Frequently Asked Questions About Teach North Texas

What is the Teach North Texas program?

Teach North Texas (TNT) is a unique secondary teacher preparation program for science and mathematics majors. TNT is a replication of the nationally recognized UTeach program that originated at the University of Texas at Austin. Our program emphasizes early and ongoing field-based experiences and fulfills all requirements for certification in Texas. Since our beginnings in 2008, enrollment has increased from 52 students to more than 250 at the present time, 175 have graduated with full certification, and, of the 175 graduates, 86% are still teaching. This is well above the national average of 51%

Why mentor teachers?

We depend on experienced elementary, middle school, and high school teachers to act as mentors to our students during their field-based experiences. Mentor teachers open their classrooms to a pair of TNT students, offering guidance and support as they begin to learn about classroom teaching.

Who are TNT students?

The students who will teach in your classroom are UNT undergraduates who are just beginning to explore the career of teaching. They are receiving ongoing instruction in inquiry-based lesson design, classroom management, and science and mathematics content, but they are **not yet** student teachers. Their final decision to pursue teaching as a career will be influenced to a great extent by their field experiences in your classroom.

What are my responsibilities as a mentor teacher?

You are playing an important role in training the next generation of teachers. You will meet your TNT students at a Saturday Match Meeting early in the semester. At this time, you will schedule dates for classroom visits and decide on topics for each teach. All mentor teachers assume primary responsibility for classroom management, provide assistance to TNT students during group activities and complete an evaluation of their performance at the end of each lesson.

How are students scheduled into my classroom?

Your principal has agreed to allow the TNT students to teach in your classrooms during your regularly scheduled mathematics or science periods. Once you have given us your preferred class periods, we will select a pair of students whose schedules match your own.

How will I benefit as a mentor teacher?

You will receive the satisfaction of preparing future teachers in a program that is receiving national attention. In addition to coaching the TNT students, you may even pick up new ideas for your own classroom!

What happens in the early and continuous field-based courses?

The chart below outlines the field-based courses that all TNT students will take:

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| **Field-Based Exploratory Courses** | | | | | | | | |
| ***Course*** | *Setting* | | *Frequency* | | *Instructional Materials* | | *Skills Acquired* | |
| **Step 1** | Elementary  (3rd-5th grade) | | 5 visits:  2 observations  3 lessons | | Grade appropriate inquiry science or math lessons. | | * Getting the attention of the class * Giving directions * Involving all students in group lab activities * Questioning strategies * Bringing closure to a lesson | |
| **Step 2** | Middle School  (6th-8th grade) math and science | | 5 visits:  2 observations  3 lessons | | calculators, probeware, manipulatives | | * Applying the 5E model of instruction * Formative evaluation * Questioning strategies * Implementing a technology-based lesson | |
| **OR** | | | | | | | | |
| **TNTX 1300** | Middle School  (6th-8th grade) math and science | | 6 visits:  3 observations  3 lessons | | calculators, probeware, manipulatives | | All the skills learned in the Step 1 and Step 2 courses. | |
| **Field-Based College Of Education Courses** | | | | | | | | |
| ***Course*** | | *Setting* | | *Frequency* | | *Instructional Materials* | | *Skills Acquired* |
| **Classroom Interactions** | | High School  (9th-12th grade) math or science | | 5-8 visits some on consecutive days:  Observations & Lessons | | Varied | | * Observing * Direct teaching * 2-day inquiry-based lesson * Self-evaluation of teaching |
| **Project-Based Instruction** | | High School  (9th-12th grade)  math and science | | 4 hours observation;  Teaching related to field trip experience | | Varied | | * Observing and analyzing aspects of project-based instruction * Designing and team-teaching a project-based unit |
| **Student Teaching Apprentice-ship** | | High School  (9th-12th grade) | | A full semester of teaching at least one class with other responsibilities added through the semester. | | Varied | | * Assuming full responsibility for planning, implementing, and evaluating curriculum and instruction based on assessment of student learning * Assuming the role of a teacher within the structure of the school, department, and classroom |

What are the responsibilities of the mentor teacher?

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| **Supervision** | * Schedule the dates for the observations and three lessons within the targeted weeks. Provide lesson topics and specific TEKS (content and process) that you want emphasized in the lesson (for Step 2, 1300, and CI) * Provide timely communication with TNT instructors when problems arise * Be present in the classroom at **all** times during the TNT students’ visits * Assume primary responsibility for classroom management |
| **Coaching and Evaluation** | * Provide informal feedback to TNT students via email as students plan and write their lessons * Complete short formal teaching feedback for each lesson taught by a TNT student * Complete a short summary evaluation for each TNT student upon completion of the three lessons |
| **Saturday Match Meeting** | * Attend a Saturday morning meeting where you will meet the students who will observe and teach in your classroom * Bring your annual lesson plans and a copy of any textbook your TNT students will use (if applicable) * Schedule all dates that TNT students will observe or teach in your classroom. Decide on lesson topics for each teach (Step 2, 1300, and CI). Communicate which TEKS will be covered in each lesson (both content and process) and how you wish those TEKS to be filtered through the lesson * Assist with initial planning of the lessons, particularly the first lesson |