Senior Year Experience

The internship for all teacher education majors is a two-semester experience in a public school classroom with a specially trained clinical teacher. The first semester (Senior I) is to acclimate the intern to the public school environment - i.e., to understand policies and procedures, to understand the multiple roles of the classroom teacher, to begin to understand the diverse needs of students, and to begin the process of long-range curricular planning, delivery of instruction, and assessment. Senior I interns are expected to be in their clinical school one day per week (or the equivalent). During Senior I, the department chair/program coordinator should serve in the place of the university supervisor for the purpose of policies and procedures. The second semester (Senior II) is a full semester of teaching, with the clinical teacher providing constant feedback to the intern about the teaching and learning process. In addition, the interns, with support from the clinical teacher and the university supervisor, develop a portfolio/electronic evidences to document their growth and development as a classroom teacher.

As a general policy, interns will not be permitted to take courses on campus or online concurrently with the internship. Exceptions may be made in hardship cases, but only through the Petition for Exception process.

NOTE: INTERNS ARE STRONGLY ADVISED NOT TO WORK DURING THE SENIOR II EXPERIENCE OF THE INTERNSHIP.

Internship Procedures

The purpose of the internship is to afford the prospective teacher an opportunity to gain experience and attain a reasonable degree of competency in his/her major area of specialization. The internship is a 15-week experience in a public school in North Carolina.

All internship assignments must be approved by the Office of Clinical Experiences. Interns should not be assigned to schools they have attended, they have been employed, they have relatives employed, or they have children enrolled.

The university supervisor and clinical teacher will jointly plan the observation and teaching schedule for the intern, leading to assuming total responsibility for instruction and for other tasks normally performed by the clinical teacher. When feasible and appropriate, interns should have experiences teaching a variety of subjects (within their licensure area), different grade levels, and students of differing achievement levels. Middle Grade and Secondary students, when appropriate, are expected to have teaching experiences in each area of concentration. Interns must complete a minimum of fifteen (15) consecutive days of full-time teaching responsibilities. A minimum of 10 weeks in the same intern placement is required for all students unless placed in a co-teaching classroom.

Concrete and timely feedback focused on improvement, is essential for intern growth. Interns, clinical teachers and university supervisors share in this responsibility. It is the intern’s responsibility to review their Progress Reports and other documents in Taskstream® throughout the internship and ask for assistance for their professional growth based on the NC Pre-Service Rubric and Standards (see Appendix 11).
The following procedures for the internship have been established by the University:

**Attendance**

1. **If there are emergencies** (personal illness, death in immediate family) during the Internship, requiring an absence, appropriate individuals **must be notified on the day of the absence prior to the start of the school day.** Responsibilities include:
   a. Telephoning the clinical teacher
   b. Sending plans to the school, if actively teaching
   c. Telephoning the university supervisor and
   d. Emailing the Office of Clinical Experiences at oce@ecu.edu twenty-four (24) hours a day or telephoning at (252) 328-6051. Please include your name, school, name of University Supervisor, and reason for the absence.

2. **After two days of absence for personal illness,** a completed Absentee Form and a doctor’s note shall be submitted to the Office of Clinical Experiences with all signatures.

3. **Excused absences:** Interns may be allowed up to two (2) excused absences for the purposes of job interviews, scheduled medical appointments, professional meetings, court appearances or others approved by the Office of Clinical Experiences without required make-up time, provided the university supervisor and clinical teacher are properly notified and are in agreement prior to the date of the requested absence, and if previous excessive absences have not occurred. If additional absences from the internship are necessary, the make-up time needed should be arranged with the clinical teacher, the university supervisor and approved by the Office of Clinical Experiences. In the event that extended absences are necessary, the Office of Clinical Experiences should be notified promptly. Absences to take licensure exams do not count toward the two excused absences, but an absentee form is still required.

4. **Prior to the date of the requested absence,** the clinical teacher, the university supervisor, principal, and the Lead Coordinator in the Office of Clinical Experiences, must approve requests for absences for job interviews, professional meetings, or court appearances. Any excused absence must be approved two weeks in advance. Documentation is required. The Absentee Form is available at [http://www.ecu.edu/cs-educ/teached/InternForms.cfm](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-educ/teached/InternForms.cfm) or in this handbook (see Appendix 6).

**Substituting**

**Senior I**

Interns **may not** substitute in their internship placement during Senior I. When the clinical teacher is absent, a regular substitute teacher should assume responsibility for the instruction and well-being of the students. The substitute teacher may need the intern’s assistance in the administration of the day’s instructional program and keeping of records. If the teacher is to be absent for a period time, the Office of Clinical Experiences should be notified by the Clinical Teacher. Decisions about continuing the internship assignment will be made on an individual basis. In the absence of the regular clinical teacher, the intern is expected to continue his/her planned periods of instruction.

**Senior II**

During Senior II, interns may serve as **substitute teachers** after meeting Local Education Agency (LEA) requirements under the following conditions:
1. The intern may substitute after the first formal observation by the university supervisor, provided the progress report reflects satisfactory performance.
2. The intern is authorized to substitute only for his/her clinical teacher.
3. The intern may substitute no more than two consecutive days and no more than a total of five days during the entire internship period.
4. When employed as substitute teachers, interns should be paid at the regular substitute teacher rate.

NOTE: Interns in North Carolina are recognized as professional educators under the state's written statutes and are given full legal status similar to that of regular teachers with the exception of salary, tenure, retirement, workmen's compensation and other fringe benefit guarantees. This status legalizes the assignment of interns to public schools, authorizes schools to delegate to them instructional and related responsibilities and provides legal protection for the schools involved and for interns as long as there is no evidence of negligence by interns in the performance of their duties within the policies of the school or of failure to comply with the appropriate guidelines of North Carolina Public School Laws. These legal provisions for professional status also provide a legal basis for the utilization of interns as substitute teachers.

Internship Policies

The following policies have been adopted for the Teacher Education Program at East Carolina University:

A. Interns must conduct themselves in a professional manner in all activities that affect their relationship and that of the University with the public school to which they have been assigned.
B. The intern must abide by the same policies of the local school as those required of regular teachers, plus those created by the local school system specifically for interns. Interns shall not administer medications to students.
C. The intern is expected to present an acceptable professional appearance in a school setting. He/she must also abide by any written code established by the local school or major department for professional personnel. Defiance of specific requests made by public school or university officials will be considered grounds for dismissal.
D. The intern will maintain acceptable teaching proficiency. At any point in the internship experience that, in the judgment of the supervisors, the intern demonstrates such ineffectiveness that the progress of the student is seriously impaired, he/she will be withdrawn from the program.
E. The intern must be punctual, prepared in advance, and ready to remain long enough after the close of the school day to participate in appropriate planning, preparation, and other professional activities.
F. Interns must possess good health and have a current physical examination form on file in the Office of Clinical Experiences before beginning the Senior II internship experience. Any changes in the medical status of the intern prior to the internship should be reported to the Office of Clinical Experiences. The intern will be permitted to continue in the internship as long as changes in health do not reduce his/her effectiveness as a teacher.
G. Interns who are arrested for violation of local, state, or federal laws or for serious offenses involving moral turpitude will be withdrawn immediately. It is the Interns responsibility to disclose to the Office of Clinical Experiences all tickets, arrests, and convictions for all offenses incurred at any time while in any teacher education course prior to and after the required Criminal Background Check. Failure to disclose all criminal activity, such as, but not limited to, underage drinking tickets; underage possession of alcohol; purchasing alcohol for a minor; drug or drug paraphernalia...
possession, purchase, sales, or manufacturing; driving while impaired, assault, larceny, breaking and entering, embezzlement, weapons charges, any misdemeanors or felonies, etc. will result in immediate removal from the Internship and probable removal from the teacher education program. Students may not be in any field experience (early field or Internship) with pending charges of any kind.

H. Other offenses or conduct that causes the intern’s character or fitness for admission to the teaching profession to be questioned, such as but not limited to, inappropriate use of social media to display inappropriate or illegal personal behavior, inappropriate comments or pictures about the clinical placement site, PK-12 students, clinical teacher, administration, university supervisor, or faculty; unauthorized posts about or pictures of, PK-12 students, etc. Refer to the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Teachers; the Technical Standards for Admission to, and Progression in Teacher Education at ECU; and the NC Professional Teaching Standards.

I. Interns may not accept gifts having monetary value from pupils at any time.

J. Undergraduate and Licensure Only (Post Bach Teacher Certification) students must earn a 2.0 or better in the internship to meet licensure requirements. Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) interns must earn a 3.0 or better in the internship to continue in the program.

If, for any reason the internship needs to be canceled, either the candidate, the Program Area Coordinator, or the Lead Coordinator of Clinical Experiences must complete one of the Cancellation of Internship Procedures Forms (see Appendices 7 & 8). Submit the forms to the Office of Clinical Experiences, Speight 110. Work with the advisor to drop all courses.
Internship Grading Procedures

Continuous guidance and evaluation of the intern is the joint responsibility of the university supervisor and the clinical teacher. The clinical teacher provides continuous, on-the-spot coaching and assistance. The university supervisor must formally evaluate the intern a minimum of four times, with additional visits as needed. The intern should participate in the discussion of the evaluations so that he/she is aware of his/her progress as perceived by the clinical teacher and university supervisor. The intern needs to review the Progress Report and seek assistance from the university supervisor and clinical teacher for continual growth.

A progress report is prepared by the university supervisor with input from the clinical teacher after each observation by the university supervisor. Student performance is rated (1) Below Proficient, (2) Proficient, or (3) Above Proficient. The report is uploaded by the university supervisor and viewed by the clinical teacher, and the intern. The progress report is viewable in the intern’s Taskstream® Account.

A final evaluation is jointly prepared by the university supervisor and the clinical teacher. Undergraduate interns are assigned letter grades (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F) on the final evaluation. MAT interns are assigned A, B, C, or F on the final evaluation. Although the grading of the intern involves the combined judgment of the university supervisor and the clinical teacher, the university supervisor is responsible for assigning the grade. See grading criteria Appendix 10.

The final grade will not be revealed to the intern by the clinical teacher or university supervisor before the end of the semester. The intern may view his/her final evaluation in Taskstream® on the last day of the semester.

University supervisors have the responsibility for issuing the final grade of the internship and submitting all required documents.

Policy for Early Release

Early release occurs only in exceptional circumstances and is seen as a privilege to outstanding students. Requests for early release should originate from the employing principal/school system and must go to the Office of Clinical Experiences at ECU and copied to the school system liaison for the employing system. Interns may not request their own early release.

Before requests can be approved, the Office of Clinical Experiences will get approval from the University Supervisor and the Department Chair or Program Area Coordinator. Interns must agree to be released and always retain the right to refuse the release in order to complete the internship and shall do so without repercussion from the University or school system. If approved, no early release will be implemented any sooner than the date approved each semester by the Office of Clinical Experiences.
Prior to approval the student must have:

(1) at least a “2” rating on all standards by the third progress report,
(2) one observation must have occurred during the 15 consecutive days of full-time teaching responsibility,
(3) 15 consecutive days of full-time teaching completed or completion of co-teaching requirements,
(4) all assessment work completed, uploaded, and scored before the date of early release,
(5) a mentor assigned from the employing school and the name of the mentor shall be forwarded to the Office of Clinical Experiences prior to the release date for the student, and
(6) interns may be released to substitute only in their licensure area,
(7) all coursework for licensure and/or degree completed.

After the release date:

(1) a formal observation of the intern must be made by the principal of the employing school or his/her designee using the ECU Progress Report form sent to the principal
(2) This formal observation shall be forwarded to and uploaded by the Office of Clinical Experiences by the designated due date.

Released Interns are not considered licensed personnel until after the official date of graduation for the semester in which they graduate. Interns should be informed that they will only receive substitute pay for the early release period. ECU will not send any letters to confirm a student’s status as graduated and/or licensure requirements completed until after all grades have cleared the Registrar’s Office and graduation status confirmed. This may take as much as three weeks after a semester ends. Interns are released from the internship placement only. They are still required to complete all course requirements, assessments, other requirements from the department, program area or university, and attend mandatory seminars. Interns shall be allowed to attend the Graduate Recognition Ceremony for their program area and the official University Graduation Ceremony. A substitute shall be provided for them to attend on the day of the ceremony in the semester in which they graduate, either May or December.

Dismissal Policy for Senior I and Senior II

During Senior I, the Department Chair/Program Coordinator shall serve in the place of the university supervisor for these polices.

A) Policies

1) Interns in Senior I or Senior II may be dismissed for failure to meet any of the established intern standards including criminal issues. If the intern is asked to be removed from any field experience placement (practicum or internship) by a school or a school system, this may be grounds for dismissal from the ECU teacher education program. This can be the result of a dispositional, technical standard and/or performance issue.

2) Only the Lead Coordinator of Clinical Experiences may terminate an internship assignment after receiving recommendations from the Department Chair/Program Coordinator.

3) Appropriate officials of the University or Local Education Agency (LEA) may initiate a recommendation for dismissal.

4) The intern may withdraw upon written request to the Office of Clinical Experiences (see Appendix 7). The Office of Clinical Experiences may also require the intern to complete a conference with the office and/or the university supervisor.
5) Copies of the cancellation letter submitted to the intern by the Office of Clinical Experiences will be provided for the designated LEA representative, the clinical teacher, the university supervisor, Department Chair/Program Coordinator and Executive Director of Teacher Education.

6) The intern will be informed of his/her right to appeal the internship grade by following the university grade appeal process for undergraduates or Graduate School (MATs) after the grade posts at the end of the semester.

B) Procedures

1) Written recommendations for dismissal may be initiated by the clinical teacher and/or other appropriate LEA officials, or by the university supervisor and/or other appropriate university officials, such as the Department Chair/Program Coordinator. This recommendation, stating reasons, will be submitted to the Office of Clinical Experiences. For expediency, recommendations may be made orally and followed by the required written recommendations.

2) Dismissal for failure to maintain acceptable levels of teaching proficiency.

a) The clinical teacher should notify the university supervisor (Senior II) or Department Chair/Program Coordinator (Senior I) at the earliest possible moment following the development of a serious concern about the intern's competence. An evaluation and a conference with the clinical teacher and intern should follow this expressed concern. The Office of Clinical Experiences should be contacted immediately in these situations.

b) If the university supervisor develops a serious concern about the intern’s competence, he/she should state these concerns in a conference with the clinical teacher and with the intern, as outlined on the Improvement Plan (see Appendix 5). Specific deficiencies should be identified with written suggestions and a time-line for improvement provided for the intern. The intern will be given an opportunity to improve based on the statement of deficiencies in the Improvement Plan. Anecdotal records may be necessary to supplement progress reports.

c) If the intern fails to improve during the specified period, or as soon as the deficiencies are deemed sufficiently acute to inhibit continued progress by pupils, termination of the intern's assignment should be recommended.

d) Supervisors may request an evaluation by the Office of Clinical Experiences or other program area faculty. The Coordinator may also choose to complete an evaluation on his/her own initiative.

3) Upon a decision for dismissal, the Office of Clinical Experiences will notify the intern and the above policies will rule to assure provisions for due process.