

Team 3 Program Information Frequently Asked Questions

1. Which courses are "methods" courses? In other words, when do we actually learn to teach reading, math, etc.

In TE 301 you will begin to examine some big questions about curriculum such as the relationship of the curriculum to the learner. Team 3 also starts a literacy strand in TE 301. TE 401 and 402 concentrates on teaching subject matter to diverse learners. In the elementary sections, literacy, mathematics, social studies and science are the focus. During the internship year, TE 802 and 804 continue to address planning and teaching in literacy and mathematics.

2. When do we get experience in classrooms and really begin teaching?

During TE 301 you will spend some time during the semester in a setting with children or adolescents which will be a school classroom or some other educational setting. The focus is on studying the learner and how learning happens in different contexts. During TE 401 and 402, you will be in a school classroom each week for four hours. Usually you are placed with another Team 3 student as a partner. Field assignments are closely linked to the coursework and generally include observations, interviewing pupils, and planning and teaching short lessons, usually with small groups of pupils in the fall, and then with the whole class in the spring. You are not expected to take extensive responsibility for the full classroom until later in the fall of the internship year and then only for limited periods of time. All of this is designed to gradually prepare you to take the lead in the classroom during the spring of your internship year.

3. When will I know where my internship placement will be?

During the fall of the senior year prior to the internship, you will receive an Internship Placement Request Form to complete. This will ask you for detailed information about your preferences and interests. You will then be asked to submit a professional resume to be given to prospective schools during the placement process. You will receive guidelines for writing your resume in October. You need to turn it in to the team coordinator in November. We hope each student will know her or his possible placement and meet the mentor teacher by the end of spring semester. However, it is impossible to guarantee this time frame or placement preferences because we are dependent upon many factors in the school districts that are beyond our control.

4. Can I make my own arrangements for an internship placement?

No. Each team works with particular schools in particular districts. We place interns in clusters so that an MSU field instructor can work with a group of interns and their mentor teachers and convene the school-based guided practice seminar. In addition, clusters of interns in a school allow for interns to interact and support each other's learning more readily.

5. When does the internship begin and end? Do we follow the school's or MSU's calendar?

In general, you will follow the school-district calendar for the district in which you are placed. You will begin your placement on the day that your mentor teacher begins. There will be a meeting for Team 3 interns in late August before most districts begin to help you get started. You will follow your school's calendar for holidays and winter and spring break. You will finish your internship on the last day of MSU's spring semester classes, unless your internship is extended for some reason.

6. Can I plan on working during the internship year? What is the weekly schedule like?

You are expected to keep every day, Monday through Friday, until 5:00 P.M. available for program-related activities. You will need to meet with your mentor teacher after school, attend faculty meetings, attend your school-based guided-practice seminar, and attend the other university-based classes. You will also need to have time to prepare and plan lessons, grade papers, etc. Many interns do need to work during the year, but it is recommended that you work no more than ten hours per week. If a heavier work schedule is necessary, talk it over with the team coordinator.

7. If I want an additional special education endorsement, do I have to enroll in a master's program? If so, who should I talk to about the special education endorsement?

Yes, you will have to enroll in a master's program. You can contact anyone in the special education department (355-1837) and they will be happy to give you the information.

8. What is the difference between the internship year and student teaching?

In the past, students in the teacher preparation program spent ten weeks in a classroom for their student teaching experience. They assumed lead teacher responsibilities for approximately 6-7 weeks. In addition, they typically had a weekly on-campus seminar to talk about their experiences in the field.

In the five-year certification program, teacher candidates have a year-long experience that integrates further study about learning to teach within the contexts of graduate level courses and K-12 classrooms. Learning to teach is a process that continues throughout a teacher's professional career. Teachers learn from their experiences in classrooms, through engaging in study and reflection with colleagues, and from their continuing professional studies in university courses. The internship provides you with a first opportunity to combine graduate seminars with sustained work in classrooms. The internship year is intended to help you (a) develop knowledge, skills and dispositions to create learning communities that serve all children; (b) deepen your understanding of the subjects you teach and develop a repertoire of strategies and representations for teaching school subjects; (c) develop habits of mind and attitudes that will be a basis for responsive, responsible, and reasoned decision making regarding curriculum, teaching practices and forms of assessment; (d) develop habits of inquiry and reflection on your own practice so that you continually strive to modify your practice in light of what you are learning in both contexts---your mentor teacher's classroom and your graduate seminars.

If you have other questions, don't hesitate to contact a team leader or coordinator by calling the team office, 355-1741 or e-mailing one of these people directly.