

Preparing for Your Practicum Experience

The Practicum and Student Teaching experiences are considered a “Linked Placement” as both experiences occur in the same classroom and with the same Mentor Teacher. Teacher Candidates complete Practicum first, followed by Student Teaching, during two consecutive quarter terms. You will never forget this experience as you make connections between theory and your teaching practices.

As a teacher candidate (TC), it is your responsibility to establish a relationship with the students and mentor teacher, complete the necessary fieldwork, and successfully prepare for your Linked Placement.

The TC and the mentor teacher (MT) relationship is important to a successful experience. Establishing that relationship prior to the beginning of the term will help to ensure success. Please treat each task and personal interaction during your time in the classroom as a job interview opportunity.

Practicum Preparation (2 weeks prior to your Field Experience start date, as listed in Sonia)

- Verify your site location, MT information, and field placement start date. Your placement dates are in your Sonia portal under the “Placement” tab. [Here are instructions that show you how.](#) **Your start date could be different from the start of the NLU term.** Report any discrepancies to your Field Specialist immediately.
- Prior to meeting with your MT, determine your availability. Work with your MT to determine which two full days will work best for both of your schedules. (Try to avoid Mondays due to frequent holidays and school closures.)
- Practicum and Student Teaching may run back-to-back; therefore, there may not be a break in your field attendance.
- Introduce yourself to your Mentor Teacher and work towards creating a positive relationship.
- Introduce yourself to your Teacher Development Coach (TDC). They will reach out to you 2-3 weeks before the term begins.

Introduce yourself and briefly get to know your MT

Establish daily arrival/dismissal times and weekly attendance schedule. Begin classroom participation during Week 1. (TC arrives and leaves the same time as the MT.)

Schedule a meeting with your MT, TC and DC during Week 1 or 2.

Determine weekly 15-20 minute touch base meetings with your MT

Ask about building requirements, dress codes, health restrictions, safety procedures, etc.

Exchange phone numbers for texting- especially in the event of an emergency

MT Introduction Details

Practicum Attendance

Attend placement site for 2 consistent days per week for 10 weeks, ex. Tuesdays/Thursdays, or Mondays/Wednesdays, etc. Do not chunk days together without Office of Teacher Development approval.

If unable to attend due to emergency situations, it is your responsibility to contact your MT and DC for notification and approval. Please contact your MT to schedule another day as a make up.

- Complete your [Coaching Introductions and Norm Agreement Form](#) at the beginning of the term.
- Complete the “My Calendar Plan” found in your ECE or ELE 420A, SEC 410A or SEC 411A course.

At the end of your Practicum field experience: Week 9 and 10.

Engage in a team meeting with your Teacher Development Coach and MT to reflect, make plans, and create a bridge between the Practicum and Student Teaching experiences. This one meeting should occur between Week 10 of Practicum and Week 2 of Student Teaching.