

Missouri Baptist  
UNIVERSITY



# SPARTAN ACADEMY

*School of Teacher Education*

*Revised Fall, 2023*

## **What is Spartan Academy?**

- A year-long education internship in one school
- An intensive field-based experience
- Replaces the traditional Field II and Student Teaching model
- For Spartan Seniors who are elementary, early childhood, middle childhood, or secondary education majors
- Provides opportunities to observe all grade levels, within a given certification program

This partnership would offer undergraduate early childhood, elementary, middle, and secondary education majors an opportunity to pursue an intensive field-based alternative for completion of their teacher preparation program. In line with national movements in education, prospective teachers, who choose this alternative, work to complete 30 credits of coursework as they teach on-site in an elementary school throughout their senior year. The work in a Partner School is designed to immerse the prospective teacher into the school's culture/community, develop deeper understanding of student learning, gain from professional development opportunities, and create a wider experience base from which the prospective teacher can draw when they enter the profession as a first-year teacher. In some partner districts, the student intern can be paid as a T.A. or PARA Professional.

## **Partner Districts for Spartan Academy**

- DeSoto
- Francis Howell
- Hillsboro
- Kirkwood
- Lincoln Country R-III (Troy)
- Lindbergh
- Mehlville
- Orchard Farm
- Parkway
- Wentzville

## **Goals of Spartan Academy**

The collaborative work of Missouri Baptist University and Partner Schools is organized based on four growth-oriented goals that reach across all participants in the partnership.

1. Enhance the educational experiences of all children.
2. Ensure high quality induction into the profession for new teachers.
3. Engage in furthering our own professional growth as school and university-based teachers and teacher educators.

4. Prepare the next generation of teacher educators who will go on to create, sustain and renew school university partnerships that are committed to excellence in teacher preparation and professional development through inquiry.

## **How Will Spartan Academy Work?**

### **Semester One**

- Student interns will spend at least two days per week in the partner school
- Classroom teachers being observed take the lead in planning and delivering instruction
- Student interns would be a support to the teacher in carrying out planned lessons and working with individual or small groups of students
- The classroom teachers serve as the facilitator/guide
- The student interns are tutors for children
- The student interns are support personnel throughout the building, helping, and supporting classroom teachers as needed in a variety of classrooms as applicable
- As a “home” classroom is determined over time, the student interns will plan and implement a minimum of two lessons.

### **Semester Two**

- The student intern will spend five days a week in the partner school
- The student intern is assigned one mentor teacher (Cooperating Teacher)
- In the initial part of student teaching, there will be co-planning and co-teaching (January through Mid-March)
- During the initial phase of student teaching, the student intern is gaining critical insight into the mentor teacher’s personal practical knowledge of his/her profession by engaging in dialogue and observation targeted at understanding why the mentor teaches in certain ways, uses particular strategies, or sequences lessons in specific ways
- The classroom teacher is the coach, and the student intern is a key player in implementing and reaching instructional goals
- As the student teaching experience progresses (late March through May), the student intern would take the lead (when appropriate) in planning instruction
- The classroom teacher will support the student intern and will also work with individual or small groups of children within the room
- The classroom teacher becomes the tutor, and the student intern assumes the role of facilitator

# What Are the Benefits of Spartan Academy?

There are many—both for you and the participating schools! Spartan Academy is mutually beneficial, which is another reason to apply.

Student Interns	Partner School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A full year of teaching experience before graduation.</li> <li>• On-going feedback from school-based as well as university-based teacher educators.</li> <li>• Opportunities to learn about teaching, learning and students through coteaching with skilled, veteran teachers.</li> <li>• Opportunities to teach and observe across grade levels.</li> <li>• Experience in working with an Instructional Support Team and in an RtI structure in meeting the needs of diverse populations.</li> <li>• Collaborative work in a non-competitive culture focused on best practices for children.</li> <li>• Discussions that bring theory to practice and practice to theory.</li> <li>• Seminars developed by university and school-based teacher educators.</li> <li>• In addition to ongoing classroom embedded learning, student interns also participate in a variety of school-based and district-based professional development experiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional support for classroom teachers and students.</li> <li>• More individualized attention and support for students.</li> <li>• Additional small group teaching.</li> <li>• Increased student achievement.</li> <li>• Professional development opportunities.</li> <li>• Collaboration among teachers practicing in the field, university faculty, and student interns that brings theory to practice and practice to theory.</li> <li>• Substitute teachers who are familiar with the school expectations and procedures, as well as familiar with the students.</li> </ul>

## How Do I Participate in SPARTAN ACADEMY?

There are a few pathways that eligible student interns can take to participate in Spartan Academy. Students may hear about Spartan Academy during a presentation, or from a faculty member promoting it in class. In some cases, they will have an SOTE faculty member suggest that they consider Spartan Academy. If interested, student candidates will complete an

application, followed by a faculty review of the application, transcripts, and MBU citizenship, as well as a brief interview with The Director of Field Experiences. Student interns will then be selected based on the information gathered during the application process and/or the direct recommendation by an SOTE faculty member.

Selected SPARTAN ACADEMY participants will be notified as soon as they have been accepted, based on available placements.

## **What If I Get Chosen to Participate?**

- Student interns agree to abandon the traditional Missouri Baptist academic calendar and instead follow their placement district's school calendar for the entire year.
- Student interns agree to attend the regular school day for each of the (minimum) two required days in the fall.
- Student interns will attend the co-requisite seminar course for Field II at the school site.
- Student interns will complete the remainder of their coursework in the fall semester when they are not at the partner school site.