Association of Teacher Educators

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE STANDARDS (THIRD EDITION)

Vision

ATE promotes advocacy, equity, leadership, and professionalism for teacher educators in all settings and supports quality education for all learners at all levels.

Mission

ATE, as an individual membership organization, promotes quality teacher education through both exemplary clinical practice and research.

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Introduction

Clinical experiences have been identified as "the holy grail" of teacher preparation (Darling-Hammond, 2014). In fact, they are the most important component and should be central when envisioning excellence in teacher education programs (AACTE, 2018; Cuenca, 2012; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; McIntyre, Byrd, & Foxx, 1996; Zeichner, 2021), so much so that clinical experiences should be at the core of any teacher licensure program (AACTE, 2018; NCATE, 2010).

The inclusion of standards for clinical education in accrediting bodies recognizes the value and importance of these experiences in promoting excellence in teacher preparation programs. As a result, the third edition of the ATE Standards for Clinical Experiences is the most comprehensive description of what clinical experiences should be to date. Most importantly, these standards were designed not to reflect what is, but to articulate what could be. The ATE Standards for Clinical Experiences are intended to challenge teacher educators and teacher preparation programs to do better than the norm. They not only raise the bar for "how to do" clinical experiences, but they also put more emphasis on self-reflection, coherence, diversity, equity, and inclusion as well as continuous improvement. Together, these standards promote excellence in teacher preparation programs, developing the kinds of teachers who can make a difference in the lives of students. These teachers will be ready to meet the challenges of not only today but also tomorrow.

Standard 1: Collaboration

Collaboration involves school and university partners coming together to engage in joint decision making for shared responsibility of clinical experiences and shared problem-solving for conflict resolution in clinical experiences.

Collaboration should be embedded throughout all aspects of clinical experiences and should embrace the concepts of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Meetings should occur among and between school-based teacher educators, university-based teacher educators, and school and district leaders. Meetings should also be data-based and solutions-driven.

Indicators

1a. Oversight of clinical experiences is a collaborative activity that includes school- and university-based teacher educators and/or administrators.

1b. Decisions concerning clinical experiences are made collaboratively with equal input from both school- and university-based teacher educators so that both school- and universitybased teacher educators have shared responsibility for clinical experiences.

1c. School- and university-based teacher educators work collaboratively on identifying, addressing, and resolving issues and problems in the clinical experiences.

1d. There are regular meetings within and across placements sites among school and district partners and school- and university-based teacher educators for continuous improvement of the clinical experiences.

1e. Meetings are solutions-driven, using issues and concerns from the clinical experiences as well as data about the clinical experiences to drive conversations.



Standard 2:

Coherence

Coherence ensures that views, perspectives, and philosophies of those engaged in clinical experiences embrace diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging; aligns research, theory, and practice to ensure clinical experiences are research-based; and connects methods, foundations, and clinical coursework to create meaningful content, tasks, and activities in clinical experiences.

Indicators

2a. The clinical experiences are an integral part of the teacher licensure program to prepare profession ready teachers through robust clinical practice.

2b. Both school- and university-based teacher educators hold research-based, agreed-upon views and philosophies about teaching and learning that are consistent with practice, implemented consistently, and regularly reflected upon and discussed.

2c. Clinical experiences are aligned with, grounded in, and informed by knowledge from current research, theory, and practice so that they have the potential to enhance the education of PreK-12 students.

2d. School- and university-based teacher educators collaborate regularly to align content, tasks, and activities in methods with teacher candidates' experiences in their clinical placements.



Standard 3:

Organization of Clinical Experiences

Organization of Clinical Experiences involves arranging clinical experiences in such a manner that they meet teacher candidates' developmental needs in learning to teach. It means organizing clinical experiences so that teacher candidates have placements with extended experiences in schools, working with diverse school populations to ensure experience with different age levels, racial and ethnic groups, socioeconomic backgrounds, language and linguistic skills, and abilities and exceptionalities.

Indicators

3a. There is a clearly defined scope and sequence of clinical experiences that are grounded in research, cumulative, and scaffolded to meet the developmental needs of teacher candidates.

3b. Clinical experiences provide teacher candidates with the opportunity to experience more than one clinical placement site in schools with at least one clinical experience in a partner or Professional Development School. **3c**. Teacher candidates have the opportunity to work with diverse school populations (e.g. students of different age levels, diverse racial and ethnic groups, and diverse socioeconomic backgrounds) in clinical experiences.

3e. Teacher candidates have experience working with students with varying exceptionalities and English Language Learners in clinical experiences.



Standard 4: Quality Placements

Quality Placements mean collaborating to identify, select, and assess partnership schools; having sustained and supportive school leadership as well as a cadre of qualified school-based teacher educators; creating an inclusive and supportive environment that fosters teacher candidate learning in schools; considering teacher candidate needs when placing them in partnership schools, and involving teacher candidates and school-based teacher educators in matching teacher candidates to their assigned classrooms for their clinical experiences.

Indicators

4a. School- and university-based teacher educators collaborate to identify, select, and assess the willingness of partner schools to meet the goals of the ATE Clinical Experience Standards.

4b. Partner schools have sustained, supportive school leadership and a cadre of qualified teachers willing to serve as school-based teacher educators for a prolonged period. **4c.** Clinical experiences occur in a warm, supportive environment that welcomes teacher candidates, considers them members of the staff, and actively engages them in the site's community.

4d. Teacher candidate needs are considered when placing teacher candidates in partner schools for all clinical experiences. **4e**. The matching processes to purposefully place teacher candidates in classrooms include and value those most connected to the clinical experience (e.g. teachers as schoolbased teacher educators and teacher candidates).

Standard 5: **Communications**

Communication recognizes and values the importance of interaction among school-based teacher educators, university-based teacher educators, school and district leaders, and program, college, and university leaders are accessible to all and is inclusive of diverse voices and multiple perspectives. Communications ensure the operations and sustainability of highquality clinical experiences.

Indicators

5a. There is regular communication (e.g., upcoming events, expectations) with teacher candidates from the teacher licensure program, the school, and the school district to ensure teacher candidates are well-informed in order to be engaged participants in both contexts.

5b. There is regular and ongoing communication among the teacher licensure program, the school district leaders, and school-based teacher educators to support teacher candidates during clinical experiences.

5c. University-based teacher educators (e.g. adjunct clinical educators, methods course faculty, etc.) receive regular communication from the teacher licensure program about relevant and important information (e.g. upcoming deadlines, school events, cross-curricular tasks and assignments, professional learning opportunities, etc.) that they need to support teacher candidates during clinical experiences. 5d. There is regular communication with program, department, college, and university leaders (e.g. center directors, provost, etc.) to share significant achievements and to develop understanding of, maintain awareness of, and advocate for highquality clinical experiences.

5e. Regular external communication about key events and activities from clinical experiences (e.g. celebrations, job opportunities, highlights, etc.) are shared through a variety of outlets (e.g. social media, news, etc.) that target various stakeholders (e.g. current participants, alumni, donors, community and business members, etc.).

Standard 6: Resourcing, Review, and Renewal

Resourcing, Review, and Renewal ensures that clinical experiences have the necessary supports to meet state standards for teacher licensure and national guidelines for high-quality, clinically based teacher preparation. It also requires systematically and intentionally gathering data, critically reflecting on those data, assessing progress, setting goals, and continuously improving clinical experiences to support teacher candidate learning.



Indicators

6a. Clinical experiences are wellresourced to ensure they meet and have opportunities to exceed state standards for teacher licensure and national guidelines for high-quality, clinically based teacher preparation.

6b. A person or group of persons with knowledge about clinically based teacher education is designated and well compensated for handling logistical responsibilities of and providing vision for clinical experiences.

6c. Clinical experiences are valued in the teacher licensure program having sufficient credit hours to reflect its importance as essential to teacher preparation, the amount of time spent in the field, and the adequate resources to support the clinical experience.

6d. Clinical educators collaboratively develop, review, and evaluate clinical experiences using a data-informed, collaborative process that results in annual goals to drive improvement.

6e. Clinical educators conduct collaborative research, apply it to program improvement, and contribute to the advancement of knowledge and practice.

6f. Clinical experiences are valued in the teacher licensure program having sufficient financial resources to reflect its importance as essential to teacher preparation.

Standard 7: Clinical Educators

Clinical Educators describes the key role school- and university-based teacher educators play in the clinical preparation of teachers. This standard attends to the knowledge, skills, and dispositions clinical educators need to address diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. This standard describes parity in the selection, preparation, and ongoing professional learning of clinical educators.

Indicators

7a. Roles and functions of all clinical educators in the clinical experiences are clear and communicated.

7b. The criteria and the selection process for all clinical educators are collaborative.

7c. Clinical educators receive preparation for their role and engage in ongoing professional learning within a community or communities of practice to deepen their knowledge of and skills in teacher education.

7d. Clinical educators serve as role models, mentors, and coaches for teacher candidates that is consistent with the teacher licensure program goals. **7e**. Clinical educators know their assigned partner or Professional Development Schools well to serve as effective liaisons among the school, school district, and the teacher education program.

7f. Clinical educators demonstrate pedagogical content knowledge, skills, and dispositions for clinically based teacher education that are congruent with teacher licensure program goals.



Standard 8: Seminar

Seminars during clinical experiences are designed to establish an environment for support and professional learning. They provide opportunities for ongoing observation and critical reflection about philosophy, theory, challenges faced, and systemic barriers that contribute to or affect student learning.

Indicators

8a. Seminar is a weekly meeting between all teacher candidates and their assigned university-based clinical educator.

8b. Seminar is taught by the universitybased clinical educators who directly work with the teacher candidates in their clinical experiences.

8c. Seminar's class size is small enough to allow for a reflective session where teacher candidates have an opportunity to learn about, discuss, and critically reflect upon pertinent classroom and school issues.

Standard 9:

Clinical Coaching and the Formative Assessment of Teaching

Clinical Coaching and the Formative Assessment of Teaching serves as the function of supporting teacher candidate learning in the clinical experience. It entails the processes, practices, tasks, and activities necessary to teach about teaching in clinical experiences. Effective clinical coaching uses a variety of tools to engage teacher candidates in data-driven conversations to critically reflect on and inquire into the improvement of their practice. Clinical coaching is developmental, addressing teacher candidates' needs and being responsive to those needs to support their learning. It requires an extensive knowledge base and skill set to effectively support teacher candidate learning. Clinical educators encourage risk taking and experimentation by problematizing teaching. Clinical coaches must have the tools to execute, model, and embody values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. They regularly meet with their teacher candidates to discuss teaching and to engage them in regular coaching cycles to support them in becoming profession ready. Clinical coaching is a formative process, distinct from teacher candidate evaluation addressed in Standard 10.



Indicators

9a. Clinical educators use a variety of tools and data to regularly engage teacher candidates in tasks, activities, and conversations that require them to intentionally analyze, continually reflect on, and systematically inquire into their practice.

9b. Clinical educators attend to teacher candidates' developmental needs by adjusting their interpersonal approach when working with them to reflect upon and improve their practice.

9c. The clinical practice triad of teacher candidate, school-based teacher educator, and university-based teacher educator communicates regularly to support the teacher candidate's clinical experience, problematize teaching and encourage risk taking to improve practice.

9d. Clinical educators routinely engage teacher candidates in data-driven coaching cycles of pre-conference, observation, and post-conference to support teacher candidate growth and development.

9e. University-based teacher educators spend time in teacher candidates' classrooms, so they know and understand the K-12 students, mentor teacher, and the classroom context. **9f**. The clinical coaching of teacher candidates serves as a formative assessment of teaching that is distinct from teacher candidate evaluation.

9g. Teacher candidates have voice and are recognized as valued participants in the clinical coaching process.

9h. Clinical educators have prior experience in and knowledge about supervision and clinical coaching that they apply to their practice consistently.

9i. Clinical educators have opportunities to deepen their knowledge and skills in clinical pedagogy.

9j. Clinical educators engage teacher candidates in data-driven conversations focused on practice to improve K-12 student learning.

9k. Clinical educators place an intentional focus on developing equity-centered teacher candidates through their clinical coaching.

9I. Clinical educators co-teach with teacher candidates that supports teacher candidates' developmental needs as well as improves K-12 student learning.

Standard 10: Teacher Candidate Evaluation

Teacher Candidate Evaluation occurs at multiple levels, is developmentally appropriate, encompasses the responsibilities of being a beginning teacher, includes the voice of the teacher candidate, school-based teacher educator, and university-based teacher educator, aligns with state and national standards, and supports candidate growth over the course of their program and assesses the teacher candidate's dispositions, attitudes, and efficacy for diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.



Indicators

10a. The evaluation instruments reflect a continuum that assesses teacher candidates' development of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions in each clinical experience needed to be successful at the next level of clinical experiences and ultimately as a competent beginning teacher.

10b. Teacher candidates, school-based teacher educators, and university-based teacher educators all have voice and input in the evaluation process.

10c. The tool used to evaluate the teacher candidate encompasses the responsibilities of being a teacher while also being developmentally appropriate for teacher candidates.

10d. The evaluation instruments are standardized across clinical experiences and are aligned with accreditation requirements and/or state and national standards.

10e. Clinical educators make evidencebased, summative decisions grounded in multiple sources of data over time about the teacher candidate's progress in the clinical experiences and continuation in the teacher preparation program.

10f. There is a clear process, including documentation and communication, for supporting teacher candidates who struggle in clinical experiences with multiple opportunities for teacher candidates to improve and be successful.

10g. The clinical practice triad of teacher candidate, school-based teacher educator, and universitybased teacher educator holds at least two formal evaluation conferences during the clinical experience, one at the midterm and one at the end of the semester, to evaluate the teacher candidate's performance.



Standard 11: Virtual Supervision

Clinical experiences that incorporate virtual supervision will adhere to best practices in the ethical implementation of virtual supervisory techniques.

Indicators

11a. When needed, virtual supervision experiences exist within PK-12 school and college/university partnerships.

11b. Provisions are made for stable, sustainable, interactive, synchronous virtual supervision.

11c. Video platform-based conferencing (college/university supervisor, cooperating teacher or administrative intern mentor, and candidate) takes place on a consistent basis. **11d.** Video recordings are readily available for subsequent reflection, formative assessment, and coaching.

11e. All aspects of clinical supervision are facilitated virtually: pre-/postobservation meetings, virtual observations, three-way conferencing, and video-based reflections (if applicable*).

Note: This standard was created by the ATE Educational Leadership Special Interest Group.

ATE Task Force on Clinical Experience Standards

(THIRD EDITION)

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