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Clinical Practice - Student Teaching and MAT Internship

The Clinical Practice - Student Teaching and Masters of Art in Teaching (MAT) Internship is considered to be possibly the most significant and important phase of the professional preparation for the teacher education candidate. This phase of the pre-service education program is the segment in which the candidate works full time in a school setting for fifteen (15) weeks with a competent and experienced cooperating teacher.

The student teacher/intern, through gradual involvement in a classroom or teaching situation, assumes increasing responsibility for teaching during the fifteen week period. During the fifteen week period, the teaching load gradually increases until the student teacher/intern assumes the full teaching load for a minimum period of five weeks. In addition to the fifteen week clinical practice, seminars are conducted at the University to review critical topics related to the experience and to assist candidates in preparing their electronic evidences.

Clinical Practice Application Process

The application process for the clinical practice begins the semester prior to the experience. Applications for student teaching/internship are due in Taskstream on March 30 for fall semester and September 30 for the spring semester experience. Candidates must enroll in one of the following student teaching and MAT internship courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELED 559</td>
<td>Student Teaching in the Elementary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUIN 660</td>
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<td>HPED 615</td>
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<td>ELED 618</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPED 670</td>
<td>Clinical Practice in Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUED 699</td>
<td>Internship in Business Teacher Education</td>
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</table>
Clinical Practice Framework

Admission Requirements:

- Formal admission to the Teacher Education Program;
- Approved Student Teaching/MAT Intern Application Form submitted in Taskstream by March 30 for the fall semester and September 30 for the spring semester in the Clinical Practice Folder in Taskstream;
- Cumulative GPA of 2.8 for undergraduate candidates and a 3.0 for graduate candidates;
- Successful completion of all required methods courses and professional education courses;
- Copy of passing scores on Licensure Tests uploaded in Taskstream;
- Approved background checks; and
- Proof of Educator’s liability insurance.

All candidates with the exception of undergraduates and graduate level Elementary Education and Special Education majors are required to take CUN 670 Capstone in Teacher Education in conjunction with their student teaching/internship course. Students enrolled in a student teaching/internship course are permitted to take only one additional 3 credit hour course during the clinical practice semester. The additional course cannot be scheduled during the school day or during the student teaching/internship seminar course. All candidates enrolled in clinical practice are REQUIRED to pay a student teaching/internship fee unless they are employed as a teacher.

Placement, Supervision, and Instruction

When the student teaching/internship application has been approved, the Field Placement Coordinator submits the name of the student teacher or intern to a school administrative unit for placement with an experienced teacher. The Director of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice, Field Placement Coordinator, Program Area Coordinator and School Partners work
collaboratively to select an effective qualified teacher who will serve as the cooperating teacher. Student teachers and interns are also assigned a faculty member that serves as the university supervisor to supervise the student teacher/intern.

**Goals of Clinical Practice**

Clinical Practice provide opportunities for the student teacher/intern to obtain, through supervised guidance, an understanding of the teaching-learning process along with a mastery of the skills involved in helping students learn. Specifically, the clinical experience should assist the candidate in becoming a catalyst for learning and leading that can:

- Demonstrate high ethical standards
- Lead in the classroom
- Create a positive and nurturing classroom environment that allows students to work in teams and develop leadership qualities.
- Plan, organize, evaluate/assess, and manage routine elements of a classroom.
- Demonstrate content knowledge and use a variety of teaching methods to make instruction relevant to students.
- Analyze student learning and modify instruction for the desired learning outcome(s).
- Adapt their teaching to benefit students with special needs
- Integrate and utilize technology in their instruction and management of the learning environment.
- Align instruction with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study that includes the Common Core Standards for the 21st learner.
- Embrace diversity in the learning environment.
- Demonstrates proficiency in communication, critical thinking and problem solving skills.
- Demonstrate the desired knowledge, skills, and dispositions of a professional educator in a real classroom setting.

**Evaluation**

The Student Teacher / Intern Performance Evaluation is utilized to evaluate the candidate’s performance. This instrument was developed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction as the LEA/IHE Certification of Teaching Capacity Form and was modified
by the School of Education Assessment Committee and approved by the Teacher Education Council at North Carolina A&T State University. It was piloted during the 2011-2012 academic year. This instrument assesses the student teachers’/interns’ performance on the following five Proficient Descriptors:

- Professionalism
- Classroom Climate/Culture
- Instruction
- Evaluation/Assessment
- Impact on Student Learning

Cooperating Teachers and University Supervisors complete three (3) Student Teacher / Intern Performance Evaluation forms in Taskstream on the assigned due dates:

- The first (initial) during the 4th week of clinical practice
- The second (interim) during the 7th – 8th week of clinical practice
- The third (final) during the 14th-15th week of the Student Teacher/Intern Performance Evaluation at the end of the experience

The initial evaluation should be completed by the cooperating teacher and university supervisor and shared with the student teacher/intern. This evaluation allows the student teacher/intern to better understand the Performance Evaluation and their performance in the classroom. Each evaluation should be discussed either independently or collectively by the cooperating teacher, university supervisor, and the student teacher/intern. A three-way conference allows the candidate to profit from weaknesses discovered and also to build on strengths identified. Student teachers/interns are expected to write a response to the evaluation.
Local Education Agency / Institution of Higher Education (LEA/IHE) Certification of Teaching Capacity Form

The LEA/IHE Certification of Teaching Capacity form provides the State Board of Education with evidence of proficiency of North Carolina teaching competencies and accompanies the candidate's application for licensure along with the transcript of credit earned. The document must be completed on each candidate and signed by the candidate, cooperating teacher, principal (or designee) and the university supervisor. The candidate must receive a “met” rating on the five (5) stated Proficient Descriptors. It should be submitted to the School of Education Student Services Office, included with the Application for Initial Licensure, and uploaded in the Profile and Graduation folder item #5D in Taskstream.
The Role of the Student Teacher/Intern

The student teacher/intern represents both the University and the teaching profession, and therefore is expected to uphold high standards of professionalism and personal ethics. The success of student teaching/internships will depend largely upon the student teacher’s/intern's own enthusiasm, effort, and initiative.

Although student teaching/internship is somewhat flexible, there are certain procedures and policies that should guide the student teacher/intern towards successful achievement throughout the experience.

Student Teaching/Internship Schedule

First Through Second Week: Orientation

The orientation phase for the student teacher/intern is accomplished during the first two weeks. The student teacher/intern should arrive promptly at school each day and dress in a professional manner. During this time, the student teacher/intern should maintain a professional code of conduct and adhere to the following guidelines:

- Learn the general rules and policies of the school and reasons for the regulations. In addition, become familiar with school procedures concerning safety regulations, fire and security drills, hall or playground supervision, cafeteria schedules, and other routines of the school.
- Learn the contextual factors of the school, classroom and students
- Learn the names of students to be taught. Discuss with the cooperating teacher the abilities and backgrounds of the students. This information will provide a better understanding of each individual's strengths and weaknesses and, in turn, a clearer understanding and acceptance of each individual as a student.
- Become familiar with student records as much as possible. Keep in mind that student records are confidential materials and accessible for professional use only.
- Become familiar with the routines of the classroom. Know where the supplies are...
stored, the general housekeeping rules, attendance procedures, available technology and other resources.

- Observe and assist the cooperating teacher. Review and analyze the cooperating teacher's methods, techniques and teaching styles.
- Review the textbooks and other materials to be used during the clinical experience. Complete a draft of unit and/or lesson plans for subjects/classes that will be taught first and give them to the cooperating teacher to review and approve. Make changes as necessary.

**Third Through Twelfth Weeks**

In agreement with the cooperating teacher the student teacher/intern should gradually assume teaching responsibilities until carrying the full teaching load. The student teacher/intern should:

- Complete a minimum of ninety (90) hours of actual teaching.
- Gradually assume the teaching load and carry the full teacher load for a minimum of 5 weeks.
- Develop purposeful and level appropriate lessons/unit plans at least one week in advance and secure approval from the cooperating teacher before teaching the lessons. The lesson plans developed in advance should be given to the cooperating teacher for review and approval.
- Treat all students and school personnel with dignity and respect.
- Engage in the formal evaluation process with the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor.
- Be reflective in your practice.
- Attend school meetings/workshops.

**Thirteenth Through the Final Week**

The cooperating teacher will begin taking back classes and related responsibilities to ensure a smooth transition in the classroom instruction. During the final week of the experience, the student teacher/intern may visit other classes (pre-arranged by the cooperating teacher) but should report to the assigned classroom each day. In addition the student teacher/intern must complete and submit the analysis and reflection item #2.B. artifact in Taskstream in the Clinical Practice folder, and upload the LEA/IHE Certification of Teaching Capacity Form and Certificate of Hours Taught Form in Profile and Graduation folder, item #5.D with the licensure
application package.

Other Important Expectations

- The student teacher/intern should abide by the calendar and the work schedule of the cooperating school rather than that of the University. The student teacher/intern is to participate in school activities approved by the principal including PTA meetings, work days, faculty and team meetings at the school, committee functions if invited, and other school activities.
- Attend all university seminars and network with peers.
- Be punctual in meeting all responsibilities and requirements related to the student teaching/internship experience.
- Maintain the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators (http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/effectiveness-model/ncees/standards/code-of-ethics.pdf) during the student teaching/internship experience. Social relationships with students, colleagues, or other school personnel should remain on a high and respectful level at all times as to ensure one’s effectiveness as a teacher.
- Well-planned lessons are essential to being an effective teacher. All plans should be discussed with and approved by the cooperating teacher prior to implementation.
- Maintain reflections on all lessons taught. These reflections will allow the student teacher/intern to evaluate their own teaching and become a reflective practitioner.
- Classroom Management: The clinical experience allows the candidate to gain confidence and success in classroom management skills. The suggestions that follow should assist the student teacher/intern in building the type of student-teacher relationships that should contribute to prevention of problems related to classroom management:
  - Use students' names as soon as possible. Be familiar with the seating arrangement.
  - Focus your attention on the total classroom situation.
  - Exhibit calmness, dignity and poise at all times. Refrain from the use of
derogatory remarks, threats, and expressions of anger, destructive criticism, and sarcasm.

- Address problems and minor issues before they gain momentum.
- Be consistent with class rules, relations, and expectations.
- Work towards a high degree of participation and engagement.
- Consider the worth and dignity of the individual; this is of utmost importance.

- Be firm, friendly and fair (3 F’s)

- Before leaving the cooperating school, the student teacher/intern must return all books, borrowed materials, and student records, and pay any debts or financial obligations incurred.

Policies

- **Corporal Punishment is not permissible. Student teachers/interns have no legal authority for this type of action.**
- It is mandatory that student teachers/interns attend all university seminars that are scheduled throughout the term of the student teaching experience.
- Student teachers/interns are expected to be regular in attendance, punctual, and give proper notification when illness or some serious circumstance prevents them from being in the classroom on any teaching day. Student teachers/interns should contact the school assigned, call the course instructor and the appropriate university supervisor when absence is essential. Student teachers/interns who are absent more than three days may be required to extend the clinical experience.
- The student teacher/intern should not be used as the substitute teacher. During the cooperating teacher’s absence, the student teacher/intern may continue with the teaching responsibilities already assumed. The substitute teacher will be responsible for the teaching duties of the cooperating teacher.
- Student teaching/internship is a full-time responsibility. Therefore, student
teachers/interns are strongly urged not to hold employment while completing the student teaching experience.

- Student teachers/interns are encouraged to videotape several mini-lessons or other brief lessons during their clinical experience to improve their teaching skills. Student teachers/interns must follow any rules and guidelines pertaining to videotaping that may include students at their cooperating school.

**Removal from Student Teaching/Internship**

Participation in early field experiences and clinical practice is a privilege and not a right. Placement sites are established through collaborative relationships between the university and the cooperating school. The school has the right to deny or remove interns or student teachers/interns whenever they deem it necessary. When circumstances arise that prevent the student teacher/intern from completing the clinical experience, the student teacher/intern, cooperating teacher, university supervisor and director of student teaching/internship may initiate the withdrawal process. Prior to removal from clinical practice, a conference will be held with the student teacher/intern, the university supervisors, department chairperson, and the director of student teaching/internships. At this conference, a plan of action will be developed for the student teacher/intern. A student teacher/intern may be removed from clinical practice for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to attend seminars and complete required assignments, activities, evaluations, etc.
- Failure to conduct himself/herself in a manner consistent with dispositions of professional educators (in keeping with ethical and moral standards). Student teacher/intern will be dismissed from the student teaching/internship experience and the Teacher Education Program. **This also includes the internet and all forms of social media.**
- Failure to meet requirements of the student teaching/internship experience.
- Failure to maintain adequate progress during the clinical experience.
- Failure to maintain adequate attendance during the student teaching/internship experience.
- Any reason that impedes the progress of the student teacher/intern.
The Roles of the Cooperating Teacher, University Supervisor, Field Placement Coordinator, Director of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

The cooperating teacher, university supervisor, and student teacher/intern working together ensure a successful clinical experience. The involvement of public school partners makes student teaching/internship experience a cooperative venture between the University and the school system. Cooperating teachers are license professional educators with a minimum of three years teaching experience in the specialty area of the student teacher/intern. The cooperating teacher brings demonstrated best practices and experiences to support and guide the candidate during the clinical practice semester. Although the cooperating teacher is the focal person in the clinical experience, principals, curriculum facilitators, and counselors may be asked to cooperate in consultation when dealing with student teachers/interns.

The Role of the Cooperating Teacher

The cooperating teacher facilitates the induction of the candidate into the teaching profession. Cooperating teachers:

- Demonstrate to the student teacher/intern a sincere interest and concern for their development as an effective educator. Model the instructional techniques and professional behaviors which will maximize learning for the student teacher/intern.
- Introduce the student teacher/intern to students and other staff members in a respectful manner that allows students, and staff to feel he/she is truly an additional teacher on the staff.
- Familiarize the student teacher/intern with school policies and procedures, including *Faculty Handbook, Student/Parent Handbook*, school map, and curriculum materials.
- Conduct daily conferences to keep the student teacher/intern informed of his/her progress, provide suggestions and constructive criticisms necessary to ensure proper planning and preparation to assure maximum learning by students.
- Conduct ongoing evaluation and provides feedback.
- Assist the student teacher/intern in developing good teaching methods and techniques.
- Instruct the student teacher/intern in the use of both hardware and software for providing instruction and data collection.
• Remind the student teacher/intern to participate in all pertinent school-based instructional and non-instructional duties for which he/she is responsible. This includes, among many other activities, PTA meetings and playground/bus duties.
• Seek to develop the student teacher/intern’s confidence and understanding of the teaching profession by gradually increasing responsibility from observation-participation during the first week to a full load of classes approximately by the fifth week.
• Allow the student teacher/intern to assume full responsibility (lead teacher role) for his/her teaching load or the equivalent for at least five weeks.
• Communicate any concerns with the university supervisor regarding the student teacher’s/intern’s performance to provide guidance for continued development.
• Complete and share 3 Student Teacher/Intern Performance Evaluations with the student teacher/intern. The first (initial evaluation) should be completed at the end of the fourth week; the second (interim evaluation) should be completed at the end of the seventh week; and the third (final evaluation) completed at the end of the student teaching/internship experience. The three performance evaluations should be completed in Taskstream on the assigned due dates.
• Encourage and permit the student teacher/intern the opportunity to implement some innovative and creative ideas in the classroom.
• Complete the personal data and other forms pertaining to the cooperating teacher’s credentials and honorarium. An honorarium will be paid to the cooperating teacher for supervising a student teacher. Cooperating teachers must submit the Student Teaching/Practicum Fee Request Form and a W9 form by the assigned due date.
• Submit to the Student Services Office the Certificate of Hours Taught and the LEA/IHE Certification of Teaching Capacity Form immediately after the experience is completed.

In summary, the student teacher/intern should engage in all school activities in which the cooperating teacher's participation is expected. However, the cooperating teacher should be careful not to overload the student teacher/intern with inside or outside activities just because the student teacher/intern is willing to work hard and is energetic. Too much responsibility too soon is not recommended. It should also be noted that the cooperating teacher maintains legal responsibility for students in the classroom.

The Role of the University Supervisor

The University Supervisor is cooperatively involved in orientation, supervision, evaluation, and overall concern for the student teaching/internship program. It is in this capacity
that the university supervisor makes significant contributions. The University Supervisor is responsible for the following:

- Instructing the student teachers/interns in methods and principles of teaching prior to and during the clinical experiences.
- Conducting individual orientation session with student teacher/intern and cooperating teacher on site.
- Assisting the student teacher/intern in becoming a Professional Educator: Catalyst for Learning using the institutional standards of diversity, assessment, reflection, and technology (DART).
- Visiting and observing each student teacher/intern a minimum of five times. However, additional visits should be made to provide assistance and problem resolution, as needed.
- The University Supervisor also completes a minimum of three Student Teacher/Intern Performance Evaluations in the Clinical Practice folder in Taskstream.
- Attending meetings and staying in touch with the Director of Student Teaching/Internship and Placement Coordinator to assure smooth operation of the program.
- Assisting the cooperating teacher in the orientation, supervision and evaluation of the student teacher/intern, with additional assistance provided in difficult cases.
- Submitting during the student teaching/internship experience all evaluation forms, observation reports, travel logs, and mileage reimbursement forms on the assigned due dates.
The Role of the Field Placement Coordinator and the Director of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice

The Field Placement Coordinator and the Director of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice work collaboratively to coordinate the administration of the clinical experience. This includes:

- Collaborating with the department chairperson, program coordinators, and school partners to place candidates with school districts for clinical practice.
- Conducting the orientation conference with the cooperating teachers, university supervisors, and other school personnel.
- Disseminating student teachers/intern rosters and pertinent communications to all parties participating in the program.
- Working with university supervisors to provide transportation and communication regarding visitations to student teachers/interns, and addressing the concerns of the cooperating teachers, school district personnel, and others directly associated with the clinical experience.
- Reporting to the Director of Teacher Education, the Dean of the School of Education and communicating with concerned departmental chairpersons regarding the student teaching/internship program.
- Cooperating with the Teacher Education Council to communicate changes and/or modifications in the Program.
- Convening meetings with university supervisors once each semester.
- Convening meetings with cooperating teachers, public school administrators, and others as needed.
- Planning and executing professional development workshops for cooperating teachers, student teachers/interns, and university supervisors.
- Writing the annual report for the Field Based and Clinical Experience Program.
Clinical Practice Appeals Process

Candidates enter the teacher education program with various work experiences, particularly individuals in the Masters of Art in Teaching (MAT) program. These work experiences may include current teaching experience or prior successful teaching experiences in the specialty area. Therefore, these candidates may not be required to complete the normal clinical practice experience. These candidates may request to appeal the clinical practice experience by submitting a portfolio to the Director of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice for review. The Director reviews the portfolio and submits the recommendation to the Director of Teacher Education. The portfolio should include the following:

- Letter requesting to appeal the clinical experience
- Resume
- Letters of support from their principal(s)/supervisors
- Letters of support from their department chairperson and/or program coordinator
- Copies of any temporary teaching license
- Copies of teaching evaluations
- Sample lesson plans and/or unit plans
- Sample special activities implemented

If the appeal is approved, the candidate must still enroll in the required student teaching/internship course(s) and complete all evidences and artifacts required for licensure recommendation but they will not need to complete the normal clinical practice experience.
Clinical Practice Request for Early Release

Candidates that receive teaching position during the student teaching/internship semester may request early release to accept the teaching position by submitting the following:

- Letter requesting early release from student teaching/internship
- Letter from the school system requesting early release to accept the teaching position in the area of specialty
- Letters of support from their department chairperson and/or program coordinator
- Copies of student teaching evaluations

These documents will be reviewed by the Director of Clinical Practice and the Director of Teacher Education for final approval. The candidate and the school system will receive notification of the decision. However, the candidate will remain enrolled in student teaching/internship and the university supervisor will complete all observations and evaluations. In addition, the candidate will be responsible for completing all program and licensure requirements including electronic evidences that must be submitted in Taskstream. The hiring school system will complete the LEA/IHE Certification for Teaching Capacity form at the end of the semester.
School of Education Conceptual Framework Candidate Proficiencies

Four core values interwoven throughout the Professional Education Program guide the development of professional educators at North Carolina A & T, they are:

**Diversity:** 21st Century Professional Educators who are catalysts for learning have competence in the nine central tenets of human diversity: (1) race, (2) ethnicity, (3) gender, (4) socioeconomic status, (5) age, (6) sexual preference, (7) religion, (8) exceptionalities, and (9) geographic region (Diller & Moule, 2005). 21st Century Professional Educators are culturally responsive and committed to the ideals of collaboration, trust, equity, advocacy, and the ethical use of power and empowerment. As such, these educators have the ability “to construct pedagogical practices that have relevance and meaning to students’ social and cultural realities” (Howard, 2003, p. 195) and have the ability to use knowledge of the learner’s family, community, culture, aspirations, and values as vehicles for engagement and learning.

**Assessment:** 21st Century Professional Educators “are continuously involved in making decisions about people or in helping people make decisions for and about themselves.” (Thorndike, 2005, p. 7) As such, 21st Century Professional Educators know the importance of systematically collecting, evaluating, and using assessment data to drive their decision making process (McMillan, 2007). These educators create and select appropriate assessments, conduct appropriate evaluation techniques, and make sound educational decisions. They understand fair, reliable, and consistent assessment practices are essential for making decisions regarding curricula, instructional strategies, and program improvement to ensure all learners have the opportunity to experience academic success.

**Reflection:** The 21st Century Professional Educator engages in continuous “deliberate thinking” (Hatton & Smith, 1995) to improve future actions and
decision making. These educators utilize an explicit reflective model to engage in a metacognitive process that involves thinking critically, exploring various solutions to problems, and making sound, evidence-based inferences when appropriate data are available. The goal of this type of reflective practice is not simply the improvement of student learning but also the enhancement of the educator’s knowledge, the expansion of the educator’s skills, and the development of the educator’s awareness.

**Technology:** The 21st Century Professional Educator uses technology to gather, manage, and reach logical conclusions about data in the context of the subject area (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2007) as a means to bridge the social, cultural, economic, and cognitive gaps between learners. Such an educator knows when and how to use technology to help the learner examine content more critically, solve problems, and establish reliability. Such an educator knows what attributes of technology promote effective learning. The effective use of technology enhances the 21st Century Professional Educator’s ability to engage learners in the exploration of real-world issues, personalize learning environments to address various learning styles, engage dynamic learner characteristics, provide learners with varied formative and summative assessments, and communicate relevant information and ideas effectively to stakeholders.

**Core 21st Century Principles**

Infused throughout the Professional Education Program are seven key principles necessary for the growth and development of an effective 21st Century Professional Educator. These principles emerge from and align with the Unit’s core values:

- **Content Mastery:** The candidate understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches, supports and/or leads. Using this
knowledge, the candidate has the ability to integrate other disciplines into the primary content area.

- **Pedagogical Knowledge**: The candidate understands how learners develop and differ in their approaches to teaching and learning, striving to create equitable instructional opportunities that encourage critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration.

- **Professionalism**: The candidate practices ethical and caring behavior within and outside the classroom and engages in continuous professional development to accomplish self-directed growth.

- **Leadership**: The candidate responds to diverse populations by constructing and articulating a shared vision within the classroom that aligns with and expands the goals of the school, community, and professional organizations served.

- **Equity**: The candidate seeks to learn more about each learner as a means to create fair learning environments that present various perspectives and counteract stereotypes.

- **Global Awareness**: The candidate seeks opportunities to learn about various cultures, beliefs, and ways of learning and deliberately integrates this information into planning, instruction, and assessment.

- **Inquiry**: The candidate designs investigations to collect and analyze data to test hypotheses and beliefs that will transform future practice and decision making through reflective dialogue with students, colleagues, and community partners.