

Mentor Teaching with the Co-teaching Model

Welcome to the School of Teacher Education and Leadership at Utah State University!

We are pleased that you have agreed to mentor one of our teacher candidates. As a teacher, you know how important it is to receive quality mentoring during preparation. We hope you see this as a way to "pay it forward" and support the teaching profession as a teacher leader.

This overview will acquaint you with the principles and practices of co-teaching, the mentoring model that we use.

Mentoring

Your job as a mentor is incredibly important. You will need to:

- periodically observe your teacher candidate and provide feedback
- debrief with your teacher candidate after they are taught
- review lesson plans before they are taught
- observe your teacher candidate interacting with students outside the classroom
- facilitate your teacher candidate's participation in grade level team meetings, department meetings, faculty meetings, PLCs, professional development, parent/teacher conferences, etc.
- provide written formative and summative feedback using a rubric and narrative comments

Using the Co-teaching Model

Co-teaching is a model for mentoring that involves the teacher candidate and mentor teacher working in collaboration, side-by-side, for the entire experience. The mentor teacher should not exit the classroom for a period of time. This "sink or swim" model is not effective or productive for the mentor teacher, teacher candidate, or students in the classroom.

In a co-teaching configuration:

- Two teachers work together with groups of students and share the planning, organization, delivery, and assessment of instruction.
- Although it is a partnership, the mentor teacher is still responsible for content, implementation, and management and is the teacher of record and final authority in the classroom.
- The teacher candidate has similar responsibilities as the mentor teacher, but they build up gradually.
- There is no "takeover" time; instead the teacher candidate's responsibilities increase gradually so that for the last four weeks the teacher candidate and mentor teacher share instructional time relatively equally.

Goals for co-teaching model of student teaching

- Teacher candidate has larger amount of productive contact time with students
- Teacher candidate teaches and plans more, but in collaboration with mentor teacher
- Teacher candidate and mentor teacher develop a partnership
- University supervisor facilitates partnership between teacher candidate and mentor teacher

How TO co-teach	How NOT to co-teach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher candidate and mentor teacher plan collaboratively • Mentor teacher gradually increases responsibility for teacher candidate, but teacher candidate does not “take over” • Teacher candidate participates in department or grade level team planning • Supervisor is a facilitator • Mentor teacher addresses problems/issues first; supervisor intervenes if needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor teacher gets extra prep time out of the classroom • Mentor teacher leaves the classroom • Teacher candidate writes lesson plans alone • Student “takes over” for 2 weeks • Student “sinks or swims” • Supervisor is THE authority figure who swoops in to address problems

Co-teaching Strategies

The following is not a sequential or hierarchical list of co-teaching strategies. At the beginning of student teaching experience, some strategies will be more appropriate than others. Once both co-teachers are comfortable working with each other, the co-teachers are encouraged to vary the strategies and roles, as appropriate.

One Teach, One Observe

Teacher candidate participates in planning and then during instruction is on his/her feet, visibly present to students, and actively observing both the mentor teacher and the student behavior in the environment.

One Teach, One Assist

One teacher takes the lead in the delivery of instruction, while the other teacher circulates, monitors, and assists where needed.

Station Teaching

Both teachers prepare and teach different parts of the instruction in separate locations in the room; both teachers are primary instructors at their station.

Parallel teaching

Class is divided into two groups; each teacher presents the same curriculum using different strategies or different levels of difficulty.

Supplemental teaching

One teacher works with a small group to re-teach, pre-teach, or enrich while the other teacher instructs the rest of the class.

Team teaching

Both teachers participate in the delivery of instruction equally; no clearly defined lead teacher in the lesson. Requires lots of trust and compatible delivery styles.

If you have any questions or would like further information about mentoring your teacher candidate or about co-teaching strategies, please feel free to contact us.

Thank you,

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