



Office of Field Experiences

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Student Teaching and Graduate Internships in Private School Settings

It is the expectation of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction that student teaching and initial licensure internships take place in a public school setting in order to avoid potential problems with school accreditation, teacher licensure, and curriculum and to provide candidates with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be effective in public school settings. There is not, however, a State Board of Education policy that prohibits student teaching in private school settings. Therefore, under special circumstances, the Director of Field Experiences in the College of Education at UNC Charlotte will consider placement of a student teacher or graduate intern in a private school, if the school meets the same criteria applied to public schools.

Undergraduate student teaching: Undergraduate candidates for initial licensure will be placed in public schools settings for their student teaching experience.

Graduate internship/student teaching for Initial Licensure: Requests from candidates in the Master of Arts in Teaching and graduate licensure programs who are *employed as full-time classroom teachers or teacher assistants* in private schools will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Requests must include documentation of at least two diverse clinical experiences in public school settings, as expected of all candidates for initial licensure. Graduate-level candidates who are not employed will be placed in public school settings.

To determine the appropriateness of the placement, the Director will evaluate the setting in terms of the following criteria. All of the criteria must be met without qualification for the placement to be approved.

School criteria:

1. The school must be accredited by a professionally recognized regional or national accrediting agency.
2. The school or school system must sign the *Field Experiences Agreement* with UNC Charlotte.
3. The placement must enhance the candidate's academic and professional preparation in terms of:
 - a. providing expanded opportunities to work with students with exceptionalities and those from diverse ethnic, racial, gender, and socioeconomic groups.
 - b. providing expanded opportunities to explore alternative educational settings and instructional strategies; and
 - c. providing the opportunity to teach an alternative curriculum that can be aligned with the current state and national standards.
4. The location of the school must be such that the University will be able to provide timely and high-quality supervision.



Cooperating Teacher or On-site Supervisor Criteria: The candidate must receive direct daily supervision from a cooperating teacher or on-site supervisor who meets the following criteria:

1. A valid North Carolina teaching license (Standard Professional License) in the subject area and grade level for which the candidate is seeking licensure.
2. Three or more years of successful teaching experience in the appropriate grade level and subject area(s).
3. Effective instructional, management, communication, and interpersonal skills.
4. Effective mentoring and supervision skills.
5. Advanced coursework or a Master's degree in an appropriate field is preferred (Note: A Master's degree is required for candidates in special education).
6. Demonstrated professionalism and documented on-going professional growth.
7. Endorsement by the principal as a good role model for teaching.
8. Willingness to allow the candidate the flexibility required by their academic program to complete course requirements.

Candidates who desire to complete their graduate internship/student teaching experience in a private school should make application and consult with the Director of Field Experiences no later than September 5 or February 5 of the semester before student teaching. In addition to the standard application for the graduate internship/student teaching, the candidate and his/her advisor must provide a written justification for the special request. This justification must include documentation of appropriate, extensive, and intensive prior experiences in public school settings, as expected of all candidates for initial licensure. Candidates who lack this public school experience cannot be recommended for a North Carolina teaching license.

The Director will make a decision regarding the placement after consultation with the candidate, the advisor, the principal, and when appropriate, the Dean. The decision of the Director will be final.

(Approved 8/22/94; revised 2/3/98, 10/27/05, 5/30/12, 7/28/14)