

Fall 2019

Dear Cooperating Teachers,

Thank you for volunteering to assist with the training and mentoring of our teacher candidates from UW-Whitewater. We truly could not produce teachers for the future without the experiences that you are providing for them in your classrooms.

Your teacher candidate will have to complete an assessment while he/she is in your classroom. This assessment is the Educative Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA). This assessment is part of a nationwide effort to ensure that our beginning teachers are truly prepared to teach effectively. In Wisconsin, this initiative includes the adoption of the edTPA, which requires candidates to demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to help all students learn in real classrooms. edTPA is not simply about theory as it requires teacher candidates to demonstrate what they can and will do on the job, translating into practice what research has shown to improve learning. edTPA is intended to be a summative assessment at the end of the educator preparation program and to support state and national program accreditation by providing evidence for program completion or licensure requirements. In Wisconsin, the edTPA is required for licensure.

As a cooperating teacher who supervises PK-12 teacher candidates in their clinical experiences you will see how the edTPA creates a rigorous and meaningful experience for aspiring teachers. Teacher candidates will develop lesson plans and deliver instruction consistent with your school's standards and curricula. For the first time, however, students will document the following five priority areas:

Planning

Instruction using video clips

Assessment using student work samples

Analysis of teaching as written in three commentaries

Academic language used throughout planning, instruction, and assessment

The edTPA assessment was developed under the leadership of the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE) in partnership with the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE).

Because this is an assessment that measures the performance of our teacher candidates, there are acceptable and unacceptable forms of support that can be given to our teacher candidates. The following link to the Field Office gives a brief synopsis of what is acceptable and unacceptable forms of candidate support.

<http://www.uww.edu/coeps/offices-services/fieldex/cooperating-teacher>

The following is an explanation of support in my words.

Acceptable Support:

- Discussing the upcoming units that will be taught in your classroom and which units will lend themselves well to the edTPA.
- Our teacher candidates can share the edTPA handbooks with you if you wish to see them.
- Sharing your input about the context and background of your students early in the process so that they can learn to plan instruction based on specific student strengths and needs.
- Asking probing questions about their draft edTPA responses and re-directing teacher candidates back to the rubrics for further deepening of understanding of the rubrics
- Arranging technical assistance for the video portion of the assessment including holding the camera for recording
- There are some acceptable forms of support that will assist your teacher candidate to be prepared to complete their edTPA. They include the following which can be discussed with any lessons that are NOT included in the learning segment that is used for the edTPA:
 - Discuss lesson plans and scaffolding lesson plans including standards and objectives
 - Develop questioning techniques with your teacher candidate
 - Help your teacher candidate to reflect on their teaching
 - Discuss how to give constructive feedback to students

Unacceptable Support:

- Editing a candidate's official materials prior to submission
- Offering critique of candidate responses that provide specific, alternate responses prior to submission
- Instructing candidates on which video clips to select for submission

These types of acceptable and unacceptable support along with the information from the above link will be very helpful when your teacher candidate begins asking questions about units, students, and assessments.

Our teacher candidates are required to video record their instruction of their 3-5 lesson learning segment, therefore they will have a video recording permission form that will need to be sent home to parents. The video permission video form that is in the first day packet of material that the parents read and sign usually does not suffice as the edTPA is scored by a third party viewer. There are a few school districts in Wisconsin that already have this edTPA permission form in their packets, it is our candidate's job to find out if your district has already included this in the first day materials. Once the permission forms are obtained, the teacher candidate will send us a Video Affirmation Form that comes from your e-mail stating that you and the candidate both know who can and cannot be video recorded.

Hopefully, this letter helps your understanding of what your teacher candidate must complete while in your classroom in addition to the normal duties expected for student teaching.

The completion of the edTPA is ultimately the responsibility of the teacher candidate. The instruction and video recording portions of the edTPA are completed in your classroom, however, the writing portions of the edTPA are to be completed on the teacher candidate's time out of the classroom. They do not get time off from student teaching to complete the edTPA.

Teacher candidates do return to campus to complete edTPA seminars. Teacher candidates will give you the dates of the edTPA seminars as they vary for different programs.

If you have any questions concerning the edTPA, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

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