The NIU Community of Learners builds on knowledge, practice, and reflection to produce Exemplary Educators. The Community encompasses scholars, education professionals, and pre-service teachers in an interaction that develops the strengths that embody excellence in education. These strengths include creative and critical thinking, scholarship, and caring. Application of these strengths emerges through the collaborative efforts of a diverse community which supports lifelong learning.
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Student Teaching Handbook
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Northern Illinois University
Educator Licensure Programs

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I. Introduction

As members of the Northern Illinois University Community of Learners, the Educator Licensure Programs in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) are built upon the central tenets of Knowledge, Practice, and Reflection. The NIU – CLAS Educator Licensure Programs are based upon the belief that effective teachers must be exceptionally knowledgeable of the subject matter they teach; possess a solid foundation in pedagogy; demonstrate dispositions appropriate to the teaching of students from diverse cultural, social, and economic backgrounds; and show a willingness to continually develop teaching skills through self-analysis, receptiveness to constructive criticism, and engagement in professional development activities.

KNOWLEDGE:

Candidates are required to demonstrate proficiency in content knowledge in their major discipline (and, where applicable, in cognate fields). All CLAS Educator Licensure Programs require a minimum of 32 hours in the teaching field. Many programs require a major in the teaching field. Candidates also must demonstrate proficiency in general knowledge. Candidates must complete the General Education course work required for the baccalaureate degree at NIU (or other accredited college or university, as determined by the undergraduate or graduate admissions department). Candidates are also required to demonstrate excellent communication skills that will allow them to function at a high level of proficiency in the teaching field. All candidates must demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly in speech and writing.

Outcomes (Knowledge)

Upon completion of their educator licensure program, candidates will be able to

1. Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of one or more discipline(s). IPTS 2D, 2F
2. Communicate this knowledge effectively to students and the school community at large. IPTS 6E, 8A, 8D, 8E
PRACTICE:

NIU-CLAS Educator Licensure Programs require candidates to complete course work and experiences that provide them with strategies and skills to become effective practitioners. Upon completion of the program, candidates are expected to demonstrate:

- an understanding of the variety of ways students learn
- a willingness to actively engage students in their own learning
- the ability to plan effective lessons
- the ability to create and maintain a productive and positive learning environment
- the ability to assess student learning through multiple means.

Candidates must also show that they have met the INTASC, NCATE, ISBE, and national professional organization standards. All candidates must complete at least one course in the methods of instruction in their teaching field; a three-semester clinical sequence; and a student teaching experience which focuses on the application of the content knowledge and pedagogy learned over the course of the entire licensure program.

### Outcomes (Practice)

Upon completion of their educator licensure programs, candidates will be able to

1. Plan and execute lessons that are well paced, logically sequenced, and focused in accordance with clearly stated objective and course goals. IPTS 2C, 3B, 3D, 3G
2. Implement a variety of teaching strategies that reflect current and relevant educational research to meet the needs of diverse learners. IPTS 1A, 1C, 1D, 2F, 3C, 3G
3. Integrate assessment and instruction and utilize a variety of assessment instruments. IPTS 6H, 7A, 7C, 7E, 7F
4. Create and maintain a productive, respectful, and positive learning environment. IPTS 4A, 4C, 4D, 4G, 9H
5. Incorporate available school educational technology into classroom practice to meet instructional objectives and goals. IPTS 4A, 4C, 4D, 4G, 9H

REFLECTION:

NIU-CLAS Educator Licensure Programs seek to instill the value of reflection as a means of continually improving one’s teaching effectiveness. Beginning with the first clinical experience and continuing throughout the clinical and student teaching experience, candidates are expected to evaluate their own suitability for the teaching profession. Candidates are introduced to the diversity of student populations in today’s schools and are expected to develop attitudes and behaviors that are non-judgmental and that demonstrate respect for the backgrounds and abilities of all students. NIU-CLAS Educator Licensure Programs emphasize the importance of the teaching profession and require candidates to maintain standards of professional conduct.

### Outcomes:

Upon completion of their educator licensure programs, candidates will be able to:

1. Perform duties in a professional manner to improve the overall learning environment for students. IPTS 4E, 5H, 6E, 8A, 9H
2. Reflect upon past and present performance with an eye toward continued professional growth. IPTS 9A, 9D, 9E, 9G, 9H
3. Develop sensitivity to community and cultural norms. IPTS 1A, 1F, 1G, 3C, 9H
4. Understand the value of students’ varied talents and perspectives. IPTS 1A
5. Respect students as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds. IPTS 1A, 1F, 3C, 9H
6. Maintain professional conduct with colleagues and community. IPTS 6E, 8A, 8B, 8D, 8E, 8F, 9B, 9E, 9G, 9H

NIU CLAS offers secondary licensure in biological sciences, chemistry, english/language arts, foreign languages, earth/space sciences, environmental sciences, history/social sciences, mathematics, and physics. Students’ primary advisors throughout their educator licensure program are listed below. They are available to discuss any questions or concerns you may have concerning the student teacher or the program requirements.

**Discipline Coordinators and Departmental Advisors for Educator Licensure**

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<th>Discipline</th>
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II. Clinical Experiences

*All NIU-CLAS Educator Licensure Programs require three semesters of clinical experience and at least one course in discipline-specific teaching methods.*

**Clinical Experiences**
Clinical observation and participation in the secondary schools are among the most important experiences teacher candidates will have while pursuing their degree and completing their educator licensure program. The knowledge, skills and dispositions required to become an exemplary educator are complex and varied, and take time to develop. Teaching skills and dispositions develop most fully in real-world classroom settings. For this reason, candidates in the NIU-CLAS Educator Licensure Programs participate in three semesters of practical secondary school experience under the supervision of qualified public school personnel. Candidates gradually move from the role of novice observer to one of beginning practitioner during this three-semester sequence.

**ILAS 201**
- **Clinical hours:** 40 hours at a high school (30 hours of observation and 10 hours of tutoring).
- **Number of Cooperating teachers:** 1-2 teachers at a high school
- **Subject areas:** Candidates may observe both within and outside their major discipline.

**ILAS 301**
- **Clinical hours:** 50 hours at a high school.
- **Number of Cooperating teachers:** Usually 1
- **Subject areas:** All 50 hours are in the student’s major discipline.
- **Sites:** Clinical sites are diverse in terms of culture, language, race, ethnicity and/or socio-economic background.

**FINAL CLINICAL EXPERIENCE**

**BIOS 401, CHEM 401, ENGL 482, FLMT 401, GEOL 401, HIST 401, MATH 401, or PHYS 401**

- **Clinical hours:** Minimum of 40 hours in the same school where the candidate will student teach the following semester
- **Cooperating teachers:** Usually 1-2
- **Subject areas:** All hours are usually with the cooperating teacher(s) for student teaching.
- **Course overview:** This course is the final discipline-based clinical experience preceding student teaching and takes place in the school in which the candidate will student teach the following semester. The course prepares candidates for the student teaching experience by allowing them to familiarize themselves with their cooperating schools and to gain experience in preparing and presenting lessons to secondary-level students. Candidates develop an understanding of their school and their subject area department and establish professional working relationships within that department.

*Foreign Languages students will observe in both high school and middle school settings with the minimum required hours split evenly between the two levels.*
The final clinical experience gives candidates the opportunity to put into practice theories on creating and managing productive classroom environments, working with diverse populations, and engaging students in active learning. In this final clinical experience, each discipline coordinator designs activities for his or her teacher candidates and links these requirements to the teaching methods course in which the candidates are simultaneously enrolled. Enrollment in the clinical allows the student to use the secondary classroom as an "observation laboratory" for the methodology course, so that the course might move beyond theory to practice to prepare the student teachers for success in the classroom.

Enrollment in the final clinical will also give cooperating teachers and students an opportunity to become acquainted with the clinical student prior to the beginning of student teaching. In addition, teacher candidates will become familiar with their cooperating teacher's expectations, the school's rules and regulations, and the curriculum, enabling them to begin student teaching at the beginning of the semester with some knowledge of the school at which they are teaching.

We encourage all of our candidates to be active participants during this clinical experience rather than passive observers, because licensure candidates who interact regularly and meaningfully with both teachers and students in this context more easily make the transition to student teaching.

**Final Clinical Experience Course Objectives:**

*Note:* These are the general objectives for the course. Each discipline may differ in the way in which the course objectives are realized. Students should share a copy of the course syllabus with their cooperating teacher early in the semester, so that the two can plan together for fulfillment of course assignments.

Students in the Final Clinical will:

1. Further develop a philosophy of teaching.
2. Identify and observe learning and teaching styles in their major field.
3. Observe and develop ways to motivate students to learn and apply concepts in the subject area to be taught.
4. Observe strategies for establishing a positive and productive learning environment.
5. Observe how lessons are adapted to meet the needs of students’ different learning styles.
6. Observe and, if possible, practice classroom management techniques.
7. Establish a professional working relationship with colleagues.
8. Observe uses of technology in the classroom.
9. Become familiar with the school’s curriculum and the particular subject matter most likely to be taught during student teaching.
10. Acquaint themselves with the department’s/school’s general policies and rules of procedure concerning attendance, academic honesty, classroom disruptions, and the like.
11. In consultation with the cooperating teacher, develop and present several mini-lessons (15 minutes or less) and/or one full-length lesson in their discipline.
12. Reflect on their reasons for and interest in a career in teaching and the personal consequences resulting from their making a commitment to teaching.
List of Suggested Activities, Final Clinical Experience

While it is not intended that everyone should have all of the suggested experiences, the following list is a guide for the student and their classroom supervisor as they plan for involvement in the classroom. Ideally candidates would have direct contact with students approximately 70% of the time. The remaining time should be spent becoming acquainted with other tasks and responsibilities associated with classroom teaching.

1. Work with an individual student or group of students on a special problem.

2. Assist the teacher in administering a test.

3. Supervise small group work.

4. Using a class roster, keep a careful check of verbal activity in the classroom. Two columns might be used to indicate when questions, directions, commands, etc. are initiated by the teacher or by students.

5. Help individual students with make-up work.

6. Check understanding of individual students or groups for clarification of assignments.

7. Set up learning centers or exhibits related to current units of instruction.

8. Co-plan and co-teach with the cooperating teacher.

9. Teach the whole class for short periods under the supervision of the classroom teacher.

10. Plan and execute a teaching activity which calls for collaborative learning groups.

11. Assist informally, and with the permission of the cooperating teacher, in preparing students for speech, dramatic, athletic, or other academic contests.

12. Read school manuals and policy statements regarding such issues as attendance, student behavior, and curriculum. Later, discuss these thoroughly with the cooperating teacher.

13. Correct tests, daily papers/homework, worksheets, or essays. Discuss grading policies with the cooperating teacher and become familiar with whatever record-keeping procedure is in place.

14. Attend a school board or faculty meeting.

15. Tour the building and meet with support staff such as the media coordinator, computer lab supervisor, guidance counselor, dean of students, school nurse, assistant principal and principal.

16. Use available technology, including document camera, projector, SMART board, etc.
17. Spend time with the special education professionals in your building; learn how to adapt materials for diverse student needs.

18. Find and read the school report card. Ask appropriate questions if you are uncertain as to the significance/interpretation of the information included in that document.
III. Student Teaching Overview

Duration of Student Teaching
The actual starting and ending dates for the student teaching experience will be determined according to the needs and/or desires of the cooperating teacher(s), in consultation with the student teacher’s discipline coordinator. The starting and ending dates will be delineated in the “401/Student Teaching Placement Confirmation Report” which will be completed the semester prior to student teaching. This form is to be signed by the cooperating teacher, a school administrator, the student teacher and the student teacher’s discipline coordinator. Any changes in cooperating teachers should be reported to both the discipline coordinator and the Placement Office as soon as possible.

The minimum duration of the student teaching experience will be either fourteen or sixteen weeks, depending on the program. Consult the coordinator or advisor (see page 4) for your program’s requirements.

Goals of Student Teaching
Upon completion of the NIU-CLAS Educator Licensure Programs, candidates will be able to:

1. Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of one or more discipline(s). IPTS 2D, 2F
2. Communicate this knowledge effectively to students and the school community at large. IPTS 6E, 8A, 8D, 8E
3. Plan and execute lessons that are well paced, logically sequenced, and focused in accordance with clearly stated objective and course goals. IPTS 2C, 3B, 3D, 3G
4. Implement a variety of teaching strategies that reflect current and relevant educational research to meet the needs of diverse learners. IPTS 1A, 1C, 1D, 2F, 3C, 3G
5. Integrate assessment and instruction and utilize a variety of assessment instruments. IPTS 6H, 7A, 7C, 7E, 7F
6. Create and maintain a productive, respectful, and positive learning environment. IPTS 4A, 4C, 4D, 4G, 9H
7. Incorporate available school educational technology into classroom practice to meet instructional objectives and goals. IPTS 4A, 4C, 4D, 4G, 9H
8. Maintain professional conduct with colleagues and community. IPTS 6E, 8A, 8B, 8D, 8E, 8F, 9B, 9E, 9G, 9H
9. Perform duties in a professional manner to improve the overall learning environment for students. IPTS 4E, 5H, 6E, 8A, 9H
10. Reflect upon past and present performance with an eye toward continued professional growth. IPTS 9A, 9D, 9E, 9G, 9H
11. Develop sensitivity to community and cultural norms. IPTS 1A, 1F, 1G, 3C, 9H
12. Understand the value of students’ varied talents and perspectives. IPTS 1A
13. Respect students as individuals with differing personal and family backgrounds. IPTS 1A, 1F, 3C, 9H

14. Maintain professional conduct with colleagues and community. IPTS 6E, 8A, 8B, 8D, 8E, 8F, 9B, 9E, 9G, 9H
IV. Roles and Responsibilities of the Student Teaching Team: Student Teacher, Cooperating Teacher, and University Supervisor

In order for a student teacher to have a successful experience and be an active participant in the process, each member of the student teaching team must understand their roles. In addition to the following general responsibilities, participants should familiarize themselves with each department’s specific guidelines.

Student Teacher Expectations and Responsibilities

Student teachers are expected to be dependable, enthusiastic, and cooperative. They need to demonstrate initiative, flexibility, and emotional maturity. They must have a strong background in subject content, educational philosophy and theory, as well as a strong commitment to meeting the needs of all learners. Student teachers must recognize the importance of establishing and maintaining lines of communication between themselves and their cooperating teachers and between themselves and the university supervisor. Successful student teachers:

- attend pre-student teaching conferences and seminars as deemed appropriate by the school or district.
- learn about the various physical facilities of the school building, the resources available in the school system and the resources of the community as they relate to the student teaching assignment.
- prepare adequate lesson plans and submit them to the cooperating teacher for approval well in advance of actual classroom teaching and to the university supervisor as required.
- are prompt in reporting to class and are regular in attendance. [All absences should be cleared by the cooperating teacher and/or university supervisor, especially in the case of extended absence.]
- become familiar with school policies and procedures, especially as they relate to behavior of students.
- communicate honestly, openly, and regularly with the cooperating teacher and with the university supervisor.
- maintain a high level of professionalism in areas of dress, speech, and behavior.
- participate in professional activities such as staff meetings, committee meetings, and parent conferences.
- discuss possible participation in extra-curricular activities with both the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor well in advance of formal commitment.
- understand the role of other professionals in the building or district such as the guidance counselor, dean of students, special education teacher, reading specialist, principal, and assistant principal.
- complete departmental assessment of student response to instruction or edTPA.

In summary, exemplary student teachers arrive at school well in advance of the students and leave with the rest of the faculty at the end of the day. They listen carefully to the suggestions of their cooperating teacher and university supervisor. They prepare their lessons thoroughly and try to provide variety in their instructional approach. They collaborate, when appropriate, with colleagues, administrators, and parents to meet the needs of their students. And perhaps most
importantly, they are reflective practitioners who are not afraid to admit shortcomings and to adjust plans and behavior accordingly.

Cooperating Teacher’s Responsibilities

The cooperating teacher’s willingness to encourage, to advise, to support, and to share ideas helps form the student teacher’s view of the profession. It is the cooperating teacher’s responsibility to work with the student teaching team in designing an experience which best prepares the candidate to be a professional teacher while maintaining instructional quality. Therefore, the cooperating teacher is expected to:

- ensure adequate continuity, class contact and supervision of the student teacher.
- explain clearly the nature and scope of the student teacher’s duties and responsibilities. In particular, the cooperating teacher should clarify his/her expectations regarding the writing of formal lesson plans, the securing and organizing of instructional materials, and the evaluating of student work.
- ensure that the student teacher’s induction into actual teaching is at a rate that seems appropriate for that student teacher.
- conduct regularly scheduled conferences to keep the student teacher informed of his/her progress and to offer suggestions and constructive criticism.
- alert the student teacher to the importance of keeping student information and records confidential.
- participate in regular, honest, and open communication with the university supervisor regarding the progress of the student teacher.
- assist the student teacher in setting goals for continued growth and development during beginning, middle and final stages of student teaching.
- encourage the student teacher to develop the teaching style best suited to the individual.
- arrange a time for the university supervisor to talk to the student teacher before or after each observation, and a time to talk to you, the cooperating teacher.
- facilitate the completion of the student teacher’s final departmental assessment of student response to instruction or edTPA.
- complete the final evaluation (and interim evaluations, if requested to do so) and inform the student teacher of its contents.

During the early weeks of student teaching, cooperating teachers should observe frequently and give plenty of feedback. Once student teachers have taken on a full load, however, they need to be left alone with their classes on a routine basis. If the cooperating teacher feels unwilling to leave the classroom, undoubtedly the student teacher has not made sufficient progress and the university supervisor needs to be contacted immediately.
University Supervisor’s Responsibilities

The supervisor and the cooperating teacher will need to confer regularly throughout the semester to establish common goals and to monitor the progress of the student teacher. The university supervisor is expected to:

- assist the student teacher and cooperating teacher in the planning and administration of the student teaching assignment which will generally include the videotaping of at least one lesson.
- hold periodic meetings with the student teacher and cooperating teacher so that issues of mutual concern may be addressed.
- observe the student teacher approximately once every two weeks and confer with him/her as soon as possible after the observation. Observation reports, which should evaluate the teaching observed and make suggestions for improvement, should be made available to both the student teacher and the cooperating teacher.
- act as a liaison between the student teacher and the university by keeping him/her informed of university meetings, conferences, and policies that may directly affect the student teacher’s licensure or future employment.
- complete a final evaluation form (and interim evaluation, if applicable) and discuss its contents with the student teacher.
- designate the grade (satisfactory or unsatisfactory) at the completion of the student teaching experience.

Visits by the university supervisor are arranged in advance. Student teachers should take responsibility for making mutually satisfactory arrangements for these visits. Visits will generally take place at two-week intervals. For these visits, the student teacher should supply the university supervisor with detailed lesson plans, tests, quizzes, and other materials needed for the lesson.

Timeline for the Student Teaching Team

While an exact timetable of experiences appropriate for all student teachers cannot be specified, the following guidelines are an approximate model based on past experience.

Each student teacher is expected to adhere to the cooperating teacher’s school day for his/her school. In general, this means being at school at least 20 minutes before the first period and staying at least 30 minutes after school dismissal for the day. Student teachers must act and dress in a professional manner at all school functions.

Development of a Phase-In and Phase-Out Strategy

[Note: Each content-area program has its own set of guidelines for length of the student teaching experience and for the specific schedule to be followed for phasing in to student teaching. What follows is a set of general guidelines that apply to most student teaching experiences in the CLAS.]

Transition from Final Clinical Experience to Student Teaching:
As mentioned above, the NIU-CLAS Educator Licensure Programs feature a final clinical experience (minimum of 40 hours) in the school to which the candidate has been accepted for
student teaching. This final clinical experience, the semester just prior to the student teaching semester, is the beginning of the phase-in process. As the candidate becomes familiar with the school, department, and students in his/her student teaching assignment, he/she should begin to participate in classroom activities.

During the first several weeks of the final clinical, the student teacher candidate’s primary responsibility should be to observe the cooperating teacher and to learn class procedures and the students’ names and personalities. The student teacher candidate should take notes about specific students with special needs to discuss later with the cooperating teacher. The cooperating teacher and student teacher candidate should discuss the objectives and methods for each lesson and how the lesson fits into the long-term plan.

Toward the last half of the final clinical experience, the student teacher candidate should become actively involved by assisting during small-group activities or by tutoring individual students who are experiencing difficulty. Some student teachers may be expected to engage in co-planning and co-teaching with the cooperating teacher.

**Phase-In Period:**
Student teachers should begin the process of “phasing-in” to teaching the first preparation as soon as possible. It is also helpful for the student teacher to do some mini-teaching involving enrichment, remediation, or regular instruction before taking over the entire class. The student teacher and cooperating teacher should also construct a tentative schedule to follow as the student teacher progresses from teaching one class to a full load. The university supervisor should be informed of this schedule as quickly as possible to facilitate the arrangement of class visitations.

When the student teacher takes over the primary responsibility for a class, he or she may choose to distribute a written statement of his/her academic and behavioral expectations to the students. Student teachers should discuss these statements carefully with their cooperating teachers in order to prevent abrupt changes in teaching styles, procedures and policies that may detract from learning. This procedure should be repeated for each preparation assumed.

As student teachers grow more confident, they should take on another class until reaching a full load, which is defined as five classes with three distinct preparations. [Note: If your school is on a block schedule, a full load will be defined as two to three classes per day, to be determined by the cooperating teacher and university supervisor.] In addition, student teachers may also be expected to assume one additional duty period, such as study hall.

**Full Load:**
Student teachers are expected to set objectives, develop lesson plans, correct homework, develop quizzes and tests, and evaluate student performance. If “departmental tests” are used in a school, then a student teacher might develop a review quiz for practice. The cooperating teacher should remain in the classroom for each period until the day that he/she feels comfortable leaving. The cooperating teacher might begin by leaving the classroom during the last minutes of the period, then progressing to leaving the room for the entire hour while remaining nearby. The cooperating teacher should try to remain out of the students’ sight consistently for at least one week to give the student teacher the opportunity to learn to handle both in-class and between-class matters without assistance from the cooperating teacher. During this time, cooperating
teachers should encourage student teachers to ask questions about everything, and give advice and feedback, both written and oral, freely.

**Phase-Out Period:**
Toward the final weeks of student teaching, the student teacher should begin to shift teaching responsibilities back to the cooperating teacher. These shifts should occur at obvious breaking points in the content. This period should also provide additional opportunities for the student teacher to see other teaching and learning situations at their school or “feeder” schools. Student teachers should take advantage of the phase-out period to observe other classrooms both in and outside their fields of expertise. Classes taught by a school’s exemplary teachers are appropriate for observation, provided that the teachers consent.

**EVALUATION**

1. Informal evaluation (Feedback and Constructive Criticism)
Student teachers need to have feedback, both complimentary and critical, from those who observe them. Feedback and constructive criticism should be given on a regular basis. The cooperating teacher should make his/her expectations clear to the student teacher at the beginning of student teaching, and should continue to do so throughout the student teaching experience. It is important that the lines of communication be kept open at all times to avoid misunderstandings. If any difficulties arise between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher, the university supervisor should be notified immediately so that he/she can work with the appropriate student teaching team members to help resolve the problem(s).

Serious concerns about a student teachers behavior and conduct should be addressed using the CLAS dispositions process.

2. Formal evaluation
Evaluation should occur continuously throughout the student teaching experience. The primary purpose of all evaluations during the experience should be to identify the student teacher’s areas of strength and to analyze where continued growth is needed. Evaluation should be related not only to performance but to planning, attitude, and personal characteristics of the student teacher. Student teachers are evaluated on both a formative and summative basis.

Formative evaluations:
Formative evaluations include the Visitation Reports that are completed at each of the University Supervisor’s visits. This report evaluates the observed teaching and makes appropriate suggestions for improvement. In addition, most programs request that both the university supervisor and the cooperating teacher complete one or more interim evaluations. The student teacher should be encouraged to continually evaluate his or her own growth as a teacher. Opportunities to discuss this growth and areas of strength and weakness should be provided throughout the semester with both the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor.

Summative evaluation:
One of the most important (and often difficult) responsibilities of the cooperating teacher and of the university supervisor is making a final evaluation of the student teacher’s performance as a teacher. The Final Evaluation is completed by both the cooperating teacher and the university
supervisor. Taken in combination, these evaluations reflect the combined judgment of those who have been responsible for the student teacher’s professional growth throughout the semester. The Final Evaluation should be the most positive evaluation possible for the student teacher. Any weaknesses mentioned in it should be classified as to whether they are due to lack of experience or are symptomatic of a general weakness that would continue to affect the teacher’s performance in the future. Both the cooperating teacher’s and the university supervisor’s final evaluations will be submitted to the student’s department for placement in the student teacher’s credential/placement file.

Note: The Final Evaluation is to be typed. It may be returned to the university supervisor at the final visit, or may be mailed to the university supervisor. The student teacher’s student teaching semester is incomplete until both the university supervisor’s and the cooperating teacher’s final evaluations have been submitted.

The student teacher will have access to both the university supervisor’s and the cooperating teacher’s final evaluations once they have been placed in the credential file.


V. CLAS Policies related to Student Teaching

1. **Student teaching placement policies:** The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at NIU offers a variety of student teaching placements throughout northern Illinois. Every effort is made to place student teachers in schools which best meet their needs. Students are not to attempt to make their own arrangements with schools for student teaching assignments; this leads to misunderstanding among all parties involved. Also, except in unusual circumstances, students will not be allowed to student teach in a school from which they have graduated or a school in which a relative is a student, staff member, or board member. Every effort will be made to place students in a location that is no more than 60 miles from their indicated place of residence during student teaching. Transportation to this placement is the responsibility of the student.

2. **Criminal Background Check:** NIU requires all initial licensure students who will be placed in a school for a clinical or student teaching experience to submit to a criminal background check. The criminal background check is performed by the district in which the NIU student is placed. Districts may refuse to accept an NIU student based on the results of the criminal background check. Any fees related to the criminal background check are the responsibility of the student.

3. **Pre-Student Teaching Testing Requirement:** The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and NIU require all student teachers to pass both the ICTS Test of Academic Proficiency (TAP) and the appropriate ICTS Content-Area Test prior to the beginning of student teaching.

4. **Payment:** The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) does not allow student teaching to be a paid experience.

5. **Substitute teacher responsibility:** School districts where the student teacher is placed are not to use the student teacher as a substitute teacher. If the cooperating teacher is absent for any reason during the student’s period of student teaching, the district is responsible for finding, and paying for, an appropriate substitute teacher.

6. **Extra responsibilities:** Student teachers are responsible for the cooperating teacher’s classroom assignment. The district may not assign student teachers responsibilities other than those in the regular classroom teacher’s job description.

7. **Working/taking courses:** While student teaching, the student’s primary responsibility should be the student teaching assignment. Student teachers are strongly discouraged from holding employment or taking any additional coursework during the semester of student teaching. If students do so and this choice interferes with effective student teaching, students may be asked to choose between student teaching and the outside activity.

8. **Calendar:** During the student teaching semester, the student follows the school district’s calendar regarding breaks and holidays, NOT the NIU calendar.

9. **Mismatch between Student Teacher and Cooperating Teacher:** Should the cooperating teacher or the student teacher suspect a personality “mismatch” or other potential problem,
the university supervisor should be contacted immediately. A successful student teaching experience is based upon having a good working relationship between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher.

10. Absences, Cooperating Teacher: No one is immune from a required absence, so communication is the key. When the cooperating teacher is absent, the student teacher should be notified and the certified substitute teacher becomes the supervisor for the student teacher. If the cooperating teacher has a prolonged absence (more than two consecutive days of absence) or frequent absences, the university supervisor must be notified in order to maintain the integrity of the experience for the student teacher.

11. Absences, Student teacher: If the student teacher is absent, notification must be given to the cooperating teacher and to the university supervisor if a visit is scheduled for that day. If the absences during the student teaching experience are excessive (number of days to be determined by the program coordinator), make-up time or other necessary steps will be mandatory.

12. Temporary disability/medical condition during student teaching: If a student teacher’s classroom performance is affected by a temporary disability or medical condition (i.e., physical, mental, emotional), the university supervisor shall consult with the cooperating teacher, the major department, and any other outside experts necessary to determine the resolution of the case. Should the decision be made to terminate the student teaching experience, the professional opinions of the cooperating teacher and university supervisor should be discussed with the major department before termination.

13. Class responsibility of Cooperating Teacher: The classes being taught are the responsibility of the cooperating teacher. The cooperating teacher has been generous to share the teaching of the classes with the student teacher, but the end result is that the cooperating teacher is held responsible for the material the classes will be taught and for the final evaluation of the students.

14. Definition of School Day: Student teachers are expected to adhere to the cooperating teacher’s school day. In general, this means being at school at least 20 minutes before the first period and staying at least 30 minutes after school dismissal for the day. However, the schedule at the cooperating school takes precedence, if it is longer. Student teachers are expected to attend department and faculty meetings, parent conferences, institute/in-service days and other such activities. Student teachers must act and dress in a professional manner at all school functions.

15. Extra-curricular activities: A student teacher’s primary responsibility is to the classroom. Interested student teachers may help with extra-curricular activities if they continue to meet their classroom responsibilities and if their help is desired. A student teacher’s participation in extra-curricular activities is optional (at the discretion of the student teacher) and cannot be made mandatory for a student teacher. At no time should a student be paid for his/her extra-curricular activities.
16. **Harassment:** Harassment must be taken seriously. If any hint of harassment is noted by any of the participants, it must be reported immediately. This may mean the student teacher reporting harassment by a student or another teacher; it may mean the student teacher reporting harassment between students or between students and adults to school authorities.

17. **Litigation involvement during student teaching:** If a student is involved in litigation of any kind that may impact on his/her ability to perform as a student teacher, he/she will be requested to submit a written statement regarding such litigation to his/her discipline coordinator. After review of the written statement by the discipline coordinator, the student will be given an opportunity to make an oral statement concerning the litigation if appropriate. The student’s discipline coordinator, in consultation with the NIU legal counsel and the student’s major department, shall decide whether the student teacher will be allowed to continue student teaching at that time.

18. **Striking public schools:** In the event that a work stoppage action is taken by some or all of the school employees during the time when students are assigned to the school, students will be encouraged to assume the role of neutral persons.

- Students shall not be required by any union to participate in picketing or other work stoppage actions.
- Students shall not be required by the school district to cross picket lines or to report for work when such action would constitute a breaking of the work stoppage.
- If, in any event, the student participates on either side of the work stoppage, such participation shall be as an individual, not as a university agent, and Northern Illinois University disclaims any liability or responsibility for any action or the consequences of any action taken by such individual as a result of his/her participation.
- Students placed in school districts where such a work stoppage has occurred are required to notify their discipline coordinators as soon as they receive notice of the work stoppage. It is the student’s responsibility to maintain contact with the discipline coordinator regarding the ongoing status of any such work stoppage.
- In the event that the work stoppage continues for a week or more, the university may make arrangements for an extended experience or an alternate placement.

19. **Liability insurance for student teachers:** Illinois statutes expressly include student teachers in both indemnification and insurance provisions for school personnel. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.20 provides that the board has a statutory duty to “indemnify and protect student teacher against civil rights damage claims and suits, constitution rights damage claims and suits, and death and bodily injury and property damage claims and suits” when such claims arise out of alleged negligent or wrongful conduct committed in the scope of employment or under the direction of the board. Student teachers should not be placed in schools that do not carry liability insurance that covers student teachers.

20. **Waivers:** Waivers are issued for hosting observers and student teachers from NIU. These waivers will be issued to districts biannually. All waivers are sent to district offices. The cooperating teacher should contact the district office to arrange the utilization of a waiver.

The NIU institutional agreement allows each district to distribute the waivers as it deems appropriate. Waivers are valid for use by administrators, teachers, and the district's professional employees as defined in the district/institutional agreement. "Professional
employees" shall be defined as teacher aides and substitute teachers who have worked a minimum of 20 days during the past academic year for the district.

Cooperating teachers may also receive Professional Development Hours (PDHs) from the Placement office. Cooperating teachers will receive information at the conclusion of the placement regarding professional development hours via email from the University Office of Educator Licensure and Preparation teachercertification@niu.edu. The number of hours awarded will either be 30 hours for a student teacher, or 12 hours for all other placements. If an observer/student teacher withdraws from the placement.

If an observer/student teacher withdraws from the placement before the placement begins, no waivers or PDHs can be issued. If a student withdraws during the placement, the length of time will be assessed, and waivers/PDHs will be issued accordingly.