



Cooperating Teacher Handbook

The Role of Trusted Advisor

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

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For more information, contact:

TeacherReady

University of West Florida

11000 University Pkwy

Pensacola, FL 32514

www.uwf.edu

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A Message to the TeacherReady Cooperating Teacher

Dear Cooperating Teacher,

Thank you for opening your classroom door to our teacher candidate. You now have an opportunity to help a developing teacher apply theories learned in their lessons while they experience real-world, classroom situations. You were carefully selected to serve as a cooperating teacher for a TeacherReady candidate and you were recommended as a cooperating teacher based on your effectiveness as a teacher, your value as a colleague, and your reputation as a professional. Our developing teacher will be a better educator because of your willingness to guide them. It is our pleasure to work with you one-on-one, answer any and every question you have, and provide the support you will need for success.

TeacherReady is the Educator Preparation Institute (EPI) associated with the University of West Florida (UWF) and a state approved, online teacher preparation program that is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The program is recognized for its quality in curriculum, instructors, and the cooperating teachers who work directly with the teacher candidate on a regular basis. The curriculum provides the knowledge, skills, and practice necessary to produce effective and successful teachers. Read the [Teacher Lesson Contents](#).

This handbook was developed to provide support as you coach the TeacherReady candidate into being an efficient and effective professional educator. All cooperating teachers must complete a free online Clinical Educator Training (CET) which will outline strategies and provide tools you can use to help your teacher candidate progress and develop professionally. Your primary function as a cooperating teacher is to **guide** through modeling, observation and feedback as well as assessing the candidate during clinical experience assignments aligned to the online content of the program and which are successfully completed in the classroom. In addition to the Clinical Educator Training, other responsibilities of the cooperating teacher are explained, and all required forms are included in this handbook.

To ensure a successful experience for you and your teacher candidate, the TeacherReady staff established a set of behavioral expectations for all TeacherReady teacher candidates. Each potential teacher candidate must agree to fulfill the [Standards of Behavior](#) before admittance to the program is granted. These standards are used in conversations with candidates to ensure all candidates will be prepared to be both a teacher of high quality and an effective and ethical professional at the completion of the program. In all cases, your teacher candidate should always demonstrate the [Standards of Behavior](#).

If you have any questions or concerns about the program or the process for your developing teacher, please contact us at TeacherReadyAdvisors@uwf.edu.

TeacherReady Faculty and Staff
UWF TeacherReady

TeacherReady Cooperating Teacher Checklist

The Cooperating Teacher Checklist is a valuable tool designed to guide and confirm the key actions necessary for a successful mentor-mentee experience with your TeacherReady candidate. We encourage cooperating teachers to keep a copy of the checklist readily available and use it as a reference during conferences and ongoing collaboration with their teacher candidate.

TEACHER CANDIDATE NAME:	
START DATE:	POTENTIAL END DATE:
AREA OF CERTIFICATION:	GRADE:

COMPLETED	DATE	KEY ACTIONS
<input type="checkbox"/>		Placement - Clinical Placement Confirmation
<input type="checkbox"/>		Introduction - Meet your mentee and set up your mentoring schedule
<input type="checkbox"/>		Mentoring Conferences – during Foundation Courses and Intensive Lessons 1-4 meet at least once a month or when mutually agreed
<input type="checkbox"/>		Clinical Training Certificate – complete training or submit administrative license or educational leadership certificate if cooperating teacher is an administrator
<input type="checkbox"/>		Benchmark Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Benchmark Assessment conference (content planning) <input type="checkbox"/> Benchmark Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Post Benchmark Assessment conference (feedback)
<input type="checkbox"/>		Mentoring Conferences – during Intensive Lessons 5-7 meet at least once a month or when mutually agreed
<input type="checkbox"/>		Culminating Clinical Experience Evaluation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Final Evaluation/Week of Culminating conference (content planning) <input type="checkbox"/> Review Lesson Plans and Pre/Post Test <input type="checkbox"/> Final Evaluation (observe 5 lessons) <input type="checkbox"/> Post Final Evaluation/Week of Culminating conference (feedback) <input type="checkbox"/> Submit Culminating Clinical Experience Evaluation

□	Questions - contact the TeacherReady Team if you have any questions at TeacherReadyAdvisors@uwf.edu
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The TeacherReady Program

TeacherReady is a State of Florida approved and an CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation) accredited online, alternative teacher certification program through the University of West Florida's Professional Education Unit. TeacherReady is also regionally accredited through SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools). The program consists of content and clinical experiences that align to state and national professional teaching standards. Candidates who successfully complete the program including the Florida Teacher Certification Exams (FTCE) become eligible to receive a State of Florida professional teaching license and the Florida Reading Endorsement.

TeacherReady is an online competency-based program that allows completers of the program to earn professional teacher certification in Florida. The knowledge and skills addressed in TeacherReady are based on the “sample key indicators” of the **Florida Educator Accomplished Practices (FEAPs)** as identified in *Preprofessional: Competencies for Teachers of the Twenty-First Century* published by the Florida Department of Education. Competencies 1-5 in the **Florida Reading Endorsement** are also a part of the instructional model of TeacherReady to ensure that participants are prepared with a basic understanding of the reading process and can assist struggling readers with increasing academic achievement.

[TeacherReady Lesson Contents](#) is organized within **twelve instructional lessons**. Each lesson is composed of instructional topics that allow knowledge and skills practice to be chunked and scaffolded using a best practices approach to instructional design for participants. The program includes coursework and clinical work, and teacher candidates are required to work under the supervision of a certified cooperating teacher during their teacher observation/student teaching assignment.

FOUNDATIONS COURSES

- **Foundations 1:** Professional Fundamentals
- **Foundations 2:** Workplace Fundamentals
- **Foundations 3:** Effective Frameworks of Teaching
- **Foundations 4:** Classroom Management Basics

INTENSIVE LESSONS

- **Lesson 1:** Managing & Engaging Students to Learn
- **Lesson 2:** Alignment of Learning Targets & Standards
- **Lesson 3:** Learning Tasks & Feedback Strategies
- **Lesson 4:** Aligning Summative Assessment Tools
 - **Mid-Program Assessment (Benchmark)**
- **Lesson 5:** Engaging Students in Special Populations
- **Lesson 6:** Engaging Students in Reading
- **Lesson 7:** Applying Five Components of Reading

- **Lesson 8:** Culminating Clinical Experience

The TeacherReady Teacher Candidate

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

A: Full-Time teacher, paraprofessional or permanent substitute teacher doing clinical work 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 work in their cooperating teacher's classroom. Cooperating teachers need to be certified in mentee's area of certification if possible. Cooperating teachers can also be administrators. Teacher candidates will spend a minimum of 150 hours of classroom teaching experiences 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

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

- hold a valid teaching certificate,
- have a minimum of three years 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 mentor listed is an administrator, then the mentor must hold a valid Administrative Certificate.

What will I do as a Cooperating Teacher?

The following list provides the specific responsibilities of a cooperating teacher in the TeacherReady program.

- **Be familiar** with the Cooperating Teacher Handbook.
- **Complete the Clinical Educator Training** unless you have already completed similar training. If so, just send us your professional development log, certificate of completion, or transcripts as documentation.
- **Mentor** the TeacherReady candidate in fully developing their professional practice through informal and formal observations, feedback conversations, and coaching.
- **Meet with the teacher candidate prior to any formal observation, specifically the Benchmark (at mid-point of the program) and at the Culminating Clinical Experience (after intensive lesson 7)** to conduct the pre-observation content planning conference and familiarize the candidate with the observation and assessment details.
- **Observe** the performance of the teacher candidate at mid-point of the program or after successful completion of Intensive Lesson 4 and submit the **Benchmark Assessment**.
- **Collaborate with your teacher candidate** throughout the program. At the end of the

program, as the candidate prepares for the week of culminating, assist the candidate in planning for the week of teaching as well as preparing the specific plans for daily teaching. Your approval of the lesson plans and pre- and post-tests for the culminating clinical experience are essential for the success of the candidate.

- **Observe** the performance of the teacher candidate at the end of the program or after successful completion of Intensive Lesson 7 and submit the **Culminating Clinical Experience Evaluation** at the end of the 5-day week of culminating.
- **Meet with the teacher candidate after any formal observation, specifically the Benchmark (at mid-point of the program) and at the Culminating Clinical Experience (after intensive lesson 7)** to conduct post-observation conferences to review the results of the observation and evaluation and provide feedback.
- **Validate the logged hours** your candidate entered in the **Clinical Experience Log** (teacher candidate B above) every time your candidate comes to your classroom.
- **Assist the candidate in scheduling observations** of other classes when beneficial.

Each of the items in the list of responsibilities will be explained more fully in the following narrative in the order that the items are listed above.

CLINICAL EDUCATOR TRAINING

To assist our cooperating teachers in coaching and providing feedback to our candidates, we developed a Clinical Educator Training. This training is intended to assist cooperating teachers in observing, giving feedback, and assessing candidate performance. **The Clinical Educator Training requirement must be met by mid-point in the program, prior to the Benchmark Assessment** (end of Intensive lesson 4). However, the earlier in the process the cooperating teacher can complete the training, the better. The Clinical Educator Training is completely online and free for our cooperating teachers. It will take approximately four (4) hours to complete. Review the [TeacherReady Clinical Educator Training Content](#).

If you have previously received similar training, you do not have to take this training again. Please send your certificate, professional development log, or transcripts to TeacherReadyAdvisors@uwf.edu. School administrators will send a copy of their administrative license or educational leadership certificate, and that will fulfill this requirement.

COOPERATING TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The teacher candidate will have specific assignments to complete while in your classroom or in a school setting. It is the teacher candidate's responsibility to discuss these assignments with you and arrange for completion. If the candidate does not have a specific clinical experience assignment to complete, assign the candidate to work with a small group of students or to complete a task in your classroom. For example, if you want to gather information on a K-12 student, you may have the teacher candidate to observe the student and take specific notes about the classroom behavior of that student. It is important for the teacher candidate to experience as many different teaching tasks as possible.

The K-12 students in your classroom need to be comfortable with and confident of the teacher candidate. The experiences you provide should support this relationship between your students and the candidate. The candidate can assume added responsibilities as they continue to learn and progress in classroom tasks.

Additionally, as the candidate experiences being a teacher, they will look to you for answers to questions, interpretation of events and feedback to improve.

We also want to provide some options that work for TeacherReady candidates as they work to complete their clinical experience hours. Most importantly, with your help, we want to provide experience in the classroom that support the development of skills and qualities needed to be a quality first year educator. The following are suggestions; we trust your judgement about what is best for the candidate and your students.

Some options for classroom experiences:

- Work with small groups of students or individual students who need special attention
- Teach a small portion of class content
- Teach special units/topics of study provided by the cooperating teacher or co-designed with the cooperating teacher
- Review student results on assessments together

In every situation above:

- Provide feedback with each effort by the candidate
 - What worked well?
 - What could be improved, or would you do differently?
 - What did you like best about the lesson, activity?
 - What are the key learnings for you from this experience?

BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT

The TeacherReady program does not require a specific number of cooperating teacher-mentee mentoring conferences, however, we require that cooperating teachers have a **pre-Benchmark Content Planning Conference** to review the objectives of this section of the program, plan the best time for the observation and assessment, and go over the [Florida Educator Accomplished Practices \(FEAPs\)](#). Content Planning Conferences are explained in detail in the Clinical Educator Training that you receive. The most important aspect of the **content planning conference** is the focus on **CONTENT** and **Student Learning**.

The **Benchmark Assessment** is designed to provide an opportunity to apply concepts and skills learned, as candidates reach the mid-point of the TeacherReady lesson content. This assessment also serves as an important time for reflection and processing of TeacherReady instructor and cooperating teacher feedback.

At the mid-point of the TeacherReady program, cooperating teachers are asked to observe the performance of the teacher candidate teaching in the classroom and complete the **Benchmark Assessment** to document the teacher candidate's performance. The **Benchmark Assessment** serves as a tool to give feedback and help the candidate work on areas of improvement as they complete the second half of the program. The cooperating teacher might not be able to observe all the areas in the evaluation. This should not be a surprise since the teacher candidate is at mid-point in their program. If that is the case, you may mark the skill as 'N/A' and in the **post-Benchmark Assessment conference**, the discussion can be around what experiences are needed to meet different areas of the evaluation.

Leading up to the **Benchmark Assessment**, teacher candidates will

- develop lesson plans for **one week of instruction**, share one of the lesson plans with their cooperating teacher, and **invite their cooperating teacher for a planned observation and evaluation** of that lesson.
- **reflect and self-evaluate** their progress following the planned observation.

After the **Benchmark Assessment**, cooperating teacher and teacher candidate will have a **post-Benchmark Assessment conference** to share feedback and observations. This is a good opportunity for the cooperating teacher to identify areas for recognition (demonstrated effectiveness), areas for improvement, and recommended paths of action. Ask the candidate to identify 1-3 actions they will continue, improve, or eliminate to assist them in their planning for continued growth and development.

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 mentoring 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.

PREPARE FOR THE CULMINATING EVALUATION WEEK

Once the candidate completes Intensive Lessons 1-7 of the program, the teacher candidate can schedule and complete the **5-day culminating clinical experience**. The teacher candidate must work with you to determine what standards/benchmarks or topics need to be taught during the **5-day clinical experience**. You determine the best time for the culminating experience to occur depending on the teacher candidate being ready to take over the class. Once the content has been decided, collaborate with the teacher candidate for the creation of pre-tests to help the candidate determine prior knowledge. Using the results of the pre-test, the teacher candidate will collaborate with you to develop lesson plans. The lesson plans should include:

- specific learning targets to be communicated to the students,
- instruction that is aligned to the learning targets,
- formative assessments that are part of instruction and that provide data on how closely students are to hitting the learning target, and
- summative assessment that is aligned to the learning targets.

- a post-test that is closely aligned to the pre-test will be administered to determine student learning gains during the culminating clinical experience. **As cooperating teacher, you will approve the final version of the pre-test, lesson plans, and post-test** before the teacher candidate uploads them into their eLearning platform for grading by the TeacherReady instructor.

During day one of the week of culminating utilize the [Culminating Evaluation \(PDF\)](#) tool to determine the indicators you will be watching for as your teacher candidate is teaching. It is imperative that you **keep comprehensive notes** for supporting evidence as you will be sharing these each afternoon with your teacher candidate, and you will need to document the supporting evidence when you fill out the online evaluation tool at the end of the week of culminating. The [Culminating Evaluation \(PDF\)](#) document included in this handbook is a replica of the **online form** you will fill out when you evaluate the candidate at the end of the **culminating week experience**.

As previously mentioned, each afternoon you will meet with your teacher candidate to reflect on the day's events and to provide recommendations for the following day. At a minimum, please, discuss the following:

1. What the teacher candidate did well
2. What the teacher candidate can improve on tomorrow
3. Discuss students learning gains that occurred that day

During your daily meeting, listen to the teacher candidate and guide their learning. Focus on improvements for the following day. Your candidate is required to include a summary of the above discussion points in their reflection assignment due at the end of each day during the week of culminating. This process will be repeated each of the five days of the culminating clinical experience.

At the end of the **Week of Culminating**, you will complete the [Culminating Evaluation \(PDF\)](#) online. Please note it is essential to fill out all questions of the **online form**. If a question is missed, the form will not be submitted. Submit the evaluation promptly after the week of culminating has finished.

CULMINATING EVALUATION WEEK

The **Culminating Clinical Experience or Lesson 8** is a full week of evaluation where teacher candidates will develop lesson plans for 5 consecutive days of instruction; embed a variety of formative assessments; employ a variety of instructional strategies to ensure all students can learn; and submit reflections as part of their assignments after each day of teaching based on their teaching performance on the lessons and student learning gains.

Similarly, to the **Benchmark Assessment**, the TeacherReady program requires that cooperating teachers have a **pre-Culminating Clinical Experience Content Planning Conference** to review the objectives of the program, plan the best time for the observation and evaluation, and review the lesson plans and pre- and post-tests.

After the **Culminating Clinical Experience**, cooperating teacher and teacher candidate will have a **post-Culminating Clinical Experience Conference** to share feedback and observations before the cooperating teacher submits the [Culminating Evaluation \(PDF\)](#).

Cooperating teachers will also meet with their teacher candidate **at the end of each day of the**

Culminating Clinical Experience week to provide immediate feedback.

Culminating Clinical Experience Evaluation – What to Expect

FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES

- In 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 mentoring 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 lessons (if cooperating teacher is a fellow teacher) or 1 lesson (if cooperating teacher is an administrator).
- Teacher candidates need to make sure they 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 their elearning system**.
- Teacher candidates will hold a **post-Culminating Clinical Experience mentoring 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 after 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 cooperating teacher is an administrator, they will observe one (1) lesson during the week of culminating. If the cooperating teacher is a fellow teacher, they will observe one (1) lesson **each day of the culminating week** (5 consecutive days).
- 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 sharing 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 (teacher candidate B on page 6), 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 **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** (teacher candidate A on page 6), 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 **Lesson 8/Culminating Clinical Experience** to document their clinical work. Cooperating teachers **do not** have to sign the [Clinical Experience Log for Full-Time Teachers, Paras & Permanent Subs](#).

SCHEDULING OBSERVATIONS

The TeacherReady candidate needs a well-rounded experience that aligns to the experience of a first-year teacher. The clinical experience assignments offer the chance for candidates to encounter a variety of classroom settings, teachers, instructional responsibilities, meetings, and a set of professional obligations. As a cooperating teacher, you provide guidance to ensure that the teacher candidate makes good decisions about who to observe and interview as well as the focus needed for continuing growth. You will also assist the teacher candidate with all the administrative requirements to observe other teachers in other classrooms as necessary.

You should expect the candidate to talk with you about the clinical experience assignments required for each lesson. Please prompt them if they fail to do so. The context for the experiences is always a part of the instructions for the clinical experiences.

Thank you again for your work with the TeacherReady teacher candidate and your continued commitment to the education profession.

Cooperating Teacher Resources

- [Cooperating Teacher Checklist](#)
- [Clinical Experience Log for Non-Full-Time Teachers](#)
- [Clinical Experience Log for Full-Time Teachers, Paras & Permanent Subs](#)
- [Standards of Behavior](#)
- [TeacherReady Lesson Contents](#)
- [Florida Educator Accomplished Practices \(FEAPs\)](#)
- [Benchmark Assessment \(PDF\)](#)
- [Culminating Evaluation \(PDF\)](#)
- [TeacherReady Clinical Educator Training Content](#)

TeacherReady Contact Information

- For admissions and general inquiries, contact teacherready@uwf.edu
- For advising, contact teacherreadyadvisors@uwf.edu
- For academics, contact Dr. Reggie Todd, Lead Instructor at rtodd1@uwf.edu

University of West Florida

Building 85, Suite 196
11000 University Parkway
Pensacola, FL 32514

Main office line [850-898-3949](tel:850-898-3949)

[UWF TeacherReady](#)