

**Teachers in a learning community . . . are not 'in-serviced.' Instead, they engage in continuous inquiry about teaching. They are researchers, students of teaching, who observe others teach, have others observe them, talk about teaching, and help other teachers. In short, they are professionals...**

**The most powerful form of learning, the most sophisticated form of staff development, comes not from listening to the good works of others, but from sharing what we know with others...By reflecting on what we do, by giving it coherence, and by sharing and articulating our craft knowledge, we make meaning, we learn.**

**Barth, 1990**

## **CO-TEACHING**



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# OVERVIEW

## **Co-Teaching and the IPTE Program**

- UCD teacher candidates (TCs) complete four general education school internships (IPTE 5910, 5911, 5912, and 5913) for a total of 800 hours of school internships.
- Special education dual licensure TCs:
  - complete the four internships above,
  - are licensed in regular education, and
  - then compete a fifth internship as they assume their first teaching position in special education (SPED 5914).

## **Co-Teaching and Coaching**

Co-teaching and coaching:

- are significant features of school internships.
- benefit students and enhance learning because the experienced clinical teacher (CT) remains in the classroom, while adding another adult, the TC, to the classroom.
- result in a decreased student-teacher ratio and increased support for student learning.

## **Gradual Release of Responsibility**

As TCs move through their school internships, they:

- gradually assume all five teaching roles and take on greater teaching responsibility;
- develop more sophisticated answers to the essential questions;
- demonstrate proficiency on performance-based assessments; and
- may also be utilized in regard to other roles and responsibilities in the school and community, especially when TCs need support or the situation is complex enough to require such guidance.

The “gradual release of responsibility” co-teaching model often occurs as follows:

1. The TC observes a teacher who is teaching the type of lesson that the TC will later co-teach.
2. The TC and CT co-teach lessons like those previously observed, using plans prepared by the CT or provided/prepared under a professor’s direction in university classes.
3. The TC and CT co-teach a variety of lessons, using the CT’s plans.
4. The TC and teacher co-teach a wide variety of lessons, using plans the teacher and the TC have collaboratively developed.
5. The TC and teacher co-teach lessons, using plans the TC has developed.
6. The TC teaches alone with coaching and other support as needed from the CT.

## WHAT IS CO-TEACHING?

Co-Teaching occurs when the clinical teacher (CT) and the teacher candidate (TC) work as partners. They collaboratively:

- create solutions to identified instructional/student problems;
- create units of study;
- plan and modify lessons;
- carry out classroom instruction; and
- supervise student work. (Adapted from Sands, Kozleski, & French, 2000)

The advantages of co-teaching are:

- increased flexibility in providing students with more individualized and diversified learning experiences;
- greater innovative capacity through sharing of ideas, energy, and materials;
- increased responsiveness to student needs during instruction;
- the fostering of inclusion of special education students in general education classrooms; and
- increased opportunities to capitalize upon the background, experience, and teaching styles of each teacher. (Adapted from Sands, Kozleski, & French, 2000)

### **Effective Co-Teachers:**

- ❖ are tolerant, reflective, and flexible.
- ❖ accept responsibility for all students in the class.
- ❖ maintain positive relationships with each other.
- ❖ share their beliefs and expectations with each other.
- ❖ keep the lines of communication open.

Adapted from Olson et. al, 1997

### **Research Note**

In a three-year study of effective co-teaching teams, teachers reported increased:

- ❖ academic and social gains for students with disabilities;
- ❖ opportunities for professional growth;
- ❖ professional satisfaction; and
- ❖ personal support.

Adapted from Walther-Thomas, 1997

## WHAT IS COLLABORATION?

*Collaboration is the key to co-teaching. It is an interactive process that enables teachers with diverse expertise to provide quality instructional services to students with a wide range of needs. (Idol, Nevin, & Paolucci-Whitcomb, 2000)*

Collaboration involves:

**Shared responsibility:** maintaining mutual responsibility for the students in the class

**Reciprocity of ideas and teaching:** Sharing in planning, instructing, evaluating, and decision-making

**Problem solving:** Developing a variety of possible solutions, based on the knowledge and background of both the CT and the TC

**Interactive communication:** Using techniques such as listening actively to each other and asking clarifying questions; speaking in non-jargon language, and employing positive nonverbal communication to maximize the productivity of interactions

**Conflict resolution:** Maintaining open lines of communication and discussing differences as they arise; allowing adequate time for planning and discussing issues.

Adapted from Texas Education Agency (2000)

# Co-teaching Models and Grouping Considerations\*

Within the models for co-teaching discussed below, CTs and TCs are able to utilize a variety of grouping techniques. Teachers can use a combination of models, depending on student needs and instructional goals.

## **Model A: One Person Teaches, One Gathers Data or Coaches**

One teacher teaches academic content.

*Student grouping:* Whole class

*Teacher roles:* One teacher has instructional responsibility

While one teacher assumes instructional responsibility, the other gathers student assessment information, research data, and/or coaches the instructor. Either person may take either role or switch roles at any time. This model can be used effectively when TCs begin to assume more teaching responsibility and need direction from the CT in order to improve and enhance their skills.

### Research Note

**Students whose teachers collect and record data and use the data to make instructional decisions show more academic progress than students whose teachers do not follow these progress monitoring procedures. (Fuchs, 1996)**

TCs will often be asked to use specific data collection tools for university coursework. If the CT and TC gather data together, the TC will learn how to collect and record data. In follow-up observations and teaching, the TC will learn how to use that data to make instructional decisions.

\*Adapted from Sands, Kozleski, French, 2000

### **Co-Teaching Tip**

TC accuracy in judging students' progress increases when s/he uses monitoring procedures consistently. When co-teaching, one teacher can chart the progress of individual students while the other teacher facilitates group work.

## **Model B: One Person Teaches Group, One Person Teaches Individuals**

One lead teacher; one teacher “teaching on purpose”

*Student grouping:* Whole class

*Teacher roles:* One teacher takes the lead in instruction  
One teacher provides “on purpose” instruction

One person provides individual help and guidance to students while the other provides instruction to the group. “Teaching on purpose” is giving short lessons to individuals, pairs, or small groups of students during or as a follow-up to whole group instruction. Content could be introduced, reviewed, or re-taught, depending on student needs.

**1-2 minute purpose:** Approach students after instruction to follow up on key ideas and concepts, encourage participation, answer questions, check for understanding, or review directions.

**5-minute purpose:** Review concepts or check for understanding.

**10-12 minute purpose:** Provide a mini-lesson on a skill. This format is used for explicit instruction of a specific skill.

### **Co-Teaching Tip**

Many teachers in co-teaching situations spend their time grazing, going from student to student to make sure that they are following along. “Teaching on purpose” is a method for checking for understanding and providing short installments of explicit instruction that are related to key ideas, concepts, or vocabulary from the main lesson. Teachers often keep a running log of information given to students during “Teaching on Purpose” as means of monitoring students’ progress. (Vaughn, Schumm, and Arguelles, 1997)

## Model C: Parallel and Simultaneous Teaching

Two teachers teach the content.

*Student grouping:* Two heterogeneous groups

*Teacher roles:* Each teacher instructs one group

These methods are often used as a follow-up to Model B. In Parallel Teaching, the class is divided and both teachers present the same content to portions of the larger group of students. In Simultaneous Teaching, the content is divided and each teacher provides instruction to half the students. The students then switch places and the instructor provides the same content to the second half of the class.

This model provides opportunities for a larger number of students to participate and interact with each other and with the teacher than would occur if a whole-class model was used. It also allows the teacher to monitor individual student responses and knowledge more closely.

### Co-Teaching Tip

Because student discussions vary depending on the groups we're teaching, we've found that it is helpful to bring the whole class together for a short wrap-up to share unique perspectives and to summarize key points. Students love to share what their group has learned – and the wrap-up reinforces students' skills in summarizing key information. (Texas Education Agency, 2000)



## **Model D: Re-Teaching**

Teachers teach different content.

*Student grouping:* Two homogeneous groups

*Teacher roles:* Each teacher instructs one group.  
Teachers adjust instruction to the needs of the students.

Students are divided into two groups based on their skill level. Student skill level in the specific content to be taught, not their overall academic ability, is the criterion for group placement. In other words, group membership changes from day to day and/or skill to skill.

One teacher instructs students who have learned the material while the other works with students who need additional learning opportunities in order to become skilled with the material. This teacher either re-teaches or adapts the material in some way so these students can learn it.

### **Co-Teaching Tip**

In effective co-teaching, the CT does not always assume the role of lead teacher, nor does s/he always re-teach. After 5911, the CT and TC share responsibility and alter roles from one lesson to the next. It is important that the TC have experience in teaching to the full range of student abilities represented in the classroom.

## Model E: Multiple Groups

Teachers monitor/teach

*Student grouping:* Heterogeneous or homogeneous groups

*Teacher roles:* Each teacher monitors and/or teaches one group

This model is often used during cooperative learning activities, reading groups, and learning centers. Students may move between centers or may be assigned to specific areas.

### Grouping suggestions:

Several groups may be heterogeneous while one or two are homogeneous. One or both teachers work with individual groups for the entire period.

Students work in small groups or pairs and teachers monitor progress



### Co-Teaching Tip

This model is often used during reading and language arts lessons in which students with learning disabilities or reading problems require intensive small-group instruction.

## **Model F: Teaching Together**

Teachers co-teach and monitor student work.

*Student grouping:* Whole class

*Teacher roles:* Teachers work together to teach a whole-class lesson

This is the most difficult model of co-teaching. Teachers work cooperatively to teach a lesson. One teacher may lead the lesson, while the other interjects with elaborations, comments, and questions to clarify the material. Special features of lesson plans may include co-teaching techniques and considerations for individual student needs.



### **Co-Teaching Tip**

Teachers often implement this "Teaching-together" model as they introduce the lesson and then follow up with Model D (Re-teaching) or Model E (Multiple Groups).

## Variations of Model F: Teaching Together

### F1. Tag-Team Teaching

*Student grouping:* Whole class

*Teacher roles:* Teachers take turns presenting the information:  
one on, one off.

Tag-team teaching, sometimes called “turn teaching,” is a common form of whole-class co-teaching. In this model, the teacher who is not presenting at the moment may fill a variety of roles, from data collection to giving assistance to individual students. If this model is to be used, it is important to clearly identify the role of the non-presenter, so that s/he does not sit at the back of the classroom waiting to teach.

#### Co-Teaching Tip

Tag-Team Teaching is a good starting point for co-teaching. It allows the CT to maintain control of the flow and the pace of the lesson, while still giving the TC an important teaching role.

### F2. Speak and Add Teaching

*Student grouping:* Whole class

*Teacher roles:* Teachers take turns presenting the information:  
one on, one off.

Both teachers are “on stage” at the same time. One leads and the other supports. The lead teacher is in charge of the content and makes process decisions. The support teacher adds examples, humor, and other perspectives. This model requires a relatively high level of content and pedagogical knowledge on the part of both teachers. Most TCs will be comfortable with this model only in their later internships – 5912 or 5913.

### **F3. Speak and Chart Teaching**

*Student grouping:* Whole class

*Teacher roles:* One teacher presents the information, while the other charts key points and student responses.

This model extends the “speak and add” concept, but modifies the role of the second teacher. Both teachers are “on stage” at the same time, but one plays a supporting role by writing ideas on a chart, overhead projector, or whiteboard. If the lesson is collaboratively planned, TCs should be able to assume this role during their first internship.

### **F4. Duet Teaching**

*Student grouping:* Whole class

*Teacher roles:* Teachers collaboratively present the lesson.

This format represents the epitome of co-teaching and is only possible with professionals who have done extensive collaborative planning and/or who teach together frequently. A CT and TC who share similar philosophies and have worked closely together for a semester may reach this level of collaboration during 5913.

- Both presenters talk. They alternate or finish sentences for one another.
- They use physical proximity as a tool. They choreograph the physical space.
- They avoid blocking one speaking and subtly cue each other with looks, proximity, hand gestures, voice tempo, and intonation.
- They stay focused all the time, each attentive to the other and to the students.

**Message from the classroom: “We go together like peanut butter and jelly. Often in class we are so in sync, we finish each other’s sentences...And the kids see that! They see us working together and it helps them work together.**

## “Gradual Release of Responsibility” Co-Teaching Matrix

The following matrix is provided as a guide for CTs and TCs. It will vary somewhat depending on the skills of the TC, the nature of the class, and the needs of the students.

### IPTE 5910

CT Approach	TC Choice	Outcome	Teaching Model
Directive	No TC Choice	CT plans. TC observes a teacher teaching a type of lesson that the TC will later co-teach.	Model A
Directive-Informational	Limited TC Choice	CT plans and TC teaches. TC uses a CT-suggested plan or a plan prepared under a professor's direction in a university class. TC and CT co-teach lessons like those previously observed, using the CT's plans.	Model B Model C Model D Model E Model F

**Message from the Classroom:** I was really nervous having another adult in my class watching me teach. I wasn't sure I wanted a TC. But we learned so much from each other. Now I look forward to seeing my lessons through the eyes of a teacher-in-training!

### IPTE 5911

CT Approach	TC Choice	Outcome	Teaching Model
Directive-Informational	Limited TC Choice	CT plans and TC teaches. TC uses a CT-suggested plan or a plan prepared under a professor's direction in a university class. TC and CT co-teach lessons like those previously observed, using the CT's plans.	Models A-F
Directive-Informational	Broader TC Choice	TC and CT co-teach a variety of lessons, using the CT's plans.	Models B-F
Collaborative	Mutual Plan	TC and CT co-teach lessons like those previously observed, using plans that the CT and TC have collaboratively developed.	Models A-F

**IPTE 5912**

<b>CT Approach</b>	<b>TC Choice</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Teaching Model</b>
Directive-Informational	Broader TC Choice	TC and CT co-teach a variety of lessons, using the CT's plans.	Models B-F
Collaborative	Mutual Plan	TC and CT co-teach a variety of lessons, using plans that the CT and TC have collaboratively developed.	Models A-F
Non-directive	TC Self-plan	TC and CT co-teach lessons using TC-developed plans.	Models B-F

**Message from the Classroom: My CT has shown me how to implement many of the strategies that I am being taught in my class. She helps me translate educational theory into effective classroom instruction.**

**IPTE 5913**

<b>CT Approach</b>	<b>TC Choice</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Teaching Model</b>
Collaborative	Mutual Plan	TC and CT co-teach a variety of lessons, using plans that the CT and TC have collaboratively developed.	Models A-F
Non-directive	TC Self-plan	TC and CT co-teach lessons using TC-developed plans. TC teaches alone with coaching and other support as needed from the CT	Models A-F

**Message from the Classroom: While my TC is teaching, I am able to provide support for some students in my class that I can't always get to. Mind you, I never lose sight of why I'm in the classroom while the TC is "soloing" – to coach and provide feedback – but there are other benefits for students as well!**

## TIPS FOR CO-TEACHING\*

### 1. Establish a co-teaching relationship.

The CT must establish how the TC will work in the classroom.

- How will the TC handle discipline problems?
- What classroom materials can the TC use?
- What kind of records of student work do you expect the TC to maintain?
- Which students will work with the TC?
- Are there certain times during the day when you want the TC to plan to always be in your classroom?

**Message from the Classroom: I was taught about curriculum and classroom management, not about co-teaching. It was hard for me the first year I had a TC, because I wasn't sure how to help her. Now I understand my role as a coach and mentor.**

### 2. Help the TC understand students' strengths and weaknesses

One of the strengths of the UCD Partnership is that it places another adult in the classroom to work with students. The purpose of the co-teaching model is to better meet the needs of all students, including those with disabilities.

- Consider modifications needed in order for all students to learn.
- Discuss the needs of students on IEPs.
- Discuss students with learning and behavior problems and identify possible solutions before they arise in the class.



\* Adapted from Vaughn, S., Schumm, J, and Arguelles, M.E. (1997) and Texas Education Agency (2000).

### 3. Designate time to plan.

Co-planning is most effective when CTs and TCs set aside a designated time to plan.

- At least 45 minutes each week
- Use August teacher workdays (for TC's who begin in August) or the January workday (for the TC's who begin in January)
- Allows the TC to coordinate his/her instruction with that of the CT.

**Message from the classroom: I'm convinced that if co-teaching is going to work, it takes a systematic approach, and the only way you're going to get that is through planning together. You can't just whisper what the lesson is about in someone's ear when they walk in to the room or write a note. You have to think through and talk through the lesson.**

### 4. Designate a workspace for the TC.

- Assign a workspace for the TC, even though s/he will only be in your classroom for one or two days a week.
- Provide a specific place for the TC to work and store materials.

**Message from the classroom: "Every week when I came into the class, the table I used was covered with her stuff. It definitely sent me a message that I wasn't really wanted in there."**

## 5. Communicate together with students and parents.

Provide an information session for parents at the beginning of the year, explaining:

- arrangements that have been made with the TC;
- the benefits for students; and
- how the students' academic needs will be met.

Put both the CT's and TC's names on all correspondence when the TC begins the 5913 (four- or five-day a week) internship.

**Message from the classroom: "Once I started 5913, we never sent anything home unless it had both of our names on it. Then parents felt that they could talk to either one of us about their child."**

## 6. Assign grades together whenever it is possible and/or appropriate.

Help the TC learn the curriculum standards and district's accountability expectations for students by:

- checking and discussing student work and assigning grades together and
- allowing the TC to sit in on parent conferences whenever possible.

## 7. Manage the TC's schedule.

Consider how many students/groups a TC can effectively manage, especially during the 5910 and 5911 internships.

- Always balance the needs of the students with the reality of the teaching situation.
- Remember that the TC often has specific university class assignments that may pull him/her from the CT's class.

**Message from the classroom: "I intern in a third grade class, but am also seeing several first grade students for a class assignment. My CT is really flexible and understands that I can't always be in her classroom for the entire day that I'm in my school."**

## 8. Lastly – and most importantly -- Have fun!

A TC can reduce the feeling of isolation that teachers often feel when they work alone day after day with students in their classrooms. TCs give teachers the opportunity to broaden their perspective on their profession, get new ideas, and see their students in a different light.

Enjoy the experience of having a TC!

**Message from the classroom: Co-teaching allows two teachers to blend their expertise and experiences and create an exciting, motivating, and enriched learning experience for all of the students in the class. Everybody benefits from having two teachers in the classroom. Each student gets more attention, and all can witness the fun and excitement of two people working together towards the same goal.**

## Articles

Teaching & Learning Initiative Co-teaching.

[www.ctserc.org/initiatives/teachandlearn/coteach.shtml](http://www.ctserc.org/initiatives/teachandlearn/coteach.shtml)

Marilyn Friend and Lynne Cook define “co-teaching as a specific service delivery option that is based on collaboration.” Co-teaching involves two or more certified professionals who contract to share instructional responsibility for a group of students with mutual ownership, pooled resources, and joint accountability. They describe the advantages of co-teaching as more intense and individualized instruction, greater teacher attention to student needs in small-group activities, and greater access to the general education curriculum for students with disabilities. The co-teaching approaches are similar to those describes earlier, but they add centers or work stations to Simultaneous and Parallel Teaching.

Lawton, Millicent (1999). Co-Teaching: Are two heads better than one in an inclusion classroom? [www.edletter.org/past/issues/1999-ma/coteaching.shtml](http://www.edletter.org/past/issues/1999-ma/coteaching.shtml)

As increasing numbers of students with disabilities are included in general education classrooms, the need for regular education teachers to have both greater skill and support in work with these children has increased as well. Lawton examines factors in successful co-teaching, including negotiating roles and maintaining realistic expectations of each other. Lawton also emphasizes that more research on the effectiveness of co-teaching is needed. “So far, research on co-teaching has focused more on the process and less on the effect on [student] achievement.”

Vaughn, S., Schumm, J, and Arguelles, M.E. (1997). The ABCDEs of Co-Teaching. [www.ldonline.org/ld\\_indepth/teaching\\_techniques/tec\\_coteaching.html](http://www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/teaching_techniques/tec_coteaching.html)

Teachers have little preparation for co-teaching. As a result, there are common co-teaching issues must be addressed if teachers are to successfully work together. These include student accountability and grading, classroom management, parent communication, and co-planning. These issues are addressed more fully in the “Tips of Co-Teaching” section of this module. Vaughan, Schumm, and Arguelles also identify two common roles that teachers assume when co-teaching, “grazing” and “tag-team teaching.” In “grazing,” one teacher takes the lead role in providing instruction while the other moves from student to student to see if they are paying attention and/or at the right place. They suggest that teachers replace “grazing” with “teaching on purpose,” as described in Co-Teaching Model B.

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