

ADE/B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary

Syllabus

The Teaching Practicum

Semester 4

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Technical Support: Education Development Centre (EDC); Teachers College, Columbia University

SYLLABUS: The Teaching Practicum

YEAR/SEMESTER: Year 2/Semester 4

CREDIT VALUE: 3 credits

PREREQUISITES: Successful completion of Semesters 1 and 2 of the ADE/B.Ed.(Hons)

The Practicum is a 3 credit course. As this is a practical course, one credit requires additional hours of practice. It is recommended that Student Teachers spend approximately 30 days/six weeks on the school placement in semester 4.

Student Teachers should aim to spend six weeks at school for the practicum in Semester 4.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Practicum consists of two important parts:

- a. A school placement in an elementary school;
- b. A seminar that meets regularly.

a. School Placement:

The practicum experience in Semester 4 should provide elementary grade student teachers with a practicum placement in an elementary classroom. This teaching practice builds on experience in semester 3 when student teachers worked with children at two different grade levels. As in semester 3, the practicum should provide student teachers with carefully sequenced and supervised experiences, with student teachers gradually assuming responsibility for teaching several subjects with the whole class, starting with one subject in week 3, and picking up an additional class in week 4, and an additional class in week 5. So for the last two weeks you should assume full responsibility for at least 3 classes.

During the practicum, student students are expected to critically select and use appropriate materials, resources (including persons in the community) and technology, and to have experiences with classroom management and a variety of evaluation techniques (including authentic assessment).³ Collaboration with other Student Teachers and professionals in the school setting should be encouraged in order to develop team building skills and utilization of all resources to enhance children's learning.

Ideally, groups of three or four student teachers should be placed in each school. Avoid having too many student teachers in one school and more than one student teacher per class (unless they are doing an activity or assignment that requires them to work together).

Opportunities for peer coaching as well as coaching by the cooperating teacher and college/university supervisor should be provided. Student teachers should be encouraged

³ Authentic assessment is a form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills.

to take advantage of the opportunity to interact with parents and to develop skills for communicating with parents under the guidance of the cooperating teacher.

b. The Seminar:

As in semester 3, a weekly seminar will accompany the practicum to help student teachers link the content of the pre-service program content to practice. The seminar should provide an opportunity to clarify and revise their teaching goals and their beliefs about a wide range of educational issues. Although the seminar should be related to and build upon classroom observation and teaching experiences, it should be focused on inducting student teachers into professional practice. Habits of thinking that provide the foundation for continued growth as a teacher are as important as strategies for solving immediate classroom issues and problems. The seminar should also provide a forum for student teachers to share and resolve problems or challenges they are experiencing during their practice.

Student teachers will be asked to complete several types of assignments. Most, but not all, of these assignments will be directly linked in some way to classroom experiences. For example:

- Present an analysis of own or a peer's teaching;
- Conduct an observation focused on specific classroom practices or an individual child;
- Try out a particular method and reflect on its success in achieving its purpose;
- An interview with of a teacher and a child.

All of the assigned tasks should be flexible enough to allow for adaptation to a wide variety of classrooms.

COURSE OUTCOMES

Student teachers will be able to:

- Reflect on and learn from teaching practice.
- Collaborate with peers, cooperating teacher and college/ supervisor, establishing professional relationships.
- Invite, accept, and utilize feedback from the supervising teacher, peers, and the college/university supervisor in a non-defensive manner.
- Produce and implement plans for teaching and learning which reflect the use of appropriate instructional methods and strategies to meet the needs of all students within the context of the practicum classroom.
- Utilize appropriate instruments or techniques for assessing student learning and learning needs.
- Recognize cognitive and affective needs of students and establish learning environments and use activities appropriate to meeting those needs.

LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES

For the practicum in semester 4, every student enrolled will be assigned to an elementary grade class.

The Practicum Seminar will utilize a variety of teaching and learning approaches, but rely heavily on reflective journals, small group and peer interaction.

SEMESTER OUTLINE

a. School experiences

The way field experiences for the Practicum are organized may vary from semester to semester, and from institution to institution. Your Instructor will provide you specific information about where you will teach or how to obtain a classroom placement, and your schedule for the semester.

Each Student Teacher will develop a plan for gradually increasing responsibility in the classroom, working with the Seminar Instructor, the College/University Supervisor (Seminar Instructors will supervise field experiences, but may also work with a team of supervisors) and the Cooperating Teacher.

Each college or university will have its own plan for the practicum. It may be organized in a variety of ways. Student teachers can expect the following types of activity and progression during the practicum in Semester 4:

Week 1: Introduction to the school and classroom context.

- Complete the Student Teacher Checklist, provided in your handbook.
- Meeting with the cooperating teacher to discuss how he/she plans for instruction, expectations and the like
- Non-observational Assignments, which will provide you with an opportunity to familiarize yourself with the school, staff, school rules, policies etc. The assignments you are required to complete will depend on your current placement. See the note below.

If you are completing this practicum at a different school than the one you worked in for Semester 3, you will need to complete the assignments provided in your handbook.

Inventory of School Resources,
Community/Co-curricular Engagement
Discipline Procedures and Policies
Cooperating Teacher Interview
Interview a Child/Children
Classroom Management

If you are at the same school as you were in Semester 3 – but working with a different teacher you need to complete the assignments provided in your handbook.

Cooperating Teacher Interview
Interview a Child/Children
Classroom Management

- Log of Daily Activities
- Daily Reflections (see the forms provided in your handbook)

- Classroom Observations which will provide you with an opportunity to learn how your teacher engages with the children using verbal behavior and how to pace a lesson
- As requested by the Cooperating Teacher, working with children who need extra help and with small groups of children to carry out the teacher's plans

Week 2: Assisting the teacher in classroom instruction as requested and assuming responsibility for planning, teaching and assessing at least part of the lesson.

- Co-planning and co-teaching with the Cooperating Teacher
- Working with children who need extra help
- Completion of any non-observational assignments still outstanding
- Completion of classroom Observations which will provide you with an opportunity to observe children's engagement through their verbal responses and what types of verbal interaction occur in the classroom (selective verbatim)
Working with small groups of children to carry out the teacher's plans
- Co-teaching lessons with the Cooperating Teacher
- Finding out about assessment – what strategies does the teacher use

Week 3 Assuming responsibility for planning, teaching and assessing a at least one subject matter's lesson

- Co-plan full lessons with the Cooperating Teacher
- Co-teach lessons for one subject matter each day
- Working with children who need extra help
- Classroom observations that will provide you with information on how to use questions effectively to engage children. You should also consider using the observation tools provided in your Semester 3 handbook to learn about other aspects of teaching and learning.
- Prepare for a formal observation by your Cooperating Teacher using the Formal Observation Cover sheet, pre-observation guide, and post observation reflection sheet.
- Prepare for a formal observation by your College/University Supervisor using the Formal Observation Cover sheet, pre-observation guide, and post observation reflection sheet.
- Prepare for a mid-way triad meeting.
- Use the Notes for Self Assessment sheet indicating all the evidence you have collected and how this meets the NPSTP.

Week 4: Assuming responsibility for planning, teaching and assessing in two subjects.

- Continue activities above, taking over responsibility for planning, teaching and assessing one subject (full lesson) throughout the week
- Co-plan and co-teach all other subjects with the Cooperating Teacher
- Prepare for a formal observation by your College/University Supervisor using the Formal Observation Cover sheet, pre-observation guide, and post observation reflection sheet.

Week 5: Assuming responsibility for planning, teaching and assessing at least three subjects

- Continue activities above, taking over responsibility for planning, teaching and assessing three core subjects with the whole class throughout the week (math, Urdu, science/general studies).

- Co-plan and co-teach all other subjects with the Cooperating Teacher
- Prepare for a formal observation by your Cooperating Teacher using the Formal Observation Cover sheet, pre-observation guide, and post observation reflection sheet.
- Prepare for a formal observation by your College/University Supervisor using the Formal Observation Cover sheet, pre-observation guide, and post observation reflection sheet.

Week 6: Assume additional responsibilities as agreed with the Cooperating Teacher

- Continue planning, teaching and assessing the three core subjects throughout the week and add additional subjects as agreed with the Cooperating Teacher
- Co-planning and co-teaching teaching all other subjects with the Cooperating Teacher
- Prepare for a formal observation by your College/University Supervisor using the Formal Observation Cover sheet, pre-observation guide, and post observation reflection sheet.
- Prepare for a final triad meeting.
- Prepare a Professional Portfolio, addressing the NPSTP. (Use the Rubric provided in your handbook as a guide.)

b. The Practicum Seminar

The seminar runs parallel to your experience at school. The content of the seminar will vary with the Instructor every semester that it is offered.

However, students may expect to discuss issues such as:

- Practical issues of teaching in learning in their field placements,
- Language learning,
- Different perspectives on how to organize and manage a classroom,
- Planning units of instruction,
- Content-specific instruction,
- Selecting and using assessments of learning,
- How to use standards for primary school teaching practice,
- Identifying the hidden curriculum in the classroom,
- Creating classroom environments that recognize physical, emotional, affective, social and intellectual needs of children,
- Non-instructional roles of the teacher,
- Working with parents and community

TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCES

Course readings and assignments will focus primarily on preparation for field assignments. Additional assignments and/or readings will be provided throughout the semester.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments will be listed on a separate handout. These assignments will be designed to help you achieve course outcomes. Some will take place in the classroom and others outside of the classroom.

GRADING POLICY

Grading for this course follows the university's policies. This will be explained by the Instructor early in the course and will include both coursework and examinations. Grades for the Practicum Experience will be assigned in collaboration with the cooperating teacher, college supervisor and Practicum Instructor

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE COURSE

You will be provided with specific and detailed information about every part of your Practicum Experience. The following will give you a general idea of what to expect this semester.

ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS OF PRACTICUM TRIAD MEMBERS

Every Practicum experience is guided by three critical participants: 1) the student teacher, 2) the Cooperating Teacher and 3) the College/University Supervisor.

What happens in the classroom and how it is interpreted will depend on the views of each member of the triad. It is important for each member of the triad to negotiate common expectations for roles and responsibilities. If expectations are clear and understood by each member, the experience is likely to be more satisfactory to all.

The triad should meet together several times during the semester:

4. At the beginning when roles and relationships are discussed,
5. At mid-point when performance is discussed;
6. At the conclusion of the experience as a final evaluation is made.

Depending on the challenges met during the practicum experience, the triad may feel that it is important to meet more frequently.

The Cooperating Teacher will guide the day-to-day work of the Student Teacher, providing feedback and initiating the Student Teacher into the life of the profession. This will include discussions of how planning, teaching and assessment are made.

The Cooperating Teacher will communicate regularly with the college/university supervisor. The purpose of supervision is to support good communication between the Student Teacher and Cooperating Teacher. Communication and collegial relationships are important to the Student Teacher and other triad members in their professional development.

The supervisor will also provide feedback on all aspects of the Student Teacher's development, including planning and teaching.

SUMMARY OF THE ROLE OF THE STUDENT TEACHER

The Student Teacher should have maximum opportunity to perform to the degree which his or her personal interests, abilities, and individuality allow.

There are three major aspects to the Student Teacher's role during the semester:

- 1) His or her activities in the classroom, school and community;
- 2) Participation in the weekly Practicum seminar; and

3) Continued reflection and documentation of professional growth.

The Student Teacher should become involved in the instructional program of the classroom as soon as possible. The experience will begin with observation. Time spent in observation will vary in length according to the situation, the Student Teacher will gradually assume more responsibility for planning and instruction through activities such as:

- Assisting individual students
- Working with small groups
- Taking responsibility for planning and teaching sections of whole class lessons
- Assisting the Cooperating Teacher with planning and teaching whole lessons
- Teaching selected lessons under the Cooperating Teacher's guidance and be open to receiving feedback. (these should be lessons that are part of the on-going curriculum, not lessons planned off-site and that do not relate to what is appropriate in the classroom)
- Assuming over-all management for part of the day
- Assuming overall management of the classroom.

During the semester, Student Teachers will engage in a variety of experiences in their classrooms. Attending teacher's meetings, parent meetings and the like are encouraged, where this is possible.

The Student Teacher is expected to play an active role in deciding how he or she will take on new activities and in assessing her or his effectiveness.

The Student Teacher is expected to participate as a regular staff member of the school in terms of professional behavior.

SUMMARY OF THE ROLE OF THE COOPERATING TEACHER

The cooperating teacher is expected to:

- Share school and classroom policies and procedures, the curriculum, the daily/semester schedule, and provide the Student Teacher with a class list, school textbooks, teacher's guides etc.
- Work with other members of the Practicum triad to set up a program for the Student Teacher's gradual assumption of all classroom responsibilities and building up to the student teacher taking on the planning, teaching, and assessing of at least three subjects. This plan should include provisions for Student Teacher involvement in all instructional tasks as well as non-instructional tasks such as home-school communication, parent conferences and staff development; and
- Work with the Student Teacher and university supervisor to set up a lesson plan format to be used by the Student Teacher. The student is required to provide the supervisor with comprehensive written plans prior to each formal observation. Cooperating teachers may also want to require written plans in addition to those required by the supervisor, for example, for sections of lesson.
- Formally and informally observe and provide feedback to the Student Teacher (use the forms provided in the handbook).
- Meet daily to discuss classroom events and make plans.
- Provide assessment to the college/university supervisor and participate in triad meetings to discuss the Student Teacher's performance.

SUMMARY OF THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR

The college/university supervisor is the official representative of the college/university. Therefore, the supervisor has responsibility for the supervision of Student Teachers, serves as the liaison between the college/university the cooperating schools' personnel, and helps establish and maintain positive relationships between the two institutions. Through classroom observations, conferences, and the weekly seminar the supervisor will:

- Make at least four one-hour observation visits throughout the semester, with at least two of these visits followed by a three-way conference involving the student, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor. The focus of these visits will depend on the needs of individual Student Teachers.
- Guide entry into the profession through discussion of issues of professional practice, providing a guided seminar experience, and conferring with the Student Teacher before and after classroom observations and giving feedback on teaching to the Student Teacher.