COOPERATING TEACHER HANDBOOK
STUDENT INTERN
UTeach-Liberal Arts (UTLA)
University of Texas at Austin

STUDENT INTERN

**UTL 101 and 202** - An individual who has been approved to take UTeach-Liberal Arts introduction to teaching courses.

**UTL 640** - An individual who has been admitted to the professional development sequence in preparation to be formally admitted to the UTeach-Liberal Arts Program and teacher certification.

**COOPERATING TEACHER (CT) (TAC 228.2(12))**

- Assigned by the educator preparation program (EPP) and campus administrator.
- At least three years of teaching experience.
- An accomplished educator as shown by student learning.
- Completed the UTLA cooperating teacher training.
- Currently certified in the certification category for the teaching assignment for which the teacher candidate is seeking certification. (Only applies to UTL 202 and UTL 640)
- Guides, assists, and supports the student intern in areas such as planning, classroom management, instruction, assessment, working with parents, obtaining materials, district policies; and who reports the student intern's progress to the UTLA instructor.

**FIELD EXPERIENCES (TAC 228.2(15))**

Field experiences are an integral component of the UTeach-Liberal Arts Program and are built on strong collaborations with school districts. These experiences involve the observation of elementary, middle, and high school classrooms, and are designed to be sequential, cumulative, and performance-based, while preparing our graduates to implement and evaluate effective practices with diverse student populations. Our future teachers engage in field experiences that assist them in mastering their subject knowledge and pedagogical skills, learning how to work collaboratively with stakeholders, developing dispositions to be active citizens, and offering students the opportunity to develop these characteristics themselves.

**REQUIRED COURSEWORK FOR STUDENT INTERN**

**UTL 101 - Introduction to the Teaching Profession**
UTL 101 is the first course that students are expected to complete in the UTeach-Liberal Arts Program. This course focuses on the basics of lesson design, the learning environment, class management, and professional responsibilities. As part of this course, students are required to complete 10 hours of field experience in an elementary classroom in which they will observe
their cooperating teacher and design and teach two lessons. The field experience should occur over a period of 8 to 10 weeks.

**UTL 202 - Introduction to Teaching Middle School**
UTL 202 student interns will experience a secondary classroom for the first time. This course will go into more depth than UTL 101 about lesson design, the learning environment, classroom management, differentiation, and school climate. As part of this course, students are required to complete 20 hours of field experience in a middle school classroom in which they will observe their assigned cooperating teacher as well as design and teach six lessons in their specific content area. The field experience should occur over a period of 8 to 10 weeks. This is the last course that students will complete before officially committing to the UTLA program.

**UTL 640 - Teaching in Secondary Schools**
In UTL 640, student interns have officially committed to the UTeach-Liberal Arts Program. This course focuses on content standards, lesson design, assessment, and a variety of teaching strategies in the students’ specific content area. It also prepares the student to take part in the teacher certification process. As part of this course, students are required to complete 45 hours of field experience in a high school classroom in which they will observe their assigned cooperating teacher as well as design and teach nine lessons in their specific content area. The field experience should occur over a period of 10 to 12 weeks.

**RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT INTERN**

- Contact cooperating teacher at the beginning of the semester to make introductions and schedule observation time.
- Recognize and accept that the cooperating teacher has the ultimate responsibility for what may or may not be done in the classroom.
- Know and follow the rules, regulations, and policies of the school and district, including irregularities in the schedule.
- Maintain an ethical and professional attitude. This includes a professional relationship with students, teachers, and administrators, professional dress, arriving with sufficient time to prepare, and utilizing discretion regarding students’ confidential information.
- Be available for regular planning and feedback sessions with the cooperating teacher when requested, and your field supervisor if you are a UTL 640 student.
- Submit lesson plans in advance of observations according to your instructor’s syllabus and share copies with the cooperating teacher and UTLA instructor. If you a UTL 640 student and being observed by your field supervisor, submit your lesson plan also to your field supervisor.
- Use e-mail to communicate with cooperating teacher and UTLA instructor, as well as your field supervisor if you are a UTL 640 student.
- Contact the UTLA instructor, cooperating teacher and if applicable, the field supervisor at least 24 hours in advance or as quickly as possible if a visit needs to be cancelled. Reschedule the missed classroom visit as soon as possible.
- Wear the UTLA lanyard and badge when visiting the campus.
• Become familiar with the school climate and culture, and when possible, introduce yourself to campus teachers, administrators, and staff.
• Follow all university, UTLA, district, and campus policies, regulations, and guidelines. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action and termination from the program.
• Instructional materials created using supplies provided by the campus should remain with the campus at the completion of the student teaching assignment unless the policy of the school district allows the student intern to keep the material.
• Student interns are never allowed to administer prescription or over-the-counter medicine to students. This is prohibited by University policy.
• When coming into contact with blood or any other potentially harmful substances, always use protective hand covering.
• Corporal punishment (even in the mildest form) is not permitted at any time. Refrain from any bodily contact with your students unless an emergency requires it.
• Providing student transportation to and from campus is prohibited. You will be held legally liable for any accidents or injuries.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF COOPERATING TEACHER WITH A STUDENT INTERN

• Serve as a teaching model and mentor.
• Meet or communicate via email with your student intern to plan and schedule lessons.
• Require lesson plans from the student in advance of the teaching assignments in addition to following all district and campus policies regarding lesson plan submission.
• Evaluate required lessons taught by your student intern by observing the taught lesson and completing the appropriate observation form.
• If possible, plan time to debrief and provide feedback to the student intern about the lessons they have taught.
• Communicate with the UTLA instructor at the first indication of problems.
• Use e-mail to communicate with your student intern, UTLA instructor, and if applicable, field supervisor.
• Contact the student intern in advance or as quickly as possible if a visit needs to be cancelled. Reschedule the missed classroom visit as soon as possible. Contact the UTLA instructor if unable to reach the student directly.
• Verify and date that you have completed the cooperating teacher training.
• Meets all administrative deadlines as established by UTLA.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AND SUPERVISING STUDENT INTERNS

Cooperating teachers will supervise UTLA students during classroom visits lasting approximately one to two class periods. The number of visits and lessons taught will vary according to the course they are enrolled in.
• UTL 101 - 10 hours of observing the CT which will include teaching 2 lessons
• UTL 202 - 20 hours of observing the CT which will include teaching 6 lessons
• UTL 640 - 45 hours of observing the CT which will include teaching 9 lessons
The student intern will contact the cooperating teacher at the beginning of the semester to schedule when observations and teaches will occur. Below are suggestions to help student interns become familiar with you, your district, campus and classroom.

- Clarify roles, responsibilities, and expectations.
- Identify and discuss concerns the student intern may have and clarify any questions about policy or regulations the student intern might have.
- Exchange all contact information in case of emergencies.
- Introduce the student intern to your class during the first observation.
- Introduce the student intern to other teachers and office personnel.
- Provide copies of textbooks and other curriculum materials available for the student intern to use.
- Provide the student intern background information on the district, campus, and students in your classroom.
- Get to know each other as individuals by discussing background information, interests, hobbies, and concerns.

During classroom visits, CTs should:

- Provide a space in the room for the student intern to observe.
- Be present in the classroom at all times.
- Assume primary responsibility for classroom management.
- Serve as a teaching model, mentor and coach for the UTLA student.
- Evaluate the UTLA student when they are teaching their required lessons using the appropriate form.
- Provide feedback after the lesson during a debrief session.

**OBSERVATION OF STUDENT INTERN**

The cooperating teacher and student intern will meet to schedule when each required lesson will be taught. These lessons will be based on the CT’s lesson plans and will be reviewed by the CT prior to the student intern teaching the lesson.

The cooperating teacher will observe the student intern and if enrolled in UTL 640, their cooperating teacher and a University field supervisor. After each observation, a post-conference will be held to discuss the student intern’s progress. Below are the required observations for student interns based on the course they are enrolled in.

- UTL 101 – Two observations by the cooperating teacher
- UTL 202 – Six observations by the cooperating teacher
- UTL 640 – Nine observations by the cooperating teacher and two observations by the field supervisor
OBSERVATION FORMS

The cooperating teacher and field supervisor will use the observation forms below to document the progress of the student intern depending on the course they are enrolled in. These forms are the official documentation for UTLA and are based on the Texas Teacher Evaluation Support System (T-TESS). The forms are available in the UTLA offices and on the website. Field supervisors will use an electronic document to observe UTL 640 students.

- Observation Form 101/202 (cooperating teacher)
- Observation Form 640 (cooperating teacher and field supervisor)

EVALUATING AND RECORDING OBSERVATIONS

Cooperating teachers will evaluate the student interns teaching their lessons using the appropriate form. CTs will rate each observable behavior and cite specific examples as supporting evidence.

When observing and evaluating the student interns a variety of methods can be used to record one’s thoughts such as scripting, checklists, T-charts, etc. CTs should identify the student’s strengths, successes, areas of concern, and how they may improve. It is very beneficial to the student intern if comments about the lesson taught are also included.

DEBRIEFING SESSION

After each lesson, the cooperating teacher (CT) should schedule a session to debrief with the student intern providing feedback about the lesson taught. Debriefing sessions should last no longer than 15 minutes. CTs will discuss the actions and comments recorded on the observation form. At the end of the debriefing session, a copy of the observation form will be provided to the student intern, UTLA instructor, and CT.

FIELD SUPERVISOR (TAC 228.2(16))

- Field supervisors observe and evaluate only UTL 640 student interns and UTL 360/670 student teachers.
- Currently certified educator, hired by the educator preparation program, who preferably has advanced credentials, to observe candidates, monitor their performance, and provide constructive feedback to improve their effectiveness as educators.
- Shall have at least three years of experience and current certification in the class in which supervision is provided.
- Shall be an accomplished educator as shown by student learning.
- May have experience as a district or campus administrator and hold a current certificate.
RESPONSIBILITIES OF FIELD SUPERVISOR - APPLIES ONLY TO UTL 640 STUDENT INTERNS

- Communicate with student interns and cooperating teachers offering guidance about the field experience.
- Communicate with the UTLA instructor on a regular basis to ensure that the student intern is making progress and address any issues that may arise.
- Observe the student intern twice and provide verbal and written feedback after each observation.
- Debrief with students.
- Keep a file of written memos, announcements, and all communication pertaining to your responsibilities.
- Meet all administrative deadlines as established by UTLA.

OBSERVATION AND LESSON VERIFICATION FORM

Student interns will document the time spent observing and teaching with the cooperating teacher using the form below. This form is the official document for UTLA and is available in the UTLA offices and on the website. At the end of the semester, the cooperating teacher will sign and verify the dates and times listed on the form. A copy of the form will be provided to the student intern, UTLA instructor, and CT.
- Observation and Lesson Verification Form

ATTENDANCE POLICY

University Attendance Policy

Regular attendance at all class meetings is expected. Instructors are responsible for implementing attendance policy and must notify students of any special attendance requirements. Special regulations of colleges and schools, required by the unique nature of their programs of study, may be enacted through the normal approval process. These special regulations may not conflict with University regulations on class attendance and absence.

Religious Holy Day

A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible, so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.

Absence for Military Service

In accordance with section 51.9111 of the Texas Education Code, a student is excused from attending classes or engaging in other required activities, including exams, if he or she is called to active military service of a reasonably brief duration. The maximum time for which the student may be excused has been defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board as “no
more than 25 percent of the total number of class meetings or the contact hour equivalent (not including the final examination period) for the specific course or courses in which the student is currently enrolled at the beginning of the period of active military service.” The student will be allowed a reasonable time after the absence to complete assignments and take exams.

INDIVIDUAL GROWTH PLAN

When a student intern is struggling, the UTLA instructor has the option to develop an Individual Growth Plan (IGP) to help improve the student intern’s skills. A student intern’s cooperating teacher or field supervisor may also identify a student intern for an IGP as long as they have a rationale and proper documentation.

The IGP identifies areas that the student intern is struggling in and needs attention. It provides a description of performance issues, target goals, deadlines, and consequences for failing to meet those goals. The UTLA instructor will meet with the student intern to review and monitor the student’s progress and discuss the results of the IGP.

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY

Student interns are entitled to the same protection of the law accorded to teachers and administrators. 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. In addition, they should not be left without a certified teacher. If these rules are violated or a student intern has been placed in an uncomfortable situation, a UTLA instructor or staff member should be contacted immediately.

The University does not provide liability insurance to student interns. Insurance coverage can be purchased by student interns and is offered by organizations such as the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE), Texas Classroom Teachers Association (TCTA), and other professional teacher organizations.

ELECTRONIC MEDIA POLICY

Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), web logs (blogs), electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing web sites, editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites. Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunication, such as landlines, cell phones, and web-based applications.

If a UTLA student chooses to use a social network site or similar media for personal purposes, they are responsible for the content of their page, including content added by the UTLA student, the UTLA student’s friends, or members of the public who can access the UTLA student’s page, and for web links on the UTLA student’s page. The UTLA student is also responsible for maintaining privacy settings appropriate to the content.

UTLA students must read and understand the district electronic media policy and receive written permission from their cooperating teacher before any exchange of electronic media occurs with
students. If permission is granted, electronic media may be used to communicate with currently enrolled students about matters within the scope of the UTLA student responsibilities. UTLA students’ use of electronic media to communicate with currently enrolled students for social reasons is prohibited.

CODE OF ETHICS POLICY

Per Texas Administrative Code (Title 19, Part 7, Chapter 247, Rule 247.2), UTLA students shall comply with the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators. UTLA students shall also comply with standards of conduct set out in this policy and with any other policies, regulations, and guidelines that impose duties, requirements, or standards attendant to their status as UTLA student interns. Violation of any policies, regulations, or guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including termination from the teacher certification preparation program.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHING AND THE STUDENT INTERN

School districts in the area have different policies when it comes to substitute teaching. UTLA policy does not permit UTLA student interns to substitute while enrolled in a UTL course. After completion of the course, student interns are free to be paid substitutes for any school district.

STIPENDS

Cooperating teachers will receive a stipend for mentoring student interns. Below is the payment scale per student.

- UTL 101 $100
- UTL 200 $200
- UTL 640 $300

To receive a stipend payment, CTs will need to complete the tasks below. The stipend will be processed at the end of the semester. Payments may take up to 4-6 weeks from the time the paperwork is received. If a CT’s paperwork is not received by the due dates listed, the UTeach-LA office will be unable to pay the stipend.

- Complete the electronic form sent by the UTeach-LA office.
- Confirm classification - Independent Contractor or a UT Employee.
- Submit payment documents to the UTeach-LA office by the dates below.
  - Fall Semester January 15
  - Spring Semester June 15

NOTE: Payments may not be approved for individuals who are non-U.S. citizens or non-U.S. Legal Permanent Residents (green card holders).