NCATE: 3.1 Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

3.1 How does the unit work with the school partners to deliver field experiences and clinical practice to enable candidates to develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to help all students learn?

Glossary

- Practicum = Field Experience Semester before Student Teaching
- Any field experience that is not Practicum will be outlined in detail.
- Student Teaching = Clinical Practice
- Supervisor = Clinical faculty

Element 3a. Collaboration...

Candidates in initial and advanced programs are placed in District of Columbia/Maryland/Virginia (DMV) area schools. The education canvas of the DMV area is vast and varied and our candidates experience diverse field and clinical experiences as a result of AU's location in this area. SETH's Field Placement Coordinator and Director of the Office of Teacher Education, in partnership with local school districts, coordinate all practicum and student teaching placements for initial undergraduate and graduate programs. Principals and cooperating teachers are actively involved in the determination of field placements. Once candidates indicate their preferences for practicum or student teaching placement in GoEd (Exhibit 4.4.i), principals are contacted and placements are discussed. There is regular communication with principals regarding placement of candidates at their schools. Through a collaborative process, candidates are matched with cooperating teachers. In Maryland and Virginia schools, county placement coordinators are responsible for setting up student teacher placements; SETH coordinates with these personnel before contacting principals. The Director of the Office of Teacher Education visits every placement while candidates are student teaching.

The EPP has written agreements with local school systems (Exhibit 3.4.a), as well as written criteria for the selection of school faculty and cooperating teachers (Exhibit 3.4.c).

SETH regularly submits and is awarded grants and contracts that formalize partnerships with other organizations. One example is our Lab2Class grant, which aims to increase the number of highly qualified science and math teachers in high-needs schools in DC, and is funded by the Toyota USA Foundation and the National Science Foundation (NSF). More information is provided in Exhibit 3.4.a.

Candidates enrolled in advanced programs undertake an internship aligned with their program concentration (education policy or literacy) and complete 6 credits of field experiences through the EDU
691 or 695 courses. Placements for the advanced MEd Educational Leadership or Literacy program are made jointly by the program coordinator and the partner school contact.

**Element 3b. Design, Implementation, & Evaluation...**

Throughout initial undergraduate and graduate programs, candidates develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions in multiple field-based settings in the DMV (Exhibit 3.4.b). The diversity of these schools enables candidates to complete field experiences in both urban and suburban schools. In addition to diverse locations, candidates also experience multiple grade levels. At a minimum, candidates in elementary education must complete field experiences in a lower level classroom (1st - 3rd grade) and an upper level classroom (4th - 6th grade). Candidates in secondary education must complete field experiences at middle school and high school levels. Candidates in the K-12 education program must choose two experiences between the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Descriptions of these field experiences and clinical practice in undergraduate and graduate programs follow. Further descriptions can be found in Exhibit 3.4.e.

**Field and Clinical Experiences in Initial Programs**

The unit's undergraduate teacher education programs are designed to transition candidates from observer to practitioner. Early field experiences occur during sophomore and junior years. During sophomore year, candidates complete a 20-hour observation course, EDU 321: Field Experience in Teacher Education. This course includes weekly observations in diverse classroom settings where students reflect on a selected dimension of teaching and learning. Junior year, candidates complete EDU 492: Service Learning in Teacher Education. This course includes a 40-hour field-based experience. These syllabi are provided in Exhibit I.5.b.

During senior year, candidates complete Practicum and Student Teaching. Practicum is completed in conjunction with methods coursework during the first semester of senior year. This field-based experience involves observation, small group instruction, and limited large group instruction. These methods courses provide candidates the opportunity to develop instructional units, which they test during field placements. Practicum placement includes 2 classroom days/week throughout the semester, totaling approximately 210 hours. Elementary practicum also complete an additional week in the classroom at the end of the semester.

Student teaching is completed during the candidates' final semester. This culminating experience is a 2 days/week placement lasting 14 weeks and totaling at least 400 hours in a classroom setting. During student teaching, candidates prepare lesson plans, attend parent conferences, participate in professional development workshops, provide direct instruction to students, and conduct assessments of student performance. Candidates "take over" the classroom for at least two weeks.
Candidates enrolled in the unit's graduate certificate and Master of Arts in Teaching programs complete practicum and student teaching as defined above for undergraduate programs. This typically occurs during the last two semesters of the program.

Candidates in the graduate program in special education undertake a year-long internship at the Lab School of Washington and other DC public and private school placements. This internship allows candidates to develop in-depth experience in remedial and diagnostic special education in a self-contained school for students with learning disabilities. During the internship, which takes place over the entire K-12 school year, candidates also undertake weekly observations of classrooms outside their placement classrooms (including the arts, club, and science classrooms) and conduct site visits to local DC public and public charter special education classrooms.

Field and Clinical Experiences in Advanced Programs

Candidates in advanced programs complete a 6-credit internship aligned with their concentration. Candidates in education policy undertake an internship focused on building pedagogical and professional knowledge of local, state and federal policy; candidates in literacy undertake an internship designed to build pedagogical and professional knowledge as it relates to literacy broadly. Candidates in literacy are required to undertake a more focused internship in order to receive the Reading Specialist endorsement offered by DC.

For both initial and advanced programs, SETH values the expertise of its many partners and regularly organizes sessions to discuss program components with them. We believe that collaboration with partners is the key to effective and successful field-based experiences. After each semester of Student Teaching, SETH faculty, cooperating teachers, and candidates evaluate the teacher education program and clinical experience (Exhibit 3.4.d). Information from written evaluations of programs and verbal feedback is used to guide the design and delivery of future field and clinical experiences.

Element 3c. Candidates' Development and Demonstration...

SETH aims to support candidates throughout every stage of their program in order to ensure that they develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help all students learn. As discussed previously, faculty use multiple assessment strategies to monitor and assess the degree to which this occurs. Below are examples of strategies used to ensure that candidates develop the resources they need to be successful in the classroom:

- **Observations:** Supervisors regularly observe candidates' teaching skills during field experience and clinical practice, ensuring they receive feedback within classroom settings at multiple points. Time for reflection and feedback occurs between candidates and supervisors before and after each observation. Candidates must share lessons with supervisors prior to teaching, and meet with supervisors following taught lessons. Observations are documented.
• **Lesson Planning Evaluations:** Supervisors complete evaluations of candidates' lesson planning and teaching skills. Evaluations and data are found in GoEd and include:
  o Lesson Plan Analysis and Implementation Form
  o Final Evaluation of Practicum Students
  o Midterm Evaluation of Student Teachers
  o Student Teaching Final Evaluation Form or FBPA
  o Student Teaching Final Evaluation Content Addendum Form
  o Student Teaching Course Rubric

*Forms are located in Exhibit 3.4.f.*

• **Candidate Reflection:** Candidates reflect throughout field experiences and clinical practice. Examples include:
  o Candidates must schedule to reflect with assigned supervisors during pre- and post-conference observation meetings of taught lessons. Discussion includes strengths, areas of growth, and how their instruction influenced student learning.

  o Candidate portfolios provide another platform to reflect on beliefs and practices to help all students learn. There are 20 entries in the portfolio (2/INTASC standard). Each entry includes individual reflection where candidates comment on the artifact, how it relates to the INTASC standard, and how the candidate would change the artifact or teaching experience to ensure that all students learn.

  o Candidates discuss and reflect on field-based experiences during the student teaching seminar. Each week candidates reflect on classroom experiences and explore educational beliefs and practices, culminating with a critical reflection document or case study analysis.

Through these strategies, SETH faculty help candidates develop, evaluate, and reflect on the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are essential to helping all students learn.