



Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

The unit and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school personnel develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn.

While the structure and location of field experiences vary across the many UNCG programs, there are some guiding principles that influence the structure of all graduate and undergraduate clinical activities leading to initial licensure. These are:

- ***Professional education candidates must have extensive and meaningful field experiences.*** All programs emphasize the importance of spending as much time as feasible in the field. Starting first semester junior year, most undergraduates have assignments that require their spending substantial time in a local school, and some programs have candidates in the schools during their sophomore year. At the graduate level, most candidates are employed in schools, thus their field assignments are carried out in their own classrooms. Those who are not employed are required to complete extensive field assignments.
- ***Teacher education candidates must have varied clinical experiences and ones that differ from their own personal experiences as a student.*** Considerable effort is devoted to identifying outstanding teachers who want to mentor teacher candidates in schools that are highly impacted and have diverse populations with respect to race, culture, ethnicity, social class, and language. Program coordinators recommend placements for their candidates with these mentor teachers and the Teachers Academy coordinates placement, working with school districts to honor program recommendations.
- ***Teacher education programs have a responsibility for assisting their school partners in providing quality PK-12 education.*** Programs, when possible, place candidates in clusters for several reasons: administratively it is more efficient but more importantly when a cluster of candidates is placed in a school, the candidates are more likely to have an impact on the school. It is our goal that field placements are mutually beneficial: teacher candidates benefit from the experience and they contribute positive energy and skills to the school.

- *All graduates from teacher education programs must have knowledge about and skill in working with high need populations.* It is likely that program graduates will be placed in high need schools where vacancies exist. So that our graduates will be prepared for such placements, we emphasize the importance of all candidates having at least one experience in a high need setting, whenever possible.
- *Teacher candidates should be inclusive in their practice.* In selecting placements for candidates, programs seek classrooms and teachers who are inclusive in their practice. While Specialized Educational Services seeks to expose their candidates to a continuum of exceptional student services, all programs seek classrooms in which candidates have experience working with special needs students and their families.

Table 27 depicts the number of undergraduate candidates admitted to student teaching since 2002-2003, the first year for which data about student teaching was entered on the Teachers Academy Data Base. As evidenced in this table, enrollment has increased each year with the most growth being seen in the Elementary Education program.

Table 27: The Number of Candidates Admitted to Student Teaching by Academic Year

Year	Elementary	Middle School	Foreign Languages	English	Math	Science	Social Studies	Special Ed	Art	Dance	Drama	Music	Physical Ed	BK	Total
2002-2003*	91	10	4	18	2	1	13	14	6	5	6	19	11	19	220
2003-2004	94	15	4	13	6	1	15	30	7	4	4	30	17	23	263
2004-2005	127	9	5	11	7	3	5	39	8	6	2	25	13	26	286

2005-2006	155	11	4	18	6	6	10	21	8	6	3	36	11	28	323
------------------	-----	----	---	----	---	---	----	----	---	---	---	----	----	----	-----

**In 2002-2003, there was one student enrolled in a Health Education program. That program was closed shortly after the student enrolled.*

Placement in Diverse Settings. As previously noted, in choosing placements for student teaching and field experiences, diversity of sites and teaching styles are considered as well as the candidate’s previous field experiences, the school’s demographics, the teacher’s credentials and preferences, and training and professional development opportunities available to a candidate. In keeping with our Conceptual Framework of Care and Competence, programs seek to place candidates in high need, diverse schools whenever possible. **Table 28** shows the racial/ethnic composition of students in the schools where our candidates were placed.

Table 28: Percent of Ethnic/Racial Composition of Students within the Schools where Candidates Were Placed

School District & # of Schools in District	# of schools used as training sites	% of Title I	% of Af Am	% of Asian	% of Hispanic	% of Indian	% of White
Alamance (33)	4	25	22.9	1.91	10.7	0.45	64.05
Asheboro City (9)	3	33.33	17.16	2.58	15.96	0.28	64.02
Chatham (15)	1	100	19.64	0.3	66.62	0	13.44
Davidson (31)	2	0	1.09	1.03	1.37	0.11	96.4
Durham (46)	1	0	46.75	1.07	3.07	0.21	48.89
Forsyth (67)	9	22.22	33.99	0.97	8.74	0.28	56.02
Guilford (116)	47	36.17	37.26	4.53	5.29	0.66	52.25
Lexington City (6)	1	100	39.12	3.24	22.35	0	35.29
Randolph (29)	2	0	3.7	0.6	1.55	0.6	93.55
Rockingham (25)	3	0	31.88	0.4	5.9	0.27	61.56

3.1. Collaboration between the Unit and its School Partners

Collaboration, one of the core values on our conceptual framework, is a hallmark of our work with schools and with programs across the University. The following illustrate the depth and breadth of our collaboration with schools and other partners.

- ***Professional Development Schools.*** The most established collaborative school-university relationships are the professional development schools (PDS) sponsored primarily by the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Currently, all the active PDSs are elementary schools, but UNCG faculty, the principal, and key faculty of a new high school that is under construction are planning a secondary PDS. A unique feature of the UNCG elementary PDSs is their focus on instructional themes. Over the past 12 years, 10 themes have been instituted and offered in the elementary education program. These themes have included: Environmental Education, ESOL, Inclusion and Working with Children who have Special Needs, Literacy, Children’s Ways of Knowing, Technology Integration, Integrated Arts, Numeracy, and Paideia. Some of the themes have been repeated multiple times. These collaborative relationships have provided candidates with excellent models of practice and opportunities to practice their craft and learn from master teachers. This collaborative arrangement has also enabled the development of outstanding professional development opportunities for teachers and staff in the schools as well as faculty at UNCG. Additionally, in most of these schools the collaboration has been deep, resulting in the sharing of responsibility for B-12 student achievement as well as teacher preparation, faculty development, and research.

As stated above, the PDSs have historically only involved elementary and middle school programs. Barriers to other programs being involved in the PDSs have been primarily logistical. During the 2006-2007 academic year, the Teachers Academy will sponsor renewed efforts to develop interdisciplinary PDSs at all instructional levels.

- ***Skilled mentors/Cooperating teachers.*** Instead of placing candidates in PDSs, other UNCG programs have developed a cadre of well qualified mentors who are excellent models of practice and who are interested in working with our candidates. Frequent professional collaborations occur through these long-standing professional relationships as well as through more formal structures such as advisory boards and joint appointments. Faculty in the schools work with faculty at the university in developing the conceptual framework, planning and implementing field experiences, planning and delivering staff development, and evaluating the collaborations. We are now trying to build systems of support and recognition for these mentors as a way of developing “community.” (See Wachovia Project description in Standard 5). Existing collaborative arrangements among all programs and their school partners have created a foundation of trust and respect upon which more enduring, formal partnerships may now be established.
- ***The UNCG School of Education and the Guilford County Schools Partnership*** was officially formed in the fall of 2005. Approved by the Guilford County School Board and the Provost and Dean of the School of Education at UNCG, this

partnership was formed to promote exemplary learning environments and achievement for all students. Goals for the 2005-2006 academic year were to:

- Refine and expand the UNCG-GCS network of professional development schools,
- Implement lateral entry and alternative certification programs that address critical shortages, and
- Focus on the science K-12 curriculum and the science teacher preparation program.

A Partnership Council consisting of the school district leadership and the university leadership meets monthly to plan and monitor the work of the partnership. Work groups are assigned for specific projects. Progress is reported on a monthly basis. As a result of this collaboration, a grant to the NC Department of Public Instruction was submitted and approved for the purpose of improving science and literacy instruction in middle and secondary high need schools as well as to provide both teachers and teacher candidates with quality professional development. Three cohorts of middle school, Guilford County teachers have been enrolled in the Teacher Leadership track of the M.Ed. program. These teachers are focusing on deepening their knowledge and improving their instruction in social studies, science and math. Planning has also begun for improving secondary literacy instruction and the literacy preparation of all teachers.

3.2. Design, Implementation and Evaluation of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

Program designs vary but all emphasize the importance of field placements and incorporate as much field experience as feasible. Undergraduate programs have sequenced their field experiences so that candidates are given opportunities to grow and develop over time. Programs require candidates to write reflections about their own practice and established structures exist that ensure candidates get feedback about their performance. **Table 29** depicts the total number of hours and semesters candidates in the various programs spend in field experiences.

Table 29: Total Number of Hours and Semesters of Field Work Assigned by Programs

	Elementary	Middle School	Secondary Education Programs	Special Education	Art	Dance	Drama	Music	Physical Education
Minimum # of hours in field experience	1,000	1,000	625+	814+	670	625	670	600+	670
# of semesters in field experience	4	4	3	5	4	4	6	4	5

The *elementary and middle school programs* place candidates in PDSs. The UNCG model for PDSs features cohorts of 12 to 30 candidates assigned to inquiry teams. These teams take their methods courses together and concurrently participate in field experiences at the PDS. Candidates are placed in a PDS for four semesters, and by the end of the fourth semester, candidates have spent more than 1,000 hours engaged in field work. For each of the first three semesters, candidates spend 10 hours per week for 15 weeks at a PDS site. During the fourth semester, candidates are assigned full-time to a PDS for student teaching. Teacher candidates are jointly supervised by teachers at the PDS sites and by the inquiry team leader from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Inquiry team leaders make a two-year commitment to supervising, advising, mentoring, and teaching a weekly seminar for the teacher candidates.

In the *secondary education programs* teacher candidates seeking licensure are required to complete three different field experiences. With each progressive field experience candidates are given more responsibility so that by the time they student teach, they have had a variety of experiences observing teachers and students, working with teachers, working with students one-on-one and in small groups, preparing lesson plans, teaching mini-lessons, and reflecting on the teaching and learning experience.

The *first phase* of the field experience involves observations, tutoring, and small group work with high school students and is assigned during the CUI 545-Diverse Learners course. In addition to their teaching/learning interaction with students, candidates conduct a case study that includes interviewing their on-site teacher educator (OSTE), one of the school's administrators, the exceptional children's teacher, and the instructional technology specialist. The total number of hours required for this phase of the field experience is 30 hours over the course of a semester. This field experience traditionally occurs during the second semester of candidates' junior year. Candidates typically change schools for the second and third clinical experience.

The *second field experience* takes place during the first semester of the senior year. Candidates are placed in schools for a year-long placement. During the first semester, they have opportunities to discuss professional issues with their OSTEs. They learn about the school environment. Methods interns not only become familiar with the NC Standard Course of Study, but they also observe one teacher other than their OSTE teaching. Opportunities for tutoring individuals and small groups of students are made available. In addition to these teacher preparation experiences, interns have a chance to grade assignments with multiple choice answers and grade assignments using a rubric. Interns co-teach a lesson with the OSTE and teach at least two lessons or mini lessons. Finally, with permission from the OSTE, interns initiate communication with the parents of their students, and they attend school events to learn about the culture of the school (i.e., pep rally, game, club meeting, faculty meeting, department meeting, parent conference, etc.). The total number of hours required for this phase of the field experience is 50 hours or more over the course of the semester.

The *third and final phase* of the field-based experiences is student teaching. This experience is traditionally 15 weeks long. Candidates must spend at least 10 weeks at one site. Full-time student teaching must occur during at least 6 weeks of the period. Since this field experience is in the same location as the second one, it becomes a year-long interaction with school personnel. Not only do the teacher candidates accomplish the same duties as they did during the second field placement, they also have various opportunities of extending them as a full-time student teacher.

In the *Department of Specialized Education Services* candidates complete a sequence of four early field experiences, beginning in their sophomore year, and culminating in student teaching during their final semester at UNCG. These field experiences are developmental and build on one another. In SES 250, Introduction to Specialized Education Professions, candidates have an opportunity to explore the work of specialized education professionals in schools and community service agencies. During early field experiences, special education candidates complete 100 hours of on-site field experiences by participating in a variety of activities that include observation, tutoring, working with small groups, working with whole groups. Student teaching is full time for an entire semester. Because licensure in K-12, all candidates complete field experiences in elementary and secondary inclusive educational settings.

The *P-12 Programs* (Art, Dance, Drama, Music and Physical Education) **are** challenged by the acute shortages of available, credentialed teachers who can and want to serve as mentors. As a result, candidates are often placed in several different counties, some of which are outside the greater Triad region. Furthermore, candidates in these programs must complete a student teaching placement at both a secondary and elementary level, thus they are assigned to a 10-week placement at one level and a 5-week placement at the other level. The university supervisor works with the candidates at both sites, but candidates must adjust to and learn about two different situations. Candidates are evaluated by the cooperating teachers at both sites.

In the *Department of Counseling and Educational Development* all degree-seeking candidates in School Counseling complete two major clinical experiences: a 100-

hour practicum experience (of which 75 hours are completed in a school setting) and a 600-hour, school-based internship. Both experiences are supervised by University-based supervisors and school-based supervisors. Group and individual supervision modalities are used to assist candidates with their clinical experiences. School-based supervisors must have at least 2 years of experience as a school counselor, and hold a valid school counseling license. Both the practicum and internship experiences require direct (small group counseling, individual counseling, classroom guidance, and consultation) and indirect (planning meetings, professional development, student observations, etc.) tasks to be completed. Because NC licensure in School Counseling is K-12, degree-seeking School Counseling students are placed in elementary and secondary clinical settings.

Individual programs design and implement their field experiences in collaboration with their school partners and in accord with UNCG policies and Conceptual Framework. Programs have established field experiences that reflect the ethnic, racial, economic, language and learning diversity of this community; provide excellent models of practice; and have teachers with whom the program can successfully collaborate. While programs have different structures for providing support and supervision of their candidates, all incorporate school-based supervision by a fully-licensed, tenured master teacher, supervision by a North Carolina licensed university faculty member, and regular scheduled seminars with other candidates to discuss the field experiences.

Specific procedures for placing candidates in schools. Procedures for selecting, placing and evaluating field sites have been negotiated with local school districts. Briefly, this process entails:

- UNCG faculty members make requests to the Teachers Academy based on their knowledge of practicing teachers in the area.
- Candidates' applications are checked to ensure all candidates meet the student teaching requirements and cooperating teachers' past evaluations are reviewed. In several programs, students are interviewed by faculty to ascertain readiness for student teaching experiences. Because of these types of screening activities, when departments recommend students for admission to student teaching, much work has been done to ensure that the students are becoming teachers who demonstrate the necessary attributes for effective teaching.
- Once this review is completed, requests for placements are submitted by the Teachers Academy to the School districts. School districts confirm the mentors' credentials and the principals' support for a candidate placement. A contractual agreement is signed by the teacher and principal.
- Once placements are confirmed, program faculty develop plans with the schools for visiting and observing candidates during the semester.
- During the student teaching experience, there is collaboration between the on-site teacher educator, the university supervisor and the student.
- Candidates are expected to attend seminars led by the university supervisor to evaluate the clinical practice experiences and to assess current strategies and develop new strategies for effective teaching. In all cases, the on-site teacher educator provides written and oral feedback to the student and the university supervisor.

- All UNCG student teachers are evaluated at the conclusion of student teaching. This evaluation is done by the university supervisor and the on-site teacher educator/cooperating teacher with sign-off by all parties. The student reads, responds to and signs the exit criteria.
- At the end of student teaching, an S form is signed by the teacher and school principal and a small stipend is paid the teacher.

Throughout the process, the school districts and the Teachers Academy work together to ensure that placements are mutually beneficial, that all student teachers have opportunities to work with diverse students and to grow in their skill development and understanding of teaching, and that cooperating teachers are supported and appreciated for their important work. From the outset of the experience, through all phases of student teaching, culminating in the final exit interview, students, on-site teacher educators, and university personnel provide opportunities for candidates to develop their knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help all students learn.

Evaluation of the process. We annually invite the persons in the school districts who manage the student teaching placements to campus for a lunch and discussion about how the process is working and what can be done to improve the process. These discussions are helpful in planning and implementing this complex process. The most consistent feedback from the school districts has been that they want more students placed in their schools, which we interpret as an endorsement of our work together. As we develop our mentor network, we will also seek feedback from them regarding how the process can be improved.

Clinical Faculty: Qualifications and Preparation for their Role as Mentor

All cooperating teachers are tenured, have minimum of 3 years experience and positive evaluations from their principals and have departmental and principal's support to have a student teacher. Additionally, programs seek cooperating teachers who have philosophies similar to the UNCG program philosophy and who are proficient in the use of techniques taught in our programs. On the rare occasion that a cooperating teacher is seen as ineffective or weak, programs avoid placing candidates in his/her classroom in the future.

Programs give cooperating teachers handbooks and meet with them to share assessment tools and expectations. A number of cooperating teachers have also been invited to the mentor training sessions sponsored by the Wachovia Mentor Project and USTEP. Over the past five years, approximately 200 mentor teachers have participated in leadership and mentor training.

In addition to program materials and handbooks, the Teachers Academy sponsors an orientation for all cooperating teachers each fall and spring. At that session, the *Cooperating Teacher Handbook* is distributed, expectations of mentors are discussed, and procedures that will be followed are explained. Cooperating teachers are provided a small stipend in appreciation of their work with the university.

3.3. Candidates' Development and Demonstration of Knowledge, Skills and Dispositions to Help All Students Learn

As discussed in Standard 2, all initial teacher education candidates complete early field experiences prior to the final student teaching. These early field experiences are designed to meet the developmental needs of teacher candidates by providing quality and frequent feedback on increasingly complex tasks and activities. In these early field experiences, programs evaluate candidates multiple times using various measures. With time, expectations of candidate performance gradually increase until the end of student teaching when candidates are expected to meet the exit criteria detailed in the TGAP and the Disposition Checklist.

The **Professional Behavior Intervention Plan** (in Evidence Box) was developed by the Council of Program Coordinators for two complementary purposes:

- To ensure that candidates get early, honest, and helpful feedback when they are having difficulty; and
- To provide program faculty with a procedure for moving candidates out of the program if, after concerted effort, they have not demonstrated the necessary knowledge, skills or dispositions for being a successful educator.

As stated on the rating sheet, candidates receiving a rating of 1 or 2 work with their faculty advisors to develop and endorse a remedial plan and a timeline for meeting expectations. Candidates who do not meet expectations may be counseled out of the program if the required progress is not demonstrated.

Field Experiences and Clinical Practice in Advanced Teacher Education Programs

The advanced teacher education programs lead to M licensure. These programs are designed for already licensed, experienced teachers and virtually all of the people admitted to these programs are fully-licensed, full-time classroom teachers working in the school districts surrounding UNCG. Clinical assignments are embedded in required coursework. Candidates carry out their field experiences, for the most part, in their own classrooms. Faculty teaching the courses with field assignments are responsible for evaluating candidates' proficiency in teaching, based on submitted assignments that include reflections, video tapes, unit plans, etc..

On the rare occasion that there is a candidate in this program who is not currently working full time in the classroom (e.g., teachers on maternity leave, teachers in transition from out-of-state to getting a teaching job in North Carolina, or teachers taking a leave from the classroom to do other things), the candidate is assigned to a classroom in which to carry out assignments that involve teaching children. There are no additional field experiences required of teachers in this program because they are already licensed and working full-time in their own classrooms every day, but because many assignments assume they have their own classrooms as a laboratory to try out new instructional strategies or to do action research, students in this program must be able to work directly with children.. When taking CUI 545 (Diverse Learners) candidates must analyze the diversity present in their school and evaluate how the needs of the diverse learners in

their school are currently being met. When taking CUI 622 (Differentiated Instruction) candidates must evaluate the learning needs, learning styles, multiple intelligences, and other differences among their students and then plan and teach lessons that are differentiated based on their students various needs. When taking CUI 675 (Teacher as Researcher) candidates must plan and carry out an action research project in their classroom or school. When taking CUI 656 (Teacher as Researcher) candidates must assess the professional development needs of their school and plan for and offer professional development to their staff. Required assignments correspond to the North Carolina Competencies of a Master Teacher (ACs).

Previous: Standard 2	Next: Standard 4	UNC-G NCATE / DPI Home Page	Program Reports	School of Education Home Page	Teachers Academy Home Page
-------------------------------------	---------------------------------	--	----------------------------	--	---

Copyright© 2005, 2006
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Teachers Academy, 318 Curry Building;
Phone: (336) 334-3414;
Fax: (336) 334-4120