Strength: More successful intern
Subject: Social Studies
Note: Name of intern has been changed.

Michigan State University's Teacher Education Program
While completing a B.A. in sociology with a minor in history, Tom entered the teacher education program where he took additional courses and gained field experience his senior year by participating and observing in two classrooms at a local high school (Street Law, World History, U.S. Government, U.S. History). After completing his degree Tom entered Michigan State University's teacher education internship program.

The program consisted of an academic year of postgraduate teaching experience at the junior high level, along with four graduate courses in teacher education. The internship combined classroom observation, co-teaching with a mentor teacher, lead-teaching (which consisted of a three week period in the fall and an eleven week period in the spring), and active participation in school activities. Tom's educational experience has therefore included a complete undergraduate education in sociology and an extensive internship program in professional education, which focused on both the technical and practical aspects of becoming an educator.

Teaching Situation
Tom spent his internship year at [name of high school] of about 700 seventh- and eighth graders. The student body was relatively homogeneous, predominantly from white, working-class families. Under the guidance of an experienced mentor teacher, and a special education teacher who worked with several students in the classes he taught, Tom planned and taught seventh and eighth grade geography, history, and English on a daily basis, eventually assuming all responsibility of the classroom for the lead teaching portion of his internship. There were seven other interns at the school, each working with a collaborating teacher. This situation provided a rich resource base, experienced insight and thoughtful feedback. Finally, Tom had the chance to share experiences with other interns on a regular basis. Given these factors, Tom had the opportunity to take advantage of a unique learning situation on his way to becoming teacher.

Subject Matter Teaching
By the end of his lead teaching period Tom demonstrated a confident grasp of his subject matter. Initially he had difficulty identifying ways in which to translate his university knowledge to the subject matter into general frameworks his students could understand. As the year progressed Tom had come to realize the importance of organized planning and sought creative means to make his subject matter more relevant and engaging to his students. Tom has made significant progress in the presentation of his subject matter, as well as in establishing his confidence as a teacher. Tom's planning and teaching also became stronger as he came to recognize ways in which to modify his presentation, and by shifting his focus from how he was presenting the material to what the students were responding to and understanding. His lesson plans have, in my estimation, improved in their clarity and objectives while the difficulty he initially had with their implementation diminished over time. During his lead teaching period Tom had four classes to prepare for and teach. Although he was initially concerned about this task, he was able, with support, to do a fine job and increase his confidence as well.
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Classroom Management and Student Engagement
One of the most challenging aspects for Tom during his internship year was in the refinement of his ability to assess what his students cared about, and what they expected from him as a teacher. Tom set high expectations for himself with regard to his initial classroom management, but through experience, discussion and reflection he was able to make better judgments. I respect Tom's honesty with himself and his ability to share both his high and low points with me. He has diligently worked to negotiate his expectations with the realities of the classroom, while making progress in gaining the respect of his students. Tom's overall classroom management improved as his expectations of student behavior and attitudes became clearer. His sense of humor and ability to engage the class in discussions that were relevant to their lives also aided in his ability to manage a class. Tom enjoyed working with his students. By the end of the internship experience Tom had gained a better insight into how to keep his students attentive and involved in the lessons, an insight that he will continue to improve upon.

Professional Development and Relationships
As a field instructor I have been impressed with Tom's hard work during the internship year. He was capable of a keen sense of introspection and thoughtful assessment of what he needed to work on as a teacher. Tom also sought constructive criticism from me, other teachers and his fellow interns. Tom also regularly participated in the school's in-service days, after school meetings with teachers and students, parent teacher conferences, and administration of the MEAP and ACT Explore tests. He was also active in after-school events, chaperoning two "Fun Nights," the Valentine's Day Dance, the student trip to Cedar Point, and participating as an assistant coach for boys track in the spring. He has taken full advantage of his internship experience. In the past year he has grown both as an educator and as a person. I believe Tom has what it takes to be an effective and successful teacher.
Teaching Situation
During Kate’s internship year she taught tenth grade Honors American History, American History and Geography at a High School a three grade one thousand student high school in Michigan. is a contiguous suburb of the state capital (Lansing). The student population is middle and/or “working class” with some ethnic diversity. European students are in the majority and the others are African American Hispanic and Asian. Most of the graduates go on to some sort of post graduate schooling while the rest either enter the military or the world of work.

Kate (individually as well as in a teaming situation with another intern and her mentor teacher) taught Honors American History three of the five periods each day for college bound sophomores. She also taught (individually) one class of American History for a heterogeneous grouping of sophomores and one class of Geography, a mixture of sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Kate was responsible for developing and implementing several thematic/conceptual units in all of the above classes during most of her internship experience. The development of these units involved finding new teaching materials and adapting classroom situations she faced.

It should be noted that Kate has spent the whole school year at the same high school instead of the usual ten week or semester period that most student teaching programs involve; and that, in effect, she could be likened to a first year teacher rather than a “student teacher.” As a part of her studies at Michigan State University Kate was present in the classrooms during her senior year observing and later teaching in those classrooms.

Knowledge and Teaching Subject Matter
Kate demonstrated her knowledge and understanding of the subject matter (American History) via her development teaching units on “The Frontier”, Immigration and the Cities”, “Turn of the Century America”, and “Warstory” in all (Honors and American History) the classes of American History. Kate was able to successfully adapt these units to the two variants of students. The core concepts she was teaching were detailed in the unit handout that was given to students. Students (in groups of three) were asked to research, investigate, give presentations, and conduct seminars on topics specifically assigned to them in their respective groups. Each group was then to conduct a seminar on its specific topic. Each of the student groups assigned a given article (or packet of information developed by the students in the group) prior to the seminar so that all participants in the seminar have a background with respect to the topic discussed. The credit for the design of these “fishbowl” seminars go to Kate and her colleague. Kate has done an outstanding job in creating a mechanism whereby students can demonstrate their knowledge and be responsible for the what happens within that mechanism.

As a part of the long term plan for the course; students being responsible for the design, implementation, and assessment of their own learning; Kate and her colleague(s) made seminars an integral part of the course for the rest of the year.

Kate used a variety of materials (library research, videos, matrices, student produced items, articles, pieces of text, etc.) and activities (presentations, student board work, learning journals, fastwrites”, “pre-writes”, “post-writes”, “The Reading Game”, “The Writing Game”, student creation of a visual,