

UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS
School of Education



Student Teaching Handbook

A Guide for Student Teachers
and
Cooperating Teachers

Revised
June 2011

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Introduction

Student teaching is an important experience in the professional preparation of prospective teachers. It represents the culminating phase of the student's course of study designed to provide personal involvement and experience with the teaching learning process. It integrates general and professional course work in ways that connect educational theory and classroom practice. Through guidance from practitioners in the profession and university faculty, student teachers develop competencies requisite for effective teaching and student interaction within the classroom setting. This experience is pivotal to the development of teaching skills, behaviors, and attitudes that are indispensable for future teachers.

Student teaching is a demanding process that will absorb a great deal of the student's time and energy. It requires commitment and diligence. Though challenging, it can be a satisfying and rewarding experience. Success in student teaching will be determined in large measure by the student's ability to apply and integrate understandings gleaned in education courses to the classroom context. Demonstration of initiative and a positive attitude are crucial elements for a successful student teaching experience. Student teaching is a learning experience, and if viewed within that context can be gratifying as well.

This handbook has been prepared to increase the awareness and understanding of those persons involved in this cooperative undertaking. It attempts to delineate their roles and responsibilities, communicate expectations, clarify standards, suggest policies, and offer guidelines for the successful implementation of the student teaching program. Questions or concerns regarding student teaching should be directed to the Clinical Director or the office of the School of Education.

The University of the Virgin Islands through the School of Education is grateful to the personnel in all cooperating schools who make major contributions to the student teaching program.

School of Education
University of the Virgin Islands

Purposes and Objectives

The overarching purpose of student teaching is to provide opportunities for student teachers to gain exposure and practice skills and behaviors requisite for effective teaching. In so doing, student teachers gain competencies planning, implementing, and evaluating learning experiences for students under their care. It affords the examination, demonstration, and application of psychological, educational, and management principles and theories within the actual classroom setting. Under the supervision of selected practitioners, student teachers are gradually oriented into the teaching learning process. Through guided observations and continuous feedback, they are provided multiple and consistent opportunities to develop skill in conveying content, applying varied methodologies, promoting thinking, and interacting appropriately with students. The experience is designed to afford them a first hand view of the rewards, complexities and subtleties of the teaching-learning situation. They are able to embrace values and develop an appreciation for the work of a teacher and the teaching profession.

At the end of this supervised experience, student teachers should be able to make informed, responsible decisions, demonstrate the capability to prepare and execute lesson plans, employ varied methodologies and management procedures, and evidence understanding of the use of various assessment and evaluation procedures. They should be able to display adequate levels of teaching competency and a commitment to continued growth and development.

Academic Prerequisites

Admission to the School of Education is required for student teaching. Students should review the Undergraduate Student Handbook concerning admission to the unit. In addition, to be eligible for student teaching, the applicant must be in good academic standing and of senior status. Incompletes (I) or grades of C- or beneath in all other required education courses must be removed prior to being granted permission to student teach.

Placement of Student Teachers

Consistent with the policy of the School of Education, students are assigned to schools in a placement appropriate to their level of concentration or content area. Students may also be placed in private schools that are accredited. Placement in cooperating schools is determined by students' request and the ability of the cooperating school to accommodate them. To the extent possible, students' requests are honored.

Once students complete the necessary forms indicating their choice of school and grade level, these requests are made in writing to the appropriate school official, usually the principal of that school. When the principal informs the university supervisor of the availability and assignment of cooperating teachers,

students are then notified of their placement by the university supervisor. Student teachers are not permitted to go to cooperating schools to seek or arrange individual placements.

Selection of Cooperating Teachers

The selection of cooperating teachers is primarily done by the principal or department chair in the cooperating school with the university supervisor jointly matching students to cooperating teacher in some cases. In general, cooperating teachers are selected based on their academic preparation, experience, exemplary service, willingness to participate, and effective interpersonal and social skills.

Student Teaching Calendar

The student teaching experience is consistent with the calendar of the university with regard to the starting and ending dates. Students should be ready to attend the cooperating school during the first week university classes begin. Once in the public schools, student teachers follow the calendar schedule of the Department of Education. Attendance at weekly seminars is based on the university's calendar, however.

Elementary student teachers and inclusive early childhood student teachers are assigned to the cooperating schools for full day sessions for the entire semester. Secondary student teachers are assigned to the cooperating school for half-day sessions for the same period.

Classroom Visits

Elementary and inclusive early childhood student teachers are required to receive a minimum of seven classroom observations by the university supervisor with secondary students receiving a minimum of five observations. The university supervisor reserves the right to visit student teachers additional times if warranted. Post-observation conferences are required for each observation.

Policy Statement

a. Strikes or Job Actions

In the event a strike is in effect, student teachers are not permitted to participate or be present in the system. Student teachers are responsible for informing the cooperating teacher and principal or department chair that they are not permitted to be present during this time. Notification should be made immediately to the university supervisor in such cases. Student teachers should request that the principal and cooperating teacher inform them when the strike is

over so that they may resume their duties. The university supervisor should be informed promptly of the resumption of the student teachers schedule.

b. Transportation

Students enrolled in student teaching are responsible for providing their own transportation to and from the cooperating school.

c. Dress Code

Professional attire should conform with the policies and dress code established by the Department of Education and the cooperating school. A cautionary note is to avoid extremes. The student teacher should secure a copy of the dress code of the school and act accordingly. In general, slacks, jeans, slippers, see-through garments and other casual form of clothing are inappropriate for this setting. Student teachers are encouraged to exercise professional judgment in their attire on the school campus.

d. Grievances

The university policies regarding grievance procedures are referenced in the undergraduate catalog under the heading "Academic Information and Regulations." A Student Handbook prepared by the Office of Student Affairs describes the procedures in detail. In each academic division, a grievance committee is established which consists of a faculty appointed by the division chair and a student representative. Written notification to the division chair formally initiates the grievance process.

In general, a student having a complaint against a faculty member, should follow the procedures outlined below. Dissatisfaction with any step would require appeal to the next step.

1. Discuss the matter with the faculty member.
2. Discuss the matter with the Dean of the School of Education.
3. Appeal to the Grievance Committee.
4. Appeal to the Provost

Roles and Responsibilities of the Student Teacher

The role of the student teacher is two-fold. On the one hand, the student teacher is a learner and on the other a co-teacher. As a learner, the student teacher is acquiring specific knowledge, developing professional skills, and forming socially recognized attitudes, behaviors and disposition which are generally accepted as contributing to a teacher's success in the classroom.

As a co-teacher, the student teacher must plan and guide learning experiences for students under his/her tutelage geared toward successful achievement of cognitive and affective goals. This two-part role of the student teacher includes many responsibilities which gradually increase as the student teacher gains experience. In executing these roles, there are a number of expectations and responsibilities for which the student must be accountable. In general, the student teacher should:

1. devote his/her energies to student teaching by freeing himself of outside employment, heavy course load, or other campus responsibilities.
2. maintain an attitude of open-mindedness and willingness to learn.
3. attend faculty meetings, assemblies, workshops and other programs sponsored by the Department of Education and the cooperating school, and assist in executing school programs and special events.
4. demonstrate adaptability to new professional situations by exercising social and emotional maturity.
5. refrain from making any unprofessional commentary about the cooperating teacher, cooperating school, students, or university supervisor.
6. remember that the cooperating teacher has legal control of the class, and the student teacher is a visitor in the room.
7. endeavor to establish and maintain a cooperative, mature, working relationship with the cooperating teacher, students, and other school personnel.
8. be constructive and positive when discussing observations or problems of the cooperating school.
9. appreciate, accept, and seek criticisms and suggestions and be willing to implement them.
10. manifest genuine pride in the teaching profession.
11. demonstrate growth in self-analysis by being able to critically analyze

his/her strengths and weaknesses.

From the perspective of the university, the student teacher should:

1. attend weekly seminars conducted by the university supervisor.
2. confer openly and frequently with the university supervisor on matters relevant to student teaching.
3. regard the university supervisor as one who is trying to help and assist the student teaching in the adjustment to the profession of teaching.
4. maintain a student teaching portfolio illustrating growth and accomplishments during the student teaching experience.

From an instructional and management perspective, the student teacher should:

1. plan learning experiences for students appropriate to their age level and consistent with the course of study for the school.
2. diagnose students' needs and plan activities appropriate to those needs.
3. maintain a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning while being firm and consistent in classroom discipline.
4. set and reinforce clear expectations for academic and social behaviors.
5. model appropriate speech and language behaviors.
6. become acquainted with children by learning their names, characteristics, and individual differences.
7. use every opportunity to observe the specific procedures and techniques the cooperating teacher uses in achieving educational " objectives.
8. be accepting of the cooperating teacher's suggestions and criticism and view them as learning tools.

From the perspective of the school, the student teacher should:

1. report to the cooperating school each morning at the time regular teachers report and remain in the afternoon as long as seems desirable for evaluating teaching, planning work, and caring for daily routines.
2. submit a copy of the cooperating teacher's schedule to the university supervisor no later than the end of the first week.
3. notify the school promptly when he/she is unable to attend.
4. prepare and submit detailed lessons for all lessons to the cooperating teacher with sufficient time that would allow for review and modification prior to implementation.
5. maintain reflective journal entries keeping notes of strengths, challenges, and areas in need of improvement.
6. prepare teaching aids, bulletin boards, and learning centers.
7. demonstrate initiative, resourcefulness and appreciation for the assistance the cooperating teacher is rendering.

Suggested Orientation Schedule

The induction of the student teacher in this process is a gradual one which increases as time passes and the student teacher manifest behaviors indicative of his/her readiness to assume greater responsibilities.

Phase I

From the first day, the student teacher should be engaged in some way. While many opportunities abound some of the more common ones include, calling the roll, distributing materials, correcting assignments, monitoring groups, assisting with morning exercises and dismissal, conducting homeroom, leading review sessions, or other routine activities.

The student teacher should use this first week to examine curriculum guides and texts in preparation for the first teaching assignment, observe the teachers instructional and management strategies, get acquainted with the school policies and procedures, and plan for the semester unit.

Phase II

By the second week, the student teacher should assume responsibility for teaching small groups of children or the entire class in selected subject areas. As the weeks progress, the responsibilities will increase in terms of the number of lessons, and the nature and sequence of the lessons assigned. The university supervisor may offer a tentative orientation schedule for the semester to further assist the cooperating teacher in the orientation process.

Phase III

The student teacher should be assuming responsibilities for the morning sessions for one or more weeks, and the afternoon sessions for a comparable length of time. The student teacher may also alternate teaching responsibilities with the cooperating teacher by teaching every other class periods.

Phase IV

Full responsibility for the final weeks of the student teaching experience will be determined jointly by the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor. During this time, the student teacher should assume the major teaching duties for the entire class. The cooperating teacher should feel free to leave the class to the guidance of the student teacher, even though he or she remains in the room.

Planning and the Student Teacher

A necessary prerequisite for teaching is the act of planning. Regardless of the grade level or subject matter, every good teacher must plan carefully and thoroughly. A lesson plan serves to organize the learning experiences and activities within which students would be engaged in a systematic pattern aimed at achieving the objectives of the lesson. The importance of planning cannot be understated for the experienced teacher, and it is even more critical for the neophyte.

Planning for teaching is essential since it represents a road map to the teacher's thoughts and actions. It is what the student teacher envisions the teaching-learning process to be from beginning to end. It is undeniably true that sound planning takes time and requires careful thought. The dividends of such time are worth the effort. Even though planning does not ensure good teaching, it is equally true that advance, sound preparation leads to exciting and effective classroom teaching and more valuable educational experiences for learners.

Planning helps the student teacher to think specifically about the concepts, skills, or understandings to be presented. It helps student teachers to consider possible instructional alternatives, ways to sequence learning experiences in a logical fashion, and encourages the student teacher to seriously consider the most appropriate questions and examples to present for optimum understanding.

Effective teaching will not automatically occur. It must be systematically and analytically thought out and organized. This reduces trial and error and provides for better and more effective utilization of instructional time. A carefully thought out plan, prepared in advance, and flexibly used serves as a valuable teaching tool for the student teacher.

It is extremely necessary for student teachers to write detailed lesson plans during this practicum experience. Minimum planning at this stage is most unwise for the beginner teacher. Planning helps to clarify your thoughts and provides a document that can be used as an instructional tool to analyze your ideas, teaming activities, questioning skill, lesson sequencing, example selection, and teaching approaches. Much useful information can be gleaned from examination of a detailed lesson plan. Written plans provide evidence that the student teacher planned for the progress and well being of the learners under his/her direction.

The cooperating teacher and university supervisor will determine the appropriate time for individual student teachers to commence writing short form plans. Student teachers are cautioned that short form plans require daily thinking. It is the written account that is less descriptive. Short form plans are important for student teachers to gain practice with the transition to the kind of plan they will need to write eventually as fully-fledged teachers: The decision to write these plans will be based on the student teacher's demonstration of sufficient competence in detailed daily planning and in lesson execution.

Though varying formats exist, the components listed below represent the minimum essential elements in any plan.

I. Instructional Objectives

Instructional objective(s) state the learning outcomes you expect students to acquire by the end of the instructional period. They detail what students should be able to do or say by the end of the lesson. Instructional objectives should be written in terms that are descriptive of learning outcomes and not learning activities that student should perform. They should be stated in measurable, observable, specific, unambiguous, and student-oriented terms. Instructional objectives should be attainable in the time allotted and should reflect various cognitive and affective levels.. A well written objective will include a condition, behavior, and criterion.

II. Subject Matter Content Analysis

This component delineates the key or major facts of the content that will be presented in the lesson. These ideas should be comprehensive in nature, specific, and sequenced in the order of presentation. The items in this component are not procedural statements but ones of fact that will be communicated to students.

III. Instructional Materials

These materials refer to the variety of tools available to the teacher to assist in the clarity of the instruction while meeting the needs of students who maybe linguistically and culturally different. Through the variety of instructional materials designed to appeal to the various senses, accommodations are made for instructing students with diverse leaning styles and modalities. Instructional materials include projected and non-projected materials such as audio and visual aids, charts, models, pictures, graph, maps, globes, flannel board, sound recorders, video recorders, physical models, visual aids, overhead projectors, and films.

IV. Procedure

The procedure component of the plan describes in detail "how" the lesson will be presented from the introduction to the evaluation. It represents the "meat" of the plan where the objective is achieved. There are three basic sub-components of the procedure.

1. **Introduction**

The introduction refers to the focusing event designed to arouse students' interest in the lesson. It can serve as an attention grabber, or may be used to link previous learning to new understandings. This event should incorporate students' prior knowledge and ready them for the lesson. It should culminate with the lesson's objective. This component is also referred to as the motivation, set induction, or anticipatory set.

2. **Development**

This component presents a detailed description of "how" the lesson will be executed. It includes all the learning experiences, questions, major ideas, examples, non-examples, and how the student teacher plans to present and use the materials. The development starts when the teacher begins to set the stage to achieve the objective(s). It demonstrates the particular methodology employed and shows how the lesson is sequenced and the nature, type, and level of questions that you pose. It specifies the activities the student teacher develops for students' involvement. Guided practice is an important aspect of the development as it seeks to check for comprehension and clarity of concept attainment or skill development. This component is the body of the plan, and is the longest section in the lesson plan.

3. **Culmination**

This component represents the final activity or summary of the lesson where key major ideas are reviewed or applied. It is not a re-teaching of the lesson. Specific key questions by the teacher should guide the review process. Prepared group learning activities should dominate this component. The culmination is the final activity that wraps up the lesson prior to the assignment of independent practice. This component is particularly suited for engaging students in cooperative group activities that reinforce the objective(s).

V. **Evaluation/Independent Practice**

This component includes the method of evaluation the student teacher uses to determine if the objectives have been achieved. It should include the independent practice assignment for this lesson. These exercises must be

consistent with the stated objectives and the body of the lesson. Independent exercises should be completed within the instructional period and not be confused-with homework assignments. The items in this component provide documented evidence of each student's understanding of the objectives and major ideas presented in the lesson. Results of independent practice items provide direction and guidance for future instructional decisions. (*This component is an appropriate place to provide for individual differences among students within the instructional period.*)

Self-Reflection and the Student Teacher

The student teacher should engage in self-reflection and self-analysis of all lessons executed to see the degree to which objectives were realized, the possible measures that must be taken to improve student outcomes, or the need to provide additional reinforcement or enrichment.

The following guide may be useful to assist student teachers in the process of self-analysis.

1. What do you consider to be the strengths of the lesson?
2. Why do you think these are strengths?
3. What do you consider to be the weaknesses or problematic areas of the lesson?
4. Why do you think these are weaknesses?
5. For each weakness or problematic area, indicate what you would do differently and why.
6. What was your teaching approach? (expository, guided discovery, inquiry, discussion)
7. How would you rate this lesson and why?
8. If you had to re-teach this lesson, what would you do differently and why?

Roles and Responsibilities of the Cooperating Teacher

It is undeniably true that one of the most important individuals in this cooperative undertaking is the cooperating teacher. His/Her role is a fundamental one since that individual must work daily and closely with the student teacher. The cooperating teacher directs, guides, and evaluates the student teacher's performance and professional behaviors and competencies. The cooperating teacher serves as a mentor, support system, and confidant for the student teacher. In this capacity, the cooperating teacher exerts great influence on the student teacher and is instrumental in providing a worthwhile learning experience. Establishing proper rapport and mutual respect for each other are essential if a successful and rewarding experience is to be realized.

The cooperating teacher is an exemplary colleague and evaluator whose duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to those listed below. A responsible cooperating teacher should:

1. be willing to attend the orientation session for cooperating teachers
2. prepare for the student teacher's arrival by informing the students of the student teacher's (co-teacher) role as a team member.
3. provide a space for the student teacher with a separate set of materials, if possible.
4. discuss the instructional program with the student teacher.
5. acquaint the student teacher with the daily schedule, physical facilities, student records, and the policies, routines, and procedures of the school.
acquaint the student teacher with the goals and objectives for the semester, including past developments and projected ones.
6. develop a sequenced program of varied responsibilities that will enable the student teacher to become involved gradually while assuming more responsibilities.
7. be professionally honest with the student teacher and communicate freely on all matters.
8. provide specific feedback, constructive criticism, appropriate suggestions and offer encouragement and support.
9. make the student teacher feel that he/she has a share in the responsibility of the classroom.
10. examine and discuss the student teacher's plan, raising appropriate questions regarding omissions and making helpful suggestions for

improvement.

11. plan cooperatively with the student teacher and entertain full interplay of questioning.
12. enforce the requirement that all plans are to be submitted and reviewed prior to any lesson presentation.
13. conduct regular and frequent conferences with the student teacher, keeping him/her informed of his/her progress.
14. assist the student teacher in evaluating his/her teaching and in accepting less successful experiences as an expected phase of student teaching process and learning experience.
15. keep written accounts of conferences (anecdotal records, brief notes).
16. remain alert for signs of need and give assistance tactfully.
17. report to the university supervisor positive aspects of the student teacher's performance along with concerns, problems, or issues that must be addressed by the university supervisor.
18. give the student an opportunity to assume full teaching responsibilities.

Planning and the Cooperating Teacher

The student teacher's plan should be understandable and functional. It should be reviewed by the cooperating teacher at a time designated convenient for discussions. Reviewing the student teacher's plan enables the cooperating teacher to provide guidance, clarify thoughts, identify omissions, provide feedback, and further solidify understanding. It acquaints the cooperating teacher with the student teachers' intentions and offers a medium for helping the student teacher develop strengths and improve on areas in need of development. It assures the cooperating teacher that the elements vital to the attainment of the lesson objectives are being included and adequately presented. In addition, it makes the student teacher realize that his or her efforts are being recognized and that planning is an important activity in the teaching learning process.

In evaluating the quality of the student teacher's lesson plan, the cooperating teacher may wish to consider the following:

1. Is the objective clearly stated with all three components included?
2. Does the subject matter content component contain the critical facts needed to achieve the objective (s).
3. Is there set induction or motivation? Is it relevant, well developed and clear?
4. Does the motivation lead into the lesson or does it appear to be of little value to what follows?
5. Are questions missing that will focus students on the objective?
6. What instructional materials are used? Were they appropriate for the lesson? Were they appropriately used?
7. Is the development consistent with the identified objective?
8. Does the student teacher tell information that could be elicited?
9. What types and level of questions are used in the plan?
10. Are key facts or attributes of concepts presented or is there a focus on memorization and exposition?
11. Are students encouraged to discover concepts and generalizations?
12. Does the instructional methodology promote thinking?
13. Are sufficient examples provided? Do the examples embody the concept

- being presented where appropriate?
14. Is there evidence of guided practice?
 15. Is there independent practice for each objective? Is the independent practice consistent with objective (s)?
 16. Did the plan develop the objective?
 17. Is the plan sufficiently detailed to allow for useful feedback?

Evaluation and the Student Teacher

Evaluation is another integral and important part of a teacher's work. It is an ongoing process initiated from the first moment the student teacher meets the cooperating teacher. Its purposes are varied and is used primarily as a learning tool designed to enhance and promote the growth and development of the student teacher. Through prescriptive and descriptive assessment of the student teacher's performance, opportunities for maintenance of skills and refinement of new knowledge become possible.

The cooperating teacher will evaluate the student teacher's lessons and provide feedback regarding its strengths and shortcomings. In addition, specific lessons will be formally evaluated and submitted to the university supervisor. A mid-semester progress report will be completed by the cooperating teacher, and a final evaluation report using the competencies given will evaluate the overall performance of the student teacher throughout the student teaching experience. It is advisable that the Student Teacher Competency and Evaluation Record form be actively used during the semester since there are the same competencies that will be used to evaluate the student teacher at the end of the student teaching experience. The form is at the end of this handbook.

Evaluation and the Cooperating Teacher

Evaluating the student teacher's performance is essential in this endeavor and should be done on a daily basis. There should be a designated time period set aside for this purpose with general and specific concepts being addressed. This sort of conferencing provides_ an opportunity to clarify understandings and share matters of concerns. It is advisable to identify the positive aspects first, then the areas of weakness which should be followed by suggestions and recommendations. The following questions will assist the cooperating teacher in evaluating the student teacher's lesson:

- I . Are students aware of the objective(s) of the lesson?

2. Is the lesson related to student's prior knowledge or experiences?
3. Are students encouraged to think and discover concepts and relationships or are they being told facts?
4. Are students motivated to participate in the lesson?
5. Is the teacher enthusiastic?
6. Are students praised for their efforts and accomplishments?
7. Is there a productive balance between teacher demonstration and active meaningful responding by students?
8. Are students actively involved in the lesson?
9. Are adequate amount of examples provided?
10. How are individual differences accounted for?
11. Does the lesson develop from simple to complex?
12. Is the student teacher tactful and considerate when responding to students?
13. Do questions promote thinking?
14. Does the student teacher monitor students' work and use the results of assessment to revise the instructional program?
15. Does the student teacher bring attention to inappropriate behavior in . dealing with transgressions?
16. Are students involved in cooperative group activities?
17. Are independent exercises challenging and appropriate for specified objectives?
18. Is the lesson conducted within the allotted time frame?

The cooperating teacher should realize that the inability on the part of the student teacher to provide effective instruction is in no way a reflection on the cooperating teacher after she/he has aided the student teacher to the best of his/her ability. While this experience will not produce master teachers, careful and conscientious guidance will enable each student teacher to develop to the best of his/her ability.

Roles and Responsibilities of the University Supervisor

The supervisor of student teaching is a faculty member in the School of Education at the University of the Virgin Islands. She/he coordinates the student teaching program and acts as a liaison between the university and the cooperating schools through the Department of Education. The university supervisor facilitates cooperative relationship between the university and the cooperating school. As a member of the team, the university supervisor is a colleague who works closely with cooperating teachers and student teachers in assuring that the objectives and expectations of the program are effectively implemented. The roles and responsibilities of the university supervisor are to:

1. seek educational placements for student teachers in public schools.
2. conduct a weekly student teaching seminar and provide exposure to resource persons in the field.
3. plan and conduct cooperating teacher orientation workshops prior to student teacher's placement in schools.
4. introduce students to the administration of the cooperating schools.
5. observe student teachers and provide guidance and direction in the development of effective teaching skills.
6. conduct post-observation conferences for lessons observed.
7. confer openly and honestly with the student teacher and cooperating teacher regarding the student teacher's strengths and weaknesses or when the performance is below expected minimum standards.
8. assist the student teacher in planning appropriate experiences for students.
9. review lesson plans and offer constructive feedback.
10. read and respond to reflective journals entries and portfolio development.
11. mediate conflicts that may arise in the cooperating school.
12. serves as an advisor for the student teacher.
13. be accessible to student teachers and provide additional observation where warranted.
14. consult with the cooperating teacher regarding the student teacher's final grade