

## STAGES OF STUDENT TEACHING

Planning the experiences of a Student Teacher is a difficult task. It is especially difficult for the College of Education to suggest any set pattern because of the differences between Student Teachers, Cooperating Teachers, and classroom settings. Consequently, Cooperating Teachers are in the best position to formulate a plan by which the Student Teacher will assume classroom responsibilities. The following schedule identifies four distinct stages in the student teaching process.

**Stage 1 - Observation:** This stage should allow Student Teachers an opportunity to become familiar with school policies, classroom routine, building personnel, classroom objectives, procedures, and individual students. During this observation stage, Student Teachers should be provided opportunities to assist in instruction and discuss observations. There is not a minimum or maximum observation period prior to the actual "teaching" period.

**Stage 2 - Observing/Assisting:** During this stage Student Teachers should be provided opportunities to assist Cooperating Teachers. Cooperating Teachers should **gradually increase** the responsibilities of Student Teachers in performing routine duties, working with individuals and small groups, etc. This stage is an ideal time to collaboratively plan, establish team-teaching strategies, and provide *opportunities to observe in other classrooms*. The Cooperating Teacher should offer the Student Teacher support and modeling while encouraging independence. Cooperating Teachers should provide continuity for the classroom.

**Stage 3 - Head Teaching:** As Student Teachers develop skills and confidence, Cooperating Teachers relinquish more duties to Student Teachers. The College of Education recommends a minimum of two full weeks of head teaching for a full semester assignment (14 weeks) and one full week head teaching for a half semester assignment (7 weeks). Student Teachers should be involved in instructional activities as early as possible. **The length of head teaching will depend upon such factors as: 1) nature of the classes; 2) progress of the Student Teacher; 3) judgment of the Cooperating Teacher; 4) responsibility and maturity of the Student Teacher; and 5) policy of the school system.** During this stage Student Teachers should have increased responsibility, primary control of planning, teaching, and evaluation of students.

**Stage 4 - Phase-out/Observation:** The purpose of this stage is to provide a smooth transition of responsibilities from Student Teachers back to Cooperating Teachers. While Student Teachers will continue to assist with various aspects of the teaching, they should also be provided opportunities to observe in other classrooms and at various grade levels. *Observation of other schools/classrooms/grades may also occur earlier in the semester.*

*Challenges can be stepping stones or stumbling blocks. It's a matter of how you view them.*  
*Anonymous*