

Special Education

Student Teaching Handbook

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Special Education Mission and Vision Statement

Mission:

The mission of the program is to develop change agents, professionals who will pursue social justice side-by-side with people with disabilities. Candidates should be prepared to believe in and be advocates for the absolute dignity of all people, including those with labels of disability.

Vision:

The goal of the Master of Arts in Special Education and Education Specialist (Special Education) programs is to develop highly competent, informed, and collaborative professionals. These programs will give students the tools to build inclusive communities of families and colleagues. Students learn to be effective communicators, informed decision makers, advocates for students, leaders and change agents, scholars, and mediators of diversity.

Welcome to Student Teaching

You are beginning an exciting time in your preparation to become a teacher. This booklet will provide you with information about your student teaching experience. Read it carefully and enjoy the adventure.

Important things to keep in mind before student teaching

(key excerpts from the handbook):

BEFORE STUDENT TEACHING

Placement within a school

Grade level requirements

Education Specialist candidates will be placed at either the elementary, middle school, or high school grade level, depending upon their interests, previous experiences (e.g., Praxis experiences, fieldwork experiences, paraprofessional experience), and qualifications (e.g., subject matter competency). Because teachers holding an Education Specialist Credential serve children with disabilities in K-12 classes, it is critical that candidates have a variety of experiences to adequately prepare them for the profession. Consequently, if the majority of the candidate's experiences were at the upper grade level, then the candidate would likely complete student teaching at the primary grade level or secondary level.

Restrictions

Student teaching assignments are made in public schools. The schools must be accredited by WASC and CTC. With the exception of Internship placements, all student teaching assignments are made by Chapman University, **not** the student teaching candidate.

DURING STUDENT TEACHING

Evaluations and grading

You will receive a letter grade in the student teaching. This grade will be based upon:

1. Evaluations from the University Supervisor
2. Evaluations from the Mentor Teacher (unless you are an Intern)
3. Your TPE Portfolio and Evidence

You are expected to request a regular time for daily and/or weekly conferences with your Mentor Teacher or Support Provider (if you are an intern).

BEFORE

Student Teaching

Application for student teaching

The application for student teaching (EDUC 590/592 and/or EDUC 591-593) must be completed in the semester prior to the one in which student teaching is to begin. Students are responsible for meeting the deadline, as well as:

1. Submit the student teaching application to the Fieldwork Administrator
2. Ensure all necessary documents are in your file:
 - a. Certificate of Clearance
 - b. CSET proof of passage
 - c. CBEST proof of passage
 - d. Tuberculosis clearance (valid through the student teaching semester)

The candidate's program evaluation (print this through PeopleSoft) must be reviewed by the Fieldwork Administrator prior to advancement to student teaching. Additional information may be requested, and the Special Education Program Coordinator may attach conditions to a candidate's advancement or deny advancement to student teaching. Course instructors are frequently consulted as to the readiness of the candidate to begin student teaching.

Agreements with school districts

All students placed with a Mentor Teaching or on an Internship Credential must be placed only in districts that have a current, valid Student Teaching Agreement or Internship Agreement on file with Chapman University. An agreement between the University and a school district is a legally binding document that may not be changed by any agent of the University without prior review and approval by the Dean of the Attallah College of Educational Studies.

Placement within a school

The primary goal is to make sure every candidate has a successful student teaching experience by working in the best schools available, regardless of location. Since these placements are formal agreements between Chapman and the school district, candidates may not make their own arrangements. Student input concerning school preferences, commuting, and other logistical concerns are taken into consideration. The Fieldwork Administrator, in conjunction with the Special Education Program Coordinator, arranges the student teaching placement.

Students who have been hired as an Intern should make an appointment with the Special Education Program Coordinator as soon as they are offered a contract by a district. There are numerous forms that will need to be completed to process the Internship Agreement. Generally, once a student is offered a contract with a district, the district wants the student to begin their Internship immediately. Chapman University will work as expeditiously as possible to fulfill their part of this cooperative venture. However, students should be aware that because of the protocols that need to be followed under state law, at times this process can take some time.

Getting prepared for student teaching

An important attitude to cultivate as you embark on this adventure is one which Gilligan (1982) refers to as the “ethic of caring.” The “ethic of caring” is an attitude that requires responsible behavior. Your student teaching experiences should “evolve around caring about instruction, the curriculum, student learning, and the needs of individuals in the classroom” (Rogers & Webb, 1991, p. 174).

Caring teachers are sensitive to children’s needs and interests, and make decisions about children and their educational needs based on what Holt calls “loving the student as learner” (1970, p. 66). The ethic of caring emphasizes responsibilities and relationships rather than rights and rules. As you enter these new experiences, try to perceive each child as the “apple of someone’s eye.” Each child is precious, each child needs to be nurtured, cared for, and given the best opportunity possible to develop his or her potential.

Self Check

Before starting your student teaching, please consider the following:

1. Your attitude about voice, diversity, equity and social justice needs to be clear. You must be willing to work with a variety of students. You must believe all students can learn and succeed.
2. Your subject matter knowledge, use of California Content Standards, and lesson planning skills need to be honed to perfection. Each time your University Supervisor visits, you will be asked to provide a written lesson plan for the teaching you are doing during his/her visit. The format for the plan will vary depending upon the type of lesson you are conducting, however, the plan must specify:
 - a. **Why** you have chosen to do this particular lesson
 - b. **What** you expect the children to learn (the learning objectives based on the standards)
 - c. **How** you plan to conduct the lesson
 - d. **Where** you will be during this lesson
 - e. An evaluation/assessment component which examines whether or not the learning objectives were met.
3. Review of various models of teaching (direct instruction, concept attainment, generative strategies) and classroom organizational strategies (cooperative learning, team teaching, cross-age tutoring, contracts) as well as curricular integration techniques such as thematic units and projects.
4. You are encouraged to work with a variety of teaching/learning activities, materials, and grouping modes.
5. An effective classroom management plan needs to be established. Whatever systems you use, it needs to employ positive behavioral support strategies. It needs to encourage/teach appropriate/new behaviors. Building meaningful, caring, and trusting relationships with students, and utilizing age appropriate, engaging, and relevant teaching and learning strategies encourages positive behavior in a classroom.

Becoming familiar with the school

Although you have spent many years in schools, you may not be familiar with the support resources available in schools. Talk to your Mentor Teacher and University Supervisor about these resources.

They can introduce you to appropriate personnel and acquaint you with various procedures and let you know what materials are available. The school may have a handbook for students and for teachers. You also need to meet the following personnel:

1. Principal
2. General education teachers
3. School psychologist
4. School counselor
5. Speech therapist
6. Occupational therapist
7. Physical therapist
8. Orientation and mobility specialist
9. Adaptive physical education specialist
10. School nurse or nurse's aide
11. Librarian, or library clerk
12. Assistant principal (who is often responsible for discipline)
13. Office staff
14. Custodians

In addition, you need to investigate:

1. The media center
2. Resources for English Language Learners
3. Bilingual materials
4. Curriculum guides
5. Back to School Night/Open House
6. Parent/teacher conferences
7. Faculty meetings
8. Procedures for conducting field trips
9. Grade level expectations
10. Child/study procedures
11. Rtl procedures
12. District/school/grade level rubrics
13. Video recording protocol
14. Schools activities (before and after school)

DURING

Student Teaching

Attendance

Student teaching placement

The student teaching assignment is considered a full-time job. The student is expected to attend all day, every day except in case of unavoidable absence. In cases of unavoidable absence, the student must notify the Mentor Teacher(s) and Chapman University Supervisor in advance. If your absences exceed a total of THREE days, your assignment shall be extended. Students doing their student teaching while on an Internship Credential must follow school procedures for reporting absences.

Substitute teaching with the student teaching placement

In rare instances, a student teacher may be permitted to substitute on a limited basis. This may not occur for **more than four days** within the entire semester. The student teacher must have a Substitute Teaching Permit on file with the district. Student teachers are to be compensated the district's daily substitute rate.

Continuity in student teaching

Once the candidate has begun a student teaching assignment, s/he will be expected to complete it. Changes of assignment are not made except in extreme cases of student teacher/Mentor Teacher incompatibility as determined by the principal, Mentor Teacher, and Fieldwork Administrator and the Special Education Program Coordinator.

Labor dispute policy

It is the policy of Chapman University to advise students not to involve themselves in labor disputes at school districts while they are doing their fieldwork (e.g., observation, internship, or student teaching). Chapman students are advised not to be in the classroom, to cross picket lines, attend labor meetings, participate in strike-related activities, or to teach as a substitute while a strike is in progress.

The student teaching experience

Overview of traditional student teaching

You will register for 3 units of EDUC 590 and 3 units of EDUC 592 if you are in the Mild/Moderate Education Specialist credential program. If you are in the Moderate/Severe Education Specialist credential program you will register for 3 units of EDUC 591 and 3 units of EDUC 593. In order to register you obtain the signature of the Special Education Program Coordinator on the Chapman University "Add" form. Once the form is signed you will take it to the Registrar's Office to officially register for student teaching. No on-line registration is permitted for student teaching registration.

The Fieldwork Administrator, in conjunction with the Special Education Program Coordinator arranges for your student teaching placement. Your input concerning your student teaching location is always considered. Mentor Teachers, schools and districts must be approved in accordance with Chapman University program standards. We make every attempt to consider commuting, child care,

family responsibilities, etc. when deciding on your placement, but our primary goal is to ensure you have a successful experience.

Student teaching assignments are made in public schools. Student teaching in an alternative program that meets qualifying guidelines may be considered (see the Special Education Program Coordinator for additional information about these requirements). In addition:

1. Student teaching must be completed in a diverse school setting relative to all of the following:
 - a. Race, ethnicity of the students
 - b. Numbers of students from families below the federal poverty level, number or percentage of students on scholarship, tuition assistance, or other proxy.
 - c. Languages spoken by the students, including English learners
 - d. The inclusiveness of the school for students with disabilities and the process for students to receive additional services, i.e. student study team and individualized education program processes.
2. Special Education student teaching is a minimum of a 16 week experience at a grade level different from the majority of the candidates' previous experiences (e.g., Praxis courses, through employment as an instructional assistant, volunteer work).
3. You must have the equivalent of full teaching responsibility of the total class, all day, for a period of at least 4 weeks.
4. Although each placement is scheduled for 16 weeks, it may be changed or lengthened, based upon the recommendation of the Mentor Teacher, University Student Teaching Supervisor and/or the action of the Special Education Program Coordinator.

Overview of student teaching on an Internship Credential

You will register for 3 units of EDUC 590 and 3 units of EDUC 592 if you are in the Mild/Moderate Education Specialist credential program. If you are in the Moderate/Severe Education Specialist credential program you will register for 3 units of EDUC 591 and 3 units of EDUC 593. Generally, the semester immediate following being hired as an Intern, students will elect to complete their first 3 units of student teaching. Most students have found this to be helpful in obtaining additional support as they begin their new responsibilities as a full time classroom teacher. The final 3 units of student teaching will occur the last semester of a student's credential program. In order to register you must obtain the signature of the Special Education Program Coordinator on the Chapman University "Add" form. Once the form is signed you will take it to the Registrar's Office to officially register for student teaching. No on-line registration is permitted for student teaching registration.

Support

The candidate's support team will consist of:

1. The Mentor Teacher at the school (unless the student is in an Intern position, then the school district will assign a support provider to the Intern)
2. University Supervisor assigned by Chapman University,
3. The Fieldwork Administrator, and
4. The Special Education Program Coordinator

The Mentor Teacher in whose class you are placed will play several roles: First, he or she will model for you various ways of working with children. You may be allowed to observe the class for several days before you assume teaching duties. During that time, observe carefully and think about what you see and how you can use the strategies modeled. Second, your Mentor Teacher will use his/her professional judgment in transferring responsibility to you. The pace at which the teaching role is transferred to you should be negotiated to the satisfaction of both of you. The University Supervisor may be called upon to help determine the most productive time-line. The Mentor Teacher has the right to specify what major units are to be taught, but you should have the freedom to plan how those units will be taught. We encourage collaboration. Third, your Mentor Teacher is your mentor who will outline what is expected in terms of:

1. Classroom management
2. Preparation and planning
3. "Housekeeping chores"
4. Effective teaching strategies
5. Rapport with students
6. Attendance and punctuality
7. Dress and grooming
8. Various duty assignments
9. Cooperation with other teachers
10. Communication with parents

If you do not get direction, ask for it. Your Mentor Teacher will observe you, will coach you and will encourage problem solving. Use the Mentor Teacher's suggestions to engage in thoughtful reflection and self-analysis. To that purpose, your Mentor Teacher is requested to remain in the room during your first weeks of student teaching, leaving you alone with the class only as appropriate throughout the remainder of the term. More important than the moral support of his/her presence, are the suggestions for improvement. A regular time for daily conferences should be established.

Your Mentor Teacher will be asked to complete formal evaluations throughout your student teaching placement, and a final summative evaluation at the conclusion of your student teaching. The formative and summative evaluations will be reviewed with you. After review, the evaluations are given to the University Supervisor. The summative evaluation also serves as a letter of recommendation for your placement file and the basis of your grade. Other observation and evaluation forms may be handwritten.

Your University Supervisor will provide valuable guidance. Your University Supervisor works cooperatively with your Mentor Teacher to maintain high professional standards while giving you support and help.

Your University Supervisor will meet with you prior to your first assignment, usually at the student teacher orientation meeting. During the course of each 16 week placement, your University Supervisor will visit approximately every other week and observe you. Your University Supervisor may ask you to critique your lesson and will give you a copy of the narrative critique written by her or him during the lesson. He or she will be available for a conference whenever possible and always at your request. Strengths and weaknesses of the lesson as well as specific suggestions for

improvement will be included in your University Supervisor's observations and evaluations. Copies of all University Supervisor observations and evaluations will be discussed with you and placed in your file. In addition, you are required to participate (to some extent) in a formal assessment, data collection for a Behavior Intervention Plan, and an observation of an IEP meeting. In addition, your University Supervisor will complete a summative evaluation report at the end of your student teaching experience. Collaboratively, your University Supervisor and Mentor Teacher will complete your formative TPE Portfolio grid at the end of your placement.

At the conclusion of student teaching, your University Supervisor will place these evaluations, along with those of the Mentor Teacher, in your file.

The principal can help you in becoming an integral part of the school community. By becoming an active member of the school's teaching staff, you can participate in many worthwhile activities such as grade-level meetings, faculty meetings, and in-service sessions. These activities will broaden your understanding of the teaching profession and allow you to network. The principal may observe you.

The Fieldwork Administrator, in conjunction with the Special Education Program Coordinator, is the person responsible for your student teaching placement and for approving other teaching experiences. She/he is the person who coordinates all aspects of your student teaching experience. The Fieldwork Administrator is the appropriate person to contact if you have concerns about your placement, your Mentor Teacher, University Supervisor, or your experience. She/he can make suggestions for helping the situation. Should you have problems or concerns about your experience you first should speak to your Mentor Teacher. If you are unable to solve your problems, talk to your University Supervisor. If you are unable to reach a satisfactory solution, talk to the Fieldwork Administrator. If you are still unable to reach a satisfactory solution contact the Special Education Program Coordinator.

A few suggestions

Student teaching is an activity that will take a great deal of time and energy. Your responsibilities as a teacher are fulfilled when tasks are accomplished, not when the bell rings. Please consider the following:

1. Professional responsibility is fulfilled in terms of tasks accomplished, not in terms of hours spent at school. You need to spend as much time as necessary to complete tasks that accompany your teaching responsibilities. Your student teaching assignment must be your first priority.
2. In the first few weeks, try to make extensive observations of other classrooms in the school to see a variety of teaching styles, grade levels, classroom management techniques, instructional methods, and evaluation approaches.
3. During the observation before you take major responsibility for the class, assist your Mentor Teacher in preparing materials, identifying student needs, and evaluating students' work. You should also observe and prepare to assume the responsibilities performed by your Mentor Teacher including yard duty and supervision.
4. You are expected to request a regular time for daily and/or weekly conferences with your Mentor Teacher: the schedule should be agreed upon early in the assignment.

5. Throughout your assignment, you will be devoting attention to individual pupils and their needs as you develop strategies to address individual differences. You can use this diversity and the breadth of your students' experiences to stimulate student interest and motivation.
6. You will want to develop skills in the classroom management. You will have students with a wide range of behaviors and you will need to channel those behaviors into appropriate ones. This can be done by creating a respectful classroom environment that values each individual's experiences, voice, and contribution. You should develop good rapport with your students as you create a classroom environment that promotes mutual respect.
7. Effective communication is extremely important in human relationships and classrooms are no exception. You will want to strive for clarity in communication.
8. Remember the importance of assessing learning in a real life context and evaluate the progress of individual students toward clear and reasonable learning goals in an authentic manner.
9. Helping students become critical thinkers is important. You need to facilitate the integration of new learning with prior learning, the evaluation of information, analytical thinking and the reaching of sound conclusions.
10. An attribute of excellent teachers is to be reflective. To be a reflective practitioner, you must engage in self-review and reflection. Seek suggestions for improvement, accept constructive criticism gracefully, and attempt to implement their suggestions.
11. As a student teacher, you are considered an ex-officio faculty member and as such you have the opportunity (and obligation) to participate in faculty meetings, parent conferences, staff development, back to school night, field trips, and after school activities and events.
12. Parents play a very important role in the education of their children. As a student teacher, you should consider participating in parent conferences, home visits, PTA meetings, newsletters, journals, and phone conferences
13. Do not forget student information is confidential information and must not be discussed without authorization

Facilitating progress

You can facilitate your progress and development by:

1. Developing lesson plans that are complete and developmentally appropriate
2. Implementing the suggestions of your Mentor Teacher, Support Provider, or University Supervisor
3. Responding positively to constructive criticism
4. Varying strategies to meet the needs of students
5. Keeping excuses and complaints to a minimum
6. Asking for help
7. Showing initiative and personal responsibility
8. Volunteering to help and/or take charge
9. Demonstrating flexibility in attitudes and practices

In addition to your evaluation forms, you will also receive a grade for student teaching. If you receive a grade lower than a "B-" you may be required to repeat the student teaching assignment in a different school, withdraw from the program, or be counseled out of the program by the Special

Education Program Coordinator. Appeals should be directed to the Associate Dean of the Donna Ford Attallah College of Educational Studies.

Assignment difficulties

If difficulties arise, it is important you attempt to solve those difference with the person closest to the situation. For example, if you have a conflict with your Mentor Teacher, first talk to your Mentor Teacher. If that does not solve the problem, then talk to your University Supervisor. The University Supervisor may then talk to the Mentor Teacher separately or in a joint meeting with you. If you still feel a satisfactory resolution has not been reached, you can talk to the Fieldwork Administrator and the Special Education Program Coordinator. In the event you experience serious problems with your student teaching, you may be asked, in collaboration with your Mentor Teacher and/or University Supervisor, to devise and implement an action plan for improving the situation. Your plan will then be monitored by the University Supervisor.

Evaluations and grading

The evaluations that are done are based upon the California Standards for the Teaching Professions (CSTP) and the Teacher Performance Expectations (TPE) established by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (see appendices for the evaluation forms).

Evaluation timeline

To standardize the evaluation process, all forms for evaluation are located in the appendices.

Please note that on the summative evaluation form, if any standard is marked as “Unacceptable,” you will not receive a passing grade for your student teaching assignment.

On rare occasions, student teachers receive a failing grade. However, the members of your support team will do everything they can to prevent this from happening. They will provide assistance, warnings and counsel with detailed written recommendations and suggestions for improvement. You may be asked to devise an action plan to solve problems. If you are not getting guidance, ask for it.

Grading

Student teaching is graded on via a “letter grade” basis as determined by the formative and summative evaluations by the University Supervisor and Mentor Teacher, and your TPE Portfolio.

AFTER

Student Teaching

Appeals process

Each student has the right of academic appeal. According to the *Faculty Manual*, “Faculty members are not permitted to change final grades, after submission to the Registrar’s Office, except for clerical error.” However, if you feel that your University Supervisor assigned an inappropriate grade you may do the following:

1. Discuss your concerns with your University Supervisor. Your University Supervisor will explain to you why you were given the grade. The evaluation form should be helpful.
2. If, after discussing your concerns with your University Supervisor, you still feel that your grade does not accurately reflect your performance in the classroom, you need to make an appointment to discuss your concerns with the Special Education Program Coordinator. Your University Supervisor should also be present at this meeting.
3. If you remain dissatisfied after this meeting you may take your grievance to the Associate Dean of the Donna Ford Attallah College of Educational Studies who will “act as an ombudsman, or in rare cases, where the matter is of serious proportions, the student may petition consideration by the Graduate Studies Committee.”

Program Exit Interview

Once all 6 units of student teaching have been completed you will need to schedule an appointment with the Special Education Program Coordinator to complete a Program Exit Interview. Prior to the Program Exit Interview you will complete a Self Assessment (see Appendices) in which you will evaluate your current skills across several dimensions. This Self Assessment will be the same Assessment that was completed in the EDUC 561 course. You will bring the completed Self Assessment with you to the Exit Interview to discuss with the Special Education Program Coordinator. You will also bring with you to the Exit Interview your completed Individual Development Plan (IDP).

After the Special Education Program Coordinator reviews the Self Assessment, your grades throughout the program, and your IDP for the program, you will be asked a series of three questions. If student grades or information on the Professional Development Self Assessment appear to indicate an area of weakness, the three questions that are asked will pertain to these weaknesses. If no weaknesses are indicated in either the student’s grades or the Self Assessment three questions are randomly selected. In either case the questions come from a pool of questions that are based upon specific course objectives. Each of the three questions is rated on a scale from 1 (unsatisfactory) to a score of 4 (outstanding) using Donna Ford Attallah College of Educational Studies rubric. These scores are then averaged to give an overall exit rating score. In the rare case the student receives an average score of 2 or less a plan of correction is drafted which would require you will be required to either take a specific course(s) again (or audit the course in the upcoming semester) or complete additional work for specific competencies.