

**Abilene Christian University  
Teacher Education Program**

**Teacher  
Candidate  
Handbook**

**Revised March 2022**

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# **Mission Statements**

## ***Abilene Christian University***

### ***Mission Statement***

*The mission of Abilene Christian University is to educate students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world.*

## ***College of Education and Human Services***

### ***Mission Statement***

*The mission of the College of Education and Human Services is to equip students for global service and leadership through exemplary practice in education and human services, informed by a Christian perspective.*

## ***Teacher Education***

### ***Mission Statement***

*The mission of the Department of Teacher Education is to prepare exemplary, committed educators for service in diverse and multicultural communities for the glory of God.*

## **Be Transformed**

### ***ACU Teacher Education Conceptual Framework***

*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world,  
but **be transformed** by the renewing of your mind.*

Romans 12:2

Abilene Christian University's conceptual framework, "Be transformed," communicates our shared vision for preparing responsive professional educators who demonstrate scholarship, relationship, and professional engagement. It provides direction for our program courses, clinical experiences, assessment, and service. This framework guides our practice and is informed by our faith commitment that teaching is a ministry. As such, we are called to continual personal and professional growth and transformation.

#### **Scholarship**

Scholarship encompasses both the mastery of knowledge and skills and the disposition of being a lifelong learner. Our teacher candidates value learning. They have an understanding of pedagogy as well as content. They comprehend the distinctive qualities of learners, including their socio-cultural contexts, and the learning process. Candidates are equipped to continuously expand their expertise through participation in professional development and personal reflection. They are prepared to think critically about their practice, reflect on the strengths and needs of their students, and adjust their instruction accordingly.

#### **Relationships**

Effective teachers establish and maintain relationships with learners, their families, communities, and other professionals. Our teacher candidates engage in collaborative activities with colleagues and community stakeholders in order to meet students' needs. They seek opportunities to share ideas and to invite feedback from peers. They communicate effectively and professionally and are guided by principles of personal and professional integrity.

#### **Engagement**

Engagement in professional activity allows teachers to enact knowledge into practice. Our teacher candidates understand and demonstrate the connection between theory and classroom application. Candidates employ teaching methods that are informed by seminal research and theories, as well as current and emergent understandings of the learning process. They apply their knowledge of learners and learning and continually refine their pedagogy as they reflect on challenges they encounter.

## **ACU Teacher Education Curriculum Framework**

The curriculum of the ACU Teacher Education Program is aligned with the [Texas Teacher Standards](#) and the [Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities \(PPR\) Standards](#)

Provided below are the six domains of the PPR Standards that provide the general framework for the program.

### **Standard 1: Instructional Planning and Delivery**

Classroom teachers demonstrate understanding of instructional planning and delivery by providing standards-based, data-driven, differentiated instruction that engages students and makes learning relevant for today's learners.

### **Standard 2: Knowledge of Students and Student Learning**

Classroom teachers work to ensure high levels of learning, social-emotional development, and achievement outcomes for all students, taking into consideration each student's educational and developmental backgrounds and focusing on each student's needs.

### **Standard 3: Content Knowledge and Expertise**

Classroom teachers exhibit an understanding of content, discipline, and related pedagogy as demonstrated through the quality of the design and execution of lessons, and the ability to match objectives and activities to relevant state standards.

### **Standard 4: Learning Environment**

Classroom teachers interact with students in respectful ways at all times, maintaining a physically and emotionally safe, supportive learning environment that is characterized by efficient and effective routines, clear expectations for student behavior, and organization that maximizes student learning.

### **Standard 5: Data-Driven Practices**

Classroom teachers use formal and informal methods to assess student growth aligned to instructional goals and course objectives, and regularly review and analyze multiple sources of data to measure student progress and adjust instructional strategies and content delivery as needed.

### **Standard 6: Professional Practices and Responsibilities**

Classroom teachers consistently hold themselves to a high standard for individual development, collaborate with other educational professionals, communicate regularly with stakeholders, maintain professional relationships, comply with all campus and school district policies, and conduct themselves ethically and with integrity.

**In alignment with the Christian mission of ACU, we have added the following standard:**

### **Standard 7: Christian Hospitality and Professional Practice**

ACU teacher candidates reflect on how the Christian virtue of hospitality supports inclusive professional practices.

## **ACU Teacher Candidate Dispositions**

*Don't be in any rush to become a teacher, my friends.*

*Teaching is highly responsible work. Teachers are held to the strictest standards.*

*James 3:1 (The Message)*

Reflecting on James 3:1, we believe that effective educators must exhibit certain dispositions in addition to possessing knowledge and skills necessary to teach. These leadership dispositions include effective communication, professionalism, reflective practice, emotional maturity and integrity. In addition to providing challenging academic coursework and meaningful field experiences, the ACU Teacher Education faculty is committed to mentoring the development of these dispositions in our student and to model them in our own practice. All teacher candidates undergo four formal reviews throughout the ACU Teacher Education Program. These reviews include assessment of the candidate's dispositions for the teaching profession. Candidates must also understand that at any point in the program a Dispositions Review may be completed by any instructor, advisor, supervisor, Student Life administrator or field placement cooperating teacher. If concerns are identified, a meeting with the Teacher Education Admissions Committee may be scheduled with the candidate to discuss any potential implications for the candidate's admission status.

See the ACU Teacher Education Program Candidate Admission and Review Procedures included in this handbook for further information. Candidates are encouraged to reflect on these dispositions personally throughout the program, considering how these dispositions reflect spiritual growth as well as professional, personal and academic growth.

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

*Galatians 5:22-23*

### **Disposition One: Effective Communication**

**Oral Expression** -- Communicates orally in an effective, positive, respectful manner that is grammatically correct.

**Written Expression** -- Communicates in writing in an effective, positive manner that is free of grammar and spelling errors.

**Tact/Judgment** -- Uses tact and judgment that demonstrates professional and positive communication.

**Interaction with Peers** -- Interacts with peers in a professional and positive manner.

### **Disposition Two: Reflective Practice**

**Response to Feedback** -- Responds to feedback in a receptive manner and is willing to try to implement suggestions.

**Personal Reflection** -- Demonstrates a strong sense of personal awareness and can articulate how specific experiences have contributed to personal & professional growth.

**Problem Solving** -- Demonstrates thought and independence in solving problems.

**Self-Efficacy** -- Communicates a sense of responsibility for all learners and identifies factors under the teacher's control to impact success.

### **Disposition Three: Professionalism**

**Attendance** -- Attends all classes, meetings, and appointments, unless absolutely unavoidable; Provides documentation when applicable

**Punctuality** -- Arrives to class and other commitments at the scheduled time

**Personal Appearance** -- Adheres to stated dress code. Dresses modestly and appropriately for the learning context

**Values Learning** -- Values and demonstrates enthusiasm about knowledge, content and experiences presented in program

**Collegiality** -- Seeks opportunities to share ideas; seeks assistance from and collaborates with colleagues in an appropriate manner

**Sensitivity and Awareness** -- Does not seek undue attention and expresses concern for others

**Acceptance** -- Values perspectives of individuals from diverse cultural, linguistic and experiential backgrounds. Considers opinions of others with an open mind

### **Disposition Four: Emotional Maturity**

**Reliability/Dependability** -- Exhibits reliability and dependability in all coursework as well as in all field experiences

**Self-Initiative/Independence** -- Demonstrates self-initiative and independence in all coursework as well as all field experiences

**Conflict Management** -- Identifies and accepts personal responsibility in conflict/problem situations. Initiates communication to resolve conflicts

**Flexibility** -- Accepts less than ideal situations when necessary and adapts appropriately to change and/or unexpected events

**Emotional Constancy** -- Acts from a positive frame of reference and maintains emotional control. Expresses and responds to emotions appropriately

### **Disposition Five: Integrity**

**Integrity of Speech** -- Protects confidentiality, avoids derogatory language and profanity and demonstrates sensitivity in all conversations

**Ethical Behavior** -- Adheres to the ACU Policy of Academic Integrity, ACU Student Conduct and the Texas Educator Code of Ethics

**Additional Dispositions for Clinical Teaching: Professional Responsibility**

**Diligence in documentation and planning** -- Submits all lesson plans and required documents in a timely fashion with a high level of independence – not requiring reminders.

**Commitment to professional growth** -- Actively engages in seminar and other professional development opportunities; Contributes to the conversation in meaningful ways; Seeks opportunities for professional development or resources relevant to current placement

**Additional Dispositions for the M.Ed. Application: Scholarship**

**Intellectual Curiosity** -- Seeks additional information about topics presented; Asks questions seeking deeper understanding

**Deep and Thorough Preparation** -- Reads with depth, making connections and formulating questions; Completes assignments and activities thoroughly with high levels of thought.

**Independence of Thought** -- Demonstrates the ability process at high levels; Is able to fulfill course requirements with a high level of independence. Formulates and supports personal opinions and applications

**Academic Language** -- Speaks and writes using academic language appropriate for courses; Uses academic language correctly and consistently



## **Criteria for Admission to ACU Teacher Education**

In accordance with Texas state law, the ACU Teacher Education Program has established the following criteria for admission to Teacher Education. Before taking more than 6 hours of professional education coursework, the student must first be admitted to the Teacher Education Program. To be admitted to the Teacher Education Program, a student must:

1. Complete and submit the application for admission into the Teacher Education Program;
2. Have completed the first 45 semester hours of credit;
3. Successfully complete with a C or better 15 hours in the candidate's chosen content field;
4. Have a minimum overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.75 and a GPA of 2.75 or higher in the chosen content field;
5. Complete 6 hours of university required freshman English requirements with no grade lower than a "C" (In order to maintain admission status, the candidate must earn a C or better in all university required English courses.);
6. Demonstrate proficiency in the English language, reading, writing, and math through one of the following:

### Reading and Writing

- A grade of C or higher in university required freshman English
- ACT English score of 19 or higher
- SAT reading score of 500 or higher

### Math:

- A grade of C or higher in MATH 120 or higher
- ACT math score of 19 or higher
- SAT math score of 500 or higher

7. Successfully complete (C or better) EDUC 211 Introduction to Education: Culture and Contexts;
8. Successfully complete the Teacher Education Dispositions Review as described in the ACU Teacher Candidate Handbook;
9. Declare a major that includes certification;
10. Successfully complete a student life review; and
11. Receive approval from the Chair of Teacher Education and the Certification Officer. An interview with the Admissions and Review Committee may be required.

Any exemptions or modification to the above requirements due to special circumstances must be requested through the chair of the Department of Teacher Education. All requests will be reviewed and must be approved by the Teacher Education Admissions and Review Committee. In addition, admission to Teacher Education is not the final step in the process. In order to remain in the program, the teacher candidate must continue to meet both the overall and content GPA requirement (2.75).

*Note: Candidates must meet criteria for admission in place at the time of application to Teacher Education.*

### **English Language Proficiency Assessment Requirement:**

All students must demonstrate English language proficiency by successful completion of ACU required freshman English with a grade of C or higher. Additional English language proficiency requirements for international students with primary languages other than English must demonstrate English language proficiency by a TOEFL iBT score of 100 with the following minimum scores in each section:

- Reading – 24
- Listening – 24
- Speaking – 26
- Writing – 24

Note: These scores must be earned in a single administration of the TOEFL.

### **Additional program requirements:**

1. To remain in the Teacher Education Program, an overall GPA of 2.75, a GPA of 2.75 in all professional education courses (EDUC, SPED, READ and EACH) and content field GPA of 2.75 must be maintained. If the GPA falls below the standard, the candidate's admission to Teacher Education will be revoked. If the GPA later meets the standard the candidate must reapply to the program and meet the standards at the time of reapplication. If the GPA falls below criteria again, the candidate's admission to Teacher Education will be permanently revoked and the candidate will not be eligible for readmission.
2. To maintain eligibility, candidates must be able to perform the essential functions of teaching as outlined in the ACU Teacher Candidate Handbook.
3. A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the candidate's teaching field, all professional education courses, and all courses in the major.
4. All professional education courses (EDUC, READ, SPED, and EACH) must be taken in residence.
5. Any appeals related to admission will be directed first to the chair of Teacher Education. If the candidate does not feel the issue is resolved, the appeal will be forwarded to the Dean of the College of Education and Human Services.

**Note:** A candidate who does not have an overall GPA of 2.75 or higher **may** be admitted to the program if **all** other admissions criteria are met and if **all** of the following are true:

1. An overall GPA of 2.75 or higher in the last 60 hours or an overall GPA of 2.75 or higher in courses that fulfill the declared certification degree
2. A GPA of 2.75 in the teaching content field with no grade lower than a C
3. No university disciplinary actions filed – academic or otherwise
4. A formal letter of request submitted to the Teacher Education admissions committee describing the candidate's academic history and articulating motivations for wanting to enter the teaching profession
5. An interview with the Teacher Education Admissions Committee.

### **Admission to the M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning:**

To qualify for the M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning candidates must have a declared undergraduate ACU degree that includes certification and must be currently admitted to the ACU

undergraduate Teacher Education Program. Candidates apply to the M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning program in the fall of the junior year and are admitted to the program in the spring of the junior year. To be admitted to the M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning program, applicants must

1. Successfully complete all content field and professional education (EDUC, SPED, READ, EACH) courses with a B or higher
2. Have an overall GPA and content field GPA of 3.0 or higher
3. Have no score below 3 on Dispositions Reviews completed by three ACU faculty members (two required from the Department of Teacher Education and one from the content area department for middle school, high school, or all levels)

To remain in the M.Ed. program, candidates must maintain the overall GPA of 3.0 in undergraduate courses with no grades lower than a B in any professional education or content field courses. Candidates will enroll in the first six hours of the graduate sequence in the spring of the senior year and will complete Clinical Teaching during the master's year.

### **Admission to the Post-Baccalaureate Certification Route:**

Admission to the post-baccalaureate certification track includes the following:

1. Admitted in good standing in the M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning
2. Completion of all professional education (EDUC, EACH, READ, or SPED) coursework in the designated undergraduate certification degree (with the exclusion of EDUC 490 Clinical Teaching) with a B or higher.
3. An overall GPA of 3.0.
4. No grade lower than a B in the designated content field.
5. A Dispositions Review administered by the professor of the appropriate undergraduate capstone course (during EDUC 411/431 Elementary Block, EDUC 412/432 Secondary Block or MUSE 449 Professional Practice in Music Education) with a no score lower than a 3.

### **Additional information for international students:**

As part of your professional preparation, you will be participating in various field experiences. The tasks performed in these experiences may be considered "work" from an immigration standpoint. Therefore, all non-U.S. citizens are advised to obtain the proper work permission before any field experience begins. F-1 and J-1 international students should consult the immigration specialist in the Center for International Education concerning work authorization procedures as soon as possible.

## **Certification Degrees Offered**

We offer the following degrees for teacher certification. The requirements for each of these certification degrees can be accessed by the link provided.

**Art, All-Level Teaching, BFA (ART-ARTT)**

[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4543&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4543&returnto=509)

**Early Childhood/Elementary Certification, BS (IDSC)**

[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4688&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4688&returnto=509)

**English for Teacher Certification, BA (ENGT)**

[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4611&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4611&returnto=509)

**High School Teacher Certification - Chemistry Education, BS (CPST-CHMT)**

[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4580&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4580&returnto=509)

**High School Teacher Certification - Composite Science - Engineering and Physics, BS (PHMT- PHCS)**

[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4594&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4594&returnto=509)

**High School Teacher Certification - Composite Science, Chemistry (CPST-CMST)**

[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4594&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4594&returnto=509)

**High School Teacher Certification - Composite Sciences, Life Science BS(BIOT-BTCS)**

[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4572&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4572&returnto=509)

**High School Teacher Certification - Computer Science and Mathematics, BS (CSMT)**

[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4669&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4669&returnto=509)

**High School Teacher Certification - History, BS (HSTT)**

[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4598&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4598&returnto=509)

**High School Teacher Certification - Life Science, BS (BIOT-BIOT)**

[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4571&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4571&returnto=509)

**High School Teacher Certification - Physical Science, BS (CPST-CPST)**

[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4579&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4579&returnto=509)

**High School Teacher Certification - Physics and Mathematics, BS (PHMT-PHMT)**

[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4593&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4593&returnto=509)

**High School Teacher Certification - Social Studies, BS (HSST)**

[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4599&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4599&returnto=509)

**All-Level Music Teacher Certification - Instrumental Concentration, BM (MTIA)**  
[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4624&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4624&returnto=509)

**All-Level Music Teacher Certification - Vocal Concentration, BM (MTVA)**  
[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4625&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4625&returnto=509)

**Journalism/Multimedia with Teacher Certification, BS (JMTC)**  
[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4606&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4606&returnto=509)

**Mathematics for Grades 7-12 Teacher Certification, BS (MATT)**  
[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4619&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4619&returnto=509)

**Middle School Education (Grades 4-8), Language Arts, BS (MSED-MSLN)**  
[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4788&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4788&returnto=509)

**Middle School Education (Grades 4-8), Mathematics, BS (MSED-MSMT)**  
[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4789&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4789&returnto=509)

**Middle School Education (Grades 4-8), Science, BS (MSED-MSSC)**  
[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4791&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4791&returnto=509)

**Middle School Education (Grades 4-8), Social Studies, BS (MSED-MSSO)**  
[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4790&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4790&returnto=509)

**Spanish for Teacher Certification, BA (SPNT)**  
[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4612&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4612&returnto=509)

**Special Education with Early Childhood and Elementary, BS (SPEL)**  
[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4689&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4689&returnto=509)

**Theatre, Theatre for Teacher Certification, BFA (THEA-THED)**  
[https://catalog.acu.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4646&returnto=509](https://catalog.acu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=10&poid=4646&returnto=509)

## **Essential Functions of Teaching**

As a credentialing institution of the State of Texas, our primary mission is to prepare teachers for service in public school settings. As such, our students are required to complete multiple field placements as part of coursework in which they must be able to perform the essential functions of teaching. Therefore, ability to perform these essential functions is a requirement for continued eligibility for the ACU Teacher Education Program.

The educational environment includes specific physical and mental demands. The demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an individual to successfully perform the essential teaching functions required necessary to complete required field experiences in Teacher Education courses.

### *Physical/Environmental Demands*

- moving small stacks of textbooks, media equipment, desks, and other classroom equipment
- occasional district-wide travel
- occasional prolonged and irregular hours
- prolonged use of computer and repetitive hand motions
- monitor students in a variety of locations with noise, activity, and inclement weather; and
- independently sit, reach, grab, pull, hear, see, speak, and move about the classroom and campus on a daily basis

### *Mental Demands*

- maintain emotional control under stress
- communicate effectively (verbal and written)
- provide instruction
- interpret policy
- monitor students for understanding of instruction, personal safety, and behavior management.

The foregoing statements describe the general physical and mental demands and are not an exhaustive list.

Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions. Contact the ADA Compliance Officer for information about reasonable accommodations.

## **ACU Teacher Education Program Candidate Admission and Review Procedures**

### **Candidate Formal Review #1 -- Admission to Program**

**Candidates apply for admission to Teacher Education during EDUC 211 ( to Education: Culture and Contexts). This first review will include the criteria for admission included in the ACU Catalog in effect at the time of application to the program, a Student Life Review, and a Dispositions Review.**

**Candidates submit an application in the first two weeks of the course. They will receive a formative assessment of their current performance at midterm. Applicants' transcripts will be audited after grades post for the semester and will receive notification of their current admission status within two weeks after the semester ends.**

### **EDUC 211 Dispositions Rubric Procedures:**

- The instructor of the course scores the dispositions review. This serves as the state required admissions interview.
- The course instructor and candidate meet to review the scored Dispositions Rubric.
- The rubric is signed by student and instructor and placed in the candidate's Admission and Candidacy File.
- If the candidate receives any score of 1 at midterm, a growth plan will be developed and the candidate will be reassessed in a final conference at the end of the course.
- Candidates who receive a score of 1 in any area of the Dispositions Rubric at the end of EDUC 211 will conference with course instructors and the Chair of Teacher Education to discuss the candidate's dispositions for teaching and to determine whether admission will be granted.
- A score of 1 in any indicator in the area of Ethics/Integrity may result in not being admitted to Teacher Education. See the ACU Teacher Education Academic Integrity Policy and Guidelines outlined in this handbook for clarification.
- If new concerns are identified after the initial review, an additional dispositions review will be scheduled with the instructor. This review will then serve as the official admissions review.

### **EDUC 211 Showcase Orientation:**

- An orientation to the Senior Showcase will be provided during EDUC 211.
- Students enrolled in EDUC 211 are required to attend one full Showcase session.
- The ACU Teacher Education Competencies serve as the framework for the Senior Showcase.
- In all professional education courses, candidates will receive direction on artifacts to archive for reflection and potential inclusion in the Senior Showcase.

### **Formative Assessment of GPA and Dispositions**

At the end of each semester throughout the program, the Teacher Education Department will audit each candidate's overall GPA, professional education course GPA, and content field GPA. If the GPA (overall, professional education or content field) has dropped below 2.75, admission to the program will be revoked. Candidates whose admission status is revoked will be notified within two weeks of the end of the semester.

**If admission is revoked because of failure to meet the GPA requirement, the candidate must re-apply to the program and meet the standards at the time of reapplication. If admission is revoked a second time, the candidate will not qualify for readmission and must declare a new major.**

At any point in the program, any instructor, advisor, supervisor, Student Life administrator or field placement mentor teacher may initiate an additional Dispositions Review or a Formal Review of Concern. If significant concerns are identified, a meeting with a Teacher Education Admissions Committee will be scheduled with the candidate to discuss potential implications for the candidate's admission status. A score of 1 in any area of the Dispositions Review may result removal from the Teacher Education Program.

### **Candidate Formal Review #2 – Dispositions Review and Program Completion Orientation**

**All candidates undergo a Dispositions Review in READ 322 or READ 363, depending on their certification program.**

- The candidate will complete a self-assessment to review at the midterm conference.
- The instructor and candidate will discuss the self-assessment at the midterm conference and finalize the rubric collaboratively.
- The finalized rubric will be signed by the candidate and instructor and placed in the candidate's Admission and Candidacy File.
- If the candidate receives an overall score less than 56 and/or any score of 1 at midterm, a growth plan will be developed and the candidate will be reassessed in a final conference the end of course to determine admission status.
- If a candidate receives an overall score less than 56 and/or a score of 1 in any area at the end of READ 322 or READ 363, a conference with the Teacher Education Admissions and Review Committee is required and the candidate **may not** be admitted to the Senior Capstone course and/or may be unadmitted from the Teacher Education Program.
- A score of 1 in the area of Ethics/Integrity may result in dismissal from Teacher Education. See the ACU Teacher Education Academic Integrity Policy and Guidelines outlined in this handbook for clarification.
- If concerns are identified after the initial review, an additional Dispositions Review will be scheduled. Reviews that do not meet the standard for Formal Review #3 may result in dismissal from the Teacher Education Program.
- All completed Dispositions Rubrics are signed by candidate and reviewer and placed in the candidate's Admission and Candidacy File.

**In addition to the Dispositions Review, candidates must attend a Program Completion during the fall of the junior year. This orientation will include program policies for August Experience, Testing, and Clinical Teaching Policies.**

### **Candidate Formal Review #3 -- Application for Clinical Teaching**

**Students must receive departmental approval to enroll in Clinical Teaching. Prior to enrollment in the designated professional education capstone course, EDUC 411/431 Elementary Block, EDUC 412/432 Secondary Block or MUSE 449 Professional Practice in Music Education, candidates will complete the third formal review. This review will include a transcript audit, a Dispositions Review, and successful completion of TExES exams. If a candidate's GPA falls below the required 2.75 – cumulative, professional education, and/or in the content field – admission to Clinical Teaching will be denied. In**



**addition, D's earned in any Professional Education course and D's earned in any courses within the teaching field must be repeated prior to admission to Clinical Teaching. All coursework must be completed prior to admission to Clinical Teaching.**

**Students will complete the Application to Clinical Teaching in the 5<sup>th</sup> week of the semester. In addition, candidates must complete an official national criminal history evaluation prior to admission to Clinical Teaching. Information about this process is included on page 25 of this Handbook.**

#### **Admission to Clinical Teaching Dispositions Rubric Procedures:**

- The candidate will complete a self-assessment to review at the midterm conference.
- The instructor and candidate will discuss the self-assessment at the midterm conference and finalize the rubric collaboratively.
- The finalized rubric will be signed by the candidate and instructor and placed in the candidate's Admission and Candidacy File.
- If the candidate receives an overall score less than 70 and/or any score of 1 at midterm, a growth plan will be developed and the candidate will be reassessed in a final conference at the end of course.
- If a candidate receives a score of 1 in any area at the end of the Senior Capstone semester, a conference with the Teacher Education Admissions and Review Committee is required and the candidate **may not** be admitted to Clinical Teaching.
- A score of 1 in any indicator in the area of Ethics/Integrity may result in dismissal from Teacher Education. See the ACU Teacher Education Academic Integrity Policy and Guidelines outlined in this handbook for clarification.
- If concerns are identified after the initial review, an additional dispositions review will be scheduled and the candidate's admission status (Teacher Education Program and Clinical Teaching) will be re-evaluated.
- All completed Dispositions Rubrics are signed by candidate and reviewer and placed in the candidate's Admission and Candidacy File.

#### **Admission to the Post-Baccalaureate Certification Track Dispositions Rubric Procedures:**

- The Director of the M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning scores the rubric prior to the midterm conference.
- The scored rubric will be signed by the candidate and instructor and placed in the candidate's Admission and Candidacy File.
- If the candidate receives any score lower than 3, the candidate will meet with the Director of the M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning, the Department Chair and the capstone instructor to develop and improvement plan. At the end of the semester, a second review will take place in a meeting with the instructor and the Director of the M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning. In this review, the candidate must have no score lower than 3 in order to proceed to the graduate sequence and the post-baccalaureate certification route.

#### **TEXES Test Completion:**

- Prior to admission to Clinical Teaching, teacher candidates must pass the TEXES exams relevant to the chosen certification(s).

- Candidates will complete content field certification exams during EDUC 411/431 Elementary Block, EDUC 412/432 Secondary Block or MUSE 449 Professional Practice in Music Education.
- Candidates must complete the PPR and content field practice exams prior to enrolling in EDUC 411/431 Elementary Block, EDUC 412/432 Secondary Block or MUSE 449 Professional Practice in Music Education. Those enrolled in these courses in the fall will take the practice exams in August Experience. Those enrolled in these courses in the spring will take the practice exams during finals week in the preceding fall semester.
- Students Faculty also provide one tutoring for students who score below 75% on a practice exam and for those who score below 70% will be provided with additional online preparation resources.
- The Certification Officer can provide information about additional TExES preparation resources.

#### **Candidate Formal Review #4 -- Program Completion and Certification**

**The final review in the ACU Teacher Education Program will be at the completion of Clinical Teaching. This review will include the final grade in Clinical Teaching and the Dispositions Review.**

#### **Final Grade:**

A grade of A or B must be earned in Clinical Teaching in order to qualify for Texas teacher certification through Abilene Christian University. The Clinical Teaching Syllabus will outline criteria for grading. The university supervisor evaluates the clinical teacher and submits the grade.

#### **Program Completion Dispositions Review Procedures:**

- Clinical Teachers will self-assess before the mid-semester conference with the assigned university supervisor.
- The supervisor and candidate will discuss the self-assessment at the midterm conference and finalize the rubric collaboratively.
- The rubric will be signed by the teacher candidate and the supervisor and placed in candidate's Admission and Candidacy File.
- If a teacher candidate receives an overall score less than 72 and/or a score of 2 in any area (except in the area of Ethics/Integrity) at the mid-semester conference, an improvement plan will be provided and a second rubric will be scored at the end of Clinical Teaching and discussed in the final conference with the supervisor.
- A score of 1 in any indicator in the area of Ethics/Integrity will result in automatic failure of Clinical Teaching and withdrawal from the placement.
- An overall score lower than 72 and/or any score of 2 in this final assessment period will result in a grade of D in Clinical Teaching the student will complete the degree but will not qualify for certification through ACU.
- Additional Dispositions Review conferences may be called at any time in the semester by the following: the cooperating teacher, the university supervisor, the building principal, any student life administrator, any ACU faculty member, the Director of Clinical Teaching, or the Teacher Education Department Chair. Dispositional challenges identified may result in dismissal from Clinical Teaching.

- All completed Dispositions Rubrics are signed by candidate and reviewer and placed in the candidate's Admission and Candidacy File.

## **Teacher Education Capstone Requirements**

The ACU Teacher Education Capstone requirements are completed in EDUC 411/431 Elementary Block, EDUC 412/432 Secondary Block or MUSE 449 Professional Practice in Music Education.

### **Capstone Paper: Professional Goals**

Throughout program you will explore a variety of instructional approaches and the theoretical support for these approaches. As you transition into your own professional practice, this paper will challenge you to reflect back on your body of professional knowledge. You will set a personal professional goal informed by this knowledge by identifying one approach or practice that you hope to implement as you begin your career.

In this paper you will expand and refine your understanding of your chosen approach or practice. You will:

- Define the approach.
- Describe your personal rationale for the selection of your goal based on your own experience as a learner and/or participation in classrooms.
- Provide a rationale for the goal informed by literature in the field.
- Articulate specific steps for implementation supported by your review of the literature.

### **Capstone Presentation: Senior Showcase**

You will select artifacts from your professional preparation for the first five of the Texas Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities Standards and for the ACU standard on Christian Hospitality and Professional Practice.

#### **Standard 1: Instructional Planning and Delivery**

Classroom teachers demonstrate understanding of instructional planning and delivery by providing standards-based, data-driven, differentiated instruction that engages students and makes learning relevant for today's learners.

#### **Standard 2: Knowledge of Students and Student Learning**

Classroom teachers work to ensure high levels of learning, social-emotional development, and achievement outcomes for all students, taking into consideration each student's educational and developmental backgrounds and focusing on each student's needs.

#### **Standard 3: Content Knowledge and Expertise**

Classroom teachers exhibit an understanding of content, discipline, and related pedagogy as demonstrated through the quality of the design and execution of lessons and the ability to match objectives and activities to relevant state standards.

#### **Standard 4: Learning Environment**

Classroom teachers interact with students in respectful ways at all times, maintaining a physically and emotionally safe, supportive learning environment that is characterized by

efficient and effective routines, clear expectations for student behavior, and organization that maximizes student learning.

### **Standard 5: Data-Driven Practices**

Classroom teachers use formal and informal methods to assess student growth aligned to instructional goals and course objectives and regularly review and analyze multiple sources of data to measure student progress and adjust instructional strategies and content delivery as needed.

### **Standard 7: Christian Hospitality and Professional Practice**

ACU teacher candidates reflect on how the Christian virtue of hospitality supports inclusive professional practices.

For standards 1-5, you must have a meaningful artifact that represents your own work to share in your presentation. (Standard 6 is not included in the Showcase.) You may, but are not required to, have an artifact for Standard 7. However, you must provide clear connections between your professional education program and the Christian virtue of hospitality.

Artifacts may come from your professional education courses (EDUC, READ, SPED or EACH) as well as from content field preparation courses. As you reflect on these experiences you must make clear connections to your professional philosophy and/or practice.

Showcase presentations will be scheduled in the last month of the semester. At least three professors will be at each session to score your presentation. Showcase presentations are open to all students in the ACU Teacher Education program. **Students in EDUC 211 will be required to attend one full Showcase session.** A rubric for the Showcase is included in the Official Forms and Rubrics section of the handbook. Additional expectations for the Showcase presentation are as follows:

1. Provide visual support for your presentation utilizing appropriate presentation software.
2. Take care to include clear visuals for your audience.
3. If your electronic presentation does not include the entire artifact, you must provide paper copies of the artifact for the faculty reviewers. Prepare 4 copies unless otherwise directed.

It is strongly recommended that all teacher candidates attend multiple Senior Showcase presentations prior to their own Senior Showcase semester. Observing peer presentations is an excellent way to prepare for your own Senior Showcase. Dates for Senior Showcase presentations will be posted in the Teacher Education calendar each semester and announced through Teacher Education Community emails.

## ACU Teacher Education Capstone Field Experiences

### August Experience

The August Experience is **required** of all Teacher Education students in the final fall of their professional preparation coursework. August Experience is required in compliance with the Texas Administrative Code requirement that all teacher candidates in Texas participate in a first-of-school experience. In the **final fall** of your program preparation, you will return to the ACU campus at least one week prior to the beginning of the AISD school year. This is typically a minimum of two weeks prior to the first day of classes at ACU. Final dates are provided when the local school district calendar is established.

During August Experience candidates participate in state-mandated professional development, spend two to three days on a local campus assisting your assigned mentor teacher in preparation for the first day of school and spend the first two days of school in the assigned classroom. Your duties will include, but not be limited to, cleaning the room, organizing books, putting up bulletin boards, filing, attending faculty meetings, participating in “Meet the Teacher” events, and preparing for the first day’s activities. ***Be aware of the timing of August Experience as you make summer plans before your final fall. There are no excused absences for August Experience with the exception a major personal or family crisis such an illness or death. In these cases, an alternative assignment will be required.***

### Clinical Teaching

Teacher preparation culminates in a 14-week (70 days minimum) Clinical Teaching experience as required by the State of Texas for teacher certification. M.Ed. candidates complete two semesters of Clinical Teaching. Once accepted into Clinical Teaching, candidates are assigned to cooperating teachers in the appropriate level and subject area of their intended certification(s) and work directly under the supervision of the classroom mentor teacher(s).

Clinical Teachers are expected to gradually assume the full responsibilities of classroom instruction. These responsibilities include planning and presenting lessons, allowing for individual differences in students, maintaining classroom discipline, maintaining a comfortable learning environment, establishing a positive rapport with the class, establishing a professional relationship with school personnel, and managing student files and information.

It is important to recognize that this is a university course and will include reading and reflection assignments in addition to responsibilities in the assigned classroom. These assignments will be outlined in the Clinical Teaching syllabus. As indicated in the ACU Academic Catalog, no additional coursework may be taken along with Clinical Teaching. In addition, it is not possible to compete as an athlete or participate in other university activities that will result in absences (full day or partial day) from clinical teaching during this semester.

A university supervisor will be assigned to each Clinical Teacher. Supervisors assess all course assignments and will schedule regular observations and evaluation sessions.

Clinical Teaching includes weekly seminar meetings every Tuesday from 4:00-6:00 p.m. These seminars are a required component necessary to satisfy course requirements.

## **Remote Clinical Teaching Policy**

Research indicates that in the complex process of teacher preparation, the Clinical Teaching experience is often the most formative. In our program, it is in Clinical Teaching that we expect our teacher candidates to demonstrate mastery of the learning outcomes outlined in the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities Standards and the Texas Teacher Standards outlined in the Texas Administrative Code. Remote placements in Clinical Teaching compromise this critical aspect of the professional preparation program in several ways. First, limited contact between the ACU Supervisor and the clinical teacher significantly impacts the supervisor's ability to assist the Clinical Teacher in making relevant connections between coursework and the Clinical Teaching placement. In addition, if Clinical Teachers encounter challenges in remote placements, we are less able to provide the support needed. This decreased access to support raises concerns due to our commitment to this critical aspect of the candidate's professional development. For these reasons all Clinical Teaching placements must be within a 45-mile radius of Abilene.

## **Teacher Education Communication Procedures**

Because teacher candidates are enrolled in majors in academic departments throughout the campus, the Teacher Education Community e-mail system is critical. All candidates, whether or not they are currently enrolled in professional education courses (EDUC, SPED, READ or EACH), are expected to attend to all education community e-mails. Information in these messages includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. State certification policy updates and changes.
2. Dates for TExES practice exam sessions.
3. Professional development opportunities.
4. Teacher Education Program chapel dates and locations.
5. Information about special program events.
6. Showcase dates and locations.
7. Dates and schedule for August Experience.
8. Invitations to apply for Teacher Education scholarships.

The Teacher Education Program updates the e-mail list each semester by the end of the second week of the semester. In individual courses, e-mail is also a standard procedure for communication. You are expected to check your e-mail regularly and are responsible for content communicated. Professors will establish in each course the appropriate procedures for your individual communication with them.

## Certification and Testing

### Teacher Certification:

Students who complete the Teacher Education Program must pass the TExES Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities exam and the TExES for the appropriate teaching fields as required by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Approval to take the certification tests must be obtained from Teacher Education. Additional information is available from the Certification Officer in the Teacher Education Department.

If candidates do not complete certification within 1 year after program completion, they may be required to take additional courses to qualify for certification. **If candidates do not complete certification within 2 years after program completion, it will not be possible to certify through Abilene Christian University. In addition, if the State of Texas changes certification policy, ACU's may not be able to recommend the completer for certification. The ACU Teacher Education Department makes every effort to inform candidates of and prepare candidates for any applicable changes in Texas teacher certification.**

Candidates seeking certification will be expected to meet the requirements in admissions policies, program policies, certification criteria and degree plans that are in effect at the time they graduate even if they are different from those in the catalog in effect upon enrollment. These changes may be necessary in responses to changes in policy at the state level. Candidates will be informed of changes when they occur. Every appropriate effort will be made to substitute courses for students if requirements change while continuing to prepare candidates for successful completion of the program.

### TExES Certification Exam Preparation and Registration Process:

There are at least 2 TExES exams every candidate must pass in order to be recommended by ACU for Texas teacher certification. Candidates must be approved by the ACU Teacher Education Department for each relevant certification exam. Testing costs are the responsibility of the teacher candidate and occasionally increase. The ACU Teacher Education Program will inform teacher candidates of current costs and make every effort to inform them of fee increases. Information about and registration for the TExES exams is available at the following:

[http://www.tx.nesinc.com/PageView.aspx?f=GEN\\_Tests.html](http://www.tx.nesinc.com/PageView.aspx?f=GEN_Tests.html)

The ACU Teacher Education Program makes every effort to have available all published official practice forms of the TExES to assist candidates in their preparation. All candidates will be required to take practice exams prior to enrollment in the designated professional education capstone course. See page 17 for information about practice testing and preparation processes.

To be recommended for certification by ACU candidates must:

- Complete Clinical Teaching with a B or higher.
- Successfully complete all Teacher Education requirements as outlined in the ACU Catalog and the Teacher Education Handbook.
- Have the final degree posted by the ACU Registrar's Office.
- Pass all required TExES exams.
- Apply for certification through TEA. (This includes fees assessed by the State of Texas.)



Additional certifications can be secured directly through the Texas Education Agency through certification by examination only after earning the initial certification(s) for which you have been prepared by the ACU Teacher Education Program.

Candidates must pass the relevant content TExES and the TExES PPR prior to admission to Clinical Teaching. The Certification Officer will provide information about testing centers and test registration. It is important to plan ahead, both financially and with timing to ensure opportunity to retake an exam if needed.

The Certification Officer will provide an orientation to the certification process in Clinical Teaching, including current fees required by the State of Texas.

All ACU teacher candidates are prepared for the ESL Supplement TExES. The **ESL certification** may be required by school districts; therefore, be prepared to take this **TExES** prior to graduation. If you wait to add the certification after you are certified, you will pay an additional fee to add this or any other certification. We strongly recommend that candidates complete this exam prior to applying for initial certification.

### **Limit on Retakes:**

State law allows a total of 5 attempts at any one TExES certification exam.

### **Retake Policy for EC-6 Certifications:**

If you do not pass the entire Core Subjects TExES the first time, each attempt on exam counts as one of your 5 allowed tests, even if you only register for one of the subject exams. Therefore, it will almost always be best to take any portions that you need to pass at once.

### **National Criminal History Checks -- FAQs**

TEA conducts a national criminal history check on all applicants for certification. Texas Education Code (TEC) §22.0831 states "The board shall review the national criminal history record information of a person who has not previously submitted fingerprints to the department or been subject to a national criminal history record information review." This must be completed prior to admission to Clinical Teaching. More information about this process is available on the Texas Education Agency website at the link below.

<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/investigations/national-criminal-history-checks-faqs>

### **Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation – FAQs**

Candidates may request a preliminary criminal history check if they are concerned about their personal history and its potential impact on eligibility for teacher certification. Further information about this process is available on the Texas Education Agency website at the link below.

<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/investigations/preliminary-criminal-history-evaluation-faqs>

## **Academic Integrity and Professional/Ethical Conduct ACU Teacher Education Policy and Guidelines**

The Teacher Education Program at Abilene Christian University is committed to integrity and ethical conduct. It is the responsibility of faculty, staff and students to honor Christian and professional ethical principles including, but not limited to, academic integrity, honesty, and caring. Students and faculty have the right to expect their work to be assessed on its academic merit. All faculty, staff, and students are expected to espouse academic honesty and every individual is responsible for upholding this expectation. Ethical and honest behavior is required in all actions that support the Teacher Education Program's academic mission. This is also informed by the ethical expectations outlined by the Texas State Board for Educator Certification in the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators. Finally, our Christian commitment calls us to the highest standards of ethical behavior and integrity.

***"But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices." Colossians 3: 8-9 (NIV)***

Examples of possible breaches in ethics or integrity include, but are not limited to:

1. Submitting another's work as one's own or allowing another to submit one's work as though it were his or hers
2. Several people completing an assignment and turning in multiple copies, all represented either implicitly or explicitly as individual work
3. Failure to properly acknowledge authorities quoted, cited or consulted in the preparation of written work (plagiarism)
4. The use of a textbook or notes during an examination without permission of the instructor
5. The receiving or giving of unauthorized help on assignments or exams
6. Stealing a problem solution from an instructor
7. Lying about any academic matters
8. Chapel integrity violations
9. Falsifying college records, field placement documentation, field placement evaluations and/or professional development points documentation
10. Sexual misconduct with students
11. Viewing pornography at school or with school computers
12. Illegal use of drugs or alcohol
13. Promoting alcohol or illegal drug use with students
14. Failure to accept reasonable direction from the cooperating teacher, university supervising teacher, the director of Clinical Teaching and/or the department chair
15. Other offenses that are serious ethical violations as described in The Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators
16. Serious violations of school district policies and regulations in the field placement district

**Procedure:**

If a faculty member believes that a violation of integrity has been committed, the procedure outlined in the Abilene Christian University Student Integrity Policy will be followed to determine whether a breach of integrity has occurred. This procedure can be found in the ACU Student Handbook. If it is determined that an integrity violation has been committed the following consequences will apply.

First Offense:

If it is confirmed that a student committed an integrity offense described in items 1-8 above, the first offense will result in the following consequences:

- The student will receive a grade of zero on all relevant assignments and/or exams.
- The student will meet with the faculty member(s) and the chair and submit a formal written response, addressing lessons learned and describing personal and professional implications of the integrity breach.
- A “Formal Review of Concern” will be filed in the candidate’s Admission and Review folder.
- The violation will be reported to the Dean of Students at the conclusion of the departmental process.

**Note: Any first integrity offense included in the description in items 9 - 16 above will result in dismissal from Teacher Education. In addition, any integrity breach committed during Clinical Teaching that is directly related to the Clinical Teaching placement and/or requirements will result in automatic removal from Clinical Teaching and a failing grade will be assigned.**

Second Offense:

Any confirmed second breach of integrity as described in numbers 1-8 above will result in dismissal from Teacher Education. It is understood that a **total** of two integrity breaches, rather than two offenses in each category, will result in dismissal from Teacher Education. A breach of integrity may be reported to the Director of Teacher Education by any official ACU faculty or staff member in a position of authority over the teacher candidate including but not limited to course instructors, field experience cooperating classroom teachers, and student life personnel. If the integrity breach occurred in the context of a professional education course, in addition to departmental procedures, the violation will be reported to the Dean of Students.

**Appeals:**

The process for appeals is also outlined in the ACU Academic Integrity and Honesty Policy.

## **Texas Educators' Code of Ethics**

### **Texas Administrative Code Chapter 247**

- (a) In compliance with the Texas Education Code, §21.041(b)(8), the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) adopts an Educators' Code of Ethics as set forth in §247.2 of this title (relating to Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators). The SBEC may amend the ethics code in the same manner as any other formal rule.
- (b) The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty and good moral character. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community. This chapter shall apply to educators and candidates for certification.
- (c) The SBEC is solely responsible for enforcing the Educators' Code of Ethics for purposes related to certification disciplinary proceedings. The Educators' Code of Ethics is enforced through the disciplinary procedure set forth in Chapter 249 of this title (relating to Disciplinary Proceedings, Sanctions, and Contested Cases) pursuant to the purposes stated therein.
- (d) As provided in §249.5 of this title (relating to Purpose; Policy Governing Disciplinary Proceedings), the primary goals the SBEC seeks to achieve in educator disciplinary matters are:
  - (1) to protect the safety and welfare of Texas schoolchildren and school personnel;
  - (2) to ensure educators and applicants are morally fit and worthy to instruct or to supervise the youth of the state; and
  - (3) to fairly and efficiently resolve educator disciplinary proceedings at the least expense possible to the parties and the state.
- (e) The following words, terms, and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.
  - (1) Abuse--Includes the following acts or omissions:
    - (A) mental or emotional injury to a student or minor that results in an observable and material impairment in the student's or minor's development, learning, or psychological functioning;
    - (B) causing or permitting a student or minor to be in a situation in which the student or minor sustains a mental or emotional injury that results in an observable and material impairment in the student's or minor's development, learning, or psychological functioning;
    - (C) physical injury that results in substantial harm to a student or minor, or the genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the student or minor, including an injury that is at variance with the history or explanation given and excluding an accident or reasonable discipline; or

- (D) sexual conduct harmful to a student's or minor's mental, emotional, or physical welfare.
- (2) Applicant--A party seeking issuance, renewal, or reinstatement of a certificate from the Texas Education Agency staff or the State Board for Educator Certification.
  - (3) Code of Ethics--The Educators' Code of Ethics codified in this chapter.
  - (4) Complaint--A written statement submitted to the Texas Education Agency staff that contains essential facts alleging improper conduct by an educator, applicant, or examinee, the complainant's verifiable contact information, including full name, complete address, and phone number, which provides grounds for sanctions.
  - (5) Contested case--A proceeding under this chapter in which the legal rights, duties, and privileges related to a party's educator certificate are to be determined by the State Board for Educator Certification and/or the State Office of Administrative Hearings commencing when a petition is properly served under this chapter.
  - (6) Disciplinary proceedings--Any matter arising under this chapter or Chapter 249 of this title (relating to Disciplinary Proceedings, Sanctions, and Contested Cases) that results in a final order or finding issued by the Texas Education Agency staff, the State Office of Administrative Hearings, or the State Board for Educator Certification relating to the legal rights, duties, privileges, and status of a party's educator certificate.
  - (7) Educator--A person who is required to hold a certificate issued under the Texas Education Code, Chapter 21, Subchapter B.
  - (8) Endanger--Exposure of a student or minor to unjustified risk of injury or to injury that jeopardizes the physical health or safety of the student or minor without regard to whether there has been an actual injury to the student or minor.
  - (9) Good moral character--The virtues of a person as evidenced by patterns of personal, academic, and occupational behaviors that, in the judgment of the State Board for Educator Certification, indicate honesty, accountability, trustworthiness, reliability, and integrity. Lack of good moral character may be evidenced by the commission of crimes relating directly to the duties and responsibilities of the education profession as described in §249.16(b) of this title (relating to Eligibility of Persons with Criminal History for a Certificate under Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 53, and Texas Education Code, Chapter 21), or by the commission of acts involving moral turpitude, but conduct that evidences a lack of good moral character is not necessarily limited to such crimes or acts.
  - (10) Intentionally--An educator acts intentionally, or with intent, with respect to the nature of his or her conduct or to a result of his or her conduct when it is his or her conscious objective or desire to engage in the conduct or cause the result.
  - (11) Knowingly--An educator acts knowingly, or with knowledge, with respect to the nature of his or her conduct or to circumstances surrounding his or her conduct when he or she is aware of the nature of the conduct or that the circumstances exist. A person acts knowingly, or with knowledge, with respect to a result of his or her conduct when he or she is aware that the conduct is reasonably certain to cause the result.
  - (12) Minor--A person under 18 years of age.
  - (13) Moral turpitude--Improper conduct, including, but not limited to, the following: dishonesty; fraud; deceit; theft; misrepresentation; deliberate violence; base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or to gratify the sexual desire of the actor; drug or alcohol related offenses as described in §249.16(b) of this title (relating to

Eligibility of Persons with Criminal History for a Certificate under Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 53, and Texas Education Code, Chapter 21); or acts constituting abuse or neglect under the Texas Family Code, §261.001.

- (14) Neglect--The placing or leaving of a student or minor in a situation where the student or minor would be exposed to a substantial risk of physical or mental harm.
- (15) Recklessly--An educator acts recklessly, or is reckless, with respect to circumstances surrounding his or her conduct or the results of his or her conduct when he or she is aware of but consciously disregards a substantial and unjustifiable risk that the circumstances exist or that the result will occur.
- (16) Sanction--A disciplinary action by the State Board for Educator Certification, including a restriction, reprimand, suspension, revocation of a certificate, or a surrender in lieu of disciplinary action.
- (17) Sexual harassment--Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- (18) State Board for Educator Certification--The State Board for Educator Certification acting through its voting members in a decision-making capacity.
- (19) State Board for Educator Certification member(s)--One or more of the members of the State Board for Educator Certification, appointed and qualified under the Texas Education Code, §21.033.
- (20) Student--A person enrolled in a primary or secondary school, whether public, private, or charter, regardless of the person's age, or a person 18 years of age or younger who is eligible to be enrolled in a primary or secondary school, whether public, private, or charter.
- (21) Texas Education Agency staff--Staff of the Texas Education Agency assigned by the commissioner of education to perform the State Board for Educator Certification's administrative functions and services.
- (22) Under the influence of alcohol--A blood alcohol content of .04% or greater and/or lacking the normal use of mental or physical faculties by reason of the introduction of alcohol.
- (23) Worthy to instruct or to supervise the youth of this state--Presence of those moral, mental, and psychological qualities that are required to enable an educator to render the service essential to the accomplishment of the goals and mission of the State Board for Educator Certification policy and this chapter.

*Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §247.1 issued under the Texas Education Code, §21.031(a) and §21.041(a) and (b)(1), (7), and (8); and 20 United States Code, §7926 (ESSA).*

**Source Note:** *The provisions of this §247.1 adopted to be effective March 1, 1998, 23 TexReg 1022; amended to be effective December 26, 2010, 35 TexReg 11242; amended to be effective December 19, 2011, 36 TexReg 8530; amended to be effective December 27, 2016, 41 TexReg 10329; amended to be effective October 21, 2018, 43 TexReg 6839*

## **Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.**

### **Enforceable Standards.**

#### **(1) Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performance.**

- (A) Standard 1.1. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.
- (B) Standard 1.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.
- (C) Standard 1.3. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.
- (D) Standard 1.4. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.
- (E) Standard 1.5. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or that are used to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents of students, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.
- (F) Standard 1.6. The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.
- (G) Standard 1.7. The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other state and federal laws.
- (H) Standard 1.8. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.
- (I) Standard 1.9. The educator shall not make threats of violence against school district employees, school board members, students, or parents of students.
- (J) Standard 1.10. The educator shall be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.
- (K) Standard 1.11. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent his or her employment history, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.
- (L) Standard 1.12. The educator shall refrain from the illegal use, abuse, or distribution of controlled substances, prescription drugs, and toxic inhalants.
- (M) Standard 1.13. The educator shall not be under the influence of alcohol or consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

#### **(2) Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues.**

- (A) Standard 2.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- (B) Standard 2.2. The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.
- (C) Standard 2.3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.

- (D) Standard 2.4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.
  - (E) Standard 2.5. The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.
  - (F) Standard 2.6. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.
  - (G) Standard 2.7. The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or who provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.
  - (H) Standard 2.8. The educator shall not intentionally or knowingly subject a colleague to sexual harassment.
- (3) Ethical Conduct Toward Students.
- (A) Standard 3.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
  - (B) Standard 3.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health, or safety of the student or minor.
  - (C) Standard 3.3. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.
  - (D) Standard 3.4. The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status, or sexual orientation.
  - (E) Standard 3.5. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student or minor.
  - (F) Standard 3.6. The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor.
  - (G) Standard 3.7. The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child or knowingly allow any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.
  - (H) Standard 3.8. The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.
  - (I) Standard 3.9. The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:
    - (i) the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
    - (ii) the subject matter of the communication;
    - (iii) whether the communication was made openly, or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;
    - (iv) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;



- (v) whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
- (vi) whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

*Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §247.2 issued under the Texas Education Code, §21.031(a) and §21.041(a) and (b)(1), (7), and (8); and 20 United States Code, §7926 (ESSA).*

**Source Note:** *The provisions of this §247.2 adopted to be effective March 1, 1998, 23 TexReg 1022; amended to be effective August 22, 2002, 27 TexReg 7530; amended to be effective December 26, 2010, 35 TexReg 11242; amended to be effective December 27, 2016, 41 TexReg 10329; amended to be effective October 21, 2018, 43 TexReg 6839*

## **Field Placement Dress Code**

First impressions are pivotal in the formation of an impression or judgment on the professionalism, work ethic, and character of a potential employee. Initial interactions between teacher candidates and administrators or cooperating teachers play a vital role in your success as a teacher candidate and, therefore, require purposeful preparation and planning.

While understanding that freedom of expression plays a large role in personal clothing choices, it is the desire of the Department of Teacher Education to provide you with the opportunity to make informed choices as you strive for a professional presentation in your interactions with local administrators and teachers.

Professional dress is required of our teacher candidates every time a visit is made to local, surrounding area, and remote campuses. Professionalism begins with the first field placement required in Educational Foundations and Multicultural Perspectives and continues throughout one's career.

At all times the candidate is expected to meet district and campus expectations regarding dress code. These expectations vary from district to district and reflect the culture of the community. The following specific guidelines for the ACU Teacher Education candidates have been developed to reflect area district expectations:

- ACU student badge must be worn on any campus during every field experience placement through graduation. If you do not have this student ID badge, you must go by Wildcat Central to get this made. ACU lanyards are available through the Teacher Education office.
- Appropriate, professional and modest attire is required.
- Clothing must be appropriately sized. Clothing that is excessively altered, slit, worn, or frayed is not professional.
- Shorts of any length are unacceptable unless serving in a physical education or athletic capacity.
- All apparel and/or accessories must be free of references to race, alcohol products, tobacco products, drugs, sex, vulgarity, death, suicide, or violence either explicitly or by innuendo.
- Shoes appropriate for school must be worn at all times. Beach shoes and are considered unprofessional.
- Hair should be clean and appropriately groomed. As a teacher candidate and a guest in the school district, it may be necessary modify personal style choices to be consistent with local cultural expectations.
- Any apparel or accessory that denotes gang-related association is prohibited, i.e. rags, bandanas, chains, spiked or studded items, or other physical alterations as identified by local law enforcement.
- District policies vary in regard to facial hair. You will need to inform yourself of policies that might affect you in your assigned placement.

In the case where the district has established standards that go beyond those outlined here, our students are required to abide by the district policy. If the district is more lenient, our students are required to abide by the policies outlined in this document.

## **Professional Organizations**

Membership in professional education organizations has many benefits, which may include liability insurance at no cost or reduced rates, access to professional literature, and professional development opportunities. As part of the Teacher Education Program at ACU, candidates are expected to explore these organizations and join and maintain membership in at least one professional organization. There are many organizations that may meet this requirement. A partial list of organizations can be found below.

### **State Teacher Organizations:**

These organizations provide liability insurance for the pre-service and/or in-service teacher. Candidates will be required to join one of these organizations during EDUC 211. Free student membership is available for some of these state organizations. It is required that membership be maintained throughout the program. Candidates will be required to document membership at the beginning of each course that includes a field placement.

- Association of Texas Professional Educators; <http://www.atpe.org>
- Texas Classroom Teachers Association; <http://tcta.org>
- Texas State Teachers Association; <http://www.tsta.org>

### **National Organizations by Teaching Field:**

These organizations are devoted to a particular age level or content field. We strongly recommend that you maintain an active membership in one or more professional organizations directly related to your teaching field. These organizations provide publications, conferences, and other professional development opportunities to support your continued development as a professional educator.

- National Council of Teachers of English; <http://www.ncte.org>
- International Reading Association; <http://www.reading.org>
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics; <http://www.nctm.org>
- Council for Exceptional Children; <http://cec.sped.org>
- National Association for the Education of Young Children; <http://www.naeyc.org>
- National Art Education Association; <https://www.arteducators.org>
- National Science Teachers Association; <http://www.nsta.org>
- National Council for Social Studies; <http://www.socialstudies.org>
- American Alliance for Theatre and Education; <http://www.aate.com>
- National Association for Music Education; <http://www.nafme.org>
- Christian Educator Association International; <http://www.ceai.org/>
- Association for Childhood Education International; <http://www.acei.org/>
- National Middle School Association; <http://www.nmsa.org/>

## **Curriculum Materials Lab (CML)**

The Curriculum Materials Lab, or CML, is located in the Education Building in room 116. The facilities are provided for student use for the completion of class projects, the construction of instructional materials and the development of lesson plans. Computer access, lamination services and supplies, as well as curriculum planning books and resources are available for use during normal operating hours. Payment for services is expected at the time services are provided. Managed by student workers with faculty/staff oversight, the CML is open weekdays and some evenings. The schedule is posted at the entrance of the CML. The CML is closed each weekday at 10:50am so that student workers can attend daily chapel.

## Teacher Education Department Course Policies

### Course Grading Policies

The Teacher Education Program is committed to high academic standards. In keeping with this commitment, the department has chosen to utilize the following grading scale:

A	92-100
B	83-91
C	74-82
D	65-73
F	64 and below

Course grades will reflect the candidate's mastery of the course competencies as aligned with the ACU Teacher Education Competencies and the Texas Teacher Standards. Grade penalties may be applied if the candidate does not fulfill professional responsibilities such as class attendance and timely submission of assignments.

It is departmental policy **not** to provide extra credit assignments. However, an instructor may find it appropriate for a student or students to be given the opportunity to resubmit an assignment in order to demonstrate competency. In these cases, the instructor will communicate clearly how this may improve the assigned grade.

All assignments must be completed in a course in order to qualify for a C or better in the course. The syllabus will identify course policies for late submission of assignments.

Course grades cannot be changed after grades are recorded at the end of the semester except in the case of instructor error.

### Clinical Teaching Grade

The grading scale for Clinical Teaching will be provided in the Clinical Teaching Handbook.

### Mastery Assignments

In each course the syllabus will identify mastery assignments. Successful completion of these assignments is necessary to demonstrate appropriate mastery of course objectives. To earn a C or better in the course, these assignments must be completed at a mastery level consistent with a grade of C or better.

Candidates will be provided one opportunity for resubmission of identified mastery assignments if the appropriate level of mastery is not met. If upon resubmission the candidate demonstrates a mastery level of C or better, a course grade of C or better is possible. If the resubmission does not meet mastery level of C or better, the highest grade possible in the course will be a D. While successful resubmissions of mastery assignments qualify the candidate for a grade of C or better in the course, the assignment grade does not change. The original score earned is what will be reflected in the grade book.

If the final exam has been designated as an official mastery assignment, there will be no opportunity to retake the exam. The grade earned will determine successful completion of the course.

### **Courses with Field Placements**

As a candidate for licensure in the State of Texas, you are held accountable for the same standards as the teacher of record in the area of professional ethics. For this reason, we hold high standards of behavior and preparedness for field placements. If a course in which you are enrolled includes a field placement, you will be required to sign a contract affirming your understanding of requirements. (See the Official Forms and Rubrics section of this handbook.) If you fail to fulfill the stated requirements for receiving or continuing a placement, the highest grade possible in the course will be a D.

In addition, candidates in courses that include field experiences must provide evidence of membership in one of the following approved professional organizations in order to be assigned a placement:

- Association of Texas Professional Educators; <http://www.atpe.org>
- Texas Classroom Teachers Association; <http://tcta.org>
- Texas State Teachers Association; <http://www.tsta.org>

### **Writing Standards**

The field of education uses the American Psychological Association (APA) standards for writing. Therefore, within courses in Teacher Education students are expected to utilize APA format for all formal writing assignments. The APA manual is available in the library and citation support tools are available on the ACU Library webpage. You are encouraged to procure a personal copy of the current APA writing style manual.

Furthermore, as students in a professional program it is expected that care will be given in all written communication. Accurate use of grammar and spelling is always important. It is advised that students use professionalism in written communication in e-mails as well.

### **Incomplete Policy**

An incomplete may be granted if a teacher candidate has not met the requirements of the course due to extreme situations outside the candidate's control. An incomplete is not given when a student has simply been negligent toward class requirements. An "I" can only be assigned if the candidate has completed at least 75% of the course in good standing. If a student knows early in the semester that life has presented a significant challenge, it is recommended that a conference be scheduled with the course instructor to assess whether it will be in the candidate's best interest to withdraw from the course and take the course at a later time. An "I" is removed by the completion of the necessary work within the next long term or time approved in writing by the instructor, otherwise the "I" will become an "F" on the student's record. It is **not possible** to change the grade after the "F" is recorded. Incompletes must be addressed before the end of the next long term. It is also important to understand that an "I" calculates as an "F" in the GPA until it is completed. This may impact a candidate's admission status and/or eligibility for financial aid. For these reasons, the teacher candidate must carefully evaluate whether an "I" is the best option. If it is determined that an "I" is the best option, an Incomplete Policy Contract will be

signed by the candidate and the instructor and be filed in the Admission and Candidacy File in the Certification Office. The contract form is included in the Teacher Education Department Forms and Rubrics section of the Teacher Education Handbook.

**Audit Policy**

The Teacher Education Department does not permit individuals to audit courses in Professional Education. This includes all courses with the following prefixes: EDUC, EACH, READ and SPED.

**Guided Studies**

The Teacher Education Department does not offer guided studies for Professional Education courses required for degree completion or certification.

**Transfer Policy**

Both state and national policy hold us accountable for your preparation. For this reason, it is not possible to transfer in professional education coursework from another institution. All professional education courses (EDUC, READ, SPED and EACH) must be taken in residence.

Courses not in professional education that are transferred from other colleges and universities may fulfill degree plan requirements. This will be determined by stated university policy or by the individual ACU content field department. However, while credit for the course may be granted, the grades from transferred courses will not be included in GPA calculations for purposes of initial or continuing admission to the ACU Teacher Education Program.

## **Professional Development Points**

In order to nurture our teacher candidates' commitment to professional development, they are required to earn a total of 20 professional development points to be completed and documented while enrolled in the following courses in the Professional Development courses listed below:

- EDUC 211 -- Educational Foundations and Multicultural Perspectives (5 points)
- SPED 371 -- Introduction to Special Education (5 points)
- Senior Capstone Course in the candidate's degree plan
  - EDUC 411/431 -- Elementary Block (10 points)
  - EDUC 412/432 -- Secondary Block (10 points)
  - MUSE 449 Professional Practice in Music Education – (10 points)

Teacher candidates must submit appropriate documentation of professional development to the instructor of record in each course and keep a personal copy for their own records. The Professional Development Points Documentation Form can be found in the Official Program Forms and Rubrics section of the handbook. Professional Development Points Documentation Forms will be filed in the candidate's Admission and Candidacy Folder at the end of each of the above courses. The candidate must obtain a signature within one week after the event.

The department will notify candidates concerning professional development opportunities as they arise. The department faculty will designate point values to each event. Points may be earned by participating in professional development events such as the following:

- Region 14 Education Service Center workshops
- Designated "ACU Summit" sessions
- Professional Conferences
- The Iris Center -- <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu>
- ACU Alumni in Action Conference and other department sponsored events
- Teacher Education Movie Symposia

Candidates may earn points at any time, maintaining their own documentation forms until enrolled in one of the courses above. Remember to have the Professional Development Points Documentation form signed by a faculty member within one week after the event. However, points from one professional development event may not be split between courses.

Failure to complete the Professional Development Points requirement will result in receiving an "Incomplete" in the course. Candidates will have one semester to fulfill the Professional Development Points requirement to have the "Incomplete" removed. Incompletes that are not removed within one semester automatically become an "F".

### **Note the following policies applying to Movie Symposia:**

1. No more than 2 points will be earned for participation in a movie symposium.
2. In order to earn the professional development points, the candidate must participate in pre-viewing preparation and post-viewing discussions included in the symposium. Candidates must participate actively in the discussions in order to earn the points.
3. No more than one movie symposium can be submitted for each course in which professional development points are required.



# Texas Education Agency Required Disclosures

## **Program Closure Procedures:**

Abilene Christian University is committed to Teacher Education and has been preparing teachers since 1922. Still, as required by TEA, ACU has established the following process if at any time we are closing any certification area:

- All candidates in the program will be notified with the closing date via their ACU email account.
- All candidates who are continuously enrolled in the ACU Teacher Education Program will be allowed to complete their program in the normal time frame for their degree plan.
- Candidates will be given copies of their records if they will need to transfer to another program (observation records, etc.)
- ACU will sign your Candidate Transfer Form if you choose to transfer to another program.

## **Abilene Christian University Educator Preparation Program Complaint Policy**

In compliance with state policy and in consistency with our Christian commitment to excellence and accountability, we are providing the contact information for feedback or any complaints that could arise regarding our program. In addition, links to the Texas Education Agency complaint process and the ACU Student Complaint processes are included below.

### **Dr. Dana Kennamer**

*Teacher Education Program Director*  
Phillips Education Building Room 101  
ACU Box 29008  
Abilene, TX 79699-9008  
Email: [dana.kennamer@acu.edu](mailto:dana.kennamer@acu.edu)  
Phone: 325-674-2112

### **Dr. Jennifer Shewmaker**

*Dean of the College of Education and Human Services*  
Phillips Education Building Room 103  
ACU Box 28276  
Abilene, TX 79699  
Email: [jws02b@acu.edu](mailto:jws02b@acu.edu)  
Phone: 325-674-2700

ACU Student Complaint Policy

<https://www.acu.edu/dean-of-students/student-handbook/student-complaint-policy/>

Texas Education Agency Complaint Policy

<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/preparation-and-continuing-education/complaints-against-educator-preparation-programs>

## **Supply and Demand for Educators in Texas**

*Note: The following information has been provided by the Texas Education Agency for compliance purposes only. No endorsement of the information sources is implied.*

Over the next decade, there will be an increasing demand for new teachers due in part to a dramatic increase in enrollments and high attrition rates as an aging teacher workforce becomes eligible for retirement.

As hiring trends soar, Texas has once again broken its own record by achieving record- breaking hiring in 2013 with over 4,500 new teachers placed in the classroom.

As demographics change in Texas, there will be an increasing need to attract minority teachers. One of the goals of the SBOE is to have a teacher workforce that reflects the racial- ethnic composition of the state.

In the State of Texas, there continues to be a shortage of secondary math and science teachers. The Texas Education Agency has released the statewide teacher shortages areas: Bilingual Education/English as a Second Language; Foreign Languages; Mathematics (STEM); Science; Special Education.

The Texas Workforce Commission anticipates elementary school teaching positions will add the second-highest number of jobs among all occupations in the state through the end of the decade assuming the economy returns to long-term growth patterns. That's nearly 68,000 new jobs. Middle schools are expected to add an additional 65,000 teaching jobs during the same time period.

Typically, teachers are in demand for urban and rural areas. Urban and poor communities will have the greatest need for teachers, with more than 700,000 additional teachers needed in the next decade. Urban communities also face the added challenge of retaining their teachers, who may be attracted to the higher salaries offered in wealthier suburban school districts. The urban schools typically open schools with substitutes in the classroom because of the lack of available certified teachers. Some school district will pay a signing bonus or extra stipend as an incentive if the teacher agrees to teach in an inner-city school or in a shortage area. If a teacher is trying to get a job along the Interstate 35 corridor, the competition will be fierce. The rural areas typically have difficulty attracting teachers because of their remoteness and lack of amenities.

Since some shortage areas have been forced to hire teachers without certifications or to instruct in areas outside of their certifications, preference is given to teachers with a Master of Arts in Teaching, a Master's of Education or a similar graduate degree. Having a master's degree can equate to higher salaries and more leadership opportunities.

## **Teacher Education Program Official Forms and Rubrics**

- 1. Application for Admission**
- 2. Formal Review of Concern**
- 3. Professional Development Points Documentation Form**
- 4. Field Experience Contract**
- 5. Acknowledgment of Receipt**

# **1. Application for Admission**

## Abilene Christian University

### Application for Admission to Teacher Education

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_  
PLEASE PRINT LAST FIRST M.I. MAIDEN PREFERRED

**S.S.** \_\_\_\_\_ **BID** \_\_\_\_\_ **D.O.B.** \_\_\_\_\_ **Gender** \_\_\_\_\_

**Local Address** \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET APT ACU BOX TOWN ZIP CODE

**Permanent Address** \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET TOWN STATE ZIP CODE

**Telephone** \_\_\_\_\_ **ACU Email** \_\_\_\_\_  
HOME CELL

**Ethnicity (must check one):** Hispanic or Latino \_\_\_\_\_ Not Hispanic or Latino \_\_\_\_\_

**Race (check all that apply):** American Indian or Alaska Native \_\_\_\_\_ Asian \_\_\_\_\_ Black or African American \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander \_\_\_\_\_ White \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you and international student attending ACU on a Student Visa?** \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**Have you transferred hours from another institution?** \_\_\_\_\_ **Previous University** \_\_\_\_\_ **# of hours:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Hours Completed (all college work):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Current GPA (ACU hours):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you completed ENGL 111 and 112?** ENGL 111 \_\_\_\_\_ ENGL 112 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_@ACU or \_\_\_\_\_ other institution \_\_\_\_\_@ACU or \_\_\_\_\_ other institution

**Certification Area** (list content field for 4-8, Secondary or All-Levels):

**EC-6:** \_\_\_\_\_ **4-8 Content:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Secondary Content:** \_\_\_\_\_ **All-Levels Content:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Special Education with EC-6** \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understand the criteria for admission to the ACU Teacher Education program and submit this application accordingly. I have included all required documents with this application including the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ Teacher Education Handbook Acknowledgement of Receipt  
INITIAL

\_\_\_\_\_ Texas Educators' Code of Ethics Statement of Affirmation  
INITIAL

\_\_\_\_\_ Photocopy of Driver's License/Texas ID  
INITIAL

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that participation in field experiences in P-12 schools will require that I submit to a background check.  
INITIAL

\_\_\_\_\_  
 SIGNATURE OF CANDIDATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
 DATE

## **2. Formal Review of Concern**

## Formal Review of Concern Form

**Teacher candidate's name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Banner #** \_\_\_\_\_

Is the concern? (Check all that apply.)

_____ Academic Criteria	_____ Personal & Prof Requirements
_____ Cultural & Social Attitudes & Behavior	_____ Emotional & Mental Abilities
_____ Ethical Behavior & Christian Integrity	

**Directions:** Please briefly describe the behavior(s), situation(s), or class requirement(s) that motivated you to complete this form and the setting(s) in which it was recognized. Attach any additional relevant documentation.

Student signature indicates notification regarding concern(s) and is not an indication of agreement.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty signature(s) indicates that the student has been informed in writing of the concern(s) expressed above.

Faculty Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **3. Incomplete Policy Contract**



Deadline(s) for completing course assignments (designate specific deadlines for each assignment):

1)	Assignment	Deadline

2)	Assignment	Deadline

3)	Assignment	Deadline

Assignment	Deadline
1) $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{3} \times \frac{1}{4} \times \frac{1}{5} \times \frac{1}{6} \times \frac{1}{7} \times \frac{1}{8} \times \frac{1}{9} \times \frac{1}{10}$	10/10/2023
2) $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{3} \times \frac{1}{4} \times \frac{1}{5} \times \frac{1}{6} \times \frac{1}{7} \times \frac{1}{8} \times \frac{1}{9} \times \frac{1}{10}$	10/10/2023
3) $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{3} \times \frac{1}{4} \times \frac{1}{5} \times \frac{1}{6} \times \frac{1}{7} \times \frac{1}{8} \times \frac{1}{9} \times \frac{1}{10}$	10/10/2023
4) $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{3} \times \frac{1}{4} \times \frac{1}{5} \times \frac{1}{6} \times \frac{1}{7} \times \frac{1}{8} \times \frac{1}{9} \times \frac{1}{10}$	10/10/2023

It is the understanding of the Professor and the student that **all work** will be completed and turned in by \_\_\_\_\_. Failure to meet this deadline will result in a failing grade for the course. Any Incomplete not taken care of by the end of the first long semester after the student was enrolled in the course will automatically change to an F in the Registrar's Office. It is not possible to change the grade after the F is recorded. Please remember that once an Incomplete has been assigned for a specific course the student cannot withdraw from that class. See the Teacher Education Handbook for further implications.

---

Signature of Student

---

Date

---

Signature of Professor

---

Date \_\_\_\_\_

---

Signature of Department Chair

---

Date

## **4. Professional Development Points Documentation Form**

# Professional Development Points Documentation Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Course (Circle One)

EDUC 211 – Educational Foundations and Multicultural Perspectives

SPED 371 – Teaching Students with Special Needs

EDUC 411/431 – Elementary Block

EDUC 412/432 – Secondary Block

MUSE 449 – Professional Practice in Music Education

*An event may only be used for one of the above reporting periods. You may not split the hours/points between two courses. Individual sessions at a professional conference are not considered separate events. Attendance at a conference is considered one event.*

Professional Development Event:

Date, Time, and Location of Event:

Hours Completed \_\_\_\_\_

Points earned \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Instructor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Please submit a copy of any certificates received, if applicable. You must also attach a typed reflection of no less than one page, double-spaced describing your professional growth in reference to this event.*

## **5. Field Experience Contract**

**Abilene Christian University Teacher Education Program**  
**FIELD EXPERIENCE CONTRACT**

The candidate is expected to successfully participate in \_\_\_\_\_ hours of field experience.

<b>Indicators of Professionalism</b>	<b>Course Requirement(s)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Attendance:</b> Attends all classes, meetings and appointments unless absolutely unavoidable.  Provides documentation when applicable.  If the candidate is unable to attend the scheduled field experience, they must contact the instructor prior to the scheduled time.	Must not exceed _____ absences	
<b>Punctuality:</b> Arrives to class, placement and other commitments at the scheduled time.	Must not exceed _____ tardies	
<b>Personal Appearance:</b> Adheres to stated dress code in the ACU Teacher Education Handbook. Dresses modestly and appropriately for the learning context.	No more than one dress code violation.	
<b>Professional Membership:</b> Provides evidence of current membership in ATPE, TSTA or TCTA		
<b>Other:</b>		

**I understand that if I do not comply with the above requirements, the field experience may be discontinued.**

**I also understand that as a candidate for certification in the State of Texas, state policy requires that I adhere to the Educator's Code of Ethics established in the Texas Administrative Code.**

_____ Signature (Candidate)	_____ Printed Name	_____ Date
_____ Signature (Professor)	_____ Printed Name	_____ Date

# Acknowledgement of Receipt

## Acknowledgement of Receipt

I have received and reviewed the Abilene Christian University Teacher Education Student Handbook.

Print Full Name	Signature
Date	Banner Number

Initial and date each of the following to indicate that you have reviewed the following documents, policies and procedures:

**Initials/Date**

____/____	ACU Teacher Education Domains and Competencies
____/____	Texas Teacher Standards and PPR Standards
____/____	ACU Teacher Education Candidate Dispositions Rubric
____/____	Capstone Requirements (Capstone Paper and Showcase)
____/____	Criteria for Admission to ACU Teacher Education
____/____	Candidate Admission and Review Procedures
____/____	Clinical Teaching Policies
____/____	Remote Clinical Teaching Policies
____/____	August Experience Requirement
____/____	Certification and Testing Information and Policies
____/____	Texas Education Agency Criminal Background Check policy
____/____	Texas Education Agency Required Disclosers (Program Closure, Complaint Policy, Educator Supply & Demand in Texas)
____/____	Texas Education Agency Criminal History Check policy
____/____	Texas Educator Code of Ethics
____/____	ACU Teacher Education Academic Integrity Policy
____/____	ACU Teacher Education Dress Code
____/____	Professional Organization Membership Requirement
____/____	Teacher Education Department Course Policies
____/____	Teacher Education Department Writing Standards
____/____	Field Experience Contract
____/____	Professional Development Points Requirements