HANDBOOK
FOR
STUDENT TEACHING

Fall 2011/Spring 2012

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
One Winooski Park, Box 281, Colchester, Vermont 05439
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. SMC Education Department Philosophy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Expectations for Student Teaching</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Responsibilities of the “Triad”</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Role of Student Teacher</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Role of Cooperating Teacher</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Role of Supervisor</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Timeline for Teaching</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Education Department Contact Information</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Appendices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation Forms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Semester and Final Evaluation Forms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards and Principles for Vermont Educators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The student teaching experience is the culmination for students in the education program at Saint Michael’s College. It marks a transition from student to novice teacher. As student teachers continue their path in teaching, student teaching creates conditions that allow them to learn from and reflect on their teaching practice. Student teachers will work with a cooperating teacher while a supervisor observes and consults with the student teacher over the course of one semester. This “triad” of individuals work as a team to develop the skills, pedagogical knowledge and dispositions of the student teacher. For the student teacher this is a fulltime responsibility. This handbook will provide information to make student teaching a more successful experience for all involved.

SAINT MICHAEL’S COLLEGE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY

The Saint Michael's College Education Department is committed to awakening and sustaining the spirit of teaching and learning through nurturing the following characteristics in ourselves and in our student teachers. As a teaching and learning community we hope that each student teacher attempts to embody these principles.

DIGNITY AND DIVERSITY

We are committed to a deep respect for the dignity and inherent worthiness of each person. We honor all dimensions of human development and emphasize the distinct gifts, needs, and interests of each learner. We are also committed to the inclusion of diverse cultural values and knowledge. As a result, we embrace and model varied learning and teaching methodologies.

CHARACTER AND COMMUNITY

We view teaching as an ethical calling through which our students and we can nurture the moral dimensions of our lives, including our sense of social responsibility and our leadership qualities within a context of compassionate relationships. The qualities we strive to promote include the development of integrity, a commitment to peace and justice, empathy, humility, and the courage to act on one’s principles in pursuit of both educational and social change.

KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM

Our search for knowledge and wisdom is strongly grounded in the liberal arts tradition, which incorporates mastery of discipline, interdisciplinary perspectives, and an increasing sense of responsibility for one’s own learning. We value the habits of mind of intellectual curiosity and persistence, critical thinking, self-reflection, and imagination, and we apply them in challenges within schools and the larger culture.
**EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT TEACHING**

Expectations for student teaching start before student teachers are placed at their respective school sites. Student teachers will consult with their advisor to ensure that all courses and Praxis tests have been satisfactorily taken. Student teachers will also submit an application to student teach to either the elementary, secondary or graduate coordinators during the semester prior to student teaching (see Appendix A for Contact Information). The Education Department determines the final school site and cooperating teacher for each student teacher. However, student teachers may request a preference.

Once a placement is determined student teachers will meet with their cooperating teacher to discuss preparations for the student teaching semester and sign a letter of agreement (Appendix B). When student teachers begin their placement they are expected to act professionally and in accordance to the norms of their respective school. The student teacher is not expected to start teaching immediately, rather there are stages that are optimal for a successful and productive student teaching experience (see also Appendix C Timeline for Teaching).

1. **Getting Started** (weeks 1-2):  
   This is a phase of observation, orientation and taking on modest responsibilities. Student teachers learn routines of the class and school and how to navigate his/her way around the building. This includes locating key resources and meeting key people (librarian, administrators, special educators, ESL teachers, and paraprofessionals). Student teachers will learn students’ names and help/support the cooperating teacher in certain appropriate activities. Student teachers will review pertinent student documents such as Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and WIDA Access test information and to begin to create an accommodations matrix for their classes. Student teachers will consider carefully how to establish presence that is more than just an observer. Meetings between student teachers and cooperating teachers will be established at regular times to debrief. Conversations will include outlining responsibilities and how and when these responsibilities will increase over the semester. Student teachers will begin to think about possibilities for a 2-4 week unit later in the semester and timing of solo week(s). The first goal setting triad meeting will probably occur during this phase.

2. **Phase-in Period** (weeks 3-4):  
   Student teachers will begin to “test their wings” as teachers and begin to get more involved in planning conversations. Student teachers will have a good understanding of the big picture and the details of daily planning. Student teachers may have ideas of their own, but the cooperating teachers are still probably doing most of the planning, allowing the student teacher to become aware of the thought process and work involved. Student teachers continue to support activities and may begin to lead short activities. Student teachers may also take attendance, do homework checks, collect assignments, and other daily routines. They may also begin to be involved in assessment.

3. **Co-teaching and Active Co-planning** (weeks 4-8):  
   During this phase, cooperating teachers and student teachers begin to work as partners, sharing the class, planning and teaching together on a regular basis. Student teachers regularly design and lead smaller activities, with the input and support of cooperating teachers. Student teachers will also provide more input and share the load in creating handouts, projects, assessing student learning, etc. By the time of the mid-semester conference (week 8), student teachers should have had enough responsibility in both planning and teaching that cooperating teachers and supervisors
can assess how he/she is doing. During this conference, student teachers, cooperating teachers and supervisors develop concrete plans for assuming substantial responsibilities including “solo time.”

4. **Taking Over All or Most of Classroom Responsibilities** (weeks 8-13):
This phase, which will culminate in a solo experience, begins to happen by the time of the mid-semester conference (after about 8 weeks). This leaves a significant chunk of time for student teachers to understand, as much as possible, what it feels like to be a teacher. Cooperating teachers and supervisors provide support and monitor student teachers’ progress closely. The goal by the end of this phase is a consensus that student teachers are competent as a novice teacher.

5. **Phase-out/Closure** (weeks 14-15):
By this time, student teachers begin to hand back responsibility to cooperating teachers. Some student teachers, though, may need to take this time to finish a unit or project they began. Student teachers are encouraged to visit other classrooms during this time.

During the semester student teachers will be assessed in five areas: planning, instruction, evaluation/assessment, classroom environment, and professionalism. Each of these areas is subdivided into specific criteria that are used in Lesson Evaluations (Appendix D), Mid-Semester Student Teacher Evaluation (Appendix E) and the Final Student Teacher Evaluation (Appendix F). It is always difficult to assign a letter grade to the complex experience of student teaching. While student teachers are strong in some aspects of teaching, they may be weak in other areas. Strengths and weaknesses must be balanced in the final grade.

As a general rule the numbers assigned during the Mid-Semester Student Teacher Evaluation and the Final Student Teacher Evaluation correspond to letter grades:

- 2 represents a B- to a B
- 3 represents a B+ to an A-
- 4 represents an A

It is not unusual for student teachers to receive “twos” during their Mid-Semester Evaluation.

Below is a narrative description of what different letter grades mean to the Saint Michael’s Education Department faculty at the end of student teaching as reflected in the final evaluation.

**A**
Highest level of performance in student teaching. The student teacher has clearly demonstrated that he/she is meeting the criteria on the evaluations in a consistent and exemplary manner. Student teacher seeks way to improve his/her performance. Student teacher accepts that he/she is responsible for meeting the needs of all students and for classroom climate.

**A-**
A productive classroom almost all of the time. The student teacher has minor inconsistencies in teaching, understanding student learning, accommodating students with special needs, maintaining a positive supportive classroom climate, working as a colleague and/or engaging in critical self-assessment.

**B+**
The classroom is a productive place most of the time but the student teacher lacks consistent attention to details. The student teacher is able to adequately plan lessons that meet the needs of majority of students. The classroom climate is positive, but lack of clear expectations and /or
consistency contributes to off-task behaviors. The student teacher works well with other adults, but expects the cooperating teacher to initiate many activities. The student teacher needs some guidance in his/her self-assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses.

B Classroom objectives are implemented and successfully assessed most of the time but there is inconsistency in the student teacher’s performance. The student teacher at times relies on the cooperating teacher for lesson ideas. Lesson plans are designed to align objectives with assessments and learning opportunities. Implementation of lesson plans is adequate with some inconsistencies such as articulation of goals, presentation of lesson plan, or assessment of objectives. The student teacher is able to meet most of the students’ learning needs in the classroom. A safe learning environment exists; however, learning opportunities for a productive learning environment are applied inconsistently. The student teacher consistently accepts responsibility for addressing the academic, social, and emotional needs of students. The student teacher may be defensive when feedback is initially given but does implement feedback most of the time or provides a sufficient rationale not to accept feedback.

Any grade below a "B" indicates that the student teacher has not met the standards required for recommendation for licensure.

While teaching is the primary focus during the student teaching semester, student teachers will be responsible for developing and preparing their Vermont Licensure Portfolio. As student teachers teach, they will be expected to collect evidence that they will use to prepare their portfolio. During the semester student teachers will work with their seminar instructors to complete the portfolio (see Appendices G-H) for licensure standards and rubric).

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE “TRIAD”

The student teaching process is a continuous one that builds upon a student teacher’s experiences in the classroom and observations of those experiences by the cooperating teacher and supervisor. The relationship of student teacher, cooperating teacher and supervisor is a dynamic process of give-and-take in which all individuals are colleagues collaborating to improve the student teacher’s teaching practice. Student teachers are not expected to excel at every aspect of teaching. The best student teachers will demonstrate their ability to respond to constructive criticism with reflection, growth, and improvement.

ROLE OF STUDENT TEACHER

Student teachers are expected to:

1. Know the content of the subject area which they are teaching.
2. Perform all duties expected of a classroom teacher at their school (lunchroom or study hall duty, parent nights, all meetings) in a manner appropriate to a classroom teacher (dress, language).
3. Confer with cooperating teacher and appropriate consulting teachers including special educators and ESL teachers to develop an accommodations matrix and/or Can-Do Descriptors classroom profile.
4. Be present, prepared and on time every day. Attend all meetings including EST, IEP, ESL, team, department, and faculty meetings.
5. Be absent no more than 3 times in the semester. Extra days must be made up at the discretion of the cooperating teacher and supervisor. All absences should be reported to the cooperating teacher and supervisor by 7:30 a.m. on the day of the absence. Lesson plans should be written and submitted for absence if teaching.

6. Follow the schedule of the school in which they are teaching even if it is in conflict with the schedule of St. Michael's College.

7. Be open to suggestions, realizing that this is a learning experience and should be viewed as a unique time to receive detailed and constructive feedback on their performance.

8. Maintain a daily journal and submit weekly to your supervisor. Maintain a planning notebook which will provide the basis for ongoing conversations about teaching and learning. Topics for daily journal entries can be focused on management, culture/climate, curriculum, instruction, assessment, planning, time management, colleagueship, teaching strategies, parents/guardians, etc.

9. Attend all meetings of and complete all assignments for the Student Teaching Seminar. As part of the Seminar, they will complete a licensure portfolio which will demonstrate their understanding on the Vermont licensure requirements.

10. Work with their cooperating teacher in scheduling a teaching lesson each time their supervisor observes their classroom.

11. Freely bring any questions and concerns which they may have to the attention of their cooperating teacher, supervisor, and/or seminar instructor.

12. Design and adapt curriculum, unit and lesson plans, teaching materials and assessments based on students’ intellectual, moral and social development.

13. Organize and manage a variety of classroom settings in a manner supportive of student growth and learning.

14. Prepare for and facilitate mid semester and final evaluation meetings. Write memo stating reflections of meeting and “next steps” to improve teaching practice.

**ROLE OF COOPERATING TEACHER**

Cooperating teachers are expected to:

1. Assure that the student teacher has a clear understanding of specific content requirements, norms of the classroom and pertinent information about students in instructional and support plans (including IEPs and ELL ACCESS Teacher Reports).

2. Share expertise with the student teacher in the areas of formulating goals and objectives, establishing rationale, planning, developing instructional strategies, creating and implementing valid assessments as they pertain to the Vermont Standards and Grade Expectations.
3. Meet with the student teacher on a regular basis for planning and feedback. Conduct 4 observations (1 per month on average) during the semester using the forms provided.

4. Allow the student teacher to progressively become involved in planning, implementing, and assessing lessons and student learning.

5. Allow the student teacher to teach a lesson (as appropriate) when the supervisor observes.

6. Allow the student teacher to assume total teaching responsibilities for a minimum of 1 week.

7. Provide specific guidance by helping the student teacher identify her/his strengths and weaknesses, and through “coaching” to encourage critically reflective teaching practice.

8. Provide a role model for the student teacher, with the awareness that the cooperating teacher is an important influence and has a great impact on a student teacher’s training and future professional practice.

9. Prepare for mid-term and final evaluations of the student teacher by completing the appropriate forms and have a copy available for each party.

10. Share with the supervisor any concerns and/or celebrations about the placement and to work cooperatively with all concerned to address and remedy issues and problems which arise.

11. Recommend final grade for student teaching.

**ROLE OF SUPERVISOR**

Supervisors are expected to:

1. Facilitate a supportive working relationship between the education department, student teacher, cooperating teacher and school site.

2. Recognize and respect the cooperating teacher’s primary responsibilities and authority in the classroom by playing the role of advisor and supporter.

3. Acquaint cooperating school personnel with the philosophy, objectives, organization, and content of Saint Michael’s College Education Department.

4. Work with the cooperating teacher in planning an appropriate program of experiences for the student teacher. There will be three triad meetings. At the first triad meeting, the planning meeting, the supervisor will explain the process of supervision, review the responsibilities of each individual in the triad and facilitate in the development of teaching goals for the student teacher over the semester.

   The second triad meeting is the mid-semester evaluation. All three parties complete the evaluation of the student and review it together at the meeting.

   At the last triad meeting, the triad completes the final evaluation and reviews the semester together. The student teacher will be responsible for facilitating the second and third triad meetings.
5. Observe and confer with the student teacher in order to help improve her/his teaching skills. Visits will be made at least every ten teaching days during the semester. During these visits the supervisor will:

   a) Review lesson plans.
   b) Confer with cooperating teacher and, when appropriate, the principal or other designated officials.
   c) Help the student teacher evaluate his/her own progress, and raise questions for reflection.
   d) Write observational notes and comments for student teacher’s review.

6. Be available to the cooperating and student teachers to address issues that may arise.

7. Take responsibility for scheduling mid-term and final evaluation meetings of the student teacher and assigning a letter grade for student teaching.

8. When asked by the student teacher, write a letter of recommendation which honestly reflects his/her strengths and weaknesses.

9. Cooperate with other Education Department faculty in evaluating and refining Saint Michael’s College Teacher Licensure program.

10. Respond weekly to daily journal entries from the student teacher.
TIMELINE FOR TEACHING

As a general guide, student teachers will:

TEACHING TASKS

FIRST WEEK

1. Learn each student’s name.
2. Meet other teachers and school staff.
3. Obtain information about the school (the population served, its mission, philosophy, and objectives) and students including IEPs and ELL ACCESS Teacher Reports.
4. Become familiar with the physical plant, including the gym, library, auditorium, etc.
5. Learn emergency procedures including fire drill, first aid, etc.
6. Find out where supplies are stored and how they are requisitioned.
7. Learn how to use duplicating equipment and other available resources.
8. Try to get extra teacher’s editions of texts used by the class.
9. Start your Planning Book and include a weekly schedule on the inside front cover.
10. Carefully observe the students in your classroom, making notes of their strengths, interests, areas of need, weaknesses, friends, etc.
11. Observe how teachers work to create a community of learners.

SECOND WEEK

1. Plan an activity for a small group or the whole class.
2. Help students with individual assignments or small group projects.
3. Discuss with the teacher some responsibilities to assume (a reading or math group /one period lesson/ review homework/give instructions or assignments and begin to plan.
4. Help to assess/grade student work.
THIRD WEEK

1. Begin to instruct one student or small group in one subject. Have lessons prepared, written out, and checked by the cooperating teacher.

2. Discuss your ideas about your curriculum unit with the cooperating teacher.

3. Every morning before school starts, clarify lesson plans and any schedule differences of the day.

4. Help to grade papers.

5. Start to diagnose student strengths and areas of need in skill areas.

6. Plan activities for student(s) with special needs.

7. Continue with observations for your journal.

FOURTH WEEK

1. Start to gather material for your curriculum unit.

2. Continue with small group instruction in at least two subjects or periods.

3. Observe and take notes of the many techniques your cooperating teacher uses to get the attention of the group, to recognize good behavior, and to give each student attention. Try some of these.

4. Discuss the next class or layer of responsibility you will assume with your cooperating teacher.

FIFTH WEEK

1. Continue to augment your teaching duties.

2. Add subjects or periods until you have experience with each by the end of mid-semester.

BY MID-SEMESTER (APPROXIMATELY 8TH WEEK)

1. Meet with the faculty supervisor and cooperating teacher for the mid-semester evaluation conference.

   8TH – 13TH WEEKS

1. The length and number of lessons taught independently should increase until you assume total responsibility (planning, teaching, and assessment) for all classes for at least one week. Your unit presentation may coincide with your solo week or be planned for a different time.

2. Participate in parent conferences as decided by you and your cooperating teacher.
THE LAST FEW WEEKS

1. Plan for your final conference.

2. Take opportunities to observe in other classrooms.

3. Start to readjust the classroom for your departure.
CONTACT INFORMATION

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION
  Elementary Coordinator: Karen Donovan
    #654-2826
    kdonovan@smcvt.edu

  Secondary Coordinator: James Nagle
    #654-2636
    jnagle2@smcvt.edu

  Administrative Assistant: Lynn Wells
    #654-2417
    lwells@smcvt.edu

GRADUATE EDUCATION
  Coordinator: Claudine Bedell
    #654-2741
    cbedell@smcvt.edu

  Administrative Assistant: Karen Abbott
    #654-2649
    kabbott@smcvt.edu

LICENSED PROGRAM COORDINATOR: Karen Donovan
  #654-2826
  kdonovan@smcvt.edu