Education, PhD

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Mentored Experience Implementation Plan

As part of their degree requirements, PhD students must complete a program-defined Mentored Experience Requirement (MER) as per these guidelines. The Mentored Experience Implementation Plan (MEIP) is the written articulation of a program-defined degree requirement for PhD students to engage in mentored teaching activities and/or mentored professional activities, collectively referred to as *MERs.*

Mentored Experience Requirements (MERs)

Philosophy of Teaching

Teaching is of paramount importance in the field of education. Regardless of a PhD student's career path after graduating, acquiring the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to be an effective teacher will facilitate their future success. Since the field is multidisciplinary in nature, our students are trained both within the department and the various programmatic units with which the department is associated (e.g., African & African-American Studies, Sociology, American Culture Studies, Psychological & Brain Sciences, Romance Languages & Literatures, East Asian Languages & Cultures, and Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies). As part of their degree requirements, students are expected to complete mentored teaching experiences (MTEs), which can consist of assisting with the instruction of a course or serving as an independent instructor. Prior to their first MTE, students are required to attend the Graduate Student Mentored Teaching Orientation and at least one workshop through the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) as preparatory engagement. During their MTEs, students are mentored in the arts and sciences of teaching by faculty members in the Department of Education. They are also encouraged to continue their professional development by attending additional workshops and engaging in other activities designed to broaden and deepen their pedagogical expertise.

An MTE represents a collaborative engagement between a PhD student and a faculty mentor wherein the student reflects on and interprets disciplinary knowledge; identifies multiple ways to represent disciplinary content; adapts content to students' abilities and prior knowledge; and develops methods to assess and improve the teaching and learning process in a discipline. A student pursuing an MTE will enroll in a course of a similar title. Students enrolled in an MTE will have an assigned faculty mentor supporting the students' development to become educators able to communicate or evaluate disciplinary knowledge. This intellectual development is especially important for those seeking careers as academics or citizen scholars.

Preparatory Engagement

Preparatory Engagement activities are those that represent an introduction to the foundational skills associated with teaching or communication. Pedagogical preparation engagement activities are normally completed before students are permitted to engage in assisting or teaching in a classroom.

Preparatory Engagement represents an important, foundational component to training in pedagogy that occurs before the first MTE. At a minimum, all PhD students will complete the following two activities via the Center for Teaching and Learning:

1. Graduate Student Mentored Teaching Orientation
2. One 90-minute teaching workshop

PhD students may be required to complete additional Preparatory Engagement activities, if necessary (e.g., targeted English language coursework for second-language teaching).

Mentored Teaching Experiences (MTEs)

Assistant in Instruction (AI)

An Assistant in Instruction (AI) is a PhD student who is directly engaged in the organization, instruction, and/or support of a semester-long course *primarily taught by a faculty member.* An AI receives mentorship from a faculty member related to best practices in classroom engagement, instruction in the field, interpersonal engagement, and other relevant skills. Students and mentors complete a mentorship plan prior to the start of each AI experience. To complete each AI assignment and to ensure that it applies toward their degree requirements, students must register for the appropriate course number for each semester of engagement. Refer to the "Required Pathways for Completion" section below for course numbers and details.

Education AI roles are weighted at 10 MER units. The PhD student performing the AI duties is formally listed as instructional support in the course listings and receives mentorship from the faculty member in best practices in classroom engagement, instruction in the field, interpersonal engagement, as well as other relevant skills. The PhD student should receive regular feedback or evaluation from the mentor throughout the semester and should be evaluated by the students in the course at the end of the term as part of the course evaluation.

The activities associated with the role of an AI may encompass some or all of the following:

- Preparing and assigning course materials
- Managing Canvas
- Developing quizzes or exams
- Supervising projects
- Guest lecturing in class

- Leading discussions
- Holding office hours
- Grading and evaluating assignments
- Leading a recitation section
- Leading a group project
- Providing logistical support
- Administering quizzes or exams
- Answering questions about the course or assignments
- Conducting review sessions for groups of students

Mentored Independent Teaching (MIT)

MIT is a semester-long experience for PhD students who engage as the primary instructor or co-instructor of a course *under the mentorship of a faculty member* as part of the MER. Students and mentors complete a mentorship plan prior to the start of each MIT experience. To complete each MIT assignment and to ensure that it applies toward their degree requirements, students must register for the appropriate course number (ASGS 8020) for each semester of engagement. Refer to the "Required Pathways for Completion" section below for more details.

Students who have successfully completed at least 20 MTE units as an AI and who have also completed their Doctoral Qualifying Portfolio may apply for MIT in the department on a topic related to the student's area of expertise. Given that some of our PhD students enter the program with considerable experience teaching undergraduates, they may request a waiver for these requirements and apply for MIT without first serving as an AI. However, the granting of such waivers is expected to be a rare occurrence reserved for exceptional cases.

As a Mentored Independent Instructor, students may take a principal role in the development of the course topic, the syllabus, the course's organization, office hours, and grading for a 1000- or 2000-level course in which the PhD student is the instructor of record. Evidence of success as an AI during multiple MTEs should accompany the student's application for MIT, which could include performance assessments from a previous teaching mentor, student feedback on course evaluations, and a statement of support from the student's advisor. Students may also use relevant teaching experiences that occurred in other departments or prior to the start of their degree program as evidence for their MIT application. Applications for MIT should be completed via the Mentored Independent Teaching Application Form submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies for consideration by the Department of Eduction’s Curriculum Committee.

Required Pathways for Completion

Students work with their faculty mentor and their Director of Graduate Studies to plan how and when they will complete their MERs. Students register during the normal registration period for courses in accordance with one of these approved pathways.

PhD students are required to complete a minimum of 40 total MTE units during their time in the program, with a maximum of 50 total MTE units completed and no more than 20 MTE units completed during any single semester.

Pathway #1

ASGS 8010	Take four times

Pathway #2

ASGS 8010	Take three times
ASGS 8020	Take one time