

Off-Campus Student Teaching Information

While teacher candidates are generally placed in the immediate geographic region surrounding Hope College for their student teaching assignments, there are, at times, legitimate reasons to request an off-campus placement. The following guidelines should be followed to ensure full consideration of such requests.



Informational Meeting

Teacher candidates interested in requesting an off-campus student teaching placement should contact the Director of Student Teaching & Certification in the Education Department to discuss this request. Teacher candidates are advised to seek this information early in their programs, but *no later than two semesters prior* to the student teaching experience.

Priority Considerations (with the exception of “official” placement options such as Chicago Semester, Denver Urban Semester, The Philadelphia Center or international placements)

- Priority will be given to teacher candidates who:
 - Request an off-campus placement for their 9th semester of coursework,
 - Request an off-campus placement to live at home,
 - Provide significant and documented financial need,
 - Provide a clear and compelling case for such an arrangement, and/or
 - Desire a unique cultural experience not available in the immediate western Michigan area (e.g., Rosebud Indian Reservation, Watts Learning Center).

Application Procedures

- Teacher candidates must submit a letter requesting the off-campus placement to the Education Department, care of the Director of Student Teaching & Certification. The letter should state the request, including semester of student teaching, the suggested location and reasons for making the request. The letter, along with a copy of the teacher candidate’s DegreeWorks evaluation, should be submitted by the following deadlines:
 - October 1st for Fall semester student teaching placements
 - February 1st for Spring semester student teaching placements
- Placement requests will then be presented to the Education Department faculty for final approval. Among the conditions that the Department will consider will be the teacher candidate’s academic standing, recommendations from the major academic department, clinical experiences, and demonstration of personal and professional dispositions. If the request is approved, teacher candidates must continue to meet all requirements to student teach at all times leading up to and including the start of the student teaching experience. Should the teacher candidate fail to meet said requirements, permission to student teach off-campus will be reversed and the off-campus student teaching placement will be cancelled.
- The teacher candidate will need to complete the following applications:
 - The **Education Department’s Student Teaching Application** (http://www.hope.edu/academic/education/studteach/student_teaching_application.html) must be submitted by the announced due date.
 - First Friday in November for Fall semester student teaching placements
 - First Friday in March for Spring semester student teaching placements
 - The College’s **Off-Campus Study Application** (www.travel.hope.edu) through the International Education Office by the published deadlines.
 - Any **additional program applications** (e.g., Chicago Semester, Denver Urban Semester)

Caveats

- If the request is approved, teacher candidates must continue to meet all requirements to student teach at all times leading up to and including the start of the student teaching experience. Should the teacher candidate fail to meet said requirements, permission to student teach off-campus will be withdrawn and the off-campus student teaching placement will be cancelled.

- Student teachers who fail to remain in good standing with the College or enter the student teaching placement on probationary status will not be allowed to student teach in an off-campus location.
- The teacher candidate should be aware that there is no guarantee that a suitable student teaching placement can be secured. Although deliberate efforts will be made to make the placement, there may be circumstances beyond the control of the Education Department that prevent the placement from coming to fruition. Finding appropriate placements can be complex and the Education Department reserves the right to terminate the off-campus placement process when concerted efforts have not yielded a student teaching placement that meets all departmental and/or state requirements. If this occurs, the teacher candidate would then be required to complete the student teaching experience within the immediate area of Hope's campus.
- Teacher candidates should also be aware that the College may place limits on the number of students that may be off-campus in any one semester. The teacher candidate interested in an off-campus option will need to apply for and be approved by the College to be off-campus for the student teaching semester.
- Teacher candidates seeking off-campus student teaching placements should understand that this is a serious decision and commitment. While the student is encouraged to enjoy the travel experience, s/he must understand that the commitment to student teach is his/her primary concern and responsibility. As such, student teachers must meet the highest standards for professional preparation, personal/psychological readiness and spiritual maturity.
- Although rare, there are times when an off-campus student teaching placement may be cancelled by the College at the last minute for reasons of health and/or safety. It should be understood that Chicago Semester defers to the decisions of the College.

Conditions of Approval: Because the off-campus student teacher is at additional risk, the Education Department carefully screens each student teacher who desires an off-campus student teaching experience. Candidates must be in good standing and have exhibited strong professional skills and dispositions in all coursework and field experiences. In addition, the institution and school system may screen potential student teachers and reserve the right to reject a student teaching candidate.

- Student teachers must be in good standing with the College prior to and at the point of student teaching. Any teacher candidate who has been sanctioned or is restricted from participating in off-campus programs, will not be allowed to student teach off-campus.
- In order to student teach in an off-campus placement, teacher candidates must receive approval from the Education Department. Approvals typically take place in the semester prior to the student teaching experience, but remain contingent upon consistent demonstration of positive professional and personal dispositions, as well as successful performance in Education coursework *and* clinical experiences up to the point of student teaching.
- Any teacher candidate who fails to meet all performance requirements (e.g., minimum of C+ or higher in Education courses) *and/or* fails to receive a positive endorsement (e.g., "Highly Recommended" or "Recommended") from a clinical experience mentor, will not be allowed to student teach off-campus.
- Student teachers wishing to student teach off-campus must meet a higher threshold for the Department's GPA requirements. The off-campus student teacher will be required to hold a GPA of 3.0 or higher in each of the following four areas:
 - Overall
 - Major
 - Minor
 - Education
- In addition, student teachers must receive a positive endorsement from his/her major department of study. Again, failure to secure a recommendation of "Highly Recommended" or "Recommended" from the major department of study will result in a denial to student teach off-campus.
- Teacher candidates who have been approved to student teach on probationary status will not be allowed to student teach in an off-campus placement.
- The school system where a student teacher is placed has the right to reject a candidate if said individual has any criminal convictions within the past seven (7) years and/or is not cleared by a criminal background check.

Placement Procedures

- Once approved, dedicated attempts will be made to meet the teacher candidate's request. The first priority is to secure a "guest student" designation at a university or college in the general geographic area requested for student teaching. Having the student teacher "connected" to an established teacher education program is critical, as it ensures, to the degree possible, appropriate and thorough supervision and support and thereby minimizes the risk associated with an off-campus placement. Without a link to a local teacher education program, it is highly probable that the student teacher will be placed in an on-campus, rather than off-campus student teaching placement.
- Assuming that it is possible to establish a workable relationship with a local teacher education program, it is then usually up to that institution to secure the actual student teaching placement, although in some cases, personnel at Hope will be responsible for finding the placement. The teacher candidate should be aware, however, that despite legitimate efforts, it may not be possible to make satisfactory off-campus arrangements. If this occurs, the teacher candidate would then be required to complete the student teaching experience within the immediate area of Hope's campus.
- Once a placement is arranged, teacher candidates may be asked to interview with the cooperating teacher and/or building administrator. The teacher candidate will also be encouraged to contact the cooperating teacher and if possible, arrange an on-site visit prior to the student teaching semester. This will provide an opportunity to ask questions and determine procedures for the student teaching placement.
- Teacher candidates will also be encouraged to contact the college supervisor in order to establish a relationship and set parameters for the student teaching experience.
- In addition, all attempts will be made to provide the opportunity for the student teacher to participate in the host institution's student teaching seminar and/or related experiences. This type of arrangement again provides the student teacher with the opportunity to connect with other student teachers and receive appropriate levels of support and instruction.
- Hope College has limited the number of students that may be off-campus in any one semester. The teacher candidate who is interested in this option will need to apply for and be approved to be off-campus for the student teaching semester.

Costs

Teacher candidates should be aware that additional fees or expenses (over and above the Hope's tuition and fees) may be incurred in the placement process. Any fees or expenses over and above what is normally budgeted per student teacher will be the teacher candidate's responsibility. In the case where a fee is imposed by the guest institution, the teacher candidate will be responsible for making payment directly to the guest institution before initial contacts will be made with local school districts.

Financial Aid

The teacher candidate who is seeking an off-campus student teaching placement should consult with the Financial Aid Office prior to committing to the placement. It is possible that parameters around various forms of financial aid may impact or limit off-campus options.

Student Teaching Seminar

- Teacher candidates who have been approved for an off-campus placement, will be required to attend several of the Wednesday evening Student Teaching Seminar sessions *during the semester prior* to the student teaching placement. The Seminar meets on Wednesday evenings from 5:00-6:30 p.m. The Director of Student Teaching & Certification will provide a calendar with the required sessions. Although the teacher candidate will not be officially enrolled in the Seminar during this semester, the required sessions provide important and pertinent information that the teacher candidate will miss while off-campus the following semester.
- The student teacher should also plan to complete several, required assignments for the Student Teaching Seminar *while completing the student teaching placement*. Copies of assignment requirements will be available from the Director of Student Teaching & Certification. Assignments include but are not limited to:
 - A complete reading of the Hope College *Student Teaching Handbook* and the *Mentoring the Student Teacher Handbook*,
 - Weekly reflections submitted via email to the assigned college supervisor and cc'd to the Director of Student Teaching & Certification,

- A midterm self-evaluation also submitted to the college supervisor,
- A self-evaluation of a videotaped lesson submitted to the college supervisor,
- The professional portfolio submitted to the Director of Student Teaching & Certification,
- Unit plans submitted to the college supervisor observing the student teacher, and
- Unit Plan Reflections submitted to the Director of Student Teaching & Certification.

The Professional Semester

- The Professional Semester includes EDUC 500-Perspectives in Education, EDUC 455 or 456-Student Teaching Seminar, as well as the Senior Seminar. These courses are all offered on Wednesday afternoons. For the off-campus student teacher, there are several options to consider:
 - The teacher candidate has the option of taking EDUC 500 the semester prior to the student teaching assignment.
 - The student teacher may wish to complete EDUC 500 as an independent study during the student teaching semester. Again, special permission is required for this to occur.
 - The teacher candidate also may wish to fulfill the senior seminar requirement prior to the student teaching semester. Some teacher candidates return to campus following the student teaching experience in order to fulfill this requirement and perhaps other course work as well.
 - Teacher candidates should remember in order to be enrolled at Hope as a full-time student, s/he must register for 12 credits of coursework. This might be a critical consideration for financial aid.

Expectations

- The student teacher should plan to be in contact with the Director of Student Teaching & Certification throughout the previous semester in order to submit appropriate materials for certification in a timely and accurate manner. All certification materials must be submitted PRIOR to leaving campus, unless the student teacher plans to return to Hope after the student teaching semester.
- As always, it will be important for the student teacher to remember that permission to student teach in an off-campus placement is a *privilege, not a right*. The student teacher must, at all times, be cognizant that s/he is representing Hope College while in this placement. Therefore, expectations for professional behavior, dress and conduct are high and maintained for all student teachers, whether on- or off-campus.

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