

**AUGUSTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
TEACHER EDUCATION**

## **Apprenticeship and the Beginning of the Year Experience**

At the start of the school year, Apprentices will participate in a preplanning lab experience designed to familiarize them with the opening of the elementary school year. Students will spend pre-planning and the first five days of school in the same class and teacher with whom they will work during Apprenticeship. During their Beginning of the Year Experience, students are expected to attend and participate in all events along with their Master Teacher. The beginning of the year experience begins on the first day of pre-planning and continues until the end of the first week of school for students.

Applications for the Beginning of the Year Experience and Apprenticeship are available in the Teacher Education Department in January. All applications for fall and spring Apprenticeships are due in the preceding March (e.g. Application for fall 2006 and spring 2007 Apprenticeships are due March 1, 2006)

**There is a mandatory \$200 Apprenticeship fee which is due the semester your Apprenticeship begins. This money is used to provide a small stipend for your master teacher and to assist with supervision costs.**

### **Components of the Apprenticeship Program**

The Apprenticeship is founded on the concepts of mentoring, reflection and dialogue, diagnosis and intervention and demonstration of learning. These components are built into the structure of the experience and are the responsibility of all parties involved in the process.

#### Mentoring:

The Apprenticeship program is designed to fully utilize the expertise of the master teacher. A mentoring/coaching model is used throughout the quarter to work toward that goal. Master teachers model teaching for the Apprentice, co-plan and co-teach lessons with them, and provide on-going feedback as an active participant in this final stage of professional preparation. The master teacher is continually involved in working with the Apprentice as coach, guide and facilitator of learning, throughout the entire semester.

#### Reflection and Dialogue:

Reflection on teaching and learning enables the Apprentice to begin to understand the “why” behind teacher decision-making in the classroom and to focus on the learner and learning, rather than content coverage and teacher-centered instruction. Dialogue is one of the primary tools used in this reflective process. Observation tools, evaluation/feedback forms, and communication strategies built into the program are used as a means to foster dialogue and subsequent understanding. The master teacher and Apprentice engage in dialogue related to teaching and learning on a daily basis. Master

teachers engage in dialogue about teaching and learning with each other and the university coordinator at regular sessions. Apprentices also meet with the coordinator for that purpose, and seminars are designed to bring all parties involved together to reflect upon critical issues related to learning and schooling. Dialogue journals kept by Apprentices are yet another source of this ongoing reflective communication.

### **Demonstration of Learning and Knowledge Gained:**

Apprentices demonstrate progress toward and accomplishment of goals set regularly throughout the semester. They work closely with the master teacher to reach these goals and set new ones. The development of an Apprenticeship portfolio, elements of which become part of their comprehensive portfolio, occurs throughout the semester to evidence learning, skills and abilities. This portfolio is shared with the master teacher and the university coordinator at an exit conference. This coupled with the ongoing evaluation and reflection upon teaching and learning, and the ongoing active involvement of the master teacher, allows students to demonstrate their learning and continue to focus on growth as professionals.

### **Roles and Definitions**

The goal of the Apprenticeship is to provide Apprentices with a supportive environment to apply skills and knowledge gained in the education program. The Apprenticeship takes place in a school setting, under the guidance of a “Master Teacher” who acts as the Apprentice’s mentor. The Apprenticeship will enable Augusta State University students to develop skills in needed areas, and further refine areas of strength. It is the final step in the Apprentice’s professional preparation before entering the field as a professional educator.

#### The Apprentice:

The role of the Apprentice is to work closely with the master teacher in developing the skills, knowledge, abilities, and attitudes indicative of an effective teacher. The Apprentice should act responsibly and professionally throughout the experience, gradually taking on all of the roles of the classroom teacher, with support and intervention from the master teacher. Communication with the master teacher and the university coordinator is key to the success of the Apprenticeship. The Apprentice must be responsible for facilitating this communication verbally, and in writing with the master teacher. The Apprentice should also alert the university coordinator of any issues or concerns related to the experience. The Apprentice is ultimately responsible to the students in the classroom in which he/she teaches. An Apprentice does best when self-directed, active, and committed to making the experience a beneficial and positive one for all concerned. During the Apprenticeship, the student will attend and participate in all meetings or after school events that his/her Master Teacher is required to attend.

A student enrolled in the Apprenticeship Experience may not accept pay for work carried out in relation to the school program such as substituting, tutoring, coaching, or any similar activity. Most importantly, an Apprentice may not serve as a substitute teacher for the assigned or any other classroom nor may he/she supervise recess without a certified teacher present.

## Policy on Working During Apprenticeship

Due to the intensity of the assignments and expectations during the Apprenticeship Experience, it is strongly recommended that students not attempt to work on either a part or full-time basis. Should a student deem it necessary to work during this semester, he/she will be expected to complete all of the Apprenticeship experiences. The fact that the student is employed will never be accepted as justification for the failure to meet all of the knowledge, skill and disposition expectations of the Apprenticeship experience. This includes, in addition to unforeseen events, all activities related to the preparation, implementation, and evaluation of student activities during the school day, after school meetings, and seminars. The expectation of the Apprenticeship experience (planned and unplanned) must, at all times, take precedence over work requirements.