



Clinical Practice Handbook

A Guide for University Instructors

2026-2027

University of Southern Indiana

Teacher Education Department

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Welcome!

The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, ...who strives valiantly...who actually strives to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause... --Theodore Roosevelt (The Man in the Arena)

Clinical experiences offer valuable opportunities for teacher candidates to grow through expert mentorship and meaningful hands-on learning. These experiences help teacher candidates connect theory to practice, strengthen instructional and classroom management skills, and make informed, evidence-based decisions.

As guests in the school community, teacher candidates are expected to follow all policies and procedures and to view their time in classrooms as a privilege. Clinical experiences can be rewarding, challenging, and sometimes overwhelming—all important parts of the learning process. The experience includes three phases:

In the **Exploration Phase**, **teacher candidates** begin their journey by working closely with their mentor teachers to observe daily classroom routines, learn the roles and responsibilities of educators, and experience what teaching looks like in real school settings. Candidates may work one-on-one with students, support small groups, or assist with whole-group activities as appropriate. This phase occurs in shorter time blocks and allows candidates to explore whether a career in education is the right fit for them. USI instructors also observe candidates during this phase to provide encouragement and formative feedback.

In the **Analysis Phase**, **teacher candidates** are placed in a local school for full-day experiences, where they work alongside their mentor teachers in whole-group, small-group, and one-on-one settings. Candidates become more fully immersed in the daily rhythms of the classroom, taking on greater responsibilities as they grow in confidence and skill. USI faculty are on site or available to observe and support candidates, offering guidance and feedback that strengthens their developing practice.

Synthesis Phase: Clinical interns complete a 16-week placement in an elementary, middle, or high school. Using the co-teaching model, interns are fully immersed in the daily work of teaching, including planning, instruction, classroom management, assessment, and reflection.

Sincerely,

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Director of Clinical Practice

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UNIVERSITY INSTRUCTOR

Policies, Responsibilities, and Procedures

Policies

Disposition Alert Policy

The Disposition Alert process complements the evaluation of teacher candidates' academic performance by assessing professionalism and professional dispositions. USI Teacher Education recognizes that professional dispositions are skills that can be developed; therefore, ongoing assessment, timely feedback, and the use of the alert process when necessary support early and effective intervention.

This process provides a consistent approach to assessing and supporting candidates' professional growth throughout their preparation program. Stakeholders—including university instructors, mentor teachers, and the Director of Clinical Practice—are encouraged to report concerns and address misconduct as appropriate.

The full Disposition Alert Policy is available on the USI Teacher Education website.

Clinical Practice Placement Termination

If the teacher candidate's performance, attendance, or conduct continues to be problematic or violates policy, the university instructor will consult with the Director of Clinical Practice regarding potential suspension or termination of the placement. In cases of serious misconduct, no Student Progress Review plan will be implemented, and placement may be immediately ended.

Clinical Placement Attendance: University Instructor Roles

University instructors play a critical role in monitoring, supporting, and enforcing attendance expectations during clinical placements. Consistent oversight ensures compliance with licensure requirements, accreditation standards, and university policy, while also promoting professional accountability for teacher candidates. Attendance is a required component of clinical coursework, and failure to meet attendance expectations may impact a candidate's progression in the Educator Preparation Program.

University instructors are responsible for:

- Clearly communicating clinical attendance expectations as outlined in the course syllabus and clinical practice handbook.

- Monitoring teacher candidate attendance throughout the clinical experience in collaboration with P–12 mentor teachers.
- Reviewing attendance documentation and verifying that absences are properly reported and recorded.
- Addressing attendance concerns promptly and professionally to prevent escalation.

Absences lacking timely communication or required documentation should be considered unexcused.

Make-Up Experiences

When an absence is excused, university instructors:

- Determine eligibility for a make-up experience in consultation with the P–12 mentor teacher and, when necessary, the Director of Clinical Practice.
- Ensure that any approved make-up experience aligns with course objectives, clinical requirements, and school site availability.
- Communicate clearly with the teacher candidate regarding expectations, timelines, and completion requirements.

Approval of make-up experiences is not guaranteed and must occur within the academic term.

Unexcused Absences and Attendance Concerns

For unexcused absences, repeated tardiness, or partial attendance, university instructors are responsible for:

- Documenting concerns in a timely and professional manner.
- Initiating a Disposition Alert when warranted.
- Participating in formal meetings with the teacher candidate and Director of Clinical Practice.
- Collaborating on next steps, which may include:
 - Development of an Improvement Plan under the Student Progress Review policy
 - Modification or suspension of the clinical placement
 - Recommendation for removal from the placement

University instructors should apply policies, in conjunction with course syllabus expectations, consistently while maintaining clear communication and support.

Tardiness and Partial Attendance

University instructors must monitor patterns of tardiness or early departure and address concerns promptly. Repeated incidents may be treated as unexcused absences and should follow the same documentation and intervention procedures.

Policy Summary for University Instructors

To support successful attendance during clinical placements, university instructors:

- Monitor and document teacher candidate attendance consistently.
- Enforce attendance and communication expectations as outlined in the syllabus and handbook.
- Collaborate with mentor teachers and the Director of Clinical Practice when attendance concerns arise.
- Ensure that all actions related to attendance are documented and aligned with program policies.

Consistent attendance oversight helps ensure high-quality clinical experiences and reinforces professional expectations essential to the teaching profession.

*See Teacher Candidate Attendance Policy for full details.

Inclement Weather

School closures due to inclement weather do not count against the teacher candidate. The closure should be documented in the Watermark™ Time Log.

It is the university instructor's responsibility to monitor clinical hours and determine, in collaboration with the Director of Clinical Practice, whether time needs to be made up.

Calendar

Teacher candidates will follow the USI calendar for holidays and breaks. If a scheduled placement day or observation falls on a school closure, instructors will work with candidates to make adjustments.

It is the university instructor's responsibility to monitor calendar alignment, communicate any course-related schedule updates, and assist with rescheduling as needed.

Professional Communication, Use of Technology, and Social Media

University instructors play an important role in fostering professional communication and appropriate use of technology during clinical experiences. Through modeling, guidance, and oversight, instructors support teacher candidates in developing the professional behaviors expected in P–12 school settings.

Professional Communication

University instructors support professional communication by:

- Modeling clear, respectful, and professional communication in all interactions with teacher candidates, mentor teachers, and school personnel.
- Providing guidance to teacher candidates regarding appropriate professional language, tone, and boundaries in school and university contexts.

- Serving as a point of contact when questions or concerns arise related to communication expectations in clinical placements.
- Addressing communication concerns as they occur and collaborating with the Director of Clinical Practice when additional support or intervention is needed.

Use of Technology and Electronic Devices

University instructors help establish and reinforce appropriate use of technology by:

- Demonstrating professional and purposeful use of electronic devices during school visits, observations, and meetings.
- Supporting mentor teachers in addressing concerns related to teacher candidate device use when concerns are observed.
- Offering clarification and guidance to teacher candidates regarding acceptable technology use in P–12 settings, including instructional and emergency situations.

Email Communication

University instructors promote effective professional communication by:

- Using official university communication channels when corresponding with teacher candidates and school partners.
- Encouraging consistent use of university email to support clear, documented communication.
- Providing timely updates and reminders related to clinical expectations, schedules, and feedback.

Social Media and Professional Image

University instructors contribute to professional growth by:

- Guiding teacher candidates in understanding how online behavior can impact professional roles and relationships.
- Communicating concerns related to professional boundaries or online conduct to the Director of Clinical Practice when needed.

Role Summary

University instructors support professional standards in clinical experiences by:

- Modeling professional communication and conduct.
- Guiding teacher candidates in developing appropriate professional behaviors.
- Collaborating with mentor teachers and the Director of Clinical Practice to address concerns constructively.

This supportive, instructional approach helps reinforce professionalism while promoting positive partnerships across university and P–12 settings.

University Instructor Guidance: Teacher Candidate Professional Dress Code

This section outlines the role of university instructors in supporting and reinforcing professional appearance expectations for teacher candidates during clinical placements.

University instructors support the expectation that teacher candidates are perceived as professionals, not students, while representing themselves, the University of Southern Indiana, and the P–12 school community in a positive manner.

Professional dress is generally business casual and should be conservative, clean, and appropriate for a P–12 school environment. Attire should not be distracting, trendy, or revealing.

University instructors collaborate with mentor teachers and school administrators to reinforce professional appearance expectations and provide clarification or guidance to candidates when concerns arise.

Name Badge Requirements

University instructors help ensure that teacher candidates understand and follow identification expectations, including:

- A **USI photo name badge** is required and should be visible on a collar or lanyard.
- Candidates must follow the clinical site's ID policies; **USI student ID badges with student numbers are not permitted.**

Hygiene and Grooming

University instructors reinforce the importance of professional grooming and personal hygiene, including:

- Maintain **personal hygiene at all times.**
- Clothing must be clean, properly fitted, and pressed.
- Hair and nails must be neat; hair color should be natural. Facial hair must be clean and trimmed.

Accessories and Fragrance

University instructors provide guidance related to professional presentation, including:

- Jewelry should be minimal and professional. Visible piercings should be subtle; if necessary, replaced with clear spacers.
- Cologne, perfume, and fragrances should be used sparingly.
- Avoid distracting accessories, such as artificial eyelashes or overly bright adornments.

Clothing Guidelines

University instructors support consistent understanding of professional attire expectations, including:

- **Shirts/Blouses/Sweaters:** No athletic-style T-shirts or sweatshirts; clothing must not be tight, short, or revealing; midriff and cleavage must be covered.
- **Pants/Skirts/Dresses:** Colored denim is allowed. Skirts/dresses no more than 2–4 inches above the knee. Leggings/jeggings must be worn with tunic-length top. No cargo, pajama-style, or torn clothing. Shorts are not allowed unless approved for PE.
- **Footwear:** Clean, safe, professional; no flip-flops, Crocs®, slippers, or distracting shoes. Tennis/athletic shoes are allowed if professional in appearance.

Spirit Days

University instructors collaborate with mentor teachers and school administrators to support appropriate participation in school spirit days.

- Candidates may participate in school spirit days **with mentor teacher and university instructor approval**.
- Jeans may be worn only on approved spirit days; they must not be torn, faded, too tight, or baggy.
- Professional perception must be maintained even on spirit days.

University Instructor Role

University instructors support professional dress expectations by:

- Reinforcing professional appearance standards during seminars, observations, and communications with teacher candidates.
- Collaborating with mentor teachers and school administrators when concerns related to appearance arise.
- Addressing patterns of concern with the Director of Clinical Practice, as appropriate.
- Supporting candidates in understanding how professional appearance impacts classroom credibility, student perceptions, and school culture.

This collaborative approach helps ensure consistent expectations while supporting teacher candidates' professional growth.

Responsibilities and Procedures

Introductory Letter to Mentor Teachers

At the beginning of each clinical practicum semester, university instructors initiate communication with mentor teachers through an Introductory Letter. This letter helps establish

shared understanding of the clinical experience and supports collaboration and communication the university instructor and mentor teacher regarding teacher candidates.

The format and content of the letter may vary by instructor; however, it should clearly communicate expectations and the roles of all participants in the clinical practicum.

Purpose

The Introductory Letter supports the clinical experience by:

- Establishing clear expectations for the practicum
- Promoting open communication and collaboration
- Providing mentor teachers with relevant course context

Key Information to Communicate

University instructors use the Introductory Letter to explain:

- The focus and general structure of the clinical practicum
- Expectations for the teacher candidate during the placement
- The role of the mentor teacher in supporting candidate development
- The role of the university instructor in supervision and support
- Preferred methods of communication and contact information

University instructors support effective clinical partnerships by initiating early communication with mentor teachers, clearly explaining expectations associated with the course, allowing flexibility in how information is communicated while ensuring clarity and consistency. This introductory communication helps set the tone for a positive, collaborative, and well-supported clinical practicum experience.

University Instructor Qualifying Credentials

University instructors are asked to complete the Qualifying Credentials Information form to ensure accurate, up-to-date professional information is on file. This information supports appropriate course and clinical assignments, meets accreditation and program requirements, and helps maintain high-quality clinical experiences for teacher candidates.

Keeping credentials current allows the university to ensure effective supervision and support throughout the clinical practicum. University instructor participation is an important component of maintaining strong partnerships and preparing future educators.

Verifying Teacher Candidate Time Log

Teacher candidates are responsible for maintaining accurate Time Logs in Watermark™. Mentor teachers approve or reject log entries weekly. It is the university instructor's responsibility to monitor time log completion and mentor approval, and to follow up with either party if concerns arise.

Teacher Candidate Midterm Check-In

Midway through the clinical practicum, university instructors conduct a Midterm Check-In with each mentor teacher regarding the teacher candidate assigned. This check-in is completed via email and serves as an opportunity to monitor progress, reinforce expectations, and provide support as needed. University instructors may determine the format and structure of the Midterm Check-In; however, the communication should:

- Invite reflection on instructional experiences and professional responsibilities of teacher candidate
- Provide space for the mentor teacher to share questions or concerns
- Reinforce key expectations for the remainder of the practicum

Debrief Video Fidelity Submission

University instructors submit a brief debrief video with each teacher candidate to the Chair of Teacher Education and the Assistant Dean of Pott College. This submission serves as an informal fidelity check to ensure that best practices in providing effective feedback to teacher candidates are being followed and to support continuous improvement of clinical processes and procedures.

Purpose

- Review how instructors provide feedback to teacher candidates and promote professional growth
- Identify opportunities to enhance the clinical experience and instructional practices
- Inform ongoing improvements in Teacher Education and strengthen program quality

Guidelines

- The video should capture a conversation between the university instructor and teacher candidate reflecting on the practicum experience.
- Discussions may include instructional highlights, candidate strengths, areas for growth, and feedback practices.

University instructors support continuous program improvement by conducting the debrief discussion with the teacher candidate, submitting the video for review as an informal fidelity check, and using insights from the debrief to enhance feedback practices, clinical experiences, and overall Teacher Education quality.

Classroom Observations/Formative Observations

University instructors are responsible for completing observations for each teacher candidate. These observations occur during the teacher candidate's clinical placement, and instructors should coordinate with mentor teachers as needed to facilitate the process. If a placement site does not permit video recording, instructors should conduct in-person observations instead.

For each observation, the instructor shall complete all components of the Formal Observation Feedback Cycle, including feedback form, debrief session, and follow-up email.

Teacher Candidate Disposition Inventory

During each field placement, the university instructor completes the Disposition Inventory in Watermark™. If any item is marked “disagree,” the university instructor provides a brief explanation to support the candidate's growth. Teacher candidates receiving a “disagree” rating will meet with the university instructor to discuss next steps for improvement, and, if necessary, begin the Student Progress Review Process.

Professional dispositions, “the habits of professional action and moral commitments that underlie an educator's performance” (InTASC, p. 6), are essential to effective teaching. This assessment ensures that teacher candidates demonstrate the professional habits, ethical standards, and interpersonal skills needed for success in the classroom and the school community. The following professional dispositions have been adopted by the Teacher Education Department at the University of Southern Indiana and are aligned to the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) Standard R1. The Teacher Education Department has determined that the following dispositions are essential for an effective teacher.

The teacher candidate demonstrates a commitment to the teaching profession and adheres to continuous development as a professional. The teacher candidate:

1. Demonstrates high expectations for self and P-12 students.
2. Demonstrates patience and compassion by providing appropriate wait time for student responses and offering positive reinforcement to P-12 students experiencing difficulty during the learning process.
3. Communicates respectfully and responsively in diverse environments without imposing personal or cultural values.
4. Actively seeks out new information and innovative, evidence-based teaching strategies.
5. Demonstrates the ability to maintain cognitive capacity (attention, focus, memory, and processing speed needed to understand complex information) in university and P-12 classrooms.

6. Analyzes, synthesizes, integrates concepts, and problem-solves to formulate assessment and educational judgments.
7. Demonstrates the ability to work with frequent interruptions, to respond appropriately to unexpected situations, and to be flexible in rapidly changing circumstances. This includes demonstrating flexibility during the learning process.
8. Organizes time and materials, prioritizes tasks, performs several tasks at once, and adapts to changing situations and environments.
9. Demonstrates appropriate use of technology during meetings, classes, and clinical experiences.
10. Demonstrates an awareness of appropriate social boundaries between P-12 students and educators and adheres to those boundaries.
11. Thinks analytically about educational issues and reflects thoughtfully on their practices.
12. Demonstrates compliance with federal and state laws and all USI handbook policies.
13. Adheres to USI's academic integrity policy.
14. Expresses themselves effectively in written and oral English to communicate concepts, assignments, evaluations, and expectations with members of the learning community, such as Teacher Education faculty, P-12 students, parents, administrators, and other school and community personnel.
15. Maintains P-12 student confidentiality, disclosing information only for professional purposes or as legally required by law.
16. Demonstrates a calm demeanor and effective coping strategies in stressful environments and addresses issues of concern professionally.
17. Maintains appropriate personal hygiene and dresses professionally, adhering to guidelines outlined in the applicable USI handbook.
18. Consistently meets course and clinical experience policies and requirements.
19. Is punctual and maintains regular attendance for professional commitments, including classes and clinical experiences.
20. Seeks assistance promptly from instructors and supervisors.
21. Responds appropriately to constructive criticism from instructors and supervisors.
22. Functions effectively in a collaborative team, whether with peers, P-12 students, parents, other school personnel, or community members.

Teacher Candidate Progression Logs: University Instructor Role

At the end of each semester, university instructors complete and upload the Teacher Candidate Progression Log in the appropriate folder within the Teams shared folder: GRP_USI Teacher Candidate Progression Log.

Purpose

- Document teacher candidate progress throughout the clinical placement
- Provide a record of candidate development for program oversight and continuous improvement
- Support communication among university instructors, faculty, and program leadership

Guidelines

- Complete the progression log accurately and thoroughly for each teacher candidate assigned
- Upload the completed log to the designated Teams folder within the timeline established
- Ensure the log reflects observations, feedback, and any relevant notes regarding candidate growth and readiness

University instructors support program quality and candidate development by monitoring and documenting teacher candidate progress, maintaining accurate records in the shared Teams folder, collaborating with program leadership to inform ongoing improvements in clinical experiences.

Required Training

University instructors are to complete training related to all responsibilities associated with supervising and evaluating teacher candidates during clinical placements. These trainings ensure consistency, reliability, and alignment with accreditation expectations and program standards.

Required training includes:

- **Watermark™:** Training on how to access and complete required documentation in the Watermark system, including reviewing time logs, submitting evaluations, and monitoring candidate progress.
- **GoReact®:** Training on the GoReact® platform for reviewing teacher candidate video submissions and providing time-stamped, targeted feedback.
- **Observation Rubric, Feedback Form, and Progression Logs:** Training on how to conduct observations using the university-approved rubric and how to provide clear, constructive written feedback aligned to clinical expectations, and progression log completion and uploading/retrieval in appropriate files.
- **Debrief Sessions:** Training on conducting structured debrief conversations with candidates.
- **Science of Reading:** Training or evidence of understanding related to the Science of Reading, which may include participation in LETRS, Keys to Literacy, Indiana Learning Lab modules, district-based literacy training, or passing the ETS Praxis 5205 or equivalent. University instructors are expected to be able to recognize and support Science of Reading-aligned instruction during observations and in their feedback to candidates.

Phase-Specific Expectations

As teacher candidates progress through their clinical experiences, university instructors will guide candidates to explore and develop within the gradual release model. Instructors support

candidates' growth as they move from observing, to assisting, to leading instruction. Using the phase-specific expectations, university instructors provide feedback, guidance, and opportunities that help teacher candidates build confidence and effectiveness in the classroom.

The gradual release model timeline may be shared with teacher candidates and mentor teachers as a suggested guide to support the candidate's progress throughout the clinical placement.

Gradual Release Model Timeline Suggestion (EXPLORATION)

Competency Domain	I Do / Observation & Initial Practice	We Do / Guided Practice & Feedback	You Do Together / Supported Independence	You Do Independently / Demonstrated Competency
Facilitating Learning				
Demonstrates Content Knowledge and Uses Academic Vocabulary	Observes mentor using accurate content and vocabulary. Begins to incorporate academic vocabulary in one-on-one settings.	Uses content vocabulary in planned small group activities with support.	Independently integrates vocabulary in small group and begins in whole group.	Demonstrates consistent and accurate use of content-specific vocabulary across settings.
Internalizes and Uses Curriculum Materials	Reviews and discusses curriculum guides with mentor. Begins using materials for basic planning.	Plans small group instruction using curriculum materials with mentor guidance.	Independently adapts curriculum for small group/individual needs.	Selects, adapts, and implements curriculum independently with fidelity and responsiveness.
Understands Students and Responds to Their Needs	Learns about students' backgrounds and needs through observation and discussion.	Begins to modify instruction with mentor input based on student needs.	Designs learning experiences that consider varied student backgrounds.	Independently adjusts instruction and materials based on student performance and individual needs.
Engages and Involves Students in Learning	Observes strategies used to engage learners. Tries brief engagement strategies (e.g., attention-getters).	Practices using engagement strategies during small group lessons.	Selects and uses age-appropriate engagement strategies independently.	Uses multiple, effective engagement strategies to involve all learners consistently.
Maintains Focus and Communicates Clear Objectives	Observes how objectives are introduced and lessons are paced.	Practices writing and stating objectives with mentor feedback.	Delivers instruction with clear objectives and pacing in guided settings.	Clearly communicates objectives and maintains lesson focus independently.

Provides Clear Directions for Students	Models and repeats directions with mentor assistance.	Practices giving directions for small tasks and revises based on student responses.	Gives multi-step directions in small and whole group with some reminders.	Gives concise, effective directions that students follow with minimal need for clarification.
Uses Student Questioning to Support Learning	Observes mentor's questioning techniques and participates in debriefs.	Practices asking recall and basic comprehension questions.	Uses higher-order questions with support and prompts.	Independently uses a variety of questions to check understanding and promote thinking.
Domain 3: Professionalism				
Creates a Respectful, Well-Managed Learning Environment	Observes mentor's classroom expectations and interactions.	Begins implementing classroom procedures with supervision.	Maintains classroom expectations with growing confidence.	Consistently promotes a respectful environment and manages student behavior effectively.
Reflects on Teaching Practice	Participates in guided reflection conversations with mentor and supervisor.	Identifies successes and challenges in lesson delivery; begins journaling or written reflections.	Reflects on student learning outcomes and instructional effectiveness.	Independently identifies strengths and areas for growth and sets goals for improvement.
Seeks and Applies Feedback for Improvement	Listens to feedback and participates in debriefs.	Begins implementing feedback in lesson revisions and teaching.	Proactively seeks feedback and applies it to planning and instruction.	Consistently incorporates feedback into professional practice with minimal prompting.

Gradual Release Model Timeline Suggestion (ANALYSIS)

Competency Domain	I Do / Observation & Initial Practice	We Do / Guided Practice & Feedback	You Do Together / Supported Independence	You Do Independently / Demonstrated Competency
Domain 1: Planning				
Prepares Materials and Plans Effectively	Observes mentor preparing materials. Assists in gathering resources for lessons.	Prepares materials for small group lessons with feedback.	Prepares and organizes materials for individual and small group lessons independently.	Prepares and organizes all materials in advance for whole group instruction aligned with objectives.

Develops Clear Learning Goals Aligned with Standards	Reviews mentor's objectives and standard alignment.	Drafts learning goals with mentor support and edits for clarity.	Creates measurable goals aligned with standards for supported lessons.	Develops clear, measurable, standards-aligned goals independently across lesson formats.
Designs Detailed, Aligned Lesson Plans	Reviews mentor lesson plans and planning templates.	Drafts lesson plans with mentor support using structured templates.	Creates full lesson plans with aligned activities and formative checks.	Independently designs well-structured, fully aligned lessons with objectives, activities, and assessments.
Uses Assessment Data in Planning	Reviews assessment data with mentor and discusses implications.	Uses sample data to inform small group lesson planning.	References current student data to adjust lesson plans and groupings.	Independently integrates assessment data into planning for targeted instruction.
Designs Aligned Assessments	Reviews mentor-designed assessments and their alignment to objectives.	Drafts formative assessments aligned to specific learning goals with support.	Designs exit slips and other checks aligned to planned instruction.	Develops aligned formative and summative assessments to evaluate student learning.
Domain 2: Instruction				
Communicates Learning Objectives and Expectations	Observes how mentor communicates objectives and expectations.	Practices stating objectives at lesson launch with mentor input.	States and references objectives during instruction with increasing fluency.	Consistently communicates and revisits objectives to guide learning throughout instruction.
Demonstrates Content Knowledge and Uses Academic Vocabulary	Observes mentor modeling academic language and content delivery.	Practices using content-specific vocabulary during small group lessons.	Incorporates accurate vocabulary in both planned and spontaneous instruction.	Demonstrates consistent and confident content knowledge and vocabulary use.
Implements Varied, Aligned Instructional Strategies	Observes instructional strategies used across groups and content areas.	Implements modeled strategies during small group lessons.	Chooses and adapts strategies based on student need and instructional goals.	Uses a variety of aligned strategies to support all learners during instruction.

Facilitates Student Engagement and Participation	Assists in engaging students with attention strategies and prompts.	Leads parts of lessons using modeled engagement techniques.	Designs and delivers lessons using participation strategies.	Independently facilitates consistent student engagement and interaction.
Uses Effective Questioning to Promote Higher-Level Thinking	Observes mentor's questioning techniques and student responses.	Asks planned comprehension and analytical questions during lessons.	Uses questions to probe understanding and support metacognition.	Uses varied questioning strategies to promote critical thinking and discussion.
Monitors Understanding and Responds to Student Needs	Watches mentor monitor work and give timely feedback.	Uses simple checks for understanding (e.g., thumbs up, quick write).	Monitors student progress during instruction and adjusts support as needed.	Consistently uses data and observation to adjust teaching in real-time.
Manages Classroom and Uses Instructional Time Effectively	Observes routines, transitions, and time management strategies.	Practices implementing routines with mentor support.	Maintains focus and pacing with occasional guidance.	Independently manages time, transitions, and student behavior efficiently.
Balances Structure with Flexibility During Instruction	Follows scripted plans and observes mentor flexibility.	Begins to adapt plans in the moment with prompting.	Balances planning with responsiveness to student needs.	Adjusts instruction smoothly in real time to maximize learning outcomes.
Domain 3: Professionalism				
Seeks and Applies Feedback for Professional Growth	Receives feedback and engages in reflection discussions.	Implements feedback into revised plans and lessons.	Seeks specific feedback and applies it to instruction.	Regularly requests and integrates feedback to grow professionally.
Reflects on Teaching Practice	Participates in reflective conversations and debriefs.	Writes brief reflections on teaching experiences with guidance.	Analyzes successes and challenges independently and identifies adjustments.	Engages in thoughtful, consistent reflection to improve instructional practice.

University Instructor Checklist

Task	Timeline
Complete Trainings	Beginning of semester / As needed
Introductory Letter to Mentor Teachers & Teacher Candidates	Beginning of semester / Before placement begins
Complete Qualifying Credentials/Mentor Profile	Beginning of semester
Verify Teacher Candidate Time Logs in Watermark™	Weekly
Conduct Teacher Candidate Midterm Check-In	Mid-semester
Fidelity Check Video	Mid-semester
Observations / Formative Observation Feedback	Throughout semester
Complete Teacher Candidate Disposition Inventory	End of semester
Teacher Candidate Progression Logs (completed and uploaded)	End of semester