

# Teacher Certification Program Grading Policy for TE 501 & TE 502

## Internship in Teaching Diverse Learners

### Introduction

The internship experience (TE 501/502) offers an extended opportunity for learning to teach with guidance and support from practicing teachers, field instructors and other program staff. **Interns and their guides share the responsibility for ongoing assessment and for more formal evaluation** at the midpoint and end of each semester. The final evaluation provides a basis for recommending the intern for certification as a beginning teacher.

The program's **professional standards serve as a framework for assessment and evaluation**. Developed through conversations with mentor teachers, MSU faculty and staff, the standards identify important knowledge and understandings, skills and dispositions needed to begin teaching on a solid footing and to continue learning throughout one's teaching career. Compatible with professional standards for beginning teaching developed at the national and state levels, our program standards offer a set of aspirations to strive for and a basis for judging how interns are doing in their efforts to become well started novices.

In TE 501 and TE 502, interns will be evaluated using a **pass (P)/ no grade (N) system**. This system encourages a shift from dependence on grades for external validation to reliance on personal and public assessment through observation, conversation, reflection and feedback. These processes serve as a source of ideas about the quality of teaching and learning displayed by the intern, and they provide direction in framing personal goals for professional development.

The year-long internship allows us to **shift the focus of evaluation over the two semesters** from an early emphasis on the intern's stance as a learner to greater emphasis on the intern's capacity to enact the standards in practice. In the first semester (TE 501) when the intern is getting to know the curriculum and students, evaluation focuses more on the intern's openness to learning, serious attention to what the standards mean and what their enactment entails, active pursuit of guidance and feedback, and evidence of steady progress. In the second semester (TE 502), judgments center more on the intern's understanding and performance in relation to the program standards. Eventually all four standards come into play since the intern must learn to (1) work and learn in a school as a professional; **and** (2) understand and teach subject matter; **and** (3) relate to and work with students in appropriate ways; **and** (4) organize and manage a classroom learning community.

### Grading Options for TE 501 and TE 502

Interns may earn a Pass (P) or No Grade (N) in TE 501 and TE 502.

A **P-Pass** means that the intern has achieved a satisfactory level of progress and that credit is granted.

In **TE 501, a Pass (P) means** that the intern is open to learning, working hard to understand the standards and figure out what their enactment in classrooms entails, actively seeking guidance and feedback, and making steady progress in learning to think and act like a professional beginning teacher.

In **TE 501 only**, a notation of "**Pass with Concern (P)**" may be recorded in the program's files, even though this rating will not appear on the intern's transcript. This notation is appropriate where the intern is actively working on learning to teach but is experiencing difficulties putting the learning into practice. Concerns may relate to all four standards or they may focus on one of the standards.

The "Pass with Concern" notation could be used to acknowledge a concern that has already been discussed with the intern, where a plan has been developed but the problem has not been

resolved by the end of the first semester. Or it could be used to communicate about a concern that surfaces late in the semester in situations where there has not yet been time to develop a plan for working with the intern. In either situation, a judgment is made that the area(s) of concern can be addressed, given a specific plan of action, appropriate resources, available time and commitment of the intern. Whether the concern arises early or late in the semester, this notation is discussed with the intern and a plan of action is developed. The problem area(s) need to be addressed in order to receive a pass (P) during TE 502 where the evaluation shifts to performance.

In **TE 502, a P-Pass** means that the intern shows evidence of satisfactory understanding and performance across the four standards. To recommend the intern for certification at the end of the program, there must be sufficient evidence that the intern has an understanding of what the standards mean and what they entail and can realize the standards in practice at a level appropriate for a well launched beginning teacher.

A **N-No grade means** that the intern did not achieve a satisfactory level of progress and performance and that no credit is granted.

In TE 501: In the first semester, a grade of N is based on evidence of serious deficiencies in the knowledge and understanding, skills and dispositions required by the program standards, or in the rate of progress toward understanding and enacting them. For example, there may be serious weaknesses in subject matter knowledge, limited initiative or openness in learning, lack of serious attention to the meaning of the standards, inattention to feedback and guidance, an insufficient rate or scope of progress. **Interns who receive no grade (N) in TE 501 are not eligible to enroll in TE 502 and will not be recommended for certification.**

In TE 502: In the second semester, a grade of N is based on evidence that the intern is not demonstrating a satisfactory level of performance in understanding and enacting one or more of the standards. For example, the intern's judgment about his/her planning, teaching and/or learning to teach is not well informed or well reasoned. The intern does not examine or adjust his/her actions or thinking in light of the program standards. The rate of progress is too slow or uneven or the scope of progress too limited. **Interns who receive no grade (N) in TE 502 will not be recommended for certification.**

**Use of Incomplete and Deferred in the Internship Year** (see p. 50 in the 1995-96 Academic Program Book for additional details)

### **Incomplete**

According to the Academic Program Book, "the 'I' (incomplete) grade may be given only when the student (a) has completed at least 12 weeks of the semester, but is unable to complete the class work and/or take the final examination because of illness or other compelling reasons; and (b) has done satisfactory work in the course; and (c) in the instructor's judgment can complete the required work without repeating the course." In other words, interns will not be given an incomplete when they are irresponsible or delinquent in turning work in. Rather **they will be given a "Pass with Concern (P)" or No grade (N).** **Interns who** are in danger of not receiving credit should be told by the MSU liaison and/or field instructor and given clear information about what they must do to pass. This should occur at the mid-term assessment conference or as soon as the concern(s) arise.

It is seldom feasible to complete an Incomplete for TE 501 prior to the beginning of TE 502. On rare occasions, it is used at the end of TE 502 for an intern who needs to make up additional time after the end of the MSU calendar, before the end of the school year. If an intern is given an incomplete, the instructor keeps a written record of the work to be completed and the deadline for completion.

### **Deferred (used only for Graduate and Life-long Graduate students)**

According to the Academic Program Book, the deferred can be given to interns “who are doing satisfactory work but cannot complete it because of reasons acceptable to the instructor. The required work must be completed and a grade reported within two calendar years.” As an example, this has been used for interns who encounter medical or psychological difficulties during the internship and need to postpone the internship to the following year in order to receive treatment. The intern will not be required to register again for a deferred course; however, the intern will not be a registered student during the intervening time and will not have access to financial aid or student services on campus unless he or she registers for other courses. Also, the intern may encounter difficulties arranging for deferment of student loan payments while completing the deferred courses. If the intern wishes to have student status, the intern must check with his/her lender to learn of enrollment or loan deferment requirements. The intern may also check with the Financial Aid Office.

### **The Assessment Process**

Teams will establish procedures for ongoing feedback and record-keeping, as well as formal opportunities for assessment and evaluation, that are in keeping with existing policy outlined in Intern Problem Solving and Support Procedures.

Regularly scheduled assessment conferences should include the intern, the MSU liaison and/or field instructor, and the mentor teacher.

Examples of the intern’s progress will be gathered from the intern’s classroom practice, from his/her participation in the professional seminar, and from other TE 501/502 assignments. Examples should reflect the intern’s professional participation in his/her own and other’s learning and will come from a variety of sources, including:

- the professional judgment of the mentor teacher and MSU liaison and/or field instructor based on observation and assessment of the intern’s work in the classroom, the school and in conferences with the intern;
- the intern’s questions, comments and contributions to discussions with the mentor teacher, MSU liaison and/or field instructor and colleagues in the school and in the professional seminar;
- written material such as journal entries, assignments, daily plans, etc.
- the intern’s attendance and promptness at teaching assignments and seminars;
- the quality of materials and examples that the intern presents at assessment conferences.

## **Teacher Certification Program Grading Policy for TE 801/3 & TE 802/4**

In accordance with the Academic Standards of the university, students at the Lifelong Graduate or Graduate level must receive at least a 2.0 to be awarded credit in TE 801, TE 802, TE 803, TE 804. Also, students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0. Because TE 801 is a prerequisite for TE 803, an TE 802 is a prerequisite for TE 804, interns who receive below a 2.0 in either prerequisite will have to retake that course before proceeding in the internship. In addition, an Incomplete for TE 801 or TE 802 must be finished before the beginning of the following semester. An intern with an unresolved incomplete will not be allowed to continue the internship. All of these courses are necessary for certification and interns who receive below a 2.0 in any course will not be recommended for certification.