

School of Education

Guidelines for Instructional Unit Planning

Note: This is a unit plan guide which the School of Education uses to ensure teacher candidates and course instructors have a shared language and understanding of components and expectations for unit planning assignments in courses.

In the graduate program the unit plan assignment has been identified as a **Key Assessment Measure**. **As a key assessment measure it will be used to ensure that candidates are meeting program and licensure requirements.** Therefore, all students need to meet the target performance level to move forward in the program. If a student misses the target, the student will be required to redo the portions of the unit until the target has been met.

Candidates will create a standards-based learner-centered sequential unit (1 week minimum or 2 weeks maximum) for a particular grade level.

The instructional unit will incorporate the following:

- o A rationale for instructional decisions. The rationale should be grounded in evidence-based practices.
 - o A description of the Context for Learning
 - o A brief overview of the unit that identifies the central focus of the unit.
 - o An overview of the instructional components that includes a unit that lasts at least one week and includes three consecutive fully developed lesson plans.
 - o A pre-assessment activity that captures students' readiness, interest, and learning needs relative to the learning objectives prior to a unit .
 - o A formative assessment to guide monitoring and adjustment during instruction
 - o An end of the unit assessment (summative)
 - o A reference page that provides citations for instructional/pedagogical choices and resources
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CRITERIA	Target (Sufficient)	Met	Not Met	Comments
Central Focus (Essential Questions/ Enduring Understandings)	<p>The central focus identifies a substantial overarching goal that unifies core concepts and skills within the curriculum.</p> <p>All lessons within the unit are aligned to the central focus.</p>			
Context for Learning	<p>Description of students includes detail on the class demographics; significant subgroups of students with similar characteristics; and students' varied strengths (including personal, cultural, and community assets), language development, and learning needs.</p> <p>Instructional choice and learning tasks are informed by understanding of students' strengths and varied needs as well as appropriate supports.</p>			
Standards	The unit is aligned to relevant ISTE and K-12 MN content standards and national content standards as appropriate (e.g. NCTM, CSTA, NCTE)			
Learning Objectives	<p>All lessons within the learning unit have a specific learning objective.</p> <p>The learning objectives are measurable; and align with the chosen set of standards.</p> <p>Lesson objectives include a variety of Bloom's Taxonomy levels or Webb's Depth of Knowledge levels.</p>			
Assessment/ Evidence	<p>Unit includes assessment; pre-formative and summative.</p> <p>The unit incorporates effective and varied formative assessments as well as summative assessments.</p> <p>The assessments align with the learning objectives and standards.</p> <p>Scoring tools such as checklists/rubrics are well crafted and measure the learning objectives.</p>			
CRITERIA	Target (Sufficient)	Met	Not Met	Comments

Lessons and Activities	<p>The sequential unit length and scope <u>is at least 1 week.</u></p> <p>The unit contains a learning segment (3 consecutive fully developed lesson plans) and activities that reflect evidence-based teaching and learning practices.</p> <p>Lesson plans follow the CSS lesson plan template.</p> <p>The lesson activities build on each other to ensure clarity and flow.</p> <p>Each of the fully developed lesson plans includes enough detail so that another educational professional could successfully instruct the lesson (substitute teacher ready).</p> <p>The unit provides opportunities for students' success with appropriate scaffolding.</p> <p>Lesson activities address real-world/authentic experiences.</p>			
Technology	<p>Technology integration identifies and aligns with the appropriate ISTE standards) for students.</p> <p>Learning experiences provide an opportunity for K-12 students to demonstrate their learning through meaningful technology use.</p> <p>The unit provides opportunities for K-12 students to create with technology vs. just consume (e.g. LoTi level 4 or ISTE Educator Facilitator standard).</p>			
Justification	<p>The candidate is able to Justify instructional choices from 3 consecutive lessons, i.e., focusing on choice of teaching strategies, materials, and the learning tasks plan for students.</p> <p>Explicitly include selected principles of research and theory from previous or current methods courses, from independent reading, or other sources.</p> <p>Considers educational philosophy and specific theories of development, learning and motivation, as well as research-based instructional practices specific to the subject area associated with this unit.</p>			
CRITERIA	Target (Sufficient)	Met	Not Met	Comments

Student Centered	<p>The lessons, activities, and assessments are student-centered and engaging (e.g. authentic, real-world, inquiry-based, open-ended).</p> <p>Includes opportunities for 21st century skills (4C's: communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity).</p>			
Differentiation (Tomlinson & Hockett, 2017)	<p>The unit reflects one or more models of culturally responsive practices to support equitable and inclusive teaching and learning practices.</p> <p>The Unit instructional and learning tasks give all students access to the same clear, high-quality lesson/unit goals/objectives.</p> <p>The Unit instructional and learning tasks includes opportunities for students to mimic or approximate the skills, thinking, habits, dispositions, or work of real-world professionals (e.g., mathematicians, biologists, writers).</p> <p>The Unit instructional and learning tasks includes opportunities for all students to use higher-level thinking skills (e.g., analyzing, judging, and defending).</p> <p>The Unit instructional and learning tasks are equally appealing and engaging from the students' perspective.</p> <p>A variety of instructional strategies are used to scaffold tasks.</p>			
Academic Language	<p>Academic language is identified and supports are embedded in teaching strategies in the unit.</p> <p>The unit instructional and learning tasks include regular, frequent and focused accountable student-to-student discussion tasks designed to improve reading, speaking and writing skills consistent within the discipline.</p>			
Resources and reference list	<p>Resources and materials are included.</p> <p>Materials go beyond a provided textbook or other provided curriculum.</p> <p>K-12 student support materials are included (e.g. student worksheets, directions, etc.).</p> <p>A reference list is provide and is formatted in APA.</p>			