

The Mentor Teacher

Excerpted from page 18 of Internship Handbook

A mentor teacher is a teaching professional who meets the requirements as established by the Newberry College Department of Education. The mentor teacher serves as a role model, instructor, and coach for the clinical experience intern.

The public school mentor teacher must be certified in the field in which the intern is seeking certification, must agree to serve as mentor teacher, must have a minimum of three prior years of teaching experience, and should be recognized by supervisors and peers as a professional teacher with the ability to mentor. It is expected that all mentor teachers will be officially trained in the use of the ADEPT instrument. Newberry College offers free ADEPT Training two times per year in August and January.

The mentor teacher welcomes a qualified clinical experience intern into his/her classroom for one academic semester. The mentor teacher, in coordination with the Newberry College supervisor, is responsible for leading the intern through progressively challenging activities and structuring the activities so that the intern applies theory, pedagogical concepts, and content knowledge while developing practical professional skills.

The role of the mentor teacher is the most critical factor relating to the success of the clinical experience intern. Research indicates that the mentor teacher has the greatest and longest lasting influence on not only the clinical experience, but also continued growth during the internship and as a novice teacher long after the internship has ended.

Mentoring has many benefits:

- Mentoring enhances the mentor's own professional development.
- Mentoring lowers pupil-teacher ratio and increases one-on-one work with individual students.
- Mentoring presents an opportunity to learn from another professional and to team teach with that professional.

Qualifications

In order to serve as a mentor teacher, a teacher must:

- Be approved by the principal and district staff.
- Model excellence in teaching.
- Exhibit high expectations for students.
- Demonstrate strong skills in planning, oral/written communications, collaborative decision making, judgment, and human relations.
- Possess strong instructional skills and current content knowledge.
- Display strong skills in collaborating with other teachers and parents.

- Have attained continuing contract status (3 years).
- Commit to the time and effort needed to serve as a mentor.
- Be ADEPT trained.
- Be trained in or be willing to participate in mentor training.

Guidelines

Among the many responsibilities of mentorship, the mentor teacher:

- Familiarizes the intern with school policies.
- Orients the intern to the school and classroom.
- Is available to the intern, Coordinator of Clinical Experiences, and the college supervisor at the beginning of the clinical experience to review the procedures and expectations for the experience.
- Is available to the intern for consultation before, during, and after the school day.
- Provides the appropriate school planning format and plans with the intern.
- Conducts a minimum of four or eight (depending on the setting) formal classroom observations of the intern using the Newberry College Observation Record.
- Conducts a feedback conference following each observation to discuss strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions.
- Reviews the intern's lesson plans and provides feedback both before and after the intern teaches a lesson.
- Provides continuous evaluative feedback regarding effectiveness in preparing lessons, delivering instruction, managing the classroom, providing meaningful feedback to students, and demonstrating professional dispositions. The mentor teacher encourages reflection and self-analysis on the part of the intern. In addition, the mentor teacher must be open and honest about areas needing improvement, and provide assistance as appropriate.
- Participates in the evaluation of the intern's performance at midterm and/or at the conclusion of the clinical experience period, in collaboration with the college supervisor, using the Newberry College Intern Evaluation Form.
- Participates in the mid-term and/or final evaluation with the college supervisor and the intern to review the evaluation and provide suggestions.
- Communicates any areas of concern with the college supervisor as soon as possible.
- Assists the intern in developing skills in:
 - a. Providing for the needs of students and creating an atmosphere conducive to learning.
 - b. Awareness and use of a variety of teaching techniques, procedures, and instructional materials.

- c. Classroom management techniques and the effective use of time.
- d. Assessment.
- e. Analyzing student data.
- f. Record keeping and record writing.
- g. Professionalism, by serving as a model professional teacher, and stimulating interest in professional organizations and literature.