

Northern Arizona University



"Thank you for your interest in hosting NAU Teacher Candidates! NAU prides itself in preparing our students to be “teacher” ready when they arrive in your classroom. Your expertise and guidance as a mentor will play an important part of their future as a teacher and, possibly, a new colleague!"

-NAU Professional Education Programs

Teacher Candidate Handbook for Supervising Practitioners

Northern Arizona University manages the student teaching experiences from its Mountain Campus office in Flagstaff, Arizona. There is a team of individuals who work diligently to secure placements on behalf of their teacher candidates. There are three individuals who will participate in the partnership with the school and the supervising practitioner: 1) Teacher Candidate, 2) University Supervisor, and 3) Director of Fieldwork Experiences. The Director updates the Teacher Candidate Handbook each year to ensure that expectations and requirements are aligned with anticipated outcomes.

Please click [here](#) to access other resources; bookmark for future use. The Teacher Candidate Handbook is under the Resources tab at the bottom of the page.

Supervising Practitioner Responsibilities/Roles

You will meet, initially, with the teacher candidate and the university supervisor within the first two weeks of the PK-12 school semester. This “Initial Team Meeting” will be coordinated and scheduled through the teacher candidate within the first few days of the experience.

Cooperating teachers are expected to be an active mentor providing constructive feedback continuously throughout the placement. participating in the co-teaching/observing model throughout the experience providing modeling, support, and guidance. Cooperating teachers can expect teacher candidates to be professional while demonstrating progress. Finally, it is expected that cooperating teachers will do what is in the best interest of their students’ learning throughout the experience.

Cooperating Teacher Roles

- ❖ Participate in the Initial Team Meeting
- ❖ Help the teacher candidate feel comfortable and welcome
- ❖ Review school policies and procedures
- ❖ Encourage teacher candidate to get involved in school activities
- ❖ Share materials and ideas Assist the candidate in developing standards based lessons
- ❖ Observe and provide constructive feedback
- ❖ Mentor and guide the teacher candidate
- ❖ Model effective teaching strategies and professional behavior
- ❖ Is flexible; allow the teacher candidate to try new ideas
- ❖ Communicate expectations Is understanding and patient
- ❖ Maintain consistency and accountability
- ❖ Remain involved throughout the day, every day

Professional Day and Professional Expectations:

Your teacher candidate is to shadow you during your professional day and attend as if they were a fellow employee or colleague. This means the candidate is required to be in attendance, be prompt and punctual at all times, and be absent ONLY if and when ill and determined contagious. The candidate will maintain your schedule in accordance with your teaching contract and within reason for a work day.

[Four Domains of Being a Role Model](#)

[InTASC Standards](#)

Teacher Candidates Phasing In/Out of Classroom

Just as all schools are unique, classrooms are unique, students are unique, so will your teacher candidate be! The course syllabus/handbook has a general phase in and phase out schedule. Ultimately, there are five phases of development your teacher candidate will go through. IT is best to use the student teacher immediately to CO-TEACH, CO-PLAN, CO-ASSESS students to benefit the NEEDS and IMPACT as you see fit. Please do not allow your teacher candidate to sit in the back of the room all day; get them actively involved with children such as co-lesson planning, monitoring, grading papers, reading aloud, etc. Use this “rule of thumb” to guide you:

1. **What will be the least amount of impact on my students?** As soon as your classroom of students are being impacted negatively or hindered in academic learning, you must step in or take back subject(s) or period(s) of the day. Inaccurate content, lack of planning or preparation, etc. will not be acceptable to university standards or to yours as the supervising practitioner.
2. **Is my learning environment and my behavior expectations being maintained?** When working with a passive teacher candidate or one who is showing lack of confidence, you will want to ease the candidate into being in front of the entire class or being responsible for the leadership of the entire group. Examples of easing teacher candidates, like this, into the role include having the candidate transition learners from classroom to lunch, lunch to classroom, specials, dismissal, etc. Have them read aloud a book for pleasure reading after lunch or at the onset of a period. Have them “open” the class with the learning objective(s), opening set, or “close” the class period with “an exit ticket”, “closure activity”, independent practice, etc.

Please meet the teacher candidate where s/he is and take them forward as quickly as possible. The University Supervisor is to be kept informed of what phase the Teacher Candidate is in by the student teacher candidate.

Formal Evaluations

Written feedback and documentation to the Teacher Candidate is indeed helpful whenever YOU can provide that; either daily or weekly feedback. This is a critical responsibility as a Supervising Practitioner. Please provide **both** *positive and constructive* feedback with the teacher candidate at each of your feedback sessions.

You will be requested twice to complete formal, written evaluations of your teacher candidate. Each time, the evaluation tool will be emailed to you directly by the NAU office. The evaluation tool will be identical for each of the formal evaluations. Note: It will be different from the evaluation tool, TAP Rubric, being used by the university supervisor.

- [Link](#) to examples of evaluation instruments for each type of student teaching placement. Select tab Student Teaching Evaluation Information and scroll to bottom of the page.

[Written Evaluations](#)

Formal Evaluations

Teacher Candidates and Course Signature Assignment (CWS)

Teacher Candidates are required to complete a teacher work sample, aka Candidate Work Sample. This project is completely their responsibility. They have a separate evaluator for this project. The CWS project evaluator is NOT the university supervisor assigned to him/her for observations and visits and one whom you will not interact with during the experience. For more information about the CWS, visit this webpage:

<https://nau.edu/pep/resources/>

Teacher Candidates and Substituting

NAU Teacher Candidates are **not to be used as a substitute in a classroom**. Arizona Risk Management insurance does not cover Teacher Candidates that are substituting in a school district. This does not mean they are not covered when you leave the room for short periods of time. They are not to be left on their own for any length of time beyond a trip to the office, the workroom, restroom, etc. When on any supervision duties, such as bus, playground, cafeteria, etc. they must be accompanied by a certified staff member, as well.

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) sets forth requirements regarding the privacy of student records and affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. FERPA applies to those institutions that receive funding from the Department of Education and guarantees students three primary rights:

1. To inspect and review their education records
2. To seek to amend education records
3. To exercise some control over the disclosure of information from those education records.

Just as your classroom students are protected under this law, so too is your NAU teacher candidate. Conversations, written feedback, etc. will maintain confidentiality at all times.

[FERPA link](#)

Teacher Candidate and FERPA Underperforming?

Midterm and final evaluations for the teacher candidates are aligned with the InTASC and/or content-specific specialized professional assessment standards. Teacher candidates are expected to meet all standards by the end of their student teaching experience. Further, teacher candidates are expected to meet dispositional standards of the teaching profession as identified in the *Statement of Values and Expected Professional Behaviors* presented earlier in the module and provided on this webpage.

- Link to *Student teaching support*: <https://nau.edu/pep/resources/>

If a teacher candidate is unable to demonstrate growth (by midterm) and there are concerns, then an unsatisfactory evaluation should be submitted. If there are continued concerns, please notify the university supervisor or Director immediately. Always, it is best to report an alert early to provide the appropriate support and guidance for the teacher candidate. It is also imperative that your documentation, written and verbal feedback align to the unsatisfactory reporting along with the evidence provided. Remember: *Facts vs Feelings*

It is the 10th week of a 16 week placement. A teacher candidate contacts the supervisor and reveals the supervising practitioner has begun to “sing a different tune” about the performance in the classroom. The supervisor reviews the midterm evaluation for this teacher candidate and views all skills are marked with a T (Target or excelling), by the supervising practitioner. The indication at week 8 was that the teacher candidate was “consistently and significantly performing well above” a typical student teacher. When the supervising practitioner is contacted by the supervisor; the mentor explains that they did not want to be “mean” at midterm, yet there were many skill areas in which the teacher candidate was under-performing. When asked if the mentor teacher had written feedback or any documentation over the 10 weeks to indicate anything but the ratings of “T”, the mentor admitted that there was no record of anything being written when the teacher candidate was observed or coached. The supervisor reviewed their evaluation at midterm of the teacher candidate and noted that quite a few 1’s were given to the teacher candidate. (This means unsatisfactory) The 1’s happen to be in the same skill areas that the teacher candidate is still under-performing during the 10th week.

Consider the situation and what you might do help rectify. Also consider how this might impact the progress of the teacher candidate and what can be done at this point in the placement.

Activity University Supervisor Role/Responsibilities

An initial team meeting will be scheduled for you to meet with the supervisor and teacher candidate to go over student teaching expectations, the format of the experience, and to address any questions you might have. Observation days and times will also be discussed; the first observation day and time will be established at this meeting.

Teacher candidates will be observed about every four weeks. Candidates who have two placements will experience a minimum of two scheduled observations and a candidate who has a single placement will experience a minimum of four scheduled observations. More may be scheduled with a possibility of unscheduled visits should the need arise (to provide support for a candidate on alert).

Supervisor Visits

Supervisor visits time table

Eight Week Candidate:	Sixteen Week Candidate:
Initial Meeting:	Initial Meeting:
Midterm Observation:	First Progress Report Observation:
Final Observation/Evaluation:	Midterm Observation:
	Second Progress Report Observation:
	Final Observation/Evaluation:
Total of 40 days in the classroom	Total of 80 days in the classroom
Midterm is 20 days or about 4 weeks	Midterm is 40 days or about 8 weeks