

Overview of the Internship Academy Model

The Internship Academy began in 2015 and is a combination of the original internship practicum semester and the student teaching semester into a year-long on-site experience with partnership school districts. Partners include the Logan-Rogersville, Nixa, Republic, Springfield, Sparta, Cassville and Willard School Districts in Southwest Missouri. In the St. Louis Region, partners include the Webster Groves and Clayton School Districts. Interns begin work in a partner school during school year pre-planning days and continue to work in that school until graduation from Missouri State University in May. The advantage of this program is a full year of teaching experience with immersion into the school community. Interns follow the host school calendar.

To complete required coursework, **ELE 500, ELE 501, and ELE 510** are embedded in the internship year for Elementary Education interns. For Early Childhood interns, **ECE 401, ECE 402, ECE 403, and ECE 315** are integrated. Interns leave their classrooms for one day two times a month and meet together at Kentwood Hall on campus or our district partner schools to work on course content that needs support in a face-to-face contact setting. The majority of content is received on-site in the placement school, with the goal being that interns learn and see firsthand how course concepts are applied in real time. In addition, the host schools may offer interns additional professional development opportunities when any professional development is implemented for their own teachers. Interns are expected to attend all training sessions when invited. Interns also have the opportunity to complete the requirements **ELE 530**, teaching English language learners, if that course requirement has not yet been satisfied. Coursework outcomes address the MTS, CAEP, and ACEI standards along with Missouri State University's Diversity Proficiencies and Guiding Principles.

Interns are asked to apply what is learned, and both the classroom teacher (called a Master Teacher) and a school-level liaison (called the Teacher-in-Residence) work with interns to make sure they can demonstrate all the competencies expected in the face-to-face classes. Besides the University Faculty teaching the coursework in a seminar setting, the Teachers-in-Residence lend their expertise to the instruction of the coursework content. Master Teachers who have proficiency and knowledge in a particular skill area may also provide mini-training sessions before or after school.

Shared learning is an integral part of this program. *Google Drive* and *Google Calendar* from Google are internet-based services that provide a free platform to make it easy to communicate, organize, share, and connect in one place. Private folders have been created to assist the interns with assignments, questions, conversations, reflective discussions, and experiences. Folders within folders are also set up to share documents and projects with Master Teachers, Teachers-in-Residence, and/or MSU Faculty. Google also provides access via a mobile device app for ease and availability.

The Internship Coordinator and University Faculty members oversee all aspects of the internship and are available for support. The Internship Coordinator acts as a liaison between Missouri State and the partnership schools guiding the experience to be mutually beneficial, enjoyable, successful, and rewarding to all participants.

Some interns may need to work to secure financial assistance. Beginning in 2020, partner schools offer paid internships, allowing interns to be paid for 3 days of substitute teaching each month at their normal substitute pay rate. The partner schools also have additional opportunities such as tutoring, specialized professional development, and before/after school program employment for those interested. Interns who need additional financial assistance may need to schedule work after school hours and/or on weekends.

The Dean of the College of Education, Dr. David Hough, has fully supported this program since its inception in the fall of 2015. This model is being examined as a possible delivery method for future educator preparation in the state by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). It has been researched and a pilot year evaluation report has been submitted. This internship will be further explored through the course of the 2019-2020 academic year. Feedback is extremely important to Missouri State as we move forward with further planning for our educator preparation programs in collaboration with our district schools.

The key to a good working relationship with all participants is the ability to communicate with one another. A plan has been formulated where Teachers-in-Residence meet with Master Teachers to keep communication open and progressing. Teachers-in-Residence also meet with the Internship Coordinator at established monthly intervals and more informally out in the districts to communicate and exchange information/feedback. Principals and District Level Program and Curriculum Directors are involved with the implementation of this program as well and provide feedback through communication channels.

Evaluation of an intern's performance is a joint effort among the following key providers: Teacher-in-Residence, Master Teacher, University Faculty Members, and Principal. Written feedback from the Master Teacher is requested by the Teacher-in-Residence and University Faculty at various intervals. Master Teachers also provide input to the Teacher-in-Residence and University Faculty on a continual basis as the mentorship progresses. Rating using the Missouri Educator Evaluation System (MEES) is ongoing with the expectation that the interns reach the "baseline" teacher candidate rating level in the first semester and the emerging and developing rating levels by the conclusion of the internship year.

Interns will experience a co-teaching environment in the classroom. They will take on the different roles as guided by the Master Teacher and Teacher-in-Residence. Co-Teaching models from the Bureau of Educational Research (BER) and St. Cloud, Missouri are made available along with district adaptations of these models. Training sessions for interns and their Master Teacher partners are provided early in the academic year.

For licensure, the intern will be observed using the MEES (Missouri Educator Evaluation System) Tool during the spring semester. Observations using the MEES Tool will be conducted by the Master Teacher, Teacher-in-Residence, and MSU Coordinator. Interns must reach a minimum score by graduation to be recommended to DESE for licensure in Missouri. As 2018-2019 is the first year for this certification model, please be aware that information will be distributed as it is available. Training on the MEES Tool will be provided to all evaluators. It is required that all evaluators complete the provided training on the MEES Tool.

Flexibility is requested when new communication is disseminated from DESE or the University and changes may need to occur. Thank you to all participants, in advance, for being open to any adjustments as we prepare these future teachers.

If there are any questions, please contact Sara Tipton at SaraTipton@MissouriState.edu or Robin Koerber at RobinKoerber@MissouriState.edu. They will e-mail you back as soon as possible and be happy to assist you with your questions or concerns. It is our goal to help make the internship experience as seamless as possible for you, your classroom, and your district. Thank you for accepting our internship program into the district. We hope it is a mutually beneficial experience for all. Participants are giving back to professional education, and it is with gratitude and sincerity that you are applauded and admired for your generosity in sharing your expertise.