

**Southwest Minnesota State University**  
**School of Education**  
**Teacher Education Program**  
**POLICIES, PRACTICES, & DUE PROCESS**  
**Approved October 20, 2010 – Updated AY2022**

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**Teacher Education Program Policies & Practices**

**Teacher Education Program Application Process**

The Teacher Education Program accepts application materials throughout the year. Applications are reviewed by advisors once files are complete. Teacher Education Program applications should be submitted no later than March 1<sup>st</sup> for priority admission consideration for the following academic year as the registration window for courses usually opens late March.

The academic and education references for admission to the TEP may come from the School of Education faculty. However, candidates are encouraged to seek an academic reference outside of the School of Education when possible. Secondary/ K-12 teacher candidates (TCs) should seek an academic reference from their content majors.

For teacher candidates holding a bachelor's degree, they may apply for admission to the Teacher Education Program and be admitted based on their previous degree. They must sign off acknowledging that the ENG/COMM/MATH requirements must be met, and if determined that these requirements have not been met prior to admission to the TEP, they may have to take additional coursework or seek the CLEP option or provide required evidence of meeting the requirements.

**Admission to Teacher Education Requirements**

Reference the most recent version of the Teacher Education Program application for updates also noted as an appendix of this document. The published TEP requirements are found on the SMSU SoE webpage: <https://www.smsu.edu/academics/schools/education/teacher-education-program.html>

**Transfer Students - ED 101**

ED 101 is a requirement for full admission to the TEP. Transfer students may need to have the ED 101 requirement temporarily waived for conditional admission to the TEP, and take ED 101 during the first semester at SMSU. A Placement application form needs to be completed to take the course.

**Transfer Students - SPED 290**

Should a candidate transfer in a course considered equivalent to SPED 290 Introduction to Special Education & LAB without a field experience evaluation, the candidate may submit a course outline, syllabus, or letter from instructor as evidence of completed lab hours.

## TEP GPA Requirements

The minimum GPA requirement can be met by option A or B or C or D or E:

- **Option A:** 2.8 cumulative GPA from all transcripts from all colleges and universities attended. The cumulative GPA requirement for admission to Teacher Education is different from the transfer of credits and grades for admission to SMSU. Students may plan with an Education advisor to retake courses taken at SMSU or other colleges or universities in order to improve the cumulative GPA.
- **Option B:** 2.8 GPA for at least two of the most recent four terms of college or university work. These two terms must each have a minimum of 12 semester credits of letter-graded coursework.
- **Option C:** Admission to the TEP requires a cumulative GPA 2.8 for full admission. If a teacher candidate has a 2.5-2.79 GPA prior to admission to the TEP, the teacher candidate may be conditionally admitted and sign off that s/he understands that s/he cannot be moved forward to student teaching until his/her GPA reaches 2.8. TEP coding will not change until the teacher candidate being conditionally admitted acknowledges this GPA policy in writing.
- **Option D:** If a candidate has not taken coursework in the last five years, teacher candidates may use ED/SPED/ECSE/TESL coursework in the most recent years to be counted for the GPA for admission to the TEP and Student Teaching. There needs to be a 3.0 (B) GPA or better for the last 15 earned credits at SMSU.
- **Option E:** If part of the post-baccalaureate program, candidates need to meet the 2.8 requirement with the previous degree and/or may be conditionally admitted until the ED 601 course grade is posted, which must be a "C" or higher grade.

Secondary/K-12 Teaching applicants must also fulfill any GPA requirement and course requirements set by the program/major they are enrolled in. A delay in student teaching may occur if these requirements are not met.

The 2.8 cumulative GPA must be maintained for eligibility for student teaching. All "I", "IP" or "F" grades must be successfully resolved to maintain eligibility for student teaching. A "C" grade or better must be maintained in all Education/Special Education/TESL courses to maintain eligibility for student teaching.

Admission to the TEP requires a cumulative GPA of 2.8 for full admission. If a teacher candidate has a 2.5-2.79 prior to admission to the TEP, the TC may be conditionally admitted to the TEP, and sign off that s/he understands that s/he cannot be moved forward to student teaching until his/her GPA reaches 2.8. TEP coding will not change until the TC being conditionally admitted acknowledges this GPA policy in writing.

Candidate GPAs will be reviewed each term. If a candidate falls below a 2.5 after being admitted to the Teacher Education Program, the candidate's acceptance status into the TEP will be revoked until the candidate's GPA is above the conditional admission requirement of 2.5.

All TEP candidates must meet the 2.8 GPA requirement in order to move forward to student teaching.

**MN Code of Ethics for Teachers:** <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/?id=8710.2100>

**Social Media Policy:**

<https://www.smsu.edu/resources/webspaces/academics/schools/education/Placement%20Licensure/guidelines-for-social-media-use-for-candidates-enrolled-in-smsu.pdf>

### **Clinical Experiences Policies & Practices**

Clinical experiences are comprised of field experiences, student teaching, and practicums.

**Livertext**

All students taking ED 101 or ED 601 with the exception of College Now students are required to purchase Livertext with FEM.

**Minimum Requirements for Placements**

A teacher candidate must be at a “C” or better in any education course with a corresponding field experience before advancing to the field experience associated with the course. If the candidate is below the “C” mark at midterm (start of week 9), the instructor of record will communicate with the candidate and Placement & Licensure Office that the candidate will not be completing the corresponding field experience. The candidate will be advised to withdraw from the course.

As courses and labs are tied together, teacher candidates must pass the course with a positive field experience recommendation. If a candidate does not *pass* the lab with a positive recommendation, they will repeat the course as the grades are tied together. Candidates must pass both the course and the lab – or repeat both.

Candidates need to earn a “C” or better in fall methods courses for their program: ED 301, 402, 423, 424, 426, 458 to advance to spring methods courses. Candidates who do not receive a “C” or better will be removed from spring methods courses, and a growth plan will be established with the teacher candidate – along with the Education Advisor, Director of Clinical Experiences in Education, and the SoE Chairperson.

**PreStudent Teaching Experience**

PSTE is set by the TEP during the spring term. If there is a conflict with the scheduled weeks of PSTE due to a university-sponsored event/activity/trip, the teacher candidate will need to contact the Placement & Licensure Office regarding the schedule change. The missed week of PSTE will then be determined by the classroom mentor, university supervisor, and teacher candidate.

SPED or TESL double majors will spend their initial 10 days in SPED 459L or TESL 459L at the middle level with the additional set of 5 days at the ED/Secondary placement replicating the second week in their initial placement (so therefore teaching and not simply observing).

For candidates seeking additional secondary licensures/majors, ED 300L is used for placements such as ED 304L for 1 credit to provide supervision

Candidates may not move on to PSTE without passing previous methods courses successfully with a grade of a “C” or higher. Reference TEP Orientation Guide upon admission to the TEP.

Teacher candidates are recommended for Student Teaching once they have successfully completed the Prestudent Teaching Experience (PSTE) and have met all other student teaching requirements.

### **Recommended with Reservation (RwR) Evaluations for Field Experiences**

1. A candidate with a “recommended with reservation” (RwR) evaluation will be allowed to advance to subsequent program coursework. If there are multiple RwRs, the candidate will be placed on a professional growth plan and monitored closely.
2. Course instructors need to communicate with the Director of Clinical Experiences in Education if there are any RwRs. The Director of Clinical Experiences in Education provides oversight and monitors field experience evaluations for a candidate receiving a “recommended with reservation” evaluation. If there is only one evaluation with RwR, the Director will contact the candidate to inform them that they are allowed to move forward but are being monitored for future evaluations - and include the course instructor, advisor, and chairperson in the communication. If there is more than one evaluation with RwR, the Director will communicate the candidate, course instructor, advisor, and chairperson; collectively a growth plan will be established and tracked for the candidate; the growth plan is to be reviewed each term prior to the candidate advancing forward in the program.

### **Not Recommended Evaluations for Field Experiences**

If a candidate receives a “Not Recommended” evaluation from a classroom mentor teacher, a growth plan will be developed to move forward with an opportunity for a second placement with a new classroom mentor teacher and university supervisor if one is required for the specific clinical experience. The growth plan will be developed by the Director of Clinical Experiences in collaboration with the instructor of record for the specific course and the candidate’s advisor.

If a candidate receives multiple (more than one) “Not Recommended” evaluations, the candidate will meet with the Director of Clinical Experiences in Education, the candidate’s advisor, and the SoE Chairperson as available to discuss other majors. At the point of three “Not Recommended” evaluations, a candidate is counseled out of the program, and TEP acceptance is revoked. A candidate may choose to reapply after 1 full year from the end of the term when the third “Not Recommended” evaluation was received.

### **Student Teaching**

At the successful conclusion of PSTE, the Director of Clinical Experiences in Education will bring the list of student teacher candidates to the UG faculty for review by the first meeting in March for fall candidates and by the first meeting in October for spring candidates. Faculty will discuss any concerns, and any teacher candidates deemed not ready to move forward, the faculty advisor in collaboration with the Chairperson and Director of Clinical Experiences in Education will meet with the teacher candidate regarding concerns and develop a growth plan to move forward. As needed, a nonlicensure degree will be recommended.

### **edTPA – Teacher Performance Assessment**

Teacher candidates (TC) participating in prestudent teaching (PSTE) will only be required to complete one edTPA even if seeking a double major.

Teacher candidates (TC) participating in student teaching (ST) will submit to Pearson for

official scoring. If the TC does not successfully pass the edTPA with the required 13, 13, 12 cut scores, s/he will resubmit to Pearson after revising the edTPA. If the TC continues to be unsuccessful, s/he will remediate locally to be moved forward to licensure.

### **Not Recommended Evaluations for Student Teaching**

If a teacher candidate is not successful in their student teaching placement, they will meet with the Director of Clinical Experiences, their advisor, and the SoE chairperson as available, to develop a growth plan to move forward with a second student teaching placement. If the candidate is unsuccessful at the second student teaching attempt, they will be counseled out of the program and guided to another major/degree option. If the candidate wishes to appeal this policy, they will need to write a formal letter to the School of Education Teacher Education Program faculty and staff requesting for the decision to be reconsidered. If the decision remains, the candidate may appeal the decision to the Dean of the College of Business, Education, and Professional Studies. See DUE PROCESS.

## **DUE PROCESS**

Candidates in the School of Education at SMSU are afforded due process rights related specifically to the Teacher Education Program. Candidates appeals include, but are not limited to, programmatic issues, sub-committee decisions and/or clinical experience related issues. Grade appeals and other issues normally covered by university-wide policies will continue to be handled through the institutional process. Refer to the SMSU Catalog / Student Handbook for the grade appeal process and other student issues not specific to the Teacher Education Program.

### **Appeals – Clinical Experience Issues**

#### **Director of Clinical Experiences in Education**

A candidate's first contact regarding a clinical experience decision should be with the Director. The Director will keep official notes of the meeting and other communications. In many instances, the Director of Clinical Experiences in Education reaches decisions relating to clinical experiences after consulting with the Field Experience Coordinator.

#### **Clinical Experiences Issues Committee**

If a candidate wishes to appeal a decision made by the Director of Clinical Experiences in Education relating to a clinical experience issue, the formal appeal is made to the Chairperson of the School of Education. The Clinical Experience Issues Committee is made up of the Chairperson of the School of Education, the Director of Clinical Experiences, the Field Experience Coordinator, and the professor of record for the course corresponding to the clinical experience.

Requests must be made in writing and must state the reasons for petitioning to the Clinical Experience Issues Committee. The request must be received within *10 working days* of the candidate being notified of the initial decision. The written appeal must state the reason(s) for the review and provide information substantiating one of the following:

- Procedures not followed
- Regulations not applied correctly
- Information not known or available at the time of the original hearing which could alter the outcome, or
- Action not appropriate

The written appeal to the Clinical Experience Issues Committee must also include:

- A copy of the original decision and any documentation relating to the decision of the Director of Clinical Experiences in Education
- Any other documentation the candidate believes would enhance their position with the appeal

The committee will respond in writing within *10 working days*. During that time, the candidate's placement will remain on hold until the issue can be resolved.

### **School of Education Teacher Education Program**

If a teacher candidate is not successful in their student teaching placement, they will meet with the Director of Clinical Experiences, their advisor, and the SoE chairperson as available, to develop a growth plan to move forward with a second student teaching placement. If the candidate is unsuccessful at the second student teaching attempt, they will be counseled out of the program and guided to another major/degree option. If the candidate wishes to appeal this policy, they will need to write a formal letter to the School of Education Teacher Education Program faculty and staff requesting for the decision to be reconsidered. If the decision remains, the candidate may appeal the decision to the Dean of the Business, Education, and Professional Studies. See the following information for the appeal process.

If the decision reached by the Clinical Experience Issues Committee is not satisfactory to the candidate, they may appeal to the School of Education. A hearing will be scheduled to occur within *15 working days* after the formal appeal is filed (based on the SMSU Academic Calendar).

#### Candidate Rights

- The candidate has the right to appear at the hearing.
- The candidate may bring and/or use expert resource persons, e.g., college faculty and staff or other appropriate professionals, to support the appeal.

#### Required Documentation

- Original appeal letter and supporting documentation submitted to the Clinical Experience Issues Committee
- The decision rendered by the Clinical Experience Issues Committee

#### Hearing steps

- Candidate and/or expert witness(es) present evidence.
  - Faculty members ask questions and review relevant data with candidate
  - present. Candidate and expert witnesses (if present) are excused from the hearing.
  - Faculty members deliberate and take action.
- The decision of the School of Education Teacher Education Program is communicated in writing to the student, the academic advisor, the Director of Clinical Experiences in Education, the professor for the corresponding field experience course, and/or other individuals impacted by the decision rendered.

### **Dean of the College of Business, Education, and Professional Studies**

If a candidate is not satisfied with the decision of the SMSU School of Education, an appeal maybe filed with the Dean of the College of Business, Education, and Professional Studies or their designated representative. This appeal must be filed within seven (7) days of notification of the School of Education's decision. The Dean will review all associated documentation, decisions ~~made~~ by the previous individuals/committees, and other evidence pertinent to this case. The Dean's decision will be relayed back to the School of Education Chairperson, who will be responsible for communicating to the candidate and other related parties. The decision of the Dean is final.

### **Appeals - Non-Clinical Experience Issues**

Appeals not related to clinical experiences follow the established due process policies and procedures of Southwest Minnesota State University.

### **Appeals Related to Recommendation for Licensure**

Appeals related to recommendation for licensure from Southwest Minnesota State University's Teacher Education Program should be brought initially to a committee composed of the Director of Clinical Experiences in Education, the Chairperson of the School of Education, and the Dean of the College of Business, Education, and Professional Studies. If the appeal is not resolved at this level, the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board, at the request of a teacher candidate preparing for teacher licensure or a licensed graduate of a teacher preparation program, shall assist in resolving a dispute between the person and a postsecondary institution providing a teacher preparation program when the dispute involves an institution's recommendation for licensure affecting the person or person's credentials. This appeals process is in accordance with MN Statute 122A.09.