

Meet the Mentees Transcript

Mentoring Virginia

Throughout your career, school-based teacher educators may serve in a mentoring capacity wearing any number of ‘mentor’ hats for mentees who may be quite varied in terms of their mentoring needs. For example, you may be in the role of a mentor teacher or clinical faculty working with teacher candidates (university students) in varied stages of their professional preparation – early field hours work, more intensive practicum experiences, or their capstone internship/student teaching. Or you may find that you are mentoring a new student in an internship that is ‘on the job.’ In other words, they are the teacher of record as they complete their internship. Mentors may also work with new teachers who are in their first three years of full-time teaching.

Below are a few scenarios that you may encounter as a mentor. As you progress through the modules, you may want to think about how the content informs the varied roles mentors can play in PK-12 schools.

A SECONDARY EDUCATION FIELD HOURS STUDENT:

James is in the first semester of a M.Ed. program in Secondary Education. He earned a B.A. in History ten years ago. He is now switching careers and wishes to teach history/social science subjects as a social studies teacher in a middle school or high school. He is working on completing courses in the social studies content areas to qualify for an endorsement to teach history/social science in Virginia. He is also taking M.Ed. courses in teaching social studies in secondary schools and in the foundations of secondary education. He is placed with two mentor teachers, Ms. Whalen, a middle school social studies teacher who teaches 8th grade civics/economics, and Ms. Ball, a high school social studies teacher who teaches psychology and sociology. Across the semester, James will spend 15 hours observing Ms. Whalen’s teaching in her middle school classroom and spend 15 hours observing Ms. Ball teaching in her high school classroom. He will complete observation forms, take notes about what he observes in his mentor teachers’ classrooms, and reflect on what he learned about teaching social studies in secondary schools through written assignments for his two M.Ed. courses.

AN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION FIELD HOURS STUDENT:

Sadia is in the second semester of her undergraduate licensure program in Elementary Education, and she is placed in a fourth-grade classroom with her mentor, Mr. Smith. Across her field experience semester, Sadia will be completing four classes in both general and content-specific methods while she is also observing for 60 hours in Mr. Smith’s classroom. Sadia is expected to collaborate with Mr. Smith to determine a schedule for weekly visits across the semester. During her field work, Sadia will be completing focused observations to help her make connections between her coursework and her field experience. In addition, Sadia will be expected to work with individuals and small groups to support Mr. Smith’s instructional plans. Sadia will also be expected to teach a few lessons as required by her courses. Sadia’s field work is an important part of preparing her for her upcoming yearlong internship.

AN EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENT TEACHER:

Alexa is in her final semester of the Early Childhood Education, Prek-3rd Grade licensure program. She is completing her first 8-week internship placement in a Prekindergarten Head Start classroom within an elementary school in Fairfax County Public School. During the first four weeks of her internship placement, Alexa is expected to progressively take on more of the day-to-day classroom responsibilities: planning and conducting morning meeting lessons, conducting one-on-one, small group, and whole group read aloud sessions, facilitating small

group instruction, facilitating daily transitions, and planning closing circle time lessons. By the fifth and sixth week of her internship, Alexa is expected to take over all teaching responsibilities for two-weeks. She will work closely with her assigned mentor teacher and University Supervisor to ensure a successful internship experience.

A PE INTERN/STUDENT TEACHER:

Morgan will be student teaching during the last semester of her undergraduate licensure program in health and physical education (K-12). She has been assigned two placements, one in an elementary school and one in a secondary school, and she will switch halfway through the semester. For the elementary placement, she will be working with a male health and physical education teacher who teaches K-6. Since she had indicated on her student teaching application that she preferred a high school placement and that she would like to gain experience in adapted PE, she will be working with a female mentor teacher who teaches 9th grade health and physical education and also teaches one adapted PE class. For each placement, Morgan will gradually pick up the responsibilities for planning, instruction, and management, culminating in four weeks of independent teaching. Morgan is expected to be at her internship placement for regular school hours and also learn the other duties assigned to her mentor teacher. She is also required to come to campus every other Monday evening to attend a seminar led by the coordinator of student teaching. A University Supervisor, Ms. Smith, supports Morgan by observing her at least twice at each placement and regularly communicating with her.

AN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION STUDENT TEACHER:

Carlos is in the final year of his masters plus licensure program in Elementary Education, and he is placed in a kindergarten classroom with his mentor, Ms. Perez for the fall semester and with Mrs. Brown in fifth grade for the spring semester. Carlos will join Ms. Perez during back-to-school week in preparation for the year and then will spend four days per week in her class and one day on campus for coursework. Carlos will begin the experience focusing on observing and building relationships with the kindergartners. Across the semester, he will begin to lead transition, plan, and implement portions of morning meeting, work with small groups in literacy and math, attend team planning meetings, and supporting management alongside Ms. Perez. In the spring, Carlos will transition to Mrs. Brown's class, where he will spend the first few weeks acclimating to the new environment by observing, building relationships, and supporting management and instruction. Carlos will work with Mrs. Brown to strategically take the lead on planning, instructing, and managing a new content area or aspect of the instructional day. Each week, Carlos will add to his responsibilities culminating in four weeks of independent teaching. Throughout the year, Carlos will work with a University Supervisor, Mrs. Lewis, who visits the school weekly to provide informal feedback, engage with school-based teacher educators, and conduct formal observations.

A SPECIAL EDUCATION ON THE JOB INTERN:

Anita is in the last semester of her graduate licensure program in Special Education and is completing her internship on-the-job at her worksite where she is a special education teacher on a provisional teaching license. Anita is beginning her third year of teaching and is currently teaching 2nd-5th grade students with disabilities in a self-contained classroom. Anita is being supported throughout her internship by Ms. Li, a Mentor Teacher at her school who is also the lead special education teacher, and by Dr. Evans, a University Supervisor from her licensure program.