

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR ADMISSION, CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT AND CERTIFICATION

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SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

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A student must be admitted, retained in, and successfully complete a state-approved teacher education program in order to receive a teaching certificate. The components of an approved teacher preparation program include:

- 1) an earned bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education,
- 2) completion of approved teaching subject matter field(s), e.g., approved majors, major equivalencies, minors, or support areas, as specified by the candidate's chosen program faculty,
- 3) completion of a teacher preparation program, including the final clinical experience, e.g., student teaching,
- 4) and verification by program faculty that all applicable standards in all required standards sets have been met.

The College of Education Program Faculties, the College of Education Director of Teacher Education, and the University Registrar are charged with the responsibility to monitor a student's progress through the teacher preparation program and to recommend to the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) that a successful candidate be awarded a state teaching license (certificate).

SECTION 2: CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT

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1. A candidate's progress through all teacher preparation programs is continuously monitored, assessed, and reviewed. In addition to typical evaluation processes that occur as part of their course work and clinical experience placements, candidates will be assessed a minimum of three times during their program by representatives of their respective program faculty.
2. The candidate assessments will occur upon entry into the Teacher Education Program, at a midpoint in the program (no later than the semester prior to the final clinical experience, e.g., student teaching), and as students exit the program following the final clinical experience, e.g., student teaching. Assessments will include, but are not limited to: (a) appropriate scores on approved standardized tests, (b) review of grades via inspection of transcript, (c) personal and professional skills assessed during interviews with program faculty, throughout coursework, and during clinical experiences, (d) artifacts submitted by the candidate that demonstrate their ability to attain standards, (e) continued adherence to the KY Professional Code of Ethics, and (f) documentation of the following skills: critical thinking, communication, creativity, and collaboration.
3. Professional Growth Plan (PGP) Following admission to a teacher education program, if problems have been identified at any assessment point, program faculty will prepare a professional growth plan for the candidate which addresses the problems, identifies the scheme to implement the professional growth plan, and provides feedback and direction to the candidate.

Section 2A: First Continuous Assessment Point... Admission to Teacher Educ. Programs (TEP)

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1. A candidate's progress through all teacher preparation programs is continuously monitored, assessed, and reviewed. The first continuous assessment point is admission to a teacher education program (TEP). In addition to the general requirements for admission to teacher education listed below, candidates should carefully review the specific requirements of their individual programs.
2. Candidates for admission to TEP must have completed at least 30 semester hours, or, if pursuing initial certification as a certificate-only student or a graduate student, must have earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education.
3. Candidates for admission to TEP must demonstrate academic achievement by earning a minimum overall GPA of 2.75, or a GPA of at least 3.0 in the last 30 hours of coursework. Candidates seeking admission to a graduate-level initial teacher preparation program must also satisfy UK Graduate School admission standards. The UK Graduate School requires an overall UG GPA of 2.75 as a minimum for unconditional admission to graduate programs. And, if the candidate has completed any graduate course work, a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0 is required. Candidates intending to use the "GPA of at least 3.0 on the final 30 hours option" should consult with their program's Director of Graduate Studies for additional information. The UG GPA is taken directly from the transcript showing award of the undergraduate degree.
4. Candidates for admission to TEP must certify their knowledge of the Kentucky Professional Code of Ethics and must sign a state mandated character and fitness review.
5. Candidates for admission to TEP must demonstrate aptitude for teaching by presenting three letters of recommendation from individuals who can attest to the candidate's potential success in teaching.
6. Candidates for admission to TEP must demonstrate that they have reviewed and understand dispositions for teaching. At UK, these dispositions are encoded in the *UK EPP Critical Dispositions*:
 - a. The candidate participates in professional development opportunities, e.g., workshops, seminars, professional conferences, and meetings.
 - b. The candidate demonstrates effective communication, particularly with parents and legal guardians in accordance with district policies.
 - c. The candidate demonstrates punctuality by reporting on time in educational activities.
 - d. The candidate meets deadlines and obligations as a student and a preservice or professional teacher.
 - e. The candidate is prepared to teach on a daily basis with all necessary materials, including lesson plans, manipulatives, handouts, resources, etc.
 - f. The candidate demonstrates collaborative relationships with colleagues and members of the educational community.
 - g. The candidate recognizes and articulates the need for advocacy for the needs of learners and the needs of the teaching profession.
 - h. The candidate is receptive to feedback and constructive criticism, incorporating them to improve practice.

7. Candidates must present artifacts that demonstrate their ability to meet standards. In addition to items specified by the candidate's program faculty, the candidate must provide documentation of the following skills:
 - a. Critical Thinking,
 - b. Communication,
 - c. Creativity, and
 - d. Collaboration.
8. For those programs requiring teacher education related courses as a prerequisite for admission to TEP, candidates must complete these courses with a grade of C or better.
9. Candidates must undergo a formal interview with their education program faculty in which they will have the opportunity to discuss the artifacts that demonstrate their ability to meet standards and engage in a dialog concerning their qualifications for admission to TEP.

Section 2B: Testing requirements for admission to a teacher preparation program (TEP).

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1. All candidates for admission to a teacher education program at UK must demonstrate successful completion of one of the following pre-professional skills assessments of basic knowledge with the corresponding minimum scores:
 - a. An ACT Composite score of 22.
 - b. If a candidate does not meet that, then an ACT score of 18 for English, 19 for Math, and 20 for Reading.
 - c. If a candidate does not meet one of those, then they can take the corresponding Praxis Case exam with the following minimum scores: Writing – 158, Math – 144, and Reading – 150.
 - d. If a candidate does not meet one of these minimum scores by five points or fewer and has an overall GPA of 3.0 or better, they meet the testing requirement.
2. Candidates for admission to a graduate level initial teacher education program (TEP) are not required to pass a basic skills assessment. Meeting the GPA requirement in their undergraduate degree program as outlined above is all that is required.
3. Recency Requirements for testing: Candidates using the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators (CASE) must present scores no older than 10 years. These recency requirements, adopted by the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board correspond to the rules of the Educational Testing Service.

Section 2C: Second Assessment Point... Retention of Candidates in Teacher Educ. Programs

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1. The progress of candidates who have been admitted to a teacher education program is continuously monitored. A retention review may be conducted at any time by the program faculty, but is required no later than the semester prior to the final clinical experience, e.g., student teaching. In addition to the general requirements for the retention review listed below, candidates should continue to carefully review the specific requirements of their individual programs.

2. If at the time of admission to the teacher education program, a professional growth plan was prepared for the candidate, progress on implementing the professional growth plan will be reviewed, and the plan will be updated as necessary.
3. Some of the items which are monitored in the retention review are:
 - a. Whether a candidate continues to earn grades of C or better in professional education classes;
 - b. Whether a candidate continues to maintain a 2.75 minimum GPA overall, or a minimum 3.0 GPA in the last 30 hours of course work;
 - c. Whether a candidate has demonstrated improved competence with the skills of communication, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration;
 - d. Whether a candidate has demonstrated improved competence with the UK EPP Critical Dispositions;
 - e. Whether a candidate continues to demonstrate adherence to the EPSB Professional Code of Ethics;
 - f. Whether adequate progress is being made toward meeting all required standards sets; and
 - g. Whether adequate progress is being made toward completing subject matter coursework requirements for the candidate's chosen certification program. If a review of the candidate's subject matter coursework identifies any problem areas, a professional growth plan will be developed to address the problems. Or, if the candidate already has a professional growth plan, it will be amended to include attention to subject matter coursework problems. (See SECTION 2 item 3)
4. Continued progress through the teacher education program will be contingent on the results of the midpoint retention review. Following a retention review, candidates may be continued in good standing in the program, cautioned about identified problems which have been included in the professional growth plan, placed on probation in the program, or dropped from the program.
 - a. If a candidate is placed on probation in the Teacher Education Program following a retention review, the time and conditions of the next review will be identified and communicated to the candidate by the Director of Teacher Education.
 - b. If a candidate is dropped from the Teacher Education Program following a retention review, the Director of Teacher Education will notify the candidate of this action. Candidates who have been dropped from a Teacher Education Program following a retention review may take no further professional coursework in the program. (See SECTION 7 "Appeals" for additional information.)
5. Admission to the Final Clinical Experience, e.g., Student Teaching. Admission to the final clinical experience, e.g., student teaching requires a successful retention review and recommendation by the program faculty that the candidate be allowed to student teach.
6. State Mandated Examinations for Teacher Certification. The Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) requires that all applicants for a state teaching license (certificate) present passing scores on the appropriate required PRAXIS 2 examinations. Although taking and passing the Kentucky mandated PRAXIS 2 examinations is not a requirement for completion of a Teacher Education Program at UK, teacher certification candidates are encouraged to complete the required state-mandated examinations prior to beginning student

teaching so that the process of applying for and receiving a state teaching license can proceed in a timely manner. Candidates are encouraged to consult with their program faculties for advice on taking the required PRAXIS 2 examinations.

Section 2D: Third Assessment Point... Completion of Teacher Educ.. Programs

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1. The progress of candidates who have been admitted to a teacher education program is continuously monitored. Each program faculty will conduct a Completion Review of all candidates, typically at the end of the final clinical experience, e.g., student teaching.
2. All candidates for completion of a teacher education program must continue to meet all standards for admission and retention at the time of program completion, including GPA requirements.
3. Candidates must have completed the subject matter requirements for his/her chosen certification program.
4. Candidates must have successfully completed all professional education requirements for his or her program, including successful performance in the final clinical experience, e.g., student teaching.
5. At program completion, all teacher certification candidates must present final evidence for review (typically this includes required and optional artifacts that demonstrate attainment of standards) in the format designated by the candidate's program faculty.
6. The program faculty must certify that a review of the final evidence and other pertinent documents has demonstrated that the candidate has met all of the required teaching standards as a prerequisite to recommending the candidate for a teaching license.

SECTION 3: GPA RULES FOR TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS

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Section 3A: GPA rules for admission to an undergraduate initial teacher education program

Admission to an undergraduate initial certification educator preparation program shall require the following: A cumulative grade point average of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale or a grade point average of at least 3.00 on a 4.0 scale in the last thirty (30) hours of credit completed. These will be taken directly from the most recent original transcripts supplied by the candidate.

Section 3B: GPA rules for admission to a graduate level initial teacher education program

Admission to a graduate level initial teacher education program shall require the following: A bachelor's degree or advanced degree awarded by a regionally accredited college or university with a cumulative grade point average of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale.

OR a grade point average of at least 3.00 on a 4.0 scale in the last thirty (30) hours of either undergraduate or graduate credit completed. This information will be taken directly from the most

recent original transcript(s) supplied by the candidate. Candidates intending to use this “3.0 minimum GPA in the final semesters that include the last 30 hours of coursework” option should consult with their program faculty chair and the departmental Director of Graduate Studies concerning the use of this option for gaining admission to the UK Graduate School.

Section 3C: Rules for using of “the last 30 hours of credit” option.

If the candidate uses “the last 30 hours of credit” option, the following procedure shall be used to calculate the last 30 hour GPA. The completed quality hours and quality points for each of the final terms that include the last 30 hours of credit shall be identified. If a group of full terms does not reach 30 hours, the highest grades from the previous semester will be included in order to reach the 30 hours mark. This means that some GPA calculations will go slightly above 30 hours.

Section 3D: GPA rules for retention and completion

Candidates must maintain a minimum overall GPA of at least 2.75 for retention in the program. Candidates who used “the last 30 hours of credit” rule for admission to the program may continue to calculate whether a 3.0 minimum GPA is being maintained at the time of the retention review (normally the two semesters prior to student teaching). Candidates who do not meet this requirement may not student teach.

Candidates must maintain a minimum overall GPA of at least 2.75 for completion of a teacher preparation program. Candidates who used the “last 30 hours of credit” rule for admission to the program may continue to calculate whether a 3.0 minimum GPA is being maintained at the time of the final completion review. Candidates who do not meet this requirement will not be considered to have completed the program, and may not be recommended for a teaching license (certificate).

Section 3E: The rule of “no grade less than C in professional education courses.”

Candidates may have no grade less than C in any course defined in the program as being a part of the professional education component. Any professional education grades less than C must be retaken prior to the final clinical experience, e.g., student teaching.

Section 3F: Special GPA Rule requiring a 2.75 GPA in program sub areas

Some programs require that candidates earn and maintain a 2.75 GPA in the majors, minors, support areas, and professional education course sequences as specified in the program curriculum description as approved by the UK Senate. The application of this rule means that candidates must demonstrate these 2.75 GPAs at the time of admission, retention, and completion of the program.

Sec 3F.1 Programs that use this special GPA rule are as follows:

1. All STEM education initial preparation programs, e.g., Mathematics Education, Science Education (all areas) and Computer Science Education.

SECTION 4: STANDARDS AND STANDARDS SETS IN EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

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Section 4A: All College of Education programs are standards-based

All College of Education programs are standards-based requiring candidates to meet these standards before completing an educator preparation program. Candidates are assessed on these standards at the three continuous assessment points: admission to the program, prior to final practicum experiences, and at program completion.

Section 4B: There are two required core standards sets

There are two core standards sets required for completion of all College of Education educator preparation programs. They are:

Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education Standards (IECE), or Kentucky Teacher Performance Standards (whichever is appropriate for the candidate's program.)

UK EPP Critical Dispositions

Section 4C: Discipline (subject) Specific Standards also required

In addition to these three core standards sets, each candidate must demonstrate mastery of the subject specific standards set(s) associated with their individual program.

SECTION 5: POLICIES ON CLINICAL EXPERIENCES, INCLUDING THE FINAL CLINICAL EXPERIENCE, e.g., STUDENT TEACHING

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Section 5A: General Policy on Intensive Clinical Experiences

The University of Kentucky College of Education is committed to preparing candidates for the teaching profession who are effective, reflective leaders and decision makers. To that end, and in order to meet state certification regulations and national accreditation requirements, teacher candidates complete an array of carefully planned clinical experiences. These experiences are systematically integrated into the teacher education program curriculum. In order to ensure high quality experiences, the College has established a network of clinical sites where candidates complete clinical placements. These sites are part of the university's extended campus known as the university clinical/field network. Sites are selected at the program level (i.e., by the program faculty that governs the curriculum for the particular certification area). Selection decisions are made using specific criteria that are directly linked to program goals, accreditation standards, and certification requirements. All teacher candidates are expected to complete their intensive clinical experiences. e.g., practicum and student teaching in these approved clinical sites.

Section 5B: General Rules for the final clinical experience, e.g., Student Teaching

A student may enroll in student teaching in one of the educator preparation programs provided he or she has:

1. been admitted to and retained in a teacher education program;
2. maintained a grade-point standing of at least 2.75 overall or a minimum 3.0 GPA in the last 30 hours of coursework;
3. completed all professional education courses except the final clinical experience, e.g., student teaching;

4. completed a minimum of 75 percent of the required subject matter courses;
5. applied and been accepted for the final clinical experience, e.g., student teaching two semesters prior to the one in which student teaching is to be done;
6. completed the required national and state criminal background check with no criminal background identified;
7. been accepted by the school system and supervising teacher where he or she plans to do the final clinical experience, e.g., student teaching;
8. scheduled no more than 3 hours of college work to be carried during the final clinical experience, e.g., student teaching with no classes scheduled to interfere with the student teaching assignment; and
9. presented evidence of having had a specified physical examination.

P-12 certification programs require student teaching in more than one grade level.

SECTION 6: CODE OF ETHICS AND CHARACTER AND FITNESS REVIEWS

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All students seeking admission to, retention in, or completion of a UK educator preparation program must complete a state mandated character and fitness review. In addition, students with records of misconduct beyond simple traffic violations must provide complete documentation of this misconduct, utilizing written procedures available in the Office of Teacher Education, Certification, and Field Experiences. Records of misconduct will be available for use by program faculties in making decisions about admission, retention, and completion of the program. Students must also complete any state-mandated background checks, which may include a national check of FBI records. By Kentucky statute, persons with records of serious legal misconduct are ineligible for student teaching, state teaching licensure, or employment in the public schools. Students are responsible for completing all required background check procedures in a timely manner so that decisions about their movement through the program may be made.

SECTION 7: APPEALS

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1. The progress of all candidates for educator preparation is continuously reviewed and assessed at least three times: at the points of admission, retention, and completion of program. Candidates who are denied admission to an educator certification program, not retained in the program, or denied completion of the program may appeal the decision of the program faculty. There are two grounds on which a candidate may appeal an unfavorable continuous assessment review: 1) a candidate may appeal if s/he has clear evidence that his/her rights to equal opportunity or due process were violated during the review process (i.e., evidence of discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, etc.) or 2) a candidate may appeal if there is new and substantial evidence pertaining to his/her review that was not available for Program Faculty consideration at the time the candidate applied and/or was reviewed (test scores were late or missing; transcripts were inaccurate, etc.). These are the only two grounds on which an appeal may be filed.

2. Any candidate considering an appeal of a program faculty decision at any of the required Continuous Assessment Review points is encouraged to first meet with the program faculty chair to discuss the program faculty's decision and to review grounds for the appeal.
3. If an appeal is to be made, candidates must request reconsideration of the program faculty's decision within 15 business days of the date on the letter notifying the candidate of an unfavorable continuous assessment review. The request for reconsideration must clearly state the grounds on which the appeal is made and demonstrate that one of the two conditions for appeal applies. Written requests should be presented to the program faculty chair, who will call a meeting of the program faculty to review the original decision. The program faculty chair will notify the Director of Teacher Education of the faculty's decision, and the Director will notify the candidate in writing.
4. If the program faculty does not alter its initial decision, the candidate may use the same procedures and appeal to the Appeals Sub-committee of the Program Faculty Chairs Committee. Candidates wishing to appeal to the Program Faculty Chairs Appeals Sub-committee must present their request for sub-committee review to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Clinical Partnerships. The Associate Dean will assemble the necessary materials, call the sub-committee together to hear the appeal, and inform the candidate of the committee's decision. The program faculty chairperson for the applicant's program may not serve as a member of the Appeals Sub-committee that hears the case. The Associate Dean will notify the Director of Teacher Preparation of the decision of the appeals sub-committee so that student records may be updated. For purposes of admission, retention, or completion of educator certification programs, the decision of the Appeals Sub-committee of the Program Faculty Chairs Committee is final.
5. This policy addresses all faculty continuous assessment reviews of a candidate's progress through an educator preparation program, including admission to the program, retention reviews of progress through the program, and the final review for completion of the program.

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