

Mentor Teacher Resource

Supporting Teacher Candidates in the Emerging

Tech Teaching Academy

We're in uncharted waters! Emerging Technologies like Artificial Intelligence are new to classroom settings, and supporting students through this process is new to all of us. This document is intended to help mentors explore various ways to support the pre-service teachers in UNG's Emerging Tech Teaching Academy of the Middle Grades Education program. We have instructed our interns to talk with their mentors early, candidly, and often. Keep in mind that this is a supplement to the mentor teacher handbook, but please make sure to read the full handbook as well!

Talk to them about Emerging Tech!

Example: Ask about their program, what they are learning, what tools they have used in their UNG courses, and how it's different than other programs. Be honest about your feelings.

Non-Example: Change the subject any time they bring up an emerging tech topic.

Set Clear Expectations

Example: Clearly outline the limitations or guardrails around EdTech and innovation. What are they allowed to do based on published county guidelines around AI? What about other emerging technologies (VR, AR, etc.)?

Non-Example: Providing unclear or inconsistent expectations, leading to confusion about the candidate's responsibilities and limitations.

Be open to ideas!

Example: Realize that they are bringing valuable insights into the workforce your students will enter upon graduation. Find ways to bring in appropriate techniques or tools that can enhance the innovation of your classroom.

Non-Example: Mandating only traditional, teacher-focused, lecture-style instruction.

Provide Constructive Feedback with Innovation

Example: After a lesson, the mentor teacher discusses what went well and offers specific suggestions for improvement or to make the lesson more innovative (e.g., "Consider using more XYZ tool to encourage student participation.").

Non-Example: Giving vague feedback like "You need to do better" without specific guidance on how to improve.

Model Effective Teaching Practices with EdTech & Innovation

Example: Demonstrating a lesson or teaching strategy, then discussing the rationale behind the approach and its effectiveness.

Non-Example: Criticizing the candidate's teaching style without offering a demonstration or alternative methods.

Encourage Reflection in these Changing Times

Example: Asking the candidate to reflect on their teaching experiences related to these new topics and what they learned from them (e.g., "What did you find challenging about today's lesson, and how might you address it next time?").

Non-Example: Not allowing time for reflection or dismissing the candidate's thoughts and feelings about their teaching experiences.

Facilitate Classroom Management Strategies as they pertain to EdTech & Innovation

Example: Sharing effective classroom management techniques and helping the candidate implement them in their lessons (e.g., "Let's try a signal for quieting the class before you start your instruction.").

Non-Example: Leaving the candidate to manage the classroom without guidance or support, especially in challenging situations. Or leaving the candidate on their own. As non-employees, candidates must be supervised by mentors in the classroom.

Encourage Collaboration with Colleagues around EdTech & Innovation

Example: Introducing the candidate to other teachers and encouraging them to observe different teaching styles and strategies.

Non-Example: Isolating the candidate and not facilitating opportunities for them to connect with other educators.

Support Professional Development

Example: Reminding the candidate to attend workshops, professional development sessions, or school meetings around EdTech and Innovation to enhance their skills and knowledge.

Non-Example: Discouraging participation in professional development opportunities or not providing information about available resources.

Foster a Positive Learning Environment

Example: Creating a supportive atmosphere where the candidate feels comfortable asking questions and seeking help related to EdTech and innovation.

Non-Example: Being dismissive or critical of the candidate's questions or concerns, which can hinder their confidence and growth.