

POLICY: Assisting Preservice Teacher At-Risk for Field-based Practica Failure

ADOPTION DATE: 3/26/10

REVISED and APPROVED: 2/2/2018

The field-based practica in the special education licensure programs provide the preservice teacher opportunities to practice effective instruction and management skills. Cooperating teachers and university faculty must balance the needs and development of preservice teachers with the obligation to provide quality services for students with disabilities. It is the goal of cooperating teachers and university faculty to see each preservice teacher succeed. However, on occasion, preservice teachers may have demonstrated deficits in instruction and/or management skills (or may have made limited progress in the development of instruction and/or management skills) such that the quality of instruction provided to students with disabilities is compromised. When this occurs, the cooperating teacher, practicum supervisor, and practicum coordinator will make the decision whether the preservice teacher should continue in the practicum as it is presently structured. The procedures outlined below are designed to help the involved party. Serious problems should be identified and addressed using these procedures as early as possible in the semester to maximize improvements in preservice teacher's instruction and/or management skills and to minimize the effects of inadequate instruction on students with disabilities.

This procedure does not cover violations of public school policy, USU Academic Honesty, or issues related to attendance, dress, hygiene, or ethical conduct covered in Professional Behavior Guidelines issued to each preservice teacher. Any violation will be reported to the practicum coordinator.

At-risk Procedures:

The preservice teacher will be expected to earn a "B-" or higher on each formal (i.e., graded) observation per practica semester. Refer to course syllabus for details regarding practica procedures and observation grading.

If a grade below "B-" is earned on any formal observation in the practicum, then the following must occur.

1. The supervisor will notify the preservice teacher and cooperating teacher of the *failed observation.
2. The supervisor will refer the preservice teacher to Assisting Preservice Teacher At-Risk for Field-based Practica Failure policy and clearly specify in writing the necessary improvements and criteria in order to continue.
3. The preservice teacher will be provided with a copy of Notification of At-risk Status.
 - a. Documentation must include
 - i. Notification date of at-risk status
 - ii. Necessary improvements to be made during the at-risk period
 - iii. Intended observation dates across the 10-instructional day period
 - iv. Notes from the meeting
 - v. Signature of preservice teacher and university supervisor
4. The supervisor will conduct 2 at-risk observations within 10 instructional days.
5. During the first at-risk observation, the university supervisor will provide feedback and/or coaching in an effort to increase the preservice teacher's skills. No grade will be recorded during this observation, although the supervisor may interpret performance to the preservice teacher in terms of what grade would have been scored.
6. The second at-risk observation will be graded.

- a. The preservice teacher, practicum supervisor, cooperating teacher, and practicum coordinator (if necessary) will meet to evaluate whether or not the preservice teacher has met the criteria for continuation.
 - b. If the second at-risk observation is graded as a B- or higher, then the preservice teacher will continue with the practicum.
 - c. If the second at-risk observation is graded below B- or fails to meet the necessary improvements outlined on the At-Risk Contract, then the preservice teacher does not pass the practicum and will not continue. The undergraduate advisor will discuss various options with the preservice teacher, and/or the university supervisor and the cooperating teacher.
 - d. The grade recorded for the original failed observation will be the average of the original failing score and the second at-risk score with a maximum of a B-.
 - e. Documentation will be provided to preservice teacher regarding the outcome of the at-risk status.
 - f. At-risk status may only occur once per practicum.
7. The practicum university supervisor may ask additional trained university supervisors to conduct or attend either or both at-risk observations.

Note: During practica, university supervisors may make an announced or unannounced visit and observe preservice teacher for the purposes of providing feedback. These visits may follow requests from the preservice teacher for additional assistance and/or recommendations from the cooperating teacher, or desires of the university supervisor.

In order to maintain parity in evaluation procedures across preservice teachers and across teaching skills, the number of formal observations to be conducted for the practicum course will be equal to the number of specified in the syllabus.

*A failed observation is a score of below "B-".

