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# *Traditional Undergraduate Teacher Education*

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# **Observation/Participation Field Experience and Student Teaching Policies Handbook**

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| **Coordinator of Field Experience**  **and Clinical Partnerships**  Jennifer Dorr  [dorr\_jennifer@roberts.edu](mailto:dorr_jennifer@roberts.edu)  585-594-6964  Hastings 210  *Please contact Jennifer for all OPE related questions.* |  | **Student Teaching Coordinator**  Amy Polisseni  [polisseni\_amy@roberts.edu](mailto:polisseni_amy@roberts.edu)  585-594-6787  Hastings 209  *Please contact Amy for all Student Teaching related questions.* |

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**General Policies**

## **Observation and Participation Field Experience (OPE)**

“52.21 (b) (xiii) Field experience means direct observation of teaching, participation in teaching, or teaching itself that is related to the teacher education program in which the candidate is enrolled; engaged in prior to student teaching or practica; and carefully selected and planned by program faculty.”

## **Student Teaching**

“52.21 (b) (xii) Student teaching means a structured, college-supervised learning experience for a student in a teacher education program in which the student teacher practices the skills being learned in the teacher education program and gradually assumes increased responsibility for instruction, classroom management, and other related duties for a class of students in the certificate sought. These skills are practiced under the direct supervision of the certified teacher who has official responsibility for the class.”

**Placement Procedures**

**Participation in field experience and student teaching is a privilege. There are no exceptions to these requirements and policies**.

## **Because of the need for objectivity regarding the NYS Education Department’s (NYSED) requirement for verification of OPE hours and student teaching, it is the policy of the Roberts Wesleyan Teacher Education Department that students will not be placed for field experience or student teaching with a relative or friend. Students will not be placed for student teaching in the school or district from which they graduated.**

## **Students are not to directly contact schools to arrange their own placements. Student requests for a particular placement with a school/teacher in the regional area may be *considered* (but not guaranteed) by the Placement Coordinators.** It is the responsibility of the Placement Coordinators to follow the protocol with all school districts to obtain appropriate placements. In some cases, the Placement Coordinators may be able to work with a building principal or district contact person to accommodate a student request for a particular school in the Monroe County/regional area, but this is an exception and cannot be guaranteed.

**Observation/Participation Experience Policies**

**Rationale for OPE**

The New York State Education Department requires a minimum number of Observation/Participation Experience (OPE) fieldwork hours to be completed prior to student teaching. The required number of hours is determined by the program leading to certification. Most programs require a minimum of 100 hours, but dual certification programs require a minimum of 150 hours. (Please refer to the “OPE Courses/Hours” spreadsheet for Roberts Wesleyan College programs and required OPE hours.)

The Roberts Wesleyan College undergraduate Teacher Education Program has embedded the fieldwork experiences into specific courses with each course requiring a minimum number of OPE hours to be completed throughout the semester. The purpose for this is to allow time for integrating and processing theory with actual practice. (Please refer to the “OPE Courses/Hours” spreadsheet listing information for each OPE course.)

The intent of the fieldwork experience is to provide opportunities for students to experience classroom realities and a variety of teaching styles. By the time a teacher education student is ready to begin student teaching, he/she will have completed the minimum number of fieldwork hours in a variety of school settings – urban, suburban, rural, and/or private; in general education, inclusive, and/or self-contained special education classrooms; and in appropriate grade levels as required by New York State for certification.

This fieldwork also provides opportunities for students to assist the classroom teachers by being involved with the classroom students in the fieldwork sites. We encourage Roberts Wesleyan College students to take the initiative to establish and develop their relationships with the classroom teachers and school administrators in the fieldwork sites to explore and/or deepen their own passion for teaching.

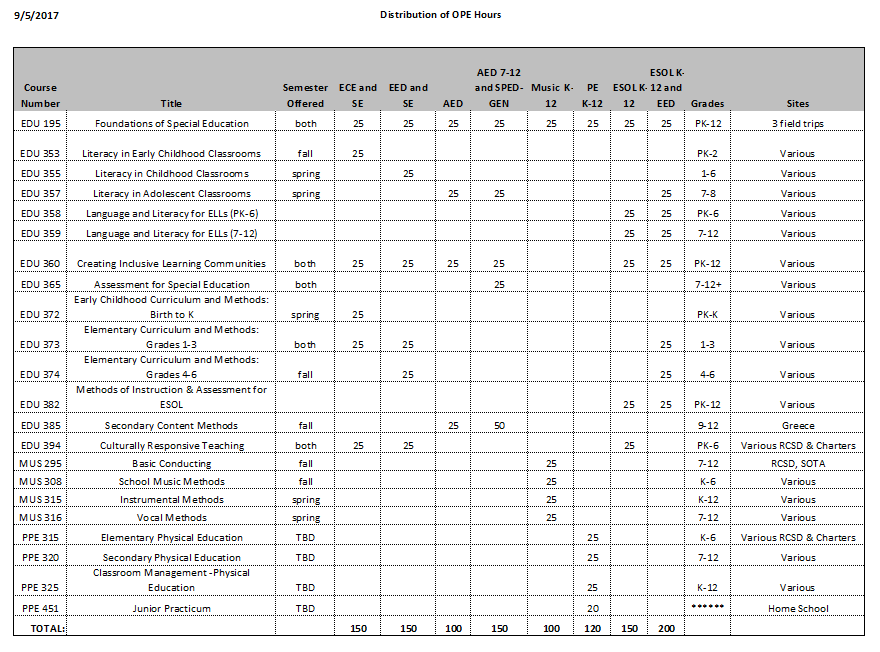
**Traditional Undergraduate Teacher Education Majors**

OPE hours are integrated into the curriculum as follows:

1. 25 hours per course required for each of 6 courses in Early Childhood and Childhood Ed
2. 25 hours per course required for each of 4 courses in the AED (without SWD) curriculum, and
3. 25 hours per course for 4 courses and 50 hours for one course in the AED with SWD 7-12
4. 25 hours per course required for each of 4 courses in K-12 Physical Education, plus an additional 20 hours in the Junior Practicum
5. 25 hours per course required for 4 courses in K-12 Music Education

Education majors, including Early Childhood/Special Education, Childhood/Special Education, Adolescence Education (with or without SWD 7-12 Generalist), and K-12 Education majors, must register for each OPE that is attached to a particular course in order to fulfill all of the NYSED requirements for field experience before student teaching.

**EXCEPTION - Seeking certification in an additional developmental level:** NYSED requires students to take 2 courses to “extend” a certification outside (up or down) of their declared developmental level *(i.e. a student seeking certification in Childhood Education, Grades 1-6 that also wants to become certified in Early Childhood, B-2).* Traditional undergraduates who take OPE courses outside of their developmental level to “extend” their certification are expected to take **one** of the OPE’s in order to gain classroom experience at that developmental level.  *(i.e. For a Childhood/Special Education major to also pursue Early Childhood certification, s/he must take EDU 353 and EDU 372. S/he is only required to complete the 25 OPE hours for* ***one*** *of these courses).*



**Completion of OPE Fieldwork**

1. Students’ performance in the classroom will be assessed by the host teacher using the OPE rubric (see Appendix I). The completed OPE rubrics and verification log sheets (see Appendix II) used for all fieldwork students are kept on file in the Undergraduate Teacher Education Office to ensure that they are available as documentation of students’ experience should the program ever be audited by the New York State Education Department.
2. If a student does not submit a rubric and log sheet at the end of the semester by the date that grades are due, he/she will receive an “Incomplete” for the course and the OPE. According to Roberts Wesleyan College policy, students have until the first day of classes in the Spring semester to have an “Incomplete” from the Fall semester changed to a grade, and until the middle of June to change an “Incomplete” from the Spring semester. Failure to meet the deadline results in the grade becoming an “F.”
3. The course instructor will make every effort to work with the student and the Registration Office to extend a deadline, if needed, in the following situations:
   1. Student’s scholarship funding may be affected
   2. Student’s time limitations due to schedule conflicts
   3. Student’s family illness
   4. Student’s change in health which affects his/her ability to complete work
   5. Any other situation which is determined by student and course instructor to be applicable
4. If a student earns below a B- (below C+ for EDU 195) in an EDU OPE course, he/she must retake the course **and** complete the entire number of hours of OPE required for the course.

**EXCEPTION: If a student has not completed all of the hours for EDU 195, the student will be able to pass the course, but will receive an incomplete for the OPE. The student will be required to make up the field trips the following semester. Whether a student is required to attend one or more of the field trips will be at the discretion of the course instructor and Coordinator of Field Experience.**

It is recommended that the student retake the course the following semester, or as soon as practically possible in consultation with the student’s advisor/advocate.

1. Since the Teacher Education Department embeds the OPE hours within specific courses, it is expected that students will complete a minimum number of hours during each of those courses. The course instructors have specific tasks/activities which students need to complete for OPE to integrate course material and tie theory to reality.
2. We encourage students to be involved in as many professional situations outside of traditional classroom time as possible but cannot count more than 10 of those hours toward the minimum 25 hours for a course. (i.e. professional development workshops, field trips, scheduled on-site planning time with a host teacher, faculty meetings, etc.). These types of hours must be completed under the direct supervision of the assigned host teacher and approved by the Coordinator of Field Experience in advance.

**Evaluation of OPE Fieldwork**

1. For each OPE course the evaluation rubric is to be completed by the host teacher, discussed with the student and then submitted to the Coordinator of Field Experience electronically. The student’s log sheet is in hard copy form and is to be signed by the host teacher to verify the OPE hours. **It is the student’s responsibility to make sure that the rubric and log sheet are submitted, either in person or by mail, by the end of the last week of classes in the semester.** If additional time is needed, the student must consult with the course instructor and Coordinator of Field Experience.
2. If an EDU OPE course instructor becomes aware of an issue or problem with a student’s OPE placement, s/he should contact the Field Experience Coordinator as soon as possible to determine appropriate intervention support. The coordinator of Field Experience, the course instructor, and the academic advisor may meet with the student to evaluate what is needed for him/her to be successful in the OPE by the end of the course. *See section D below for specific intervention procedures.*
3. A passing score on the rubric is determined by a program’s progression. Please see Appendix III for specific passing scores for each OPE course.
4. Any student for which a concern has been raised or whose average is below a specified cut-off score will be required to attend a meeting with an OPE advisory committee made up of the Program Director, the course instructor, the student’s faculty advisor, and the Coordinator of Field Experience, to discuss the experience and identify an appropriate response – including potential intervention and/or support options.
   1. The Coordinator of Field Experience and/or course instructor may ~~also~~ consult with the host teacher to obtain more information.
   2. The student will be asked to reflect on reasons for his/her performance and identify potential intervention and/or support options.
   3. If a student desires to continue in the Teacher Education Program, he/she may be required to complete one or more interventions, including but not limited to the following:
      1. S/he may be assigned an individual OPE Supervisor for an additional placement or for his/her next OPE course.
      2. S/he may be encouraged or required to get academic and/or personal advisement and support at the College Learning Center and/or Counseling Center.
      3. S/he may be encouraged or required to meet regularly with her/his advisor to set personal and professional goals, and monitor progress toward achieving those goals.
      4. S/he may be asked to develop and sign a contract accepting the conditions and requirements for continuing in the program.
   4. The student may be encouraged to explore alternative ways to graduate from the college, including other majors for traditional undergraduate students and an education degree (B.S. or M.Ed.) that does not include student teaching or a recommendation for certification for nontraditional undergraduate and traditional graduate students.
5. If a student earns a B- or higher in the course and completes the hours, but does not earn a passing score on the rubric, s/he may need to satisfactorily complete an appropriate OPE intervention before taking another EDU course requiring OPE hours, or before student teaching if this course is the final OPE course. (Student will receive an “Incomplete” grade in the course and an “Incomplete” grade for the OPE until the fieldwork is completed satisfactorily.)

**Additional OPE Policies and Procedures**

**OPEs Per Semester**

Students are strongly advised to plan their coursework so that they do not have to take more than one OPE course per semester. If a student cannot avoid taking two OPE courses in one semester, the student can be placed in one placement of 50 hours. This is possible, but not guaranteed. Consideration will be given to ensure that the student has the breadth of experience required by the program and NYSED.

If a student wants to take three OPE courses in one semester, the student must apply to the Undergraduate Program Director and Coordinator of Field Experience for special permission to do so. The decision to approve (or not approve) the application will be made by the Undergraduate Program Director in consultation with the student’s faculty advisor and the Coordinator of Field Experience. Permission will be granted only in certain rare circumstances.

**Change of Program**

If a student has completed fieldwork in a classroom setting which no longer meets the requirements for a student’s program because the student changed programs, those hours will not count toward the required fieldwork.

**Requesting Credit of Previous Experience Toward OPE Hours**

1. **Employment at an Appropriate District, School, or Agency**

A student with previous classroom experience from employment at an appropriate district, school, or agency may submit a “Request for Credit Towards OPE Hours and official documentation (letter from the district/school on official letterhead) to the Coordinator of Field Experience, who will consult with the Undergraduate Program Director, course instructor and faculty advisor to consider this request. The Coordinator of Field Experience may contact the district/school for more information and confirmation of the experience.

Documentation must be submitted at least one month prior to the beginning of the semester. Students should be aware that such requests will rarely be accepted because of the way that fieldwork is thoroughly integrated into OPE courses and course assignments.

* 1. If the decision is yes, the Coordinator of Field Experience will inform the course instructor and student in writing. The course instructor will determine alternate ways for the student to fulfill course requirements.
  2. If the decision is no, the Coordinator of Field Experience will notify the student in writing. The student may appeal this decision by contacting the Teacher Education Department Chairperson, who serves as the Director of the Teacher Education Program.

1. **Application of Fieldwork from a Previous College**

If a student has completed fieldwork hours while attending another college and wants to apply those fieldwork hours toward a current, specific Roberts Wesleyan College OPE course, he/she must ask the previous college to send written verification of the number of fieldwork hours, grade levels, and types of classrooms to the Coordinator of Field Experience. Documentation must be submitted at least one month prior to the beginning of the course.

If there is verification of previous fieldwork…

* 1. If fieldwork hours are verified and accepted for transfer to Roberts, the hours accepted will be applied toward the total number of hours the student must complete. Credit towards hours for a particular course will be at the discretion of the Coordinator of Field Experience, Undergraduate Program Director and faculty member teaching that course.
  2. In no case will the number of fieldwork hours accepted for transfer exceed half of the total number of hours the student must complete for his/her program.

If there is no verification of fieldwork completed at the previous college, then the student will need to complete the designated number of OPE hours for the course.

1. **Appeal Procedure**

The Teacher Education Department Chairperson, who serves as the Director of the Teacher Education Program, is available for students to appeal OPE decisions.

**Non-Education Majors and OPE**

1. **Students pursuing a minor in education**

Students with other majors, including students earning a B.S. in Cross-Disciplinary Studies or a B.A. in Liberal Arts, may choose to complete a minor in education. The requirements for an education minor are found in the undergraduate catalog.

* 1. When taking a course with an OPE, students completing a minor in education are not required to register for and complete the OPE, but may choose to do so. If they wish to do fieldwork in a classroom setting, they must apply to the Coordinator of Field Experience.
  2. The decision to approve (or not approve) the student’s application will be made by the Undergraduate Program Director and the Coordinator of Field Experience.
  3. Students may also choose to do an alternative field experience related to their vocational goals. In this case the student is responsible for setting up the fieldwork (e.g., in a church educational program, hospital setting, or school counseling office) with the permission of and in consultation with the course instructor, his/her faculty advisor, and the Coordinator of Field Experience. Alternate experiences will not meet certification requirements should a student later choose to major in education.

1. **Students pursuing other majors, including Cross-Disciplinary Studies (CDS) or Liberal Arts (LA) majors whose program includes education as an “area of study”**

Completion of an area of study for CDS and LA degrees requires a student to complete 15 credit hours, of which 6 credit hours must be coursework at the 300- or 400-level. Students are not required to take an OPE course, but most of the upper level education courses are OPE courses.

* 1. If a student who has designated “education” as an area of study chooses to take an OPE course, the student may request and apply for permission to complete the OPE hours with her or his classmates. The decision to approve (or not approve) the student’s application will be made by the Undergraduate Program Director in consultation with the student’s faculty advisor and the Coordinator of Field Experience.
  2. Students earning either of these degrees who are completing a minor in education as part of their program must follow the guidelines for anyone doing a minor in education (see above).
  3. The policy for all other non-education majors is the same as the policy for students in CDS and LA who complete education as an area of study.
  4. Decisions about allowing non-majors to complete OPE hours in a classroom setting will be based largely upon the perceived ability of the student to participate appropriately in a school setting, including demonstration of teaching competencies and professional dispositions. It is imperative that all students who go into schools on behalf of Roberts Wesleyan College are prepared to represent us well.

1. **Students who are not traditional undergraduates, but are taking undergraduate OPE courses (e.g., graduate and PTT students, and alumni/ae who are taking a course toward a certificate extension).**
   1. These students will not be required to complete OPE hours. Their circumstances will be considered on an individual, case-by-case basis.
   2. If these students want to complete the OPE hours, they must apply to the Coordinator of Field Experience for permission to do so. The decision to approve such a request will be made by the Undergraduate Program Director or Department Chair in consultation with the Coordinator of Field Experience.

**Transportation Policies for OPE**

1. **EDU 195 - Foundations of Special Education**

Students are required to complete 3 day-long field trips. Transportation may be provided by the Roberts Wesleyan College Transportation Department and/or in college vans driven by Teacher Education personnel, depending on the nature and location of the field trip. Some students provide transportation as arranged with the course instructor and Coordinator of Field Experience.

1. **For all other OPE courses, students are required to provide their own transportation or make arrangements with another student to ride with him/her.** Requests for placements in the vicinity of another student for the purposes of carpooling must be made to the Coordinator of Field Experience 1 month prior to the beginning of the semester.
2. Travel time to and from an OPE site **does not count** towards the total required hours for a course.

**Chapel Reduction and OPE**

Students must work closely with their faculty advisors to ensure there are ample and available blocks of time in their schedules to accommodate required OPE hours outside of chapel time. **Students are not allowed to request a chapel reduction to complete OPE hours, except in the following extenuating circumstances:**

1. The only time a host teacher and student’s schedules coincide is during the teacher’s planning/lunch times on a chapel day.
2. A student has less than a 2 hour free block of time per week to complete OPE hours outside of classes and chapel (excluding time for work or work study).
3. The student is participating in the Teacher Immersion Fellowship program and has designated a chapel day as one of his/her committed days.
4. The student is taking 2 or more OPE courses.

Students must consult with their faculty advisor if one of the extenuating circumstances applies. Requests for chapel reduction must be signed by the student’s faculty advisor.

**Proof must be provided to the faculty advisor and Office of Student Services that the OPE hourly requirement cannot be met by the end of the semester.** Printed email correspondence and student schedule with calculated hour totals may be provided as proof.

**Attendance Policies for OPE**

Students are expected to arrange a consistent weekly schedule of attendance with the host teacher. The student is expected to follow the pre-arranged weekly schedule and be punctual and prepared.

In addition, the following attendance policies must be adhered to:

1. It is prohibited to miss classes to attend OPE.
2. Students may not miss their scheduled OPE time for work or poor planning (i.e. completing homework or studying).
3. Any need to miss or reschedule an OPE visit must be communicated to the host teacher at least 48 hours in advance.
4. **Unexcused or last minute absences are unprofessional and not acceptable**. One unexcused absence or “no show” may result in termination of the placement.
5. Excused absences consist of athletics competition, illness, death in the family, and other serious complications.
6. If a student must miss a significant amount of scheduled time because of extreme circumstances, the student may be asked to withdraw and complete the OPE during another semester.

***Teacher Immersion Fellowship Program* (TIFP) Opportunities for OPE**

To address the substitute teacher shortage, Roberts Wesleyan College has partnered with Monroe-2 BOCES and the Churchville Chili Central School District to provide paid OPE fieldwork through substitute teaching. A student has the opportunity to apply for this program directly through Monroe-2 BOCES and/or Churchville Chili. If applying through Monroe-2 BOCES, a placement may be obtained in the Brockport Central School District, Hilton Central School District, Spencerport Central School District, Rush-Henrietta Central School District, or in BOCES Special Education classrooms.

**How the program works:**

1. The student applies directly to Monroe-2 BOCES or Churchville Chili. The student will be interviewed and hired by the cooperating district/organization.
2. The student commits to 1-5 days of substitute teaching each week. This is discussed directly with the hiring district.
3. The student is placed with a team of teachers in his/her certification area.
4. **For the entirety of a semester, a student will report to the building for substitute teaching each of the days to which he/she committed.** If the team of teachers does not need a substitute teacher on a particular day, the student will assist his/her assigned team as a teacher’s aide.

On rare occasions, a building/district may have a vacancy and need the student to substitute outside of his/her assigned team on a given day. On very rare occasions, the student may need to fill a vacancy outside of his/her certification area on a given day.  **In these cases, the student must be flexible.**

**Roberts Wesleyan Policies Relating to the Teacher Immersion Fellowship Programs:**

* A log sheet must be filled out and signed by one of the teachers on the team to which the student was assigned. **Only days spent with the assigned team of teachers should be recorded on the log sheet.**
* One rubric must be completed by the team of teachers to which the student was assigned.
* A student may only receive credit for OPE hours for the courses which he/she is enrolled in a semester. Hours may not be credited to future semesters. The student is expected to working his/her designated day(s) for the entire semester even if the number of hours worked exceeds the number of OPE hours required for the semester.
* A student can receive credit for up to, but no more than, 50 OPE hours in a Fellowship Immersion Program **in one district.** (i.e. A student works in the TIFP for the Brockport Central School District during the Fall semester. He/she may only receive credit for 50 hours. He/she may continue in the TIFP during the spring semester with the Hilton Central School District to receive another 50 hours).
* A student can receive credit for up to, but no more than, **100 OPE hours in total** through the Fellowship Immersion Programs. *Note: If a student receives credit for OPE hours from previous experience or his/her place of employment, this option may not be available or there will be additional restrictions to the total hours for which a student may receive credit in the TIF Programs. These decisions are made by the AGE Steering Committees. The Committees will review requests on an individual, case-by-case basis.*

**For more information on how to apply, please contact the Coordinator of Field Experience.**

**Student Teaching Policies**

**Rationale for Student Teaching**

The Student Teaching semester is devoted to the actual teaching process. The student spends the semester in schools observing, participating, and teaching under the direction of a mentor teacher. The student teacher is required to engage in self-appraisal while receiving frequent and regular appraisals from the Mentor Teacher and the College Supervisor. Students take a Student Teaching Seminar concurrently with the Student Teaching Practicum.

**Prior Requirements**

Students will not be allowed to enter Student Teaching unless they have met all prerequisites: completion of all EDU/EDUC courses with required grade achieved, completion of all required OPE hours, a minimum overall GPA of 2.70, and successfully meet the Technical Standards for Teacher Education.

**Application**

Each student will need to complete an application packet to student teach. Student teaching application packets are available in the Office of Student Teaching, Hastings room 209.

**DEADLINES FOR STUDENT TEACHING APPLICATIONS:**

For Fall Student Teaching – February 10th (7 months prior)

For Spring Student Teaching – September 10th (4 months prior)

**Transportation**

Roberts Wesleyan student teachers are welcomed at numerous school districts and private schools. Working closely with these private and public schools, the College is able to ensure our students the best possible professional preparation. **Transportation must be provided by each student teacher.**

**Placements**

A teacher candidate will be assigned no more than a total of three (3) seven week student teaching placements. If a teacher candidate does not successfully complete two (2) student teaching placements within the possible three (3) assignments, no further placements will be made by the Teacher Education Department. This policy does not guarantee that a teacher candidate will have the opportunity to participate in a minimum number of student teaching placements.

**Teacher Requests**

If a teacher has indicated to you that she/he would like to have you as a student teacher in her/his class, please tell the teacher that you are not allowed to request an individual teacher or do anything to arrange your own placement. **Any teacher who would like to request a particular student must contact the Coordinator of Student Teaching by e-mail as soon as possible.** (polisseni\_amy@roberts.edu) Note: Any request made by a teacher will be considered, but **not** guaranteed. There are many factors that have to be considered in determining the most appropriate placement for each student.

**Length of Practicum**

Students in Childhood and Early Childhood programs will be given one 14-week placement in an inclusive setting that allows them to teach both general education and special education students. Students in Adolescent programs will be given 2 seven-week placements or one 14 week placement with the opportunity to teach both general education and special education. Students in K-12 programs (Music and Physical Education) will be given 2 seven week placements.

**Grading/Rubric**

The student teaching final grade is a Pass or Fail. This is the only course in the pedagogical core that does not award a letter grade. Performance on the rubric will determine whether or not a Student Teacher earns a passing grade in each placement. The Student Teacher, Mentor Teacher and College Supervisor will each complete the rubric at the Midterm and End of the semester. At the Midterm and Final conference, all three parties will reach consensus scores for the rubrics. **A passing score is 35 for the Final rubric.**

**Attendance**

Student Teachers are expected to observe the attendance rules that apply to the staff and master teacher in the assigned school and district. **Unexcused absence is unprofessional and simply not acceptable**. One unexcused absence may result in termination of the placement and a grade of F. Students are allowed no more than 3 legal absences for the entire semester. Legal absences consist of illness, death in the family, and other serious complications. If a student must miss more time than allowed because of extreme circumstances, the student may be asked to withdraw. The Student Teaching Panel will then determine when and how the student will meet the requirements of that student teaching placement.

**Employment**

In recognition of the fact that some students must work to meet their financial obligations, or to maintain their full-time status at the College, the Teacher Education Department has formulated the following policy: Students are strongly urged **not** to work during student teaching. Students who must work are strongly urged to limit their work to part-time and limit their working hours to the weekend when the work will least interfere with their lesson preparation.

**Athletics**

The Teacher Education Department also recognizes that some undergraduate students are athletes, some are involved in dual-semester sports, and some must play sports in order to receive scholarship funds that allow them to remain enrolled at the College. Student athletes who wish to play sports while student teaching must meet with their Faculty Advisor, Coach, and the Undergraduate Program Director to review and sign the *Student Teaching/Scholar Athlete Requirement Contract* – before they apply to student teach*.*  Included in the policy governing participation in sports while student teaching are the following principles:

* Student athletes who participate in a sport that only involves one semester will student teach during the opposite semester.
* Any off-season practice or play participation must meet the requirements of a two-semester sport.
* Student teachers may not leave their student teaching placement earlier in the school day schedule in order to attend practice sessions or to participate in any home or away games.

**Additional Coursework**

Traditional undergraduate students are full-time students enrolled in Student Teaching for 12 credit hours and the Student Teaching Seminar for 2 credit hours. They may not take additional coursework without the prior, written approval of the Professional Admissions Committee.

**Equity for Students with Disabilities**

The College is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all qualified students and welcomes students with disabilities into its community and programs. Students who request special academic support services are responsible for providing timely and appropriate documentation of their disability to the Learning Center. The instructor of this course will provide individual accommodations to any student who has a disability when the student presents the appropriate recommendation and/or resources from the Learning Center. Students are expected to comply with all areas of the course in which accommodations are not required.

**NYS Teacher Certification Exam - the edTPA**

Effective May 1, 2014, candidates for initial certification in NYS must complete and receive a passing score on the edTPA. This Teacher Performance Assessment must be completed during student teaching. It is a standardized assessment usually consisting of three components or tasks: Planning, Instruction, and Assessment. (For Childhood 1-6 Education, there are four tasks – the three above and an additional assessment task.) Teacher candidates complete each task following detailed guidelines provided in the appropriate edTPA Handbook and submit their completed work electronically to be scored by trained scorers. The specific Handbook a student will follow is determined by the student’s primary certification (e.g., developmental level, academic discipline, and/or special/general education).

The Instruction task requires teacher candidates to videotape lessons they have taught and to write a detailed commentary analyzing and justifying their teaching behaviors. They must secure written permission from parents before taping students in their classroom.

Student teachers are encouraged to work closely with the Student Teaching Seminar faculty and their College Supervisors to determine the best setting and time for completing the edTPA. The NYS Education Department has indicated that scores will be returned within 3-4 weeks. *Note: Passing the edTPA is separate from passing student teaching*. *Students are responsible for the consequences if they do not pass the edTPA, including the cost of retaking the assessment if necessary.*

**Policy for Termination of Student Teaching**

**Statement of Purpose**

It is the goal of the Teacher Education Program that every student teacher succeed in both of her or his placements, pass the edTPA required by NYSED, and move forward in the journey toward an initial teaching certificate and a lifetime of successful teaching.

However, sometimes students encounter difficulties that must be addressed – whether through intervention, support, and an additional placement, or through a decision to pursue another degree and profession. The faculty, program directors, supervisors, master teachers, and coordinators work as a team to support each student toward the best possible outcome.

Problems in student teaching may take the form of:

* Inadequate planning,
* Inadequate classroom management/discipline,
* Lack of content knowledge or inability to convey content knowledge to the pupils in the classroom,
* Deficiency in oral or written communication skills,
* Inability to accept and integrate constructive feedback,
* Inappropriate, unethical, or unprofessional conduct in or out of school,
* Failure to accomplish all student teaching requirements,
* Any of the above, or any other behavior that harms pupils or impedes their progress in the school.

**Problems in student teaching may lead to any of the following consequences:**

1. **Involuntary termination of a student’s placement before the end of seven weeks.** This may be a decision by the master teacher and/or school to which a student is assigned, or a decision by the Teacher Education Program. This decision may be made when the student has violated policies or procedures of the school of assignment, or has demonstrated to the school and/or Teacher Education Program that the student is not ready or able to meet the requirements of the student teaching placement.

The grade earned for the student teaching placement that has been involuntarily terminated will be decided by the Student Teaching Panel composed of the appropriate Program Director, the student’s Faculty Advisor, and the College Supervisor. The grade may be a W (withdrawal), or an F (failure), depending upon the circumstances which led to the termination. The Student Teaching Panel will also determine the student’s status toward completion of the Student Teaching Seminar, in consultation with the faculty member teaching the Student Teaching Seminar.

Involuntary termination by a student does not automatically mean that the student will be ineligible for an additional student teaching placement. The decision about additional placement(s) will be based upon the recommendation of the Student Teaching Panel and its determination of a student’s potential to succeed in the future.

1. **Voluntary termination of a student’s placement before the end of seven weeks.** This is a decision made by the student in consultation with the student’s College Supervisor, Mentor Teacher, Faculty Advisor, and Program Director. The professionals working with the student teacher may recommend this action because life circumstances (e.g., serious illness) or poor performance in the classroom (e.g., failing to adequately meet the requirements of student teaching) indicate that it is very unlikely the student will succeed in completing the placement.

The grade earned for a student teaching placement that is voluntarily terminated by the student depends upon the timing of the termination. If the student voluntarily terminates her or his placement by the end of the fifth week and before the scheduled “solo week,” the student will receive the grade of W (withdrawal). If the student teacher terminates the placement during the sixth or seventh week, or anytime during or after the “solo week,” the student will receive the grade of F (failure). The Student Teaching Panel (College Supervisor, Faculty Advisor, and Program Director) will determine the student’s status toward completion of the Student Teaching Seminar, in consultation with the faculty member teaching the Student Teaching Seminar.

Voluntary termination by a student does not guarantee that the student will be eligible for an additional student teaching placement. The decision about additional placement(s) will be based upon the recommendation of the Student Teaching Panel and its determination of a student’s potential to succeed in the future.

1. **Failure to pass the student teaching placement**. In this case the student completes all seven *(or fourteen)* weeks of student teaching, but fails to meet all the requirements of student teaching and/or fails to demonstrate the teaching competencies and behaviors expected of entrants into the teaching profession. The student receives an F for this quarter of student teaching.

**Process of Termination**

If the school where the Student Teacher is placed has determined that the Student Teacher must be removed immediately because of serious problems, the College has no authority to appeal or change the decision. In all other circumstances, the decision to terminate a student teaching placement before completion of seven weeks, whether by the school, the Teacher Education Program, or the student her or himself, will be made collaboratively with careful examination of the individual situation and circumstances and with the utmost care, thought, and professional consideration given to all parties involved. In order to make the decision and determine next steps, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The College Supervisor will make every effort to meet with the Student Teacher to discuss the potential problem(s) related to student teaching in a timely manner that will allow adequate time for the teacher candidate to show improvement. It is the responsibility of the College Supervisor to give the Student Teacher preliminary feedback about her/his progress no later than the 4th week of the placement. Both the feedback given to the student and discussion of the feedback with the student will be documented in writing. However, if the reason for considering termination of the student teaching experience is of a nature that requires immediate attention, the Director of the Undergraduate Program will begin the process immediately and move to step 2.
2. The Student Teacher will receive a formal written notification that significant problem(s) have been identified and her/his student teaching placement may be terminated. The notice will require the student to attend a formal meeting with the Student Teaching Panel composed of the appropriate Program Director or her/his designee; the College Supervisor; and the Student Teacher’s Faculty Advisor. Another person, who may act as an advocate, may accompany the student. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the problem(s) in student teaching that have been identified and the steps that will be taken to address these problem(s). These may include continuation in the placement with significant changes in the Student Teacher’s teaching or other behaviors, or termination of the placement. The Student Teacher may choose to withdraw voluntarily from the student teaching placement; or the Student Teaching Panel may decide that she/he will be removed from the classroom involuntarily. The Coordinator of Student Teaching will attend the meeting and record the decision(s) made.
3. Following the meeting, the appropriate Program Director will inform the student in writing of the decision of the Student Teaching Panel.
4. If the decision of the Panel is to remove the Student Teacher from the placement involuntarily, she or he may appeal the decision in writing to the Department Chair who will then meet with the Student Teacher and with her/his advocate, if requested by the Student Teacher. This letter of appeal must be received within seven (7) days of the decision. In the event that the Program Director is also the Department Chair, the student may appeal in writing to another Program Director.
5. Any additional appeals must follow the rules and procedures outlined in the Academic Grievance Policy located in the Roberts Wesleyan College Student Handbook.

**Procedures Following an Unsuccessful Student Teaching Placement**

If the teacher candidate is unable to satisfactorily complete a student teaching placement, the Student Teaching Panel will determine one of the following alternatives for the teacher candidate based on her/his specific situation:

**The teacher candidate is determined to have the potential to be successful in another student teaching experience**:

When the Student Teaching Panel determines that the teacher candidate has the potential to succeed, an individual intervention plan that will facilitate progress toward that goal will be identified and implemented before the student may begin an additional placement. A written copy of the intervention plan will be given to the Student Teacher. The plan may consist of such requirements as: a supervised OPE (Observation Participation Experience) which will be scheduled by the Coordinator of Field Experience; personal or career counseling and advisement; additional coursework; and/or development of a contract indicating precisely which behavior(s) must change in order for the student to succeed. The teacher candidate must successfully meet the requirements of the intervention plan before s/he will be eligible to apply for another student teaching placement.

If following the prescribed intervention, she/he does not successfully complete a subsequent placement, the student will be withdrawn from the Teacher Education program. The student will meet with the Program Director to determine an alternate route toward graduation. This may include changing his/her major, and completing the coursework needed to receive a degree in a program outside of Teacher Education, and assignment of a new Faculty Advisor.

**The teacher candidate is determined not to have the potential to be successful in another student teaching experience:**

The Student Teaching Panel carefully weighs all evidence of a student’s ability to enter the teaching profession before making a recommendation regarding the student’s continuation in any education program. This includes evidence of a student’s content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and personal and professional dispositions, as well as information about the circumstances surrounding the unsuccessful placement. When the Panel concludes that it is very unlikely that a teacher candidate will be able to enter and/or succeed in the teaching profession – whether after an unsuccessful student teaching placement or in some cases after completion of the prescribed intervention – the student will not be eligible for a subsequent student teaching placement. This decision will be discussed with the student, and every effort will be made to assist the teacher candidate in finding an alternate route toward completion of a degree. This may include changing majors, identifying coursework that will substitute for student teaching, and/or personal or career counseling.

**Special note**: In some circumstances a student may be unsuccessful in completing a student teaching placement because of what appear to be temporary circumstances, such as a personal or family crisis, prolonged illness, or other dynamic life situations. If the Student Teaching Panel believes that the student has the potential to succeed when her/his life circumstances improve and/or stabilize, the Panel may recommend that the student “stop out” or withdraw from the program temporarily rather than complete an education degree without student teaching (in one of the ways described above). To the extent possible, the student will be informed of the consequences of her/his present choices for entering into the teaching profession in the future, but the decision and responsibility for its consequences will remain with the student.

**Student teaching at Roberts is available only to students currently enrolled in one of the Roberts education programs registered with the New York State Education Department as a program leading to teaching certification.** Students who complete an education degree without student teaching are not eligible to return to the College later to student teach as non-matriculated students.

**Teacher Education Portfolio**

Increasingly, it is becoming the practice that teacher candidates share with their future employers a portfolio illustrating their preparations to enter the teaching profession. With this in mind, **it is important that – beginning in your freshman year – you create and preserve the materials necessary for such a portfolio.** A typical portfolio prepared by teacher candidates might contain such items as the following:

* Your Educational Philosophy
* Copies of papers you have written on educational subjects or in your content area
* Unit and lesson plans
* Student work (completed during your observation/participation experience and student teaching)
* Written evaluations of lessons during student teaching
* Pictures of children and projects during your student teaching experience

**Telecommunications Policy for OPE Students and Student Teachers**

**Cell Phones and Texting Policies**

You need to know and follow the host school’s cell phone policies for employees and students and the RWC Teacher Education policy for cell phone use in host schools. If these policies differ, you should adhere to the policy that is the most restrictive.

The RWC Teacher Education policy is:

* You may not have your cell phone turned on while in the host school building or with students outside the building unless necessary for safety or security purposes.
* You may not make any personal calls while in the building or “on duty” for OPE or student teaching.
* You may not give your cell phone number to any student or ask for his/her cell phone number.
* You may not allow students to see, use, or handle your cell phone and you may not see, use or handle theirs.

**Social Networking Policies**

For educational purposes:

* Your use of Internet Social Networking must be approved by your host or master teacher.
* You are responsible to be aware of the policies of your host school.

Private or personal information:

* You may not communicate with any students via any technological social networking media.
* You may not give your permission to any student to access your social network and you may not access any student’s social network.

**Professional Considerations**

Including blogs, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and a host of other sites, there are many opportunities to communicate private information. However, the Internet is public domain and comments and/or pictures can find their way to potential employers, current employers and/or students in your host school. Be aware of what you put on any of these networks! *During our Mock Interviews panel some area school administrators have said that they may check the technological social networking sites of potential job candidates to see if there are inappropriate pictures or messages.*

Voicemail Answering Messages: In your preparation for a professional career, keep in mind that host teachers, master teachers, supervisors, and/or administrators may call you at a time when you are not able to answer the phone. Your voicemail answering message needs to be professional and respectful of people’s time.

Personal email addresses should be appropriately named. It is RWC policy to communicate with staff and faculty using Roberts Wesleyan College email.

**You are in a position of responsibility as a student preparing to be a professional educator. You do not want to say or do anything that could implicate you in a situation of inappropriate contact with students, parents, or colleagues – or even give the appearance of inappropriate contact.**

**Confidentiality Policy for OPE Students and Student Teachers**

Maintaining confidentiality means that when you acquire information regarding a student’s academic, social, emotional, physical, or family situation, you do not discuss or reveal that information with anyone other than the person who gave it to you. In most cases, that would be your host or master teacher. It is also your responsibility to be aware of and comply with your host school’s policy.

Whenever you reference a specific student by writing in journals or reflection papers and/or discussing your school experiences in college OPE classes or student teaching seminars, always use a pseudonym (make-up a first name). Do not use any last names or any identifying information.

There may be no discussion of students or school situations when you are in public campus areas or out in the community. You never know who might be sitting or standing within hearing range.

Emails are legal documents, so do not send anything about students that could be identifying in personal emails. Emails can be forwarded to anyone.

Also, as guaranteed by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), school student information contained in professional emails are part of the student’s file and may be accessed by parents.

**If you have questions regarding any student-related policy, refer to your host or master teacher for the school policy, for example, reporting any suspected abuse or neglect of students.**

**Dress Code for all Fieldwork and Student Teaching**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **MEN & WOMEN** | |
| * Do not wear hats in schools. * Cover all tattoos. * Do not wear jeans of any color * Do not wear sneakers of flip flops. | * Take out all piercings (ladies, other than your ears). * Clothing should be clean, unwrinkled and not frayed. * Do not wear t-shirts or shirts with graphics/printing. |

**WOMEN**

Slacks should be dress material and style.

Skirts should be an appropriate length for working with children/youth.

Blouses, sweaters, tops should be loose and have a high neck line.

Do not wear tight fitting clothing. Leggings or skinny jeans should be mostly covered by a long shirt.

When you raise your arms over your head – no skin should show at all.

Make sure you are totally covered when bending over or stooping down.

**MEN**

Wear a dress shirt tucked into dress pants/khakis.

Wear a tie and dress shoes

Do not wear t-shirts or shirts with printing/graphics.

**Physical Education Majors: Wear clothing specified by the Director of Physical Education.**

*All policies are subject to change. Any changes will be communicated to students through college publications, website, e-mail, and/or course instructors.*