Duties of the Teacher

Northern's evaluations are based upon an adaptation of the duties of the teacher as proposed by Scriven: knowledge base, instructional competence, assessment competence, and professionalism (1993). He considers these duties "the only legitimate basis for teacher evaluation" (1993, p. 4). Other accepted models of teacher evaluation are based upon a limited view of the teachers' tasks, limited and atypical observations, too much weight on the way of teaching and too little on content and effect, and faulty use of indicators based upon statistical conclusions. As a result, they are not valid in ways that are "multiple and serious" (Scriven, Wheeler, and Haertel, 1993, p. 7).

The evaluation of the preservice teachers' competencies in field settings is the primary responsibility of the supervising teachers. Supervising teachers are to help the students identify their strengths and weaknesses by encouraging self-evaluation through techniques such as feedback, reflection, journaling, scripting, conferencing, and videotaping.

Field experiences help determine the student's ability to carry out these duties and offer multiple sources of data for evaluation. Supervising teachers determine if these competencies are demonstrated by the students to an adequate degree and make comments to explain or support their assessments. The duties that NMU has decided upon as needed by preservice teachers to be recommended for certification as teachers are briefly described below. Some possible performance indicators, including those derived from NMU's Professional Education Unit Mission Statement, are briefly presented. The duties and the minimal competencies expected at each stage in the teacher education program are explained in a later section.

Knowledge Base

All preservice teachers must demonstrate a satisfactory level of competence in their subject matter and general knowledge through required courses and standardized tests before they are allowed to student teach. University students who do not meet minimal standards set by the University on general and specific content area tests and in performance in college courses are not admitted into teacher education or not allowed to continue. The supervising teacher should evaluate whether the student can apply this knowledge effectively in a teaching situation and meet the following criteria.

1. Content areas. Has an adequate grasp of the subject matter they are teaching. Demonstrates accurate, appropriate, and comprehensive knowledge of the subjects taught to the degree needed to effectively teach the curriculum.

2. General knowledge. Has a good general knowledge and appreciation of the humanities, social sciences, arts and sciences. Communicates the value of this knowledge to their students, including an appreciation of the interrelationships among. Demonstrates a multicultural perspective.

Instructional Competence

Preservice teachers must not only have adequate knowledge, they must also be able to teach. The University evaluates these skills through testing, coursework experiences. Students unable to demonstrate adequate communication skills, as measured through standardized tests and required coursework, are not allowed to progress through the teacher education program. Through pre-student teaching field experiences students' management skills are only superficially explored. Student teaching is the primary source of data for these skills. Lesson/unit planning and presentation, including the use of materials, are taught and evaluated in the methods classes at the university.

1. Communication skills. Communicates what is to be learned so that students understand and value the learning. Demonstrates effective speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Uses appropriate and grammatically correct language. Has congruent verbal and nonverbal communication.


3. Management of learning progress. Manages learning progress so that the curriculum is covered appropriately and efficiently. Makes smooth transitions and is able to handle varying ability levels and activities. Manages assignments and time efficiently. Ensures quality time on learning tasks and accomplishes what has to be done.
Management of contingencies/emergencies. Reasonably and responsibly copes with the frequent contingencies and occasional emergencies of classroom teaching. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking abilities through effective decision making under pressure.

Lesson/unit planning. Develop effective lessons and units within the contexts of the curriculum and assessment. Uses curricular frameworks as a means to developing student's inquiry and thinking skills.

Lesson/unit presentation. Presents lessons and units so that the instructional objectives are efficiently realized. Creates meaningful learning experiences that help all students understand the subject matter based on each student's abilities, attitudes, effort, culture, and achievement.

Use of materials and resources. Is familiar with and able to use a variety of materials and resources. Selects, creates and incorporates appropriate instructional techniques, technology, and materials needed for instruction.

Assessment Competence

Assessment is taught in education classes and concurrent field experiences. Accurate self-evaluation of teaching and curricula are encouraged throughout the program.

Selection, creation and use of student assessments. Understands testing and assessment, including test construction and administration. Knows the various ways of determining the merit of a student's work. Values and develops a variety of reliable and valid measures.

Grading and reporting student achievement. Understands and appreciates the grading/ranking/scoring process and how to report achievement. Grades and reports fairly, honestly, clearly, consistently, efficiently, and helpfully.


Professionalism

The preservice education program tries to select students who have the attributes needed in a professional educator and to develop these attributes through the experiences required of these students and the expectations held for them.

Professional ethics. Models moral standards that are expected in the profession, such as confidentiality, fairness, honesty, trustworthiness, and integrity. Models a commitment to intellectual, moral and professional virtues.

Professional attitude. Values learning, students, teaching, and schooling. Demonstrates openness, courtesy, conscientiousness, reliability, caring, compassion. Identifies with professional educators and behaves accordingly.

Professional development/service. Is involved in professional development and service activities. Performs non-teaching duties required of a teacher such as administrative tasks (attendance, out-of-class supervision) and school or community services (committee work, participation in events).

Knowledge and execution of duties. Understands and effectively deals with issues of professional policy and practice at local, state and national levels. Understands responsibilities associated with being a competent professional, including following laws, regulations, policies, requirements and procedures.

Knowledge of the school and its context. Understands the special characteristics and circumstances related to the students, staff, school, and community. Develops practices to promote collaborative, supportive interaction in the classroom, school and community.

Human relations. Establishes positive and effective relationships with students, parents, colleagues, administrators, and community members. Demonstrates appreciation of cultural diversity, individual differences and exceptionalities of students. Discourages prejudice and unfair discrimination in their classrooms.