

Frequently Asked Questions

When will I do my student teaching?

Student teaching occurs in two phases distributed over two semesters. Normally, Phase I student teaching occurs the first semester and Phase II in the final semester as the culminating experience. Your university supervisor will arrange your Phase I student teaching assignment. Phase II student teaching is arranged by Secondary Education in consultation with your teaching subject area advisor. Applications for Phase II student teaching are distributed by Phase I instructor or the subject advisor and must be completed and signed by the subject area coordinator.

What is the duration of my student teaching assignment?

Assignment lengths vary depending upon the district in which you student teach, your subject area, whether you are a Phase I or Phase II student teacher, and special arrangements that may be made between the district and the University. Phase I assignments include approximately 15 hours of observation completed earlier in the semester followed by 10-15 hours of teaching scheduled later in the semester. In most subject areas, Phase II assignments coincide with the academic calendar of the school to which you are assigned. Phase II student teachers should plan on being at the school site whenever the school is in session, during SJSU vacations, and until the end of the school semester, even if University classes terminate earlier.

How will I find out about my assignment?

Your Phase I student teaching assignment is determined by your EDSC 184X instructor, and will be explained in class early in the semester. You will be advised of your Phase II assignment by telephone or email as soon as it is approved by the district, generally in advance of the date you are to report to the school.

May I select the school at which I do my student teaching?

Generally, you may request a geographic area. In some subject areas you may request assignment to a specific school. However, there is no guarantee that you will be assigned to the school of your choosing. Limited resources may preclude assignment to schools outside the immediate area. For traditional student teachers, each experience is completed at a different school site.

Should I contact schools on my own?

No. After your student teaching placement has been determined, you will be advised of the person you should contact, and when to make that contact. Do not take it upon yourself to arrange a student teaching placement.

What subjects will I teach?

You will be assigned to teach classes within the teaching subject area in which you intend to be credentialed. At least two different preparations are required. You will also be required to teach in multicultural classrooms and, in many cases, at more than one grade level.

How many classes will I be required to teach?

During Phase I you will teach one class, and during Phase II, a minimum of two different classes (level and/or subject). During Phase II, each candidate must teach a full day for a minimum of two weeks. For more specific information, check with your 184X instructor about Phase I and with your subject area advisor about Phase II.

What will be different if I am student teaching under contract (in a paid position)?

As a student teacher who is also an employee of a district, you must, of course, perform all duties required by your position. You must also meet all the requirements of student teaching. Your status as an employed teacher does not exempt you from the requirements of student teaching.

Who will supervise my student teaching?

You will be supervised by both a school site professional and a university field supervisor.

How frequently will my university supervisor visit me?

The number of times you are visited will depend upon several factors. Your supervisor will observe you teach, give you feedback, and provide the necessary support to help you succeed. Generally, Phase I student teachers are visited two times during the short duration of their teaching. Phase II student teachers are visited often enough throughout the semester to determine student teacher competence and readiness for certification.

How much autonomy will I have as a student teacher?

This will depend primarily upon your resident teacher and how fast you develop. Some resident teachers, especially during Phase II, will turn over responsibility for the classes almost immediately. Others increase student teacher responsibility for the classes more slowly. Be prepared for both extremes. You must comply with resident teacher instructions on planning lessons, organizing the class, correcting papers, giving grades, and so forth. In no case should you engage in a practice of which your resident teacher or university supervisor does not approve.

At what point in the semester will I begin my actual “in-front-of-class” student teaching?

Your starting date will be determined by your resident teacher in consultation with your university supervisor. Starting dates vary from student to student depending upon readiness for teaching.

How will I be evaluated?

Your resident teacher or site supervisor will provide you with both verbal and written feedback during the course of the semester. At the end of your teaching assignment, your resident teacher will complete a written evaluation of your performance and submit it to the university supervisor. Your university supervisor also will provide you verbal feedback as well as a copy of any written supervisory report, which will become a part of your record.

How is student teaching graded? Student teaching is graded on a credit/no credit basis.

Will I be told in advance about visits from my supervisor?

Some supervisors plan visits in advance and others like to make unscheduled observations. Check with your supervisor to see which approach will be used.

What lesson plans must I use?

Secondary Education Program policy requires that you have a written lesson plan for every lesson you teach. See the section Lesson Plans on page 4 of this handbook for general lesson content. Your subject area advisor may require a specific lesson plan format.

Will the cooperating teacher ever leave the room while I am student teaching?

You may teach without direct supervision at the discretion of your resident teacher and university supervisor. In any case, your resident teacher is always responsible for the class to which you have been assigned. Note: individual district or school policy may prohibit the resident teacher from leaving the room while you are teaching.

How many hours per day am I required to be on the school campus?

Again, this varies depending upon your teaching subject area and placement. Check with your University supervisor for specific information about this requirement.

What should I do in the event of a strike while I am student teaching?

University policy prohibits student teachers from taking part in school strikes. If there is a strike at the school to which you are assigned, report to your university supervisor immediately. Student teachers are advised not to take sides during strikes.

Should I request a letter of recommendation from my Cooperating Teacher?

Yes, if you believe the resident teacher knows you well enough to write one. Sometimes Phase I assignments are brief, and your resident teacher may not have adequate opportunity to observe you. You may request a letter of recommendation from your Phase II resident teacher, especially if you have performed well. Remember: it is your responsibility to request letters of recommendation.

How do I apply for the credential?

You will apply for your credential through the Credentials Office in SH 107. Details about applying for the credential will be given at Phase II Credential Advisement sessions. Make sure you attend one of these meetings.

What should I do if problems arise?

If you have a problem pertaining to your responsibilities as a classroom teacher, discuss it first with your resident teacher or site supervisor. If the difficulty pertains to your relationship with your resident teacher or site supervisor, contact your university supervisor. Most problems are minor and can be resolved easily. Information about grievance and appeals procedures is available in the Secondary Education office, SH 301.

What should I do if confronted with verbal or physical disturbances between students?

At the beginning of your assignment, ask your resident teacher or site supervisor about school policies and procedures for dealing with and reporting disturbances.

