

Elementary Education Professional Development School Network Internship Handbook Master's in Education Program

College of
EDUCATION  HUMAN DEVELOPMENT 



Promoting Learning  Development Across the Lifespan

Fall 2022-Spring 2023

Reflective. Responsive. Ready.

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Introduction

Welcome to your capstone clinical experience—your final internship in Elementary Education! The Elementary Education Program is committed to developing **Reflective** teachers who are **Responsive** to students' diverse needs and **Ready** to advance learning in the 21st century classroom. The Elementary Education Program uses the Professional Development School Model, emphasizing reciprocal learning among all stakeholders with enhanced PK-6 student learning being everyone's ultimate goal. The PDS internship includes

- Co- and Independent Teaching experiences in one school;
- Participation in all aspects of school life and a teacher's responsibilities;
- Increasing levels of responsibility for instruction;
- Supervision by classroom teachers trained as Advanced Mentor Teachers or Mentor Teachers;
- Frequent support from university faculty;
- Integration of study with practice;
- Emphasis on critical inquiry, reflective practice, and technology;
- Participation in school division in-service education programs.

During your internship you will be working with an Advanced Mentor Teacher/Mentor Teacher (AMT/MT) and a University Facilitator (UF) to complete the requirements for teacher licensure. The internship requires you to gradually assume the full-time teaching duties of your AMT/MT. You will be expected to create, plan, and teach lessons that meet the curriculum adopted by your assigned school and the standards set by the national association that govern the Elementary Education program.

Internship is a major time commitment for you, your AMT/MT, and your UF. The internship should be viewed as a *process* during which you grow as a teacher and demonstrate your ability to meet the standards required for teacher licensure in your subject area. In addition to planning lessons, creating assessments, and grading assignments, you are expected to complete the common assessments and all assignments required by your UF. For most students, it is hard work, exciting and stressful because there is so much to learn. Flexibility in adapting to differences in school cultures, teaching styles, facilitators' philosophies, and students' needs will reduce anxiety and increase growth.

This handbook is designed to provide all of the information you need to meet the requirements of the internship and teacher licensure. You are responsible for reading the handbook, completing the assignments and assessments in a timely manner, and submitting proof of completion of all requirements to your UF by the end of your internship.

Definition of Terms

Independent Teaching

Independent Teaching activities include the 4-week (20 day) time period during which a Teacher Candidate has lead responsibility for planning and teaching in his/her placement classroom. This includes directly instructing students or facilitating their learning through individual, small group or whole class instruction.

School Based Activities

School-based teaching activities include time spent engaged in activities outside of the 7.5 hours of the school day but related to school (e.g-Back to School Night, Girls on the Run, Science Night).

Co-Teaching

Co-teaching includes planning and instructional activities in which the Teacher Candidate and MT/AMT are collaboratively instructing students or facilitating their learning. Co-teaching can take many forms. These include:

- **One teach/one observe** – one teacher takes the primary instructional responsibility and the other observes specific behaviors of the teacher and/or the students.
- **One teach/one assist** – similar to one teach/one observe but as one teacher assumes primary responsibility for the instruction, the other circulates and assists students by monitoring behavior, assessing, adding to discussions.
- **Parallel teaching** – both teachers are responsible for instruction to a group of students. The same content and teaching process are being used with both groups.
- **Station teaching** – the two teachers split the instructional responsibilities as they instruct groups of learners who rotate through stations.
- **Alternative teaching** – both teachers assume instructional responsibilities but work with students at different levels of understanding.
- **Team teaching** – the two teachers alternate taking the lead role. The active involvement of both teachers is planned ahead of time.

Teacher Candidate (TC)

Teacher Candidates (formerly interns) are university students who are eligible to participate in the capstone clinical experience of student teaching (internship).

Mentor Teacher (MT)

Mentor Teachers (formerly cooperating teacher/CT) supervise a Teacher Candidate participating in an internship. From Fall 2017 forward MT's have completed the George Mason Modules for Mentor Teachers.

Advanced Mentor Teacher (AMT)

Advanced Mentor Teachers (formerly Clinical Faculty/CF) supervise a Teacher Candidate participating in an internship. AMT's have successfully completed the George Mason Modules for Mentor Teachers and the *Elementary Program Advanced Mentor Teacher Training*.

Site Facilitator (SF)

Site facilitators are school-based personnel who are the liaisons between the PDS site and the university. SF's provide onsite support for the Teacher Candidates and work closely with the UF. The Elementary Program Coordinator communicates directly with the SF regarding PDS placements, policy, and procedures.

University Facilitator (UF)

University Facilitators are university-based personnel who facilitate the growth of the PDS site by supporting the Teacher Candidates, the AMTs/MTs, and the ongoing development of the PDS site.

Semester Long Intern (SL)

Semester long interns are Teacher Candidates completing a 16-week internship in either the fall semester OR the spring semester.

Yearlong Intern (YL)

Yearlong interns are Teacher Candidates completing an internship that follows the full academic year of our PDS partners.

Placement Expectations

NOTE: If a candidate does not comply with the following placement expectations, school divisions and school principals have the right to request the candidate's removal from the placement. If such a removal is requested, it is highly unlikely a second placement location for the semester will be approved for the candidate. Due process is followed by the Graduate School of Education should this occur.

Attendance

Teacher Candidates follow the school calendar for the school system where they are assigned, not the Mason calendar, except for attending scheduled courses. Teacher Candidates are also required to follow the AMT/MT's daily schedule. Teacher Candidates must be punctual and remain on duty during the contractual school day.

Although accommodations are made for emergencies, outside commitments to family or an employer are no excuse for failing to fulfill all teaching duties and responsibilities. Teacher Candidates are not employees of the school division; consequently, they are not entitled to sick leave or personal leave. **Teacher Candidates are expected to follow school division policy by requesting permission to be absent or notifying the school of unanticipated absences. Any time a Teacher Candidate is absent the University Facilitator, site facilitator, and AMT/MT must be notified. Teacher Candidates may be allowed one absence for illness each semester.** Absence beyond one day must be documented with a doctor's excuse to the SF and may require an extension of field experiences or internship. Should extenuating circumstances be involved, the SF and the UF will consult with the Elementary Coordinator. ***If the Teacher Candidate is absent on a day when the Teacher Candidate is scheduled to teach, lesson plans and materials must be provided to the AMT/MT before class begins.***

Assuming district approval of our substitute teaching grants, Yearlong Teacher Candidates are paid for **being available** to substitute for approximately 35- 45 days per school year in Fairfax County Public Schools, Loudoun County Public Schools, or Prince William County Schools. Paid personal days or sick leave are not provided for Teacher Candidates just as none are provided for substitute teachers who are paid only for days worked. Because of other services that yearlong Teacher Candidates provide to the schools, they are paid even if they do not substitute the full 45 days.

Personal and Professional Responsibilities

Teacher Candidates are expected to comply with the calendar, school hours and regulations established at the local site during the internship. Each PDS school prepares a Faculty Handbook for use during the year. If a copy of the Faculty Handbook is not available, the Teacher Candidate should ask to share and review the AMT/MT's copy of the Handbook. Please note the sections on Human Resources and Employee Professional and Personal Responsibilities. It is important that Teacher Candidates have knowledge of the expectations of employees in a school division.

Teacher Candidates should check with the principal or assistant principal or SF on school procedures regarding:

- Absence from school/Tardiness
- Leaving school during the school day
- Dress
- Confidentiality
- Child abuse
- Substance abuse
- Emergency procedures
- Cell phone use

If the Teacher Candidate is unclear about a procedure or policy, it is his/her responsibility to ask the AMT/MT, the SF or an administrator. Reviewing the Faculty Handbook and being proactive are important aspects of the Teacher Candidate's integration into the school and faculty.

Teacher Candidates are responsible for exercising "reasonable care" for pupils' welfare and for complying with all federal, state and local policies and regulations. This is best accomplished through careful study of the school's or school division's teacher handbook and through guidance from AMT/MTs or administrators. Special attention should be given to responsibilities and procedures for dealing with suspected child abuse. **Due to the general nature of the risks involved in internship activities, you are strongly encouraged to seek additional professional liability coverage. One recommendation is for you to look into the Student Educator Professional Liability Plan offered by the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) which, for an annual fee, will cover damages arising from professional liability lawsuits.**

Holidays and Vacations

Candidates must follow the academic calendar of their assigned school; Mason may have days off that the school does not.

Personal Appearance and Professional Conduct

The Virginia Department of Education promotes maintaining standards of professional competence and requires applicants for licensure to possess good moral character. Students must meet Graduate School of Education grading standards and course requirements as well as *demonstrate professional performance* in the areas required of professional educators: communication, collaboration and professionalism. Therefore, the Graduate School of Education expects its students to develop and exhibit the following:

Commitment to the Profession

Promoting exemplary practice
Excellence in teaching & learning

Advancing the profession
Engagement in partnerships

Commitment to Honoring Professional Ethical Standards

Fairness
Integrity
Confidentiality
students

Honesty
Trustworthiness
Respect for colleagues and

Commitment to Key Elements of Professional Practice

Belief that all individuals have the potential for growth and learning
Persistence in helping individuals succeed
Safe and supportive learning environments
Intrinsic motivation
Continuous, integrated assessment
Thoughtful, responsive listening
Technology-Supported learning
Authentic and relevant learning
Respect for diverse talents, abilities, and perspectives

High standards
Systematic planning
Reciprocal, active learning
Critical thinking
Supportive interactions
Research-based practice

Commitment to Being a Member of a Learning Community

Professional dialogue
Collective improvement
Responsibility
Collaboration

Self-improvement
Reflective practice
Flexibility
Continuous, lifelong learning

Commitment to Democratic Values and Social Justice

Understanding systemic issues that prevent full participation
Awareness of practices that sustain unequal treatment or unequal voice
Advocate for practices that promote equity and access
Respects the opinion and dignity of others
Sensitive to community and cultural norms
Appreciates and integrates multiple perspectives

**Adopted by GSE - May 2004*

Dispositions for Elementary Education

In addition, candidates for initial teaching licensure in elementary education are assessed on the following standards:

- Possess the basic skills and knowledge needed to guide students' learning;
- Demonstrate effort to continue learning both content and pedagogy;
- Reflect on his/her professional practice, including personal teaching & learning style;
- Welcome assistance for improvement and problem solving;
- Can develop and explain professional judgments using research-base theory and practice;
- Engage in productive relationships with professional colleagues and support staff
- Demonstrate stamina, flexibility, and a positive attitude;
- Is responsible, dependable, and observant of school policies and procedures;
- Project a professional image in terms of demeanor and appearance;
- Maintain confidentiality of information about colleagues, school sites and students unless;
- Disclosure serves a professionally compelling purpose or is required by law;
- Meet all expectations for attendance;
- Meet all expectations for professional behavior.

Candidates must dress professionally and exhibit professional behavior in their assigned school. Candidates must read their assigned school's faculty handbook and conform to the professional expectations of that school.

Social Media and Communications:

As you enter the teaching profession, it is critical that you embrace your role as a professional educator in all of your interactions--personal and professional, in the GMU classroom and in public, and in written and oral communication. **It is imperative that you check and respond to professional emails on both your Mason account and your internship email account in a timely manner.**

Now is the time to take stock of your "internet presence"--both personal accounts and those that you create to support your program completion--to make sure that your use of social media aligns with the professional dispositions required of classroom teachers. The Elementary Education program strongly recommends that Teacher Candidates make all of their social media private.

Potential employers search social media and the web to ascertain information about potential employees. The media is filled with examples of how seemingly private AND INOCUOUS items from Teacher Candidates' and teachers' social media accounts have made their way into the public spotlight. The ramifications of these missteps are serious and can include removal from the program, removal from internship, termination of employment, and/or loss of certification. The dispositions section of this handbook further explains our expectations for Teacher Candidates. You are strongly encouraged to read all of these and consider the risk/reward factors as you engage in social media.

A Teacher Candidate may not communicate via text message or cellphone with an elementary student under any circumstances. If there is a situation where a Teacher Candidate must email a student directly the Teacher Candidate should discuss the email with the AMT/MT first. A Teacher Candidate should only email an elementary student from a school email account and should cc the Advanced Mentor Teacher/Mentor Teacher.

Confidentiality of Records:

School division and Mason policies regarding student records must be followed. Teacher Candidates should familiarize themselves with the school divisions' policies regarding student records. A Teacher Candidate's evaluation may be shared among the AMT/MT, UF and responsible administrators until the University Facilitator submits the intern's cumulative folder to the Clinical Practice Office. After that, access will be in accordance with the Privacy Act. No materials will be released by the Clinical Practice Office for employment purposes other than grades and verification of meeting licensure standards.

Internship Overview

Placements:

Placement of Teacher Candidates is arranged by the Elementary Academic Program Coordinator and Elementary PDS Liaison, in collaboration with school division personnel in our Mason Elementary PDS Network. Placements take into consideration the need to have rich, high-quality experiences and the availability of AMT/MTs. Principals, SFs and UFs match the Teacher Candidates and AMT/MTs. Changes in assignments are made rarely and only for serious reasons. Such changes must be coordinated through the Elementary Academic Program Coordinator and Elementary PDS Liaison. **An internship placement can be terminated at any time at the request of the principal/school division.**

In most cases, each Teacher Candidate will have **two** assignments--one in a primary grade and a second in an intermediate grade. Each will last one semester. In some instances, candidates will spend a full year in a **single** grade level.

The Independent Teaching required for licensure will be completed in one grade level during the spring semester (YL/SLs) or fall semester (SLs). The Teacher Candidate's Independent Teaching will be done in the assigned AMT/MT's classroom.

General Calendar:

All Teacher Candidates report to their assigned schools on the first day that the teachers report for the fall or spring semesters. This permits a school-based orientation, planning with the faculty and participation in other activities essential to the successful beginning of the school year.

YL Teacher Candidates follow the calendar of the classroom teachers for the entire school year (pre-planning through end of the school year activities). YL Teacher Candidates are expected to end the school year following the calendar of their assigned AMT/MT. Failure to meet this expectation will impact the Teacher Candidate's program completion and standing in the district and will likely result in financial ramifications. SL Teacher Candidates follow the calendar provided in the handbook for 16 weeks (not including spring break) of internship.

A monthly calendar is provided in the documents supplement.

First Week of School	Study handbook Attend school-based activities Meet site facilitator and University Facilitator Plan with AMT/MT Prepare Google drive and/or notebook Begin coursework
September-December And February-March	Determine children who do not have social media release forms signed Observe and assist in classroom Attend Mason classes and school-based seminars Plan with AMT/MT for co-teaching Work on course assignments Complete bi-weekly progress reports Submit video using GoReact according to UF schedule Participate in student activities, parent conferences, meetings Participate in interim/final evaluation conference **Yearlongs - Substitute according to guidelines, if applicable
April	Participate in student activities, parent conferences, meetings Confer daily with AMT/MT and SF and UF as needed Submit video using GoReact as required Attend school-based seminars Maintain internship notebook Independent Teaching Action research data collection
December-January And May-June	Complete course work and exams Complete attendance report Complete evaluation of AMT and UF Action Research presentation (May/June) **Yearlongs - Substitute or assist/observe in classes/resource programs Apply for licensure

Seminars:

Seminars are planned and facilitated by the UF in conjunction with the SF and/or the PDS site faculty and administrators. Seminars are designed to supplement Teacher Candidates’ classroom experiences. At a minimum, monthly seminars will be conducted at the school site under the guidance of the UF each semester.

Classroom Expectations:

Observing

Any time the Teacher Candidate is not co-teaching or teaching independently, school-based activities should be planned with their AMT/MT (e.g., observations, student activities, parent conferences, or working with resource teachers). Please use the *Structured Observation of Another Teacher* to guide these observations outside of the placement classroom.

Co-Teaching

Co-teaching is encouraged throughout the internship. The AMT/MT and Teacher Candidate will discuss specific experiences that need to be included during co-teaching and together they will complete a *Weekly Plan for Co-teaching* for each week the intern is co-teaching.

During co-teaching, the Teacher Candidate and AMT/MT plan and teach together. In the spring semester of the year-long internship, co-teaching occurs as the Teacher Candidate gradually assumes responsibility for the AMT/MT's class(es).

During IT (Independent Teaching), Teacher Candidates take the lead in any co-planning and co-teaching.

Lesson Planning

Please note: all teaching assignments, including morning meetings, read-alouds, content lessons, must be accompanied by detailed lesson plans. For guidelines on the required lesson plan format see *Elementary Lesson Planning Guidelines* in the supplemental documents.

Supported Teaching (Fall YL only)--During the fall semester of the yearlong internship, Teacher Candidates will be expected to independently teach lesson(s) for the internship (EDCI 790) and as required by the assignments for their fall courses. The Teacher Candidate will take over some routine(s) and/or content and teaching responsibilities as deemed appropriate by the AMT/MT and UF.

Independent Teaching (YL Spring, SL Fall or SL Spring)--George Mason University's internship requirements exceed the state minimum licensure requirements of 300 student teaching hours, including 150 hours of Independent Teaching. Independent Teaching typically spans a four-week period, typically during the **spring** semester. In the spring semester, co-teaching is followed by a gradual assumption of full responsibility during Independent Teaching and gradual return of the class(es) to the AMT/MT. In rare instances, a Teacher Candidate may complete their Independent Teaching in the fall semester.

Teacher Candidates who are placed in departmental units during Independent Teaching (e.g., sole subject, science, math, etc.) are required to demonstrate competence across core disciplines (e.g., science, math, social studies, technology, fine arts and literacy). UFs, AMT/MTs and SFs are responsible, along with the Teacher Candidate, to establish a timeline during the spring term in which the intern can demonstrate competency and the completion of assignments in the core disciplines.

Roles and Responsibilities

Teacher Candidate Responsibilities:

- Delivers, analyzes and reflects on effective instruction and participates in observations, conferences and lesson redesign to improve instructional outcomes;
- Pursues deeper understanding of the relationship between theory and informed practice and between school culture and the learning environment;

- Understands and is instrumental in developing and using coaching plans focused on growth;
- Uses student assessment data to inform effective instructional practices focused on learning outcomes;
- Participates as a team member in seminars, grade level meetings, and school reform initiatives at the school;
- Serves as an intellectual resource to AMT/MTs, UFs, and other Teacher Candidates;
- **Completes required formal observation cycles with the Mentor Teacher and University Facilitator;**
- Accepts responsibility for completion of all materials and assignments encompassed in the handbook in a timely manner;
- Completes university course work and attends class because class assignments are integrated with the internship;
- Accepts assigned substitute duties and other duties related to classroom practice;
- Shows evidence of dispositions as defined by the Graduate School of Education;
- Expresses concerns in a timely and professional manner following established protocol: AMT/MT, SF, UF, Internship Facilitators, Elementary Coordinator, Associate Dean.

Advanced Mentor Teacher/Mentor Teacher Roles and Responsibilities

The AMT/MT is expected to share supervisory and evaluation responsibilities for the internship with the UF. In addition to being a mentor and coach, they serve in a number of critical roles:

- Specifies, during the introductory conference, overall goals and specific objectives of the school system and how they relate to the Teacher Candidate and offers ongoing support to meet these objectives throughout the internship;
- With the candidate and UF, develops a plan for the candidate to accomplish internship assignments and assessments using appropriate guidelines and rubrics;
- Assists the Teacher Candidate in meeting the school division, university and classroom requirements;
- Provides feedback and support to the Teacher Candidate on an ongoing basis;
- **Conducts formal observation cycles with the Teacher Candidate**
- Provides informal feedback, including written feedback to the candidate and feedback via GoReact video recording and reflection assignments;
- Assists the Teacher Candidate in creating and executing the internship assessments;
- Contacts the UF as soon as any concerns arise so corrections can be implemented;
- Conducts electronic or in-person conferences with the UF as needed to review the Teacher Candidate's progress;
- Includes the Teacher Candidate in all appropriate teaching duties (e.g., IEP conferences, parent/family conferences, related phone calls, child study meetings, faculty meetings, professional development);
- Participates in seminars between and among candidates, UF, and others involved in the internship experience;
- Follows all documenting policies listed in the "Documentation" section of this handbook;
- Completes electronic evaluation of internship placement process, Teacher Candidate and UF;
- Attends orientations/trainings as available.

University Facilitator Roles and Responsibilities

The University Facilitator serves as a link between the school and the university, providing support and guidance to Teacher Candidate and the AMT/MT. The UF supports the coaching, supervisory, and evaluative functions carried out by the AMT/MT. The UF also plays an important role in facilitating communication and in providing additional feedback and assistance for the candidates. The UF serves in a number of specific roles:

- Maintains contact with the Teacher Candidate throughout the clinical experience;
- Observes, records, reflects upon and analyzes practices and performance data to improve the quality of the internship;
- Weekly reviews all assignments and assessments the candidate uploads to BlackBoard, giving feedback on the assignments and grading the assessments using the provided rubric as required;
- Conducts formal observations of the Teacher Candidate and provides the candidate with feedback using GoReact and in accordance with the formal observation guidelines;
- Supervises and assesses the assessments as noted in the chart below;
- Collects from the Teacher Candidate all documentation according to the policies listed in the “Documentation” section of the handbook;
- Evaluates the candidate’s internship experience and submits a grade to the Clinical Practice Office and/or appropriate faculty member;
- Completes electronic evaluation of internship process, Teacher Candidate, and AMT/MT

Principal and Administrator Roles and Responsibilities

School administrators foster professional norms of competence and quality learning environments for teachers and students. The principal/administrator does the following:

- Oversees the process for identification of quality placements for Teacher Candidates;
- Includes Teacher Candidates in scheduled meetings, orientation training, and staff development activities;
- Serves as an intellectual resource for elementary school teachers, UFs, and Teacher Candidates;
- Aligns organizational structures and resources to reinforce stated goals of the school (e.g., ensures the teachers have access to available technology training and application within the classroom);
- Supports UFs, AMT/MTs, and others to improve instructional outcomes;
- Involves Teacher Candidates as part of the faculty;
- Ensures the mechanisms are in place to help parents participate in and understand internship goals;
- Works for continuous school improvement and the professional growth of administration, faculty and Teacher Candidates.

Observations

Each semester of the internship the MT/AMT and UF will conduct observations of the Teacher Candidate's teaching. These observations may include informal/unannounced observations, observations related to guided instructional cycles, and/or formal observations of instruction. Observations may be conducted live, virtually, or using video-recordings. **Regardless of format, evidence of feedback from the mentor and UF should be uploaded to Bb by the TC at the end of the semester.**

During the 3-credit internship (Fall YLs) the MT/AMT will conduct a minimum of two formal observations, and the UF will conduct a minimum of one formal observation for yearlong teacher candidates. Each of these should be accompanied by written feedback (paper/pencil and/or GoReact) that is provided to/discussed in partnership with the teacher candidate. Informal observations will be conducted every other week.

In the 6-credit internship, the MT/AMT will conduct a minimum of four formal observations and the UF will conduct a minimum of 2 formal observations. During the Independent Teaching semester (6 credit internship), the AMT should conduct two of the required four teacher observation and the UF should conduct one of the required two observations during Independent Teaching. At least one observation each semester may be unannounced. Each of these should be accompanied by written feedback (paper/pencil and/or GoReact) that is provided to/discussed in partnership with the teacher candidate. Informal observations will be conducted weekly

Sample 1: Informal Observations

- Written notes and feedback provided to teacher candidates, often in an unannounced, informal format.

Sample 2: Guided Observation

- See description pg. 15-16

Sample 3: Structured Formal Observation Cycle

- A structured observation cycle includes a preconference, observation and post-conference. The teacher candidate use video to record the observation and that it be used for post-conference feedback and discussions.
- The AMT/MT and/or the UF observe the teaching event as it unfolds. Observers may want to take notes in the following domains as discussion points for later use in the video feedback:
 - Preparation and Planning
 - Instruction and Management
 - Assessment and Differentiation
 - Professionalism
 - Recommendations

A form is provided in the Supplemental Documents Packet to support this notetaking.

Assignments

A. School/Community Ecological Mapping Assignment (10%)

- You will collaborate with teacher candidates in your school to more fully understand the ecological systems impacting the students with whom you work. Together, you will examine the role of neighborhoods, agencies, social and cultural beliefs in shaping the students in your classroom.

B. Student Learner Chart

- You will create a chart to track your understanding of your learners. This chart should include student interests, readiness (literacy and math), social/emotional, and learning profile information.

C. Core Beliefs Statements

- Prior to the start of your placement you will identify your core beliefs in terms of learners and learning, management, instruction (broadly and in literacy and mathematics, specifically). These should be provided/posted in the forum designated by your university facilitator (e.g. hard copy, google drive).
- It is expected that your beliefs will change, expand, and become more detailed across the internship experience. At each biweekly, you should revisit, revise, add to, and/or modify your core beliefs statements.
- You will post your core beliefs statements document to Bb at the end of the semester.
- You will use these ongoing revisions to inform your biweekly reflections.

D. Biweekly Reflections

- Every two weeks, you will submit a biweekly reflection. These should be submitted to your university facilitator in the requested format (e.g. hard copy, email, google drive).
- Your biweekly reflections should be connected to your core beliefs statements and should serve to generate specific goals. Your professional development goals will be reflected in your lesson plans across the internship experience.
- You will post your biweekly reflections (compiled into one document) at the end of the semester.
- Topics will be provided throughout the semester.

E. Guided Observation Cycles

- You will engage in 3-4 observation cycles with your peers and with your university facilitator in the following core practices:
 - i. Teacher Language for Building Community and Establishing Presence (tone, body language, words)
 - ii. Transitions
 - iii. Mini-lessons/focus lessons
 - iv. Small group instruction*Topics may vary
- Each observation cycle will follow the format below:
 - i. Your university facilitator will identify a time that you will visit several 'expert' teachers to observe a classroom core practice.

- ii. You will observe the classroom core practice and identify the essential elements of the practice.
- iii. After the observation cycle, you, your peers, and your university facilitator will meet to discuss the observation and identify the key attributes of the core practice.
- iv. Following the guided observation, you will gather one brief video each week related to the core practice. You will comment on your video and that of 2 peers each week. Your comments should be connected to the attributes of the core practice identified by your group. At the end of each video you should set a goal related to the core practice for the following week. That goal should be the focus of comments in the subsequent video.

F. Formal Documentation of Progress

- You will use the Internship Evaluation Rubric – Continuum Form to reflect on your progress in relation to the ten InTasc Standards at both the midpoint of the semester and at the end of the semester. It is based upon the activities above (A-C), and each of the following:
 - Observations of teaching
 - See above description
 - Co-teaching
 - The Advanced Mentor Teacher/Mentor Teacher and the Teacher Candidate will co-plan specific experiences to be completed during the co-teaching period. The Advanced Mentor Teacher/Mentor Teacher and the Teacher Candidate will complete a weekly plan for co-teaching for each week of the semester.
 - Lesson Instruction
 - The Teacher Candidate will begin the internship observing the Advanced Mentor Teacher/Mentor Teacher. Across each week, the Teacher Candidate will gradually assume more planning and teaching responsibilities. Lesson plans should be provided to the Advanced Mentor Teacher/Mentor Teacher *a minimum of 48 hours* prior to instruction.
 - Any time the Teacher Candidate is not co-teaching or teaching their lessons, activities should be planned with their Advanced Mentor Teacher/Mentor Teacher, (e.g. observations, small group instruction, student activities, parent conferences, or working with resource teachers). Forms developed by experienced teachers to structure reflection on observations and to encourage a variety of experiences during the internship can be found in the Internship Handbook (must be confirmed with Advanced Mentor Teacher/Mentor Teacher and Site Facilitator).
 - Use of Video
 - All Teacher Candidates will be using video for the purposes of enhancing their professional development across the yearlong internship. Your support team (University Facilitator, Advanced Mentor Teacher/Mentor Teacher, School Principal) will work

collaboratively with you to provide expectations for additional use. **It is imperative that you collect video evidence regularly as requested by your university facilitator.**

- Attendance and Professionalism
 - Teacher Candidates are expected to meet professional standards in every respect including personal appearance and behavior. Although accommodations are made for emergencies, outside commitments to family or an employer are no excuse for failing to fulfill all teaching duties and responsibilities. Because Teacher Candidates are not employees of the school division, they are not entitled to sick or annual leave; however, one day has been allocated in each semester for emergencies. Teacher Candidates must familiarize themselves with the Faculty Handbooks for their respective school systems and should check with the Principal on school procedures regarding school calendar, school hours, absence from school/tardiness, leaving school during the school day, dress, confidentiality, social media use, child abuse, and substance abuse.
 - Teacher Candidates are expected to attend all seminar meetings. These seminars will focus on topics of relevance that emerge throughout the semester.
- The Internship Evaluation Rubric – Continuum Form is completed by the Teacher Candidate, in collaboration with the AMT/MT at the midpoint of the semester (see internship calendar). This should be shared with the University Facilitator at the midpoint conference and uploaded to Blackboard.
- The Internship Evaluation Rubric – Continuum Form should be revisited and updated by the Teacher Candidate, in collaboration with the AMT/MT at the end of the semester (see internship calendar). It should build upon the notes and comments from the midpoint Internship Evaluation Rubric – Continuum Form. The end of semester Internship Evaluation Rubric – Continuum Form be shared with the University Facilitator at the final conference and uploaded to Blackboard and VIA.

Common Assessments and VIA

The accrediting body of the College of Education and Human Development requires a number of Common Assessments across all licensure programs. The *Faculty/Mentor Assessment of Dispositions* and the *Internship Evaluation Rubric – Continuum Form* are two Common Assessments that occur during internship. These required VIA performance-based assessments must be submitted by the Teacher Candidate to VIA. Failure to submit the assessment(s) to VIA (through Blackboard) will result in the UF reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless this grade is changed upon completion of the required VIA submission, the IN will convert to a NC nine weeks into the following semester.

Faculty/Mentor Assessment of Dispositions

- ***YL: Completed after fall Semester***
- ***SL: Completed midpoint of internship***

Dispositions reflect one's attitudes and deeply held beliefs. They can be positive (e.g., committed) or negative (e.g., apathetic). Dispositions are not directly "visible," but are inferred from one's actions. Throughout the Teacher Candidate's program of study at George Mason, s/he should demonstrate behaviors that reflect positive dispositions befitting a professional. The final administration of this assessment is completed by the AMT/MT in conjunction with the Teacher Candidate at the midpoint of the internship experience (*YL—after first semester; SL—midpoint of internship semester*).

Impact on Student Learning Task

- *YL: Completed in fall or spring (IT) semester*
- *SL: Completed in the IT semester*

To complete this task Teacher Candidates will gather data on student learners related to readiness, interests, and learner profiles through observations, pre-assessment and formative assessment data. With the learning team, Teacher Candidates will consider assessment data and their knowledge of learners to plan instruction. The series of lessons should include a rationale, goals and objectives, detailed daily lesson plans with specific goals and objectives for each instructional block, a clear formative and summative assessment plan. Evidence of differentiated instructional approaches should guide creation. Following implementation of the lessons, teacher candidates will analyze their student data and examine the impact of their instruction on student learning. The lessons should also include a plan for future instruction with specific attention to extending or revisiting specific instructional objectives. Detailed information is provided in the course syllabus.

Internship Evaluation Rubric-Continuum Form

- *YL: Completed at midpoint and end of both fall and spring semester*
- *SL: Completed at midpoint and end of internship semester*

The Internship Evaluation Rubric – Continuum Form is used as the midterm and the final evaluation of the internship semester. The AMT/MT, Teacher Candidate and UF use these tools to assess Teacher Candidate progress.

Internship Midterm and Final Evaluation Guidelines

Midterm Evaluation Procedures

The midterm evaluation is used to document the Teacher Candidate's progress and to highlight areas for improvement. The Teacher Candidate and the AMT/MT, working together, complete the Internship Evaluation Rubric – Continuum Form and email the completed rubrics to the UF at least two days before the midterm conference.

The UF will review the completed rubrics and be prepared to discuss any areas of interest, concern, or contrast. In addition, the midterm conference should be used to review the Teacher Candidate's progress on the common assessments—including the dispositions form—and provide guidance in the completion of the common assessment tasks. The teacher candidate may choose to present evidence of their learning using a portfolio.

Final Evaluation Procedure

The scores on the Internship Evaluation Rubric (during the 6 credit internship course only) are used to determine the Teacher Candidate's eligibility for licensure. The Teacher Candidate, in concert with the AMT/MT, will complete the Internship Evaluation Rubric – Continuum Form and submit them to the UF at least 2 days prior to the scheduled final conference. The UF will review the continuum and be prepared to discuss any areas of interest, concern, or contrast. The teacher candidate may choose to present evidence of their learning using a portfolio. The final version will be signed by the Teacher Candidate, AMT/MT, and UF and uploaded to BlackBoard under the assessments tab. The UF will use the Continuum Form to enter the scores on the Internship Evaluation Rubric provided in BlackBoard/VIA during the 6-credit internship course.

Reflection During Internship

Reflective Practice

Reflective practice is a cornerstone of the Mason Elementary Education Program. Reflection is necessary for reflective practice – instead of relying on the authority of others, their own impulse, or unexamined previous practice, teachers and Teacher Candidates must continually examine and evaluate their attitudes, practices, effectiveness, and accomplishments (Shandomo, 2010). Reflection allows Teacher Candidates to integrate experiential knowledge from work in schools with theoretical knowledge from university course work (Sutherland, Scanlon, Sperring, 2004; Wegner, 2005). Reflection allows candidates to look at themselves and their situation with new eyes, and in the process, become conscious of the multiple ways they can interpret, critique, challenge, confront, and reconstruct teaching (Ajayi, 2011).

Reflective Video Analysis – GoReact

All Teacher Candidates will be using video for the purposes of enhancing their professional development across the yearlong internship. Your support team (University Facilitator, Advanced Mentor Teacher/Mentor Teacher, School Principal) will work collaboratively with you to provide expectations for additional use. ***It is imperative that you collect video evidence regularly as requested by your university facilitator.***

Beginning of Internship

- Familiarize yourself with GoReact and make sure your account is active throughout the entire internship.
- Determine the children who do not have signed media releases in your classroom. Submit this list to your UF. These children will not be able to be in any of your videos.
- Work with your UF, your AMT/MT, and your peers to determine a plan for recording additional instruction, providing feedback, and reflecting on your growth.

Throughout Internship

- Upload and reflect on videos as required by UF and AMT/MT.

Reflecting with Video

- According to John Dewey (1933) reflection affords teachers conscious, deliberate insight to bring about learning and encourages them to become students of their own teaching. The George Mason Elementary Education program requires three levels of reflection:
- Three hierarchical levels of reflection (Van Manen, 1977)
- Technical reflection is concerned with the technical application of knowledge to examine the strategies used and the effects of those strategies. Reflection at the technical level is prompted by reflecting on
 - What I did
 - What I could have/should have done
- Practical reflection allows for open examination of the assumptions underlying a specific practice and its consequences on student learning. Reflection at the practical level is prompted by reflecting on
 - What are the assumptions underlying my practices?
 - What are the consequences of my practices on student learning?
- Critical reflection includes emphases from the previous two levels, and calls for considerations involving moral and ethical criteria, making judgments about whether professional activity is equitable, just and respectful of persons or not. It locates any analysis of personal action within wider sociohistorical and politico-cultural contexts. Reflection at the critical level is prompted by reflecting on
 - What are the ethical, social political ramifications of my teaching?
 - Links back to vision/philosophy

Reflective Conferring

Conferring between AMT/MTs and Teacher Candidates will occur regularly, following informal and formal observations. UFs and Teacher Candidates will also confer regularly. Three-way conferences including the Teacher Candidate, AMT/MT, and UF will occur twice per semester, at midpoint and at the completion of the semester (see Midterm and Final Evaluation Guidelines above).

- *Informal Observations*

Throughout the internship the AMT/MT and UF will conduct informal observations. Feedback will be provided to the Teacher Candidate.

Reflective Writing

Teacher Candidates will reflect in writing with their AMT/MTs using Biweekly Progress Reports. These will be completed by the Teacher Candidate and the AMT/MT and shared with the UF. The Teacher Candidate will do a written reflection using the guiding questions on the Biweekly Progress Report. The Teacher Candidate will share the form with the AMT/MT for additional feedback. When the form is completed it is the Teacher Candidate's responsibility to submit it to the UF.

Grading Policies

The AMT/MT and the UF shall determine the final grade jointly after consultation. If they cannot agree, the Academic Program Coordinator for Elementary Education will determine the

grade based on a review of the documentation and consultation with faculty and, if necessary, observation of the candidate’s performance. In some cases, a grade of No Credit may be accompanied by a recommendation that the Teacher Candidate not be allowed to repeat the clinical experience. In such cases, the Teacher Candidate will be counseled out of the licensure program although not necessarily out of the degree program.

Graduate Grading Scale

Grade	Definition
S	Satisfactory: Candidate successfully meets clinical experience requirements and can be recommended for teacher licensure
NC	No Credit: Candidate will not be recommended for teacher licensure unless he/she repeats all or part of the clinical experience with satisfactory performance (This may require enrolling and paying tuition for additional credit hours in a subsequent semester, or paying a fee for extended supervision.)
IP	In Progress: Candidate’s performance cannot be evaluated at the end of the grading period. IP grade can be changed to S or NC for graduate students, upon completion of requirements

Special Assistance for Teacher Candidates

Occasionally candidates need special assistance and arrangements to complete their licensure. In such cases, an individualized Development Plan is developed collaboratively by the UF, AMT/MT, and school administration. The Academic Program Coordinator of Elementary Education should be contacted to determine what resources are needed. The following are some of the ways to provide special support for a candidate:

- Arrange for observation of another Teacher Candidate or a teacher who models the skills that the Teacher Candidate needs to develop, followed by a conference;
- On rare occasions (when appropriate, possible, and early in a semester) change a placement within the school to provide a better match of Teacher Candidate and AMT/MT.
- Modify schedule for Independent Teaching commensurate with candidate’s needs.
- Delay or extend a Teacher Candidate’s Independent Teaching.
- Provide additional experiences during the period after Independent Teaching in order to address areas needing improvement.
- Suggest available services at Mason such as the Counseling Center for personal or therapeutic support, the Financial Planning and Assistance Office for advice on financial aid, the Student Health Center, or other source of medical assistance.
- Facilitate conferences with the Teacher Candidate’s academic advisor and/or course instructors.

Substitute Teaching

Teacher Candidates in a *yearlong* internship may receive stipends from the school district for their availability to their school as substitute teachers under controlled conditions. The stipends are

received in biweekly installments distributed by George Mason University. Each Teacher Candidate will substitute teach in their assigned internship site in either LCPS, PWCS or FCPS for 35-45 days per school year. Teacher Candidates in the *semester long* internship program may sub on a limited basis in his/her Mentor Teacher's classroom within the guidelines shared in the handbook.

Yearlong Teacher Candidates Substitute Teaching

*****For YL Teacher Candidates who are receiving the substitute teaching stipend, the following section is applicable:***

- Teacher Candidates should read and sign the Yearlong Internship Contract. During Independent Teaching, including phasing in and out, the Teacher Candidates should substitute only for the AMT/MT whose classes they are teaching.
- During the fall and spring semesters the Teacher Candidates are available to substitute on a "sheltered" basis. This means the Teacher Candidates will begin substituting for their AMT/MT, then for their internship grade level teachers. At two points in the yearlong internship (Dec and May/June) the Teacher Candidate can substitute in any grade level in the school. Except in emergencies, the "substitute teaching should be prearranged, so that the intern has an opportunity to plan with the classroom teacher. ”
- Teacher Candidates are available to substitute in the fall semester on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Some Teacher Candidates will attend classes on one evening and all will have classes on Wednesdays. During the spring semester, Teacher Candidates will attend one evening class at Mason and will be at their school site, and available to substitute on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.
- Substituting is a priority assignment over non-teaching assignment within the school (e.g., observing other classes).
- When not substituting, the Teacher Candidates co-teach with the assigned AMT/MT or participate in the activities planned by the school faculty. The Teacher Candidates should not withdraw from working with students to complete readings or assignments related to their course work. During the 'open subbing' periods, if no substitute duties are assigned, Teacher Candidates report to their AMT/MT and/or SF for duties or experiences that have been planned by the school faculty. Assigned substitute duties take priority over Teacher Candidate arrangements.
- Due to established university and school system agreements, **no Teacher Candidate may be considered for a long-term substitute teaching assignment** after Independent Teaching. Similarly, the Teacher Candidates should not be assigned clerical duties that are unrelated to their classroom.
- The Teacher Candidate's stipend is funded from the substitute accounts of all participating school divisions. All Teacher Candidates should complete the *Monthly Log of Attendance and Responsibilities*. This should be maintained and submitted to the University Facilitator at the end of each semester. The Teacher Candidate is responsible for turning in this log in a timely manner. If the Teacher Candidate has not been available for the required number days of subbing (45) then the final stipend will be reduced accordingly. The PDS Network Calendar defines the parameters of substituting during the school year. Calendars are emailed to Teacher Candidates and AMT/MTs each semester.
- **Teacher Candidates must use the tracking system to enter all dates/times that subbing**

occurs. The link is

https://gmucehd.az1.qualtrics.com/surveys/SV_0Pwe5XzCsRfSXTE/edit

Semester Long Internship Teacher Candidates & Substitute Teaching

The Educator Preparation Office, in consultation with our local school administrators and central office personnel, notes to licensure programs that substitute teaching during internship is allowed, under the following conditions, all of which must be met:

- Teacher Candidates must already be fully hired and trained as a substitute in their internship location's school division prior to any substitute teaching.
- Teacher Candidates may only substitute in the classroom of their AMT/MT, and with the building administrator's advance knowledge and permission.
- Teacher Candidates may only substitute in the classroom of their AMT/MT when the AMT/MT is absent due to illness or family emergency. Students should accompany their AMT/MT to professional development activities when those are scheduled, and therefore should not substitute if/when the AMT/MT is out for such activities.
- Teacher Candidates may only substitute for their AMT/MT at or past the point where they are engaged in Independent Teaching.
- Teacher Candidates may not count hours spent substitute teaching towards their direct/indirect hours requirements for licensure.
- Teacher Candidates may not leave their internship prior to its end date in order to serve as a long-term substitute teacher; completing the internship with fidelity and in a timely manner must always take precedence over substitute teaching.

Records Retention

Teacher Candidates are strongly advised to keep copies of evaluations, logs, summaries, and other records. Teacher Candidates should keep a personal file of documents for reference and future use. Due to University policy, we are unable to provide copies of records (including standardized test scores) back to students after they have been turned into the office.

The Mason transcript provides permanent documentation of meeting state-approved teacher education program requirements, including student teaching hours completed, and the final grade. Teacher Candidates can request a copy of their transcript through the Registrar's Office.

Teacher Candidate Frequently Asked Questions

a. Do I have to reflect on every lesson I teach?

Reflection is an integral part of teaching. Guidelines for reflection will be established in conjunction with your UF and MT/AMT based on the options provided in this handbook.

b. Is co-teaching acceptable during Independent Teaching?

As every elementary teacher's primary responsibility is to the PK-6 learners, co-teaching may occur if necessary. During Independent Teaching the expectation would be for the Teacher Candidate to take the lead in all aspects of the instruction (including planning and assessment).

c. What happens if I am sick for an extended period of time?

Everyone in the elementary program works to scaffold all Teacher Candidates to successful completion of internship. We will work with you to modify your internship so that you can successfully complete the required 4 weeks of Independent Teaching.

d. What if I am having issues with my AMT/MT?

The key to any successful relationship is communication. It is best to address issues quickly and directly with the person involved. A face-to-face conversation is the best method. If you want to discuss the issue before addressing it with your AMT/MT you may do so with the site facilitator at the building or your UF.

e. How do I get my teaching license?

Once you have successfully completed your internship you will need to begin the application process to obtain your license from the VA Dept. of Education. You will need to review the steps for licensure application at: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/teacher/instructions/> and schedule an appointment to meet with our Licensure Specialist, Rebekah Flis. Please note that it is your responsibility to gather all of the materials you will need (test scores, application, fees, etc.) and submit these to Ms. Flis. You may contact her at 703-993-2094 or at rflis@gmu.edu

* As a reminder, please note that due to University Policy, any and all materials that you provide to us become property of the University and we cannot give these back to you or provide you with copies. Please be sure you have multiple official and unofficial copies of all test scores and transcripts for your personal records.

f. How do I get letters of recommendation?

Most jurisdictions require a letter from an AMT/MT as well as your UF. It is important that you ask a potential letter writer if she/he would be willing to

write you a letter and if she/he could write a strong letter of support. During the semester of Independent Teaching letters cannot be written until after the successful completion of Independent Teaching.