

Essay Requirements for Admission to the Teacher Education Program

Dear Teacher Education Program applicant:

The SMSU School of Education requires each applicant to the Teacher Education Program to submit an essay. Your essay, at least two pages in length (and not to exceed three pages), should include information on the following topics:

The essay written for admission to the Teacher Education Program should include the following:

- Why you have chosen teaching as a career
- What you already know about teaching the age range for which you are applying
- Your experiences in a teaching setting with the appropriate age group (give dates, age levels, and details surrounding the experiences) and other additional experiences you have had working with children/adolescents
- Any additional characteristics you possess which will make you a good teacher

Please submit your essay to the Education Department Administrative Assistant. It is to be **handwritten** in pen on standard 8 ½ x 11 inch white paper (lined or unlined, no fringes); cursive is preferred (especially for Early Childhood and Elementary Education majors). Legibility is essential – if the paper is not readable, it will be returned for revision. The title for your essay should be centered on the top of the first page, with your name centered below the title. Please make sure your name is included at the top of each page of your essay.

Your essay will be reviewed for your ability to express ideas clearly, as well as for accuracy in spelling, sentence structure, grammar, and writing mechanics. One rationale for this assignment is the faculty's concern about the writing skills of all teacher education candidates, as you will be the model for students in your classroom. Becoming an effective communicator is a critical Standard of Effective Practice that is frequently assessed, in multiple formats, throughout our program. Therefore, we have high expectations for this essay in terms of quality as well as the message conveyed.

Sincerely,

The SMSU School of Education faculty

SMSU School of Education
Writing Rubric (Rev. Jan. 2013)

	Aware (1 pt)	Developing (2 pts)	Competent (3 pts)	Proficient (4 pts)
Sophistication of Analysis (8, 32%)	The paper has no sense of purpose or central theme. Sequence of information is difficult to follow. Lacks perspective or insight into topic.	The paper has missing details and is not consistent in its position. The main ideas are incorrectly placed. Supporting details do not always relate back to the main idea.	The paper follows the guidelines for the paper. The subject is followed and position taken is consistent and supported by the themes presented.	An in-depth analysis about the subject is provided. Positions are clearly stated and consistently maintained. The paper is clear, focused, and holds the reader's attention.
Organization and Logical Development (8, 32%)	The paper lacks a clear sense of direction and makes it hard for the reader to get a grip on the main points.	The paper is beginning to define the topic, even though development is basic and general. Not all details are linked back to main idea, and paper tends to jump around.	The paper follows a logical sequence and context is linked together, but little detail is shared. Most areas within the paper are developed and supported, although some elaboration is needed.	The paper is well developed and maintains a purpose throughout. Paragraphs are logically linked and the writing style used is well developed. Arguments, examples, facts, opinions, and details used enhance the main points.
Clarity of Expression (5, 20%)	The paper contains a limited vocabulary and words are used incorrectly. The paper contains structural weaknesses and phrasing inconsistencies.	The paper is beginning to show some elaboration with vocabulary and expressions, but is basic and rather matter of fact and to the point, which makes it a rather dry read.	The language is functional, even though it doesn't contain as much energy as it could. There are some expressive tones used and most points made are clear and precise.	Words and phrases are chosen carefully and expressions are constructed purposefully. Each point the author makes is expressed exactly, precisely, and as clear as possible.
Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling (4, 16%)	Errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, usage, grammar, and/or paragraphing repeatedly distract the reader and make it difficult to read and/or comprehend intended message.	The paper demonstrates reasonable control over a limited range of standard writing conventions, although repeated errors are found throughout the paper.	The paper has few errors and most errors are sporadic and do not take away from the main idea of thoughts and expressions presented throughout paper.	The paper uses grammar, punctuation and spelling correctly. There are very few, if any, errors found. The paper demonstrates a solid grasp of standard writing conventions.

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