Handbook for Teacher Certification Academic and Professional Policies

2024-2025

University of Houston-Downtown

Department of Urban Education

A Center for the Professional Development of Teachers

UHD-CPDT

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UHD Terms and Definitions

Terms and Definitions

- **Gators2Teachers -** These are the two semesters and blocks of courses that are taken during the final year in the program. During the first semester of Residency, Residents will report to their field placement with a single Host Teacher for 2- 3 full days each week. On the non-field placement days, Residents will attend methods courses at UHD. During the second semester of Residency, Residents will work with their Host Teacher in the field five days per week and then attend SOSE 4303 or READ 4321 at a UHD campus.

- **Clinical Coach-** UHD's faculty member assigned to supervise, coach, and evaluate Residents. Clinical Coaches function as links between schools, school districts, and the university.

- **Site Coordinator-**UHD faculty member collaborating with multiple clinical coaches and their campuses to create continuity in support of Residents across campuses.

- **Sites-** Clinical coaches will be assigned a school or schools (sites) in which their cohort of Residents will complete their field placements. Schools will be arranged to provide a diverse teaching experience and align to the Resident's certification (e.g., ESL, SPED).

- **Resident –** A Resident is a student admitted into the teacher education program at the University of Houston-Downtown. Residents are enrolled in the final two semesters when they are completing the student teaching year.

- **Host Teacher (HT)-** This are the P-12 classroom teachers in the partner school district who have volunteered/applied to mentor a Resident.

- **Performance Assessment (POP Cycle)-** The evaluation process used at the University of Houston-Downtown. A POP "cycle" consists of (a) a pre-conference to review the Resident's lesson; (b) observation and scripting of the lesson by both the Resident and Clinical Coach to gather evidence for evaluation; (c) post-conference meeting with the Resident to review evidence, coach and assign ratings; and (d) ensuring the timely uploading of video capture and entry of ratings by the Resident and Clinical Coach into the Swivl database.

- **T-TESS Assessment Rubric-**UHD has adapted this rubric, used in most Texas public schools, for supporting Residents and will use the rubric during the POP cycles.

- **Informal Walkthrough**- Short (about 15 minute) observation that allows the Clinical Coach to collect a "snapshot" of information on co-teaching, professionalism, and overall development of the Resident.

- **Performance Gates-**These benchmarks must be met to successfully complete the certification program.

- **Professional Growth Plan (PGP)-**This support tool will be created by Clinical Coaches when issues arise with Residents or when they are at risk of not meeting performance gates.

- **Swivl-**This video technology enables teachers to record classroom interactions for observation and reflection.

- **Residency Class-**This weekly class is taught by the Clinical Coach in which Residents develop their instructional and professional knowledge. This course includes assignments that aid the Resident in applying theory and best practices to the classroom.

- **Governance Meetings-**Quarterly meetings with district and university partners are held to discuss program data and common initiatives. The Site Coordinator and/or Clinical Coach facilitate these collaborative meetings and provides Resident data from POP Cycles, HT progress reports, and other data sources.

- **Host Teacher Meetings-**Regular meetings are facilitated by the Site Coordinator and/or Clinical Coach to train the HTs on T-TESS, co-teaching, and coaching strategies including reviewing Resident data and discussing next steps for Resident success.

Professional Development Semesters
PD1, PD2, PD3, and PD4

Professional Development Semesters

The University of Houston-Downtown Department of Urban Education is a state approved Center for Professional Development of Teachers (UHD-CPDT) for training new EC-6 Core Subjects with ESL, EC-6 Core Subjects with Bilingual, 4-8 Core Subjects with ESL, EC-12 Special Education, and secondary teachers and for providing staff development for public schools. The UHD-CPDT is in partnership with Houston- area school districts to prepare future teachers who will enhance the academic success for at-risk children and adolescents in urban schools.

Overview of Professional Development 1 (PD1)
Upon gaining admission to the Department of Urban Education, teacher candidates will be eligible to register for PD1 courses. Once admitted into the PD semesters, teacher candidates must seek course approval from their advisor before registering for courses each semester. During the PD1 semester, candidates in the EC-6 Core Subjects with ESL, EC-6 Core Subjects with Bilingual, 4-8 Core Subjects with ESL, and EC-12 Special Education certification areas will be required to take four courses/12 hours as noted on their respective degree plans. Candidates may choose to take courses at the time and location of their choice as cohorted classes do not begin until PD2. Additionally, secondary certification students will not join the PD semesters in Urban Education until PD2.

Overview of Professional Development 2 (PD2)
Each teacher candidate is required to successfully complete three professional development semesters in field-based settings. For EC-6 Core Subjects with ESL, EC-6 Core Subjects with Bilingual, 4-8 Core Subjects with ESL, and EC-6 with Special Education, Professional Development 2 consists of four courses (twelve semester credit hours) each semester. For secondary teacher candidates, Professional Development 2 consists of three courses (nine semester credit hours) each semester. In PED 4380, teacher candidates receive a placement in an urban classroom with an assigned mentor during regular school hours throughout the Professional Development 2 semester.

- EC-6 Core Subjects with ESL, EC-6 Core Subjects with Bilingual, and 4-8 Core Subjects with ESL, and EC-6 with Special Education teacher candidates take 12 semester credit hours of coursework. The primary focus of the PD2 courses is to understand the learner, practice professionalism, and develop content methodology.

- Secondary candidates take nine semester credit hours of coursework which focus on understanding the learner and classroom management.

- A grade of "C" or higher in each of the graded PD2 courses and a satisfactory grade in PED 4380 are the criteria for successful PD2 completion and advancement to Professional Development Semester 3 (PD3).

- In PED 4380, teacher candidates who are not currently employed as instructional teacher's aides are assigned to a mentor teacher and spend a minimum of six hours each week throughout PD2 in an urban classroom with the assigned mentor teacher.

- All teacher candidates will be observed by their PED 4380 Clinical Coaches and given constructive feedback to improve teaching and learning.
- A satisfactory rating on all points of the "Criteria to Pass the Field-work Component" is required for successful PD2 completion and advancement to the next PD semester.

Overview of Professional Development 3 and 4/ Gators2Teachers

The PD3 semester consists of four courses (twelve semester credit hours), and PD4 consists of three courses (nine semester hours).

PD3 and 4 semesters provide immersion into the field of teaching by offering coursework and fieldwork during both long semesters. Content and methods learned in coursework will be applied in the field as each Resident is assigned to a Host Teacher in their area of certification. Through the provided field experiences, residents will put theory into practice by engaging in such activities as co-planning, co-teaching, creating materials, taking part in professional development, supporting the campus community, and being reflective of time spent in the public schools.

To fulfill all course and field requirements, residents are encouraged to consider PD3 and 4 as a full-time commitment to properly allocate the time and resources needed for these semesters.

Field Experience

The Gators2Teachers program is a one-year residency during which the resident works with a Host teacher in their classroom. This kind of immersion enables the resident to be a part of every aspect of the school day including co-planning and co-teaching with the Host teacher, working with whole and small groups of students, using and assessment and evaluation to guide instruction, preparing materials, taking part in staff duties, and meeting with staff members, administrators, and parents. Ongoing reflection will be a part of each resident's growth across semesters.

Placement with a Host Teacher

A resident's placement with a Host teacher occurs because of the collaboration between UHD and the partner district based on a resident's area(s) of certification.

Residents may not seek their own placements. Placement with a Host teacher will depend upon the teachers at the campus that have volunteered and applied to serve Host teachers. While each resident may not be placed in the grade level of their choice, each candidate will be placed with a teacher within their certification area(s).

Support from a Clinical Coach

One of the most important ways residents will be supported during their preparation as a teacher will be through the work of the Clinical Coach. The Clinical Coach is a UHD faculty member assigned to supervise, coach, and evaluate Residents during field placements.

A Clinical Coach will be assigned to a group of residents in the same school or "site." This arrangement will enable the clinical coach to understand resident goals and recognize strengths and weakness related to instructional competency and professionalism, and then assist the resident to develop in these important dimensions. The Clinical Coach will also be the Resident's primary point of contact for communication with UHD and the point of contact for the Host Teacher.

Using the Co-Teach Model

At the University of Houston-Downtown, we view the entire residency experience as a collaborative process between our Resident and the school community. Although it is informative to see if a Resident can function independently, the strongest preparation for our novice teachers is not time alone but rather constant modeling by an experienced Host Teacher.

When the Resident is actively teaching, the Host Teacher is most instructive when they continue to observe, give advice, and provide feedback, and to look for opportunities for co-teaching and co-planning. In addition to co-teaching the same lesson, this is an ideal time for the Host Teacher to parallel teach, work with centers or workstations, or pull small groups or individual students for additional remediation or enrichment.

The "co-teaching" model offers some helpful definitions of how the Host Teacher and resident might work together to share the planning, organization, delivery, and assessment, as well as the physical space:

One Teach, One Assist	One teacher has primary instructional responsibility while the other assists students with their work, monitors behaviors, or corrects assignments.
One Teach, One Observe	One of the advantages in co-teaching is that more detailed observation of students engaged in the learning process can occur. With this approach, for example, co-teachers can decide in advance what types of specific observational information to gather during instruction and can agree on a system for gathering the data.

Team Teaching	Both teachers are responsible for planning, and they share the instruction of all students. The lessons are taught by both teachers who actively engage in conversation, not lecture, to encourage discussion by students. Both teachers are actively involved in the management of the lesson and discipline.
Station Teaching	Both teachers divide the instructional content, and each takes responsibility for planning and teaching part of it. In station teaching, the classroom is divided into various teaching centers. The teacher and Resident are at particular stations; the other stations are run independently by the students or by a teacher's aide.
Alternative Teaching	In alternative teaching, one teacher manages most of the class while the other teacher works with a small group inside or outside of the classroom. The small group does not have to integrate with the current lesson.
Parallel Teaching	In parallel teaching, the teacher and Resident plan jointly but split the classroom in half to teach the same information at the same time.

Although class situations vary, one rationale for a full-year residency is the flexibility to allow novice teachers to develop in their expertise over a longer period. However, generally, residents will progress through the first semester of residency, gradually leading more of the planning and instruction so that by the last month of the first semester, he or she is the primary lead for most of the day, again maintaining the co-teaching presence of the Host Teacher.

Teaching Practice

Assessment of the performance of a Resident is a collaborative process engaged in by the Host Teacher, the university Clinical Coach, and the Resident as a team, based on a series of formative and summative assessments. The major components of this part of your residency grade include:

- Two iterations of the POP cycle (Pre-assessment, Observation, and Post-Assessment) each semester (see below)
- Four informal, unannounced walkthroughs in your classroom each semester (formative assessments)

POP Cycle: Completion of the two POP cycles each semester during the student-teaching practicum involves several steps, each with its own deadline, and communication with your Clinical Coach. The expectation for the Resident is that they will complete each step, communicate with the clinical coach, and provide products (e.g., lesson plan) by the time specified. Below is a sequenced list of tasks.

- You will schedule all formal observation cycles with your clinical coach and your Host Teacher, keeping flexibility in mind as your Host Teacher must fit your instruction into the larger scope of class instruction, and your Clinical Coach will likely be scheduling observations with several Residents.
- You will prepare lesson plans using the required UHD Lesson Plan template and send it to your Clinical Coach at least 48 hours in advance of a formal observation. These required lessons plans should include all required elements of the UHD Lesson Plan format. Failure to submit lesson plans 48 hours in advance will result in a loss of points on your teaching grade.
- You will attend a pre-conference lesson review with your clinical coach at least one day prior to the formal observation. If possible, your Host Teacher can also meet with you during these conferences to add to the conversation of the lesson reflection.
- You will teach your lesson with your clinical coach and Host Teacher observing you in person.

Although students may score 3's, 4's, or 5's on an indicator, the point values reflect the desired and expected proficiency level for PD3 and PD4. No additional points are given for scores above the expected proficiency level.

Failure to complete any portion of the POP Cycles, including submitting lesson plans in advance, will result in a reduction in total points earned for this portion of your grade.

Residents are expected to exhibit growth in instructional competencies such that:
- By the end of PD3, Residents must have scores of 2 on each of the TTESS indicators. Failure to achieve this standard can in a failing grade in the class impeding the ability to move on to PD4.
- By the end of PD4, Residents must score 3 on each of the T-TESS indicators. If this does not happen, the Resident may not pass the class or be recommended for certification.
- Residents who fail to achieve or maintain ratings in this manner have the option to complete one additional POP cycle to reach standard.

If after receiving support from the Clinical Coach, the Resident is unable to meet the standards described here, she or he will receive a failing grade for the semester.

Recorded Observations

Part of the assessment and reflection cycles in PD3 and PD4 include video capture of POP cycle lessons observed by the Clinical Coach. The clinical coach will capture the lesson using a UHD device allowing both the resident and clinical coach to view and reflect upon the video. Swivl will be used as the platform on which videos can be observed and reflected upon. Clinical Coaches will offer support to residents in accessing and working on Swivl.

Schedule and Attendance

Residents will observe and co-teach in a Host Teacher's classroom two to three days per week in PD3 and five days per week in PD4. It is required that the Resident log their daily attendance on TK20 and request Host Teacher to approve daily attendance. Additionally, the Resident must sign in and out of campus in the front office each day for campus records.

Professional Dress

Residents are encouraged to view the partner district's guidelines for professional dress online before joining the Host Teacher on campus. Residents are then encouraged to further discuss campus expectations of professional dress with the Host Teacher.

Professional Roles

The Clinical Coach and/or Site Coordinator will:

- provide meetings with Host Teachers offering an overview of the structure of PD3 and PD4 fieldwork as well as the roles of the Resident and Host Teacher;

- keep records on each Resident comprised of an accurate record of class schedules, evaluations, visitation reports, and any missed classes or campus days, tardies, or absences;

- complete a UHD-CPDT T-TESS form in TK20 after each formal classroom observation and confer with the Resident regarding the observed lesson using the POP Cycle format;

- facilitate discussion with the Resident and the Host Teacher that clarifies Resident's progress and performance up to that time with specific guidelines for completing the semester successfully;

- collaborate with the Resident other PD faculty on the professional attributes and completion of PD course requirements and facilitate discussion with the Resident regarding that assessment; and

- collaborate with the site-based administration and faculty on the professional attributes and completion of requirements and facilitate discussion with the resident regarding placement.

The Host Teacher (HT) will:

- facilitate the Resident's teaching of lessons that will be observed by university faculty;

- encourage Resident to have as many varied teaching experiences as possible during the semester;

- complete Resident reflection forms provided in TK20; and

- provide on-going opportunities to enact various co-teaching models in the classroom.

All Faculty will:

- utilize areas of expertise to give Residents critical feedback and model pedagogically sound lessons; and

- collaborate with the Clinical Coach on the professional attributes and successful completion of course work especially that part which integrates the field experience.

Substitute Teaching

Because fieldwork in PD3 is a part-time activity, residents are permitted by UHD to seek employment as a substitute teacher with a partner district outside of the scheduled observation times with a Host Teacher.

Legal Status of the Host Teacher and the Resident

The Host Teacher, who holds a legal status with respect to students, is responsible for their students' health, safety, and general well-being. Because the Resident is not certified, a certified teacher should remain in the classroom when the UHD Resident is present.

Expectations for Testing and Certification

In considering UHD degree programs, teacher candidates are eligible to complete their testing for certification beginning in the PD1 semester. It is the responsibility of candidates in each PD semester to follow guidelines specific to their certification area/degree plan to complete certification exams in a timely manner. It is the recommendation of the Department of Urban Education that all certification exams should be completed prior to PD4. This would enable teacher candidates to be eligible to apply for teacher certification through the state upon graduation.

Interventions for Residents

The Clinical Coach monitors each Resident's work and progress throughout the semester. Should there be concerns regarding a Resident's academic responsibilities or professionalism, the Clinical Coach may choose to confer with the individual or refer the individual to the CPDT Director to convene a committee meeting to address the Resident's needs. Should such a meeting be called, various support members at UHD will gather to create a growth plan with the Resident addressing specific individual needs.

APPENDIX

UHD-CPDT Lesson Plan Directions
Your instructor/professor will provide additional guidelines.

I. PLANNING PROCESS PHASE

Objective(s): Using observable, measurable terms (such as in Bloom's Taxonomy) that support the TEKS (with correct verb alignment), write objective(s) that can be assessed. State the objective(s) in the following manner: ***The learner will...*** [Use an ***observable, measurable verb***].

  A. Actor: Who is the learner and what will they be able to as a result of this lesson?
  B. Behavior: What is the desired behavior that will help the learner reach the desired goal of the lesson?
  C. Condition: How will you assess how much learning took place during your lesson (informal/formal; formative/summative)?
  D. Degree: Describe in detail the method(s) of determining if the learner has met the stated objective(s).

TEKS: State the number(s) and descriptor(s) of the TEKS specifically being taught (https://www.texasgateway.org/search-standards).

Student-Centered Rationale: Why does the student need to know this? How does this lesson align with student interests? Describe the reason(s) why you are teaching this lesson. What real-life reason should you give your students for learning this skill or content? The STAAR test is NOT a reason!

Cross-Disciplinary Connections: Describe how the lesson will make connections with other content areas.

Special Needs Student Accommodations/Differentiation: Consider and reference students' Individual Educational Plans (IEP).
English Language Learners (List the proficiency level (e.g., beginning/intermediate/advanced/advanced-high) and accommodations for listening, speaking, reading, writing used made to make the lesson more comprehensible: https://d1yqpar94jqbqm.cloudfront.net/documents/ELPS-LIAG-2.pdf); Gifted Students (Enrichment/Acceleration - What are you doing for students who have mastered the topic? What are you doing for students with varied developmental levels? What are your strategies to make sure that the students with differentiated instruction will stay on task?)

Extensions and Contingency Plan(s): Provide a specific plan for students who take longer to accomplish tasks described in your lesson; Provide a specific plan for students who finish tasks described in your lesson early.

Description of the Learning Environment: How many students are involved in this lesson? Where will the different activities in this lesson take place (small group, literacy carpet, literacy table, etc.)? What kind of grouping would be effective with this lesson?

Materials: <u>Describe</u> specific materials (books, visuals, manipulatives, etc.) and <u>provide</u> supporting documents that you will use in your lesson (handouts, websites, PowerPoint, game boards, etc.).

Technology: Describe specific technology-based resources used in this lesson. If technology is not going to be used in this lesson, describe why it will not be included.

II. TEACHING PHASE (LESSON CYCLE):

TIME ESTIMATES:

A. Focus: Describe, in detail, an engaging activity/event to bring the learner into the lesson or to focus the learner on the objective that is about to be taught.

B. Student-Centered Objective: Describe the objective(s) of the lesson in language/terms that students will understand (ex. "I Can..." or "Today, I will...").

C. Rationale: What is the real-life reason you give your students for learning this skill or content? (ex. "It is important to be able to this because...").

D. Teach/Active Engagement: Describe in detail, step-by-step, how you will teach the lesson, including teaching strategies and methods of assessment (informal/formal; formative/summative). Include higher-level questions you will ask during the lesson and the connections you will make.
Be sure to include:
- Instruction/Modeling/I do
- Guided practice/We do
- Cooperative **OR** Independent practice/You do *(Note: Independent refers to independent of the teacher)*

E. Closure: Summarize what students have learned – For example, students could verbalize what they have learned, <u>or</u> the teacher (you!) can summarize for them if time is short <u>or</u> a culminating activity that will help the learner synthesize what has been learned and help you sum up the lesson.

III. **REFLECTING PHASE** (*AFTER THE LESSON*) - Reflection is an essential part of the lesson planning process; your professor/instructor will give you guidance on how to reflect on this lesson. Your reflection will include the following questions/statements:

    A. How were students able to demonstrate what they knew? Describe the way(s) in which the instructional environment (grouping, etc.) was effective?

    B. Describe how you incorporated the different levels of Bloom's Taxonomy into your lesson? How could you have elevated the level of questioning into your lesson?

    C. Was the assessment/culminating activity successful/appropriate? What evidence do you have of this? Describe any unanticipated events that occurred during the lesson and how you responded.

    D. What evidence do you have that the learner has met the stated objective(s) of this lesson?

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UHD-CPDT Lesson Plan

Teacher Candidate: Click or tap here to enter text.

Email: Click or tap here to enter text.

Host Teacher: Click or tap here to enter text.

Clinical coach: Click or tap here to enter text.

Date: Click or tap here to enter text.

Time: Click or tap here to enter text.

Grade: Click or tap here to enter text. **Subject:** Click or tap here to enter text.

I. **PLANNING PROCESS PHASE**

Objective(s): Click or tap here to enter text.

TEKS: Click or tap here to enter text.

Student-Centered Rationale: Click or tap here to enter text.

Cross-Disciplinary Connections: Click or tap here to enter text.

Special Needs Student Accommodations/Differentiation: Click or tap here to enter text.

Extensions and Contingency Plan(s): Click or tap here to enter text.

Description of the Learning Environment: Click or tap here to enter text.

Materials: Click or tap here to enter text.

Technology: Click or tap here to enter text.

II. TEACHING PHASE (LESSON CYCLE):

Give Time estimates before each section.

Minutes **A. Focus**: Click or tap here to enter text.

Minutes **B. Student-Centered Objective**: Click or tap here to enter text.

Minutes **C. Rationale:** Click or tap here to enter text.

Minutes **D. Teach/Active Engagement:** Click or tap here to enter text.

Minutes **E. Closure:** Click or tap here to enter text.

III. REFLECTING PHASE (*AFTER THE LESSON*)
Click or tap here to enter text.