

# **Mentoring Teacher Candidates Through Co-Teaching**



***Co-Teaching Training Manual***

Jacksonville State University  
College of Education and Professional Studies  
Co-Teaching as Best Practice in Student Teaching

Agenda

Introductions, Overview and Goals  
Data Review- Quantitative and Qualitative

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Break

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Why Co-Teach?  
Co-Teaching Essentials

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Lunch

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Roles and Environment for Co-Teaching  
Co-Teaching Strategies

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Break

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Role-Alike Sessions  
Wrap-Up



**Co-Teaching Anticipation Guide**

Directions BEFORE the Co-teaching Model Presentation: Carefully read the statements below and indicate whether you agree or disagree by checking the appropriate column. Compare your responses to someone at your table. AFTER the Co-teaching Model Presentation: Review your previous responses, decide whether you still agree or disagree with the statements. Provide a brief statement of support for your selection.

Before the Presentation		Statement	After the Presentation	
AGREE	DISAGREE		AGREE	DISAGREE
		1. A co-teaching model is designed for well-trained and experienced teachers (aptitude matters).		
Support:				
		2. Cooperating teachers (CTs) maintain continuous involvement in daily lessons and classroom activities.		
Support:				
		3. All co-teaching strategies/approaches should be employed at some point during the practicum/internship experience.		
Support:				
		4. Teacher candidates will likely experience distinct <i>stages of concern</i> throughout the co-teaching model.		
Support:				
		5. <i>Supplemental teaching</i> is used to enrich students' classroom experience beyond the general curriculum.		
Support:				

## Participants in the Triad

## **Role of the Cooperating Teacher**

- Help the teacher candidate feel comfortable and welcome
- Review school policies and procedures
- Encourage teacher candidate to get involved in school activities
- Share materials and ideas
- Assist the candidate in developing standards based lessons
- Observe and provide constructive feedback
- Know and implement the co-teaching strategies
- Mentor and guide the teacher candidate
- Model effective teaching strategies and professional behavior
- Be flexible; allow the teacher candidate to try new ideas
- Communicate expectations
- Be understanding and patient
- Maintain consistency and accountability

## **Role of the University Supervisor**

- Provide a systematic and consistent presence during the student teaching experience
- Provide program information to the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate
- Observe and provide feedback on a regular basis
- Act as a confidant for both the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate
- Be an advocate for the teacher candidate
- Help the team build good communication and facilitate positive interactions
- Set clear expectations; be honest about a student's performance
- Handle the difficult situations that might come up
- Schedule three-way conferences at the beginning and end of the experience
- Be knowledgeable in and supportive of the use of co-teaching strategies

## **Role of the Teacher Candidate**

- Come ready to learn; be enthusiastic and show initiative
- Introduce yourself to team members and school personnel
- Ask questions and discuss professional issues
- Share ideas and work cooperatively; be flexible
- Help with all classroom responsibilities...record keeping, grading, etc.
- Know your content and be a continuous learner
- Plan engaging, standards based lessons
- Know and implement co-teaching strategies
- Accept feedback and put suggestions for improvement into practice
- Be proactive in initiating communication with your triad members
- Demonstrate respectful behaviors
- Be reflective about your practice
- Be patient with yourself and your cooperating teacher
- Be a sponge; learn all you can from everyone in the building

## **Stages of Concern for Teacher Candidates**

### **The first stage is Pre-teaching Concern.**

At this stage, teacher candidates are still closer to the student role, rather than the teacher role. The real concerns of pupils and teachers are very remote to the teacher candidates. Teacher candidates are often highly critical of the teacher with whom they are working. They may seem unsympathetic or even hostile to the teacher. At this point the teacher candidate has only their idealism to go on (Company in Your Classroom, 2000). There are often concerns about their personal life that interfere and inhibit growth.

### **The second stage is Concerns about Survival.**

As teacher candidates become more involved in the classroom and begin to understand the magnitude of the profession, there is a concern about their own survival as teachers. Idealized, "book-learned" concerns about pupils are replaced by concern about class management and mastery of content. There is also concern about the evaluations by supervisors and cooperating teachers. Being observed causes a great deal of stress at this stage.

### **The third stage is Teaching Situation Concerns**

At this stage the teacher candidates are beginning to feel a mastery of the areas of concern from the second stage. They are, however, feeling the frustrations and limitations of the teaching situation. Concerns about methods and materials, which are the focus of education courses taken before their student teaching experience, are now taken seriously. This is the "Why didn't I pay closer attention?" lament that is so common. The difference between theory and practice is being felt.

### **The final stage is Concerns about Pupils.**

At this point the teacher candidates begin to see the trees in the forest. There is a concern for the individual pupil. Understanding individual learning styles and social- emotional needs of pupils is of concern. There is also an understanding that "he or she can be caring and strong, flexible and consistent, child-centered and in-control" (Company in Your Classroom, 2000, p.69). There is also an awareness of the broader issues in education and a connection to how these issues impact individual students.

# Co-Teaching Strategies

Strategy:

Description:

## Co-Teaching Strategies & Examples

Strategy	Definition/Example
<b>One Teach, One Observe</b>	One teacher has primary responsibility while the other gathers specific observational information on students or the (instructing) teacher. The key to this strategy is to focus the observation - where the teacher doing the observation is observing specific behaviors. <b>Example:</b> One teacher can observe students for their understanding of directions while the other leads.
<b>One Teach, One Assist</b>	An extension of One Teach, One Observe. One teacher has primary instructional responsibility while the other assists students with their work, monitors behaviors, or corrects assignments. <b>Example:</b> While one teacher has the instructional lead, the person assisting can be the "voice" for the students when they don't understand or are having difficulties.
<b>Station Teaching</b>	The co-teaching pair divides the instructional content into parts - Each teacher instructs one of the groups, groups then rotate or spend a designated amount of time at each station - often an independent station will be used along with the teacher led stations. <b>Example:</b> One teacher might lead a station where the students play a money math game and the other teacher could have a mock store where the students purchase items and make change.
<b>Parallel Teaching</b>	Each teacher instructs half the students. The two teachers are addressing the same instructional material and presenting the material using the same teaching strategy. The greatest benefit to this approach is the reduction of student to teacher ratio. <b>Example:</b> Both teachers are leading a question and answer discussion on specific current events and the impact they have on our economy.
<b>Supplemental Teaching</b>	This strategy allows one teacher to work with students at their expected grade level, while the other teacher works with those students who need the information and/or materials retaught, extended or remediated. <b>Example:</b> One teacher may work with students who need reteaching of a concept while the other teacher works with the rest of the students on enrichment.
<b>Alternative (Differentiated)</b>	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. <b>Example:</b> One instructor may lead a group in predicting prior to reading by looking at the cover of the book and the illustrations, etc. The other instructor accomplishes the same outcome but with his/her group, the students predict by connecting the items pulled out of the bag with the story.
<b>Team Teaching</b>	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 students' perspective, there is no clearly defined leader - as both teachers share the instruction, are free to interject information, and available to assist students and answer questions. <b>Example:</b> Both instructors can share the reading of a story or text so that the students are hearing two voices.

*The strategies are not hierarchical - they can be used in any order and/or combined to best meet the needs of the students in the classroom.*

## Welcoming Your Teacher Candidate

- Arrange to meet with your teacher candidate before the official start of the experience. Spend time learning about one other as people, not just as educators.
- Introduce the teacher candidate to other faculty members, support personnel and administrators.
- Tour the school...staff work areas, the lounge, adult restrooms, etc.
- Post the teacher candidate's name (*Mr./Ms. Smith*) along with your name near the classroom door.
- Send a note to families to let them know you will have a teacher candidate co-teaching with you
- Provide a desk (*preferably not a student-size desk*) or designate a work area for the teacher candidate with supplies and copies of necessary manuals, textbooks, the current read-aloud book, etc.
- Provide a picture of the class or individual students to help the teacher candidate learn names more quickly.
- Review items in the faculty handbook that directly affect the teacher candidate: the contractual day, issues related to school security, etc.
- Share that "bit of information" that matters: "*There is a 'Peanut Free' table in the cafeteria*" or "*Staff members never park in Lot A.*"
- Explain any staff activities or special events the teacher candidate could choose to participate in or attend.
- Discuss classroom rules and expectations for student behavior as well as acceptable rewards and consequences. Review the student handbook.
- Assemble a binder with useful information including class lists, daily schedules, classroom rules, discipline referral forms, etc.
- On a desk-top calendar or planner, mark important dates for faculty meetings, your week for hall duty, school-wide music programs, etc.
- Start a file with your favorite tried-and-true activities and good teaching ideas. Encourage your candidate to add to it throughout the experience.
- Leave an inspirational quote or article related to teaching on the candidate's desk that might spark an interesting discussion.
- Gestures of kindness, no matter how small, have a positive impact.
- If your teacher candidate will start later in the school year, send an email or letter from the class a few weeks before to share information about current units, upcoming special events, etc.

## Creating a Positive Co-Teaching Environment

- ✓ Move from...
  - Isolated teachers and students to integrated teachers and students
  - Doing it alone, to let's do this together
  - "Yours" or "mine", to "our" students
- ✓ Share ownership for planning, teaching and assessing
- ✓ Recognize and appreciate the expertise each one brings to the partnership
- ✓ Show mutual respect
- ✓ Set high expectations for students, self and team
- ✓ Reflect - individually and as a team
- ✓ Share expectations for student behavior
- ✓ Share vision/goal for student achievement
- ✓ Commit to planning time and "the team"
- ✓ Maintain your sense of humor
- ✓ Demonstrate positive communication skills

## Station Teaching

Topic/Standard(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_

Objective: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher 1

Teacher 2

Independent Station?

Considerations:

## Parallel Teaching

Topic/Standard(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_

Objective: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher 1 & 2

Considerations: Pace/Common Questions/Space

## Supplemental Teaching

Topic/Standard(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_

Objective: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher 1

Teacher 2

Considerations:

How will you determine groups?

### **Alternative/Differentiated Teaching**

Topic/Standard(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_

Objective: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher 1

Teacher 2

Considerations:

How will you determine groups?

## Teacher Actions During Co-Teaching

*TQE Strategies (2005) along with Adaptations from Murawski & Dieker (2004)*

**Co-Teaching is an Attitude... an attitude of sharing the classroom and students  
Co-Teachers must always be thinking - We're Both Teaching!**

If one teacher is leading instruction...	The other can be doing this...
	<p><b>Observing for:</b>            student understanding and/or questions (through body language facial expressions, etc.);            specific types of questions asked by instructing teacher;            specific student interactions and behaviors;            teacher movement;            specific teacher behaviors;            specific student or group behaviors;</p>
	<p><b>Charting:</b>            where questions are directed within the classroom;            gender of responders;            on-task/off task behavior;            teacher wait time;            specific teacher behaviors or movements;            specific student or group behaviors</p>
	<p><b>Circulating:</b>            checking for comprehension;            using proximity control for behavior management;            checking for comprehension;            providing one-on-one support as needed</p>
	Collecting and reviewing last night's homework
	Introducing a social or study skill
	Taking roll
	Reviewing directions; modeling first problem on the assignment
	Writing down instructions on board
	Repeating or clarifying any difficult concepts
	Passing out papers
	Giving instructions orally
	Facilitating a silent activity
	Introducing a new concept to whole group
	Asking clarifying questions

<b>If one teacher is...</b>	<b>The other can be doing this...</b>
Reading a test aloud to a group of students	Proctoring a test silently with a group of students
Explaining a new concept through discussion	Introducing a new concept through role play or modeling;
Provide enriching or extended activities on a concept already discussed in class	Re-teach or review an old concept with students who didn't understand it
Provide enriching or extended activities related to items on a test	Re-teach or review those concepts or questions that were missed on an exam with those students who missed those questions on the exam
Predicting what will happen next (in book or text) by brainstorming with a group of students using the overhead	Predicting what will happen next (in a book or text) by showing objects that have already been introduced in the story and using them to predict what happens next
Re-teaching or pre-teaching with a small group	Monitoring large group as they work on practice materials
Facilitating sustained silent reading	Reading aloud quietly with a small group
Lecturing	Modeling note taking on the board/overhead
Running last minute copies or errands	Reviewing homework; providing a study or test-taking strategy
Prepping half of the class for one side of a debate	Prepping the other half of the class for the opposing side of the debate
Checking for understanding (reviewing a chapter, etc.) by leading a discussion with half of the class	Checking of understanding (reviewing a chapter, etc.) by leading a discussion with half of the class
Facilitating a station or group	Facilitating a station or group

**The main focus of *Co-Teaching* is to find ways to keep both teachers actively engaged with students and their learning.**

# Planning Tips

## Before your planning session:

- ✓ Decide what lesson(s) you will use your hour of planning time for.
- ✓ Who will lead the planning time or will parts be shared? Usually the cooperating teacher will lead in the beginning of the semester and the teacher candidate will take over as the semester progresses.
- ✓ Decide the materials that you will need and don't take on too much.
- ✓ Bring ideas for modifications and accommodations.
- ✓ Bring ideas for enrichment activities.
- ✓ When the teacher candidate is ready to take over a subject/or period, let him/her know ahead of time that they will be leading the planning time for that lesson. They should preview what they will be teaching and come to the planning time prepared with ideas and lessons where co-teaching could occur.

## During co-planning (remember this time is to plan for co-teaching):

- ✓ Spend a few minutes communicating about questions or issues (may use planning sheet).
- ✓ Share what will be co-taught and ideas from curriculum.
- ✓ When will you co-teach? When will each of you teach solo?
- ✓ What co-teaching strategies will best meet the needs of the students?
- ✓ Eventually, try to incorporate all of the co-teaching strategies.
- ✓ Outline questions to be used for parallel, station, etc.
- ✓ Discuss a variety of assessment strategies.
- ✓ What do each of you need to do when you leave the planning session (tasks, gathering resources, copying, etc)?
- ✓ What, if any, changes do you need to make to the layout or organization of the classroom.

## After co-planning:

- Teacher candidate writes up lesson plans for each lesson where they have a teaching role.

## Important points to Remember

- ✓ Planning is VERY important. Use the planning time wisely, focusing on lessons to be co-taught. Prioritize the time and don't allow outside distractions to take over.
- ✓ The goal is to have the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate actively engaged with students as much as possible. However, EVERY teacher candidate DOES need time to manage the classroom on their own.
- ✓ Full time responsibility means the teacher candidate leads all aspect of the classroom, including how the cooperating teacher and other adults will be involved.
- ✓ University Supervisors ARE prepared in co-teaching, and should observe at least one co-taught lesson. When they do, they will be observing and evaluating only the teacher Candidate.
- ✓ **Encourage an attitude that we're both TEACHING!**

# Co-Teaching Lesson Planning Sheet

Date/Time of planning session \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of lesson \_\_\_\_\_

Goal(s) for this planning session:

Strategy/ies to be used:

*Observe Assist Station Parallel Supplemental Alternative/Differentiated Team*

Teacher #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Standard(s) for lesson:

Roles/Responsibilities:

Space (classroom set-up) considerations:

Materials necessary and who will be responsible:

## LESSON PLANNING TIPS TO REMEMBER

- ✓ Bring ideas for modifications and accommodations
- ✓ Bring ideas for enrichment activities
- ✓ When planning together work on what you'll be co-teaching
- ✓ Focus on communication; planning/teaming takes time
- ✓ Divvy up the work
- ✓ Don't use co-planning time to plan what you're doing on your own for the lesson
- ✓ Outline questions to be used for parallel, station, etc.
- ✓ Discuss a variety of assessment strategies
- ✓ Have an attitude that we're both teaching!

# STRATEGIES FOR EXPANDING TIME FOR PLANNING

(Adapted from: *A Guide to Co-Teaching*, Corwin Press 2004, Villa, Thousand & Nevin,)

## Borrowed Time

1. Rearrange the school day so there is a 50- to 60 minute block of time before or after school for co-teachers to plan
2. Lengthen the school day for students by 15 to 30 minutes on four days allowing for early student dismissal on the fifth thus gaining a long (i.e. 1-2 hour) time block for co-teachers to meet

## Common Time

1. Ask co-teachers to identify when during the day and week they prefer to plan, and redesign the master schedule to accommodate this with a block for common preparation time

## Tiered Time

1. Layer preparation time with existing functions such as lunch and recess.

## Rescheduled Time

1. Use staff development days for co-teacher to do more long-range planning
2. Use faculty meeting time to problem solve common co-teaching issues of either immediate or long range importance
3. Build into the school schedule at least one co-teacher planning day per marking period or month
4. Build in time for more intensive co-teacher planning sessions by lengthening the school year for teachers but not for students, or shortening the school year for students but not for teachers

## Release Time

1. Go to year-round schooling with three week breaks every quarter; devote four or five of the three week intersession days to co-teacher planning as professional development days

# STRATEGIES FOR EXPANDING TIME FOR PLANNING *(Continued)*

(Adapted from: *A Guide to Co-Teaching*, Corwin Press 2004, Villa, Thousand & Nevin,)

## **Freed-Up Time**

1. Institute a community service component to the curriculum; when students are in the community (e.g. Thursday afternoons), co-teachers meet to plan
2. Schedule a "specials" (e.g. art, music, PE), clubs and tutorials during the same time blocks so that co-teachers have at least that extra time block to plan.
3. Engage parents and community members in conducting half-day or full-day exploratory, craft, hobby (e.g. gourmet cooking, puppetry, photography) theater, or other experiential programs to free up time for co-teachers to plan
4. Partner with colleges and universities; have their faculty teach in the school, provide demonstrations, or conduct university -campus experiences to free up time for co-teachers to plan

## **Purchased Time**

1. Hire permanent substitutes to free up co-teachers to plan during the day rather than before or after school
2. Compensate co-teachers for spending vacation or holiday time planning with pay or compensatory time during non-instructional school year days

## **Found Time**

1. Strategically use serendipitous times that occasionally occur (e.g. snow day, student assembly) to plan

## **New Time**

1. In what ways might the school administrator provide co-teachers with incentives that would motivate the use of their own time to plan?

## Co-Teaching Myths/Realities

**Myth #1 - Co-teaching means having two teacher candidates in a classroom.**

**REALITY:** Only one teacher candidate is in a classroom. The co-teaching occurs between the cooperating teacher and the teacher candidate.

**Myth #2 -Teacher candidates must be left on their own to sink or swim.**

**REALITY:** Teacher candidates in co-teaching settings are supported in their efforts to becoming a licensed professional. The cooperating teacher models and assists as the teacher candidate acquires the knowledge and skills of teaching. This is in sharp contrast to the sink or swim model that assumes the teacher candidate must learn how to become a teacher on their own.

**Myth #3 - Co-teaching inhibits a teacher candidate's ability to develop classroom management skills.**

**REALITY:** Rather than having to manage a classroom all alone, a teacher candidate has the support necessary to implement effective classroom management strategies. As the skills are gained, the teacher candidate takes the lead to make sure he/she can manage the classroom without support.

**Myth # 4 - Teacher candidates don't get enough solo teaching time with co-teaching.**

**REALITY:** Teacher candidates must have opportunities to teach all alone. The amount of time a candidate is left totally alone varies and is based on their skills in managing a classroom. It is important that the teacher candidate demonstrate that they can handle a classroom all by themselves.

**Myth # 5 - It takes too much time to co-plan.**

**REALITY:** It may take more time to co-plan in the early stages of co-teaching. In order to co-teach effectively, the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate must have shared planning time. However, the benefits of co-planning are huge. Teacher candidates get a much deeper understanding of the entire curriculum through co-planning and co-taught lessons lead to increased academic performance of P-12 students making the time spent in planning beneficial for all.

**Myth #6- Teacher Candidates will never have full responsibility of the classroom.**

**REALITY:** For a period of time, each teacher candidate will lead the planning, organization, delivery and assessment of instruction in a co-taught classroom. Candidates will also be responsible for directing other adults, including the cooperating teacher, thus learning the skills necessary for effectively managing the human resources in a classroom.

**Myth #7 - Co-teaching is not the “real world”. When a teacher candidate becomes certified they will be alone in the classroom.**

**REALITY:** To accommodate large class sizes, students with special needs, English Language Learners, and the push in model of title one and special education, today's classrooms will often have special education teachers, paraprofessionals and volunteers working alongside the classroom teacher. It is rare to find a classroom where the assigned teacher is working solo. The need to collaborate with other adults in the classroom is a necessity in our schools.

**Myth #8 - Co-Teaching doesn't work at the secondary level.**

**REALITY:** Co-teaching strategies have been used successfully at all grade levels and in every content area. Co-teaching can be especially effective at the secondary level as teachers are dealing with larger class sizes and greater diversity of students.

**Myth #9 - Teacher candidates don't have to write lesson plans for co-teaching because they co-plan.**

**REALITY:** Co-planning takes place before formal lesson plans are written. Once a cooperating teacher and a teacher candidate co-plan, the candidate takes the information and writes up lesson plans, which will be reviewed by the cooperating teacher.

**Myth #10 - Co-teaching can only work if the teacher candidate and cooperating teacher have the same learning or teaching style.**

**REALITY:** No two people have the same style because we are uniquely different. Teacher Candidates entering the workplace must be able to work with a variety of learning and teaching styles. Through workshops, teacher candidates and cooperating teachers are made aware of many different types of learning and teaching styles, how they work, and how to work together with individuals who have different styles.

**Myth # 11 - The university supervisor should only observe a teacher candidate when they are teaching solo.**

**REALITY:** When a supervisor observes a teacher candidate co-teaching with a cooperating teacher, they focus the observation on what the candidate is doing. If the candidate is leading a small group, it may be helpful to move closer to that group to observe him/her. If the teacher candidate is teaming with his/her cooperating teacher, focus the observation on the candidate's teaching skills, ability to collaborate with the cooperating teacher, management skills, organization, etc.

