

2009 Employer Survey Open-ended Comments

Please comment on areas for strengthening the teacher education program at UTM:

1. Teachers are having a hard time understanding the standards and how to teach them. And by that I mean they know about standards, but are not able to unlock the standard.
2. Classroom discipline is always an issue for all new teachers.
3. Many students don't realize that it takes many extra hours outside the classroom to plan for instruction. I'm finding that "new" teachers are not prepared to go above and beyond. As a principal, I wish that teachers could not be hired without having had the student teaching experience. I also wish that professional dress could be reinforced. Plunging necklines are the style right now, but I hate having to constantly monitor what my teachers wear.
4. classroom [sic] management is so difficult for new teachers, if we could get out of the box and come up with some application before they enter their student teaching experience. Also an area that we all struggle with is using data to drive our instruction. (Pre-assessing and TCAP information) higher order thinking questions and use of application or real life.
5. The area of diverse learners present [sic] a challenge for any teacher and when they get their first job they will need for the teacher program [sic] to be strong in this area.
6. Assist students in passing Praxis
7. Emphasize the new standards and critical thinking/problem solving.
8. Planning instruction that will engage students in the learning--becoming active learners, not passive listeners.
9. Continue to stress assessment and evaluation, and classroom management. Students need to use research-based teaching strategies and differentiated instruction.
10. I think that the supervising teacher at UTM and at the site school need [sic] to collaborate more.
11. They really DO need some practicum experience early in university years to be sure they really want to work with children. They do not need to wait until student teaching time, because they feel too much pressure at that time to go ahead and graduate.
12. traits of a professional educator ethics
13. Novice teachers need more help with problem behaviors and addressing at-risk students.
14. probably more classroom management, but that comes w/experience
15. Teachers need to know how to use formative and summative test data to plan Differentiated Instruction.
16. Student teachers need more experience working with students with behavior problems.
17. more differentiated instruction, importance of using assessment data to drive instruction
18. 1. Students need to be more familiar with the state rubrics for evaluation and how to fill out the eval forms. 2. Students need to have a better understanding of the curriculum standards and how to track students from state report card data. Suggestion: Bring principals in every so often to go over basic aspects of first time teachers and expectations of principals.
19. Continue to build on the classroom management skills.
20. Content instruction aligned with Tennessee standards
21. /classroom management skills. Experience is a good teacher but beginning teachers need to be aware of problem areas such as discipline and student motivation with some insight as to how best to prevent & handle.

Please indicate any obvious strengths and/or weaknesses in the graduates you hire from UTM as compared to graduates from other programs.

1. subject knowledgeable [sic]
2. On the whole UTM graduates are some of the stronger teachers that we have entering the workforce. They have the ability to become great teachers.
3. I have been very pleased with the graduates you send to us.
4. excited, knowledgeable [sic] of subject matter and some great strategies [sic] engaging all students,
5. The teaching program gives the flexibility [sic] to allow the student teacher to get the true picture of teaching.
6. No noticeable difference.
7. Some teachers have difficulty relating to students (different ethnic, socioeconomic background)
8. Strength: Knowledgeable of subject, cooperative, love for education, and professional
9. UTM students are as prepared as those from other teacher prep programs.
10. It is time that teacher candidates be fluent with classroom technology beyond power points. Can they operate LCD projectors, e-Beams or Smartboards, access United Streaming clips to go with lessons, put together E-tales, set up a web page, have experience with student response classroom systems???? Do they know the ISTE standards for the grade levels for which they may teach? Teachers in my school are doing all of these.
11. Technology skills in the classroom-strength [sic]
12. UTM teachers have a good grasp of their professional responsibilities and display an outstanding work ethic. They are willing to accept constructive comments to improve their teaching.
13. Technology!!! very strong more 7-8 certification
14. Most new teachers are not individualizing their instruction to reach all levels of students.
15. no obvious differences
16. UTM graduates are overall well prepared as anybody but like everybody else lack experience. I have a retired teacher who is hired as a mentor teacher and works with all new teachers. That has been a big help to first year teachers.
17. Eager to learn, very professional
18. Very competent in subject area

Do you feel UT Martin graduates' show competence of in-depth content knowledge?

Yes—unequivocally

Yes (16)

Absolutely (2)

Absolutely. They are well prepared in the content area. (1)

Very much so. (1)

Yes—equivocally

Yes, for the majority (1)

Yes--they know the content, but have difficulty in conveying it to their students (1)

Yes, I know that UT Martin graduates show competence of in-depth content knowledge. (1)

They understand content, not standards. (1)

As well as can be expected in beginning teachers (1)

I believe that most of them do. (1)

UT grads excel in the content knowledge - it is the motivational tactics and definitely classroom management which is a struggle (1)

I hope you are covering teaching reading in small group rotations to allow for individual needs...also, push technology (see #4). Otherwise, very good! (1)

I feel that they are well equipped to address the content knowledge they are expected to possess for elementary students. (1)

Could be better in areas of application of content (1)