



STUDENT TEACHING HANDBOOK

January 2024

**Bluefield University
School of Education & Social Sciences
3000 College Avenue
Bluefield, VA 24605**

Mentor Teacher Training:

<https://screencast-o-matic.com/watch/c3j3qnVTrrT>

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FOREWORD

This handbook, developed by the Bluefield University School of Education and Social Sciences, is to be used as a guide for student teachers, mentor teachers, school administrators, university supervisors, and university faculty.

The sections of this handbook provide basic information related to the transition from theory to practice, the roles and responsibilities of the student teacher, mentor teacher and university supervisor, and the policies and procedures that govern the student teaching experience. The final section presents guidelines for evaluating student teaching performance. Additional materials will be distributed throughout the student teaching semester as appropriate. We hope that the information presented in the handbook will further clarify the many aspects of the student teaching experience. If there are questions that are not addressed in this handbook, please bring them to our attention.

Bluefield University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, baccalaureate, and master's degrees. Degree-granting institutions also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of Bluefield University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

The Bluefield University Teacher Education Program is awarded TEAC accreditation by the Inquiry Brief Commission of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) for seven years, from 10/24/2016-12/31/2023. The accreditation does not include individual education courses that the EPP offers to P-12 educators for professional development, re-licensure, or other purposes. This accreditation certifies that Bluefield University's Teacher Education Program has provided evidence that their program adheres to TEAC's quality principles.

All programs have been reviewed by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), realigned to the course competency matrices, and were given re-approval by the VDOE on October 17, 2019. Actions by the General Assembly of Virginia, the Virginia State Board of Education, the Virginia Department of Education, or Bluefield University may dictate changes in teacher education policies and regulations. Please keep in close contact with your advisor in the School of Education and Social Sciences to become aware of any changes.

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INTRODUCTION

Student teaching, the culminating experience of your teacher education program, is a time when you, as the prospective teacher, are able to put into practice the understandings and skills that you have acquired from your coursework and experiences.

You will be joining the ranks of more than 40 years of highly qualified teachers who have graduated from Bluefield University in the Teacher Education Program. Bluefield graduates have pursued careers with distinction in Virginia and beyond, providing outstanding leadership and service to their communities.

Teacher education is a vital part of Bluefield University and supports the mission and values of the university:

Mission:

Bluefield University is a Christ-centered learning community developing servant leaders to transform the world.

Values:

1. We are Christian in outlook, Baptist in tradition, and welcoming to each person.
2. We are committed to academic excellence and life-long inquiry embracing the liberal arts tradition through the study of humanities, sciences, professional studies, and graduate programs.

3. We are a diverse community characterized by iniquity, mutual respect, support, and encouragement.
4. We are passionate about helping students understand their life calling and become compassionate, globally-minded servant leaders. (Retrieved June 2, 2021 from <https://www.bluefield.edu/about-bluefield-university/mission-values/>.)

The Teacher Education Program at Bluefield University works within a conceptual framework of preparing competent, caring, and qualified teachers. The program is built upon a foundation of developing the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary within content, pedagogy, and caring teaching. Embedded within all areas of preparation and implementation are subject matter knowledge, curricular decision-making, effective technology integration, culturally responsive practices, diversity, reflective practices, servant leadership, and research to help teacher candidates demonstrate the following goals and dispositions:

1. Subject matter knowledge
 - Demonstrate subject matter knowledge, professional communication skills, and thinking skills through a robust integrated liberal arts education.
 - Possess a Christian worldview and global perspective, commitment to community, as well as dispositions for servant leadership, ethical, and professional behavior through a core curriculum exclusive to Bluefield University.
 - Demonstrate a deep understanding of one or more content area specialties through rigorous study and practice within the chosen content area(s).
2. Pedagogy and Curricular Decision-Making
 - Possess the ability to move subject matter knowledge and theory to practice by making appropriate curricular decisions affecting teaching, learning, and assessment.
 - Design instruction based on student needs for intended student outcomes and learning goals.
3. Technology Integration
 - Utilize technology in appropriate manners to enhance teaching and learning experiences for successful student learning outcomes.
4. Culturally Responsive Practices & Diversity
 - Use the knowledge of the rich diversity among people in terms of gender, race, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, culture, abilities, and individual differences to promote understanding, respect, and support for human diversity.
 - Possess the ability and dispositions to create a positive learning environment that supports and provides positive learning outcomes for all learners.
5. Reflective Practices
 - Practice deep reflection of instructional strategies, curricular decisions, and classroom climate to make continuous improvements to teaching and learning practices.
 - Convey commitment to lifelong learning.
6. Servant Leadership
 - Possess the skills to be a teacher leader within the classroom, school, and community.
 - Acquire the dispositions of servant leadership to best serve students, parents, and communities.
7. Research
 - Acquire an understanding of research methods, statistical analysis, needs assessment, and curricular evaluation.
 - Possess the research skills necessary to find, evaluate, and determine best practices for teaching and learning for continuous professional development and learning.

Students in the Teacher Education Program major in a liberal arts or science area and receive either the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree.

The Teacher Education Program also emphasizes practical aspects of teaching. Field experiences in public schools provide valuable opportunities for students to apply various theories presented in the college classroom and to engage in continuous reflection in their approach to teaching. Our low faculty-student ratio permits individual attention in class, during field experiences, and during academic advising sessions. Non-traditional students bring a wealth of life experiences to the classroom and interact well with students of traditional college age.

Bluefield University offers bachelor's degrees with teacher licensure in the following endorsement areas:

Bachelor of Science

Career and Technical Education: Business Information Technology 6-12

Science-Biology 6-12

Science-Chemistry 6-12

Elementary Education preK-6

Special Education: General Curriculum K-12

Bachelor of Arts

Music Education—Vocal/Choral preK-12

Music Education—Instrumental preK-12

English 6-12

Add-on endorsements are available in the following areas:

Journalism

Mathematics-Algebra I

Speech Communication

Information relative to the required courses for each of the teaching areas may be found in the School of Education.

Through advising sessions and course assignments, students learn that licensure requirements exceed graduation requirements.

The cooperative involvement of the total university faculty and public school practitioners is built into the planning, administering, and evaluating of the Teacher Education Program. Evaluation of teacher education students is continuous in order to assure that teacher candidates who exit the program meet the highest standards.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Teacher as a Reflective Practitioner



STUDENT TEACHING PROGRAM

Student Teaching is the phase of a teacher's professional preparation where the student teachers implement their academic and professional competencies in an actual classroom. During student teaching, the prospective teacher gradually assumes increasing responsibility as a teacher under the direct supervision of an experienced and well-qualified teacher in the public schools.

While becoming a reflective practitioner, as you assume the responsibilities of a teacher, you will have opportunities to:

- refine your professional qualifications for teaching.
- use and evaluate professional knowledge, understandings, and skills to promote student success and achievement.
- accept and succeed in the teaching role with its many responsibilities.
- participate in and become knowledgeable about the entire school operation.
- develop strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners in a variety of school settings.

ADMISSION TO THE STUDENT TEACHING PROGRAM

Admission to the Teacher Education Program does not mean that a student will automatically be accepted for student teaching. All students who plan to do student teaching must complete an application for student teaching no later than the semester prior to student teaching. The application will be reviewed, and the student will be notified in writing of the decision. If a student wishes to appeal the decision, the student must petition the Teacher Education Appeals Committee within ten days. This petition should be in the form of a letter to the Vice President for Academic Affairs with a copy to the Dean of the School of Education stating the desire for a hearing and should also contain any additional information that could be utilized in reviewing the decision.

Student Teaching must be completed while enrolled at Bluefield University and under the supervision of a Bluefield University faculty member. **The student teaching program lasts a full semester and involves full-time commitment on the part of the student teacher.** The student teacher must not plan to be involved in other major activities during the semester, which will conflict with student teaching. Taking courses, travelling with education or recreational trips, or participating in extracurricular activities often impact student teaching performance and final grade in negative ways. Student teaching begins with the preliminary sessions in the school division where the student teacher is placed. Fall semester student teachers are strongly encouraged to attend the pre-school conferences for teachers and be present for the opening days when the students first arrive at school.

Students who are seeking an endorsement in PreK-6 will be placed in primary and intermediate grades. Students seeking an endorsement in grades 6-12 will be placed in a high school and a middle school. Students seeking PreK-12 endorsements will have placements at elementary, middle, and/or high school. Trainings in specific areas may be required before student teachers are permitted in the classroom. Because of the need for adequate supervision by university personnel, student teaching placements are made locally and Bluefield University maintains field placement agreements with Tazewell and Bland Counties. Students are responsible for their own transportation to and from school each day.

The following requirements must be met in order to be accepted for student teaching.

- Admission to the Teacher Education Program.
- An overall grade point average of 3.0 or better.
- Completion of major (endorsement) area courses with a grade point average of 2.75 or better.
- Completion of all professional education courses with a grade point average of at least 2.75. No grade below C (2.00) will be accepted toward licensure in any professional education course.
- Completion of a minimum of 108 semester hours before beginning student teaching.

- The student must pass VCLA, Praxis II, and Teaching Reading: Elementary * (Prek-6 and Special Education* only) prior to beginning student teaching. **It is the student’s responsibility to submit minimum test scores for all required assessments to the School of Education. Testing companies DO NOT send official score reports to the University.**
- The student **MUST** provide documentation of completion of certification in the following trainings to the Education Department before the beginning of the student teaching semester:
 - *Dyslexia Awareness Training* (Completed in EDU 3133 Introduction to the Exceptional Child).
 - *Child Abuse and Neglect: Reporting for Educators* (Completed in EDU 4103 Dynamic Learning Environments).
 - *Behavior Intervention and Support* (Completed in EDU 4103 Dynamic Learning Environments.)
 - *Cultural Competency* (Completed in EDU 4103 Dynamic Learning Environments).
 - Emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (including hands-on practice effective September 1, 2017) (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED) (Completed prior to or during EDU 4103 Dynamic Learning Environments).

BLUEFIELD UNIVERSITY’S PARTNERSHIP WITH SCHOOL SYSTEMS

The principles below reflect the partnership that Bluefield University relies upon for student teaching in the cooperating schools:

- The off-campus student teaching program is guided by the objectives formulated by the University.
- The operation of the student teaching program is governed by the general policies of the University.
- The planning and evaluation of the student teaching program is a joint effort, carried out by the university personnel, the cooperating school systems, and the student teachers.
- A written contractual agreement is signed by officials of the teacher education institution and the cooperating school divisions covering the necessary understandings concerning the program and the value of such cooperation.
- The University has some measure of control over the experience of the student teacher in the cooperating school so as to give more effective supervision.
- An honorarium is granted to the student teaching mentor by the University for services rendered in guiding the student teacher.
- A follow-up survey of program completers is used to evaluate their success in the teaching field and to evaluate the student teaching program.

POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

University Expectations

In the community, the student teacher is assuming a position of respect, preparatory to the role of a teacher the following year. Student teachers will be expected to conduct themselves ethically and morally, as a teacher in the community, reflecting credit upon the local school, the University, and themselves. Every student teacher should ask the question, “Am I the kind of teacher I would like for my own child to have?” Students who fail to comply with the rules and expectations of the cooperating school, cooperating school district, and/or the University will meet with the Director of Teacher Education and/or Dean of the School of Education and Social Sciences. Students who continue not to comply will be placed on a plan of improvement and provided with a specific time period to make required improvements in performance and/or compliance with expectations. Failure to comply with the rules and expectations of the cooperating school, cooperating school district, and/or the University can result in the following options:

- Extension of the student teaching experience
- Pass with a grade to reflect the poor evaluation/performance
- Repeat the experience (re-register for student teaching in another semester)
- Withdrawal from student teaching; determine requirements to graduate without a teaching license
- Refusal by university supervisors and/or cooperating school personnel to provide references

Assignment of Student Teachers

Many factors must be taken into consideration when placing student teachers, and it may not be possible to place students in their choice of schools. Factors such as the availability of mentor teachers, concerns of principals, and the schedules of the university supervisors are primary concerns in the placement of student teachers.

Student teachers with a 6-12 endorsement will be assigned to a high school and a middle school, in which they can teach those subject areas in which licensure is expected. Students seeking licensure in PreK-12 endorsement areas will normally be placed in a middle school for pre-student teaching field experiences and in an elementary and high school for student teaching. Students seeking a PreK-6 endorsement will ideally be assigned to a lower elementary grade (PreK-2) and to an upper elementary grade (3-6) for student teaching. Because special education is a K-12 endorsement, field experiences will consist of two placements across the K-12 span.

Absences

You are not to be absent from your assignment for any reason whatsoever, except for personal illness or death of an immediate family member. There are no “personal leave” days, and you are not to leave the school property during the school day to attend to personal business without prior approval from your university supervisor. No absences are permitted from any part of the student teaching experience which lasts the entire university semester. The student teacher is expected to be present and on time for all school functions as well as for all student teaching seminars. **Regardless of when you complete the minimum number of clock hours required for licensure, you are expected to prepare and to participate as a student teacher for the entire semester.** Allowances for job fairs and job interviews can be made, but such requests must be cleared directly with the Director of Teacher Education.

If an emergency occurs that requires you to miss or leave school, you must call or notify the following:

Emergency Telephone List

University Supervisor	
Mentor Teacher	
Principal	
Director of Teacher Education	276-326-4475

You are expected to make arrangements for any lesson plans or materials that will be needed for instruction on any day you are absent so that the mentor teacher may continue instruction as scheduled. **If you have classroom materials at home that are needed for instruction, you are responsible for getting those back to the teacher.**

Additional days may be added to your student teaching assignment due to the closing of schools as a result of inclement weather or an extended personal illness. **In case of inclement weather, you are responsible for monitoring social media, local radio, or TV stations for cancellations or delayed schedules at your assigned school(s).**

Student Virginia Education Association

Each student teacher is required to become a member of the Student Virginia Education Association (SVEA) during the time of his/her student teaching. Members receive the same benefits given to full-time teachers, but at a fraction of the cost. Membership includes tort insurance coverage that protects the student in the event a public school student is injured while under the supervision of the student teacher. In addition, discounts in Virginia Education Association (VEA) dues are given to those who are student members. Membership year is from September 1 to August 31, so it is best to join in September for the full year of benefits.

Employment and Additional Coursework during Student Teaching

The student teaching experience is a full time job. Every effort should be made during student teaching to keep additional employment responsibilities to a minimum. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Director of Teacher Education and be brought to the attention of the University Supervisor. In any case, outside activities must not interfere with student teaching responsibilities.

Any additional coursework, must be approved by the Director of Teacher Education.

Transportation

Transportation to the student teaching assignment is the responsibility of the student teacher. Bluefield University assumes no responsibility for providing or arranging for transportation for students involved in field experiences.

Dress and Appearance

While good grooming and neatness are more important than the extensiveness of your wardrobe, student teachers must be appropriately dressed at all times, conforming to or exceeding the faculty dress code of the school district.

Here are excerpts from the dress code for Tazewell County Schools Amended by the School Board: May 20, 2014:

Guidelines

Employee ID Tags are required to be worn and visible at all times.

No display of body piercing (eyebrow, nose, tongue) that is disruptive to the teaching/learning process will be allowed.

No jeans or overalls of any color or fabric are permitted, except on such days as designated by the principal or superintendent.

Hats are not allowed to be worn in the building.

Male employees are required to wear pants, a collared shirt, and appropriate footwear (no sandals or flip-flops).

Female employees are required to wear either pants, a skirt or a dress of an appropriate length. Acceptable tops include shirts, blouses, or sweaters that are appropriately sized and do not expose under garments. Flip-flops are not considered to be appropriate.

All substitute workers and volunteers must comply with the dress code established for regular employees.

Exceptions

The principal may establish guidelines for attire on days when school is not in session or on designated special days/events (Career Day, Read Across America, Homecoming, etc.).

Physical educational personnel may wear loose fitting shorts of no more than 3" above the knee during physical education hours. It is suggested that when teachers or coaches leave the physical education area, "warm-ups" or skirts should be worn over or instead of the shorts, with a collared style "golf shirt" or "warm-up" jacket. On days when physical education classes are in a classroom, teachers are required to follow regular dress code standards.

Please do not embarrass the principals or the mentor teacher, or jeopardize your position in the school by improper or inappropriate dress. Students admire and respect a well-groomed, appropriately dressed teacher. Be sure that you are worthy of their admiration, respect, and even emulation at all times. Remember, also, that principals and supervisors will be observing you and forming impressions, and you may later need their recommendations for a teaching position.

Timesheets

Students are required to submit weekly timesheets, signed by the mentor teacher. Timesheets MUST be completed using the EXCEL timesheet (formulas for adding the timesheet are already saved in the timesheet) on "MYBC", printed, and signed by your mentor. Keep a copy of each timesheet for yourself so you can keep track of your hours. Please round all figures to the nearest quarter hour using the following: 15 minutes=0.25, 30 minutes=0.50, 45 minutes=0.75

University Email and Mail

Student teachers should check their university email on a daily (Sunday night through Friday) basis. Important information is sent through email, and it is your responsibility to check your email regularly for such information. It shows professional courtesy to reply to emails sent by your mentor and student teaching supervisor, as well as emails from any member of the School of Education team. In writing or responding to emails, use complete sentences and punctuation. Put a helpful and appropriate subject in the subject line, so the receiver can respond efficiently. If you are attaching documents, put your name/date in the header of the documents. All offices on campus will contact you through your Bluefield University email address. If you are having issues accessing your email or MYBC account, you must contact the IST department immediately.

Student teachers should make arrangements for picking up mail from the university post office boxes. Student teachers should check the boxes at least weekly or arrange to have another student pick up mail at regular intervals.

Confidentiality

Occasionally, a student may confide information to a student teacher. If a student does entrust a student teacher with confidential information, you are NOT to betray his or her confidence unless it threatens the student's welfare or welfare of others. Consult the mentor teacher for policies regarding school and school division procedures for reporting indications of abuse, pregnancy, suicide, harassment, or other welfare-threatening conditions. Keep in mind the following guidelines regarding student teacher/student confidentiality:

- Any identifying information regarding a student and his/her family must be removed from documents before sharing with other individuals outside the classroom setting. Mask name and other identifying information.
- Student teachers should refrain from any unprofessional discussions about students.
- Avoid discussing specific students inside or outside of the school setting unless it is regarding a professional matter with your mentor teacher or others involved with the student's education.

Email, Social Networking and Other Internet Sites

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE YOU TO PLACE PHOTOGRAPHS OF OR COMMENTS ABOUT STUDENTS, TEACHERS, STAFF, OR THE SCHOOL IN GENERAL ON ANY INTERNET/SOCIAL MEDIA SITE! DO NOT POST inappropriate comments or photographs of yourself or any about student actions/sayings that you consider "funny" or cute." Nothing is private if it is on the Internet. Student teachers must NOT share personal email addresses with students and must not "friend" students on social networking sites.

Inappropriate Language, Instructional Content or Activities

Student teachers are cautioned to avoid language, topics, or instructional activities which are prohibited by the school or the school division and/or are offensive to teachers and/or students. Generally, the mentor teacher will guide the student teacher's selection of curriculum and instruction, but in cases where he/she provides the student teacher with a great deal of autonomy, the student teacher is advised to ask questions about the policies and norms governing classroom language, topics, and activities in order to plan instruction appropriately. Using food items for lessons or "rewards" is strongly discouraged; students have an array of food and substance allergies and sensitivities.

Unsatisfactory Performance in Student Teaching

After unsatisfactory work has been documented by the mentor teacher and university supervisor, a decision will need to be made regarding the student teacher's continuation in the placement. If unsatisfactory performance continues, the following options may be used:

- Extend the student teaching experience
- Pass with a grade to reflect the poor evaluation
- Repeat the experience (re-register for student teaching in another semester)
- Withdrawal from student teaching; determine requirements to graduate without a teaching license
- Refusal to provide references

If the student teacher fails to perform his/her duties in attendance/punctuality, daily preparation, completion of required paperwork, respect for students, faculty, and staff, adherence to school and university policies, prompt communication, and/or quality of work, then the university supervisor will meet with the student teacher to determine what he/she will need to do to bring up his/her performance level to satisfactory. The university supervisor will present the student teacher with documentation of concerns as a plan of improvement; then both the university supervisor and the student teacher will determine steps to rectify the deficiencies. The student teacher will be given a time-line in which to demonstrate improvement and a day/time to meet with the university supervisor to determine if progress has been made. If the student teacher has not made sufficient progress at this point, then he/she will meet with the university supervisor and the Director of Teacher Education to determine if the student teacher should continue in the placement. A determination will be made in writing, and the student will be counseled about options. If the student wishes to appeal the decision of the Director of Teacher Education or Dean of the School of Education, he/she should make a written request to the Vice-President for

Academic Affairs who will refer it to an *ad hoc* committee and continue to follow the grade appeal policy in the university catalog.

Calendar of the Cooperating School

Student teaching is a full-time responsibility, and the student teacher must not participate in any activities that conflict with student teaching in the cooperating school or with the student teaching seminar. **You will follow the same calendar, between the beginning and ending dates of student teaching, that is set up for the mentor teacher in that school division.** The school division calendar shows not only school days and holidays, but also certain days that are non-instructional days, at which time the teachers are expected to be at their respective buildings performing such tasks as reporting to parents, working on cumulative records, counseling, planning, evaluating progress, and working with other staff members on professional growth projects. You are expected to participate in all non-instructional days, unless otherwise directed by your mentor or school administrator. **You must provide a signed document from the mentor or principal, if you are directed not to attend school on a non-instructional day.**

Student teaching will continue through the period of Bluefield University's Fall Break or Spring Break. The student teacher will follow the school division's calendar for holidays NOT the university calendar. If you are living in the university dormitory, you must make adequate arrangements for housing and meals for the time of the breaks.

Non-Instructional Duties

A student teacher is expected to accompany the mentor teacher in all phases of work. The same schedule should be kept in regard to hours spent at school, including both classroom work hours and extracurricular hours. The student teacher will find that the mentor teacher is responsible for many activities other than those directly attached to the classroom. Some of these include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Attending faculty meetings
- Taking duties, such as bus, lunch, and hall duty
- Working with dramatic, athletic, musical groups, or other extracurricular activities
- Working with academic teams
- Conferring with parents
- Attending parent-teacher meetings
- Attending local, district, or other professional meetings
- Serving on committees that work to improve local schools

Local School Regulations

Each school sets up certain regulations concerning such things as parking areas, the use of cars, the care of property, the use of materials, computers and cell phones, checking out supplies, ordering supplies and materials, and the use of the teachers' lounge. Student teachers are expected to observe those regulations that apply to classroom teachers unless special policies are established that are different for student teachers. You may be required to have an I.D. badge made at the school board office; until that time, use your university I.D. and sign in daily as required by the school.

Personal Email, Cell Phone Use, and Text Messaging

You are not to use the computer at school for personal email, or your cell phone for phone calls or text messaging at any time when the students are present. Cell phones should be turned off and out of sight when students are present. You are not to use the school telephone to receive or make personal telephone calls, except for an emergency (illness or accident). **Friends and family members must not visit you at school for the purpose of socializing.**

YOU ARE NOT TO GIVE YOUR CELL PHONE NUMBER TO ANY STUDENT, AND YOU ARE NOT TO TEXT OR RECEIVE TEXTS FROM STUDENTS. YOU ARE NOT TO "FRIEND" OR FOLLOW STUDENTS ON ANY SOCIAL MEDIA SITE.

Substitute Teaching

Student teachers should be allowed to maintain contact throughout the semester with those classes for which they have been assigned teaching responsibility. *You should not be utilized as a substitute teacher unless you have been approved as a substitute through the local school division.* For those school divisions that have the policy that a paid substitute will be hired whenever the regular teacher is absent, it is expected that the local school will allow the student teacher to continue under the supervision of the substitute on the same basis as when the mentor teacher is present.

Substitute Teachers in Tazewell County must meet the following requirements:

Bluefield University Student Teaching Handbook 2024, p. 11

Must be 21	Drug Test*	Interview
Application	Fingerprinting*	Board Approval
TB Test*	Background Check*	Substitute Training

*Requirements that have been met when admitted to the Teacher Education Program

Absence of the Mentor Teacher

If the mentor teacher must be absent on a short term basis (1-5 days), a substitute teacher must be present in the classroom if the student teacher is not an approved substitute. The student teacher’s responsibilities should include only those previously defined. The student teacher may observe or assist the substitute in ongoing classroom activities. The student teacher should also continue with planned lessons under the supervision of the substitute teacher.

If the mentor teacher is expected to be absent for an extended period of time (in excess of a week), the university supervisor must be contacted to determine whether alternative arrangements must be made.

Your Relationship with Students

It should be remembered that all students are people, and they appreciate the same kind of courtesy and interest that any other person would expect. You, as the student teacher, should remember, however, that there is a difference in age and experience between you and the students. Therefore, you should always act, dress, and think as an adult. You should never do anything to give the students the idea that you are “one of them.”

Because close personal relationships with students compromise the integrity of the student teacher’s professional role in the classroom and may have severe consequences, student teachers **MUST** avoid physical or emotional intimacy with students. Remember that you can be “friendly without being pals.”

- You are not to touch students.
- You are not to be alone in a room with one or a small group of students.
- You are **NEVER** to transport a student in your vehicle.

Sexual harassment is strictly forbidden by the Teacher Education Program and by the school divisions.

Your Relationship with the Mentor Teacher

All relationships with the mentor teacher should be professional, courteous, and cooperative, and communication is key to a successful experience. You should realize that the mentor teacher is responsible to the administration, to the parents, and to the community for a particular group of students, each of whom has certain needs and desires that the mentor teacher is striving to satisfy. The task of the student teacher then is to fit into the overall plans and help in achieving these aims.

The welfare and academic achievement of the students for whom you are jointly responsible is the ultimate priority.

Your Relationships with Other Members of the School Staff

Since no teacher serves in an isolated compartment or vacuum, you should become acquainted with staff members, their functions, and their inter-relationships. The principal, with designated helpers, sets up regulations for the entire school and has the duty to see that the regulations are administered properly. It is the duty of the student teacher to help the administrative staff in every way possible.

Other teachers on the staff expect little from the student teacher besides the courtesy and friendliness that labels an educated person. Occasionally, they may request that a student teacher lend a helping hand. The cafeteria staff and the custodial staff expect cooperation from the student teacher also. Recognition of and respect for the work of each group will help you to succeed as a member of the school community.

In a relatively small number of cases, student teaching experiences have become unsuccessful and distressful because of a lapse in professionalism on the part of a student teacher, mentor teacher, or other teacher in the school placement. Student teachers are cautioned to avoid intimate, personal relationships such as dating other professionals in their placement site. It is very difficult to maintain the conditions necessary for the student teacher’s growth when too close of a personal relationship exists between the student teacher and another individual at the school. If a school staff member approaches a student teacher in a personal or intimate manner, he/she is advised to discourage such attention. If it persists, it should be reported immediately to the university supervisor.

Relationship between Student Teachers and Parents

Working with parents is one of the most important roles of a classroom teacher. However, student teachers may only have limited experience in this role. Due to the sensitive nature of school/community relations, student teachers are advised not to jeopardize their own positions or the position of the school in the community by initiating or responding to any personal overtures from parents. Student teachers may observe or participate in parent conferences only under the direction of the mentor teacher or the principal. While communication is important, the mentor must approve all calls, emails, and letters to parents/caregivers. NO messages are to be sent in any form without the mentor's knowledge AND approval.

Leadership

For a teaching professional, leadership is an essential quality defined as initiative and a positive attitude. Initiative is demonstrated by observing the needs of students and adults in the school and making an effort to meet those needs. Leaders also project a strong active positive presence in the school and are sensitive to individuals, valuing their differences.

Professional Ethics

There are many daily decisions that the student teacher must make that cannot be governed by statements of policy, rule, or law. You will be called upon to make difficult decisions that must be governed by judgment which will hopefully be based upon a consideration of the ethics considered important to the professional educator. **If at any point during student teaching, you should violate moral, ethical, or professional standards of the teaching profession and/or the standards of Bluefield University, the School of Education faculty will convene to consider your future status. A student teacher can be withdrawn from the placement at any time. Consequences can include not graduating or graduating without completing licensure requirements.**

After consultation with education faculty, a decision is made by the Dean of the School of Education. If a student teacher wishes to appeal the decision, the student must petition the *ad hoc* grade appeal committee. This petition should be in the form of a letter to the Vice President for Academic Affairs with a copy to the Dean of the School of Education stating the desire for a hearing; the letter should also contain any additional information that could be utilized in reviewing the decision.

The *Code of Ethics for the Education Profession*, authored by the National Education Association, reflects a standard for professional behavior. (Source: <http://www.nea.org/home/30442.htm>)

Code of Ethics of the Education Profession *Adopted by the NEA 1975 Representative Assembly*

Preamble

The National Education Association believes that the education profession consists of one education workforce serving the needs of all students and that the term 'educator' includes education support professionals.

The educator, believing in the worth and dignity of each human being, recognizes the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, and the nurture of the democratic principles. Essential to these goals is the protection of freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all. The educator accepts the responsibility to adhere to the highest ethical standards.

The educator recognizes the magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the teaching process. The desire for the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents, and of the members of the community provides the incentive to attain and maintain the highest possible degree of ethical conduct. The Code of Ethics of the Education Profession indicates the aspiration of all educators and provides standards by which to judge conduct.

The remedies specified by the NEA and/or its affiliates for the violation of any provision of this Code shall be exclusive and no such provision shall be enforceable in any form other than the one specifically designated by the NEA or its affiliates.

PRINCIPLE I

COMMITMENT TO THE STUDENT

The educator strives to help each student realize his or her potential as a worthy and effective member of society. The educator therefore works to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the student, the educator--

1. Shall not unreasonably restrain the student from independent action in the pursuit of learning.
2. Shall not unreasonably deny the student's access to varying points of view.
3. Shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter relevant to the student's progress.
4. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety.
5. Shall not intentionally expose the student to embarrassment or disparagement.
6. Shall not on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, marital status, political or religious beliefs, family, social or cultural background, or sexual orientation, unfairly--
 - a. Exclude any student from participation in any program
 - b. Deny benefits to any student
 - c. Grant any advantage to any student
7. Shall not use professional relationships with students for private advantage.
8. Shall not disclose information about students obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.

PRINCIPLE II

COMMITMENT TO THE PROFESSION

The education profession is vested by the public with a trust and responsibility requiring the highest ideals of professional service.

In the belief that the quality of the services of the education profession directly influences the nation and its citizens, the educator shall exert every effort to raise professional standards, to promote a climate that encourages the exercise of professional judgment, to achieve conditions that attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education, and to assist in preventing the practice of the profession by unqualified persons.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the profession, the educator--

1. Shall not in an application for a professional position deliberately make a false statement or fail to disclose a material fact related to competency and qualifications.
2. Shall not misrepresent his/her professional qualifications.
3. Shall not assist any entry into the profession of a person known to be unqualified in respect to character, education, or other relevant attribute.
4. Shall not knowingly make a false statement concerning the qualifications of a candidate for a professional position.
5. Shall not assist a noneducator in the unauthorized practice of teaching.
6. Shall not disclose information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.
7. Shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about a colleague.
8. Shall not accept any gratuity, gift, or favor that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or action.

ORDERING YOUR PRIORITIES

Personal and Professional Transitions

Changing your identity from a student to a teacher may require a significant change in your lifestyle. This transition is an exciting one, but it is one which may require modification of how you use your time and your energy. The decisions you make about how you will modify your lifestyle, and how you will change the ways in which you manage your time and information can potentially make the difference between an adequate student teaching experience and an exceptional one.

You will have many demands on your time during this semester of student teaching. Planning for daily instruction, attending after-school or evening meetings, and being available for unexpected parent conferences makes student teaching a full-time commitment. As a novice, you will have to spend significant amounts of time in the planning, delivery, and evaluation of your instruction. Time which used to be available evenings and weekends may no longer exist. You will need to make decisions about how to order your priorities and manage your time based on what is critical in learning how to teach. Making wise decisions about your time and energy can help you obtain maximum benefits from the student teaching experience.

Managing Time and Organizing Information

You may feel overwhelmed at the amount of information that you need to process during student teaching. To help organize the number of papers and forms that you must manage, in addition to your notes, you may wish to keep a loose-leaf notebook, calendar, and/or computer files for that purpose. You should develop an organized system to manage your teaching materials, student work, school documents, etc. Being able to manage your time and materials plays a significant role in determining your grade.

BUILDING PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Of the many areas in which you need to demonstrate professional competency, none is more important than your ability to develop and maintain positive working relationships with students, teachers, school staff, administrators, parents, and university personnel. The relationships that you build with students and adults in your environment will go a long way in making your preparation as a teacher a rewarding and successful experience. Your perceived ability as a teacher is, in large part, based on the way in which you conduct yourself in these relationships.

The following are some suggestions, which will assist you in building and maintaining quality professional relationships:

1. The classes you will be assigned will be culturally diverse. Use culturally responsive teaching strategies to create a positive classroom environment for all students. Treat each student as an individual. Respect the contributions of each as worthy and important and intentionally create a classroom climate that reflects a culturally responsive and individualized perspective with attention given to materials, activities, and positive interactions. Remember to use positive nonverbal behavior such as smiling.
2. Listen to and watch what is going on in your school, classroom, or community. Be a skillful observer, take notes, gather information, and ask questions which strive for understanding. This is your opportunity to tap the expertise of professional educators and learn as much as you can during this short time.
3. The practices we observe in the field may not always conform to what you believe in or have learned in your formal coursework. If you have some concerns about a specific practice, ask questions in a non-judgmental manner to gain further insight about school policy, a teacher, classroom practices, or a student's behavior.
4. Often, information shared in the school setting is not appropriate for other audiences. Not only is it important to respect the information you have about students and their families, but you also need to be discrete about sharing the experiences you encounter in the classroom or in the school with those outside of that environment. **Confidentiality is an expected professional attribute.**

5. Be sure that you really do know your personal biases, particularly as they are going to affect your attitudes and actions toward students, parents, or other professionals in the school. You need to be sure that these biases do not interfere with your professional responsibilities.
6. Recognize that you communicate through both verbal and nonverbal avenues. Be sure that both your verbal and nonverbal communication reflect a positive attitude and professional image.
7. Often, you will be expected to participate in collaborative activities with other teachers. In inclusive settings, you may team-teach with another educator. It is essential that you learn how to work effectively with others. Communicating openly and honestly and being respectful of other views are essential attributes of a team player and will facilitate the maintenance of a healthy work environment.
8. Your relationship with your mentor teacher is a vital one. The way you conduct yourself initially will have a significant influence upon your working relationship with your mentor teacher. Exhibit an interest in what goes on in the classroom. Taking notes, asking questions, becoming actively involved, and being responsive to requests for assistance will contribute to the mentor teacher's perception of your potential to assume increased responsibility.
9. Observations will be conducted on a regular basis by your university supervisor and mentor teacher. This may be a stressful experience for some student teachers. In order to make the observation less stressful and maintain a positive working relationship, consider their written and verbal feedback objectively, ask questions about points that may be unclear and be willing to problem solve together. Suggest to your supervisors what you want them to focus upon. Try not to react defensively and produce excuses for instruction that did not go as you intended. Instead, try to incorporate the suggestions into your teaching. Showing an interest in improving and learning will promote good relationships, and make it easier for your supervisor and mentor teacher to be helpful.
10. You may have the opportunity to interact with parents during your student teaching experience. Try to learn as much as you can about the community. Help parents to feel welcomed and appreciated when they visit the school. Always be courteous and professional. It is mandatory to have the mentor teacher present when conferring with parents about their child's performance.

ACTIVITIES FOR THE STUDENT TEACHER

The following suggested activities are a partial list of ways in which you may become actively involved in the classroom.

I. Initial Activities

- Handle classroom routines such as attendance, lunch count, collecting forms, money, arrival and dismissal, movement of children/youth for special grouping.
- Assume teacher's duties -- cafeteria, recess (organize an indoor recess), hall duty, study halls.
- Secure and maintain supplies and technology within the school; copy student handouts.
- Check students' written work and keep necessary records.
- Learn school health and safety procedures (fire drill, what to do in case of illness or accidents).

II. Organizational Activities

- Keep a notebook or idea file; include "sponge" activities such as games; songs; stories; sources of information and materials; ideas for learning centers; bulletin boards; ideas for technology integration for teaching, assignments, or assessments, etc.
- Become responsible for the general appearance of the classroom. Help the mentor teachers set up and arrange the classroom, consultation, or small group area.
- Help group students for instructional purposes.
- Prepare bulletin boards (not a requirement for your portfolio, but if you get the opportunity to create one, it can be utilized as an artifact).
- Develop a repertoire of techniques for class management and for addressing individual behavior problems.
- Create an individual behavior management plan including the use of data for decision-making.

III. Instructional Activities

- Prepare individual written lesson plans.
- Plan, modify, alter or adapt, and teach a unit of instruction as is appropriate for the students in this classroom, and teach a unit of instruction.
- Participate in team planning sessions even if outside of regular school hours.
- Prepare and direct the use of learning centers or computer activities.
- Prepare an instructional classroom game and other original teaching materials.
- Explore existing technology for use in instruction.
- Help evaluate students' progress, including decision making from data collected, preparation of report cards, or the evaluation of movement toward an IEP goal.
- Help administer standardized and teacher-made tests. Design original tools for diagnosing problems and/or evaluating progress.

Eventually assume full teaching responsibilities according to a plan developed with the mentor teacher. Take complete charge for a designated period of time, planning, and directing all activities during the school day.

IV. Professional Activities

- Attend school during regular teachers' hours as well as all faculty, team, grade level, and professional development meetings.
- Notify the mentor teacher and university supervisor of absence and send in plans for lessons that were to be taught. Prepare a set of plans for a substitute teacher.
- Communicate with parents in writing with the mentor's guidance, and orally participate in parent/teacher conferences under the guidance of the mentor teacher.
- Become familiar with professional teachers' organizations and professional books and magazines. Read recent articles concerning education.
- Attend a parent/teacher meeting. If possible, attend professional education conferences.
- Learn about the school division's special services and resources, such as pupil personnel workers, guidance counselors and resource teachers.
- Become familiar with curriculum materials, curriculum guides, and diagnostic tools.
- Visit other classrooms and observe different teaching techniques as well as characteristics of students of various levels.
- Become familiar with the responsibilities of other educators.
- Participate in informal faculty activities. Develop open and friendly staff relationships.
- Display initiative and a willingness to accept constructive feedback.
- Become familiar with the varied responsibilities of the special educators and other specialists in your building.

GUIDELINES FOR OBSERVING YOUR CLASSROOM

As you observe your mentor teacher, the students, and other professionals, the following guidelines are provided to assist you in focusing on the complexities of classroom life.

I. Focus on the Organization of the Classroom

A. Physical Arrangement

- The seating arrangement
- The location of the materials and the use of bulletin boards, technology tools, and learning centers
- Utilization of open space
- What kinds of learning are facilitated by the room arrangement?
- What is used to make the room appealing and stimulating?

B. Routines

- Beginning of day - arrival, attendance, lunch count, money collections, opening exercises or homeroom

- Bathroom and hall pass procedures
- Distribution and collection of materials
- Student jobs and responsibilities
- Ending of day - dismissal

C. Transitions

- From opening routines to start of first lesson
- From one lesson to another
- Within a lesson
- From an active experience to a quiet one
- From large group to small group instruction
- From the classroom to lunch/recess and back to classroom
- To and from special subjects such as physical education
- Movement of groups within the instructional area

II. Focus On Instruction

A. Introductions to lessons or activities

- How are new activities introduced?
- How are activities continued from the day before introduced?
- What techniques are used to interest and involve students?

B. Materials

- What types of materials are used? How are they used?

C. Procedures

- How much activity is teacher-directed? Student directed?
- How much teaching is done in small groups? Large groups? Independently?
- What is the rest of the class involved in when the teacher is working with a small group?

D. Conclusions to activities and evaluation

- What do students do when they are finished?
- How does the teacher provide closure?
- How does the teacher provide for evaluation or follow-up of activities?
- How are assessment records of students' progress kept?

E. Team teaching

- How do teachers work together in a team situation?

III. Focus on the Students

- What are some common characteristics of this age level?
- What individual differences do you observe?
- How do students of differing abilities relate to each other?
- Who are the popular students? Who are the *loners*?
- Does the behavior of a given student change under a variety of situations and teachers?
- Which students appear to have special problems?
- What motivates different students?

IV. Focus on Teacher/Student Interaction

A. Teacher's use of voice and nonverbal communication (facial expressions and body gestures) in interactions with pupils

B. Teacher's handling of children's differences in:

- Gender, race, culture, ethnicity, socioeconomic levels, and abilities
- Interests and motivations
- Attention span
- Time required to complete work
- Ability to complete tasks and the ability to work independently

C. Teacher's questions posed to students

- Types of questions asked (recall, inferential, opinion)
- Types of responses made by students
- Which students respond most often? Least often?

V. Focus on Classroom Management

A. Disruptive Student

- Observe the teacher's behavior, verbal and nonverbal.
- Observe the student's response and response of peers.

B. Group Management

- What techniques does the teacher use to get and hold the attention of a large group? Small group?

BECOMING A REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER

Reflective thinking allows you to analyze classroom events so that you not only recognize what happens but also understand why those events occurred. You know from your class work that success as a reflective practitioner demands time, energy, and practice. The following are suggestions of some activities that promote reflection:

- **Reflective Journals:** Use the weekly email to your supervisor as an opportunity to reflect upon your experiences of the week and to write your weekly journal that is submitted to your university supervisor. Also, remember that a section is provided on each lesson plan for you to reflect specifically about that lesson.
- **Reflection on Daily Lessons** – Use the questions at the bottom of the daily lesson plan template. Spend time each evening answering the questions for each subject/period that you taught that day. Show evidence of deep analysis beyond just things such as “the lesson went good.”
- **Video:** Video record yourself as you present a lesson; view that video and note areas of strengths and weaknesses completing the video self-evaluation. **NOTE: A video recording of your choice MUST also be included in the student teaching portfolio. You must have parental permission for your students PRIOR to filming a class.**
- **Coaching and Conferencing:** You should work with both your mentor teacher and your university supervisor to establish a comfortable system of communication. As you work with your mentor in developing lesson plans, seek his/her suggestions. Be respectful, polite, direct, and specific when you have concerns.
- **Professional Portfolio:** As you progress through the semester, you will compile artifacts to include in your professional portfolio, which will be evaluated by expert practitioners. A personal self-progress chart for the portfolio is included in the appendix of this document.

PLANNING FOR EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION

Effective planning is considered one of the most important factors in successful student teaching. It is vital for student teachers to be aware of the following as they make their plans:

- Establish a specific time/date for consultation with the mentor about lesson plans.

- Write a plan for each different lesson you teach using the format that your university supervisor provides to you.
- Submit the plan to the mentor teacher, before you teach the lesson, and get his/her initials. NOTE: The mentor teacher has the authority and duty to assume responsibility of any class for which he/she does not believe the student teacher has planned adequately.
- Make any modifications that the mentor teacher deems appropriate.
- Following the presentation of the lesson, hand-write a reflection about what went right, what went wrong, and how you could improve the lesson. Feel free to make notations on your plans as you use them.
- Prepare a 3-ring binder of lesson plans. Lesson plans must:
 - Include hand-written reflections,
 - Be dated and initialed by MENTOR teacher,
 - Grouped by class/subject,
 - Be in order by date.
 - This binder MUST be with you at school each day. Supervisors will be reviewing lesson plans during observations. Failure to document lesson plans will result in dismissal from student teaching.
- Create an instructional unit lasting 5-10 days following the criteria in this handbook. Give the students a pre-test, teach the unit, then give the students a post-test. Complete the “Verification of Student Growth” form containing the pre-post test data and analyze strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

STUDENT TEACHER ASSESSMENTS

The Professional Teaching Portfolio

The culminating assignment during student teaching is the development of a professional teaching portfolio and the portfolio presentation. This portfolio is a purposeful collection of selected materials by and about the student teacher that represents teaching competency. It can provide a meaningful cumulative record of teaching performance which may assist in making decisions about successful program completion. Most student teachers use their portfolios as an enhancement to the job search process and continue to add to them throughout their teaching career. University supervisors will mentor and guide student teachers through the process of portfolio development as sections are submitted (or revised from previous education courses) as required on the seminar schedule.

A list of items to be included in the portfolio is distributed at the student teaching seminar and is included in the online course.

Student Teaching Seminars

Throughout the student teaching experience, student teachers will attend scheduled seminars which are an integral part of the student teaching semester. The seminars are arranged by the Director of Teacher Education and the university supervisors. The seminars may focus on topics such as: Multicultural Education, Teaching Strategies, Inclusion, Classroom Management, Assessment, Motivation, Portfolio Development, Problem Solving/Inquiry, Reflection, and Home/School Relations. Attendance at all seminars is required; if needed, arrange with your mentor to leave early to be on time.

Mentor, Principal, and Supervisor Observations during Student Teaching

As you gradually assume the many responsibilities of a teacher, you will be expected to demonstrate growth and competency in the areas of:

- Subject Matter Knowledge
- Caring Teaching Skills
- Pedagogical Knowledge

- Diversity
- Technology
- Leadership
- Reflection
- Licensure

Many observations are conducted by your mentor teacher and occur on a regular basis as you perform your classroom responsibilities. These observations are usually daily, informal, and provide ongoing written or oral feedback.

Your university supervisor will also observe you teaching. Most of these observations will be scheduled, formal observations although it is possible to expect additional unscheduled visits. The observation will be followed by a post observation conference with written/oral feedback. You can expect to be observed by your university supervisor anywhere from 4-6 times per semester.

Observations by school administrators are required to assist with data collection and analysis. The Teacher Education Program requests that one school administrator (principal/assistant principal or a designee) per placement completes the Principal Evaluation.

Regardless of who is observing, the main purpose of the observation is to facilitate growth. It is not merely to praise, criticize, or give you suggestions, but to provide the opportunity to engage in conversation that will promote your ability to reflect upon your teaching and resolve any of your own dilemmas of practice. This is a time to verbally analyze your own performance, generate alternative strategies, and commit to self-examination and self-improvement.

REQUIRED LICENSURE ASSESSMENTS

The Collegiate Professional 10-year Renewable Virginia License

The Virginia Department of Education (September, 2022) requires that **all candidates seeking initial licensure** in Virginia take and submit passing scores on the following:

- *Praxis II: Content Area Assessment*
- *Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA)*
- *Teaching Reading: Elementary* * (for PreK-6 and Special Education Licensure ONLY)

Passing scores on Praxis II, VCLA, and the RVE* are required for student teaching placement, exiting the program and recommendation for licensure.

Required TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM Assessments

In compliance with the Virginia Board of Education's *Regulations Governing the Review and Approval of Education Programs in Virginia* (August 1, 2020), a minimum score on reading/writing assessment (VCLA) as well as proof of competence in math (MAT 1213 with a minimum grade of C) is required for admission to the Teacher Education Program. Bluefield University has additional requirements as well. The following are requirements to be admitted to the Teacher Education Program at Bluefield University:

- Maintain a 3.0 overall GPA
- Maintain a 2.75 endorsement area GPA
- Maintain a 2.75 professional education GPA
- Complete ENG 1013 & ENG 1023 (minimum grade of C)
- Complete MAT 1213 or higher math (minimum grade of C)
- Complete EDU 2003 (minimum grade of C)
- Complete the background check for Tazewell County Public Schools (\$108.50)
- Pass the Virginia Communications and Literacy Assessment (VCLA) (Reading – 091 and Writing – 092) (\$130 – passing score of 470 is required)
- Complete the application for the Teacher Education Program (TEP) – Application, 2 essays, 3 recommendations from faculty, and interview with Education Department faculty
- Demonstrate moral, social, and professional dispositions deemed acceptable to the teaching profession.
- Possess those health and physical qualities that are deemed necessary for teaching.

Prior to beginning student teaching, students must complete the following requirements:

- Maintain a 3.0 overall GPA
- Maintain a 2.75 endorsement area GPA
- Maintain a 2.75 professional education GPA
- Submit the application for student teaching
- Review the Bluefield University student teaching handbook
- Pass the appropriate Praxis II content area assessment
- Pass the Teaching Reading: Elementary Assessment (for PreK-6 Elementary Education and K-12 Special Education ONLY)
- Pass all education courses with a minimum grade of C
- The student **MUST** provide documentation of completion of certification in the following trainings to the Education Department before the beginning of the student teaching semester:
 - Dyslexia Awareness Training (Completed in EDU 3133 Introduction to the Exceptional Child.)
 - Child Abuse and Neglect: Reporting for Educators (Completed in EDU 4103 Dynamic Learning Environments.)
 - Cultural Competency (Completed in EDU 4103 Dynamic Learning Environments.)
 - Behavior Intervention and Support (Completed in EDU 4103 Dynamic Learning Environments.)
 - Emergency first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (including hands-on practice effective September 1, 2017) (CPR), and the use of automated external defibrillators (AED) (Completed prior to or during EDU 4103 Dynamic Learning Environments).

It is the **student's responsibility** to see that all minimum scores are on file in the office of the School of Education. The student **MUST** provide a copy of all test scores to Bluefield University School of Education. The student should use the same candidate ID number when registering for subsequent Praxis test sessions. No recommendations for student teaching placement or licensure will be made until all copies of all required scores are received.

Assessment Information

Complete information about required assessments may be found online using the following links:

- <https://www.ets.org/praxis/va>
 - Praxis II Content Area Assessments
 - Teaching Reading: Elementary (Prek-6 and Special Education General Curriculum K-12 ONLY)
- www.va.nesinc.com
 - Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (Reading and Writing Sub-Tests)

All admission and licensure assessments must be passed prior to student teaching. It usually takes four to six weeks from the test date for the scores to be reported by ETS.

Industry Credentials**

For a Collegiate Professional License to teach in Virginia (A 10-year renewable license)

****Required ONLY for Business 6-12 (Career & Technical Education: Business Information Technology)**

Industry Credentials for Teachers Seeking an Initial License with Endorsement(s) in an Area of Career and Technical Education: Individuals applying for a license with a Career and Technical Education endorsement must include documentation verifying this requirement has been met with the application packet. The 2014 General Assembly amended the *Code of Virginia* to require that every teacher seeking initial licensure with an endorsement in the area of career and technical education shall have an industry certification credential in the area in which the teacher seeks endorsement. "Industry certification credential" means a career and technical education credential that is earned by successfully completing a Board of Education-approved industry certification examination, being issued a state professional license, or successfully completing an occupational competency examination. Please note that this requirement is in addition to all other licensure requirements for the endorsement you are seeking. For additional

information on this requirement, please refer to the *Industry Credentials for Teachers Seeking an Initial Virginia License with Endorsement(s) in an Area of Career and Technical Education* guidance document accessible at the following Web site:

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/career_technical/path_industry_certification/cte_credentials/industry_credentials_for_teachers_guidance_document.pdf. You may also access the guidance document by referring to www.doe.virginia.gov and selecting Superintendent's Memos under the "Quick Links" at the top, right-hand side of the page. Superintendent's Memo #150-14 was posted on June 6, 2014.

RECIPROCITY WITH OTHER STATES

By receiving a Virginia license, the student will have reciprocity for licensure in a number of other states. Students seeking teaching licenses in states other than Virginia may be required to take additional courses or tests. Information about teacher licensure in all 50 states is available at <https://www2.ed.gov/teachers/jobs/reqs/edpicks.jhtml>. Most states require payment of a license fee, and most states and school districts require a state police and/or FBI background check. The fee for an initial Virginia teaching license is \$100 in-state and \$150 out-of-state. The School of Education works with all students completing the approved program to facilitate their obtaining a teaching license in Virginia and in other states.

GRADUATION WITHOUT STUDENT TEACHING, REQUIRED TESTS, AND/OR EDUCATION COURSEWORK

If a student quits the Teacher Education Program to accept a teaching position prior to completing all program requirements (including coursework, student teaching and the required licensure examinations), he/she will not be recommended by the University for licensure. These individuals will need to apply for a teaching license through their employing school division and will be subject to transcript evaluation by the state department of education. This may result in additional course work being required for licensure. Faculty in the School of Education may choose not to write letters of recommendation for teaching positions if students have not completed the program.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Following are some of the more difficult questions that have been asked by student teachers while participating in their student teaching experience in the public schools.

Should I be left alone in my classroom?

At some point in the student teaching experience, you are likely to be left alone to conduct a lesson. When this occurs, be sure you know how to contact your mentor teacher, another teacher, or principal in case of emergency.

What if a child gets hurt while I am in charge of the classroom?

Notify the principal's office and mentor immediately. As soon as possible, contact your university supervisor. **Carefully document the incident.** Remember to wear disposable gloves if you are in contact with blood or other bodily fluids.

Should I be left alone with students for activities such as recess, cafeteria duty or such large group activities?

It is not recommended that you be alone to assume the responsibility for supervision of large groups of students. Usually, at least one other teacher or administrator will be present during these times.

Do I have to report suspected child abuse?

Teachers are responsible by law for reporting suspected child abuse. As a student teacher, you must report any suspected child abuse to your mentor teacher.

What if I suspect that a student is carrying or concealing drugs or weapons on school property?

The United States courts have generally upheld the right of a school to conduct searches and seizures. If you should suspect a student of carrying an illegal weapon, drugs, obscene materials, etc. you should report it to your mentor teacher. **Under no circumstances should you take on the responsibility of searching a locker or seizing illegal paraphernalia.**

Can I transport students in my car?

No! Absolutely NOT.

What if I am asked to give medications to a child?

Student teachers are not responsible for issuing medication to students. There are times when a student needs medication,

and this is usually done in the office or health room with the written consent of the parent. Ask your mentor teacher about school policy.

What are my rights should I need to physically defend myself or a student?

There are situations which arise when a teacher is threatened by a student, where two students physically endanger each other, or where a student is “out of control.” Every non-aggressive means should be made to intervene. You must not let anger prevail or let yourself get out of control. The courts have generally upheld a teacher’s right to self-protection, protection of other students, or school property when compelled to do so, and without using extreme force. Threats against your person should always be taken seriously and reported to the proper authorities. Find out the exact policy in your school.

What should I do if I feel that the school is implementing practices that are in violation of children’s and parent’s rights?

This is perhaps the most difficult question of all to answer. There is always a very fine line that student teachers must walk when they feel that the school’s rules - written or unwritten - are wrong or inappropriate. If you suspect this is happening, discuss it with your university supervisor.

What are my rights to teach what I think is appropriate?

There is increasing controversy over what teachers can teach. **As a student teacher, everything that you will teach must be approved by your mentor teacher;** consequently, while preparing to be a teacher, you will not make that decision alone. For future reference, however, we have found the following suggestions helpful. Address the following questions when determining to use controversial subject matter:

1) Is the material developmentally appropriate for your class? 2) What is your educational purpose? Is it valid? 3) Is there a policy in your school which prohibits the use of such material?

Are student teachers required to attend all student teaching seminars and meetings? YES!

Are student teachers expected to attend school-related meetings such as PTA, faculty and team meetings, professional meetings or workshops?

Student teachers are expected to attend all school functions required of the mentor teacher.

Who assigns the student teaching grade?

The student teaching grade is a combination of the following:

Weekly Required Assignments (Graded by the University Supervisor)

Teaching Evaluations from Supervisor, Mentor, and Principal

Student Teaching Portfolio and Presentation (Graded by Panel Members)

How are mentor teachers selected?

Student teachers are placed at public schools in Tazewell and Bland Counties at the discretion of the School of Education. After receiving approval of placements by the appropriate school division, the principal of the chosen school will assign the mentor teacher(s). Student teaching placements are final, and NO changes will be made except under the most extreme circumstances.

TO THE MENTOR TEACHER:

THANK YOU!! As a mentor teacher you will probably have the greatest influence on the development of the student teacher as a new professional in education. This responsibility is a highly significant one, and we appreciate your involvement in the college-school partnership. Providing a climate for open and honest discussion of questions and concerns will help to create the growth environment and support system the student teacher needs. Your most important contribution to the development of the student teacher is your daily **FEEDBACK** that reflects the strengths and the challenges of each lesson. Our student teachers highly value suggestions for improvement.

The mentor teacher is an individual who exhibits the following characteristics:

- Has expressed a desire to work with student teachers.
- Holds at least a Collegiate Professional License
- Has three years of teaching experience
- Is strongly recommended by the principal and other members of the administrative staff
- Demonstrates professional competence
- Works well with other professional staff members and parents
- Has a concern for the welfare of others
- Demonstrates an understanding and practice of professional ethics
- Is dedicated to the teaching profession
- Has the ability to communicate diplomatically constructive feedback

Teach/Coach/Reflect Process

The role of the mentor teacher is to **TEACH** the student teacher what you know about how to teach, **COACH** the student teacher so that his/her skills can be developed in a supportive, mentored environment and provide opportunities for the student teacher to **REFLECT** on the many aspects of the teaching and learning process. By encouraging the student teacher to analyze his/her own progress and identify problems and possible solutions, the transfer into the role of decision maker in his/her own classroom will be more easily made. The following guidelines will help to facilitate this process.

Orientation

- Introductory Conference between mentor teacher and student teacher
- Explain classroom and building responsibilities and procedures, and the role you want the student teacher to take in implementing them.
- Discuss professional expectations such as appropriate attire, school policies, and procedures.
- Discuss and reflect on each other's expectations of this experience so that you can provide a foundation for building a professional working relationship.

B. Orientation to the Classroom

- Introduce the student teacher as a co-professional/teacher using "Mr. Mrs. Ms. or Coach".
- Provide the student teacher with his or her own workspace or desk, if possible.
- Provide a class list and seating chart, and discuss, when appropriate, any special needs of individuals in the classroom.
- Discuss with the student teacher the approximate time line of when they will gradually assume responsibility of the classroom. For example:

Week 1	Observe/Assist
Week 2	Teach at least 1 to 2 classes or subjects
Week 3	Teach 3 to 4 classes or subjects
Week 4-end	Teach all day

C. Initial Conference with the University Supervisor

- The University Supervisor will visit to introduce herself and to deliver an honorarium form, evaluation forms, and the mentor packet.
- The University Supervisor will briefly discuss the school and university calendar, important dates, seminar times, observations, midpoint and final evaluation scheduling.
- You and the University Supervisor will exchange phone numbers and email addresses and decide how you will maintain ongoing communication during this time.

D. Orientation to School and Staff

- Tour the school building explaining what is available and where equipment and materials are located. Provide orientation to use technology equipment, computers, projectors, video cameras, etc., and any other procedures that you deem necessary.
- Introduce the student teacher to school personnel.

Planning

Share your written lesson plans and provide the student teacher with a sample format for daily, weekly, and long-range plans. The Teacher Education Program requires that students use the Bluefield University Daily Plan.

Introduce the student teacher, when time allows, to curriculum guides, explain and model how these guides are to be used.

Your feedback is invaluable as the mentor. Review and critique the student teacher's lesson plans - individual, daily and weekly. The student teacher is to write a plan for every lesson that he/she teaches prior to teaching the lesson. We ask that you initial and date each lesson plan prior to the student teaching the lesson.

Assist student teachers as they modify plans to provide for ALL students.

Pose questions which encourage the student teacher to reflect on the effectiveness of daily, weekly and long range plans.

Teaching

- **Student teachers should begin, no later than Week 2, to teach one period/subject each day; this should be the same subject/period each day.**
- **Student teachers should gradually assume more teaching responsibilities, adding 1 period/subject at a time until they assume full responsibilities of the classroom, at least by Week 4.**
- Your expertise in determining readiness and your instructional feedback helps the student teacher to assume responsibility for actual teaching.
- **Currently the state of Virginia requires a student teacher to have a minimum of 150 clock hours of direct instruction during the student teaching experience.**
- Encourage the student teacher to use a variety of instructional techniques and strategies:
- for individual, small group, and whole class instruction.
- that appeal to a variety of learning styles.
- that demonstrate integration of subject matter to reflect a multicultural approach.
- that utilize technology.
- that create a positive classroom climate.
- Observe the student teacher delivering instruction in order to provide formative feedback during conferences to highlight specifics of teaching effectiveness and identify areas for continued growth.
- When possible, provide opportunities for the student teacher to observe in other classrooms.

Classroom Management and Discipline

- Because classroom management cannot be learned in a university classroom, your expertise and guidance in this area is vital.
- Share a copy of the school, district, and/or your discipline procedures and consequences.
- Encourage your student teacher to document classroom management strategies during their observation period. Discuss behavior situations and methods of addressing them.
- Observe the student teacher implementing management strategies and offer suggestions and feedback.
- You, as the mentor teacher, decide when the student teacher may be left alone in the classroom. Ideally, the student teacher should have limited opportunities to manage the classroom without your presence.

Assessment: Grading and Evaluation of Students

- Familiarize your student teacher with various methods and tools used in diagnostic evaluation.
- Discuss how to use test results as an effective learning tool.
- Evaluate the student's efforts to create and administer teacher-made tests.
- As much as possible, share grading procedures, grade book, and how to keep accurate records of student learning.
- Record report card grades and comments together.

Working with Parents

- If appropriate, allow the student teacher to observe you conducting a parent conference and to participate where appropriate. Share parent-conferencing tips with student teachers.
- Oversee all communication with parents, whether written or by phone. Emphasize that all decisions concerning phone and written communication with parents must be a joint effort with the mentor teacher.
- Student teachers are required to obtain written permission from parents to take photographs and videos of the class; these items will be used in their student teaching portfolio and presentation at the end of the semester.

Student/Mentor Conferences and the Importance of Feedback

- Because the aim of the Teacher Education Program is to develop reflective practitioners, your formal and informal conversations with students become the basis for refining those skills.
- **Mentors give formative feedback (both oral and written) to the student teacher on a daily basis to improve instruction while giving encouragement and support.**
- The student teacher should take an active part in supervision with the goal of becoming one who can evaluate his/her own strengths and weaknesses.
- If you identify weaknesses in lesson plans, we value your judgment in helping them refine those skills.
- Frequent conferences about strengths, as well as weaknesses, are essential for the student teacher's progress.
- When a student teacher identifies a concern, help her/him to clearly define the concern. You may need to probe to clarify exactly what behavior is the problem, when and how often it occurs, and the reasons for feeling it is a concern.

If a situation arises that you do not feel comfortable addressing, please contact the university supervisor. We are partners with you in this endeavor.

Assessment: Grading and Evaluation of THE STUDENT TEACHER

A student teacher's semester grade is determined by many requirements, including weekly required assignments, **teaching evaluations**, and student teaching portfolio.

Teaching Evaluations

ALL teaching evaluations are archived for data collection and analysis in support of our national accreditation and state approval processes.

- The **Mentor Mid-Placement Assessment** provides up to 100 points for the student teaching grade and valuable feedback for the student teacher, providing an opportunity to improve before the end of the placement.
- The **Mentor Final Assessment** provides up to 300 points for the student teaching grade and valuable feedback for the student teacher, helping to look at areas of strengths and weaknesses in a constructive manner.
- The **Mentor** is also asked to suggest an overall letter grade.
- The **Principal** is asked to complete a **Principal Evaluation** which is an evaluation of a whole or partial lesson, and is worth up to 150 points.
- The **University Supervisor** observes and completes at least 2-3 **Supervisor Observations** at each placement. Each of these is worth up to 100 points.
- These teaching evaluations not only serve to evaluate the student teacher. They provide an important part of our ongoing data collection as we strive to maintain the accreditation of our teacher education program.

Confidentiality of the Evaluation Forms

Since 1974, when Congress passed the General Evaluation Provision Act and an amendment, known as the Buckley Amendment, confidentiality of student teaching evaluations are prohibited in teacher education institutions receiving federal funds. The essence of this amendment is that student teachers are given the right to see their evaluations. They also have the right not to include the evaluations in their credential file.

Due Process in Student Teacher Evaluation

Case law affirms the principle that education professionals have the right, obligation, authority, and ability to evaluate student teachers. The only condition is that due process must be exercised. The following processes constitute due process in student teacher evaluation:

- Review the evaluation instrument and its interpretation with the student teacher.
- Discuss each of the evaluation criteria for understanding.
- Indicate what is expected from the student teacher.
- Observe the student teacher, record number of observations, and keep a copy of written feedback.
- Critique and analyze the student teacher's performance and inform him/her of any inadequacies so that remedial action may be taken.
- Provide evaluative feedback on a regular basis.
- Discuss the completed final evaluation form with the student teacher.

Unsatisfactory Performance

If a student teacher is doing unsatisfactory work at any point during student teaching and fails to improve after intensive work by the mentor teacher and university supervisor, he/she faces the prospect of failing student teaching and not receiving a license. **If at any time, the student teacher fails to do what is best for students or neglects vital responsibilities, it is imperative that you notify the university supervisor or the Dean of the School of Education immediately so that appropriate policies can be followed.** It is important to distinguish between the natural learning process and the total inability to teach. If it is determined that the student teacher will not be successful during this semester, please contact the university supervisor immediately.

Your documentation, especially of poor performance, is essential to reach an accurate decision about the future of the student teacher.

Relevant data could include:

- a log of dates, times, and places that are pertinent to the situation
- copies of feedback from observations
- conference summaries, formal and informal
- notes from telephone calls
- explanations of specific incidents
- written feedback signed by the student teacher
- written feedback from other professional staff, including the principal
- any other documents that you deem appropriate

At some point during the time of documentation of unsatisfactory work, a decision will need to be made regarding the student teacher's continuation of this experience. Depending on the nature of the problem, the following options may be considered by the university supervisor with input from the mentor teacher and approval of the faculty of the Teacher Education Program:

- extend the student teaching experience
- pass with a grade to reflect the poor evaluation
- provide a new placement with a different mentor teacher (only under unique and extreme circumstances)
- repeat the experience (reregister for student teaching in another semester)
- withdraw from student teaching
- counsel out of teaching

Additional Important Information

Problems or situations such as illnesses, personal crises, etc. that occur during student teaching, and that are not due to a deficiency in teaching performance, might require an extension of the student teaching experience. When this occurs, an incomplete contract may be arranged and an "I" grade assigned until the requirements of the contract are met, resulting in a delay in the date of graduation for the student teacher.

For Questions, Suggestions, or Problems

Contact the university supervisor by email or telephone at the numbers listed on the cover.

THE UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR

The university supervisor is the liaison between the School of Education and the local school division where student teachers are placed for their student teaching experience. The primary function of the university supervisor is to assist the student teacher in developing teaching competency and provide support to the mentor teacher. The university supervisor's role is a complex one involving several activities and responsibilities. The following list identifies some of the major responsibilities of the University Supervisor.

- Assists with the orientation seminar for mentor teachers and with seminars throughout the semester for the student teachers.
- Conducts observations and follow up conferences with the student teacher to assist in the improving of instruction, analyzing problems, identifying strengths, and reflecting on teaching effectiveness.
- Assists the student teacher in becoming self-reflective.
- Counsels the student teacher concerning problems.
- Writes final recommendation and assigns grade for student teacher.
- In the case of inadequate performance on the part of the student teacher, the university supervisor works with the student teacher, mentor teacher, and building principal to try to improve the student teaching performance to a satisfactory level. If conditions warrant, the student may be withdrawn from student teaching. See "Unsatisfactory Performance" p. 25.

The university supervisor's role in relationship to the mentor teacher:

- Explains the student teaching program and requirements to the mentor teacher.
- Acts as a resource person for the mentor teacher.
- Maintains open communication with the mentor teacher regarding the progress of the student teacher.
- Acts as an intermediary in conflict or misunderstandings between the mentor teacher and the student teacher.
- Coordinates meetings with school and university personnel to discuss problem situations.
- Maintains contact with the school administrator and other school personnel to promote and sustain good working relations between the school and the university.
- Makes recommendations for future student teaching placements and mentor teachers.

The university supervisor is an important factor in the student teaching program. This individual can provide the support needed by both the student teacher and the mentor teacher. The supervisors at the Bluefield University represent the education profession. The supervisors enter this role with a background of knowledge and experience in teaching and/or administration. Therefore, they should not be overlooked in serving as a resource person or contact for curricular, instructional, and organizational matters.

Student teachers, mentor teachers and university supervisors collectively bring a wealth of knowledge, experiences, skills, and insight to this experience. In order for each to be most effective in performing his/her role it is important to maintain open, honest communication, and a partnership based on mutual respect, cooperation, and professional growth for each participant in the student teaching experience.

THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

The principal in a cooperating school has the following responsibilities in scheduling student teachers:

- Assign well-qualified mentor teachers
- Assign student teachers only to classes in which licensure is anticipated
- Assign student teachers only to duties where the mentor teacher or qualified substitute is present

The principal or his/her designee is asked to observe a student teacher in teaching a lesson and to complete checklist evaluation. This is an important aspect of data collection for the Teacher Education Program. Additional feedback is encouraged.

JOB SEARCH

Job Opportunities in Virginia Education

Source: <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/jobs/index.shtml>

TeachVirginia <http://www.teachvirginia.org/> – electronic job bank and hiring hall for school divisions and teachers.

Job Bank and Electronic Hiring Hall – <http://www.teachers-teachers.com/> web-based tool that allows teachers to post resumes and school divisions to query for teachers throughout the state, nation and abroad.

School Division Websites – find teaching jobs through individual school division job postings.
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/directories/school_divisions/division_info_by_divisions.shtml