, along with districts, to actively scout, screen, recruit, and rigorously evaluate teacher candidates for potential or actual openings in teaching.

**Letter of Verification**

There is often a time lag between completion of program requirements and the issuance of the Instructional I Certificate from Pennsylvania Department of Education or the diploma from the University of Pittsburgh. During this period, most students are interviewing for teaching positions and employers will request verification of completion of degree/certification requirements. Once the student’s application for graduation and/or certification is endorsed, the Office of the Dean of the
School of Education provides an official letter of verification that can be shared with prospective employers. For degree candidates, the letter is sent out routinely at the time of graduation.