

# STUDENT INTERN HANDBOOK

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 and begin the certification process. 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.

## **COURSEWORK POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

### **Grading Policy**

All courses required by UTLA (except UTL 670) must be taken on a letter grade basis. Students who receive an incomplete grade in any UTLA sequence course (UTL 101, UTL 202, UTL 640, UTL 360/670), must complete the requirements for the course before the start of the next UTL course:

- Students who receive an "X" in one of the aforementioned courses, but plan to enroll in a subsequent UTL course the next semester must complete the course requirements and the UTLA instructor must report a final course grade by the first-class day of the following long-session semester. Any student who does not receive a grade of at least a B in the incomplete course by the first-class day will be dropped from their current semester's UTL course.
- Students who receive an "X" in one of the aforementioned courses, but do not plan to enroll in subsequent UTL courses the next semester, are required to adhere to University policy.

## Performance Standards Policy

UTLA students who earn a letter grade of “B-” or below in UTL 101, UTL 202, and UTL 640 are automatically suspended from the program and need to re-apply to continue:

- The *Performance Standards Committee* chair will notify students within seven (7) calendar days of the grade posting.
- Re-application consists of a reflective essay that examines performance in UTLA and why the student should be allowed to continue. Essay guidelines and instructions will be provided in the notification email.
- The *Performance Standards Committee* and UTLA director will conduct a review of the student’s UTLA course records and reflective essay before rendering a decision regarding re-admission to the program.
- Deadline for essay submission is seven (7) calendar days before the first-class day for fall and spring semesters. The UTLA advisor will notify students of the committee’s decision before the beginning of each subsequent long semester.

**NOTE:** Going through this appeals process does not guarantee approval for continuation in the program. Students who do not re-apply will be withdrawn from the program.

## Two-Attempt Policy

No student may attempt any UTLA course (UTL 101, UTL 202, UTL 640, UTL 360/670) more than twice. *Other academic and coursework policies and guidelines can be found on the UTLA website.*

## LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STANDARDS

Clear, effective communication skills with students, parents, or colleagues are necessary for teacher success. Below is the procedure for identifying students who enter the UTLA program who have difficulty with the spoken or written language.

- During UTL 101, students will be given a written evaluation to be analyzed and submitted to the *Language Support Review Committee* if support is needed.
- Any UTLA instructor, cooperating teacher, field supervisor, or advisor working with a UTLA student may identify the student for evaluation. A student may also request an advisor to refer him/her for evaluation (self-referral).
- Post-Bac students with a degree from a foreign university are required to take the TOEFL IBT exam. The minimum required score is 79 overall and minimum scores for writing and speaking sections are 27.
- The initial referral and documentation is submitted to the *Language Support Review Committee* chairperson. If further information is needed, the committee may schedule an interview with the student.
- The committee determines if support is needed, and if so, the nature of that support. If support is needed, the committee develops a *Language Support Plan* for the student. Specific goals and target dates are detailed in the plan.

- The student's instructor will monitor progress throughout the semester and submit work samples to the *Language Support Review Committee* for review. Further recommendations for support may result from that review.

## **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.

## **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)

## **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.

## **APPLYING FOR CERTIFICATION**

Students may begin the certification process during the UTL 640 semester and complete it during their student teaching semester (UTL 360 & UTL 670).

The registration and application process is provided in detail on the UTeach-LA website along with fingerprinting and submitting fees.

If accommodations for testing need to be provided, students will complete an accommodation form for each test that they will take. The form is located on the Texas Educator Certification Examination Program website and needs to be submitted three weeks prior to the testing date for approval.

Program graduates have a three-year time frame after program completion and/or graduation in which to officially apply for certification. If you do not apply within this three-year timeframe you will be required go through an appeals process, which may involve retaking certification exams or completing additional coursework, before being eligible for certification.

Additional information about certification procedures, including adding new levels or fields of certification by exam after receiving initial certification, is available on the UTLA and SBEC websites.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

During the student teaching semester, most UTLA students will be registered for nine (9) hours of upper-division UTLA coursework (UTL 360/670). UTLA students are not allowed to take coursework other than UTL 360/670 during the final student-teaching semester without approval from their UTLA instructor or Advisor.

Financial aid will be proportionally adjusted based on the cost of tuition and actual hours enrolled. Students should contact Student Financial Services if they need more information on how this will affect them. For students who receive financial aid, we recommend that they meet with their Financial Aid Counselor at least one full semester before Student Teaching to plan accordingly.

**Tuition Rebate** (*for undergraduate students only*) - UTLA undergraduates may be eligible for a tuition rebate at graduation if they have attempted no more than eleven (11) semester hours beyond the minimum number of hours required for the degree. Current policy states, "If the student earned a bachelor's degree and a Texas teaching certificate concurrently, any

required teacher education courses are not counted as hours attempted if they exceed the number of hours of free electives allowed in the bachelor's degree program." For more information, visit the College of Liberal Arts Tuition Rebate webpage.

## **PROGRAM SCHOLARSHIPS**

Scholarship are available to UTeach-Liberal Arts students. Please contact the UTeach-Liberal Arts Program staff for more details.

In order to receive any of the following scholarships you must be an active student of UTeach-Liberal Arts. Please see individual scholarship details for additional eligibility requirements.

In the event you are no longer a student of UTeach-Liberal Arts when receiving a scholarship/award or do not attend the conference/study abroad program, the full scholarship/award must be reimbursed. Students will be financially responsible for any late, change, or cancellation fees.

**UTeach-Liberal Arts Study Abroad Scholarship** (*for all UTeach-LA students*) Scholarships based on need are available to help defray the cost of study abroad travel. To be eligible, students must complete UTL 101. Apply online through the [College of Liberal Arts website](#). Application deadlines are March 1 and November 1.

**UTeach-Liberal Arts Conference Scholarship** (*for all UTeach-LA students*) This scholarship is awarded to UTeach-Liberal Arts students to cover the cost of registration for professional conferences. To be eligible students must be currently enrolled in or have completed UTL 202. Applications should be submitted to UTeach-Liberal Arts 45 days prior to the conference date. The application is available on the UTeach-LA website.

**Marilyn White APSI Scholarship** (*for UTeach-LA PDS students*) The Marilyn White Scholarship is awarded to UTeach-Liberal Arts students who wish to attend Advanced Placement Summer Institute (APSI) training offered through the College Board. To be eligible, students must complete UTL 640 or UTL 360/670 in the spring semester prior to the summer institute. Please see the UTeach-Liberal Arts Office Manager for more details.

**Friends of UTeach-Liberal Arts Student Teacher Scholarship** (*for UTeach-LA students entering student teaching semester*) Scholarships **based on need** are available to help defray costs during the student teaching semester. Apply online through the College of Liberal Arts scholarships website. Application deadlines are March 1 and November 1.

**Patricia Sandlin Pennington UTeach-Liberal Arts Scholarship** (*for UTeach-LA PDS students*) This is a **need and merit-based** scholarship to help defray costs, such as certification, expenses during student teaching, etc. **GPA of at least 3.25**. If you have already received a "Friends of UTeach-Liberal Arts Student Teacher Scholarship" you are not eligible for

this scholarship. Apply online through the College of Liberal Arts scholarships website. Application deadlines are March 1 and November 1.

**AISD Future Teacher Scholarship** *(for UTeach-LA students seeking LOTE certification)*

The AISD Future Teacher Scholarship is awarded to students seeking certification in critical needs areas. In UTeach-Liberal Arts, only students in Languages Other Than English fall into this category. LOTE students are eligible to receive the scholarship during the final four semesters before certification. They must, however, apply for the scholarship each semester for which they are seeking aid.

**English Oxford Program Fee Reduction** *(for UTeach-LA students seeking certification in English)*

The Department of English at The University of Texas at Austin has sponsored a summer program in Oxford since 1984. The Oxford Summer Program gathers students to enjoy life and literature at Oxford University, the oldest English-speaking University in the world. UTeach-LA students are eligible to apply for a program fee reduction. For more information visit the English Oxford Program website.

**Jefferson Junior Fellows Program** *(for all UTeach-LA students)* The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Study of Core Texts and Ideas offers a competitive scholarship of \$300 per semester to students enrolled in a Core Texts and Ideas course. For more information, please see the Junior Fellows section of the Jefferson Center website.