

**Public School Mentor  
Teacher  
Guidelines**

**Dewar  
College of Education**

**Valdosta State  
University**

## **Public School Mentor Teacher Guidelines Information, Schedule, and Evaluations Spring Semester 2012**

Research clearly indicates that the mentor teacher has the most influence on the student teacher during the student teaching experience. Your role is demanding, but also rewarding, as you guide the student teacher during the transition from student to teacher. Much of what the student teacher learns during this experience will be modeled after you, so it is important that you model different instructional strategies and encourage the student teacher to try them also.

Student teaching is probably the most valuable part of a teacher training program, and the guidance provided by mentor teachers is invaluable. Please accept the appreciation of the faculty of the Dewar College of Education for the outstanding job that you do in helping us to prepare future teachers.

This mentor teacher packet includes information and directions about orientation for the student teacher, planning/teaching expectations, solo teaching, evaluation of the student teacher, and evaluation of VSU supervisor. Attached to this information packet is a checklist for the mentor teacher (this form does **NOT** need to be returned).

All forms (evaluations of the student teacher and evaluation of the VSU supervisor) will be completed on-line; instructions are given later in this packet. If you have any questions, please call Dr. Lynn Minor at 229-259-5132 or email (lminor@valdosta.edu) or Ms. Elizabeth Omiteru email (eomiteru@valdosta.edu).

### **Orientation for the Student Teacher**

The orientation is important to help the student teacher know the procedures you use with students, your teaching schedule, school policies for teachers and students, and much more. The orientation activities may take place over the first few days of the student teaching experience and should include:

- Providing access to the teacher handbook or other documents which explain policies, rules, and regulations of the school or system.
- Providing a work place for the student teacher and any instructional materials and textbooks that will be needed by the student teacher to plan his/her instructional activities.
- Explaining the composition of the class(es) and calling attention to such factors as specific needs of students with exceptionalities as well as any other matters that are important for the student teacher to know.
- Discussing the lesson plan format to be used and establishing deadlines when lesson plans will be due to you for review. **Note: If plans are not submitted on time or if they are not of acceptable quality, the student should NOT be permitted to teach and the VSU supervisor should be notified.**

- Providing opportunities for the student teacher to become familiar with pertinent resources in the library, media center, and elsewhere.

### **Planning and Teaching Expectations**

As quickly as possible, you should encourage the student teacher to assist you in classroom procedures and activities, which will begin to prepare him/her to assume some teaching responsibilities. How soon the student teacher assumes teaching responsibility for a class is dependent on his/her performance during this time of assisting you; also, the VSU supervisor should be consulted in determining the student teacher's readiness to assume responsibility for a class. This transition should be planned in such a way that both you and the student teacher feel confident in increasing the amount of responsibility. The students in your classes should always be given first consideration to ensure that any changes do not adversely affect them. Other factors to consider during this transition of teaching responsibilities are:

- Involving the student teacher with the classes as you are teaching to help the student teacher to become more comfortable in dealing with the students, to become more familiar with curricular expectations, and to develop his/her "teacher presence."
- Identifying clearly the lesson plan format you want from the student teacher and deadlines for submitting lesson plans. Discuss QCC/GPS requirements or other critical aspects of the lessons that he/she will be planning. You are invaluable to the student teacher as he/she prepares those first plans--how to get the students engaged, how to check if they learned what was taught, and much, much more. The student teacher's plans should include sufficient detail to demonstrate that he/she is well prepared and also permit you to confirm that expected curricular/instructional objectives are being met. Your review and feedback of the lesson plans is critical in helping the student teacher to achieve success as the plans are implemented!
- Reviewing any tests developed by the student teacher prior to their administration. After tests are given, the student teacher should review the results and grading procedures with you. This could be the basis for reflection by the student teacher on which instructional activities were effective and which ones could be improved.
- Reviewing the lesson plans and discussing them with the student teacher prior to their implementation should include feedback on how the plans meet QCC/GPS objectives, any expected local outcomes, how to engage the students more effectively, and how to sequence instruction and assess student learning effectively.
- Providing feedback frequently! Student teaching is a learning experience, and the student teachers have been told to expect feedback and constructive criticism from you on their teaching performance. Encourage the student teacher to reflect on his/her plans and teaching and help him/her consider ways to improve. A regularly scheduled time to discuss the student teacher's progress is highly recommended. If at all possible, avoid correcting the student teacher in front of the class!

## Solo Teaching

Scheduling the solo teaching. Student teachers are expected to solo teach a full class/case load for a minimum of three weeks. The timing of this solo teaching and the length of it are dependent on the performance of the student teacher. The solo time may be longer if performance meets your expectations. After the solo period, you might wish to try team teaching together; or there may be a gradual shift of the teaching back to you full time. In any of these cases, the decision should be a collaborative one based on discussions with the student teacher and VSU supervisor.

After the solo teaching time, discuss with the VSU supervisor and student teacher specific activities that could be provided to the student to enrich or expand his/her professional development. These activities could provide experiences at other grade levels, assisting professionals such as media specialists, counselors, Title I teachers, etc.

## Evaluation of the Student Teacher

You will be providing feedback to the student teacher constantly as you work together and as the student teacher begins to assist you with various classroom activities. Most of the feedback you provide to the student teacher will be informal, but you are expected to complete three formal evaluations and share these results with the student teacher and the VSU supervisor. These evaluations are collected by VSU to provide information about the overall performance of our student teachers within and across departments.

These evaluations will be completed on-line. The evaluation materials are located at the following Student Teacher Assessment website:

<http://asp.valdosta.edu/sta>

When you go to the above website, you will note that there are four forms for you to complete. Three of these are evaluations of the student teacher and should be completed as explained below. The other form is the mentor teacher's evaluation of the VSU supervisor and should be completed near the end of the semester. **After you complete each form, please click the "Submit" button only ONE time—this may take a few seconds. Please print a copy of the evaluation BEFORE you click the "Submit" button.**

*First Evaluation* -- This should occur soon (a week or two) after the student teacher has started any teaching responsibilities. High expectations should be established during this first evaluation to identify strengths as well as areas needing improvement. In fact, the scoring on this evaluation should be relatively low since the student teacher is just beginning. After you complete the form on-line, please print a copy of your evaluation for the student teacher and the VSU supervisor. Please schedule a time to discuss your evaluation of the student teacher with him/her; be sure to include in your discussion ways in which the student teacher can improve his/her performance.

**Please submit first evaluation on-line by the due date listed on the schedule.**

*Second Evaluation* -- A second formal evaluation should be completed around the mid-term point. The results of this evaluation can be compared to the initial one to determine growth and to identify areas for additional growth. Again, the emphasis is on promoting growth, not determining a grade. Please print a copy of your evaluation for both the student teacher and the VSU supervisor. Discuss your evaluation results with the student teacher and VSU supervisor; again, please suggest ways for the student teacher

to improve his/her performance. Solicit feedback from the VSU supervisor regarding his/her evaluations of the student teacher.

**Please submit second evaluation on-line by the due date listed on the schedule.**

*Third Evaluation* -- The last evaluation should be done near the end of the semester as the student teacher completes his/her teaching responsibilities. Please print a copy of your evaluation for both the student teacher and the VSU supervisor; this evaluation should provide the focus for a discussion with the student teacher and VSU supervisor regarding the overall student teaching experience and the assignment of a final grade. This data is important in helping VSU identify overall program strengths and weaknesses.

**Please submit third evaluation on-line by the due date listed on the schedule.**

All three forms are to be completed on-line. Thank you for submitting your evaluations of the student teacher by the due date.

Overall Grade -- The student teaching experience is graded as “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory.” The VSU supervisor should solicit your input regarding the student teacher’s overall performance; however, the final grade for the student teacher is the ultimate responsibility of the VSU supervisor.

### **Evaluation of the VSU Supervisor**

On the Student Teacher Assessment website is an evaluation form for your use (the mentor teacher) in evaluating the VSU supervisor; please complete this form on-line by the due date listed on the schedule.

### **Substitute Teaching**

Student teachers are **NOT** allowed to serve as substitute teachers during the semester they are student teaching.

### **Questions**

If you have questions regarding this information or during the student teaching experience, please contact Mrs. Jamie Bird at 229-249-2779 or email (jbird@valdosta.edu).

Attachment:

- Mentor Teacher Checklist – do NOT return this form

## Mentor Teacher Checklist

As the mentor teacher, I:

- \_\_\_ Provided orientation activities to prepare student teacher--school policies, materials, classroom procedures, established work place for student, etc.
- \_\_\_ Discussed with student teacher--lesson planning, format, and deadlines for plans to be submitted.
- \_\_\_ Began involving the student teacher with the students and in assisting me.
- \_\_\_ Met with VSU supervisor for orientation session.
- \_\_\_ Discussed beginning of teaching responsibility for student teacher--which class and when.
- \_\_\_ Asked the student teacher to do a self-evaluation soon after he/she began teaching and to discuss the results with me.
- \_\_\_ Completed the first evaluation on-line and discussed it with the student teacher. Continued to encourage the student teacher to reflect on his/her performance.
- \_\_\_ Maintained regularly scheduled interactions with student teacher about planning, teaching, discipline, etc.
- \_\_\_ Scheduled solo teaching schedule (minimum of three weeks) and reviewed expectations that should take place during this time.
- \_\_\_ Continued to encourage student teacher to reflect on his/her performance.
- \_\_\_ Completed mid-term evaluation on-line and discussed with student teacher.
- \_\_\_ Discussed student teacher's progress with VSU supervisor and solicited feedback.
- \_\_\_ Discussed with the student teacher his/her activities after the solo teaching period; this could include shared teaching responsibilities, team teaching, as well as the student teacher observing other teachers such as special education teachers or teachers at other grade levels.
- \_\_\_ Completed final evaluation on-line and discussed with student teacher. Met with VSU supervisor to discuss overall performance of student teacher.
- \_\_\_ Completed VSU supervisor evaluation on-line.

## Spring 2012 Student Teaching Schedule

Spring Semester Student Teacher Orientation	Friday, January 6, 2012, at 9:00 a.m. in the Jennett Lecture Hall, Room 1111
First Day of Student Teaching	Monday, January 9, 2012
<b>Field Experience Forms Due from Students</b>	<b>Friday, January 13, 2012, at 3:00 p.m.</b>
<b>Initial (First) Self-Evaluation Due</b> <b>Initial (First) Supervisor Evaluation Due</b> <b>Initial (First) Mentor Evaluation Due</b>	<b>Friday, January 27, 2012, at 3:00 p.m.</b>
<b>Second Self-Evaluation Due</b> <b>Second Supervisor Evaluation Due</b> <b>Second Mentor Evaluation Due</b>	<b>Friday, February 24, 2012, at 3:00 p.m.</b>
Spring Student Teacher Training Session	To be announced
<b>Final (Third) Self-Evaluation Due/All Forms Due</b> <b>Final (Third) Supervisor Evaluation Due</b> <b>Final (Third) Mentor Evaluation Due</b> <b>Mentor Evaluation of VSU Supervisor Due</b>	<b>Friday, April 20, 2012, at 3:00 p.m.</b>
Spring Career Day and Seminar	<b>Thursday, April 26, 2012, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the University Center Magnolia room</b>
Last Day in Schools	Friday, April 27, 2012
Student Teacher Exit Meetings (Students will attend one meeting)	Thursday, May 3 & Friday, May 4, 2012 from 1:30-3:30 pm, in Dewar COE
Graduation	Saturday, May 5, 2012, PE Complex

**NOTE:** All VSU student teachers are to be excused to attend the Spring Career Day and the Spring Student Teacher Training Session. It is mandatory that all Student Teachers attend these sessions as well as ONE Student Teacher Exit Meeting.