

2015 Employer Survey

In the spring of 2015, 122 UTK intern/student teachers who had completed initial licensure requirements in the 2012-2013 school year had been identified as teaching in 90 schools in Tennessee. Other individuals were also reported as teaching but information on which school was not available. Knox County Schools accounted for 39 of the 90 schools. Nine of the schools were located in the Knoxville area (Alcoa, Anderson County, Blount County, Clinton City, Lenoir City, Loudon County, Maryville, Oak Ridge, Sevier County), and the remaining 51 were in other school districts across the state.

In early April the principals of the schools identified were mailed a survey form on which to indicate his/her level of satisfaction with the UTK teacher preparation program related to the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM). In some cases a principal had hired more than one of our graduates, sometimes representing different content areas. One form was sent for each content area represented, emphasizing that we were examining our programs and not individuals. A reminder was e-mailed approximately two weeks after the initial mailing. 45 of the 90 surveys were returned by the mid-April for a 50% overall response rate.

Responders reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with program preparation 95.6% of the time and with no exceptions would feel confident in hiring other UT graduates.

This report reflects aggregate data. Disaggregated program data will be broken out and forwarded to program chairs and Department Heads. Program specific responses to open ended questions will be included in these individual reports.

**Evaluation of UTK Teacher Preparation Program
Of Principals' Employing 2012-2013 Program Graduates**

**Overall Summary (N=45)
from 45 Principals out of 90 (50%)**

	VD = Very Dissatisfied D = Dissatisfied	S = Satisfied VS = Very Satisfied	NA = Unable to judge		
	VD	D	S	VS	NA
Planning					
1. Instructional Plans	0	0	11	34	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>24.4%</i>	<i>75.6%</i>	
2. Student Work	0	0	10	35	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>22.2%</i>	<i>77.8%</i>	
3. Assessment	0	0	18	27	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>40.0%</i>	<i>60.0%</i>	
Instruction					
4. Standards and Objectives	0	0	13	31	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>29.5%</i>	<i>70.5%</i>	
5. Motivating Students	0	0	18	27	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>40.0%</i>	<i>60.0%</i>	
6. Presenting Instructional Content	0	0	16	29	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>35.6%</i>	<i>64.4%</i>	
7. Lesson Structure and Pacing	0	1	19	25	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>2.2%</i>	<i>42.2%</i>	<i>55.6%</i>	
8. Activities and Materials	0	0	16	29	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>35.6%</i>	<i>64.4%</i>	
9. Questioning	0	0	22	23	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>48.9%</i>	<i>51.1%</i>	
10. Academic Feedback	0	1	20	20	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>2.2%</i>	<i>44.4%</i>	<i>53.3%</i>	
11. Grouping Students	0	0	20	25	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>44.4%</i>	<i>55.6%</i>	
12. Teacher Content Knowledge	0	1	13	31	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>2.2%</i>	<i>28.9%</i>	<i>68.9%</i>	
13. Teacher Knowledge of Students	0	0	27	18	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>60.0</i>	<i>40.0%</i>	
14. Thinking	0	0	23	22	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>51.1%</i>	<i>48.9%</i>	
15. Problem Solving	0	0	25	20	0
	<i>0%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>55.6%</i>	<i>44.4%</i>	

Environment

16. Expectations	0	1	17	27	0
	0%	2.2%	37.8%	60.0%	
17. Managing Student Behavior	0	2	23	20	0
	0%	4.4%	51.1%	44.4%	
18. Environment	0	0	15	30	0
	0%	0%	33.3%	66.7%	
19. Respectful Culture	0	0	11	34	0
	0%	0%	24.4%	75.6%	

Professionalism

20. Growing and Developing Professionally	0	0	12	33	0
	0%	0%	26.7%	73.3%	
21. Reflecting on Teaching	0	0	12	33	0
	0%	0%	26.7%	73.3%	
22. Community involvement	0	0	23	22	0
	0%	0%	51.1%	48.9%	
23. School responsibilities	0	0	16	29	0
	0%	0%	35.6%	64.4%	

24. On the basis of the performance and preparation of this individual, would you feel confident in employing other UT graduates?

45	100%	Yes
0	0%	No

25. Have you participated in the training of UT interns by having them placed in your school for their internship year?

17	38.6%	Yes
27	61.4%	No

Employer Survey: Open Ended Questions

26. Is there anything special about your school or student population that should receive more emphasis in the preparation program?

- Behavior management has to be strong and in place in order for instruction to occur with success. This is one thing I find with new teachers to be a consistent challenge.
- Classroom management Unit/year pacing - prioritizing curriculum to meet expectations
- Continue looking at best practices in working in inclusions settings. IEPs
- Difficult to Manage Students
- Guided Reading
- Issues in urban education, educating the student with IEP goals in a general education setting, and handling diverse groups such as parents would be the three top issues I would love to see intentionally addressed with interns placed at my school.
- Management of tasks required of teachers
- More IEP procedures not necessarily writing the IEP goals
- New teachers should have additional training and background knowledge on differentiating lessons to reach advanced learners. They need to increase awareness of how questioning, academic feedback and various instructional routines may meet the needs of students who have already mastered a given standard. This come with professional development over time but would greatly fit and benefit my school.
- Our school has many high poverty and ELL students. This can be a culture shock and can be difficult and stressful for a beginning teacher.
- Please remind future teachers that many of our Title 1 schools have a large number of students from homes that are struggling in many ways. Students who are not completing assignments often have serious excuses such as lack of supervision, lack of food, lack of support, lack of sleep, and other reasons related to finances and

incomplete or deficient family units. Patience, flexibility, and a genuine caring attitude are now more than ever key aspects of being a successful teacher.

- Professionalism
- Readers/Writers Workshop Professional Development. Working with formative assessment techniques
- Setting appropriate lesson objectives has been an area of focus for many of our new teachers.
- Several of our teachers are trained academic coaches that have returned to the classroom. We truly seek our best practices for instructing our students. We've been a TN Reward school for two years now
- The county where I work students are bussed to school locations farther from their home in order to create more diversity in individual school populations. I wish that I had more preparation to teach a diverse group of students.
- We have a high number of students who are academically and socially at risk.
- We have a large number of migrant students. Being able to work with ELL. Being able to work with instructional tasks will be huge
- We have a large percentage of Hispanic students, many of whom are non-English speakers when they enter school. We also have a high percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students attending our school.
- We have large Hispanic population. ELL strategies would be valuable
- We highly value the UTK interns and about 25% of our school hires are from UTK internship program. We highly value teaching interns about the evaluation rubric and student discipline.
- Working with students from poverty is something new teachers seem to have to learn on the job
- Yes. My school is high poverty and students have social/emotional concerns. Helping teachers to understand some of the issues they may have to face daily would be great

27. What do you see as the major strength(s) of beginning teachers from UT?

- Awesome Preparation!!! In particular, my UT grad's classroom student teaching was strong and comprehensive. The more time undergrads can spend in real classrooms the better!
- Beginning teachers from UTK exhibit a willingness to learn and are open to guidance and feedback from experienced teachers and administrators.
- Commitment
- Confidence in the classroom.
- Content knowledge
- Content Knowledge
- Good work ethic, willingness to learn, coachable, well-prepared, team players, and love their students!
- Have experienced a full year cycle from beginning to end time to develop relationships with mentors strong content knowledge and research skills
- Having the internship experience before going into the field.
- Having the yearlong internship is a real advantage
- If I am not mistaken the employee from your program also did course work in urban studies which prepared her for the population of the school
- Knowledge base
- Knowledge of evaluation
- Lesson Plans, Subject Knowledge, State Standards
- Major strength is the amount of time required to student teach. This time is so very valuable. Also, evaluating student teachers using the TEAM rubric is a must in preparing new teachers for the classroom
- Not all new teachers are alike. Part of their strengths are due to the UTK program, but part of it is just having that "with-it-ness" that no one can teach. Not everyone is cut out to teach, and teacher training programs need to be able to cut students' from the program who do not measure up.
- Organization and planning
- Our interns come to us with a wealth of knowledge. They know about effective instructional practices, using data to inform their instruction, and being reflective of their own instruction/delivery of content
- Reflective. Strong Teachers
- Strong content knowledge and various experiences from longer student teaching times
- Teachers graduating from UTK have shown great skill in reflective practice related to their instruction and growth. I have found their self-reflections to be purposeful and aligned with our instructional rubric. This allows a more specific path for improvement and growth to be determined for the first year. I've noted willingness to welcome visitors and feedback related to instruction. This is a high-priority practice in the field of education.
- Text-based questioning
- The fact that they have a full year of experience is a major strength!
- The full year internship is fantastic. UT grads understand the rigor of teachings. Great assistance from cooperating school, teacher

- The internship year is something that really sets up your students for success down the road.
- The yearlong internship.
- Their willingness to reflect and grow based on specific feedback.
- These teachers have had training in some of the best schools in the Knoxville area, been taught how to teach difficult concepts in kid friendly and accessible ways, and have an undergraduate degree from the major university of the state. Beginning teacher from the University of Tennessee are hard-working intelligent teachers.
- They are extremely prepared, eager to jump in, able to manage their own class, and seem more mature
- They are ready to go on the first day! They are confident, excited, and ready! They work well with their team mates and are knowledgeable about the workings of a school.
- They are ready to go to work to do what it takes to help students progress. They are confident enough to be mostly independent, but humble enough to ask for help if really in need.
- They are very prepared to take on their own classrooms and they seem more mature
- They know the wording of the instructional rubric, which is the lexicon used for coaching.
- They understand the basics of good teaching
- Very prepared. Not a steep learning curve from internship to 1st yr
- Volunteering for school responsibilities
- Well-prepared regarding planning and general expectations/procedures of classroom
- Yearlong internship gives interns a full year's experience which shows their 1st year of teaching.

28. What do you see as the major weakness(es) of beginning teachers from UT?

- Classroom management - being a "presence" in the room when one is young. They need to be stronger in being a commanding presenter in front of groups - including parents .
- Classroom Management
- Discipline Management
- I don't think it can be addressed as readily through an off-site preparation, but the reality of theory vs. action/implementation is always the major weakness. Those well prepared with theory, but an open mind to constantly engage in action research does best with the shock of getting into the real world of the classroom.
- I have hired two students who completed the Master's program with the year-long internship. I have been very pleased with their job performance. I cannot identify a weakness.
- I'm not sure I would call it a major weakness as much as I would call it the area that needs strengthening. Classroom Management. I also feel that this is an area that cannot always be taught, it has to be learned through experience.
- Lack of classroom management skills
- Lack of experience. Understanding these are high school students, not adults.
- Lesson plans are NOT what makes a strong teacher. New teachers are often concerned with lesson planning, when that is only the first step. The implementation and attitude of the teacher is key. The attitude of my new teacher from UTK is fabulous. She has learned that implementation is key, but still has a ways to grow toward expected student performance.
- Managing Student behavior
- Many struggle with managing student behavior. Not just UTK graduates.
- Middle Schools need more teachers with the Middle School endorsement. I can't hire a K-6 teacher... Middle Schools need teachers prepared for all Middle School subject areas.
- More experience with TEAM as it applies to daily classroom
- Not specifically from UT but we need math teachers to be versed in teaching using instructional tasks. Working to conceptual understanding
- Noted in my answer to number 26...I believe students should be given additional opportunities/classes to explore and develop instructional routines and strategies related to enrichment and lesson extension.
- Nothing that isn't true for all beginning teachers: lack of experience
- The weakness I recognize is one that improves with experience, and that is the ability to communicate confidently with parents.
- They can always strengthen classroom management
- They just need additional experience

Other Comments:

- Although this is the candidates second year of teaching, she has been accepted in the Turnaround Corps (teachers impacting achievement for low performance students) she is progressing toward becoming a leader
- XYZ is a rock star teacher!
- Excellent Program

- I appreciate the opportunity to work with The University of Tennessee. The TPTE department works hard to prepare our future teachers to meet the needs of our students in today's challenging educational environment. Our school / school system should continue to work closely with our local state university to ensure our students are provided the very best education!
- I appreciate the work that you do to prepare future educators. Please continue to provide excellent programs for these individuals.
- I had an opportunity to interview soon to be graduates at the Job fair this spring. I was very impressed!! It made me proud to be part of the College of Education at UTK, Class of '90
- I have been impressed with our UTK interns and hope this mutually beneficial relationship between UTK and SDMS continues.
- I have been very pleased with her!
- I loved the structure of UT's program. I value that I have an undergraduate degree in psychology. I was taught by some of the greatest professors in the nation. They are dedicated and hard-working individuals that model correctly what it means to be a good teacher. I feel honored to have worked alongside the other students in my program who are now succeeding as brilliant and capable educators of young people
- I would love to have UT student teachers at Cherokee Middle School in Roane County
- I've only had one UT graduate, so my response is based strictly on one person
- Keep up the work!
- Thanks for soliciting our feedback!
- Very Impressed with teachers we have hired from UTK, thank you
- We are very impressed with the UT program
- We consider it an honor to host UT interns! Thank you for allowing us the privilege of helping them to grow into the career they have chosen! We benefit greatly from having them here and hope to continue for years to come.
- We love interns! It's beneficial for all involved- the interns, the students, classroom teachers, parents, school, and community. We value their input and collaboration! A year-long internship is invaluable! These teachers are prepared for their own classroom when they leave your program.
- Would love to see more diversity in the program.