

Director's Note

Preparing Classroom-Ready Teachers

Coined several years ago, the term “classroom-ready” fits well with the theme of our fall newsletter. It emphasizes the importance of preparing candidates for the teaching profession who are properly equipped with the knowledge and skill needed to take charge of classrooms when they begin their careers. We certainly ascribe to that principle at the University of Kentucky with a teacher education program grounded in clinical experiences which are carefully structured and guided by expert school- and university-based faculty. These experiences are embedded in courses designed to help candidates acquire an array of innovative practices that undergird effective teaching.

In this issue we have included examples of program elements that speak to classroom readiness, and we have featured a few of the many faculty members who supervise candidates in the field. Holly Shinn, one of the school-based faculty who has mentored our candidates in her classroom for several years, shares her analysis of this year’s student teaching program evaluations in the lead article. Her insights provide good fodder as we prepare to work with candidates in the new school year.

In addition to hearing from Holly, you will learn about the promotion of campus-based faculty who play an important role in our clinical program and who are ever present in our partner schools. You will also see snapshots of collaborative initiatives, including an article about a program designed to promote literacy at Breckinridge Elementary School, and photos of STEM camp, representing the array of activities in which school and university partners are engaged.

We hope these examples will serve as a reminder of the critical role you play in preparing candidates to reach all the students in their charge when they lead classrooms for the first time. Please know we appreciate your contributions to the success of the program, and be assured that we welcome your comments, suggestions, and ideas, now or at any time in the future.

Here’s to a productive year of working and learning together!

Sharon
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Learning in Tandem

Holly Shinn, Kindergarten Teacher
Glendover Elementary, Fayette County

Watching children mature academically and socially in kindergarten is amazing! Many go from not knowing how to hold a pencil, to writing sentences, in mere months. Kindergarteners go from looking at pictures in books and singing their ABCs, to reading simple books on their own. They also go from being shy acquaintances, barely knowing one another, to budding social creatures making new friends. As a kindergarten teacher, I am always amazed with how much my students develop as the school year progresses. Seeing this growth is one reason why I love teaching this age group.

For several years I have had the pleasure of sharing my classroom with student teachers, and watching their growth and excitement is just as gratifying as seeing the 5-year-olds bloom. Student teachers show growth in areas such as classroom management skills, lesson planning, and assessment design. Like the children, some of them start out as shy and timid individuals, eventually growing to be confident teachers. This is made possible through the structure, guidance, and careful monitoring of the Teacher Education Program at the University of Kentucky.

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Dr. Margaret Schroeder assisted students during the annual summer STEM Camp on UK campus.

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Each year student teachers evaluate the Teacher Education Program (TEP). Recently I reviewed the student teaching program evaluations for the 2016-2017 school year. Overall, student teachers (STs) found the capstone experience to be helpful. Of the fall STs, 74.5% ranked it excellent, compared with 73% of spring STs. The mean scores, on a rating scale of 1 to 4, were 3.71 in the fall and 3.7 in the spring.

The majority of STs found being in the classroom and experiencing daily events was helpful in preparing them for their future careers, and they credited their cooperating teachers (CTs) as good mentors providing helpful guidance and assistance during the student teaching process. In particular, solo week was mentioned as a challenging--but rewarding--experience. Having to split the semester between two different placements, with a new beginning in each classroom, was a noted challenge, but many saw it as a beneficial experience. This sentiment is expressed in such comments as below:

“Both of my CTs were very knowledgeable teachers. I learned more about being an elementary school teacher than I could have possibly imagined.”

“Being able to work directly alongside a teacher, during both practicum and student teaching, really allowed me to grow as a professional, because it gave me hands-on experience that just cannot be replicated in the [college] classroom setting.”

“Experiencing something is the best way to learn and grow. It helps us learn how to minimize behavior issues in the classroom when we can experiment to find what works....Most aspects in teaching are better learned through doing rather than sitting in a lecture.”

“Student teaching has allowed me to work with a wide range of students, and as a result, it has prepared me for any job I may pursue. It has also allowed me to be mentored by phenomenal teachers and make connections across the state.”

Seminars, which have been added to the student teaching experience since I completed my own student teaching, were generally perceived as beneficial, but not quite as much as the student teaching experience itself. The overall mean for fall was 3.62, compared with 3.39 in spring. The seminar about first year teachers was mentioned

as helpful, and suggestions for future seminars included discussing times of the year not typically seen by the student teacher, such as the first day of school. Another student pointed out:

“The seminars were wonderful! I really thought they held up to my education and what would help in my placements. The standards and domains were also incredibly helpful.”

Student teachers are about to embark on a journey as their future careers take flight. The majority of them feel that the TEP has prepared them for their future role as educators. In the fall, 77% rated the TEP as excellent, dipping somewhat to 67% in the spring. However, the mean score for each semester remained over 3.5.

The university can be proud of comments such as the following:

“My professors have done a great job of preparing me for my career as a teacher. I feel the program is thorough in providing a great teacher education. Throughout the course of the year, we have taken classes which address the many different aspects that are necessary to become a great teacher.”

“UK has prepared me for a professional role, because I’ve been doing everything a teacher does, which will help me as I launch my own teaching career.”

Overall, CTs’ comments on the preparation level of their student teachers were positive. Many said that STs were prepared, worked hard, and enjoyed the experience, as illustrated by the comment below:

“My student teacher was INCREDIBLY prepared. I feel so lucky to have had her in my classroom and am already missing her presence. “

However, some suggested topics came from both students and teachers about the program. The comments from students mentioned they thought some classes were not beneficial. Some cooperating teachers indicated that STs could use more specific experience with creating and administering IEPs, working with ELLs and students with impoverished or traumatic backgrounds, creating summative assessments, and implementing management techniques. There were also a few comments concerning challenges with individual personalities or circumstances.

Reading and analyzing student evaluations this year reinforced my overall positive feeling about the University of Kentucky’s TEP program. Comments from supervisors, students, and cooperating teachers were generally positive and reflected enthusiasm about the program and excitement about entering the field of education. I look forward to seeing another eager student teacher in the fall, along with all those smiling 5-year-old faces!

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Field Notes is published twice a year by UK’s Office of Clinical Practices and School Partnerships.	

UK College of Education Students Read to Children at Breckinridge Elementary



Elementary Education teacher candidate Miranda Fulce shared a book with students at Madeline M. Breckinridge in Fayette County.

When Breckinridge Elementary sent an email seeking readers for Black History Month, it sparked an idea for two University of Kentucky College of Education faculty members.

Mary Shake and Joni Meade teach literacy methods in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. In semesters past, students captured video of themselves reading a children's book as a class assignment. This semester, however, the aspiring educators went to Breckinridge Elementary and completed the assignment in classrooms throughout the school.

“The experience was a win for the school in getting dozens of readers on their campus. But it was particularly a win for us, as it gave our students yet another authentic experience in schools and was a great community involvement opportunity for them,” Dr. Shake said.

The professors hope to continue the experience.

“Our students, even early in their studies, get multiple opportunities to work with schools,” Meade said. “Any time we can convert a traditional assignment into a real-world experience, we jump on that opportunity because it adds authenticity to our lessons and often provides a service to schools.”



Students at STEM Camp, organized by UK's STEM Education department, participated in hands-on activities with Jonathan Thomas. See the back page for news about Dr. Thomas' recent promotion to Associate Professor.



PD Opportunity: Co-Teaching Training for Student Teacher Supervisors

If you want to mentor student teachers in your classroom, register for this face-to-face training session hosted by the University of Kentucky. Attendance will fulfill Part B of the co-teaching training requirement outlined in 16 KAR 5:040 Admission, Placement, and Supervision in Student Teaching. Three hours of PD credit is available for attendees. Registration begins at 4:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served.



Wednesday, September 13, 2017
Southern Middle School
5:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Contact Martin Mills
for information or registration:
859-257-1857 martin.mills@uky.edu



University of Kentucky College of Education
Office of Clinical Practices and School Partnerships
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August 14 9:00 am	University Supervisors' meeting in 122 TEB
August 15 9:00 am	ST Orientation in Taylor Ed. Auditorium
August 16	First day for most student teachers
September 13 4:30-7:30 pm	Cooperating Teacher / University Supervisor Training--Southern MS
October 16	Dual placement student teachers begin 2nd half placements
October 27 8 am-12:30 pm	Professional Seminar for all 2017-2018 student teachers UK Singletary Center
December 15	Last day of Fall 2017 semester

Tuition Waiver Program for Cooperating and Resource Teachers

State universities provide cooperating teachers a tuition waiver for 3-6 credits depending on duration of student teaching supervision.

Resource teachers can also claim a tuition waiver for up to 6 credits for each KTIP intern supervision they complete.

To redeem your waiver at UK, you must:

- use your credits within one calendar year of completing the assignment,
- gain admission to the university and be a student in good standing,
- complete a tuition waiver form prior to each semester enrolled,
- submit the waiver form to the associate dean's office prior to the first day of classes for each semester of enrollment.
- visit <https://education.uky.edu/ADeanARGS/tuitionwaiver> for contact info and an application to redeem your waiver at UK.

To claim your tuition waiver at other Kentucky universities, visit: <http://www.epsb.ky.gov/internships/tuitionwaiver.asp>

Congratulations!

We are proud to recognize Spring 2017 promotions of several faculty members who work with our teacher education program. We thank them for their good work and look forward to continued partnerships with them in preparing classroom-ready teacher candidates!



Amy Spriggs MSD / LBD program faculty chair promoted to Associate Professor

Lu Young Educational Leadership Studies promoted to Associate Professor

Jonathan Thomas STEM Education promoted to Associate Professor

Aaron Beighle PE program faculty chair promoted to Professor

KTIP Training 2017-2018 UK Service Region

Please register online:
<http://education.uky.edu/ocp/ktip>

Training sessions typically last 9:00 - 1:00 and take place on UK campus. See website for details on what to take with you to the training session.