



# UTeach Student Handbook





## Welcome!

It is a pleasure to have you consider our program. UTeach Natural Sciences grew out of the conviction that public universities have a profound role to play in improving the public education system. UTeach began at The University of Texas at Austin in 1997 as an innovative way to recruit undergraduate science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) majors and prepare them to become teachers.

Faculty with expertise in STEM fields, in STEM teaching and learning, and in the history of science and mathematics work alongside master teacher practitioners (UTeach clinical faculty) to design a program emphasizing deep understanding of content, practices and pedagogy, and strong connections between theory and practice. The program combines rigorous STEM degrees with secondary teaching certification without adding time or cost to four-year degrees.

Out of this original program a number of local education initiatives have grown, including a national expansion effort, all supporting the improvement of STEM education and the public education system overall.

We are excited that you are taking the first step to earning a teaching certificate through UTeach Natural Sciences, where you will be prepared to change the world.



Sincerely,

Annette Hairston  
UTeach Academic Services Manager



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## Chapter I: UTeach Natural Sciences Advising

Academic Advising is an integral part of undergraduate education. The goal of all academic advising is to assist students in taking responsibility for developing meaningful educational plans compatible with their career and personal goals. Advising is more than imparting specialized knowledge; it includes helping students formulate important questions about the nature and direction of their education and helping them find answers to those questions. This process often involves the advisor directing the student to university publications and other university offices for answers to questions in order to allow the student to take ownership of their college experience and function as an adult. Advisors will confer with students about course schedules and educational experiences, but students themselves are responsible for selecting the content of their academic program and making progress toward an academic degree.

New UTeach students may decide, after the first or second semester, that they no longer want to pursue teacher certification. This is fine since the first course (and even the 2nd course) is designed to let you try out teaching. Students who no longer wish to pursue teacher certification should inform their advisor in the UTeach office (PAI 4.02 or [advisor@uteach.utexas.edu](mailto:advisor@uteach.utexas.edu)).

UTeach students are required to be advised each semester either in person or by completing the online advising worksheet. Each semester, well before registration, students assigned to a UTeach advisor are sent an email, generally in September during fall semesters and February during spring semesters, requesting that they submit an on-line pre-advising worksheet (<https://utdirect.utexas.edu/ns/>). Students assigned to advisors outside of UTeach should follow the registration advising process established by their advisor. New students who have never met with a UTeach advisor are required to schedule an advising session; these students should complete the worksheet, and then schedule an appointment with an advisor. Do not wait until the week before registration to complete the worksheet and/or try to get an appointment, as advisors are usually booked through registration by then and may not be able to clear an advising bar in time for registration.

### **Nondiscrimination**

The University of Texas at Austin and the UTeach Natural Sciences Program are committed to an education and working environment that provides equal opportunity to all members of the University community. In accordance with federal and state law, UTeach Natural Sciences prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, citizen- ship, and veteran status.



## Starting UTeach

Unlike many traditional teacher certification programs, UTeach students get classroom experience as early as the very first semester. Our first course, UTS 101, is a one credit hour course that lets you see what teaching is really like. Once registered, you'll be on your way to becoming a certified teacher as you complete requirements for a bachelor's degree.

In addition to hands-on experience your very first semester, here are a few other things you can expect from UTeach:

- Completion of both a bachelor's degree and teacher certification in four years.
- Small class size and awesome instructors who are master teachers with years of actual public school teaching experience.
- Scholarship opportunities.
- Paid internships providing additional educational experiences.
- A student organization with leadership opportunities.
- Job search support.
- Support during your 1st year of teaching.
- Continued support after graduation.



## Chapter II: Certification, Coursework, and The Portfolio

UTeach is designed to assist students in becoming certified to teach math, science, computer science or engineering without adding any additional time at UT Austin. Students can major in one of our UTeach degrees in biology, chemistry, physics or computer science, or they can pursue any major at The University and complete our requirements for certification.

Teaching majors take most of the same content courses as their peers in the same major, except that teaching students may take one or two professional development courses each semester. A UTeach advisor will go over teaching major requirements generally in the first advising session. Degree Requirement Checklists are available in the UTeach office in PAI 4.02 and on the UTeach website: <http://uteach.utexas.edu>.

### Certification Areas

#### Middle School Certification (grades 4 - 8)

- Mathematics (certified to teach math only)
- Composite Science (certified to teach biology, chemistry, physics and geology)

#### High School Certification (grades 7 - 12 or grades 6 - 12 for MPSE)

- Computer Science (certified to teach computer science only)
- Composite Science (certified to teach any of biology, chemistry, physics or geology)
- Life Sciences (certified to teach biology only)
- Mathematics (certified to teach math only)
- Mathematics, Physical Science and Engineering (MPSE, certified to teach math, physics, chemistry and engineering)
- Physical Science (certified to teach chemistry and physics only)
- Physics/Math (certified to teach physics and math only)

**NOTE:** Students take the Professional Development Sequence (UTeach courses) in addition to content courses for their area of certification. A grade of at least a C- is required for all courses in the Professional Development Sequence AND content courses counting towards certification.





## Coursework

### Pedagogy Training (Professional Development Sequence or PDS)

Prerequisites are enforced for all students. If you are registered for a class for which you do not meet prerequisites, you will be dropped from that class. It is your responsibility to check prerequisites for all classes. Advisors are available to help clarify any questions.

#### 1. UTS 101 & 110: Step 1 and Step 2

The aim of these STEP courses is to attract students to careers in math & science teaching. Master teachers introduce students to examples of high-quality inquiry-based lessons and model the pedagogical concepts to which they are being introduced. In STEP 1 students prepare and teach 4 lessons in elementary classrooms, and in STEP 2 students prepare and teach 3 lessons in middle school classrooms.

**Prerequisite:** For students with less than 80 hours: UTS 101-Step 1 must be taken before UTS 110-Step 2. Students with at least 80 hours should take Step 1 and Step 2 concurrently. See the UTeach Academic Advisor for further information about taking these courses concurrently.

#### 2. EDC 365C: Knowing and Learning

This course expands the prospective teacher's understanding of current theories of learning and conceptual development. Students examine their own assumptions about learning. They critically examine the needs of a diverse student population in the classroom.

**Prerequisite:** Students must have credit or be registered for UTS 101-Step 1 or UTS 110-Step 2 in order to take Knowing and Learning (EDC 365C). Students with at least 80 hours and taking both UTS 101 and 110, should also take EDC 365C their first semester in the program as part of the four-semester sequence.

#### 3. EDC 365D: Classroom Interactions (CI)

This course moves from a focus on thinking and learning to a focus on teaching and learning. Prospective teachers are introduced to the way in which curriculum and technology are used in classroom settings to build interrelationships among teachers and students. They are taught how content and pedagogy combine to make effective teaching.

**Prerequisites:** Students must earn a C- or better in UTS 101-Step 1, in UTS 110-Step 2, and EDC 365C Knowing and Learning in Math and Science and have at least a 2.5 GPA in order to take Classroom Interactions (EDC 365D).



## 4. EDC 365E: Project-Based Instruction (PBI)

In this course, students aim to master new technologies for problem-based investigations in math and science classrooms. Students also discuss the use of assessment to improve student learning. Students teach project-based lessons to high school students.

**Prerequisites:** Students must earn a C- or better in Classroom Interactions and have at least a 2.5 cumulative GPA.

## 5. EDC 651S: Student Teaching

Students are immersed in the schools to prepare them to confidently assume a teaching position. In the seminar, students reflect on their student teaching experiences and examine contemporary critical issues in education.

**Prerequisites:**

- EDC 365E with a grade of C- or better
- Research Methods with a grade of C- or better
- Perspectives with a grade of C- or better
- A passing score on the preliminary portfolio
- A cumulative UT GPA of 2.5
- An application. Apply here: <http://www.edb.utexas.edu/feld/pds.html>
  - Spring Apprentice Teachers must apply by October 1.
  - Fall Apprentice Teachers must apply by March 1.
  - Students will receive a formal admission offer, through DocuSign, their student teaching semester before classes begin. Students must complete the admissions offer accepting formal admission in order to begin student teaching.
- Attend an orientation session in the semester before you intend to apprentice teach. For further details and to sign up for the mandatory apprentice teaching orientation, students must reply to an email from the Student Teacher Coordinator, Pamela Elias.

**The deadlines for the application and attendance at an orientation session are firm due to the degree of coordination and planning required; students who miss this deadline or who do not attend an orientation may have to postpone student teaching.**

## 6. UTS 170: Special Topics Seminar

Students reflect on their student teaching experiences and examine contemporary critical issues in education.

**Prerequisite:** Concurrent registration for EDC 651S: Student Teaching and an overall UT GPA of 2.5.





## Supporting Coursework

### 7. **BIO 337 / CH 368 / PHY 341: Research Methods**

Students perform four independent inquiries and learn to combine skills from mathematics and science in order to solve research problems.

**Prerequisite:** You may ignore published prerequisites, but that class should be taken after your first semester in the program.

### 8. **HIS/PHL 329U: Perspectives**

Faculty in History and Philosophy introduce students to the historical, social, and philosophical implications of mathematics and science through investigation of five significant episodes in science history.

**Prerequisite:** Upper-division standing (60 credit hours).



## The Portfolio

For the portfolio, save everything from Step I, Step II, Knowing & Learning, Classroom Interactions, Project Based Instruction, Research Methods, and Perspectives; you'll be glad you did. You can store documents in the portfolio system itself or on UTBox. Either way, you get a lot of space.

Each student in the UTeach program generates a teaching portfolio, a purposeful collection of work arranged to demonstrate their successful preparation for certification. Portfolios are jointly reviewed by qualified secondary educators in the certification area. A satisfactory review of the preliminary portfolio is required prior to enrollment in student teaching. In some cases, revisions may be required, but a passing score on the preliminary portfolio review is an absolute requirement for formal admission to student teaching candidacy. The final portfolio review is a portion of the grade in the Student Teaching Seminar (UTS 170) and a passing score is required for recommendation for certification.

## Preliminary Portfolio Submission Process

Students usually submit a portfolio during the semester they take Project Based Instruction. The portfolio must receive a passing score prior to enrollment in student teaching.

Portfolio evaluators may require the resubmission of one or more sections. Revisions must be submitted and receive a passing score in order to advance into student teaching. In cases where the portfolio does not receive a passing score, a delay in student teaching may be required.

## Portfolio Due Dates

The due date varies by semester but is typically shortly before the Thanksgiving break in the fall and toward the end of April in the spring. Check the portfolio page for updates.

**The portfolio deadlines are firm. Only those students with a passing score on the preliminary portfolio will be allowed to register for Student Teaching.**

The final portfolio is due as a part of the Student Teaching Seminar (UTS 170). The instructors of the Seminar will tell you the exact due date.

For more information on portfolios, visit our website at <https://uteach.utexas.edu/uteach-portfolio>.



## Chapter III: Paid Internships and Scholarships

Many UTeach students considering a career in math or science education must also work to support their studies at the University. To financially assist these students, UTeach offers a unique internship program for its participants. With the help of generous foundation support, UTeach has formed partnerships with many non-profit organizations around the Austin area that provide educational services to the Austin community.

Students are paid a generous stipend to work 10 to 20 hours a week assisting with the development of educational materials, working directly with families and children, providing guided tours at local museums, or assisting with after-school programs devoted to helping children succeed. Internships have proven mutually beneficial to UTeach students and the Austin community organizations.

### Scholarships

All eligible students may apply for the following scholarships. An email is sent to students reminding them to apply for the scholarships by the deadlines. Undergraduate scholarships directly related to the UTeach program are listed below.



#### **AISD Future Teacher Scholarship**

The AISD Future Teacher Scholarship Program provides an incentive to students who certify to teach in critical shortage areas for the state of Texas. Students seeking math, science, computer science or engineering certification through the UTeach Program and who are in their last four semesters of the program are encouraged to apply. All applicants must be enrolled as full-time students and must have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher. Students must reapply for the scholarship online each semester.

Undergraduate students can receive up to \$5,000 over four semesters (\$1,000 per semester, increasing to \$1,500 the last two semesters). It is the student's responsibility to apply for the scholarship each semester.

There is no commitment on the student's part to teach in AISD if they receive the scholarship. However, if they receive the funds and do not complete the UTeach Certification Program, they may be required to repay the amount they receive.



## **Charles Butt Scholarship for Aspiring Teachers**

The Charles Butt Scholarship for Aspiring Teachers consists of \$8,000 in annual funding for up to four years, as well as ongoing training and development opportunities, mentorship from sitting public school educators, and participation in a statewide aspiring teachers network facilitated by the Raise Your Hand Texas Foundation.

## **Greater Texas Foundation Scholarship for Teaching**

Through a generous gift from the Greater Texas Foundation, we are pleased to offer up to a \$1000 scholarship to science, mathematics, and computer science majors who explore the possibility of becoming high school and middle school teachers. This scholarship is available to science, mathematics, and computer science majors who take the first two courses in the UTeach sequence, Step I and Step II.

Students chosen for this scholarship, will be awarded \$500 at the completion of Step 1 with a B or better, and another \$500 at the completion of Step II with a B or better. The hope is that they will continue on to obtain certification through UTeach, but they should do so only if it is right for them. There is no further obligation.

Eligible students may pick up an application from the UTeach office in PAI 4.02 .

## **Kodosky Foundation Scholarship for Physics Teaching**

Through a generous gift from the Jeff and Gail Kodosky Foundation, we are pleased to offer up to a \$1000 scholarship to physics majors who explore the possibility of becoming high school and middle school physics teachers. This scholarship is available to physics majors who take the first two courses in the UTeach sequence, Step I and Step II. Students chosen for this scholarship, will be awarded \$500 at the completion of Step 1 with a B or better, and another \$500 at the completion of Step II with a B or better. The hope is that they will continue on to obtain certification through UTeach, but they should do so only if it is right for them. There is no further obligation.





## Chapter IV: Student Support

### Math and Science Teachers of Tomorrow

Math and Science Teachers of Tomorrow (MASTT) is a student-led organization whose activities help to promote the success of future math, science and computer science, pre-service teachers in the UTeach program at the University of Texas at Austin. UTeach students are automatically members. However, officers are elected, and elections are held at the end of each spring semester and as vacancies occur.



#### MASTT Staff Advisor:

- Aaron Koehler  
koehler@uteach.utexas.edu  
(512) 232-2770  
PAI 4.02



## **Student Services Staff: (512) 232-2770, PAI 4.02**

- Annette Hairston: Academic services Manager  
hairston@uteach.utexas.edu
- Aaron Koehler: Coordinator for Recruitment and Advising  
koehler@uteach.utexas.edu
- Adela Galarza: Administrative Associate  
galarza@uteach.utexas.edu

## **Student Teaching Coordinators and Portfolio Management**

- Kelli Allen & Pamela Elias  
allen@uteach.utexas.edu & elias@uteach.utexas.edu  
(512) 232-2770  
PAI 4.04

## **Paid Internships**

- Shelly Rodriguez  
rodriguez@uteach.utexas.edu  
(512) 232-2770  
PAI 4.04

Still have questions? Check out our Student FAQ at <https://uteach.utexas.edu/student-faq>; <https://uteach.utexas.edu/degree-holder-faq>; email [advisor@uteach.utexas.edu](mailto:advisor@uteach.utexas.edu), or call (512) 232-2770.





## Chapter V: Program Admission/Student Teaching

### Application Process

Undergraduate students are officially admitted at student teaching. Degree holders must be admitted before starting any UTeach classes. You will receive a formal admission offer through DocuSign. You must respond with acceptance into (or rejection of) the UTeach Program and student teaching.

### Applying for Student Teaching

October 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for Spring student teachers, and March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for Fall student teachers. To apply for student teaching you must:

1. Create a TEAL Account (REQUEST NEW USER ACCOUNT)  
(<https://pryor.tea.state.tx.us/TSP/TEASecurePortal/Access/LogonServlet>)

Instructions: [https://secure.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/TEAL\\_End\\_User\\_Training\\_ECOS.pdf](https://secure.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/TEAL_End_User_Training_ECOS.pdf)

2. Apply for Student Teaching on the COE website PDS Application BEFORE March 1, 2021 (<https://education.utexas.edu/about/college-offices/field-experiences>) Quick Link “Apply to the PDS”

You do not have to see an advisor before applying! You can answer yes to “have you seen an advisor?”.

3. Complete the Orientation Information Form on the UTeach website(<https://apps.uteach.utexas.edu>) “Orientation Information Form”

Select your Orientation Time (WRITE IT DOWN SO YOU DO NOT FORGET)

Include your TEA ID Number (that you get from completing #1 above) in this online form!!!

**CRITICAL NOTE:** All Student Teachers will have to pass a thorough **Criminal Background Check** prior to Student Teaching. Any criminal activity may prevent you from participating in Student Teaching and you may need to alter your degree plan if you wish to complete your degree from UT Austin without completing certification requirements. It is critical that you are honest all on criminal background questionnaires. It is better to explain an extenuating circumstance than to be accused of falsifying an official document.



## Student Teaching Semester

The student teaching experience is a 35-40 hour minimum per week field commitment where you will teach two courses autonomously. Your first day in the public schools is the Monday AFTER the first week of UT classes for the semester. During the first week of UT classes for the semester you ONLY attend the evening seminar. Once in the schools - The first week in the schools is observational, the second week you begin teaching the first of two classes, the third week you begin teaching the second of two classes and retain those courses until the last UT class day. This is the ideal schedule but can be adjusted for individual constraints.

The student teaching seminar meets in Painter on the fourth floor from 6 – 7:30 p.m. once a week. The seminar will be on Wednesday evenings throughout the semester. You will need to sign up for both the pass/fail student teaching class (EDC 651S STU TCH SEC SCH: SCIENCE if you are a science student EDC 651S STU TCH SEC SCH: MATHEMATICS if you are a math or computer science student) AND the one hour graded seminar class (UTS 170 Student Teaching Seminar – SCIENCE if you are a science student and MATH if you are a mathematics or computer science student) for a total of 7 hours. These classes have restricted enrollment and only students who have attended an orientation, have a minimum 2.5 GPA, and a passing score on their preliminary portfolio will be allowed to take the courses.

A passing score on the PRELIMINARY PORTFOLIO is required prior to student teaching. Deadlines vary, so check the portfolio page. Usually, the deadline in the fall semester is close to the Thanksgiving break and toward the beginning of April in the spring semester. The deadline is firm. Missing it may mean delaying your student teaching semester for at least a semester. External evaluators review portfolios and results will be sent to you by the last week of class.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Complete all of your coursework before Apprentice Teaching or complete your coursework in the summer. Taking a course in the summer can affect your ability for a school district to hire you since school districts start before university summer coursework officially ends. Even taking a first summer session course limits your employment opportunities since those grades do not officially post until the END of the summer. You must complete a formal appeal and be approved to take any courses while student teaching.

There may be scholarship opportunities that allow you to devote your time exclusively to student teaching during the semester. Please talk with an Academic Advisor in PAI 4.02 about these. The AISD Scholarship is a wonderful monetary opportunity for all students who have at least a 2.5 GPA. There is no teaching commitment for this scholarship; in a sense it is FREE MONEY to help support you during the semester. You will have clothing and traveling expenses during student teaching and this monetary opportunity is a wonderful way to help offset these expenses. Sign the very short application in PAI 4.02 by the deadline to receive these funds. The money is released after the 12th class day of the semester.



## Responsibilities

Everyone involved in the student teaching program--you, your cooperating teacher, your university facilitator--has well-defined responsibilities. We want to do everything we can to make certain that these expectations are met so that everyone enjoys a positive experience. If you have concerns about your student teaching experience, you should make them known to your cooperating teacher and your university facilitator. You should also contact Pamela Elias or Kelly Allen, your student teaching coordinator at [elias@uteach.utexas.edu](mailto:elias@uteach.utexas.edu) or [allen@uteach.utexas.edu](mailto:allen@uteach.utexas.edu) if you have concerns that may require additional assistance. Of course, all of your concerns will be kept confidential.

The teachers and mentors associated with student teaching are highly professional and competent. But unforeseen problems may arise from time to time, and it is important that you let someone know about your concerns so that they can be dealt with right away. Do not wait until the end of the semester to seek assistance with a lingering problem or misunderstanding.

## Responsibilities of Student Teacher

1. Meet the principal and assistant principal and become familiar with the school climate and culture.
2. Know and follow the rules, regulations, and policies of the school. This includes the use of any confidential information you may obtain through student records, conversations, etc. Uphold school safety standards and understand school emergency response procedures.
3. Maintain an ethical and professional attitude toward all members of the school community. In part, this means holding in confidence your personal opinions about people with whom you interact (students, teachers, staff, parents, and administrators). Read and sign an agreement to abide by the Texas Administrative Code 247, Educators Code of Ethics.
4. Recognize and accept that the cooperating teacher has the ultimate responsibility for what you may or may not do in the classroom.
5. Make yourself available for regular planning and feedback sessions with your cooperating teacher and university facilitator.
6. Make adequate lesson plans in advance of teaching assignments and share copies with the cooperating teacher and university facilitator. Make revisions as recommended by your cooperating teacher and obtain final approval prior to lesson implementation.
7. Attend all required student teaching and related seminars.
8. Dress in a professional manner.
9. Assess your growth as a teacher throughout the semester.
10. Integrate technology-learning tools to enhance instruction and learning, and to support your own pre-professional growth.
11. Demonstrate professionalism through punctuality and accurate, courteous communication.



## Responsibilities of Cooperating Teacher

1. In all interactions, treat the student teacher as a professional.
2. Introduce the student teacher to the class on the first day of attendance.
3. Acquaint the student teacher with materials and resources available in the school on the first day or soon thereafter.
4. Require lesson plans from the student teacher in advance of the actual teaching. Review these plans carefully, recommend revision as needed, and approve final plans prior to implementation.
5. Allow the student teacher to assume responsibilities as soon as the student teacher exhibits the readiness to do so. Early in the semester, work with your student teacher to develop a Student Plan to pace and scaffold increasing teaching responsibilities.
6. Encourage the student teacher to be creative and to try new teaching strategies.
7. Require lesson plans from the student teacher in advance of the teaching assignments.
8. Conduct regular cooperative planning sessions with the student teacher. There should be one session at the beginning of the semester followed by weekly and/or daily sessions.
9. Observe the student teacher teaching on a regular basis and provide a written copy of your observation to both the student teacher and university facilitator.
10. Provide an organized feedback session for each observation (in addition to incidental observations and remarks) and provide the student teacher and university facilitator with a written summary of the feedback session.
11. Complete two student teaching evaluation forms, the Formative Assessment at mid-semester and the Summative Assessment at the end of the semester. Cite specific examples of the observed behaviors as supporting evidence and submit the form electronically. Discuss each evaluation with the student teacher. At mid-semester, concrete suggestions for improvement should be identified and then communicated in writing to all parties involved.



## Responsibilities of University Facilitator

1. Assist in the placement of student teachers, as specified by the Director of Education Services or the UT coordinator.
2. Provide an orientation meeting for all student teachers under your supervision. Provide and/or attend an orientation for your cooperating teachers.
3. Conduct a minimum of three student teaching seminars. Establish equitable procedures for scheduling observations and conferences.
4. Review the Student Plan for appropriate pacing and scaffolding of broad planning and teaching experiences to promote increasing self-directions and competence. Provide guidance to both the student teacher and cooperating teacher with respect to the pacing of experiences and steady development of the student teacher's professional competencies.
5. Observe each student teacher on a regular basis and provide the student teacher and the cooperating teacher with a written account of your observations.
6. Monitor the progress of each student teacher and maintain regular communication with each cooperating teacher.
7. Conduct an individual feedback session for each observation made and provide the student teacher and cooperating teacher with a written summary of the results.
8. Help student teachers with any problems that may arise in their student teaching assignments. If problems arise contact Pamela Elias or Kelly Allen, your student teaching coordinator at [elias@uteach.utexas.edu](mailto:elias@uteach.utexas.edu) or [allen@uteach.utexas.edu](mailto:allen@uteach.utexas.edu).
9. Conduct a three-way mid-term and final three-way conference with the cooperating teacher and student teacher to discuss the evaluation of the student teacher.
10. Complete the Formative Assessment at mid-semester and the Summative Assessment at the end of the semester. Cite specific examples of observed behaviors as supporting evidence. Discuss each evaluation with the student teacher. At mid-semester, concrete suggestions for improvement should be identified and then communicated in writing to the student teacher and cooperating teacher.
11. Keep a file of memos, announcements, and all communication pertaining to the responsibilities of a university facilitator. Maintain communications by checking your e-mail and telephone messages daily and responding promptly. The university facilitator must be available for communications and meet deadlines.
12. Communicate with your coordinator on a regular basis to ensure that you are both up-to-date on your student teacher's progress in the schools.



## **Your Assignment**

Your student teaching assignment has been made with much care and attention to the suitability of your placement. Changes in assignments are not made after student teaching begins except in highly unusual circumstances. If you experience what seem to be insurmountable problems with your placement, please notify your facilitator at once.

It is important for you to recognize that you are a guest in the school, and that your cooperating teacher bears the responsibility of determining what is best for her or his students. It is up to the classroom teacher to determine what responsibilities you will assume and when. If you demonstrate competence, responsibility, and tact, you will likely have many opportunities to begin teaching early in your experience and to try innovative teaching strategies. If you experience any problems, be sure to inform your university facilitator as soon as possible.

## **Personal Liability**

As a student teacher, you are entitled to the same protection of law accorded to the cooperating teacher and the principal in the school where you are assigned. This 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.

The University has not provided you with liability insurance and you may want to look into insurance coverage offered by organizations such as ATPE and TCTA. This means that in the weeks before Total Teach, you should not be left alone on a regular basis with your class for extended periods of time (small pull-out groups are fine). In addition, you should not be left alone on a playground or field trip with a group of students without a licensed teacher within “shouting distance.” These rules are for your own protection and it is important that you alert your university facilitator immediately if they are being violated. If you have been approved as a substitute teacher in the district in which you are student teaching, you are protected with liability insurance by the school district on days you serve as a substitute. However, it is still recommended that you consider the purchase of additional health and liability coverage.

Different school districts have different policies when it comes to permitting student teachers to serve as substitutes. Make certain that you understand what your district’s particular policies are before you get involved in what could be a “sticky” situation. When in doubt, check with your university facilitator.





## Calendar

University regulations require that all instructors follow the University Course Schedule as printed unless all students in a given course agree at the beginning of the semester to a modified schedule. There may be times when the University has a holiday, and the schools are in session. You cannot be required to attend your student teaching assignment on these days. However, for many of you this break in your contact with the classroom could interfere with a sequence of instruction. In these cases, you may wish to proceed with your student teaching. If you do take the University holiday, then you are required to provide the cooperating teacher with lesson plans for these days so that your absence will not be detrimental to the children. For those days on which the school district has a holiday and the University is in session, your university facilitator may require you to attend sessions on campus. No student teachers will be excused on these days. If the school or school district is conducting in-service sessions on staff development days, then you are expected to attend these sessions unless your university facilitator notifies you that the school district or campus principal has specifically indicated that student teachers should not attend.

## Absences

Perfect attendance during student teaching is expected. If you must be absent, you will need to contact both your cooperating teacher and your university facilitator as soon as possible. Days that you miss will be made up at the end of the practicum and student teaching experiences unless your university facilitator approves another arrangement. Student teachers are responsible for preparation, planning, teaching and debriefing during school days. Student teachers should plan to mirror their cooperating teachers' hours as closely as possible. Lateness is inexcusable.

If you are scheduled to teach on a day that you will be absent, you should send lesson plans and/or materials to the school for your cooperating teacher. Failure to notify the specified individuals in the case of an absence may result in the termination of your assignment. It is the responsibility of each student to notify your university facilitator and cooperating teacher, in advance, that you will be absent from class on a religious holiday and to receive, in advance, their approval for scheduling make-up time and work.



Absences are to be made up. If you request an absence to attend an out-of-town job interview, then you must make-up the absence. If you are absent because of illness, then you are expected to make up the absence. Arrangements for making up absences are to be made in consultation with your university facilitator. If at any time, in the judgment of your university facilitator and/or cooperating teacher, your absences are excessive, your assignment may be terminated.

## **Student Teaching Evaluation**

A copy of the student teacher Summative Assessment form will be given to you at the start of the semester. This form will be completed by both your University facilitator and cooperating teacher at the end of the semester. You should become familiar with this form and seek feedback from your university facilitator and cooperating teacher throughout the semester with respect to the categories included.

At the end of the semester, you will review these evaluation forms and submit them electronically. Your signature indicates that you have reviewed the forms, not that you necessarily agree with them.

You can usually expect that the evaluation by your university facilitator will vary somewhat from that of the cooperating teacher. They will have seen you at different times doing different things so they likely may develop some different impressions.

## **Outside Responsibilities**

Outside activities (e.g., employment, sports, sororities, fraternities) should be held to a minimum during student teaching. During this period of time, your first responsibility is to the students you teach. Outside responsibilities should not interfere with your student teaching responsibilities.



## Words to the Wise

1. Instructional materials prepared using supplies provided by the school usually remain with the school at the completion of the student teaching assignment. If you know that you will want to keep some of the instructional materials for your own future use, check with your school's policy and then decide whether you will want to purchase the necessary supplies yourself.
2. Administering medicine to your students is not permitted at any time. Even if your cooperating teacher gives you the 'go ahead', you must decline and cite University policy as your reason for doing so.
3. Corporal punishment (even in the mildest form) is not permitted at any time. Be very careful of the ways in which you touch your students, especially when you become angry or frustrated.
4. Do not drive your own car to take students on a field trip or to deliver them anywhere away from campus. You could be legally liable for any accidents or injuries.
5. Make sure to make healthy choices about your diet, exercise, and rest. It is critical that you take care of yourself during student teaching so that you may meet the rigorous demands that the semester imposes.
6. Should you be asked to substitute for your cooperating teacher during student teaching, contact your university facilitator immediately. Students will be allowed to substitute for their own cooperating teacher only and on a very limited basis with the following conditions: A) they must be registered and have completed training with the district's substitute office, and B) prior authorization for substituting must be secured in agreement with the university facilitator, cooperating teacher, campus principal, and the student.
7. Grading papers only for the subjects you are teaching is a practice you are encouraged to follow during student teaching. If you are experiencing pressure from your cooperating teacher to grade papers of students with whom you do not work, you should notify your university facilitator immediately.
8. Writing lesson plans during class time is not permitted during times when students are in the classroom. When you are not teaching, you should observe your cooperating teacher and/or monitor your students as they work.
9. First impressions are extremely important in the public schools. Dress like a professional at all times. This is not to suggest that you have to purchase an expensive wardrobe. It is advisable; however, that you ask about the dress code and observe what the faculty members are wearing and then dress accordingly. Some districts provide written dress codes for teachers on district Web sites or in faculty handbooks. Good grooming is part of the professional image you create.

## A Final Word

You now must accept the responsibility of completing this important experience successfully. Give it your best effort. What you do during your student teaching will become the beginning of your professional record of accomplishments. Be sure to communicate with both your cooperating teacher and the university facilitator at all times. If you encounter any serious problem, talk to someone and correct the problem. Be sure to abide by the Code of Ethics on the following pages. If you think that it would be helpful to obtain assistance from another professional, then get in touch with Pamela Elias or Kelli Allen, [elias@uteach.utexas.edu](mailto:elias@uteach.utexas.edu) or [allen@uteach.utexas.edu](mailto:allen@uteach.utexas.edu) PAI 4.02 or (512) 232-2770.



## Chapter VI: Recommendation for Certification

### Certification Requirements in Texas

- apply to SBEC (State Board for Education Certification)  
<https://secure.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/login.asp>
- complete an undergraduate degree
- complete an approved certification program
- pass both required exams
- complete the required fingerprinting process. Some students may have already completed this process. Check with your Apprentice Teacher seminar instructor if you have questions.

### Certification Process

As soon as grades are posted, UTeach provides program completion documentation to the University's Certification Officer. The Certification Officer checks the list above and recommends students for certification if all of the requirements are met.

Documentation is not sent if:

- you are registered for courses after your student teaching semester
- you are missing degree requirements
- you have not applied to graduate

### Undergraduates

Degrees must become official before you can be recommended for certification.

### Degree-holders

You can be recommended for certification as soon as grades post.

### Wondering where your certification is? Here are some possibilities:

- Did you apply to graduate? Is your degree official yet?
- Did you apply to SBEC yet?
- Have you completed the fingerprinting process?
- Have you taken and passed both exams?
- Did you finish course work or degree requirements after Apprentice Teaching? Send us an email to let us know you're ready to be certified.
- Did you finish course work for certification after your degree became official? Send us an email to let us know you're ready to be certified.

### We're here to help

Send an email to [advisor@uteach.utexas.edu](mailto:advisor@uteach.utexas.edu) if you have questions.



## Chapter VII: Texas Code of Teacher Ethics

### RULE §247.2 Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators

#### Enforceable Standards.

##### (1) Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performance.

- (A) Standard 1.1. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.
- (B) Standard 1.2. The educator shall not knowingly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.
- (C) Standard 1.3. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.
- (D) Standard 1.4. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.
- (E) Standard 1.5. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents of students, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.
- (F) Standard 1.6. The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.
- (G) Standard 1.7. The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other state and federal laws.
- (H) Standard 1.8. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.
- (I) Standard 1.9. The educator shall not make threats of violence against school district employees, school board members, students, or parents of students.
- (J) Standard 1.10. The educator shall be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.
- (K) Standard 1.11. The educator shall not intentionally or knowingly misrepresent his or her employment history, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.
- (L) Standard 1.12. The educator shall refrain from the illegal use or distribution of controlled substances and/or abuse of prescription drugs and toxic inhalants.
- (M) Standard 1.13. The educator shall not consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

##### (2) Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues.

- (A) Standard 2.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- (B) Standard 2.2. The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system
- (C) Standard 2.3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.
- (D) Standard 2.4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.
- (E) Standard 2.5. The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.





## Enforceable Standards Continued

(F) Standard 2.6. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.

(G) Standard 2.7. The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or who provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.

### (3) Ethical Conduct Toward Students.

(A) Standard 3.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

(B) Standard 3.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health, or safety of the student or minor.

(C) Standard 3.3. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.

(D) Standard 3.4. The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status, or sexual orientation.

(E) Standard 3.5. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student or minor.

(F) Standard 3.6. The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor.

(G) Standard 3.7. The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child or knowingly allow any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

(H) Standard 3.8. The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.

(I) Standard 3.9. The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

(i) the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;

(ii) the subject matter of the communication;

(iii) whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;

(iv) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;

(v) whether the communication was sexually explicit; and

(vi) whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

**Source Note:** The provisions of this §247.2 adopted to be effective March 1, 1998, 23 TexReg 1022; amended to be effective August 22, 2002, 27 TexReg 7530; amended to be effective December 26, 2010, 35 TexReg 11242





## Chapter VIII: Complaints/Grievances

### To Raise a Concern or File a Complaint

You have the right to raise a concern or lodge a complaint and to seek redress in areas where you feel that the program did not fulfill requirements for certification or for actions that you feel are wrong. All conferences are confidential. To raise a concern or file a complaint:

- Contact UTeach Natural Sciences Associate Director Dr. Mark Daniels, [mdaniels@math.utexas.edu](mailto:mdaniels@math.utexas.edu) or call 512-232-2770 to schedule an appointment.
- If your concern is not resolved to your satisfaction and you want to speak with someone else, contact UTeach Natural Sciences Executive Director Dr. Michael Marder, [marder@chaos.utexas.edu](mailto:marder@chaos.utexas.edu) or call 512-232-2770 to schedule an appointment.

When students make an appointment, we always ask them what it's about so that we can make sure you see the most appropriate person. However, you DO NOT have to disclose that you have a complaint. Just say that the matter is confidential, and you will not be asked for further information.

### Student Ombudsman

The University of Texas at Austin Student Ombudsman is also a resource:

<http://www.utexas.edu/students/ombuds>

### Texas Education Agency

While we always hope that our students feel that they can come to anyone on the UTeach staff to discuss concerns, you should know that you DO NOT have to go through UTeach or the Student Ombudsman first. You have the right to file a complaint directly with TEA: <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/preparation-and-continuing-education/complaints-against-educator-preparation-programs>

Please feel free to make use of the electronic UTeach Suggestion Box.

(<https://uteach.utexas.edu/complaints-and-disclaimers>)

We also have an analog version, a real box, on the table just outside the Workroom, PAI 4.12. Only the UTeach Co-Directors read suggestions left by our students.