

# TEACHER EDUCATION ADMISSION / RETENTION

## Official Departmental Policy (VERSION A; Revision: 09/17/19)

### TEACHER EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

**Standard I - Personal Behavior and Ethical Conduct.** Behavioral and dispositional indicators:

- Respect personal, academic, and professional rights and responsibilities of others.
- Maintain dignity of the teaching profession by respecting/obeying laws, exemplifying honesty and integrity.
- Accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession, including all individuals associated with the teacher preparation program.
- Demonstrate respect for the dignity, individuality, culture, and values of each person.
- Cooperate with teacher education established policies and procedures.
- Work compatibly with other students, staff, and faculty.
- Demonstrate commitment and dedication in preparing to teach.
- Assume personal responsibility for actions and consequences.
- Be responsible for timely attendance.
- Maintain professional dress while in the field setting.
- Demonstrate professional behavior in class or field assignments.
- Do own work on assignments and exams (unless specifically directed to collaborate) including accurately citing work and avoiding plagiarism
- Exhibit a positive attitude toward the education profession and course content area.
- Develop and adhere to appropriate professional boundaries in all relationships with field experience students.
- Safeguard others from conditions detrimental to learning, emotional or physical health, or safety.
- Comply with all rules and regulations of the local school(s) for any field assignment or class assignment.
- Use technology appropriately (at WSU and field) *Refer to Teacher Education Standards*

**Standard II - Academic Skills.** Behavioral and dispositional indicators:

- Maintain teacher education academic standards including full participation in all course activities, compliance with attendance policies, and completion of assignments.
- Demonstrate commitment to learning, openness to new ideas, and a tolerance for ambiguity.
- Demonstrate competence in written and oral English language.
- Maintain pattern of exceeding minimum requirements in course and field work.
- Demonstrate ability to apply knowledge and skills in classroom settings with school-aged students.

## I. DEFINITIONS

Terms indicated below will be shown in italics and shall have the following meanings in this Admission/Retention Policy statement, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

Admission/Retention Committee (also referred to as A/R Committee, or solely as Admission Committee or Retention Committee, according to functions being performed.) - Standing committee of the Department of Teacher Education charged with executing student admission and retention affairs.

Admitted to Candidacy - Provisionally admitted students are admitted to candidacy for licensure at the beginning of their student teaching semester provided they have successfully completed all required course work, field experiences, and testing, and adhered to Teacher Education Professional Standards. In the absence of evidence of satisfactory progress, a provisionally admitted student will not be admitted to candidacy, and may not register for Level 3 courses.

Admissions Interview - An interview conducted for each applicant who has satisfied all Teacher Education Academic Admission Criteria. The structured interview is conducted by a team of professional educators that includes one or more WSU Teacher Education faculty.

In Good Standing - No unresolved problems or concerns exist between the applicant and faculty/administration of any higher education institution attended by the student.

Professional Education Courses - All EDUC courses requiring admittance in the Teacher Education Program. (See Weber State University Catalog requirements for Early Childhood, Elementary, Composite Elementary and Special Education, and Secondary Education Majors.)

Preliminary Review - A due process meeting of the Retention Committee wherein a brief summary of concerns from one or more Student Referral(s) is presented for the sole purpose of determining whether or not formal Committee action is warranted for the case.

Provisional Admission (or Provisionally Admitted) - Refers to Teacher Education students authorized to enroll in required Professional Education Levels 1, 2, 3, and Pro Core courses.

Retention Hearing - A meeting of the Teacher Education Retention Committee to consider academic and/or professional concerns raised through a Student Referral. In such meeting, the referred student may present written and/or verbal information and evidence to address or refute concerns raised by the referral. After evidence has been presented and discussed (including gathering of additional information if necessary), the Committee shall render a decision whether the referred student's admission to Teacher Education should be continued (with or without conditions) or withdrawn.

Disposition/Professional Demeanor Concern Notice (also referred to simply as Notice) – A Notice is a written document addressed by a faculty/ staff member (or a group of individuals

representing a course block) for a student's failure to adhere to one or more of the Teacher Education Professional Standards.

Disposition/Professional Demeanor Referral (also referred to simply as a Referral) - A Referral is a written document addressed by a faculty/ staff member (or a group of individuals representing a course block) for a student's failure to adhere to one or more of the Teacher Education Professional Standards that could potentially jeopardize a student's admitted status in Teacher Education.

Teacher Education Professional Standards (also referred to as Teacher Education Standards) - Standards expected of all professional educators, or those who aspire to be; specifically defined in Section III.B of this document.

Under-represented Populations - Refers to where percentages of teacher education students or practicing teachers fall significantly below percentages of the population at large in the local service area (including gender, ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and individuals having disabilities).

## II. ADMISSION / RETENTION COMMITTEE

**A. Functions and Responsibilities.** The Teacher Education Admission/Retention Committee is a standing committee in the Department of Teacher Education and performs dual functions, as indicated by its name. Functions and responsibilities of the Committee are to:

- Regularly review standards and policies and procedures for admission of students to, and retention in teacher licensure programs; and recommend modifications to policies and procedures as seem appropriate.
- Conduct the application and screening process for admitting students; select and notify qualified candidates; and clarify issues where necessary for unsuccessful applicants for admission.
- Monitor student progress in teacher education programs to ensure the maintenance of academic, professional, and ethical standards.
- Conduct hearings on students referred by faculty or staff.
- Hear and act upon appeals from students who have been denied admission or continuance in teacher education programs.
- Communicate actions related to student admission and retention to department faculty and other appropriate authorities.

**B. Committee Membership.** The Teacher Education Admission/Retention Committee is chaired by a faculty member appointed by the Chair of the Department of Teacher Education. It consists of faculty members from the Department of Teacher Education and representatives from other WSU academic departments, each of whom is appointed by the Chairperson of the departments which they represent. The Teacher Education Department Chair and Advisement Center Coordinator serve as ex officio (non-voting) members of the Committee. Continuity of experience is assured on the Committee by members serving staggered three-year terms.

- The Committee consists of eleven (12) voting members as follows:
  - Eight Department of Teacher Education faculty members, which include four Teacher Education Faculty Mentors, and four other faculty members.
  - Two College of Education faculty members, one each from Child and Family Studies, and Health Promotion and Human Performance Departments.
  - Two Non-College of Education faculty members from departments which prepare Secondary level teaching majors and minors.

### **III. ADMISSION TO TEACHER EDUCATION**

Admission to Teacher Education is a selective process separate from Weber State University admission and must be achieved before students may register for Professional Education Courses. A predetermined number of qualified applicants are Provisionally Admitted each semester, based upon availability of Teacher Education faculty and departmental resources. Provisionally Admitted students are admitted to Candidacy for licensure at the beginning of their student teaching semester provided they have successfully completed all required course work, field experience, and testing, and adhered to Teacher Education Professional Standards.

#### **A. Student Advisement**

1. Teacher Education Advisement - Academic advisement is available in the Teacher Education Advisement Center, Room 230, David O. McKay Education Building.
2. Faculty Mentors - Professional mentoring is centralized with four faculty mentors including one for each licensure program including Elementary, Secondary, Special Education, and Graduate Certificate of Teaching. Names of faculty mentors are available in the Teacher Education website.

**B. Academic Criteria for Admission.** Satisfactory completion of a minimum of 40 semester credits and the following academic criteria must be completed to apply for admission:

1. Grade Point Average (GPA) - A cumulative minimum GPA of 3.00 is required.
2. Standardized Test - The standardized test is designed to show achievement levels in basic academic skill areas. Students may take the test any time prior to applying to teacher education, but limited dates are available for testing. Information regarding dates for taking the test, including critical deadlines is available through the Teacher Education Advisement Center.
3. General Education Core Requirements - General Education Requirements of Composition, Quantitative Literacy, and Computer and Information Literacy must be satisfied before applying for admission. (See Weber State University Catalog for specific General Education Core Requirements.) Completion of an Associate of Arts or Sciences Degree from any college or university in the Utah State System of Higher Education or

Brigham Young University automatically satisfies all WSU General Education Requirements.

4. Communication Class - Complete a three semester credit college-level public speaking course approved by the Teacher Education Advisement Center with minimum grade of B-.

**C. Application Procedures.** After all academic criteria have been satisfied, an application for Teacher Education Admission may be submitted to the Teacher Education Advisement Center. Application to Teacher Education may be made when 40 semester credits have been earned. No student will be permitted to apply for admission to more than a total of three times.

1. Application for Admission - The Teacher Education Advisement Center provides program outlines and advisement, and all necessary application materials. If desired, an applicant may submit with the application a brief letter explaining any extenuating circumstances the applicant wishes to be considered by the Admissions Committee. Transcripts of all college work, including Weber State University, must be in the Teacher Education Advisement Center by the application deadline. Credits for individual professional education courses taken at WSU or any other institution more than five years ago must be repeated and will not be counted toward licensure. By applying for admission to teacher education, students agree to comply with Teacher Education Professional Standards (shown below).
  - a. Weber State Applicants - Applications for admission to teacher education, along with routine directions are available in the Teacher Education Advisement Center.
  - b. Transfer Applicants - In addition to application procedures indicated above, transfer students must include with the application an official grades transcript from every higher education institution attended, and have their credits evaluated by the Weber State Teacher Education Advisement Center. Applicants whose application documents indicate other than In Good Standing by any higher education institution will not be considered for admission until issues are cleared and documented.
2. Group Interviews – After an application is submitted, the applicant may sign up for an Admissions Interview. This faculty group interview must be completed before the applicant will be considered. Applicants will be placed in teams to participate in group discussions designed to assess subjective factors such as commitment, a conversance with educational issues, interpersonal skills, professionalism, and overall potential as a teacher. Members of the interview team rate applicants independently on an interview rubric, and a mean score of the individual ratings may yield up to 40 points in the selections process. A minimum average rating of 28 points is required on the faculty interview to be considered for admission.

**D. Selection Process.** Departmental administrators determine the number of qualified applicants that may be Provisionally Admitted each semester, based upon availability of Teacher Education faculty and departmental resources. Thus, meeting the minimum admission requirements qualifies a candidate to be considered, but does not ensure admission to the program during any particular selection period. Students are Provisionally Admitted twice each year, and notified in time to allow registration for the up-coming semester.

1. Ranking of Applicants - After the Application for Admission is submitted and the Faculty Admission Interview has been completed, applicants are ranked on a 100-point basis for consideration and selection by the Admission Committee. Critical minimums for each of the selections criteria must be met for an applicant to be considered for admission.
2. Under-represented and Special Need Populations - The Department of Teacher Education recognizes needs for qualified teachers among under-represented populations, including ethnic, language speaking, disability status, and critical-need secondary teaching majors and minors (Applicants having disabilities must first register with the WSU Services for Students with Disabilities (SDD) Office before consideration for special admission or program accommodations).
3. Assistance for Non-selected Applicants - Feedback to non-admitted applicants regarding future selection cycles may be obtained upon request from the Teacher Education Advisement Center.

**E. Special Training Programs Admission.** Students in special training programs officially sponsored by the Department of Teacher Education must be Provisionally Admitted to the Teacher Education Program prior to beginning Professional Education Courses. Regularly established admission policies and procedures of the department shall be followed.

**F. Provisional Admission.** Applicants admitted to the Teacher Education Program are admitted provisionally until they have successfully completed all required course work, field experience, and testing, and begin student teaching.

**G. Background Security Clearance.** All applicants are required to apply For Background/ Security Clearance (including fingerprinting) immediately upon being notified of Provisional Admission. Security clearances are valid for three years and must be renewed at the time of admission to Teacher Education if less than one year of clearance remains. Students who do not complete all security clearance requirements by the deadline assigned by the Teacher Education Advisement Center may not may not complete the necessary practicum required in the professional education coursework.

**H. Admitted to Candidacy** Candidates will be fully admitted to the Teacher Education program at the beginning of their student teaching semester provided they have successfully completed all required course work, field experience, and testing, and adhered to Teacher Education Professional Standards.

- I. Five-year Limitation.** Admission to Teacher Education Programs is valid for a period of five years. If a student has not completed the program within the five-year period, she or he will be required to seek readmission to Teacher Education under the current admission policy and procedures in force at that time.

#### **IV. RETENTION IN TEACHER EDUCATION**

- A. Orientation of New Students.** Prior to the beginning of the first course block, a new student orientation will be held where students will be oriented to program procedures and expectations and be introduced to teacher education faculty.
- B. Student Performance Expectations.** Teacher education students are expected to maintain high standards, both professionally and academically. Evidence of dedication and commitment and quality of work are two major criteria considered evidence of professional competence. Instructor expectations and course procedures are detailed in the syllabus for each education course. Secondary students must provide written certification that all requirements of their major and minor departments have been completed before they will be recommended for licensure.
- C. Monitoring Student Progress -** Student progress in the Teacher Education Program is monitored by faculty, staff, and administrators in the department. Regularly scheduled discussion concerning student progress will be held by course block faculty as well as across program faculty when warranted. Field experiences at all levels are monitored and evaluated by university faculty and collaborating teachers in the schools with a variety of checklists and performance critiques. Typically teacher Education students are required to pass the Professional Course Blocks in sequential order with no more than one Level taken per semester.

For secondary majors, academic departments must certify that course work in the major and minor areas has been essentially completed before candidates will be approved to begin student teaching.

- D. Student Concern Notice -** Any student who fails to adhere to Teacher Education Professional Standards may be placed on Notice by any faculty, group of faculty representing a course block, or staff member. A student receiving Notice will meet with the faculty/staff member in a timely manner to address dispositional issue. The Concern Notice and notes from the meeting will be sent to the A & R Committee Chair who shares them with the student teaching coordinator, and the Elementary, Secondary, Special Education, or Graduate Certificate of Teaching program mentor.
1. Initial Notice – After meeting with the faculty submitting the notice, student concern notices are submitted directly to the A & R Committee Chair, who forwards them onto the appropriate faculty mentor. The faculty mentor may, depending on the resolution of the concern, meet with the student to discuss plans for resolving concerns addressed in

the notice and maintaining success in the Teacher Education program. In the event that a student's mentor is the referring faculty member, an alternate mentor will be assigned.

2. Serious or Group Notice - Student notices of a serious nature (i.e. student's success in the program could be in jeopardy), from multiple faculty/staff members (during the entire period of teacher education admission), or those from a group of faculty representing a course block are automatically forwarded to the appropriate faculty mentor, who will meet with the student to discuss plans for resolving concerns and maintaining success in the Teacher Education program. In the event that a student's mentor is the referring faculty member, an alternate mentor will be assigned.

**E. Student Referrals** - Any student who fails to adhere to Teacher Education Professional Standards may be formally referred by any faculty, group of faculty representing a course block, or staff member. Teacher education students and candidates referred for cause may have their admission status revoked by the Teacher Education Retention Committee. All referrals are shared with the Dean of the College of Education, Teacher Education Department Chair, and the Student Teaching Coordinator

1. Initial Referral - Student Referrals are submitted directly to the A & R Committee Chair who sends an email and letter to the student informing him or her of the referral and giving direction to meet with the appropriate faculty mentor, who discusses plans for resolving concerns addressed in the referral. In the event that a student's mentor is the referring faculty member, an alternate mentor will be assigned.
2. Serious Group or Multiple Referrals - Student Referrals of a serious nature (i.e. student's admitted status could be in jeopardy) or from multiple faculty/staff members (during the entire period of teacher education admission) are automatically forwarded to the Retention Committee for Preliminary Review.

When serious, group or multiple referrals are received, the faculty mentor will notify the student of issues reported in the referral(s) and inform her/him that the Retention Committee will conduct a Preliminary Review of the issues in its next meeting. The purpose for a Preliminary Review is to determine whether or not formal involvement of the Retention Committee is warranted. Thus, the referred student is not invited to participate. Referrals of a serious nature will result in the student being immediately suspended from the teacher licensure program pending Retention Committee review.

3. **Referrals during Student Teaching** – Referrals during or following the student teaching practicum may be made by a University Supervisor, Collaborating Teacher, and/or the Coordinator of Clinical Practice/Field Experience. A referral will be made to the Retention Committee in the following cases:
  - a. The Student Teacher Candidate is removed from the assigned placement when it is determined that the situation is damaging to the pupils and/or the reputation of Weber State University, and/or the Student Teacher Candidate is incompetent in fulfilling assigned teaching responsibilities.



- b. The Student Teacher Candidate receives a grade of no credit (NC), or retrain (RT).

When a single referral is made, the Coordinator of Clinical Practice/Field Experience will (a) meet with the referred student teacher candidate to discuss plans for resolving concerns addressed in the referral, or (b) request that the Retention Committee conduct a Preliminary Review of the issues in its next meeting to determine whether or not formal involvement of the Retention Committee is warranted. Student Referrals of a serious nature or from multiple faculty/staff members are automatically forwarded to the Retention Committee for Preliminary Review, and will be treated as Item 2 above.

4. **State Referrals Notification of Alleged Educator Misconduct UPAAC** – Referrals of this nature may be made during any field experience by a University Supervisor, Collaborating Teacher, and/or the Coordinator of Clinical Practice/Field Experience. A state referral will be made for anyone engaging in offences outlined in [Utah Code R277-516](#):

- (a) any matters involving an alleged sex offense;
- (b) any matters involving an alleged drug-related offense;
- (c) any matters involving an alleged alcohol-related offense;
- (d) any matters involving an alleged offense against the person under Title 76, Chapter 5, Offenses Against the Person;
- (e) any matters involving an alleged felony offense under Title 76, Chapter 6, Offenses Against Property;
- (f) any matters involving an alleged crime of domestic violence under Title 77, Chapter 36, Cohabitant Abuse Procedures Act; and
- (g) any matters involving an alleged crime under federal law or the laws of another state comparable to the violations listed in Subsections (a) through (f).

Students receiving referrals of this nature will be immediately removed from the WSU teacher education program pending state findings. Depending upon state outcomes students may reapply to the teacher education program. The reapplication procedure will be conducted by the Retention Committee. This may include a formal hearing and/or a remediation plan outlined below.

**F. Retention Committee Action** - The A/R Committee is responsible to monitor student performance and assure that Teacher Education Standards are maintained.

1. Preliminary Review - Major issues addressed in the referral(s) will be summarized for the Committee to determine if there is sufficient cause for Committee involvement.

2. Retention Hearing - When the Committee determines that concerns reported in the referral have sufficient merit to potentially jeopardize the student's continuation in the Teacher Education Program, a Retention Hearing will be conducted in general compliance with WSU established procedures. A Retention Hearing is a WSU Teacher Education Department action, not a legal proceeding.

A referred student will be notified by email, to a WSU student account, at least 10 working days before the hearing date of his/her right to appear before the Committee and an official letter will be sent on the date of the email. The notification will inform the student of the date, time, and place of the hearing and invite him/her to attend. To assure that all explanations and points of rebuttal are clearly understood by the Committee, the student is encouraged to present a written response addressing each of the allegations to the Chair of the Committee at least two working days prior to the hearing. Though counsel (personal or legal) may attend the hearing with the student, such counsel may not speak for the student at the hearing. Students only may represent themselves in the hearing through written or verbal statements. Should a referring faculty member be appointed as the Chair of the A/R Committee, an alternate chair shall be assigned to conduct the Retention Hearing.

If a referred student has no desire to continue in the Teacher Education program, a written request for withdrawal of admission may be submitted to the Admission and Retention committee. A retention hearing would then not be conducted.

3. Notification of Findings and Decision

The student shall be notified by student account email and in writing of the decision of the Committee within ten (10) working days of the hearing. As a minimum, the notification shall include a statement of findings as pertain to the allegations, the decision of the committee, and indication of the student's right of appeal.

**G. Appeal Process** - A Student who wishes to appeal a ruling of the Retention Committee shall communicate such appeal in writing to the Dean of the College of Education, with copies forwarded simultaneously to the Chairs of the Department of Teacher Education and the Retention Committee. To be valid, an appeal must be received by the Dean of the College within 10 working days from when the student received notification from the Retention Committee and must include a thorough explanation of issues the student wishes to be considered, along with documentation to support any and all assertions.

**H. Reapplication for Admission** - Written approval from the A/R Committee shall be required before a previously admitted student whose Teacher Education admission has been withdrawn may reapply for admission to the Teacher Education Program.