

Greetings from Concordia University-Nebraska!

My name is Dr. Janell Uffelman. I am a professor of education and have the honor of serving as instructor of students enrolled in Education 461, Literacy Instruction, Assessment, and Intervention. The goal of Educ 461 is to empower and equip elementary teachers to address the multiple literacy needs of students.

A Capstone has been designed to serve as the culminating learning experience of the course. Each student has been asked to identify a school site, a mentor teacher, and specific unit topic. You are being asked to serve as the mentor teacher for an Educ 461 student's capstone. Your participation in the important capstone experience will provide a practice teaching opportunity for the Ed 461 student prior to engaging in full-time student teaching. The capstone provides practice and builds confidence! Your role is critical and I seek to communicate specific information with you for clarification.

During the semester, Educ 461 students design three lesson plans that comprise a unit. The unit incorporates factors and methods taught during the Educ 461 class at Concordia (comprehension, vocabulary, appropriate texts and resources, diverse teaching methods, etc.). Educ 461 students immediately apply their knowledge to the formulation of the Capstone unit. Learning is authentic and applicable!

Should you elect to serve as a mentor teacher, you and the Ed 461 student will collaborate to identify the specific content that is to be taught during their three days with you. I am very sensitive to the complexity of determining where you will be in the chronology of your lesson plans during the identified Capstone time period. As a professor, I daily assess the learning sequence of the course and accelerate or slow down as student assessment data indicates.

However, it would be extremely beneficial if the Educ 461 student could be given a specific topic at this point so that all of the work accomplished during workshop time will contribute to the quality of the three-day unit.

Would you please consider these possibilities?

1. The student may teach a unit that is self-contained, but related to the topic that will most likely be covered at that specific time. In other words, working with you as the mentor teacher, the Educ 461 student will design a mini-unit that is related to a larger unit that will be taught at that time.
2. The student may teach a self-contained unit that is normally taught within your curriculum, but perhaps at another time of the year.

I have every confidence that this experience will add to the professional development of the pre-service teacher! Thank you for considering the possibility of giving of yourself in order to invest in the next generation of teachers!

With great appreciation,

Janell Uffelman, Ph.D.
Professor of Education
Concordia University, Nebraska
janell.uffelman@cune.edu