



# GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION M.Ed. Curriculum and Instruction: Initial Certification Option

## Policies for the Elementary and Secondary Field Experiences, Pre-practicum and Practicum

*Program Coordinator – Dr. Patricia Fontaine*



Revised Septemebr 2015

## **EXPECTATIONS FOR THE PROFESSIONALISM OF TEACHER CANDIDATES**

This document describes the expectations, policies and procedures required of all teacher candidates throughout their program, and particularly when work in PK-12 schools occurs. In recommending a candidate for teacher licensure, the Graduate School of Education is attesting that the candidate exhibits professional dispositions and behaviors and is of “sound moral character.” The candidate at all times must exhibit good judgment, personal integrity, and exemplary behavior. Candidates must demonstrate that they understand their professional responsibilities and have the integrity to work in schools where they will be responsible for the education and welfare of minors. Further, they must know how to engage in collaborative and collegial professional work with fellow teachers and staff.

### **PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS AND BEHAVIORS**

At any time during the program, faculty may inform the Program Director of concern about a teacher candidate’s dispositions for teaching and/or their professional behavior. When a concern is noted, the candidate will meet with the faculty member, program coordinator and/or the Dean.

Depending on the severity of the concern, the candidate may receive a warning or may not be allowed to continue in the initial licensure program.

Professional dispositions and behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Attendance and Punctuality
- Independence
- Reliability
- Organization
- Oral and Written Communication
- Tact and Judgment
  - Diplomatic and sensitive to other’s feelings and opinions
  - Decisions display consideration of different perspectives and reflect sound reasoning
- Collegiality
- Reflective and responsive to feedback
- Commitment to the profession
- High ethical standards
- Respectful and appropriate interactions with others (including understanding roles and boundaries)
- Maintains professional appearance

#### **Mis-Conduct**

A concern which appears to violate UMass Lowell’s code of conduct will be investigated through the student conduct process documented in

[http://www.uml.edu/docs/Student%20Conduct%20Code%20and%20Resident%20Student%20Handbook\\_tcm18-74786.pdf](http://www.uml.edu/docs/Student%20Conduct%20Code%20and%20Resident%20Student%20Handbook_tcm18-74786.pdf)

## UML CONDUCT HISTORY, CORI and FINGERPRINTING

All teacher candidates will be subject to three forms of background check (i) UMass Lowell Conduct History, (ii) Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and (iii) Fingerprinting.

A candidate who has a UMass Lowell disciplinary record, a CORI or fingerprinting report which documents a disregard for the rights of others, and/or a lack of integrity, will be regarded as having failed to display Professional Behavior and/or Sound Moral Character, which may lead to discontinuation in the initial licensure program.

### CORI CHECK FOR ALL FIELD EXPERIENCES RELATED TO COURSES, AND FOR THE PRE-PRACTICUM AND PRACTICUM

- A candidate who is aware of an issue which may be revealed by a CORI check is urged to meet with clinical field experience coordinator (Dr. Pat Fontaine)
- Candidates will be required to complete forms to authorize CORI checks for observations in specific school districts. **Candidates should bring an official ID such as a driver's license to this meeting.** For Massachusetts residents, the CORI check is performed by the school district, generally at no cost to candidate.
- If a candidate resides in New Hampshire then a CORI check needs to be completed in NH with results sent to the school districts to be visited. Candidates are required to pay the NH fee for this check. The website to fill out the NH CORI is: <http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/nhsp/ssb/crimrecords/documents/dssp256.pdf>
- Some districts also require that candidates from other states supply a CORI check from the state of residence.

#### *Alternative Route Candidates*

- Candidates who are already teaching in a school district on a preliminary license may be required to complete a CORI for the school district visit that they are required to make (see below). It is the candidate's responsibility to ascertain if this is required.

- *Prepracticum*

Candidates who are completing a pre-practicum need to register on ISIS. The course number is 02.540 and there is a \$150.00 fee. Alternate route candidates also need to register for the pre-practicum on ISIS. The course number is 02.539 and there is no fee.

- Fingerprinting may be required for some school district prepracticum work. It is definitely required for the practicum. Go to <http://uml.edu/Education/Become-a-Teacher/Becoming-A-Teacher.aspx>

## APPEAL PROCESS

After receiving all relevant information, any student deemed by the Dean of the Graduate School of Education as failing to satisfy the professional dispositions and/or behavior and/or fails to demonstrate sound moral character, may be discontinued from the initial licensure program. A student who wishes to appeal the Dean's decision should do so within ten working days of receiving written notification. The appeal should be made in writing to the Office of the Provost. The Provost or designee will investigate the matter and render a final written determination within fifteen working days of receiving the appeal.

## PRE-PRACTICUM POLICIES

The pre-practicum is completed in the semester prior to the practicum and consists of seminars and full-day, school visits. The seminars will be on topics pertinent to the role of a teacher and will include:

1. RTI – (Response to Intervention)
  2. BRAIN LEARNING CONNECTION
  3. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT
  4. ANALYZING STUDENT WORK AND USING DATA DRIVEN DECISION MAKING
  5. SCHOOL LAW ISSUES
  6. IMPLEMENTING THE COMMON CORE
  7. DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP
  8. UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING (C.A.S.T)
- Candidates who are not employed as a teacher must be available for a specified full-day throughout the semester in order to attend the pre-practicum seminars or make visits to schools.
  - **Alternative Route Candidates** are employed in a school district as a full-time teacher of record while completing their M.Ed. Observations may be completed at the candidate's school, EXCEPT ONE DAY OF OBSERVATION must be spent in a school district with a demographic structure that differs from the candidate's place of employment.
  - ALL candidates complete a pre-practicum portfolio, details of which will be described in the first pre-practicum meeting. The portfolio is submitted at the end of the pre-practicum and must be approved before the candidate is allowed to continue to the practicum.

### **REQUESTING A FALL PRE-PRACTICUM**

- Candidates seeking to complete their pre-practicum during the FALL SEMESTER, must inform the Program Coordinator (Patricia\_Fontaine@uml.edu) in writing or by email by **JULY 1<sup>st</sup>**

### **REQUESTING A SPRING PRE-PRACTICUM**

- Candidates seeking to complete their pre-practicum during the SPRING SEMESTER, must inform the Program Coordinator (Patricia\_Fontaine@uml.edu) in writing or by email by **DECEMBER 1<sup>st</sup>**

### **FAILURE TO REQUEST A PRE-PRACTICUM BY SPECIFIED DATE**

- A candidate, who fails to meet the pre-practicum notification date, may submit a written request for consideration by the Program Coordinator.

## **POLICIES FOR PROCEEDING TO THE PRACTICUM**

In order to proceed to the practicum, candidates must have met the following conditions:

- all course work is complete\*
- Fingerprinted in district of practicum
- a GPA of 3.25 and above
- passed all MTEs relevant to their field
- demonstrated appropriate dispositions for teaching
- shown to be of sound moral character and have no UML conduct issues on his/her record or CORI infractions which throw doubt on his/her suitability for teaching
- successfully completed the pre-practicum portfolio

### **FAILURE TO MEET CONDITIONS FOR THE PRACTICUM**

The candidate will be notified by the Program Director that s/he does not meet one or more conditions. The candidate may be required to present his/her case to a faculty committee who will decide whether the candidate may proceed to the practicum.

The candidate may appeal the decision of the committee to the Dean within seven working days. The Dean will gather all relevant information and render his/her decision within ten working days. If the Dean determines that the candidate should not continue in the program, the candidate may appeal to the Office of the Provost. The appeal should be made in writing. The Provost or designee will investigate the matter and render a final written determination within fifteen working days of receiving the appeal.

---

*\* Candidates may submit a petition to the Program Director to request a practicum before coursework is complete. **Only one course, which cannot be a methods course, may be taken after the practicum to complete the degree.***

## PRACTICUM POLICIES

The practicum is the culminating event of the M.Ed. program. The practicum is a semester long (not including school vacation weeks) teaching in a Massachusetts Public School under the supervision of a school-based SUPERVISING PRACTITIONER and a UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR. The teacher candidate must assume responsibility for teaching for a minimum of 100 hours during the practicum. Candidates are required to attend a bi-weekly seminar at the Graduate School of Education throughout the practicum.

**Candidates, who take a position as a teacher of record or change school AFTER admission to the M.Ed. program, must inform the PROGRAM COORDINATOR in writing and gain her permission in ADVANCE to request a practicum at the site. Distance of the school from UML may mean that a practicum cannot be supported.**

### REQUESTING A FALL PRACTICUM PLACEMENT

- Candidates seeking to complete their practicum during the FALL SEMESTER, must inform the Program Coordinator (Patricia\_Fontaine@uml.edu) in writing or by email **BY MAY 1<sup>st</sup>**

### REQUESTING A SPRING PRACTICUM PLACEMENT

- Candidates seeking to complete their practicum during the SPRING SEMESTER, must inform the Program Coordinator (Patricia\_Fontaine@uml.edu) in writing or by email by **DECEMBER 1<sup>st</sup>**

### FAILURE TO REQUEST A PRACTICUM BY SPECIFIED DATE

- A candidate, who fails to meet the practicum notification date, may submit a written request for consideration by the coordinator, **BUT NO REQUEST WILL BE CONSIDERED WHICH IS MORE THAN 4 WEEKS LATE.**

When requesting a practicum placement, candidates must be sure that they can fulfill the commitment they are making. Practicum placements require considerable collaboration on behalf of the university and school districts.

### PROCESS FOR REQUESTING A PRACTICUM

- Candidates may submit in writing (or email) three choices for a practicum placement, but the Program Coordinator makes the final decision based upon her knowledge of the candidate, the school, the cooperating teacher and proximity to UMass Lowell.
- The cooperating practitioner must meet the requirements of regulations set forth by Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (3 years of teaching experience on an initial or professional license and positive evaluations of his/her teaching by the Principal.)

### **FOR CANDIDATES WHO ARE THE TEACHER OF RECORD IN A SCHOOL DISTRICT**

- Candidates must be teaching as the teacher of record with a full schedule (not a long term substitute position) and have at least one semester experience in this position at the practicum site.
- Candidates must have the permission of the principal/department chair to proceed to the practicum.
- The location must be a reasonable distance from UML and approval of the site must be gained IN ADVANCE – candidates should not just assume that their place of employment will be a suitable practicum site.
- Candidates must identify a supervising practitioner who holds an initial or professional license in the appropriate field and meets the regulations set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary education.

### **NOTIFICATION OF PRACTICUM PLACEMENT AND CORI CHECK**

- Candidates will be notified in writing or email, by the Program Coordinator of their practicum placement and dates of the practicum.
- It is the responsibility of the candidate to contact the personnel office of the school district and arrange for a CORI CHECK if required.
- Candidates will attend a meeting at UML 1-2 weeks prior to the practicum beginning at which they will receive the procedures and requirements for the practicum. At the meeting, the candidates will be told who their University Supervisor is.

### **WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PRACTICUM**

- Candidates withdrawn from the practicum for reasons others than misconduct, may have the option of completing the M.Ed. by submitting an academic petition and requesting transfer to the M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction (non licensure).
- To complete the M.Ed., the candidate must take the following courses:
  - Curriculum Design K-12
  - History and Theory of Curriculum
  - Program Evaluation or Capstone Project

### **DISMISSAL FROM THE PRACTICUM**

- Candidates who do not comply with the professional behaviors and responsibilities that come with the practicum placement are subject to dismissal from the program and will not be afforded the opportunity to complete the M.Ed.