

# Clinical Experience Essential Handbook

For  
Clinical Teachers



**Texas Lutheran University**  
Department of Education – Educator Preparation Program  
Accredited by The Texas Education Agency (TEA)

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# THE ESSENTIAL CLINICAL TEACHING HANDBOOK FOR STUDENT TEACHERS

## Texas Lutheran University Office of Educator Preparation

Updated, Fall 2020

Texas Lutheran University has a rich tradition of developing professional educators who are well-prepared for successful careers in the teaching profession. This clinical experience is the culminating requirement for the undergraduate teacher education and alternative teacher education certification programs at Texas Lutheran University. This experience will provide an opportunity for student teachers to apply the theories and practices accrued through the courses provided by the Education Department for preparing future teachers. This final opportunity will provide a valuable experience for acclimating student teachers to the actual teaching profession. This clinical teaching opportunity will include the following activities: (a) attendance at three required professional development seminars, (b) at least fourteen weeks of student teaching (minimum of 70 days), and (c) additional responsibilities related to the clinical teaching experience.

This handbook has been prepared for student teachers. The primary focus of this handbook is to outline responsibilities, guidelines, procedures, and legal requirements related to student teaching. The success of this student teaching semester will depend upon the cooperative efforts of all stakeholders in assisting student teachers during this critical part of their preparations for becoming future teachers.

It is our hope that the contents of this handbook will serve as a resource and provide an opportunity to make your involvement with this experience an enjoyable one.

### The Texas Lutheran University Instructional Model for Student Teachers

Texas Lutheran University Clinical Teachers and Intern Teachers will use The Danielson Framework for Teaching as the instructional model. In addition to providing a comprehensive picture of teaching, the Danielson Framework guides the growth of Texas State education students throughout their coursework and field experiences. The research-based Danielson Framework is similar to the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS), the teacher evaluation tool currently endorsed by the Texas Education Agency. The Framework is aligned to the Educator Standards is supported by Texas Lutheran University as well. Experience with the Framework prepares Student Teachers for entrance into the public school system of Texas.

The Framework has a 4-point rubric that describes what effective teaching and learning looks like and sounds like in the classroom. Though the Framework was developed to describe the practice of a certified teacher in the classroom, Texas Lutheran University values the use of the rubric with Student Teachers to reinforce growth towards highly effective instructional practices. Student Teaching Faculty use the Danielson Framework and rubric when conducting observations and evaluations of Student Teachers. Post observation conferences and instructional discussions during seminars are grounded in the Framework's language and indicators of development.

In addition to using the Danielson Framework, Texas Lutheran University will be participating in the T-TESS Pilot. Associated observation forms and summative evaluations will be done. Reflections will be completed after videoing two lessons.

Framework Ratings	Rating	Level	Criteria
<p>Student Teaching Faculty receive training in the Framework in order to conduct observations and score the Framework's components. Student Teachers will also receive training regarding the Danielson Framework Study prior to the beginning of the semester in which they teach, regardless of prior experience with the Framework. Cooperating Teachers can access an overview training of the Framework and are provided additional support through interaction with the Student Teaching Supervisor.</p>	Unsatisfactory	1	Indicates little to no evidence of effective component demonstration. Rubric adjectives include "lack of," "unclear," "unaware," "poor," and "unsuitable."
	Basic	2	Within this level, attempts are made, but results are inconsistent or minimal. Performance rubric descriptors include "partial," "generally," and "moderate."
	Proficient	3	Describes the expected level of performance. Descriptors include "consistent," "frequent," "successful," and "smooth."
	Distinguished	4	Indicates a classroom where the level of effective learning and teaching is "solid," "seamless," "skillful," and "preventative."

#### Related Resources

All resources are available through the portal.

- The Danielson Framework for Teaching
- Instructional Model for Education Students: Danielson Framework for Teaching
- T-TESS Rubric

## The Student Teaching Assignment

The Student Teaching Practicum is the capstone field experience for our students working toward teacher certification. Student teaching is a six-semester-hour experience in a classroom of a public, and in some cases private or charter school. Student Teachers are required to complete a clinical teaching experience for a minimum of 70 days with a full day being 100% of the school day. Single-placement Student Teachers are placed with one Cooperating Teacher in one classroom for a minimum of 70 days. Split-Placement (usually All-Level) Student Teachers are placed with one Cooperating Teacher for the first half of the semester and with another Cooperating Teacher for the last half of the semester. In some situations, a Student Teacher's placement may be structured differently than previously described. During this semester, students are "students of teaching". It is a time of much learning, improvement, and growth, supported by the Cooperating Teacher and University Student Teaching Supervisor. All candidates for initial teacher certification student teach for one full semester. The Director of Student Teaching is the entity responsible for facilitating and monitoring this experience. This handbook outlines the program guidelines, policies, standard experiences, and participant requirements, roles, and responsibilities.

This experience is of paramount importance to the future careers of Student Teachers, and, along with other criteria, must be completed successfully in order to receive recommendation to certify. Commitment to learning, growth, professionalism and open communication is critical. Questions and concerns should be addressed immediately by all parties, initially through Student Teaching Supervisor and, as necessary, through the Director of the Student Teaching.

Assignments are made by our partner school districts in collaboration with the Director of Student Teaching with care and attention to many factors. At no time should the Student Teacher contact a district directly as it violates our memorandum of understanding with our partners. Additionally, adjustments in assignments are not made after the Student Teacher begins except in unusual circumstances. No Student Teacher is to be reassigned without the prior approval of the Director of the Student Teaching.

### Expectations of the Student Teacher

Student Teachers meet with Student Teaching Faculty prior to school placements to receive information about their role during the student teaching experience, as well as attend additional Texas Lutheran University seminars during the semester. Texas Lutheran and Student Teaching Faculty expectations for Student Teachers are outlined below. Additional information regarding expectations can be found in the Syllabus for Student Teaching and on the portal within the class.

### Student Teacher Standard Experiences

To maintain equity with assignments and workloads, Texas Lutheran University has established a set of common experiences for Student Teachers. Because of the context of the placements, the details of these requirements vary somewhat between elementary and secondary. Student Teachers will receive specific information about these standard experiences from the Student Teaching Faculty during the orientation meeting at the beginning of the semester. The major requirements are listed below.

Classroom Visit / Email of Introduction	Student Teachers are asked to visit their assigned classroom prior to the first day of student teaching if possible. All students have been instructed to email their cooperating teacher prior to the first day.
Observations of the Cooperating Teacher	Student Teachers are expected to observe the Cooperating Teacher teach and manage the classroom environment, especially during the early weeks of student teaching. These opportunities provide excellent examples of effective teaching and learning.
Reflections	Through regular reflections submitted to the Director of Student Teaching, the Student Teacher will assess his/her growth as a teacher and learner and reflect upon how to refine and expand teaching skills, classroom management techniques, and professional growth. Critical reflections will be written on a weekly basis and after lessons are facilitated by the student teacher. Additional reflections will be written after the attendance of specialized meetings and after a review of a video of one's own teaching.
Instructional Responsibility	Student Teachers and Cooperating Teachers will collaborate to develop a schedule for assuming instructional responsibility using the appropriate Timeline.
Organization System	Student Teachers will develop and maintain an organization system that should result in effective storage and retrieval of information and resources gathered throughout the semester.

Lesson Plans	As Student Teachers assume instructional responsibilities, they will be responsible for developing lesson plans for each lesson or part of lesson taught that was designated in advance as the student teacher's responsibility. Lesson plan expectations differ between elementary and secondary. Specific lesson plan requirements will be shared by Student Teaching Faculty with Student Teachers.
Pre-Observation Conference	Prior to observations, Student Teachers and Student Teaching Faculty will review and reflect on the lesson plan, focusing on the interrelationships between planning, instruction, the learning environment, and student outcomes.
Post-Observation Reflection	After each observation by faculty, Student Teachers participate in a post-observation conference during which the Student Teacher is guided through a reflection on their strengths and areas for improvement.
Midterm Conference	The University Supervisor will assess the Student Teacher's progress at mid-point of the semester. In the event that concerns arise that could potentially affect the student's success as an upcoming teacher, the Student Teacher will participate in a midterm conference with the University Supervisor and Cooperating Teacher, discussing progress and setting goals for professional learning and growth in practice.
Video of One's Teaching / Self-Reflection	Students will video tape a lesson in their first placement (first half of the semester) and one in their second placement (second half). The lessons should be ones that are observed last within that timespan by the university supervisor (i.e. 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> observations).
Resume and Cover Letter	In preparation for job fairs and applying for possible positions, Student Teachers are expected to develop a professional resume and cover letter that could potentially be adapted for use in future applications.
Action Research Project	Student Teachers will complete an action research project that focuses on an unwanted student behavior.
Final Evaluation	The student teacher will participate in a final evaluation conference with the Cooperating Teacher and Student Teaching Faculty, where summative ratings using the Texas Lutheran Student Teaching Rubric will be shared.

### Related Resources

All resources are available through the portal.

- Lesson Plan Formats
- The Right Questions for Planning: Using the Danielson Framework (Pre-conference and lesson planning support document)
- Student Teacher Observation Form
- Student Teacher Final Evaluation Form
- Texas Lutheran University Final Evaluation Performance Level Descriptors
- Video Reflection

### Additional Expectations

- **Communication:** Communication throughout the student teaching experience is critical to successful completion of the student teaching experience. All university communication takes place through TLU Mail. Students are responsible for checking their email daily and responding appropriately. Additionally, communication and documentation will be found in the portal under the course.

Students are responsible for completing the required actions (assignments, uploads, etc.) in a timely manner. Your faculty and cooperating teacher may incorporate phone calls and text as a means of further communication. Be sure to respond to all communication in a timely manner.

- **Classroom Authority:** Texas Lutheran expects the student teacher to work within the context of the Cooperating Teacher's classroom and school and accept that the Cooperating Teacher has the ultimate responsibility for how the Student Teacher may operate in the classroom. Remember that a student teacher is a guest in the cooperating teacher's classroom.
- **Campus Policies:** Student Teachers should know and follow the policies of the school on which they are assigned. Cooperating Teachers are encouraged to share school policy, as well as prompt and coach their Student Teacher when necessary.
- **Required Texas Lutheran Meetings:** Student Teachers are required to attend all Texas Lutheran Student Teacher training sessions, as well as the Texas Lutheran Job and San Marcos Job Fairs (if applicable), and all Student Teaching Faculty meetings and seminars.
- **Deadlines of Assignments and Actions:** Student Teachers should refer to the course information on the portal to remain informed of important submission dates and deadlines. In addition, the Student Teacher will adhere to deadlines given by the University Supervisor and / or Director of Student Teacher. It is the Student Teacher's responsibility to submit requirements online on time and to meet deadlines.
- **"Passing" Student Teaching:** To successfully complete Student Teaching and receive credit (CR), the Student Teacher must successfully complete the 14+ week placement (minimum 70 days – additional days allowed), including the 2-week Total Teach requirement. In addition, the Student Teacher must receive a rating of "2" or higher on each of the final evaluation components, complete all required tasks noted in the portal as part of the course, and be in attendance full days for a total of at least 70 days on the assigned campus(es).
- **Growth Plan:** If a Student Teacher's performance is in need of *significant intervention in order for the Student Teacher to complete student teaching*, the Growth Plan process will be initiated and the Department Chair of Texas Lutheran University Office of Educator Preparation will be informed. Ideally, the identification of areas needing significant improvement will occur early, leaving time for action steps to be implemented. Early and open communication between the Student Teacher, the Cooperating Teacher, and Student Teaching Faculty is critical. Once it has been determined that a growth plan is necessary, a conference with the Student Teacher will be held. *The Student Teacher will be responsible for the creation and enactment of the growth plan* with guidance provided by the Cooperating Teacher and Student Teaching Faculty.

## Professionalism

The Student Teacher is expected to demonstrate professionalism throughout their program, maintaining cooperative and collaborative relationships, complying with University, school and school district policies, and conducting themselves ethically and with integrity.



- **Texas Education Code of Ethics** - All preservice and in-service teachers are required to uphold all aspects of this code. To maintain accountability with the Texas Education Agency, Student Teachers must document that they have read and understood the Code of Ethics. If a student teacher is in violation of the Texas Education Code of Ethics, the F.L.A.G. might be implemented. Depending on the outcome of the F.L.A.G. process, there is a possibility that the student teacher's placement may be terminated, which would result in having to repeat the course. When the Code of Ethics is violated based on the criteria noted with TAC §249.14, the violation must be reported to the SBOE. The student teacher will be temporarily suspended from the placement pending the outcome of the investigation. If the outcome does not impede the student teacher from returning to the classroom setting or affect the ability of the student teacher to obtain a teacher certification in the state of Texas, the student may return to active within the program. This may result in the need to repeat the student teacher semester.
- **Ethical or Professional Concerns** - In the event that a Student Teacher witnesses or experiences unprofessional behavior in the host school, the Student Teacher should first contact Student Teaching Faculty for support and guidance. In no instance should action be taken to report unethical or unprofessional behavior without first consulting Student Teaching Faculty.
- **Cooperative and Acceptable Work Ethic** - As a guest at the host school and in the Cooperating Teacher's classroom, the Student Teacher should work in a professional, cooperative manner with all who s/he encounters.
- **Confidentiality** - The Student Teacher is expected to know and adhere to the school policy on the use of confidential information that may be obtained through student records, conversations, or other sources. Confidentiality regarding students, information about parents of students, or information shared with you must be maintained.
- **Dress Code** - Student Teachers are expected to present a professional appearance that reflects the transition from college student to educator. The Student Teacher is expected to dress appropriately and professionally at all times, complying with the dress code policy of the host school and district.

#### Related Resources

All resources are available through eRacer under the handout section on the course.

- Texas Education Code of Ethics

## Student Teaching Policies

This handbook section provides an overview of basic policies regarding the student teaching experience. This, in conjunction with the current Student Teaching Syllabus, provides specific guidance regarding program policy.

Request to Change or Add Certificate Area	Upon the written request of the candidate, an EPP may prepare a candidate and grant test approval for a certification area other than for which the candidate was initially admitted to the EPP - (TAC) §228.40(c). If a candidate wants to make a change or add an additional certification area, the candidate should contact the Certification Officer via email to arrange for a time to complete the required form.
Requirements for Getting Approved to Take a Certification Exam	<p>Students are encouraged to begin their certification test preparation at least one semester prior to the semester for student teaching. Texas Lutheran University is currently using 240 Tutoring* for most of the TExES certification exams preparation, with the exception of the Music Education test preparation. The Music Ed. Content test preparation is provided currently through Certify Teacher*.</p> <p>Students are expected to complete all the components of the module related to their certification area(s) identified either from when the student was admitted into the program or through the degree plan that is currently followed for the bachelor degree sought. In addition, the practice test is considered passed when a minimum score of 90% is earned. When a student has met the noted criteria, the student should notify the Certification Officer, so that the student can be approved to sign up for the actual certification TExES exam.</p> <p>If the candidate wants to seek training and/or test approval in a certification area other than the one in which the candidate was initially admitted to the EPP, the teacher candidate should email the Certification Officer noting the request and to schedule a time to complete the required paperwork.</p> <p><i>(Note: The programs used for the test preparation is subject to change based on the discretion of the Educator Preparation Program at TLU.)</i></p>
Exit Policy for Dismissal of Candidates	<p><b>Violation of Handbook Expectations</b></p> <p>After students have formally been accepted into the Texas Lutheran University Education Program, they are expected to maintain the requirements as noted within the Education Department handbook, including the GPA requirement of 2.90 and the FLAG policy. A student that falls below the 2.90 GPA once in the program has one semester to become in “good standing” based on the 2.90 requirement; otherwise, the student will be removed from the program. In the event that a student is found in violation of the TLU Education Department guidelines as identified through the FLAG process, removal of the program may be an option.</p> <p>In addition, the student is required to follow the expectations within the TLU University Student Handbook. If a student is suspended from the University as a result of a disciplinary reason that violates the TLU Student Handbook, the student will also be dismissed from the Education program. When a student is dismissed from the program due to GPA, a FLAG, or the suspension from the University, the student will be removed from the entity of Texas Lutheran University within ECOS.</p> <p><b>Changing Degree Plans</b></p> <p>If a student decides to change the degree plan and no longer seek a teaching certification, the student should notify the Certification Officer immediately through email to share the intention to exit the program. The email will serve as the notice to the Education Department, and the student will be removed from the entity of Texas Lutheran University within ECOS.</p> <p><b>Withdrawing from the University</b></p>

	<p>If a student decides to withdraw from the Texas Lutheran University as a student (even if only for a semester), the student should notify the Certification Officer immediately through email to share the intention to exit the program. This email will serve as the notice to remove the student from the entity of Texas Lutheran University within ECOS. In the event that a student returns to TLU and wishes to continue to seek a teaching certification, the student should contact the Certification Officer to discuss options for readmission to the program.</p>
<p>Background Checks / Fingerprinting Requirements</p>	<p>For a new teacher, or one in a new district, a teaching background check is required. The Texas Education Code Section 22.083(b) authorizes the district to obtain criminal history record information on applicants being considered for employment with the district. The district requires everyone who is going to be in classrooms to be cleared through a criminal record check prior to being on campus. Some districts also may require fingerprinting to be done.</p> <p>Based on information recorded in a student's criminal history, students may be ineligible for issuance of a certification upon completion of the Educator Preparation Program. Field Director and the Certification Officer.</p> <p>Applicants have the right to contact TEA to request a preliminary criminal history evaluation from TEA [19 TAC §227.1(d)(3)] if concerns are present. TAC §227.1. (b) (1) pursuant to the Texas Education Code (TEC), §22.083, candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to employment as an educator; and (2) pursuant to the TEC, §22.0835, candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to clinical teaching.</p>
<p>Professional Behavior of an Educator Related to Code of Ethics</p>	<p>Students are required to maintain professional behavior as an educator. As per 19 TAC Chapter <b>§247</b>, Educators have a Code of Ethics that must be followed. Students in the Education Preparation Program at TLU are expected to follow the Code of Ethics within TAC. Otherwise, the student may not qualify for a teacher certification as determined by the SBOE. TAC <b>§249.14</b> provides specific guidance on when a violation of the Code of Ethics must be reported to the SBOE. A copy of the Code of Ethics can be found on the class portal and in the TLU Education Department Student Handbook, titled: Pathway to Teacher Certification at Texas Lutheran University.</p>
<p>F.L.A.G. Report (Formative Language to Assess Growth)</p>	<p>The F.L.A.G. report is completed for any student in the TLU Education Program about whom an instructor may have concerns regarding his or her success in the Educator Preparation Program. (Refer to the TLU Education Department Student Handbook for a copy of the forms utilized in this process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The report should be filed with the chair of the Education Department and will be reviewed by the appropriate members of the department.</li> <li>• Appropriate assistance will be provided for the student regarding professional development, and the report will be filed in the student's education department file.</li> <li>• In the event that the behavior(s) noted in the F.L.A.G. results in dismissal from the TLU Education Program, the student will be removed from the entity of Texas Lutheran University within ECOS and will no longer be able to take Education classes within the department that lead to a teacher certification.</li> </ul>

<p>Professional Liability</p>	<p>The Student Teacher is entitled to the same protection of law as the Cooperating Teacher and the principal in the school where s/he is assigned. The University does not provide the Student Teacher with liability insurance. Texas Lutheran requires that all Student Teachers obtain liability insurance coverage offered through ATPE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Liability insurance protection does not apply in cases where there is use of excessive force in the discipline of students or negligence resulting in bodily injury to students, nor does the protection apply to the operation or use of any motor vehicle.</li> <li>● Administering medicine to a student is not permitted at any time, under any circumstance.</li> <li>● Student Teachers are not to drive their own cars to take students on field trips or to deliver them anywhere away from school as they could be found liable for any accidents or injuries.</li> <li>● Corporal punishment administered by the Student Teacher is not permitted at any time. The Cooperating Teacher should discuss school policy regarding this issue with the Student Teacher.</li> <li>● As required by Texas Administrative Code, student teaching is a supervised placement. Student Teachers are not the teacher of record and should not be solely responsible for supervision of students. The Cooperating Teacher or another certified teacher should always be in close proximity and available.</li> </ul>
<p>Injuries at Student Teaching Site</p>	<p>If a Student Teacher is injured at a school, s/he should notify the Director of Student Teaching, the Cooperating Teacher, and the school principal. Because student teachers are not district employees, they are responsible for their own medical expenses.</p>
<p>Substituting</p>	<p>Texas Lutheran University Student Teachers currently are <u>not allowed</u> to substitute during the student teaching assignment under any circumstance. A Student Teacher may substitute after s/he has successfully completed all requirements as set forth for a student teaching semester, including meeting the state-mandated 70-day student teaching practicum and all items noted within the portal, and only if s/he is employed by the district as a substitute.</p>
<p>Student Teacher Attendance</p>	<p>Perfect attendance is expected during student teaching. If the Student Teacher must be absent, the following restrictions apply.</p> <p><b>General Requirements</b></p> <p>The Texas Education Agency requires a minimum number of days (70) the Student Teacher must be in the classroom. Therefore, days missed will be made up after the last official day of student teaching, regardless of the reason, until the student completes the minimum 70 full day requirement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Student Teacher is to be present at the school for the entire day (Exceptions are made to attend required Texas Lutheran University events, meetings, and seminars sponsored by the Education Department) and to follow the required start and end times for their school. Lateness is inexcusable.</li> <li>● The Student Teacher must notify both the Cooperating Teacher,</li> </ul>

	<p>Student Teaching Supervisor, and Director of Student Teaching of absences as soon as possible. Failure to notify may result in the termination of the student teaching assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If absent, s/he must send plans/materials to the Cooperating Teacher if these were his/her responsibility for that day.</li> <li>• An “Absentee Form for Student Teachers” must be submitted prior to an absence for personal reasons and the first day back from an emergency absence (available on the portal).</li> <li>• The state requires a minimum number of days for student teaching. If at any time the Student Teacher’s absences are excessive and prevent the student from reaching the minimum requirement, the Education Department F.L.A.G. Process will be implemented, possibly resulting in the termination of the placement. The student will have to reapply for the opportunity to student teach in a future semester. NOTE: There is no partial credit for student teaching.</li> </ul> <p><b>Absences Due to Personal Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>TEXES Exams:</b> Student Teachers are encouraged to take their TEXES exams prior to assuming total instructional responsibility. They are expected to schedule their TEXES exams after school hours or on Saturday. A Student Teacher that must miss student teaching for a TEXES exam will be required to submit an absence form and make up the absence.</li> <li>• <b>Interviews:</b> Absences for interviews should be limited, approved by Director of Student Teaching, and must be made up.</li> <li>• <b>Other:</b> Student Teachers who are absent due to any other personal business must receive prior approval and must make up the absence.</li> </ul> <p><b>Absences Due to Weather or other Emergencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the case of a district or public emergency (for example, serious weather events, safety lockdowns, etc.), student teachers must contact both their Student Teaching Supervisor and the Director of Student Teaching within two hours of the event to ensure communication and safety.</li> </ul> <p><b>Absences Due to Religious Holidays</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is the responsibility of each Student Teacher to notify the Cooperating Teacher and Student Teaching Supervisor in advance when they will be absent from school for a religious holiday. The Student Teacher should obtain approval for scheduling a makeup day and work for this absence.</li> </ul>
Calendar	<p><b>Work Days/Hours:</b> Student Teachers are to follow the school staff calendar and work hours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arriving early and staying late for meetings, team planning, and preparation for class is expected.</li> <li>• Returning for night meetings / family events is expected.</li> <li>• Student Teachers will follow the calendar of the school district in which they are assigned. If the district has a holiday and the University is in session, the Student Teacher will have a holiday unless Student Teaching Supervisor/Director schedules a meeting or seminar. If the school has scheduled professional development days, the Student</li> </ul>

	<p>Teacher is required to participate unless specifically requested not to by the district or school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooperating Teachers and Student Teachers should familiarize themselves with the University Student Teaching calendar for mandatory meetings, due dates, and other information.</li> </ul> <p><b>Inclement Weather:</b> In case of inclement weather closures or late starts, Student Teachers follow the staff hours and calendar of the district in which they are assigned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the district is closed or starts late due to inclement weather, the Student Teacher is expected to adhere to his/her assigned district's expectations for staff, even if Texas Lutheran University continues to hold classes.</li> <li>If Texas Lutheran University implements a closure or late start, but the Student Teacher's district does not, the Student Teacher will comply with the district's expectations.</li> </ul>
<p>Outside Responsibilities</p>	<p>During the student teaching semester, the Student Teacher's first responsibility is to the students he/she teaches. Other obligations should not interfere with student teaching responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outside activities (e.g., employment, sports, sororities, fraternities) should be held to a minimum by Student Teachers during their student teaching experience.</li> <li>No Student Teacher will be excused to leave early for work or for class.</li> </ul>

**Related Resources**  
All resources are available through the portal.

- Student Teacher Absence Form

## Student Teacher Support

Student Teachers are supported in the field during the student teaching practicum by the Director of Student Teaching and by the host school through the assigned Cooperating Teacher. The role of each support figure is outlined below.

### Hosting Student Teachers: Cooperating/Mentor Teachers

The Cooperating/Mentor Teacher is a critical figure within the student teaching experience, acting as a mentor and day-to-day guide during a Student Teacher's placement. A brief summary of the roles and requirements of the Cooperating Teacher are outlined below. *Detailed guidance can be found in the Cooperating/Mentor Teacher's Resource Guide.*

Orientation / Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the Cooperating/Mentor Teacher Handbook.</li> <li>• Watch an orientation training with the Texas Lutheran University Student Teacher (sent by Director of Student Teachers).</li> </ul>
Mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome the Student Teacher (ST) to the classroom and build a trust relationship.</li> <li>• Introduce the ST to the classroom, school, staff, and district.</li> <li>• Encourage and support the ST.</li> <li>• Facilitate the professional learning and growth of the ST. This should include dialogue, co-planning, observation/feedback, and collaborative problem-solving.</li> <li>• Plan for and facilitate the assumption of instructional responsibilities by the ST.</li> <li>• Collaborate with ST to complete various Standard Experiences.</li> <li>• Collaborate with ST Faculty to promote/monitor progress of the ST.</li> </ul>
Standard Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent Newsletter - Review and approve the newsletter the ST will send home to the classroom parents.</li> <li>• Class Background Study - provide pertinent information regarding students, school, procedures, schedule, etc.</li> <li>• Total Teach Timeline - co-create a plan for gradual release of teaching responsibilities to the ST.</li> <li>• Student Work Reflection - provide input for ST submission of the student work reflection.</li> <li>• Midterm Conference - share midpoint ratings with the ST and co-create goals and action steps.</li> <li>• Final Evaluation Conference - Participate in the summative conference with the ST and Student Teaching Faculty.</li> </ul>
Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete at least one observation and document the observation on the provided form.</li> <li>• Collaborate with ST Faculty to determine ST progress and further observation requirements during Midterm Conference.</li> <li>• Collaborate with ST Faculty to determine final evaluation ratings at end of placement.</li> </ul>

## Guiding the Student Teacher: Student Teacher University Supervisor

The Student Teaching Supervisor is another critical figure within the student teaching experience, acting both as a mentor and a facilitator of professional learning and growth in practice. Student Teaching Supervisors have extensive experience in observing, mentoring, and training, and are committed to partnering with the University, the school, the Cooperating/Mentor Teacher, and the Student Teacher to create the best possible experience during the student teaching placement. Faculty duties encompass working with Student Teachers within the district/school environment, providing external support and training, and completing all required Texas Lutheran University documentation. A brief summary of the roles and requirements of University Student Teaching Faculty are outlined below.

Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the required university training.</li> <li>• Complete the TEA required approved field supervisor training.</li> <li>• In the event that the University Supervisor has a <i>current</i> T-TESS Appraiser Certification, the certificate can be used as proof for the TEA training. This certificate needs to be current during the timeline that the University Supervisor serves in that capacity.</li> <li>• Provide orientation training for Cooperating/Mentor Teachers per guidelines.</li> </ul>
Mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate the professional learning and growth of the ST. This should include dialogue, co-planning, observation/feedback, and collaborative problem-solving.</li> <li>• Collaborate with ST to complete various Standard Experiences.</li> <li>• Collaborate with Cooperating/Mentor Teacher to promote/monitor progress of the ST.</li> </ul>
Standard Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure completion of tasks and assignments outlined in the Student Teacher Standard Experiences.</li> <li>• Conduct at least four formal observations, each of which must be 45 minutes or longer.</li> <li>• Facilitate pre- and post-observation conferences for each formal observation.</li> </ul>
Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with Cooperating Teacher to determine ST progress and additional observation requirements during Midterm Conference.</li> <li>• Collaborate with Cooperating Teacher to determine final evaluation ratings at end of placement.</li> </ul>

### Final Recommendations

#### Before Student Teachers can be certified in Texas, they must do the following\*:

1. Students are required to meet all requirements for Texas teacher certification in addition to all requirements for completing a university baccalaureate degree. Certification requirements for the state of Texas are subject to change at any time.



2. Students must successfully complete all necessary examinations for certification in Texas and pay all necessary fees.
3. Students must successfully complete the required fingerprinting process and background check. A negative background check could prevent certification.
4. Students must complete a certification application in the TEAL system and pay appropriate fees for each certification sought. The TLU certification officer will then recommend a student for certification upon verification of graduation and the successful completion of all requirements.

\*Subject to change based on the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Fulfill all graduation requirements.

## **Filing a Complaint with TEA**

### **Information on Filing a Complaint**

For issues or complaints about TLU's Educator Preparation Program, email the Texas Education Agency at [generalinquiry@tea.texas.gov](mailto:generalinquiry@tea.texas.gov) or fax your complaint to 512-463-9008 or mail to Correspondence Management, Communications Division, Texas Education Agency, 1701 North Congress, Austin, TX 78701-1494.









