



# Teacher Education Field Experience Policies

## Education Academic Services – Field Experience Office

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Students and staff are responsible for knowing and complying with the following policies. Many professional programs have their own separate handbooks and specific policies; students are also responsible for those policies and procedures.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison is committed to providing equal opportunity and equal access and to complying with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations and University of Wisconsin System and university non-discrimination policies and procedures. Information, including how to file a complaint alleging discrimination, can be found at the Office for Equity and Diversity (OED) Web site: [www.oed.wisc.edu](http://www.oed.wisc.edu).

*Student* in this document refers to a UW-Madison student, while *pupil* refers to a PK-12 student. Although the terms *field experience sites*, *settings*, or *placements* usually refer to schools, they may in some cases refer to non-school sites. The word *School*, when capitalized, always refers to the UW-Madison School of Education.

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## Field Experience Settings

Under Wisconsin State regulations, all teacher education students are required to complete at least one pre-student teaching practicum and at least one full semester of student teaching. Most programs at UW-Madison require students to complete additional field experiences.

### Practicum

The pre-student teaching practicum gives students first-hand knowledge of the classroom environment and the teacher's role. For many students, the practicum is the initial encounter with the real world of teaching. Practicum students do not assume the degree of classroom responsibility they do during student teaching. Under the supervision of an experienced teacher, practicum students observe classroom activities, assist the teacher with day-to-day classroom management tasks, interact one-to-one with students, and instruct small groups. In some programs practicum students will lead activities and assume responsibility for whole class instruction. The cooperating teacher and university supervisor use the practicum to assess the student's readiness for the student teaching experience. For this reason, active student engagement in the practicum experience is necessary and expected.

### Student Teaching

Student teaching is a full-time, school district semester assignment that places a university student under the guidance of an experienced, qualified cooperating teacher. The student teaching experience follows the calendar of the local school district. A fall semester assignment will typically begin the latter part of August

and end the latter part of January. A spring semester assignment will begin the latter part of January and end mid-June. Holiday breaks follow the school district calendar.

After an orientation period, the student teacher assumes gradually increasing responsibility for planning, instruction, and overall classroom management. Student teachers follow the daily schedule of the cooperating teacher and the building policies of the school, and function as regular staff members in arrival and departure times and attendance at school events. *Daily attendance at school, barring emergencies, is required.*

### **Alternative Placement Options**

Alternative placement options include *international student teaching*, placements with the *Institute for Urban Education*, and *teacher internships* under the auspices of the Wisconsin Improvement Program:

- Students seeking opportunities to enrich their preparation for teaching through an *international student teaching experience* should contact International Academic Programs ([www.studyabroad.wisc.edu](http://www.studyabroad.wisc.edu)) for more information. Not all teacher education programs participate in these experiences.
- The UW-System Institute for Urban Education (<http://iue.uwsa.edu>) helps pre-service teachers pursue their desire to become urban educators and to provide professional development opportunities for currently practicing teachers. Not all teacher education programs participate in the Institute. Students should consult with their program coordinator for more information.
- The *teacher internship* is a licensed, full-semester assignment that replaces the student teaching experience. Interns are under contract with a school district and paid a modest salary. Internships are rarely available; students are notified by the program coordinator when they are offered by a district and are available to our students.

### **Special Placements**

The School of Education is committed to placing its students in classrooms with teachers we know, in schools led by principals we know. Thus, student teaching placements are made within the University of Wisconsin–Madison service area. In general the service area is 50 miles from Madison, but individual programs may (and do) reduce the size of their service area. Occasionally, students with extenuating circumstances are allowed *special placements* beyond this area. “Extenuating circumstances” have included spousal/partner relocation, family emergency, or a highly specialized placement. *All special placements must be approved by the student’s program coordinator and Associate Dean Jeffrey Hamm.* Students permitted special placements are usually liable for the cost of supervision (at least \$500). Special placements are not permitted due to financial need or to enhance employment opportunities.

### **Field Placement Roles and Rules**

#### **School of Education Field Experience Office Staff**

School of Education Field Experience staff members include *Nancy Kuehn*, Field Experience Coordinator, who is the primary contact between campus program coordinators and PK-12 school and district staff. Nancy is usually the first point of contact when field experience questions or concerns surface. *Ricki Benton* is the support staff for teacher education field experience activities in the School of Education. With decades of experience, she is primary contact for many field experience administrative activities, including formal placement lists and teacher payments. *Associate Dean Jeffrey Hamm* has overall responsibility for field placement policies, procedures, and activities. University and PK-12 school and district staff may consult with Dean Hamm regarding particularly challenging issues or policy questions related to field experiences.

#### **Role of Program Coordinator**

Teacher education program faculty and staff (referred to as “program coordinators”) have primary and ultimate responsibility for the placement and evaluation of teacher education students. PK-12 school personnel are not authorized to make decisions or take actions around student placements. Concerns and questions about the field experience should always be directed to the program coordinator.

### **Cooperating Teacher Qualifications for Student Teaching Placements**

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction requires that cooperating teachers who work with student teachers (1) hold a Wisconsin license and have volunteered for assignment as a cooperating teacher or practicum supervisor; (2) have at least 3 years of teaching experience with at least one year of teaching experience in the school or school system of current employment or have at least 3 years of pupil service or administrator experience with one year in the school or school system of current employment; and (3) have completed training in both the supervision of clinical students and in the applicable standards. New cooperating teachers must attend a seminar or workshop, or complete a formal course in supervision of student teachers. Teacher qualification status is monitored and recorded officially by field experience staff.

### **Teacher and Administrator Placement Approval**

Students are placed in schools and classrooms only with the express permission of the cooperating teacher and designated administrator (usually the principal). A regular process for administrator approval of prospective cooperating teachers is conducted at least once a year. Tentative placements made with a teacher who does not have official administrator approval will not be formalized until that approval is obtained by field experience staff. Administrators may reject a student placement based on the results of a student's criminal background check.

### **Students Arranging Field Placements**

Under no circumstances should a student (or a cooperating teacher) attempt to arrange a specific field placement. Students often have the opportunity to make a special request for a particular teacher or school location, but individual requests will not necessarily be honored. Placement requests based on permitting students to live at home or on potential future employment will not be considered.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Conflict of interest principles forbid the placement of students with family members, friends, or former teachers. Such placements jeopardize the objective decision-making and evaluation that are at the core of effective field experiences. Program coordinators have the prerogative to extend the types of unacceptable placements due to family or personal connections.

### **Transportation and Housing**

Students are responsible for transportation to and from field placements. Students should be aware that a car may be necessary for some field placements (especially student teaching) depending on the subject and on site availability. Housing is also the responsibility of students.

### **Documentation of Placements**

Timely and accurate documentation of finalized student field placements is critical. Because teacher compensation and other perquisites are based on final placement lists, inaccurate lists can result in teachers not being compensated. Some states require that applicants or institutions provide detailed school and grade-level field placement information for both practicum and student teaching to grant teaching licenses. For these and other reasons, the School's Field Experience Office maintains historical documentation of all student field placements. Program coordinators are ultimately responsible for providing complete and accurate placement data to field experience staff.

### **Placement Changes**

Occasionally a mismatch between student and teacher occurs, and an alternative placement may be needed after the semester has begun. All consequences of such changes should be considered carefully. A placement change need not be looked upon as a failure by those involved. Changes in student teaching placements are the responsibility of the program coordinator, but should usually be made with the participation of all individuals involved. Placement changes must be communicated to field experience staff to ensure maintenance of accurate placement information.

## **Student Teaching Policies and Procedures**

### **Student Teaching Applications**

Students in the following programs must complete a student teaching application prior to the semester the student intends to student teach: Communicative Disorders; Library and Information Studies; Music Education; Physical Education; Special Education. Find online [student teaching applications](#) at the School of Education website.

### **Tuberculin Skin Test or Chest X-ray**

Before being placed for student teaching, all students are required by the Wisconsin Department of Public Health to produce evidence that they are free of tuberculosis. Students must provide the Field Experience Office with certification of a negative TB examination before beginning student teaching; students without negative TB test results will not be placed. In general, students will be contacted by Field Experience Office staff with detailed information when TB tests are needed.

Some local school districts require a current (within 90 days of placement) TB test prior to both practicum and student teaching placements. These school districts have access to student and teacher placement information, and will contact students directly before the start of their placements regarding test result submission. For this reason, it is imperative that the Field Experience Office receive final placement information within established timelines.

### **Required Face-to-Face Meeting for Student Teaching Placements**

The interview allows the student and teacher to discuss their respective expectations for the experience and to determine whether the tentative assignment is an appropriate one. It is also an opportunity for the student to become acquainted with the prospective teacher's classroom and school. A student teaching assignment is tentative until the student and the cooperating teacher have met and program faculty/staff officially confirm the placement.

### **Student Teacher Schedule**

The student teacher is expected to follow the local school calendar (including vacation dates) and the building policies of the cooperating school. The student is to function as a regular staff member in terms of arrival and departure times and attendance at school functions such as team meetings, faculty meetings, in-service sessions, and parent-teacher conferences.

### **Student Teacher Workload**

The student teaching experience is a full-time commitment for the entire school district semester. The student teacher's experience in the school may include direct teaching responsibilities, small and large group instruction, planning and conference time with the cooperating teacher, and observation experiences. The actual number of classes or teaching duties assigned to student teachers varies across programs and is dependent on such factors as the student's readiness to assume increased responsibility, the needs of the pupils, the number of different preparations, etc. As a general rule, after a suitable orientation and participation period, the student teacher will be expected to assume primary responsibility for several concurrent weeks of instruction or up to four classes per day in the major subject area.

A satisfactory workload for the student teacher should be cooperatively arranged and agreed upon by the university supervisor, the cooperating teacher, and the student teacher. Since student teachers may be considered "learners" at this stage of their preparation, they normally do not carry as heavy a teaching load as a regular teacher. As a beginning teacher, it is important that some regular time be set aside in the student's daily and weekly schedule for planning, evaluating, reflecting, and conferencing with the cooperating teacher.

### **Leaving Student Teachers Alone in the Classroom**

As the semester progresses and the student teacher assumes primary responsibility for designated classes or portions of classes, the student will benefit from the cooperating teacher's occasional absence from the classroom. The actual amount of time the student teacher is left alone in the room depends on what the

cooperating teacher and student teacher are comfortable with and what the student is able to handle. The aim is for all student teachers to have some experience alone in the classroom. This issue should be discussed by the student, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor at some point during the semester. Leaving the student teacher alone in the classroom occasionally during the semester is a recommended practice and should always be considered in light of individual situations and local school policies.

### **Student Teachers as Substitute Teachers**

Student teachers are not licensed and their legal authority in the classroom is limited. Therefore, student teachers may not serve as substitute teachers. Nor may student teachers take playground or lunch room duties normally handled by licensed teachers. This is not only a School of Education policy, but one supported by all other teacher education institutions and by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. It is intended to protect the cooperating school system and its students as well as the student teachers.

An intern is licensed and, therefore, may serve as a substitute teacher, but only for a cooperating team teacher for a limited period of time. Under no circumstances should an intern serve as a substitute teacher for other teachers in the school system. The intern should, except in the case of an emergency, receive at least one day's notification of the responsibility of serving as a temporary substitute teacher.

### **Leaving Student Teaching Early for Employment**

It is School of Education policy not to permit students to leave student teaching early to begin employment. Students may consult with Associate Dean Jeffrey Hamm for more information.

## **Legal, Health, and Safety Issues**

### **Professional Liability Coverage for Students**

All University of Wisconsin System education students working in the schools as part of their professional preparation are protected by a personal injury and property damage liability policy. In the event that liability is the responsibility of the student teacher or intern, or the responsibility of the teacher preparation institution, professional liability coverage is provided by sections 165.25(6) and 895.46(1) of Chapter 81 of the State of Wisconsin Statutes. The UW-Madison Risk Management Office can provide more detailed information about this coverage. In addition, students should never transport PK-12 pupils in a personal vehicle.

### **Student Liability for Loss or Repair of School Equipment**

Students may be responsible for the security of school district-owned materials and equipment during their field experiences. Students are strongly encouraged to determine if their renter's or homeowner's insurance policy will cover damage, loss, or theft of items belonging to the PK-12 school, but which the student uses during field experiences. These items may include electronic and audiovisual equipment, software, books, and videos. Student liability for the security of these items may extend any time the student has responsibility for these items. Students who do not have sufficient insurance coverage for these items will be held personally liable. Students are encouraged to investigate the insurance benefits of membership in education associations.

### **Criminal Background Checks**

Students admitted to UW-Madison School of Education programs that require field placements (e.g., practicum, student teaching, or clinical field experience) must have a criminal background check run at admission. These investigations are mandated by state statute for some programs and sites and have been requested by other sites. Costs for these checks will be borne by students; detailed information will be provided at program admission. Students must have a completed criminal background check on file before the admission process is finalized and they are placed in the field.

Some school districts require their own separate criminal background check before a placement is finalized. These school districts have access to student and teacher placement information, and, if necessary, will contact students directly before the start of their placements regarding the background check. Costs for these additional checks are borne by the school district. These additional district background checks make it imperative that the Field Experience Office receive final placement information within established timelines.

School administrators have the authority to determine the appropriateness of a student placement and may choose not to permit a placement based on a student's background check results. Students with questions about criminal background checks and their results should consult field experience staff.

### **Emergency Procedures in Case of University Student Illness or Accident**

Students should make sure that current emergency contact information is entered into the UW-Madison student records system in case they become ill or is injured. Students should also complete emergency information forms at their field site and follow the building/district policy governing the reporting of accident or illness emergencies. UW-Madison staff can provide information for use by the school principal and cooperating teacher in notifying the parent or guardian and in securing medical attention for the student.

### **Absences from Placements**

All students should follow their program's notification procedure when illness or an emergency necessitates an absence; students should consult with their supervisors about protocols. This normally would include informing the university supervisor and cooperating teacher of the absence. Time lost due to significant absences may require extension of the field assignment into another semester.

### **School District Policies**

Students should become informed about individual school district policies governing issues such as sexual and other forms of harassment; use of physical force; confidentiality; mandatory reporting; standards of conduct for electronic media and communication; and drug-free environments. Students are expected to act according to local school district regulations for pupils and professionals, and should obtain a copy of the district's regulations at the beginning of the student teaching placement.

### **Communicable Diseases, Blood-Borne Pathogens, and First Aid Treatment**

Students should learn and follow district policies regarding communicable diseases, accidents, and first aid, especially as it relates to blood-borne pathogens. Students should take the initiative to find out what procedures are followed and where first aid materials are kept at the school site. In the event of an accident, the UW-Madison student should take the role of secondary care provider. Students should not give medication of any kind—even cough drops or aspirin—to pupils. Students may want to consider getting immunized for Hepatitis B.

### **Confidentiality**

UW-Madison students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with state and federal confidentiality laws, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as they relate to PK-12 pupil records. Students should consult with their cooperating teacher, principal, or program coordinator with questions or concerns.

UW-Madison faculty and staff are also responsible for protecting the privacy of teacher education students' educational records and shall not disclose personally identifiable information about a student or permit inspection of the student's records without his/her written consent unless such action is allowed under FERPA. Student academic information can only be shared on a "need-to-know" basis, and this should be a consideration in sharing student information with school district or other field staff. More information regarding FERPA and UW-Madison student records is available online at <http://registrar.wisc.edu/ferpa>.

### **Information Technology/Social Media Use**

The rapid growth of information technologies, including social media, has made communication faster and easier than ever before. These same technologies raise questions and concerns regarding communication behaviors while using these tools. UW-Madison students are expected to use information technology in a responsible manner that reflects good judgment. Most school districts have established policies and procedures for the use of information technology, along with rules specifically governing staff use. Students should review these policies and procedures and consult with their cooperating teacher and principal if they have questions.



UW-Madison students should refrain specifically from the following: (1) identifying PK-12 pupils in a public online presence; (2) “friending” students or families through social media; (3) posting negative comments about school or district staff, School of Education program faculty/staff, families, peers, or any other members of the school or campus community.

Students should also be aware that school and community members may access their personal social media sites. Students’ role in the classroom and job opportunities have been compromised when others have viewed what they have deemed to be inappropriate materials posted to such sites. Students are strongly encouraged to review their own social network sites with this in mind.

### **Collection and Use of Artifacts for Student Portfolios**

Over the course of their programs, School of Education students create and collect material for their portfolios that may include images, video, audio, student work, and any writing, such as journals, that refer to their PK-12 pupils. The School has developed special agreements with school districts to allow students to collect and use authentic artifacts under specific permissions and conditions of confidentiality, authenticity, and restricted access. For additional information contact EPCS at 608-246-2718 or [epcs-online@education.wisc.edu](mailto:epcs-online@education.wisc.edu).

**Confidentiality.** Confidentiality restrictions include the following:

- Pupils’ full names should never be used in portfolios. Student names must be removed from anything submitted to a portfolio and pseudonyms should be used in place of real names.
- Portfolio materials may be stored only in the password-protected portfolio system and on a personal flash drive. Flash drives are not to be loaned to friends or offered as collateral.
- Images, video, and audio collected as a part of practicum or student teaching may be used only in the UW-Madison password-protected portfolio space as per agreement with schools.
- Nothing collected for portfolios should be in any publicly available space, such as My WebSpace, Facebook, Yahoo Images, Google docs, or email. Images should not be blurred, as this detracts from the fidelity of the image.
- Portfolio confidentiality policies should not be confused with research for publication. Research has more restrictive standards since results are made available to the public, while portfolio access is password protected. For instance, a school's name may not be used in research but may be in a portfolio on the School’s password-protected site.

**Permissions.** Students must have permissions for collecting and using an artifact that identifies a student, such as a picture, video or student work. (This applies equally to paper portfolios.) Permission is covered either by having parents sign a special form or by special arrangements between the UW-Madison School of Education and the district. Permission forms are available at On-Line Help as needed and should be kept on file with personal records. Students should review the permission agreement to understand details. Most important, students should be sensitive to pupils and others in collecting artifacts. Direct questions to an instructor/supervisor and to staff at Education Portfolios and Career Services (EPCS).

**Authenticity.** All portfolio work, including artifacts and entry slips, must be the student’s own work or the author must be identified when work is created by someone else (e.g., lesson plans). Students may ask for help with the authoring process, but must remember that this should constitute their original work.

**Access and security.** To maintain the integrity of the system, students are required to keep their passwords to themselves. University instructors access portfolios through the secure portfolio system. When seeking a job, students will be able to sign up for a Job Search Account that connects their portfolio to the secure employer distribution system.

### **Safe Environment**

Students need to help maintain a safe environment for both the pupils and themselves. Harassment of any sort is unacceptable, whether between pupils, between the student and the pupils, or between cooperating personnel and the student. In addition, students need to protect against unwarranted accusations by using good judgment in one-on-one interaction with the pupils. Discussion of liability issues should occur early in the field placement. Students should never transport PK-12 pupils in a personal vehicle.



## **Students and Staff Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect**

Wisconsin state law specifies that teachers, social workers, psychologists, school administrators, and other professionals are *mandatory reporters* of child abuse or neglect. By law, these professionals must report to law enforcement or child protective services if there is reasonable cause to believe that abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur.

When School of Education students participate in field work, they usually do so under the day-to-day supervision of professionals who are mandatory reporters. As part of their professional preparation, we expect our students to be educated about issues related to abuse, neglect, reasonable cause, and mandatory reporting.

*UW-Madison students are not mandatory reporters of child abuse or neglect.* However, if, during the course of field work, a student has reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur, School of Education policy requires the student to report immediately to her/his cooperating teacher or other cooperating professional at the field site. The professional will take responsibility for evaluating the case and reporting if necessary.

If the incident or threat of child abuse or neglect involves an allegation against the cooperating teacher/cooperating professional, the student must report this immediately to the UW-Madison field work supervisor (usually faculty, staff, or TA).

Under Governor's Executive Order #54 (EO 54), *all UW-Madison employees are also mandatory reporters.* If someone reports possible child abuse or neglect to a UW-Madison employee, that employee must comply with EO 54 by reporting to the local police or child protective services. EO 54 does permit collecting additional information that is readily available or verifying that the information learned meets the criteria for reporting, as long as this is done promptly.

If a School of Education student reports possible child abuse or neglect to a UW-Madison employee, the employee should confer as soon as possible with the student's cooperating teacher/cooperating professional (unless the cooperating professional is the abuser). It is also considered standard School of Education practice for the employee who receives the student's report to confer separately with the school principal, agency director, or other appropriate administrator.

The UW-Madison employee to whom the incident was reported should document what was observed or told, what action was taken, who was consulted, and when the events occurred. Most important, the employee should determine whether a report was made to child protective services or law enforcement. *If a report was made to authorities by institution staff, the UW-Madison employee need not also report.*

If a report was not made, or if it cannot be confirmed that a report was made, or if the allegation is against the cooperating teacher or other cooperating professional, and the UW-Madison employee has reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur, *the employee should, without delay, report to the police or child protective services.* In this case, simply reporting to the cooperating teacher/cooperating professional or to the field site administrator does not discharge the employee's legal obligation under EO 54 to report to authorities.

**Reporting child abuse or neglect.** The UW-Madison employee should contact the county social/human services department, sheriff, local police department, or university police department immediately—by telephone or in person. Language interpretation services are available through the UW-Madison Police Department, the Madison Police Department, and Dane County Child Protective Services.

- Emergency Phone Number: 9-1-1
- Non-Emergency Phone Numbers:
  - UW-Madison Police Department: 608/264-COPS or 608/264-2677
  - Madison Police Department: 608/266-4275
  - Dane County Child Protective Services: 608/261-KIDS or 608/261-5437
  - Wisconsin Telecommunications Relay Systems (WTRS): Dial 7-1-1 from any phone in Wisconsin.

**Additional campus reporting expectations.** If the incident or threat of child abuse or neglect involves an allegation against a University employee or agent (e.g., student, volunteer, etc.) or the suspected child abuse or neglect occurred on the UW-Madison campus or during a UW-Madison sponsored activity, in

addition to notifying child protective services or law enforcement, the reporter should also notify one of the following entities:

- UW-Madison Police Department: 608/264-COPS or 608/264-2677 (if not notified previously)
- Office for Equity and Diversity: 608/263-2378, WTRS: 7-1-1 (language interpretation services are available)

**Educational materials and training.** The campus offers materials and activities to educate UW-Madison employees about their reporting obligations. An electronic copy of a brochure and a poster on the topic are available at [www.oed.wisc.edu/childabuse/](http://www.oed.wisc.edu/childabuse/). Mandated reporter online training has been created and posted; find the link at [www.oed.wisc.edu/childabuse/](http://www.oed.wisc.edu/childabuse/). Face-to-face group training sessions are available; contact the Office of Equity and Diversity, 608/263-2378.

Students and staff should also feel free to consult with Associate Dean Jeffrey Hamm.

### **Search and Seizure**

Searches at schools may occur in response to drug use or violence. A student teacher who suspects a pupil is in possession of something illegal should report it to the cooperating teacher immediately. Students should never conduct a search of a pupil's body, clothing, or possessions.

### **Temporary Work Stoppage Policy for Field Experience Students**

When a work stoppage occurs in a district in which students have been assigned for field experiences, it is the policy of the School of Education that the students be declared non-participants in the job action. As non-participants, students shall not report to their placement schools during a job action, even if requested to do so by cooperating teachers, principals, or field experience supervisors. Students should not be penalized in any way for being a non-participant.

If students choose to take action (e.g., cross a picket line, participate in a picket line, sign a petition), they are making that choice on their own volition. Students may not take the place of a certified staff member at any time in any educational setting, including classrooms, playgrounds, lunch rooms, etc.

Differing requirements across programs may result in extending the field experience or making up missed hours in other ways so that class requirements can be met. As a result, students should check with program faculty about specific requirements related to absences associated with job actions.

## **Evaluation of Student Performance and Termination of Placements**

### **Responsibility for Evaluation**

The faculty program coordinator has responsibility for the final evaluation of the student, although this is usually determined through close consultation with the university supervisor and cooperating teacher.

### **Mandatory Supervisory Visits**

Wisconsin State regulations require at least two one-hour observation visits throughout the semester for practicum placements and at least four one-hour observation visits throughout the semester for student teaching. Two of these four student teaching observations must be followed by a three-way conference involving the “triad”—student teacher, cooperating teacher, and university supervisor. Written supervisor evaluations of each observation must be completed and included in the student's permanent file. These requirements should be considered minimum expectations. The number of university supervisor visits may vary according to student teacher need and program expectations. It is recommended that the cooperating teacher participate in as many of the post-observation conferences as time will allow.

### **Student Performance Problems**

It is critical that the cooperating teacher and supervisor share with each other any concerns about student performance as early in the placement as possible. If the cooperating teacher does not know who the university supervisor is, or how to reach her or him, the teacher should contact the faculty member who serves as program coordinator. Teachers or administrators are encouraged to call the School of Education Field

Experience Office at 608-262-4918 for program coordinator names and contact information. Supervisors should always communicate student performance problems or concerns to the appropriate program faculty as early as possible. Associate Dean Jeffrey Hamm is available for consultation, and should always be contacted in cases where termination of a student's field experience is being considered.

### **Considerations regarding Performance Evaluation**

Students enter clinical field placements near the end of academic programs in which they have made substantial investments of time and money; therefore, decisions that will significantly lengthen a program or result in dismissal from a program must be carefully considered. Students must be informed at the beginning of and throughout the experience what standards of performance are expected and how they will be evaluated. Problems or concerns must be carefully documented, usually by the supervisor, but sometimes by the cooperating teacher as well. Field placements are learning experiences for students and in most cases the students should have the opportunity to learn from their mistakes.

A decision not to recommend a student for certification or to remove the student from a placement must be accompanied by a written report that details the reasons for the decision. Such decisions are always made in consultation with Associate Dean Jeffrey Hamm. Students have access to the School of Education grievance policy and decisions may be reviewed by the School's grievance committee and ultimately a court of law. The grievance panel making a recommendation to the Dean of the School will look closely to make sure that students who received less than satisfactory grades were informed of the performance expectations and given opportunities to improve their performance.

### **Grievance Policy**

Students and staff can find the official School of Education *Grievance Policy and Procedures* at the following website: [http://pubs.wisc.edu/ug/education\\_policy.htm#grievancepolicy](http://pubs.wisc.edu/ug/education_policy.htm#grievancepolicy).

### **Withdrawal from Field Experiences**

Students who withdraw or receive an unsatisfactory grade (including a "D") from a field experience may not repeat such experiences without approval from the program coordinator and Associate Dean Jeffrey Hamm. Students withdrawing from or receiving an unsatisfactory grade in field experiences in one major or program may not enroll in another major or program without written permission from the program coordinator and after consultation with Associate Dean Hamm. Permission to repeat field experiences is not automatically granted.

A confirmed field placement is considered an informal contractual agreement between the University and the school in which the student is located. Under this agreement, University faculty, cooperating teachers, and students assume certain responsibilities and obligations to one another. A student's withdrawal from an assignment is considered to be an exception to the agreement and should occur only under the most unusual circumstances. Because of the consequences that withdrawal from a confirmed assignment may have on a student's future progress in the teaching certification program, a student who contemplates such action is strongly urged to consult with the program coordinator and Associate Dean Hamm to fully understand the implications of such action and the options available.