



Clinical Practicum Handbook

Guidelines for clinical interns, cooperating teachers, and field supervisors

Academic Year 2026-2027

DEPARTMENT OF URBAN EDUCATION

Dear Clinical Intern,

Congratulations on your decision to pursue a career in teaching. This is the final step to becoming an effective, caring, and reflective urban educator. As you reach the peak of the teacher education program, you will learn to become critically reflective individuals, as well as equipped to teach racially, ethnically, economically, and linguistically diverse student populations. Your experiences will give you the incentive to continuously work toward modifying and enriching urban school education.

This clinical practicum experience will enable you to reflect upon your course readings, classroom discussions, and fieldwork assignments. You will engage in a wide range of experiences and be expected to demonstrate your progress toward your teacher candidacy through various assessments that may include, but are not be limited to journals, analysis of organizations and school cultures, performance assessment, classroom visitations of various subjects and grades, visits to cultural and educational resources, and your work with individual or groups of students and parents as well as the creation of unit and lesson plans.

Please remember that the faculty and staff of the Department of Urban Education are here to support you. Visit our Canvas website for updates regarding deadlines, applications, certification information, and other important topics. And always be sure to check and respond to your Rutgers email regularly!

Sincerely,

Department of Urban Education Team

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Professional Teaching Standards

CAEP Accreditation and Standards

The Department of Urban Education (DUE) at Rutgers University-Newark (RU-N) is nationally accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP,) a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving academic degree programs for professional educators.

In order to maintain this accreditation, the Department of Urban Education must demonstrate that all clinical interns can demonstrate CAEP Standard 1.1:

Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions

Candidates demonstrate an understanding of the 10 InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards at the appropriate progression level(s) in the following categories: the learner and learning; content knowledge; instructional practice; and professional responsibility.

New Jersey Department of Education Professional Standards for Teachers

The NJ DOE has adapted the InTASC standards to our state context. For a more detailed explanation of the InTASC standards and the NJ DOE adaptations, including performance expectations, essential knowledge, and critical dispositions, please see <https://www.nj.gov/education/profdev/standards/docs/ProfStandardsforTeachersAlignmentwithInTASC.pdf>.

Through observations of your teaching and disposition evaluations, edTPA submission, Next Generation Teacher presentation, and other assignments, you will demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions aligned to the 10 InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards as shown below (INTASC, 2023).

The Learner and Learning

Standard/Progression #1: Learner Development. The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

Standard/Progression #2: Learning Differences. The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

Standard/Progression #3: Learning Environments. The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation.

Content Knowledge

Standard/Progression #4: Content Knowledge. The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.

Standard/Progression #5: Application of Content. The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

Instructional Practice

Standard/Progression #6: Assessment. The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

Standard/Progression #7: Planning for Instruction. The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

Standard/Progression #8: Instructional Strategies. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

Professional Responsibility

Standard/Progression #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice.¹ The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

Standard/Progression #10: Leadership and Collaboration. The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

¹ InTASC combines these. NJ DOE has Professional Learning as Standard 9, and Ethical Practice as Standard 11.

What is Cluster III/ The Clinical Year/ Clinical Practicum?

Cluster III/ the clinical year/ clinical practicum is the last phase in the process of becoming a certified New Jersey school teacher. There are five courses in Cluster III which make up your clinical practicum. Altogether, the clinical courses form a continuous program from September through May. Clinical interns (CIs) observe and perform instruction and daily school routines under the supervision of an identified cooperating teacher (CT) and university-provided field supervisor (FS.)

Clinical I: Practicum Seminar, Clinical I: Practicum Field Experience, and Seminar in Critical Writing are taken concurrently in the fall semester only. *Clinical II: Student Teaching Seminar* and *Clinical II: Field Experience Practice* are taken concurrently in the spring semester only.

As a clinical Intern, you will participate in a cycle of observations, which includes review of and feedback on lesson plans, observation of teaching, and feedback and evaluation. The observation cycle consists of seven formal evaluations and five informal observations across the two consecutive semesters of clinical practicum.

Upon successful completion of the above courses, a capstone project (edTPA performance assessment,) and participation in the Next Generation Teachers symposium, you will be eligible for consideration for NJ teacher certification (Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing, CEAS) in your content area/major.

Overview of Clinical Courses

Altogether there are five clinical courses. Below is a description of each.

- **21:300:381 Critical Writing Seminar (1 credit)**
This writing intensive seminar is designed to develop students' critical, reflective, and analytic writing skills. In this course, students will examine their own field-based teaching pedagogy through a critical lens and use analytic writing skills to strengthen their critical reflexivity.
- **21:300:418 Clinical I: Practicum Seminar (3 credit)**
In a student-centered, differentiated environment, clinical interns create and become a part of a professional learning community. In this learning community, clinical interns investigate and practice the process of *planning, instructing, and engaging students in learning, assessing student learning, reflecting on the teaching process, and sharing and reviewing research-based best teaching practices*. Using field experiences as a basis, this course explores the process of teaching effectively and addressing the needs of a variety of learners in the urban setting. During the semester, clinical interns begin to design and collect edTPA artifacts for submission.

- **21:300:419 Clinical I: Practicum Field Experience (3 credits)**

Clinical interns are assigned to a school site in the Newark Public Schools for their field experience starting in September. Candidates are expected to complete a minimum of 175 hours of on-site, typically twice per week, 6 hours per day. These activities include observing and assisting the cooperating teacher (CT), writing and implementing daily lessons and/or units of study, and other activities as required by the Clinical I seminar instructor or field supervisor (FS.) Such activities are to be documented in Watermark as directed. During the semester, clinical interns are responsible for coordinating and scheduling CT and FS observations/ evaluations. Clinical interns undergo at least 3 formal clinical evaluations of their teaching to be completed by their CTs and FSs during this semester.

- **21:300:487 Clinical II: Student Teaching Seminar (3 credits)**

Through the systematic and collaborative examination of the art and science of teaching, clinical interns engage in building knowledge and skills that reflect and enhance best practices in curriculum development, student learning and assessment, and teacher professional development. Having successfully completed *Clinical I: Practicum Seminar and Field Experience* courses, clinical interns further engage in developing pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and concomitant skills. During this semester, clinical interns continue to collect artifacts for edTPA submission.

Through the cyclical process of planning lessons, peer observation and critique of lesson implementation, and reflection on and revision of lessons, clinical interns learn *from* teaching to have a more accurate understanding of how subject matter content is taught and learned, and are able to more readily identify, collect, analyze, and use multiple and varied forms of data to assess student learning. Clinical interns are immersed in and see modeled the very practices that many teachers are being asked to use. Near mid-semester, clinical interns submit their edTPA artifacts for external grading. At the end of the semester, clinical interns participate in the Next Generation Teachers symposium. In the context of this symposium, clinical interns demonstrate, through the careful selection, analysis, and description of artifacts, thorough knowledge and understanding of InTASC Standards/Progressions, reflect on their growth as teachers, and posit goals for immediate future growth.

- **21:300:488 Clinical II: Field Experience Practice (3 credits)**

Clinical II: Field Experience Practice is a full day, full-time, school-based experience that is supervised by a certified experienced classroom teacher (cooperating teacher) and a Rutgers University-Newark field supervisor. It is an entire semester (15 weeks) of full-time, unpaid work. The primary objective of *Clinical II: Field Experience Practice* is to provide clinical interns with the opportunity for acquisition and demonstration of instructional competence. *Clinical II: Field Experience Practice* has been carefully designed to be as realistic and as intensive as actual teaching. All on-site activities (e.g.

observations of the CT, implementation of daily lessons, implementation of longer units of study, and other activities as required by the Clinical II instructor) must be documented in Watermark by the clinical interns. During the semester, clinical interns are responsible for coordinating and scheduling CT and Field Supervisor observations/evaluations. You are not permitted to take any other courses while you are student teaching. As part of the Department of Urban Education's policy for *Clinical II*, you are not to assume new commitments or responsibilities during this crucial time.

edTPA Performance Assessment

edTPA is a multiple-measure assessment of teaching that addresses planning, instruction, assessment, and analyzing teaching. It includes unedited video recordings of you teaching and examples of teaching materials (plans, teaching tools, assignments) that demonstrate how you planned instruction, adapted it for diverse learners (attending both to subject-specific learning and the development of academic language,) and assessed student work.

Each assessment is scored by trained subject-matter experts who have experience supporting beginning teachers. Scorers are recruited from higher education and P-12 educators, including National Board Certified Teachers. Your *Clinical II: Seminar* syllabus will outline the edTPA expectations for score and timeline as well as the weight of edTPA in your final grade

Next Generation Teachers Symposium

Clinical interns prepare a reflective presentation and participate in a symposium, known as the Next Generation Teachers symposium, as part of the department's exit from the program and as a summative review of their work. You will describe the intersections of professional practice and personal development, while making connections to where your practice may need improvement. In so doing, you defend your readiness for receiving an initial New Jersey teaching Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing (CEAS.)

Clinical Year Timeline

End of August..... Clinical Orientation

First week in September.....Begin clinical placement field hours and coursework

September – early December.....Complete and document min. 175 field hours

Early-mid January.....Return to clinical placement

Mid-January-early May.....Complete and document full-time internship

February-March.....Prepare for and submit edTPA

Early May.....Present at Next Generation Teachers symposium

The Clinical Year

Your First Meeting with your Cooperating Teacher

As soon as you find out who your cooperating teacher (CT) is, please send them an introductory email, including your name, that you are a student teacher from Rutgers-Newark, and your contact information. By Clinical Orientation in August/September, you should be able to communicate with your CT. Try to meet your CT in their classroom *before* the first day of school, and offer to help them with classroom setup. If you or they cannot meet in person, try to at least have a phone or Zoom conversation.

During orientation, we will review the handbook with you. Your CT and field supervisor (FS) will also receive a handbook. When you visit your CT for the first time, you are encouraged to bring a copy of the handbook, so that you may review it together. Your first meetings are the first step toward building a solid, professional relationship.

Your Visit to Your Placement School on the First Day of School

Arrive at your clinical field assignment early and be sure to have your Rutgers identification and another form of legal ID with you. Check in at the Main Office or security desk of your field placement school; a school representative will announce your arrival to your cooperating teacher. Be sure to ask what procedures you should follow when visiting, especially with regard to checking in and out of the school. Remember to express appreciation to the CT for their willingness to work with you. Keep in mind that your CT is very busy during the school day and may not have the time to have a leisurely meeting with you. During this visit, you will discuss the new school schedule of the classes you are expected to observe and work with as well as revisit the expectations.

In The First Weeks of the Clinical Experience

This is the time to learn the policies and procedures of the school. You should keep a journal of what you observe and need to know about the school.

- Be mindful of co-teaching strategies.
- Observe your cooperating teacher (CT) teaching.
- Note classroom management techniques and varied pedagogical approaches, use of time, and organizational skills.
- Become familiar with the names and personalities/interests/strengths/needs of all students.
- Be sure to learn the school procedures for:
 - Taking attendance
 - Grading
 - Use of technology
 - Handling discipline (lateness, cell phones, etc.)
 - Fire drills
 - Emergencies (i.e. student/family crises)

- Referrals (i.e. substance abuse counselor, social worker, child study team, guidance, etc.)
- Discuss what classes/subjects you will be expected to teach and when you will start teaching them with your CT.
- Identify a suitable “backup CT” in case your CT is absent. This is described more fully in the section called Absence of CT.
- Meet support staff in your school including counselors, social workers, librarians, ESL/ELL teachers, child study team, custodians, secretaries, and resource room teachers. Find out how they can be helpful resources.
- Become familiar with community groups and local resources that may be of assistance to you in your classroom and school.

Clinical Intern: Expectations and Responsibilities

RU-N and The Department of Urban Education have established relationships with several Newark Board of Education (NBOE) and greater Newark schools to help support your professional growth. Based on this professional relationship, the school administrators and cooperating teachers (CTs) accept you into their buildings and classrooms. Remember that you are a reflection of Rutgers University (and NJIT) and the Department of Urban Education, and you should act accordingly. It is not appropriate for you to do or say anything negative regarding placements or otherwise that might work against the integrity of the Department of Urban Education or its staff, as it is imperative that we maintain positive relationships with teachers, school personnel, students, and parents. In order to continue the relationship that we have built within districts, we ask that you adhere to several guidelines. Should you fail to do so, we reserve the right to remove you from your clinical placement. Removal from your placement will be recorded as a failure of the clinical course(s) in which you are enrolled (see Appendix C for more information.)

Professional Conduct and Attitude

Clinical interns understand the responsibility for their professional growth, performance, and involvement as an individual and as a member of a learning community. Clinical interns are professionals who recognize that they are in a position to influence the future of their learners. It is imperative that clinical interns practice the highest standards of responsibility, honesty, and fairness. Your presence in the school and classroom should cause as little disruption to the class as possible. Unless previously agreed upon, keep your phone off/silent and out of sight during your time in the classroom. Ask your cooperating teacher for your school's policy regarding photos of students, student work, posting to social media, etc., and be sure to follow it. When in doubt: do NOT take pictures/videos of students, or student work with their name visible. Do not post information to social media without completely understanding and adhering to your district's policy.

Remain objective during your experience. It is very easy to become judgmental of teachers when you are observing their classes. Even if you disagree with a teacher's methods or teaching

style, negative criticism is unwarranted and should not be offered. Any concerns you may have regarding your placement or relationship with the cooperating teacher should be discussed with your field supervisor, clinical instructor, and/or field placement coordinator. ***Should problems arise during your placement, be proactive! Do not wait until the end of the semester to address miscommunications or misunderstandings.***

Professional Relationships

Be a responsive practitioner who is genuinely interested in your students. However, be sure to maintain appropriate emotional distance, so that you are seen as an adult and a professional. Keep your relationship and interactions with the students positive. Remember you are the adult and should not raise your voice or be coaxed into unnecessary arguments with your students. A professional disposition will help you establish credibility with teachers, school personnel, administrators, students, and their parents. It is expected that you will help in whatever is needed for a cohesive classroom and school community. You are expected to attend faculty/department meetings and professional development workshops. Your attitude indicates your level of seriousness during the clinical experiences. Having joined a professional community, it is also expected that you will speak and write in ways that are acceptable to this professional community, especially via email, phone, and text messages.

Dress Code

Teachers are professionals and should be dressed as such. Remember that when you enter the classroom, you become a role model for the young people in your class. Appropriate dress and good grooming are essential to success in clinical field experiences and teaching in general. If the school to which you have been assigned follows a dress code, be respectful of it. If you are unsure what is appropriate, it is always best to be conservative and dress as you might for a job interview.

Work Schedule and Attendance Policy

Clinical Practice I (Fall Semester)

Clinical Practice I begins the first week of the Fall semester and runs 15 weeks through mid-December. Exact days/dates will be confirmed at Clinical Orientation in August. If you know who your cooperating teacher is before the beginning of the semester, you should reach out to them and see if you can help them set up their classroom, go in for school-based Professional Development days before the students start, or at least meet them in person, if you are able.

In *Clinical Practice I*, you will visit your assigned classroom two 6-hour days per week (typically 8 am - 2 pm,) for a **minimum** of 175 hours over the course of the fall semester. These two days will be assigned as a part of your university schedule. Adjustments to the days/hours are rare, and require prior approval of the course instructor, cooperating teacher, and field supervisor. You should also make every effort to attend Back-to-School Night and Parent-Teacher Conferences, if allowed by your cooperating teacher. You should also try to experience an after-school club, activity, sport, or tutoring session at least twice during this semester.

During *Clinical Practice I*, the clinical intern is allowed two documented, unavoidable absences. If one-two additional days are missed (3-4 days total), and if absences are acceptable to the cooperating teacher, the field supervisor, and the Office of Field Experiences, that clinical intern can make up the time missed at the end of the semester (but before the district goes on winter break.) In this case, clinical intern may receive a grade of Incomplete. When the clinical intern completes the work, the cooperating teacher and the field supervisor will be responsible for submitting revised reports so that a grade change can be processed.

If a clinical intern misses 5-10 days total during Clinical Practice I, and if absences are acceptable to the cooperating teacher, the field supervisor, and the Office of Field Experiences, that clinical intern may be given an Incomplete for Clinical Practice I for that semester and continue in early January, ***if arrangements can be made with the district by the Office of Field Experiences***, or clinical intern may be put on hold until the following year or removed from the program. The field supervisor and the cooperating teacher would both have to agree to continue to supervise that clinical intern until the time is made up. When the clinical intern completes the work, the cooperating teacher and field supervisor are responsible for submitting revised reports so that a grade change can be processed.

If a clinical intern misses 11 or more days of *Clinical Practice I* without an official WD, that clinical intern will **fail** *Clinical Practice I* for the semester. If a clinical intern would like to continue in the program, they must submit a request to repeat Clinical Practice I. This may happen in the following semester or the following year, depending upon Department and cooperating teacher availability. The request would need to be approved by the appropriate departments.

Tardiness will not be tolerated. Three tardies will be equivalent to one absence. You are required to use a log to track your daily attendance and have it signed by your cooperating teacher.

Clinical Practice II (Spring Semester)

Clinical Practice II officially begins the first day of the Rutgers semester in mid-January and continues 15 weeks until the end of the semester. Once you begin, clinical interns are expected to follow the school district calendar until graduation.² Whenever teachers are in attendance, whether for teaching, professional development days, parent conferences, etc., clinical interns are expected to be in attendance. **Clinical interns do not take Rutgers University's spring break or holidays; instead, they follow the school district break and holiday schedule. However, clinical interns are still expected to attend any classes or meetings at Rutgers University during their school district break/ holidays.** Exact days/dates will be confirmed at Boot Camp in January.

² If you are available to begin student teaching on the district schedule in early January, we highly recommend it. However, we understand that some work and housing situations prohibit this for some individuals, and therefore it is not required.

In *Clinical Practice II*, you will visit the assigned classroom five full days per week (approximately 8 am - 3 pm,) for a **minimum** of 450 hours over the course of the spring semester. You are expected to arrive with your cooperating teacher and leave with your cooperating teacher to see the work they do before and after school, and for planning purposes. Therefore, actual arrival and departure times and hours may look different for each clinical intern. In addition, you are also encouraged to participate in and help lead (if possible) an afterschool activity or club at least twice during the semester. You should also attend at least one student event during this semester (e.g. an athletic game, a music concert, Senior Prom, etc.) If emergency school closures are excessive and are deemed to impact the Clinical Practice experience, the Office of Field Experience will determine how many days will need to be made up at the end of the semester.

During *Clinical Practice II*, the teacher candidate is allowed three documented, unavoidable absences. If a clinical intern misses a total of 4-6 days of *Clinical Practice II*, and if absences are acceptable to the cooperating teacher, the field supervisor, and the Office of Field Experiences, the clinical intern can make up the time missed at the end of the semester. The cooperating teacher and field supervisor may need to submit a grade of Incomplete. When the clinical intern completes the work, the cooperating teacher and field supervisor will be responsible for submitting revised reports so that a grade change can be processed.

If a clinical intern misses between 7-25 days total during *Clinical Practice II*, and if absences are acceptable to the cooperating teacher, the field supervisor, and the Office of Field Experiences, that clinical intern may be given an incomplete for *Clinical Practice II* and may continue their hours past graduation into June, ***if arrangements can be made with the district by the Office of Field Experiences***, or they may be put on hold until the following year to repeat *Clinical Practice II*, or they may be removed from the program. The field supervisor and the cooperating teacher would have to agree to continue to supervise that clinical intern until the time is made up. When the clinical intern completes the work, the cooperating teacher and field supervisor are responsible for submitting revised reports so that a grade change can be processed.

Any absences exceeding 25 without an official WD will lead to **failure** of *Clinical Practice II*. If a clinical intern would like to continue in the program, they must submit a request to repeat *Clinical Practice II*. This may happen in the following semester or the following year, depending upon Department and cooperating teacher availability. The request would need to be approved by the appropriate departments.

Tardiness will not be tolerated. Three tardies will be equivalent to one absence. You are required to use a log to track your daily attendance and have it signed by your cooperating teacher.

All final decisions about clinical enrollment are determined by the *Review and Retention Committee*.

Attendance at Professional Development Activities

Whenever district teachers have a professional development day on a scheduled Clinical Practice day (for CP I or CP II,) clinical interns are expected to attend with their cooperating teacher. This is part of being a professional who continues to learn.

In addition, clinical interns may find outside professional development activities and may be excused from their placement once each semester if this activity is approved in advance by the Department of Urban Education. Funding may be available for such activities, so if you see an opportunity, be sure to ask early.

Absence of Clinical Intern

- It is the clinical intern's responsibility to notify their cooperating teacher (CT) and field supervisor (FS) any time they are going to be absent. If CI has to be out on the day their FS is scheduled to observe, contact them with as much advance notice as possible. CI must record the absence in Watermark.
- Excessive absences or tardiness will result in terminating the field assignment. **Detailed policy outlined above.**
- Attending the seminars for the clinical courses is mandatory. Complete all the assignments for the seminar.
- CIs are expected to attend professional development sessions and faculty meetings with cooperating teachers, if permitted.

Absence of the Cooperating Teacher

Please note that clinical interns, whether in *Clinical I* or *Clinical II*, must be under the direct supervision of a certified teacher at all times. **If the cooperating teacher is absent, the clinical intern cannot be the substitute teacher for the day.** Clinical interns should work with their cooperating teacher to identify a suitable "back-up cooperating teacher" at the beginning of the school year in case of an emergency absence by your cooperating teacher. For such emergencies, the teacher does NOT have to be certified in your content area, but must have their standard certification. In such situations, use this as an example to witness how your students work with other teachers in other content areas, and to take notes on other teachers' pedagogical choices.

If the cooperating teacher is going to be out for an extended period and their substitute teacher is not a certified teacher in your content area, you must contact your field supervisor. A possible reassignment may be requested by the Office of Field Services.

A note about your own substitute certification: For those who are already certified substitute teachers, you cannot earn field hours while subbing (whether paid or unpaid.) If you are looking to earn additional money and experience by substitute teaching, this may be done on your non-field days in *Clinical I* or after graduation during *Clinical II*.

Expectations for Planning and Teaching

- Prepare written lesson plans for *all* lessons taught following an approved format. Make sure all your lesson plans and unit plans are kept on Canvas/ in Watermark, as directed.
- Work closely with your cooperating teacher on instructional and administrative matters. Collaborate in preparing your short- or long-term unit plans. For the teaching of observed lessons, meet with your CT 1-2 days before to review your plan and make any necessary adjustments.
- Submit a lesson plan to your field supervisor by 5 pm the day before your observation.
- Enter your hours and activities daily in Watermark, and ask your cooperating teacher to sign/approve your activities weekly (also in Watermark.)
- Arrange for your CT and FS to observe you the necessary number of times.
- Maintain an open and positive attitude toward communicating with your field supervisor and your cooperating teacher. It is your responsibility to keep the dialogue open.

A Note about Lesson Plans

Clinical interns are expected to prepare thoughtful and well-developed written lesson plans for every lesson to be taught. In the case of a formal observation, candidates must use the Department of Urban Education lesson plan template. The template can be found on Canvas. Your lesson plan must be accessible to your cooperating teacher and field supervisor for lessons being taught every day. Do not use downloaded, pre-packaged lesson plans as your own and do not use AI to develop a lesson plan, graphic organizer, activities, etc. in full, though you may use AI as a “thought partner.”³ In order to meet the unique strengths, interests, and needs of the students in your classroom, you should take ownership of the planning process rather than trying to fit another educator’s plan to the students in front of you. If you have any questions or concerns about lesson planning, be sure to consult with your clinical instructor.

³ If your course instructor, field supervisor, cooperating teacher, or RU-N has a policy prohibiting the use of AI, please follow their guidelines.

Concerns/Complaints About Placement

If you have a concern or complaint of any kind while in your clinical placement, you should complete the following steps:

Step 1: Contact your field supervisor and discuss the conflict in a professional manner. Ask yourself the following when preparing to speak with your field supervisor

What was the conflict?

What do you want to achieve?

Was the matter harmful? If so, whom did it harm and how?

Is this a matter that can be resolved?

Your field supervisor will advise you on the next steps.

If your complaint is resolved, **STOP HERE.**

Conflict Unresolved

Step 2: If you feel that the conflict has not been resolved, you will email the department email, URBANED@NEWARK.RUTGERS.EDU, with URGENT as the subject line.

Include the following when communicating your concern: your name, student ID, current placement details (location, subject, cooperating teacher's and field supervisor's names) and clearly outline the cause of your concern. Please be advised: DUE will take each complaint seriously. Sharing a concern or making a complaint will not affect your placement outcome if you follow due process. The review and retention committee will review the complaint.

Step 3: Continue your placement and field hours. You will receive a response with next steps in the 24-48 hours that follow the submission of the complaint. If the matter requires that you leave your placement on that day, contact your field supervisor before leaving.

If the matter is resolved, **STOP HERE.**

Step 4: Should your concern not be resolved, a meeting will be arranged with the Director of Field Experiences to discuss the situation. It is your responsibility to contact the Director of Field Experiences to make the appointment. This will be scheduled within a 2-week time frame. At the time of the meeting, a final decision will be made about next steps for continuing or changing placements.

Calendar for Clinical Practice I: Field Experience

During planning discussions with your cooperating teacher, focus on the experiences below. This calendar should assist you with meeting some of the standards set forth by The Department of Urban Education, the New Jersey Department of Education, and CAEP (InTASC.)

Week 1-2

- Observe CT classroom lessons.
- Learn students' names.
- Familiarize yourself with your school's philosophy and mission/ vision statement.
- Familiarize yourself with classroom routines, record keeping procedures, student assessment tools, lesson planning policies, and use of technology in the classroom.

Week 3-5

- Begin to supervise some daily classroom routines.
- Begin to work with small groups of students.
- Discuss with CT how you will increase your teaching responsibilities (e.g., co-teaching).
- Meet other grade-level teachers to arrange for your observation of their classrooms.
- Schedule Formal Observation #1 for week 5.
- Begin to plan for co-teaching.
- Ask your cooperating teacher and students about some of the afterschool activities, clubs, or sports practices/games you might visit/attend.

Week 6-8

- Supervise student transition activities, such as escorting students to lunch, to other classrooms and dismissal depending upon the grade level and the school's policies (for Elementary/Early Childhood.)
- Take responsibility for teaching a whole class lesson as you continue to work with small group of students.
- Talk to your cooperating teacher about students with IEPs. Ask to review the IEP, if allowed, and ask how your teacher plans/ instructs/ assesses differently based on IEPs. If your classroom does not have many students with IEPs, ask if there is another class you could observe a few times.
- Attend one afterschool activity/ event.

Week 9-15

- Schedule Formal Observations #2 and #3 for weeks 9 and 13.
- Reflect on your field supervisor's and cooperating teacher's ideas, suggestions, and constructive criticism.
- Think of ways that you might improve your teaching.
- Continue to teach whole class lessons.
- Attend a second afterschool activity/ event.
- CT, field supervisor, and course instructor individually complete clinical intern disposition assessment in Watermark.

Calendar for Clinical Practice II

During planning discussions with your cooperating teacher, focus on the experiences below. This calendar should assist you with meeting some of the standards set forth by the Department of Urban Education, the New Jersey Department of Education, and CAEP. Refer to the edTPA pacing calendar that you will receive in seminar for guidance on completing that performance assessment.

Week 1

- Continue to teach whole class lessons during one class period.
- Discuss with your cooperating teacher how you should plan, assess, and teach at least two units of study to two or three different sets of students.
- Meet other teachers working on your grade level to arrange for your observation of their classrooms. It is helpful to see your students in other contents with other teachers.
- Arrange to observe other grade level teachers of your content (e.g. if you are teaching US History, but may teach World History once hired! Or Geometry/ Algebra.)
- Start planning for edTPA.
- Clinical intern completes self-efficacy assessment (in Watermark.)

Week 2

- Supervise student transition activities, such as escorting students to lunch, to other classrooms, and dismissal depending upon the grade level and the school's policies (Elementary and Early Childhood.)
- Begin to take responsibility for teaching two whole classes as you continue to work with small groups of students.
- Begin record keeping procedures for homework, grades, etc.
- Take the time to observe other teachers. This is often best done during your cooperating teacher's prep time, unless you need to meet with them during that time.

Week 3

- Assume full-time teaching responsibilities. Make sure by now you are teaching at least two classes/groups on a regular basis, preparing lesson plans, and evaluating each one.
- Sit in on professional development, planning sessions, and other professional meetings.
- Follow up with your field supervisor regarding suggestions for improvement of your instruction and your dates for observations.
- Talk to your cooperating teacher about students with IEPs. Ask to review the IEP, if allowed, and ask how your teacher plans/ instructs/ assesses differently based on IEPs. If your classroom does not have many students with IEPs, ask if there is another class you could observe a few times.
- Schedule Formal Observation #4 for week 3

Weeks 4-6

- Continue to increase your teaching responsibilities.
- Implement and record your edTPA learning segment(s).
- Review your assessments of student learning with your cooperating teacher on an ongoing daily basis. Revise lesson plans as needed.
- Reflect on your classroom management techniques and make adjustments where needed.
- Begin to gather your lesson plans, examples of students' work, examples of your use of technology, photos of classroom activities, assessment tools, and other materials that you may wish to include in your Next Generation Teachers presentation/ edTPA submission.
- Continue to observe other certified teachers.

Weeks 7-11

- Schedule Formal Observation #5 for week 7 and Formal Observation #6 for week 11.
- CT, field supervisor, and course instructor complete candidate disposition assessment in Watermark.
- Review evaluations from your CT and field supervisor.
- Review your students' levels of understanding of the unit of study and adjust your instruction accordingly by conducting an analysis of students' use of your feedback.
- Continue with other teaching responsibilities.
- Continue to implement your cooperating teacher's and field supervisor's suggestions for improvement.
- Continue collecting examples of student work that demonstrate your strengths as an educator.
- Submit edTPA portfolio (more precise dates will be given in Clinical II Seminar/ Boot Camp, but typically mid-March.)

Weeks 12-15

- Schedule Formal Observation #7 for week 13.
- Continue to research, plan, and teach effective lessons and reflect on them.
- Be sure to fully take part in the student evaluation process.
- Continue to observe and learn from your cooperating teacher.
- Work with your cooperating teacher to transition your departure from the class.
- Review evaluations from your cooperating teacher and field supervisor.
- Finish collecting examples of student work that demonstrate your strengths as an educator.

The Observation and Evaluation Cycle

Observation Cycle

The observation cycle is a year-long cycle of observation, evaluation, and feedback for clinical interns. Each clinical intern has two evaluators in the field: a *cooperating teacher* (CT) and a *field supervisor* (FS). To improve reliability in the evaluation of an observed lesson, the CT and FS will evaluate each clinical observation using the same rubric within Watermark.

Table 1 shows the observation cycle calendar for both Clinical I and Clinical II

Table 1. Observation Cycle Calendar	
Clinical Practice I:	
Observation 1 (Week 5)	CT & Field Supervisor
Informal Observation (Week 7)	Field Supervisor
Observation 2 (Week 9)	CT & Field Supervisor
Informal Observation (Week 11)	Field Supervisor
Observation 3 (Week 13)	CT & Field Supervisor
<i>One additional observation may be added if candidate demonstrates a need for greater support.</i>	
Clinical Practice II:	
Observation 4 (Week 3)	CT & Field Supervisor
Informal Observation (Week 5)	Field Supervisor
Observation 5 (Week 7)	CT & Field Supervisor
Informal Observation (Week 9)	Field Supervisor
Observation 6 (Week 11)	CT & Field Supervisor
Informal Observation (Week 12)	Field Supervisor
Observation 7 (Week 13)	CT & Field Supervisor
Next Generation Teachers symposium (May)	DUE faculty, field supervisor, cooperating teachers.

Formal Evaluation Rubric

The formal observation rubric is a developmental continuum of observable teacher behaviors designed to support reflective practices for clinical interns in their clinical settings. It is organized to describe three levels of developing practice: Level 1: Needs Improvement, Level 2: Proficient, Level 3: Exceptional. The observation rating scale does not correlate to grades. Receiving an evaluation of Needs Improvement (1) is not a failure; rather it is indicative of the level of a newcomer entering the field. Likewise, a rating of Exceptional (3) is not a grade of A but indicates the level of a highly qualified, first-year practicing teacher.

The continuum is based on the New Jersey Professional Standards for Teachers and the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards. It indicates the professional trajectory that clinical interns should continue to aim for as they enter the profession. Clinical interns should aspire to the level of Proficient (2), which would indicate a solid foundational understanding of practice demonstrated in performance; it is likely that most solid CIs will graduate the program at a level of Proficient (2) and will continue to work toward the Exceptional (3) ratings once they are practicing teachers.

The Role of the Cooperating Teacher

The cooperating teacher (CT) is essential to the clinical year experience. The Department of Urban Education is grateful for the time and energy they contribute to the teacher candidate's growth. Due to their level of experience and professionalism, clinical interns (CIs) will be able to learn and model best practices in the classroom. Cooperating teachers play the most important role in creating a positive classroom experience for CIs. Clinical interns should use the knowledge and experience of their CTs, and learn as much as possible from them. The roles and responsibilities of being a cooperating teacher are as follows:

- Attend clinical orientation in August/September.
- Meet with clinical intern regarding scheduling and expectations.
- Allow time for CI to introduce themselves to the class, and help get them familiarized with the school philosophy, rules, and procedures.
- Introduce basics such as:
 - Lesson and unit plans
 - Arrival and departure times
 - Attendance procedures
 - Grading, disciplinary procedures
 - Fire drills
- Assist CI in developing their own teaching style.
- Allow CI to observe lesson preparation and presentation.
- Demonstrate how to include students with different achievement levels, and how to implement different classroom management techniques.
- Encourage CI to experiment with a combination of techniques and styles that suit their own philosophy of teaching.
- Demonstrate the necessary “housekeeping” duties that are important for maintaining an organized classroom.
- Ensure that the clinical intern is involved in most, if not all, planning, grading, teaching, and other duties by the middle of *Clinical Practice II*. There should be a gradual increase of responsibility for the clinical intern.
- Offer positive reinforcement and constructive criticism to the clinical intern as they refine their skills.
- Keep the lines of communication open with the clinical intern and the field supervisor.
- Listen carefully to the clinical intern’s concerns and respond meaningfully to their questions.
- Check over the clinical intern’s lesson plans at least 24 hours prior to them teaching it.
- Provide daily feedback.
- Sign/approve their attendance/activity log in Watermark weekly.
- Following edTPA guidelines, support CI during the edTPA process.
- Allow video recording of the lessons taught by the clinical intern.

- Complete 7 formal observation evaluations from September-May, as scheduled in Table 1. Submit evaluation in Watermark within 48 hours of observation.
- Complete a CI Dispositions form in Watermark at the end of *Clinical I* (December) and in the middle of *Clinical II* (March).
- Please keep in mind that clinical interns must not be left in the classroom without supervision of a certified teacher; the cooperating teacher must remain in the room whether the intern is observing or teaching. New Jersey law requires that school children must be supervised by licensed teachers at all times.

The Role of the Field Supervisor

Field supervisors (FS) are a vital connection between the Department of Urban Education and the district public school teachers. The role of the university field supervisor is as follows:

- Maintain regular contact with clinical intern (CI.)
- Conduct 5 informal and 7 formal observations between September and May, as outlined in Table 1. Submit evaluations in Watermark within 48 hours of the observation.
- Complete a CI Dispositions form in Watermark at the end of *Clinical I* (December) and in the middle of *Clinical II* (March).
- Review all lesson plans for formal observations.
- Plan to stay after observation for a detailed conference with cooperating teacher (CT) and CI. Provide feedback on lesson plan and teaching, and make suggestions for growth of CI.
- Check with the cooperating teacher for a report on clinical intern's progress.
- Make a plan for the clinical intern's continued improvement and offer help to make this plan a reality.
- Check hour tracking/attendance in Watermark to be sure progress is being made toward the required number of instructional and observation hours.
- Check lesson and unit plans, making sure they are current and have been properly initialed by the cooperating teacher.
- In cases where clinical interns may have difficulties, offer additional meetings and observations.
- Act as an intermediary between the cooperating teacher and clinical intern when there seems to be a break in communication or other tensions between them.
- Follow up with Department of Urban Education (*Clinical I/II* course instructor, Department Chair, Director of Teacher Learning, Assistant Director of Teacher Learning, Field Placement Coordinator) if there are concerns about dispositions or growth of clinical intern.

Tools and Resources

In addition to this handbook, use the following sources as needed to help you plan, keep informed, and clarify information. When in doubt, contact your field supervisor, clinical instructor, field placement coordinator, and/or the Department of Urban Education. Sometimes, an email copied to all four of the above is helpful.

- Canvas (Department of Urban Education AND individual courses)
- Watermark
- edTPA handbook & webpage
- DUE webpage

Appendix A – Clinical Practicum Site and Contact Information

Please fill out the following information as soon as you are able to. Keep a hard copy, a digital copy, and take a picture on your phone and save it to your favorites.

Clinical Intern's Name	
Placement school name Address Main office phone # Principal's name	
Cooperating teacher's name & classroom	
CT's school email (and preferred email, if different), cell phone, and preferred method of contact	 Preferred method of contact: __ email __ cell phone
Field supervisor's name	
Field supervisor's Rutgers email (and preferred email, if different), cell phone, and preferred method of contact	 Preferred method of contact: __ email __ cell phone

Appendix B – Terminology Used

You are likely already familiar with the terms used in this handbook. They are defined here simply to ensure that everyone uses the terms the same way.

Clinical Intern

A college student or career changer seeking teacher certification in New Jersey enrolled in the Cluster III courses. Also called a teacher candidate.

Field Supervisor

A university-assigned supervisor who observes and mentors the clinical intern in the classroom and is particularly focused on evaluating the clinical intern's level of content knowledge, pedagogy, the cycle of teaching, dispositions, and overall performance in the field.

Cooperating Teacher

A certified classroom teacher who assumes responsibility for the direct supervision of the clinical intern.

Dispositions

Traits that influence the ability to become an effective teacher.

Field Observation/ Evaluation

The evaluation of a clinical intern while teaching in the field, based on a given instrument.

Observation Cycle

This refers to the cycle of field evaluations a clinical intern, their field supervisor, and cooperating teacher are required to complete, including the tasks pre-, during, and post-observation.

Performance Assessment

A form of testing requiring the performance of a task. For RU-N clinical interns, this is edTPA.

School

A location in which the clinical intern is placed for field experience.

Student

This refers to the school-aged child in the classroom.

Appendix C – Causes for Termination of Clinical

Early Termination

You may be terminated from clinical courses or field experience for exhibiting unprofessional behavior, including but not limited to attendance, inappropriate conduct, dress, and/or for violating the Rutgers University Code of Student Conduct (<http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~polcomp/judaff/docs/UCSC.pdf>) on or off-campus.

Removal from clinical courses may be initiated at the request of your cooperating teacher, your host school, your university field supervisor, or any member of the Department of Urban Education. Any request for termination will be brought forth to the Review and Retention Committee.

If you are withdrawn from *Clinical I or II*, you generally cannot be reinstated sooner than the THIRD semester following the semester of you were withdrawn. You will be given individual remediation, and successful remediation must be demonstrated before a second attempt to complete a clinical course will be granted. The Department Chair makes the final decision concerning re-placement, which is made on a case-by-case basis. Withdrawal from the field experience must be accompanied by a simultaneous withdrawal from the course. It is your responsibility to withdraw formally from the course(s), otherwise, an incomplete grade becomes an "F." You can obtain information about how to withdraw from the Registrar's Office. You will not be permitted to attempt either clinical course more than two times.

Appendix D – Contract for Clinical Year

I, _____, am entering into Clinical I with the intention to continue to Clinical II and earn my New Jersey Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing for teaching. It is my intention to complete both semesters fully and successfully, including attending all required classes, field days, orientations, and any other requirements of the New Jersey Department of Education and the RU-N Department of Urban Education.

I agree to follow all rules and policies as outlined in this handbook and shared with me in orientations, class, and through advising in the Department of Urban Education.

I accept my assigned field placement, and agree to follow the policies of my host school and cooperating teacher.

By signing this contract, I acknowledge that I have read and understand this handbook, the Professional Code of Conduct, and the policies and procedures for clinical coursework. I will uphold this contract, policies & procedures as well as the Rutgers University Code of Student Conduct at all times on and off campus.

Signature – Clinical Intern

Print – Clinical Intern Full Name

Date

Notes:

[illegible]