



# Teacher Candidate Handbook

Extraordinary Teachers. Extraordinary Classrooms

**TeacherReady Teacher Candidate Handbook** | TeacherReady Program | 2025 | *Eleventh Edition*

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# UWF TeacherReady Program Standards of Behavior

As a future educator, you are stepping into a role that is both deeply rewarding and profoundly impactful. The classroom is more than a place of instruction—it is a community where every interaction shapes the learning experience and contributes to a culture of respect, growth, and belonging. The following professional norms are designed to guide your conduct as a teacher candidate and beyond. They reflect the values of today's K–12 educational landscape, emphasizing collaboration, inclusivity, and a commitment to lifelong learning. By embracing these principles, you will help create a positive, student-centered environment where all learners—and educators—can thrive.

## TeacherReady Standards of Behavior

### **Professional and Classroom Norms for a Positive K–12 Learning Environment**

- Hold yourself trustworthy and accountable.
- Be flexible and supportive – set an example of cooperation.
- Be friendly and helpful to others.
- Always greet others with a smile and/or verbal acknowledgment.
- Recognize the value of each individual.
- Manage up students, parents, colleagues, leaders, and yourself both externally and internally.
- Celebrate successes and have fun while learning.
- Do not embarrass or criticize students or colleagues in the presence of others.
- Be tolerant of each other and offer professional courtesy to students, parents, and other teachers inside and outside of class when communicating.
- Respect each other's time by being on time for all meetings/appointments.
- Maintain a Positive and Professional Presence.
- Be a lifelong learner and never stop seeking to expand your skill set.
- Actively read books and other resources that are provided.
- Create a learning environment where students desire to learn and take control of their own learning.
- Think about how to overcome barriers by implementing best practices in the classroom rather than using the barriers as excuses for not practicing effective teaching strategies.
- Create and participate in an environment where honest feedback is seen as valuable and not criticism.
- Respect students by being prepared for class.

# The TeacherReady Teacher Candidate

TeacherReady teacher candidates can be described as one of the following:

A: Full-Time teacher, paraprofessional or permanent substitute teacher doing clinical experience in their own area of certification. Teacher candidates do not have to log observation hours since they are in the classroom all day every day. Cooperating teachers can be a fellow teacher or an administrator.

B: Non-Full-Time teacher doing clinical experience in their cooperating teacher's classroom. Cooperating teachers need to be certified in the teacher candidate's area of certification. Cooperating teachers can also be administrators. Teacher candidates will spend a minimum of 150 hours of classroom teaching experience before they can request enrollment in the Culminating Clinical Experience which happens during Intensive Lesson 8. The Culminating Clinical Experience is one full week of student teaching (35 hours). Teacher candidates should spend a minimum of 4-6 hours per week with classroom teaching experiences during the length of the program and before the Culminating Clinical Experience.

## The TeacherReady Cooperating Teacher

The role of the cooperating teacher is to encourage the development and growth of the new teacher candidate and to ensure that the teacher candidate maintains a steady improvement of student learning in the classroom. The following are the requirements to serve as a cooperating teacher:

- hold a **valid professional teaching certificate**,
- have a **minimum of three years of teaching experience** as an effective or highly effective teacher, and
- be willing to take a free four-hour **Clinical Educator Training** for supervision of teacher candidates (can be taken in segments); if the cooperating teacher listed is an administrator, then the cooperating teacher must hold a valid Administrative Certificate.

## Teacher Candidate Expectations

### Expectations for School and Classroom Involvement

To make the most of your clinical experience, it is essential that you take the initiative and actively assume a leadership role in the classroom alongside your cooperating teacher and other educators. The following responsibilities are involved for **Non-Full-Time teacher candidates doing clinical experience in their cooperating teacher's classroom**:

- Spend a **minimum average of 4 to 6 hours a week in your cooperating teacher's classroom**. You must have a minimum of **150 hours** of clinical experience **prior** to your enrollment in **Intensive Lesson 8/Culminating Clinical Experience**.
- Log on your clinical experience hours in the **Clinical Experience Log for non-Full-Time teachers**.

- Be **punctual** and **dependable**. Report on time for each day's work and leave only when the work is complete. Inform the cooperating teacher of any potential or immediate absence. Prepare carefully and in sufficient detail for each day.
- Become **acquainted with the school** plant, administration, routines for reporting, parking areas, etc.

Throughout the TeacherReady Program, candidates become integral members of the educational team at their cooperating teacher's school and are expected to adhere to the following professional guidelines.

- Know and operate within the policies, rules, and regulations of the school.
- Dress professionally and in accordance with the standards of the school.
- Read and follow the TeacherReady Standards of Behavior.
- Read and follow the assigned school Faculty Handbook or alike.
- Take proper care of all school equipment and facilities.
- Work cooperatively with the cooperating teacher and others in the school setting.
- Refrain from gossip about pupils, teachers, and other staff members, and confine any discussion of problems that might arise to conferences with the cooperating teacher.
- Attend meetings, conferences, and in-service programs required of the school faculty.
- Understand the activities, ideas, and values present in the school.
- Understand that the student teacher should never be left alone in the classroom with the students at any time.

Teacher candidates who are **full-time teachers, permanent substitute teachers or paraprofessionals doing clinical experience in their own classrooms** do not need to log on hours but do have to submit a **Clinical Experience Log for Full-Time teachers, Paras or Permanent Subs**.

## Expectations for Working with the Cooperating Teacher

Cooperating teachers play a vital role in the TeacherReady program, working closely with teacher candidates throughout the nine to twelve-month clinical experience. They serve as both instructional partners and professional role models, committed to supporting the candidate's development while maintaining a positive and effective learning environment for all students. Cooperating teachers provide ongoing guidance and support, and they are primarily responsible for evaluating the candidate's performance during key milestones, including the **Benchmark Assessment** and the **Culminating Clinical Experience**.

To establish a productive working relationship with the cooperating teacher, you should:

- Display an interest in becoming a teacher by conveying a sincere desire to learn, willingness to cooperate, and an appreciative attitude toward suggestions and feedback.
- Keep in mind that your cooperating teacher has an adequate knowledge of subject matter, human growth and development, teaching techniques, and planning.
- Take initiative and assume responsibility when an opportunity is provided.

- Realize that the classroom pupils are the responsibility of the cooperating teacher and that variations from standard procedure should be discussed in advance with the cooperating teacher.
- Seek the advice of the cooperating teacher. Plan for regular conferences to discuss planning. Be frank and honest regarding teaching performances and be open to suggestions.
- Develop a receptive attitude toward suggestions and feedback.
- Expect to give more assistance than you receive. Expect and even ask to be allowed to participate in all normal teaching duties--playground, lunchroom, field trips, clubs, etc.

While in the school and the classroom:

- Your behavior during school days and non-school days should be governed by the fact that you are now a professional person.
- You should use methods and materials which are consistent with the philosophy and practices of the school in which you are teaching and become familiar with classroom strategies and resources.
- You should abide by all rules which apply to students and teachers. You are not a visitor in a privileged status, but a fellow teacher subject to the established standards and practices of the school in which you are teaching.
- You should attempt to get to know your pupils as well as possible so you can provide appropriate instruction.
- A great portion of your early responsibility is to observe the cooperating teacher conduct classes. Then, you should add teaching responsibilities so that you are slowly taking on more until you are prepared to take over the class for the week of the Culminating Clinical Experience.
- **Your Week of Culminating will be teaching everything your cooperating teacher teaches for a full week, so you may need to adjust your clinical experience time to make sure you have observed and taught all subjects and classes before culminating.**

## Clinical experience and Clinical Experience Assignments

The clinical experience assignments you will be assigned are directly aligned to the topic of instruction of the content of the TeacherReady program. These embedded clinical experience assignments are designed to help you see how concepts, skills and theory are applied in a real classroom setting. In completing the clinical experience assignment, it is important to consider the topic at hand and how the clinical experience will enhance your understanding. This is your opportunity to focus on particular happenings in a classroom.

If you are a **full-time teacher**, your clinical experience assignments will be done in your own classroom. You will still turn in all assignments, and your clinical experience assignments will be related to what you teach.

## Clinical Experience and Lesson Content Alignment – Lessons 1-7

Clinical Experience assignments are aligned to each intensive lesson content (Lessons 1-7). Teacher candidates are encouraged to review lesson content prior to completing clinical experience assignments.

Review the **clinical experience assignments** aligned to each one of your intensive lessons below.

### LESSON 1 - MANAGING AND ENGAGING STUDENTS TO LEARN - VOLUNTEER

- Non-Full-Time teachers requesting assistance with a clinical placement and who will do clinical experience in their cooperating teacher's classroom, we encourage them to begin volunteering in a school as soon as possible. Up to 45 of the total clinical experience hours required may be volunteer hours. Teacher candidates will document their volunteering hours in the Volunteering Log.

### LESSON 2 - ALIGNMENT OF LEARNING TARGETS & STANDARDS

- Interview about Student Belonging and Mental Health Wellness Assignment
- Supporting Student Emotions Assignment
- Interview about Learning Standards Assignment
- Scaffolding Learning Targets Assignment

### LESSON 3 - LEARNING TASKS & FEEDBACK STRATEGIES

- Aligned Learning Tasks Assignment
- Applying the Six Rules of Thumb for Giving Feedback Assignment
- Teach a Lesson Assignment

### LESSON 4 - ALIGNING SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT TOOLS

- Create a Test Blueprint Assignment
- Develop Test Items Assignment
- Analyzing & Using Summative Assessment Results Assignment

### LESSON 5 - ENGAGING STUDENTS IN SPECIAL POPULATIONS

- Developmental Profile Assignment
- Activating Prior Knowledge Assignment
- Accommodations & Modifications Assignment
- Teaching English Language Learners Assignment

### LESSON 6 – ENGAGING STUDENTS IN READING

- Academic Strategies for Literacy Assignment
- Phonological Awareness Assignment
- Phonemes in Use: Multiple Activities for a Critical Process Assignment
- Understanding Fluency Assignment
- Readers' Theatre Assignment
- The Art and Science of Teaching / Six Steps to Better Vocabulary Instruction Assignment
- Teaching Vocabulary Assignment
- Comprehension Assignment
- Technology Related to Reading Instruction Assignment

### LESSON 7 – APPLYING FIVE COMPONENTS OF READING

- Oral Language Activity



- Oral Language Activity Reflection Assignment
- Interrelated Skills Assignment
- Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM) for PK to 6 or 7 to 12 grade (according to your grade area)
  - Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM) for PK to 6 or 7-12 grade Reflection Assignment
- Vocabulary Instruction Oral Language Activity
  - Vocabulary Instruction Oral Language Activity Reflection Assignment
- Word Walls Activity Assignment
- KWL Chart--Graphic Organizer Activity
  - KWL Chart--Graphic Organizer Activity Reflection Assignment
- Summarizing Reflection Assignment

### **PRIOR TO ENROLLMENT REQUEST TO LESSON 8**

- Upload your Clinical Experience Log in the Clinical Experience Lesson Dropbox

## **Volunteering/Observation Experience**

If you are a **non-full-time teacher** and you are waiting to be placed with a cooperating teacher for your clinical experience placement, you are asked to look for volunteering opportunities at a school near your area. These volunteering opportunities can be in different capacities within the school.

**You will have a Volunteering Assignment in your first intensive lesson once you start your TeacherReady program.** Log your volunteering hours and use these to complete the activity. Continue to volunteer weekly until placed with a cooperating teacher.

**If you are currently a full-time teacher, you will complete your volunteering assignments as observations in your own classroom.**

The expectation is that you will begin volunteering as soon as you start the TeacherReady Program and will count **up to 45 hours of volunteering** towards your clinical experience hours.

## **Benchmark Assessment**

The **Benchmark Assessment** is designed to provide an opportunity to apply concepts and skills learned, as students reach the mid-point of the TeacherReady lesson content. This assessment also serves as an important time for reflection and collection of lesson instructors and cooperating teacher feedback. The **Benchmark Assignment** and **Self-Assessment** come right after **Intensive Lesson 4**.

At that time, your **cooperating teacher** will also be required to complete a Benchmark Assessment.

## **Benchmark Assessment Learning Outcomes**

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Apply the student engagement framework in planning a unit of study.
- Complete a lesson from the planned unit.
- Develop a test blueprint for the unit plan developed.
- Reflect on your learning and teaching experience.

## Benchmark Assessment – What to Expect

### FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES

- Teacher candidates will create a 30-Day Curriculum Calendar, based on a **30-Day Plan**.
- Teacher candidates will develop lesson plans for **one week of instruction**, share one of the lesson plans and **invite their cooperating teacher for a planned observation and evaluation**.
- Teacher candidates will **reflect and self-evaluate** their progress as well.

### FOR COOPERATING TEACHERS

- Cooperating teachers will review the [Florida Educator Accomplished Practices \(FEAPs\)](#) as preparation for the Benchmark Assessment.
- Cooperating teachers will hold a **pre-Benchmark Assessment content planning conference** with their teacher candidate.
- Cooperating teachers will **observe** at least one (1) lesson/mini lesson for purposes of the Benchmark Assessment.
- Cooperating teachers will hold a **post-Benchmark Assessment feedback conference** with their teacher candidate.
- Cooperating teachers will **submit** the [Benchmark Assessment \(PDF\)](#) using the **online tool** including their observations and evaluation.
- Cooperating teachers and teacher candidates will receive a copy of the Benchmark Assessment after submission.

## Culminating Clinical Experience

The **Culminating Clinical Experience** is done once you are enrolled in **Intensive Lesson 8**. Therefore, it cannot be started until you have completed all coursework and clinical experience for Intensive Lesson 1-7.

The Week of Culminating requires you to teach **five consecutive days** in your cooperating teacher's classroom if you are doing clinical experience in your cooperating teacher's classroom or in your own classroom if you are a full-time teacher.

If you are doing clinical experience in your cooperating teacher's classroom, it is essential to have a conference with your cooperating teacher before proceeding to ensure your cooperating teacher feels you are prepared and ready to take the class over for a week. Students who score poorly on the culminating evaluations will be required to do additional clinical experiences and another Week of Culminating. If there is any doubt about the process, you and your cooperating teacher must call the TeacherReady office for a conference before proceeding. Once you both feel it is time for culminating, there are specific steps to take to develop a pre-test, lesson plans for the five days, implementation of the plan, post-test and a professional reflection of the experience.

If you are currently a teacher, your Week of Culminating will be in your own classroom teaching what you normally teach, and your cooperating teacher will come to your classroom to observe and evaluate you.

## Learning Outcomes

- Develop lesson plans for 5 consecutive days of instruction.
- Embed a variety of formative assessments in these lessons to determine student learning.

- Employ a variety of instructional strategies to ensure all students can learn.
- Use your developed lesson plans to teach, with modifications based on the information gathered from the formative assessments.
- Complete a clinical experience reflection form after each day of teaching, to reflect on the lesson and student responses.

## Culminating Clinical Experience Evaluation – What to Expect

### FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES

- In Intensive Lesson 8, teacher candidates will create **lesson plans for all the classes** that they will teach during the week established to do their culminating clinical experience.
- Teacher candidates will **create and administer a pre-test and post-test** to evaluate student learning during their culminating clinical experience.
- Teacher candidates will **submit their lesson plans to their cooperating teacher for approval** before uploading into their lesson 8 dropbox.
- Teacher candidates will request a **pre-Culminating Clinical Experience feedback conference** to their cooperating teacher.
- Teacher candidates will need to make sure they **upload their lesson plans into lesson 8 dropbox** and that they are graded with “1” before teaching.
- If teacher candidates are doing their culminating week in their cooperating teacher’s classroom, cooperating teachers will observe all their classes. If teacher candidates are full-time teachers doing their culminating week in their own classroom, cooperating teachers will observe 5 full lessons (if cooperating teacher is a fellow teacher) or 1 full lesson (if cooperating teacher is an administrator).
- Teacher candidates must complete the daily reflection and upload it into the dropbox **at the end of each day of teaching**. Teacher candidates will submit all these even if they are a full-time teacher and are only getting observed one day.
- Teacher candidates will have a **feedback session** with their cooperating teacher **at the end of each day** of teaching during the week of culminating.
- Teacher candidates must submit all their lesson 8 assignments including their final reflection **within 48 hours** of completing their week of culminating.
- Teacher candidates must **verify that their cooperating teacher has submitted their Culminating Clinical Experience Evaluation paperwork** after the week of culminating is complete. The **Culminating Clinical Experience Evaluation link** can be found in **lesson 8 in the eLearning system as well as the Cooperating teacher Handbook**.
- Teacher candidates will hold a **post-Culminating Clinical Experience feedback conference** with their cooperating teachers. Teacher candidates will bring the results of the pre and post tests to students and their reflections to this conference.
- Teacher candidates must email their student advisor to verify their cooperating teacher’s final evaluation was received and processed about **one week after their week of culminating**.

### FOR COOPERATING TEACHERS

- Cooperating teachers will make sure the teacher candidate has fulfilled all the requirements before starting the Culminating Clinical Experience (Lesson 8)
- Cooperating teachers will hold a **pre-Culminating Clinical Experience content planning conference** with their teacher candidates.
- Cooperating teachers will **approve lesson plans** before teacher candidates upload them into their eLearning system lesson 8 dropbox for grading.

- Cooperating teachers will **observe and evaluate** the teacher candidate during the **Week of Culminating**. If a cooperating teacher is an administrator, they will observe one (1) full lesson during the week of culminating. If the cooperating teacher is a fellow teacher, they will observe one (1) full lesson **each day of the culminating week** (5 full lessons).
- In the case of virtual teaching, the 5 consecutive days can be spread out within 2 weeks.
- Cooperating teachers will hold a **feedback session** at the end of each day of teaching during the week of culminating.
- Cooperating teachers will hold a **post-Culminating Clinical Experience conference to share all observation feedback** and review the culminating clinical experience final evaluation before submitting it.
- Cooperating teachers will **submit** the [Culminating Evaluation \(PDF\)](#) using the **online tool** including their observations and evaluation.
- Cooperating teachers and teacher candidates will receive a copy of the Culminating Clinical Experience Evaluation after submission.

## Clinical Experience Log

In the case of teacher candidates who are **non-full-time teachers** and are completing their clinical experience in their cooperating teacher's classroom, they will record the hours spent in the cooperating teacher's classroom and the cooperating teacher will initial the logged hours in the [Clinical Experience Log for Non-Full-Time Teachers](#).

The [Clinical Experience Log for Non-Full-Time Teachers](#) will be submitted by the teacher candidate **prior** to requesting enrollment in **Intensive Lesson 8/Culminating Clinical Experience** to document a minimum of 150 hours of clinical experience. We recommend that cooperating teachers keep a copy of the logged hours for future reference.

In the case of teacher candidates who are **full-time teachers**, they will document the school and school year where they completed their clinical experience for the TeacherReady program in the [Clinical Experience Log for Full-Time Teachers, Paras & Permanent Subs](#).

The [Clinical Experience Log for Full-Time Teachers, Paras & Permanent Subs](#) will be submitted by the teacher candidate **prior** to requesting enrollment in **Intensive Lesson 8/Culminating Clinical Experience** to document their clinical experience. Cooperating teachers **do not** have to sign the [Clinical Experience Log for Full-Time Teachers, Paras & Permanent Subs](#).

## Teacher Candidate Resources

- [TeacherReady Lesson Contents](#)
- [Clinical Experience Alignment to Content](#)
- [Clinical Experience Volunteering Log](#)
- [Clinical Experience Log for Non-Full-Time Teachers](#)
- [Clinical Experience Log for Full-Time Teachers, Paras & Permanent Subs](#)
- [Volunteering Request Letter for Schools](#)

## TeacherReady Contact Information

- For admissions and general inquiries, contact [teacherready@uwf.edu](mailto:teacherready@uwf.edu)
- For advising, contact [teacherreadyadvisors@uwf.edu](mailto:teacherreadyadvisors@uwf.edu)
- For academics, contact Dr. Reggie Todd, Lead Instructor at [rtodd1@uwf.edu](mailto:rtodd1@uwf.edu) or each lesson instructor for specific questions.

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