

A Developmental Approach to Becoming a Teacher: The Progression of Responsibility Using a Co-Teaching Model for Student Teaching

Evergreen's MIT program, like many teacher preparation programs in the state, is exploring the use of a co-teaching model during student teaching. The intention behind this model is that public school students, teacher candidates, and mentor teachers will all benefit from a collaborative planning and teaching relationship between the candidate and the mentor. *Mentors and candidates who agree to use the co-teaching model also agree to follow the guidelines and employ the co-teaching strategies described in this document.*

St. Cloud University has conducted extensive research about the efficacy of co-teaching. Based on their research and co-teaching model, we are implementing the co-teaching model as described below. Though the mentor teacher remains in the classroom co-teaching with the teacher candidate for the entire quarter, the *teacher candidate gradually assumes more leadership in the relationship*. Before student teaching begins, the MIT faculty supervisor, mentor teacher, and teacher candidate discuss and agree on a timeline that allows the candidate to progressively assume leadership in the co-planning and co-teaching relationship. A sample progression may be:

1. The mentor assumes leadership in co-planning, modeling, and co-teaching for the first two or three weeks with the candidate engaging in one or more of the teaching strategies described in St. Cloud University's plan.
2. The mentor and candidate then work together to co-plan and co-teach for two weeks using the team teaching model described on the next page.
3. The teacher candidate then takes the lead in the planning (i.e., the candidate needs to show responsibility in making planning decisions) and co-teaching for at least three weeks with the mentor engaging in one or more of the co-teaching strategies described on the next page. The teacher candidate in the leadership role provides the candidate with an important developmental opportunity, roughly equivalent to solo teaching in the traditional student teaching model, even though the mentor is still in the room.
4. The mentor and candidate decide on the appropriate division of responsibilities for the weeks remaining in the quarter.

The information provided by St. Cloud University describes what co-teaching is and is not, and defines a range of teaching strategies to be used by the teacher candidate and mentor as part of co-teaching. To implement this model, the mentor teacher, teacher candidate, and college supervisor work collaboratively to select the teaching strategies that will be implemented to meet:

- the needs of the students, staff, and school,
- MIT's requirements for lesson planning and completion of the *Positive Impact on Student Learning Project*, and,
- requirements necessary for candidates to reach standard on the MIT *Student Teaching Rubric* and the State of Washington *Performance-Based Pedagogy Assessment* (please see *Student Teaching Handbook – Assessment Guide*).

Co-Teaching: Why, What, and How
www.stcloudstate.edu/coe/tqe

Co-teaching is defined as two teachers working together with groups of students and sharing the planning, organization, delivery and assessment of instruction and physical space.

Why co-teaching?

- Increased options for flexible grouping of students
- Enhanced collaboration skills for the teacher candidate and cooperating teacher
- Professional support for both the cooperating teacher and the teacher candidate
- Another set of eyes to watch and help problem solve
- Flexibility to try things you wouldn't be as willing to do alone
- Help in classroom and lesson preparation
- Help with classroom management
- Diversity and size of today's classrooms
 - Reduce student/teacher ratio
 - Increase instructional options for all students
 - Diversity of instructional styles
 - Greater student engaged time
 - Greater student participation levels

What co-teaching is NOT

- Simply dividing the tasks and responsibilities between two people.
- For example, co-teaching is NOT:
 - One person teaching one subject followed by another who teaches a different subject
 - One person teaching one subject while another person prepares instructional materials at the Xerox machine or corrects student papers in the teachers' lounge
 - One person teaching while the other sits and watches
 - When one person's ideas prevail regarding what will be taught and how it will be taught
 - Someone is simply assigned to act as a tutor

Co-Teaching Strategies – How to Shape the Co-Teaching Experience

Team Teaching – well-planned, team-taught lessons exhibit an invisible flow of instruction with no prescribed division of authority. Using a team teaching strategy, both teachers are actively involved in the lesson. From a student's perspective, there is no clearly defined leader, as both teachers share the instruction and are free to interject information and are available to assist students and answer questions.

One Teach, One Observe – One teacher has primary instructional responsibility while the other gathers specific observational information on students or the (instructing) teacher

One Teach, One Drift – One teacher has primary instructional responsibility while the other teacher assists students with their work, monitors behaviors or corrects assignments

Station Teaching – The co-teaching pair divide the instructional content into parts – each teacher instructs one of the groups. The groups then rotate or spend a designated amount of time at each station. Often an independent station will be used.

Parallel Teaching – Each teacher instructs half of the students. The two teachers are addressing the same instructional material and presenting the material using the same teaching strategy. The greatest benefit is the reduction of the student to teacher ration.

Supplemental Teaching – This strategy allows one teacher to work with students at their expected grade level while the co-teacher works with those students who need the information and/or materials extended or remediated.

Alternative/Differentiated Teaching – Alternative teaching strategies provide two different approaches to teaching the same information. The learning outcome is the same for all students; however, the avenue for getting there is different.