

UNC-BEST Student Teaching Handbook

Fall 2023 & Spring 2024

Introduction and Welcome

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill teacher education programs are built on research based best practices, provide early and extensive clinical experience, and engage practicing teachers in collaborative inquiry. The internship provides candidates for licensure with an opportunity to integrate theory and practice, to demonstrate skills in a structured, supportive environment, and to enhance their strengths and improve upon their weaknesses. It is the most important component of the program and is a requirement for state licensure.

Important Dates

Fall 2023

- First day in schools = Monday, August 21, 2023
- edTPA portfolio due = Thursday, November 1, 2023
- Last day in schools = Wednesday, December 6, 2023
- Commencement - Sunday, December 17, 2023

Spring 2024

- First day in schools = Monday, January 10, 2024
- edTPA portfolio due = Thursday, April 4, 2024
- Last day in schools = Friday, April 30, 2024
- Commencement - Saturday, May 11, 2024

Teaching Load and Internship Expectations

UNC-BEST Licensure Program Interns are required to be in a local school placement in their specialty area for at least 16 weeks during the semester of their internship. UNC- BEST student teachers are only expected to teach one of their teacher's preps, teaching two ninety-minute classes or at least 3 fifty-minute classes on the traditional schedule. These reduced teaching load expectations were established to provide interns with more time to design innovative lessons and think deeply about their practice. When interns are not teaching their specialty classes, they should be planning, grading, helping their clinical educator with teaching a second prep or observing lesson of other teachers in their school.

University and School of Education Expectations and Regulations Governing the Internship

As with any professional educator preparation program, the regulations and policies pertaining to student teaching are continually evolving due to the dynamic nature of professional organizations, legislation, and licensure requirements. General regulations and policies that govern undergraduate internships may come from local public school district partners and the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Education. Questions regarding the undergraduate and graduate internships may be directed to the Assistant Dean of Educator Preparation and Accreditation, located in the Office of Student Affairs in Peabody 103. UNC-Chapel Hill and the School of Education have established certain regulations that will help. Interns work more effectively with Clinical Educators. Regulations require Interns to adhere to the following:

- Observe the same hours required for teachers while on assignment in schools, which may include duty stations, extracurricular activities, grade level meetings, and other professional developments (PDs).
- Follow the local school calendar during the semester in place of the University's calendar, including holidays and breaks.
- Become a member of the school faculty throughout the student teaching internship. Participate in official school functions such as faculty meetings, in-service training programs, teacher workdays, parent meetings,
- Interns may not work as a paid substitutes for Clinical Educators without a licensed employee in the room or readily at hand. They may do the actual teaching, but cannot be paid if the University is in session and they are meeting their internship course requirements. Note that while it is beneficial for the Intern to be left alone during lessons as the intern gains experience, the Clinical Educator must be on campus and accessible to the the Intern at all times.

Clinical Educator Observations

We know that our clinical educators will be observing the vast majority of lessons their intern leads and providing ongoing feedback which is vital for the intern's development into an effective teacher. UNC-BEST asks Clinical educators to conduct three formal observations of the intern teaching a lesson and document her/his evaluation. The manner in which the feedback is provided can be in the whatever format the Clinical Educator and student teacher chooses, from an observation tool used at the school to a running commentary of the lessons with feedback/suggestions for improvement included. These observations will be collected by the University Supervisor and included with the student teacher's materials.

In addition to documenting three lesson observations, the Clinical Educator will evaluate the intern's progress on meeting the expectations included in the North Carolina Teacher Candidate Evaluation Rubric (NCTCER). Student teachers must achieve the proficient level on all criteria within the NCTCER by the end of the internship to be eligible for a teaching license. The Clinical Educator is asked to evaluate the intern at three times throughout the internship including: several weeks after the intern assumes responsibility for teaching a class (mid-late September), at the midpoint of the teaching period (mid-late October) and at the end of the semester (late November). The University Supervisor will help prompt these evaluations and will collect the rubric updates to monitor progress. For both the midpoint and the final NCTCER evaluation, the University Supervisor, Clinical Educator and Student teacher will meet to discuss progress toward meeting the Proficient Level of each criteria. If the intern has not progressed to the Developing level on each criteria by the midpoint observation, an action plan will be created to clarify the expectations and strategies to meet them. The University Supervisor will collect all NCTCER evaluations conducted by the Clinical Educator and upload them to Taskstream, the online platform the School of Education uses to collect teaching evidences.

University Supervisor Observations

The UNC university supervisor will conduct a minimum of three teaching observations over the course of the internship. The university supervisor will analyze the lessons using a method that combines teaching standards from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the Interstate New Teacher assessment. Each observation will also be followed with a conference or written feedback where the Supervisor and student teacher will discuss strengths and weaknesses of the lesson, Challenges or dilemmas the intern is facing, Progress on goals established from previous observations and goals for future lessons.

Additional Requirements for Interns

- Attend EDUC 601 workshops
- Pass the Praxis Exam(s) for NC teaching license. All UNC-BEST students pursuing licensure in Secondary Science must must pass the General Science Content Knowledge Exam (test code 5435). UNC-BEST students pursuing a license in Secondary Mathematics will take Mathematics: Content Knowledge (test code 5165). You can learn more about Praxis tests and testing centers at <http://www.ets.org/praxis/nc>
- Obtain a passing score on the Teacher Performance Assessment portfolio (see below).

Passing score for edTPA will be as follows (Effective 08/7/2018)

- All candidates must pass the edTPA teacher performance assessment to be recommended for licensure. The edTPA must be completed during the student teaching internship and the passing criteria are as follows:
 - UNC-BEST students must earn total score minimum of 38.
 - Candidates will have one opportunity to revise and resubmit portfolio items and will be granted 7 days to upload revisions to Taskstream.
 - Failing to earn a score of 38 or above on the edTPA will not prevent students from graduating, but will prevent student from meeting UNC-BEST requirements and being eligible for a North Carolina Teaching License.

University and School of Education Regulations Governing the Internship

As with any professional preparation program, the regulations and policies pertaining to student teaching are continually evolving due to the dynamic nature of professional organizations. General regulations and policies that govern undergraduate and graduate internships may come from local public schools and the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Education. Questions regarding the undergraduate and graduate internships may be directed to the Office of Student Affairs in Peabody 103.

The University and the School of Education have established certain regulations that will help interns work more effectively with clinical educators. Regulations require interns to adhere to the following:

- Observe the same hours required for teachers while on assignment in schools.
- Follow the local school calendar during the semester in place of the university's calendar.
- Become a member of the faculty throughout the student teaching internship. Participate in official school functions such as faculty meetings, in-service training programs, teacher workdays, parent meetings, etc.

Note: Interns may NOT sub for their Clinical Educator without a school employee (other teacher or substitute teacher) in the room.

Policies Governing Student Teaching Absences

- Absences for valid reasons are excused only by the university supervisor. Excessive absenteeism, even if excused, is not permitted (see below).
- If an intern is sick and unable to attend school, s/he must contact the university supervisor and the clinical educator before the start of the school day or the day before. In order for the clinical educator to cover for the intern, all plans and materials for the period of the absence must be available in the classroom.
- Interns who anticipate being absent for a medical appointment, religious holiday, or some other valid reason must receive prior approval from their university supervisor and their clinical educators. Interns are encouraged to make ALL non-emergency appointments outside of school hours consistent with what a practicing teacher would be expected to do.
- Regardless of reasons for the excused absences, interns are required to make up any days over **three** days in the semester. Any needed make up days can be met the week after the internship formally ends.
- An unexcused absence is cause for termination of the internship. If an intern misses more than a total of five days during the internship and fails to make up these days at the end of the internship, the intern will receive an F for the internship, whether or not the absences are excused. Students must follow the University appeals process in order to be eligible for a passing grade and recommendation for licensure.

ACTION PLANS, MODIFICATIONS, AND TERMINATION OF THE STUDENT TEACHING INTERNSHIP

Action Plans

Teacher candidate performance will be assessed regularly by the Clinical Educator and University Supervisor. If an Intern is evaluated as not making adequate progress, as assessed on the NC Teacher Candidate Rubric, an Action Plan will be collaboratively developed by the Program Coordinator, Clinical Educator, and University Supervisor. Failure to make the performance improvements outlined in the Action Plan may lead to modification or termination of the student teaching internship and jeopardize the teacher candidate's eligibility for a teaching license.

Modification of the Internship

Circumstances other than poor performance may require modification of the student teaching internship. It is important for the University Supervisor to inform the Program Coordinator and both the Assistant Dean of

Student Affairs and the Assistant Dean of Educator Preparation and Accreditation, in writing, when an Intern is unable to follow the regular student teaching schedule and meet the instructional and professional expectations of the internship site. The University Supervisor must include in writing the rationale for any modification of student teaching. The Intern, Supervisor, Clinical Educator and Program Coordinator must sign and date a copy of the letter, which will be submitted to the Intern's Taskstream portfolio and filed with the Office of Student Affairs. The Intern will receive a copy of the letter for his or her files. Please be aware that modifications may also include additional documentation from a medical provider or other campus resources

Termination of the Internship

If an Intern is terminated from their student teaching internship by either the district partner or the School of Education, they will earn a "F" (Fail) for the 12 hour student teaching course. The student teaching internship is not repeatable for credit.

General Student Teaching Intern Expectations

Professional conduct

- Act in a professional manner at all times including wearing professional attire. Interns are strongly advised to avoid wearing jeans or t-shirts, even if this is the common attire for the experienced teachers at the school.
- Arrive at the school at the same time as the teachers and expect to spend the full school day and any additional planning or meeting time as the clinical educator.
- Follow instructional calendar for the district in which you are placed. Interns are expected to follow the vacation calendar of the school, not UNC.
- Conform to the same professional standards as the regular staff members of the cooperating school. If unforeseen circumstances should cause the intern to be late, the intern must contact the clinical educator and the university supervisor. The same applies if the intern is going to be absent due to illness. S/he must contact the clinical educator and the university supervisor the night before or as early as possible. In addition, when absent, the intern must provide plans and other materials necessary to the clinical educator.
- Comment favorably on the good things happening in the school. Everyone likes praise. This applies to teachers and principals as well as students.
- Respect the confidentiality of all students. Recognize the potential in all students.

Teaching

- Make revisions or improvements to lessons used previously by your clinical educator. While it is not an expectation that interns will create entirely original lessons, it is not appropriate for the interns to simply use their mentors' lessons. The intern should revise instructional strategies to make them their own and/or improve them. Improvement can focus on aligning lessons with criteria included in the lesson analysis rubric or suggestions from the clinical educator.
- Be involved in every step of the teaching process including grading assignments, posting grades, lunch duty, IEP meetings, parent contact, parent meetings, open house, PLC meetings, teacher workdays, professional development, etc.
- Make the moment to moment teaching and discipline decisions called for during teaching (i.e. the students should not see you consult with the clinical educator about what to do during a lesson).
- Consult with clinical educator on significant curriculum, policy and discipline decisions.
- Be available to help students as needed.
- Observe other teachers in the school when not teaching.
- Attend at least two different extracurricular activities (such as school plays, musicals or sporting events) that one or more of the activities your students participate in.

General Clinical educator Suggestions

Orientation

- Accept each intern as an individual and do not compare him/her with previous interns you have had.
- Provide a separate work/study area (an extra desk or portion of front table) in the classroom for the intern.
- Introduce interns to other faculty and school administrators.
- Orient the intern to the school/classroom by explaining:
 - General philosophy of the school, the building policies, and procedures.
 - Procedures for parent conferences, discipline procedures, etc.
 - Curriculum and classroom management procedures and practices for which the intern will be responsible including methods of record keeping for attendance, tardies, grades, conduct, cumulative folders, etc.
 - Services available within the school.
- Provide the intern with a set of textbooks, teachers' manuals, curriculum guides, or school handbooks as needed.
- Include interns in faculty and curriculum meetings when appropriate.
- When appropriate, include the intern in parent conferences or telephone conversations. Guide him/her to use diplomacy and appropriate communication skills.

Planning

- Jointly develop a long-range plan for instruction during the internship to support the intern's lesson planning schedule with appropriate pacing.
- We recognize that ultimate responsibility for the performance of your students lies with you. However, we hope that you will encourage your intern to employ a variety of teaching strategies and thereby develop her/his own classroom style. Your intern should take the initiative in lesson planning and design.
- Offer lesson ideas for upcoming units, but encourage the intern to try his/her own ideas. Provide room for risk-taking and possible failure.
- When providing lesson ideas, include suggestions for revising/improving the strategy given previous experiences. It is not acceptable for the intern to simply implement the exact same strategy without careful consideration and some revision.

Supervision

- Try not to jump in and fix minor problems that occur during a lesson, unless absolutely necessary.
- When visiting the classroom, refer students with questions about lessons, policies or procedures to the intern to reinforce the idea that they are the teacher in charge.
- Schedule consistent meeting times to provide feedback on a regular basis. Be tactful, yet honest. Acknowledge successes and improvements. Limit major suggestions for improvement to 2-3 improvement goals at any one time and hold your intern accountable for making explicit efforts toward meeting these goals.
- Encourage your intern to use self-evaluation on a regular basis.
- Leave the room occasionally after the first few weeks and more frequently toward the end of the internship to allow the intern to feel that he or she is truly in charge. Make sure that the intern knows where to find you, however, at all times in case you are needed for an emergency.
- Communicate with university supervisor (via e-mail, phone or in person) to share updates on the intern's progress and ongoing goals or share concerns with the intern's performance in the classroom.