



NATIONAL
LOUIS
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NATIONAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AT NATIONAL LOUIS UNIVERSITY

Master of Arts in Teaching [MAT] Elementary Education

**Practicum I Handbook
Grades 1 - 6
2019 - 2020**

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Welcome to Practicum I Teacher Candidates

Welcome to an important and exciting phase of your career – Practicum I: Teaching and Learning in Diverse Settings. This experience will support your to becoming a professionally licensed educator. As Elementary Education faculty, we understand the demands of this experience and are excited and confident knowing that you are ready to take on this task. We look forward to supporting you and helping you to become high achieving professionals. We also hope to model the highest principles of progressive education that you will provide to those you teach now and in the future.

The Practicum I Experience

Theory and practice come together in the Practicum I experience as teacher candidates are introduced to important concepts in education as well as the world of the elementary classroom. Candidates will be expected to plan and teach at least one lesson to the entire class as part of the 40+ hours spent in the Practicum I classroom. Candidates will be supported during the experience by the cooperating teacher and seminar leader.

On Campus Seminars

Practicum seminars meet every week. Seminar attendance is mandatory. Seminars offer many learning opportunities and are forums for sharing ideas and challenges from the field.

Placement

There are specific guidelines for all placements made during Practicum I; that is, it is the candidate's responsibility to arrange the placement for the ELE500 Practicum I preclinical experience.

- Candidates have the **primary** responsibility of locating an appropriate placement classroom. They can be assisted by the seminar leader if needed.
- Practicum hours must be completed in an Illinois school as candidates at NLU/NCE must meet Illinois licensure requirements.
- Practicum I hours cannot be completed in a school where a candidate's children or other family members are enrolled or employed.
- Some, but not all, practicum hours may be completed in the school where a candidate is employed, but in a different classroom, **upon approval by the seminar leader**.
- Practicum hours must be completed during the regular academic year and school day and during the term in which candidates are enrolled in the practicum class. It is recommended that observations are half or full day experiences. A portion of the preclinical hours may be completed in a private or parochial school setting with an approved teacher; however, if a candidate wishes to student teach in a private or parochial school, **more than half** [51% +] of the minimum required 125 preclinical hours must be completed in public school settings.
- Candidates must work with a cooperating teacher who holds a Professional Educator License with an endorsement for the grade being taught and who has three or more years of experience as a teacher.

Arranging the Hours

It is required that the Practicum I hours are spread across the term to provide a framework for developmental learning and completion of specific class assignments. Candidates will be required to prepare and teach a minimum of one lesson to the entire class during their classroom time. Near the end of the term, the candidate and the cooperating teacher separately complete an online Competency Appraisal [found at www.nl.edu/eletools] about the candidate's participation and performance in the classroom and then meet and discuss the appraisals together. The seminar leader must have these completed appraisals prior to the end of the term. A grade of B or better must be received in Practicum I to continue in the program.

It is the candidate's responsibility to arrange the placement for the ELE500 Practicum I preclinical experience. Below are the recommended procedures for securing a placement.

1. Identify a school that is known for excellent teaching practices. This may be done through discussion with friends, colleagues, teachers, the NLU academic advisor, or the seminar leader. Personal contacts are a good place to begin the search.
2. Schedule a meeting with the principal [or the person designated to work with preservice teachers] to explain the Practicum I requirements and to request a placement in the school.
3. At the meeting, present your *Letter of Introduction* and the *Guidelines for the Principal* form. Be sure to follow appropriate registration procedures when you arrive at the school.
4. A specific teacher will be assigned. Candidates must work with one teacher for this experience. The classroom must be a regular elementary school classroom. Special education classrooms, fine arts, ELL/bilingual resource settings are not appropriate for this experience. Share the *Guidelines for Cooperating Teachers and Suggestions for Participation in the classroom*.
5. A professional appearance and disposition during all school visits is required at all times.

Practicum I Requirements

Professional Demeanor: The faculty in Elementary Education is dedicated to preparing skilled and caring future classroom professionals. Teacher candidates must demonstrate behaviors that support their own professional development as well as the high achievement of children in the classroom. These behaviors and dispositions must demonstrate commitment to high academic, professional, and ethical standards which include wearing appropriate professional attire for school settings.

Reflective Journal: Teacher candidates are encouraged to write a reflective journal during the time they spend in the elementary classroom. In some cases, a journal will be a required seminar assignment. This journal can provide an important record of personal and professional

growth and document understanding of what the teacher candidates are learning in that experience.

Log Sheets: Teacher candidates are required to document the hours they are completing in the Practicum I classroom. They need to use the ELE MAT Log Sheet for the day-to-day hours. At the end of the term, teacher candidates need to document the total hours on the NCE Online Log Sheet found www.nl.edu/eletools.

Competency Appraisal: Teacher candidates should be thoroughly familiar with the Competency Appraisal. This documents progress in the important knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to teaching and constitutes an important portion of the Practicum I experience. In Practicum I, the teacher candidate and cooperating teacher each fill out an online Competency Appraisal at www.nl.edu/eletools. Instructions for filling out the online Competency Appraisals are included on the introduction to the appraisal form.

Attendance in the Practicum Placement: A regular schedule in the classroom should be established with the cooperating teacher. Teacher candidates must complete a minimum of 40 hours while enrolled in Practicum I. Appropriate arrival and departure times should be discussed with the cooperating teacher as well as procedures for signing into the schools as visitors. Additionally, since meetings are part of the real world of schools, teacher candidates should take advantage of meetings held at the school that are approved by the cooperating teacher; for example, attending grade level team meetings, faculty meetings, and parent conferences if appropriate.

Planning: Development and competency in lesson planning are essential for teaching effectiveness and meeting goals. Teachers build lessons around relevant student experiences to encourage optimum student achievement and engagement, to support student independent thinking, and to develop student interest and love of learning. Please keep the following in mind:

- a. The MAT Elementary Education program requires that candidates generate a formal lesson plan for the required whole class lesson. The specifics of lesson planning will be introduced in seminar. The topic and content of the lesson should be discussed with the cooperating teacher. The required lesson plan format and expectations for candidate instruction will be explained by the seminar leader.
- b. The cooperating teacher must review and initial the plan to signify approval before the lesson is taught and is asked give feedback before and after the lesson is taught. Plan should be provided to the cooperating teacher in advance in order for the candidates to receive feedback on their planning before actually teaching the lesson. It is helpful if the feedback is written notes and not simply verbal.

Exit Interview: This is an option for the seminar leader. If choosing to do an exit conference, it is held at NLU with the teacher candidate and seminar leader. The goal is to discuss the Practicum I experience including the competency appraisals, the logged hours, course requirements, and university requirements. The seminar leader determines the grade for Practicum I after considering all elements.

***Please note: Teacher candidates, while completing Practicum hours in the classroom, may not serve as a substitute teacher. If the cooperating teacher is absent, a qualified substitute teacher must be in the classroom at all times.**

Responsibilities

The Teacher Candidate is responsible for fulfilling the following requirements:

- Plan a schedule for completion of hours with the cooperating teacher
- Be an active participant in the 1-6 classroom and in seminar
- Complete all assignments as explained on the syllabus, in class, and D2L
- Complete the online Competency Appraisal with comments and discuss it with the

cooperating teacher

The cooperating teacher is responsible for fulfilling the following requirements:

- Provide written and oral feedback on planning
- Provide written and oral feedback on instruction
- Approve the lesson plan in advance of teaching
- Introduce the multiple roles of a teacher in today's classroom
- Complete the Competency Appraisal for Practicum I with comments and discuss it with the teacher candidate

The seminar leader is responsible for fulfilling the following requirements:

- Discuss Practicum I and other NCE/NLU policies
- Facilitate discussion of practicum classroom experiences in seminars
- Assess all candidate submissions of required assignments
- Assign the final grade for Practicum I

For the Cooperating Teacher

We ask that cooperating teachers become familiar with the Practicum I requirements as described in this handbook and assume the following responsibilities:

1. Provide oral and written feedback to the candidate on planning
 - a. Articulate the school's program goals and assist the candidate in creating appropriate learning experiences.
 - b. Review and approve, by initialing, the lesson plan for the whole class in advance of instruction. We recommend that this be done with enough time for the candidate to make any suggested changes in the plan.
 - c. Invite the candidate to participate in department planning sessions, faculty meetings and professional conferences when appropriate.
2. Provide oral and written feedback to the candidate on instruction
 - a. Observe teacher candidate interactions in the classroom on a regular basis. Give specific feedback on strengths and areas in need of growth. Discuss alternative strategies and techniques that have been successful as well as those that have not.

- b. Demonstrate effective teaching and assist the teacher candidate in analyzing its effect on student learning.
3. Evaluate the teacher candidate
 - a. Complete the online Competency Appraisal with comments in advance of evaluation conference.
 - b. Discuss insights regarding the teacher candidate's abilities and professional competencies in the classroom with the teacher candidate.

Meeting NCE/NLU Requirements

Contributing to the evaluation of the Practicum I experience is appropriately fulfilling all course and university requirements as outlined in the beginning of this Handbook. These include all class assignments, attendance, and planning, teaching, and analyzing a lesson taught to the entire class.

Clinical Forms

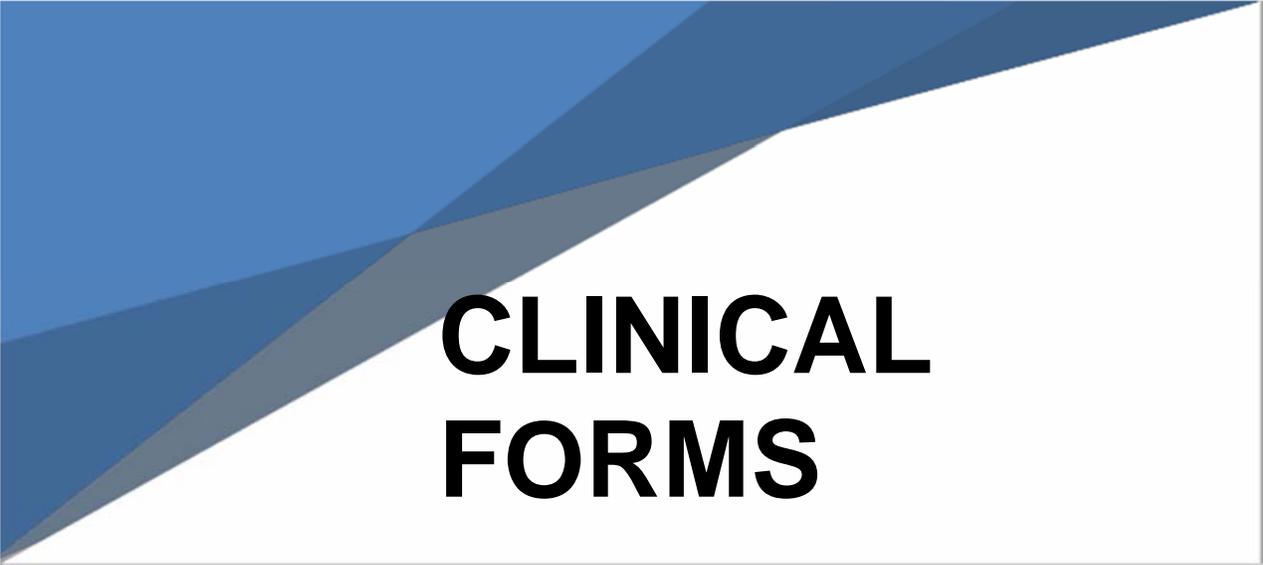
Copies of the Clinical Forms listed below are part of this handbook. Candidates are expected to print copies for use in seeking a placement for Practicum I.

- Placement Information
- Calendar
- Letter of Introduction
- Guidelines for the Principal
- Guidelines for the Cooperating Teacher
- Suggestions for Active Participation in the Classroom
- Thank You Letter for the Cooperating Teacher

Candidate Handbook

Please reference the MAT Elementary Education Candidate Handbook for additional information regarding the program and policies that apply to all teacher candidates in Elementary Education.

All of the information needed to apply for the Practicum II/Student Teaching placement is in the Candidate Handbook.



CLINICAL FORMS



Teacher Candidate Placement Information

Name Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/>		
Address		
City		
State		Zip
Phone		
NLU Email		
Best times to reach you		

Information about Your Practicum I Placement Site

Cooperating Teacher Name Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/>		
School Name	Grade	
Address	District #	
City	State	Zip
Days & Times you will be in the classroom		

*** Please return this completed form to the Seminar Leader as soon as possible.**



To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to introduce _____, a Master of Arts in Teaching candidate in the National College of Education at National Louis University, who is preparing for licensure in Elementary Education.

One of the requirements of this program is early active participation and observation in elementary Grades 1 - 6 setting. The level and type of involvement will vary for each candidate as described on the *Suggestions for Practicum / Experiences* sheet, but the goal is to become actively involved in your school classroom. During this field experience, the candidate is to spend a minimum of 40 clock hours working with one elementary classroom teacher.

We appreciate your willingness to accommodate this request for an initial classroom experience. If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact the seminar leader, _____, for the on-campus class at _____.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sherri Bressman
Assistant Director
School of Teacher Preparation



ELE 500 Practicum I

Guidelines for the Principal

On behalf of the Elementary Education teacher preparation program in the National College of Education at National Louis University, we would like to express our appreciation to you for supporting this early preclinical experience for our Elementary Education teacher candidate. Practicum I allows candidates to gain introductory exposure to the teaching and learning processes while earning 40+ hours of the pre-student teaching hours required in our program. Your role in selecting a teacher to mentor the candidate is critical in helping the candidate learn about teaching as well as to carefully reflect on his or her decision to enter this profession.

We have found that the most meaningful school experiences occur when candidates are assigned to classroom teachers who demonstrate a deep personal commitment to education and who welcome the opportunity to introduce pre-service teachers to the roles and responsibilities of a teacher. Accreditation standards for our program require that the cooperating teacher have an endorsement on his or her Professional Educator License for the grade that he or she is teaching and a minimum of three years of experience as a classroom teacher.

Candidates in ELE 500 Practicum I are in the early stages of their professional preparation program. Expectations and possibilities for involvement are detailed in the *Suggestions for Practicum I Experiences* which the candidate can provide. On-campus seminars accompany the school-based component of this experience. Seminar assignments require the candidate to explore the school as a functioning organization and to learn about the school's physical facilities, curriculum, instructional framework, professional personnel, and support services.

Candidates are responsible for conveying information and appropriate forms to the cooperating teacher. Both you and the cooperating teacher are welcome to contact the seminar leader with any concerns or questions you have. The candidate can provide the correct name and university contact information.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this important component of our elementary teacher education program. Please feel free to contact either the seminar leader or the Assistant Director of Teacher Preparation, Dr. Sherri Bressman [sbressman@nl.edu] at National Louis University.



ELE 500 Practicum I

Guidelines for the Cooperating Teacher

On behalf of the Elementary Education teacher preparation program in the National College of Education at National Louis University, we would like to express our appreciation to you for agreeing to work with one of our Master of Arts in Teaching candidates in the school-based component of the ELE 500 Practicum I experience. We appreciate your time and efforts and are grateful for your willingness to assist in the professional development of a future teacher. The contribution you make toward this preparation is a significant one. It is hoped that the information below will assist you and the NLU candidate in making this early experience a success.

Practicum I is intended to be a time for the candidate to become better acquainted with the personal, social, and academic requirements of teaching. They are eager to become actively involved in classroom activities. This experience is completed through 40+ hours in your classroom coupled with university seminars that meet weekly on campus during the quarter. These hours must be completed over the course of the university quarter.

Candidates in ELE 500 Practicum I have not yet taken any of their professional methods courses. This limited background needs to be considered when planning activities. Candidates rely on your guidance for appropriate ways to participate in your classroom. They have been advised to confer with you about influences and factors in the teaching and learning process. They are also required to plan and teach one lesson to the whole class.

We ask that you engage the candidate using the possibilities for involvement detailed in the *Suggestions for Practicum I Experiences* which the candidate can provide. We would like our candidates to gain information about the roles and responsibilities of classroom teachers, connect knowledge from the university seminar to your classroom, and have direct interactions with the children in your classroom.

As part of our assessment process, we ask that you complete the ELE 500 Elementary Education Practicum I Competency Appraisal. The candidate will also complete a self-appraisal. At the end of the experience, please discuss your appraisal with the candidate. Both copies are submitted to the seminar leader. These data give us rich feedback on the candidate's progress in the program.

Again, thank you for your assistance in this important component of our elementary teacher education program. Please feel free to contact either the seminar leader or the Assistant Director of Teacher Preparation, Dr. Sherri Bressman [sbressman@nl.edu], at National Louis University



Suggestions for Practicum I Experiences

It is a requirement that Practicum I candidates plan and teach a minimum of one lesson to the whole class under the direction of the cooperating teacher. Content must be approved by the cooperating teacher. The lesson plan must be initialed by the cooperating teacher prior to implementation. This plan is then submitted to the seminar leader. Practicum I is where candidates begin to learn about lesson planning, and the candidate will not be ready to teach the lesson until later in the quarter.

The following are suggestions for ways to involve the candidate in the classroom. The intention of the practicum experience is for candidates to be actively engaged in the classroom not merely observers at the back of the room. Activities may include but are not be limited to the following:

Instruction

- Read stories to the class
- Tutor individual students
- Work with small groups on focused tasks
- Conduct spelling lessons/activities
- Conduct routine activities such as calendar or daily oral language
- Observe and discuss teaching in different content areas
- Plan and teach a lesson to the whole class under the direction of the cooperating teacher

Supervision

- Escort groups to the washroom, gym, specials, library, lunch, etc.
- Assist in fire drills and other emergency procedures
- Assist the cooperating teacher in supervising playground activities
- Assist students with clothing and shoes if appropriate by grade level

Preparation of Lessons

- Prepare learning materials, worksheets, transparencies, etc.
- Prepare bulletin boards and other classroom displays
- Gather materials relevant to future lessons
- Do internet research
- Assist in planning field trips

Administration

- Assist in distribution and collection of materials
- Assist in recording attendance and lunch requirements
- Assist in evaluating student work and recording grades
- Observe and discuss techniques for management and organization



To the Cooperating Teacher,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for working with a Practicum I teacher candidate during this 40+ pre-clinical experience. The time you have spent helping our candidate during this segment of his or her professional preparation helps him or her to make better decisions about their student teaching and career choice.

I hope that having an extra person in your classroom was an asset to the class and to you professionally. Again, thank you for your cooperation in helping us to prepare others to make a positive contribution to the education profession. Please keep this letter as a confirmation of your participation in the Master of Arts in Teaching Elementary Education program in National College of Education at National Louis University.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sherri Bressman
Assistant Director
School of Teacher Preparation
National College of Education
National Louis University