



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION &  
HUMAN SERVICES

## **OFFICE OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS**

CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Special Education

# COOPERATING TEACHER ORIENTATION GUIDE 2023

*Spring SEMESTER*

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## WELCOME

Thank you for agreeing to host a Central Michigan University teacher candidate for the spring semester. Your willingness to support the development of highly effective teachers is appreciated. This document will provide you with important information regarding your role as a Cooperating Teacher (CT) and what you can expect from your CMU Teacher Candidate (TC), the

University Coordinator (UC), and related faculty over the course of the 16-week semester.

After this initial orientation guide, you will receive two further newsletters with information from the Clinical Experiences team to support you as the semester progresses. Please add our email address to your contact list: [cmuedclinical@cmich.edu](mailto:cmuedclinical@cmich.edu)

For more information, please visit the OEPP

webpage at: <https://www.cmich.edu/academics/colleges/college-education-human-services/centers/office-of-educator-preparation-programs/clinical-experiences>

## ATTENDANCE

Teacher Candidates are expected to be present everyday (following the school staff calendar), arrive on time, remain for the duration of the day, and communicate any schedule changes to the CT and UC in advance. If the candidate has to miss a day, they must call their CT and complete a Teacher Candidate Attendance form for their UC (available online). Candidates must prepare lesson plans for when they are absent from placement. Candidates missing over four days for extreme

illness or family emergencies must make up time in the field. ONE unexcused absence, two late arrivals, or the combination thereof, will result in an action plan and/or a disciplinary referral and may be grounds for dismissal from the clinical field experience.

## SEMINAR DATES

To meet the needs of our TCs who are completing their student teaching in distant locations, seminar courses have been scheduled for six virtual sessions. Candidates are expected to share seminar dates with their CT at the beginning of the semester.

With the exception of the individual meeting, all Friday seminars are scheduled as follows:

9:00 am – 3:00 pm

WebEx:  
[cmich.webex.com/meet/ansle1b](https://cmich.webex.com/meet/ansle1b)

**Attendance is mandatory.**

# CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Formal observations are scheduled by the candidate with the UC in advance. Candidates shall share the date and time of expected visits with their host teacher. Lesson plans must be submitted to Taskstream® at least 24 hours in advance of the formal observation. Observations will last a minimum of 30 minutes. At the conclusion of each observation, the UC will debrief with the TC for approximately 15-20 minutes (in a

private area if available). The UC and the TC will discuss classroom management, instructional skills, strengths, weaknesses, and alternative classroom strategies. While onsite, the UC will also speak with the cooperating teacher for their feedback on the candidate's progress.

The approximate timeline for each evaluation is listed in italics.

1. Lesson observations –Six evaluations conducted by the UC *throughout the duration of the experience*
2. Dispositions –Two completed by the CT *during weeks 4 and 12*
3. Mid-semester progress– Initiated with a TC self-evaluation and forwarded to CT and UC for completion *during week 7 or 8*
4. Final –Same process as above and must be *completed by week 15*

# EVALUATIONS

There are four types of evaluations that occur during the field experience. Please remember that the evaluations should reflect the intern's performance as a **TEACHER CANDIDATE**. On areas you score the TC as basic or unsatisfactory, please provide details so the UC can support the TC's professional growth.

For more information, please visit the OEPP webpage at: <https://www.cmich.edu/academics/colleges/college-education-human-services/centers/office-of-educator-preparation-programs/clinical-experiences>

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

Due to the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 pandemic, teacher candidates will undoubtedly face increased expectations regarding their ability to follow the state and local guidelines for social distancing, monitoring systems, and conducting their private life in a way that does not increase risks for those with whom they share a classroom.

We stress to all our candidates that it is their ethical and professional responsibility to know and follow the safety procedures implemented by their assigned district to maintain the health

and well-being of the staff and students in the building.

Please share with the candidate(s) the expectations of your district for self-screening, social distancing, mask-wearing, and classroom sanitation. If any concerns arise about your candidate's adherence to local policies, please contact their University Coordinator.

All health matters related to COVID-19 must be disclosed to building and/or district administration and documented with the CMU University Coordinator. The Director of Clinical Experiences will handle all attendance considerations related to the coronavirus on an individual and confidential basis.



# CMU UNIVERSITY COORDINATOR (UC) EXPECTATIONS

CMU University Coordinators (UCs) are expected to:

- Serve as a liaison between the CT and CMU's teacher education program
- Complete 6 observations
- Support the CMU teacher candidate with meeting program goals
- Provide specific, targeted feedback on lesson implementation
- Encourage the TC to engage in self-reflection and improvement of practices
- Maintain ongoing communication with both the TC and CT
- Communicate with host teacher regularly about the TC's attendance, classroom performance, and professional dispositions, and initiate an Action Plan if needed
- Collect and maintain records pertaining to TC (observations, attendance, professionalism evaluations, substitute forms, etc.)
- Remind CTs to complete mid-term and final evaluations

For more information, please visit the OEPP webpage at: <https://www.cmich.edu/academics/colleges/college-education-human-services/centers/office-of-educator-preparation-programs/clinical-experiences>

## ACTION PLANS

When a problem persists, an Action Plan will be developed. Prior to developing a written Action Plan, the UC or the CT may:

- Conduct visits to the assigned classroom to observe, assess, and document the TC's progress on specific criteria.
- Document and discuss specific strengths and areas of growth for the TC.
- Share specific strengths and areas of growth for the TC and allow a period of attempted improvements.

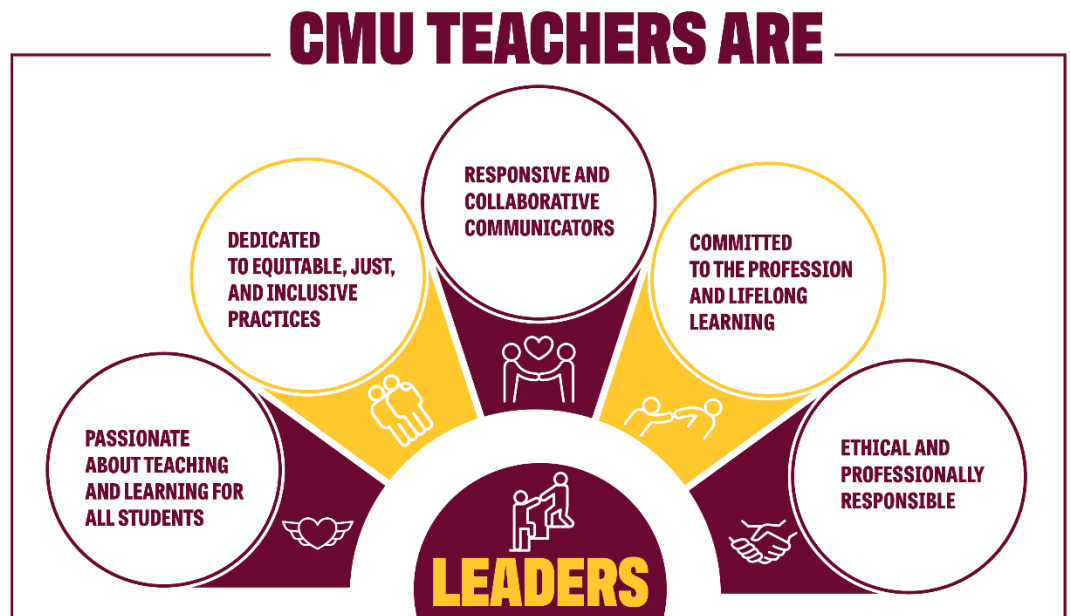
If needed, a written Action Plan will be initiated. The development of an Action Plan includes the following steps:

1. CT communicates need for an Action Plan to UC and Director of Clinical Experiences
2. Meeting to develop a written Action Plan (CT, TC, UC, and related faculty)
3. The UC will submit signed plan to the Director of Clinical Experiences
4. Evaluate the TC's progress by documenting actions taken and noting whether goals have been met

\*Failure of TC to meet the guidelines established within the action plan will result in a grade of No Credit. Further actions might include additional clinical hours in the current placement or retaking the student teaching internship.

# PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

The CMU teacher preparation program focuses on providing teacher candidates with the required knowledge (content), teaching skills (pedagogy), and dispositions to have a positive impact on student learning. It is vitally important that TCs demonstrate professional attributes needed for success in the teaching profession. For this reason, you will be expected to complete two evaluations of your TC's professional behaviors. The TC will complete a self-evaluation and share the link with you via Taskstream®. We ask that you include specific examples of any professional areas where the candidate requires additional support to meet professional expectations.



# SUBSTITUTE TEACHING

The candidate may substitute teach for pay, upon district approval, for a maximum of 15 days throughout the 16-week semester.

CMU Substitute Teaching Policy:

- Weeks 1-8, the TC is allowed to substitute teach *for the host teacher only* for a maximum of 5 days.
- Weeks 9-16, the TC may be allowed to substitute teach for teachers building-wide (with administrator request) for a maximum of 10 additional days.
- If you are interested in having your TC substitute teach for you, please make sure they contact their UC to fill out the proper form.



# EXPECTATIONS OF TEACHER CANDIDATES

While a Teacher Candidate has some experience within a classroom following their pre-service experience, they have yet to experience the full scope of the life of a busy teacher. Therefore, support and guidance will be needed during the onset of the Student Teaching Experience.

Cooperating Teachers are encouraged to assist in the following areas:

- Descriptions of the subject matter that will be taught and what aspects the TC will be responsible for executing.
- Suggestions and tips for preparing learning activities and materials.
- An idea of what has happened to date in the educational life of the pupils.
- Aid in generating the broad goals which must be reached in curricular areas and in identifying resource materials.

# FROM CO-TEACHING TO LEAD TEACHING: A GRADUAL RELEASE APPROACH

TCs should be professional, positive, and proactive from day one as a co-teacher and colleague. Over time, the candidate will assume greater responsibility of classroom duties.

The following chart provides a general overview of a candidate's progression over the semester.

| Phase 1: Beginning of Experience<br>Weeks 1—6   | Phase 2: End of Experience<br>Weeks 7—16   |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Cooperating Teacher responsibilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct two evaluations of teacher candidate related to professionalism – one at the end of week three and one at the end of week five.</li> <li>• Introduce teacher candidate to faculty and staff.</li> <li>• Engage teacher candidate in planning, organizing, and implementing lessons for small groups of students.</li> <li>• Develop a consistent schedule for providing feedback to teacher candidate and planning for instruction.</li> <li>• Communicate expectations and assist teacher candidate in developing sound instructional practices based on student needs.</li> <li>• Invite teacher candidate to sit in on IEPs when appropriate.</li> <li>• Assist teacher candidate in accessing student records for collecting data for completion of course requirements.</li> <li>• Communicate weekly with University Coordinator to provide updates on teacher candidate's progress and share any concerns.</li> <li>• Provide a tentative daily class schedule to assist University Coordinators in scheduling observations (two required during this phase).</li> <li>• Complete a Mid-Term teacher candidate evaluation prior to the end of the 8-weeks.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Teacher Candidate responsibilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-plan and implement small and whole group lessons independently.</li> <li>• Video record one instructional lesson for self-reflection.</li> <li>• Participate in all professional development opportunities.</li> <li>• Attend all meetings with the Cooperating Teacher.</li> <li>• Continue collecting student data for completion of course requirements.</li> <li>• Attend at least one IEP meeting with the Cooperating Teacher.</li> <li>• Begin independently planning and implementing small and whole group lessons.</li> <li>• Collaborate with ancillary staff to meet the needs of all students.</li> <li>• Communicate with families regarding student progress (phone calls, newsletters, P/T conferences, etc.)</li> <li>• Conduct observations of other special education programs within the district (1-day).</li> <li>• Meet weekly with Cooperating Teacher to discuss progress and engage in self-reflection.</li> <li>• Schedule four face-to-face observations with his/her University Field Supervisor in collaboration with the Cooperating Teacher.</li> <li>• Record and maintain all attendance records during internship.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Teacher Candidate responsibilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gradually assume responsibility for opening and closing activities (calendar, daily schedule, attendance, organization, end of day routines, etc.)</li> <li>• Co-plan and co-teach whole group lessons (when appropriate).</li> <li>• Co-plan and independently teach small group lessons (to be evaluated by field supervisor).</li> <li>• Collaborate with ancillary staff.</li> <li>• Attend IEPs when appropriate (they are not expected to write or actively participate in the meetings).</li> <li>• Attend all meetings with Cooperating Teacher.</li> <li>• Collect student data for course assignments (access to student IEPs, MET reports, behavior plans, academic achievement data, etc.)</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Cooperating Teacher responsibilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct informal observations of teacher candidate to provide feedback on his/her instruction, classroom management, organization, etc.</li> <li>• Schedule weekly meetings to provide feedback to teacher candidate.</li> <li>• Support teacher candidate in development of instructional lessons, classroom management, etc.</li> <li>• Provide teacher candidate access to student records for completion of course assignments.</li> <li>• Invite teacher candidate to attend meetings and professional development.</li> <li>• Allow teacher candidate to attend IEP meetings when appropriate.</li> <li>• Conduct two evaluations of teacher candidate professionalism – one at week four and one at week eight.</li> <li>• Complete a final evaluation of teacher candidate to be submitted prior to the end of the semester</li> </ul>  |



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## EARLY RELEASE FROM STUDENT TEACHING

Teacher candidates in their final semester of student teaching who have demonstrated proficiency\* on their mid-progress evaluation may receive an early release for employment as a long-term substitute teacher, after completing 12 weeks of student teaching. Before approval for an early release, teacher candidates must complete the appropriate forms in

collaboration with their cooperating teacher and University Coordinator and ensure classroom responsibilities have been completed.

\*Teacher candidates must have a **minimum** of a 93 on their mid-evaluation to be eligible for early release. The OEPP will use the average of scores between the CT and UC to make the determination. Any scores of “unsatisfactory” would disqualify a candidate for early release.

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## SCECHS & TUITION REFUNDS FOR COOPERATING TEACHERS

CMU recognizes the value of professional educators who work closely with our teacher candidates. As a token of appreciation for hosting a student teacher, we offer three credits of tuition reimbursement for you to continue exploring your academic interests at Central Michigan University.

Cooperating Teachers also have the opportunity to obtain SCECHs for hosting a candidate. Per MDE, hours associated with programs formerly deemed “Non-Traditional Programs” such as supervision for student teaching interns, may be uploaded in a yearlong SCECH program with all other DPPD hours.

For more information about Tuition Reimbursements, email Lori Moon, Executive Secretary of Teacher and Special Education at [moon1l@cmich.edu](mailto:moon1l@cmich.edu)

For Questions about SCECHs please email Amy Hodges at [hodge1al@cmich.edu](mailto:hodge1al@cmich.edu)

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## GRADING TEACHER CANDIDATES

Teacher candidates are assessed by their course faculty and assigned a grade for each course associated with the clinical placement. These course grades reflect information provided by Cooperating Teachers and the staff of the OEPP.

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