



UNIVERSITY OF  
**NORTHERN COLORADO**  
College of Performing and Visual Arts  
School of Music

Dear cooperating teacher:

Greetings from UNC!

On behalf of the entire teacher education faculty, and of our music education faculty in particular, THANK YOU for opening your classroom to your student teacher this semester. As you may well remember yourself, student teaching is an important component of a teacher candidate's professional development. It serves as the culminating experience for their university education, yet it is still but a "first step" in their career as a future school music teacher. As such, the experiences you provide and the guidance you offer is extremely critical. We are most appreciative of your service to the profession in this capacity.

As important as mentoring a student teacher truly is, we know that your first responsibility is to your students and to your program. You have lessons to prepare, scores to study, students to teach, programs and concerts to prepare, and innumerable other duties which are part-and-parcel of your duties — in short, you're busy being a music teacher. *All of this is exactly what our student teachers need to do, and what they need to learn to do.* We hope that your mentorship will demand little more of you than simply letting them see and do everything that you do. In so doing, you are "enculturating" your student teacher into the world of teaching.

With this in mind, I am offering on the pages that follow just a few guidelines for your work as a cooperating teacher. This isn't a definitive or comprehensive summary of all that it means to be a mentor — there are other resources available to us for that purpose, if needed. Rather, this is simply an outline which will help to ensure a positive experience for the student teacher, for you, and for your students.

Please note that while our student teachers do have some assignments they must complete as part of their experience, for you, the "paperwork" requirements are fairly light: We only need you to complete a student teaching plan (provided to the student teacher, and see item no. 1 on my "seven simple guidelines" document), and we need you to complete a formal evaluation, which is done online (see item no. 7). (Your stipend for your work as a cooperating teacher is processed separately, through our School of Teacher Education; for this or other questions, please contact Lynette Kerrigan at [lynette.kerrigan@unco.edu](mailto:lynette.kerrigan@unco.edu).)

Whether this is your first time mentoring a student teacher or your most recent time after having mentored countless others, again, thank you very much for your service. Please do not hesitate to contact me at the address below, by email at [mark.montemayor@unco.edu](mailto:mark.montemayor@unco.edu), or by telephone at (970) 351-2358, if I can be of any assistance to you in your work with this student teacher.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Montemayor', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Mark Montemayor, Ph.D.  
Professor and area head,  
music education



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TO: Cooperating teachers  
FROM: Mark Montemayor  
Area head, music education  
RE: University graduate credit for student teacher supervision

Please know that if you wish, you may receive one **graduate credit** (EDF 513, Student Teacher Supervision) in lieu of the stipend that will otherwise be paid to you or your school. (If you have a student teacher for both eight-week terms, you can earn two credits of EDF 513; in either case, there is no fee charged for this graduate credit.) Registration information can be found at this website (look under “credit for supervision”):

[http://www.unco.edu/teach/partners/cooperating\\_teachers.html](http://www.unco.edu/teach/partners/cooperating_teachers.html)

If this is of interest to you, please note that the **registration deadlines for receiving this credit are as indicated in the registration forms found at the link above. Late credit requests cannot be honored.** The registration form should be submitted to Lynette Kerrigan; appropriate contact information is indicated on the form itself.

Please also note that you may also use mentoring experiences for Colorado Department of Education licensure renewal credit. Please contact Lynette Kerrigan ([lynette.kerrigan@unco.edu](mailto:lynette.kerrigan@unco.edu)) if you wish to receive a verification form to send to CDE for your licensure renewal.

## Seven simple guidelines for mentoring your UNC music student teacher

### 1. *Plan for their gradual, full involvement.*

Ideally, a student teacher's involvement in a host school's program is perfectly gradual — beginning with a few days of observation, followed by assuming a few minutes of instruction for each class (perhaps by following plans you've written, at first), and then increasing the proportion of planning and teaching responsibilities until at some point — about six weeks into the placement — the student teacher has assumed full responsibility for planning and teaching all classes. Then, the last two weeks would consist of gradually giving back the reins to you.

We know, though, that there are all sorts of workable variations on this “perfect plan.” Perhaps the student teacher is ready to lead a greater portion of a full class, sooner, or perhaps he or she needs a bit more time in learning how to properly plan for class. Perhaps the demands of your concert or program schedule necessitate that you share teaching responsibilities throughout the student teacher's placement, and that you follow more of a collaborative model during his or her time with you.

In any case, please work with the student teacher in filling out the “student teaching plan” (provided to the student teacher), so as to plan for his or her full involvement as much as possible, and so that he or she may know what to expect in the weeks ahead.

### 2. *Insist on punctual, full-time participation.*

We insist that the student teacher is there with you, full-time: This means arriving at school when you arrive, and leaving when you leave. This also means that they attend all faculty meetings, district meetings, parent meetings, concerts, bus duty, lunch duty, and so on. As stated previously, being part of these activities — as routine as they may seem at times — is an important part of becoming enculturated to the world of teaching. Please understand (as our student teachers do!) that they may not be excused from these components of their placement experience for any reason except for attending our student teacher seminars on the scheduled dates. *Should this become a problem at all, please contact your student teacher's university supervisor immediately.*

### 3. *Allow some time for deliberate reflection, every week or every day.*

Student teaching is an opportunity for professional growth unlike any other, and we encourage our teacher candidates to take advantage of the time they have to deliberately improve their teaching skills *before* they have the full responsibility of a music program as a professional teacher. This may mean allowing them some time each day to view video recordings of their teaching work that they may have taken, or allowing them time to do some other task which their university supervisor has assigned. Also, this may mean allowing time to complete their work sample, or even taking the opportunity to watch another esteemed teacher in your building. Certainly, some of these tasks are ones which must be done on their own time, outside of school. But allowing them to also take *some* school time for these activities will, itself, highlight the importance of being a reflective practitioner.

### 4. *Talk with them.*

Student teachers need to see what you do, and they need to do what you do. But they will also benefit immensely by knowing *why* you do what you do. By occasionally “thinking out loud” with them, they will gain innumerable insights into the realities of day-to-day teaching life. Let them ask questions, too!

## **5. *Provide frequent, informal feedback.***

One of the most frequent frustrations we've heard from past student teachers is "I don't know how I'm doing!" This is understandable, especially if the student teacher is doing relatively well, and if your attention is precluded with your own planning and teaching work.

Even a brief, complimentary and/or constructive comment following a teaching episode, or perhaps at the end of the day, will function very positively towards building competence and confidence in your student teacher. You may wish to regularly take informal, handwritten notes when observing his or her instruction, which you could share and discuss at a later time. Inasmuch as you can, try to allow for daily discussion opportunities (perhaps during your planning time) in order to review your student teacher's past performance and to prepare for their future teaching work.

## **6. *Complete one formal evaluation.***

All UNC student teachers must have their cooperating teachers (and their university supervisors) submit one formal evaluation (the "Program Completer Survey") for their eight- or sixteen-week session, preferably sometime during the final week or so of their work. Our evaluations are now done entirely online. The instructions for doing so can be summarized as follows:

|   |
|---|
| <p>Go to the LiveText link that will be emailed to you<br/>from the UNC School of Teacher Education,<br/>and follow instructions accordingly.</p> |
|---|

For your reference, I've provided some further information about the evaluation system in the pages that follow. Please note that the online evaluation form is typically not available until about the midpoint of the eight-week term.

## **7. *Stay in touch with their university supervisor...***

...especially if you encounter any sort of difficulty about his or her placement, or if you have grave or lingering concerns about your student teacher's performance (in which case you should contact us immediately!). We certainly don't anticipate such problems, but if a situation does arise, we won't know about it unless and until someone tells us. Please feel free to contact us by telephone or email — we may be able to arrange a video conference as well.

The university supervisor will ordinarily make two planned supervisory visits to the placement site throughout the eight-week term, and he or she will be happy to make further visits if necessary and/or upon request. We generally prefer to see at least twenty minutes of the student teacher's instruction (or more if possible) at each visit. (For elementary/general music placements, we generally prefer to see the student teacher teach an entire class from start to finish.) We will wish to "debrief" with the student teacher after the observation, and if possible, it would help to have a three-way conference with you, the student teacher, and the university supervisor.

## ***And an eighth guideline...***

Let your student teacher try things. Some things will work better than others. He or she will teach differently than you do, and perhaps even differently than they were taught to teach. Again, some things will work... others, not so much. For your own students' sake, you certainly don't want to let things get out-of-hand — but do let the student teacher experience the fruits of their own labors.



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TO: Cooperating teachers  
FROM: Mark Montemayor  
Area head, music education  
RE: Formal evaluation procedures for student teachers

The following pages describe, in some detail, the student teacher evaluation procedure. As stated elsewhere, the instructions may be summarized as this:

Go to the LiveText link that will be emailed to you  
from the UNC School of Teacher Education,  
and follow instructions accordingly.

Our evaluation system is now completed entirely online, with minimal accompanying paperwork. We are continually refining our evaluation procedures, and we would welcome your suggestions on how to improve them.

You will note that there are numerous items on which the student teacher is to be evaluated. Some items will probably seem more relevant than others, some may seem repetitive, and the five-point scale (developing; proficient “low,” “mid,” and “high”; or advanced; or N/A) may seem limiting at times. Please understand that there are numerous reasons for this system looking the way it does, including our need to maintain some degree of continuity with what we’ve done in the past, our need to make the evaluation system consistent among various subject matters, and our need to maintain accountability with various agencies, including the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), the Colorado Teacher Quality Standards, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC), the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), and both the Professional Teacher Education Program (PTEP) and the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences (CEBS) at UNC.

Doing this, while at the same time creating a system which is somewhat user-friendly and which is intellectually honest to our profession — let alone which is potentially helpful to the student teacher — is no easy task! *We fully realize that your daily, often informal guidance, and your role in modeling positive teacher dispositions and strong instructional techniques, are immeasurably more valuable to the student teacher than are the responses on an evaluation instrument such as this one.* No form can ever adequately capture the “whole” of teaching. Still, the evaluation procedure is important, as it provides some measure of meaningful information to the teacher candidate and to our teacher education program.

Thank you again for your work with our student teacher, and thanks in advance for your careful attention to the evaluation instructions. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at [mark.montemayor@unco.edu](mailto:mark.montemayor@unco.edu) or by telephone at (970) 351-2358.

Detailed instructions on completing a...

## UNC Music Student Teacher Evaluation

Please take the time to carefully read these instructions prior to your first completion of an evaluation.  
(You'll likely find that this is actually rather simple!)

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1. Go to the LiveText link that will be emailed to you from the UNC School of Teacher Education, and follow instructions accordingly. Follow the instructions on-screen and provide any preliminary information as requested.

When you reach the evaluation items regarding your student teacher, **please respond to all items honestly**. All items are evaluated on a five-point scale, from “developing” to “advanced.” “Proficient – low” is the lowest passing score. If you haven’t observed a particular item, or if you feel that an item doesn’t apply, select “N/A.” Similarly, if the candidate’s performance on a given item is, in your professional opinion, not at a satisfactory level, select “developing.” “Advanced” should be reserved, as indicated, for exemplary performance; this doesn’t necessarily mean “perfect” performance or “expert” performance. Remember that this is a “pass/fail” course for our student teachers (more specifically, “satisfactory/unsatisfactory”), and all “proficient” ratings are fully passing.

In order to pass, a student teacher *doesn't* need to have all “proficient” or better ratings — contrary to what may have been the understanding in the past! **However**, if there are more than a few items which are indicated as “developing,” or if there is an item which is “developing” which you believe is particularly debilitating for the student teacher, we are obliged to refrain from providing a passing overall grade. (See box below.)

Evaluation concerning the teacher candidate’s content knowledge — in our case, music — is addressed by the Program Completer Survey only indirectly. Our music education program uses the “music content knowledge evaluation items” (see document near the end of this package) to address the teacher candidate’s performance on music-specific matters. At this time, only the University Supervisors complete formal evaluations on these items, but we strongly encourage Cooperating Teachers to consult this document and discuss the teacher candidate’s performance on the listed items, frequently and informally.

2. Some of the final questions provide text boxes for you to indicate the teacher candidate’s strengths and areas for growth, respectively. **Your responses on these can be brief.** The UNC faculty will receive your responses on these items and on the preceding evaluation form.

If for any reason, you believe the teacher candidate’s performance has been insufficient to warrant a satisfactory overall evaluation, **please contact both the University Supervisor and Mark Montemayor**, (970) 351-2358 or mark.montemayor@unco.edu, **right away**.

*Please also note:*

- This evaluation procedure needs to be done **once** (not twice!) **per placement**. If your student teacher is placed with you throughout the 16-week semester, ***you only need to complete the evaluation once.***
- This evaluation procedure does *not* generate a duplicate copy for you. At the end of the survey, you will have the option to create a PDF to retain for your own records, if you wish.
- We no longer require student teachers to “sign” the evaluation, indicating that they have seen it. Therefore, please be sure to make your student teacher aware of items which you might evaluate as “developing.”
- Your responses are forwarded directly to the UNC School of Teacher Education; the music education program and the teacher candidate are able to see all completed evaluations.

# Program Completer Survey items

University of Northern Colorado · Professional Teacher Education Program

List of 45 items provided in LiveText survey (link emailed to Cooperating Teacher), as enumerated.  
Items are aligned to InTASC and Colorado Teacher Quality Standards.

Scoring is on a five-point scale: “Developing” (1 point), “Proficient – Low” (2 pts., normally considered the lowest passing score), “Proficient – Mid” (3 pts.), “Proficient – High” (4 pts.), “Advanced” (5 pts.); a response option of “Not Applicable” (N/A) is also provided.

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1. Provides instruction that is aligned with the Colorado Academic Standards.
  2. Understands how learners grow and develop.
  3. Recognizes that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas.
  4. Designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.
  5. Takes responsibility for the progress of all students toward high school graduation.
  6. Works to ensure that students are globally competitive for work and postsecondary education.
  7. Empowers students to become lifelong learners by taking responsibility for their own learning.
  8. Is aware of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities.
  9. Uses this awareness to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.
  10. Adequately implements individualized education plans, individualized assistance plans, and other legal requirements for the delivery of instruction.
  11. Works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning.
  12. Works with others to create environments that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
  13. Understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches.
  14. Creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.
  15. Pays appropriate attention to grammar, spelling, and writing skills.
  16. Understands how to connect concepts.
  - 17a. Uses differing perspectives to engage learners in: Critical thinking
  - 17b. Uses differing perspectives to engage learners in: Creativity
  - 17c. Uses differing perspectives to engage learners in: Collaborative problem solving
  - 18a. Understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to: Engage learners in their own growth
  - 18b. Understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to: Monitor learner progress
  - 18c. Understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to: Guide the teacher’s and learner’s decision making
  - 19a. Plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of: Content areas

- 19b. Plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of: Curriculum
- 19c. Plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of: Cross-disciplinary skills
- 19d. Plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of: Pedagogy
- 19e. Plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of: Learners
- 19f. Plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of: Community context
- 20a. Understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of: Content areas
- 20b. Understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of: Content area connections
- 20c. Understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of: Building skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.
21. Engages in ongoing professional learning.
22. Uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice.
23. Uses evidence to continually evaluate the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community.)
24. Adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.
25. Knows when to use consultation from colleagues and specialists to support the successful learning of all students.
26. Demonstrates high ethical standards and behavior.
27. Shows commitment to ethical principles including honesty, integrity, fair treatment, and respect for others.
28. Understands that change is constant and functions effectively in a complex, dynamic environment.
- 29a. Seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to: Advocate for positive change in policies and practices affecting student learning.
- 29b. Seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to: Participate in the development of positive working conditions and school climate in their school.
- 29c. Seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to: Provide input in determining the school budget, participate in the hiring process, and collaborate with colleagues to mentors and support new teachers (if possible).
- 29d. Seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to: Actively participate in and advocate for decision-making structures in education and government that take advantage of the expertise of teachers.
30. Seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth.
31. Seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to advance the profession and engages in a professional learning community.

# Music

University of Northern Colorado · School of Music (music education) and School of Teacher Education  
Professional Teacher Education Program

*Music content knowledge evaluation items.*

*For use in student teacher evaluations and UNC Music PTEP courses.*

*Intended to be inclusive of all levels (e.g., elementary, secondary)  
and all genres (e.g., band, choir, orchestra, general music, etc.) of music instruction.*

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## Musicianship

*Musical knowledge and skills manifest in teaching.*

- a. **Conducting or song leading** is clear, expressive, and responsive; tempo is certain. *(For elementary/general music, includes any kind of music performance leadership, including related skills, such as playing guitar or piano.)*
- b. **Musical modeling** is frequently but judiciously used (includes soliciting student performance models; can also include teacher's singing, even in non-choral contexts). Modeling is precise and beautiful, demonstrating specific musical elements.
- c. **Diagnosis** of musical problems is accurate and addresses important, meaningful, fundamental aspects of performance/musicianship; teacher "hears" important matters.
- d. **Music preparation and responsiveness.** Instruction reflects teacher's preparation and capacity to respond to demonstrated needs. *(For ensembles, this includes score study.)*
- e. **Teacher talk.** Teacher's speech and instruction conveys important, accurate, and relevant musical matters. Talk is used judiciously.

## Musical Leadership

*Or "teachership," i.e., music pedagogy and instruction.*

- f. **Presence.** "Teacher intensity" or "conductor magnitude"; includes teacher's enthusiastic affect, vitality and clarity of speaking and expression, eye contact; also includes confidence and rapport.
  - g. **Prescription.** Tasks are *sequenced* for students in logical, discrete, manageable steps (provided as *directives*); instruction is *responsive* to demonstrated needs. *Repetition* is employed to build habit strength among students, leading them to musical success. Teacher demands mastery (quality) more than task difficulty. *Prescriptions* to remedy musical problems are pedagogically accurate and reflect detailed, appropriate knowledge of specific instrumental, vocal, and/or ensemble performance.
  - h. **Time management** and *pacing* are conducive to rehearsal/lesson productivity and student attentiveness; teacher uses time to engage students in music and in learning. *(For elementary/general music especially, includes transitions between activities.)*
  - i. **Individualization.** Teacher targets instruction according to the demonstrated needs of individuals within groups. *(For ensembles, teacher's instruction addresses individuals, sections, and full group.)*
  - j. **Feedback** is accurate (both positive and negative), specific, contingent, and generally frequent; verbiage is generally employed towards correcting musical problems.
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*Note: Standard scoring is on a five-point scale: "Developing" (1 point), "Proficient – Low" (2 pts., normally considered the lowest passing score), "Proficient – Mid" (3 pts.), "Proficient – High" (4 pts.), "Advanced" (5 pts.). Please understand that other items crucial to effective music teaching (such as classroom management) are included elsewhere in the student teacher evaluation system, and are thus not included in the content-specific list above.*

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2015–2016**

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