College of Education and Professional Studies
Educator Preparation Programs

Clinical Experience Student Handbook (Spring 2027)



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Introduction

The Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education (OELTE) is the unit within the College of Education and Professional Studies (CEPS) responsible for coordinating clinical experiences for both undergraduate and graduate teacher education candidates.

In collaboration with program faculty, OELTE carries out several key functions: it maintains accurate documentation of clinical experiences, partners with the Director of Academic Assessment to support systematic program evaluation, and builds and sustains relationships with local schools and school districts.

Clinical experiences are closely connected to classroom instruction, providing candidates with opportunities to engage in real-world educational settings. Through these experiences, candidates develop practical context for their learning, reflect on professional dispositions, strengthen their skills, and connect theory to practice. Proper documentation ensures that candidates meet both program requirements and the standards necessary for Alabama teaching certification and program accreditation.

As part of the College's broader program evaluation efforts, data collected from clinical experiences plays a vital role in continuous improvement. OELTE works alongside the Director of Academic Assessment to gather input from candidates, Cooperating Teachers (CT), and faculty.

Strong partnerships with local school districts are critical to fulfilling the College's mission. In coordination with program faculty, OELTE is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective relationships with teachers, administrators, agency personnel, and local and state education officials, including representatives from the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE).

I. General Information

The policies and procedures outlined in this handbook apply to all clinical experiences within the College of Education and Professional Studies (CEPS) that lead to initial teacher certification. Specific requirements for clinical experiences will be provided at the start of each semester in which a candidate is enrolled in a course that includes a field component. Additional details may be provided by program faculty within each department and the CEPS Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education (OELTE).

Accreditation

The educator preparation programs within CEPS are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), a national organization dedicated to ensuring the quality and effectiveness of educator preparation programs. CAEP accreditation indicates that an institution meets rigorous, research-based standards for preparing teachers and other education professionals. These standards emphasize strong content knowledge, high-quality clinical experiences, data-informed continuous improvement, and a positive impact on P–12 student learning. Achieving CAEP accreditation reflects a commitment to excellence, accountability, and ongoing program enhancement.

Clinical experiences are a central component of high-quality educator preparation and are guided by CAEP standards. These standards highlight the importance of strong partnerships with P–12 schools, qualified and well-supported clinical educators, and carefully structured, developmentally sequenced experiences that foster candidate growth. Alignment with CAEP ensures that candidates have meaningful opportunities to apply instructional knowledge, demonstrate professional dispositions, and develop the skills necessary for effective teaching upon program completion.

CAEP Standards and Components Relevant to Clinical Practice

Standard 2: Clinical Partnerships and Practice
2.1 Partnerships: Collaborative and mutually beneficial partnerships with P–12 schools to design, implement, and evaluate clinical experiences.
2.2 Clinical Educators: Selection, preparation, and support of effective cooperating teachers and clinical supervisors.
2.3 Clinical Experiences: High-quality, developmentally-sequenced clinical experiences aligned with program expectations.
2.4 Candidate Competence at Completion: Evidence that candidates demonstrate readiness for effective professional practice.

Standard 3: Candidate Quality, Recruitment, and Selectivity
3.4 Candidate Progression: Monitoring candidate readiness, performance, and professional growth throughout clinical experiences.

Standard 5: Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement
5.4 Continuous Improvement: Use of clinical data (e.g., observations, evaluations, and surveys) to inform decision-making and improve clinical practice and partnerships.

Educator Preparation Programs in CEPS

- K6 Teacher Education
- Music Education (Vocal)
- Music Education (Instrumental)
- Physical Education
- Health Education
- PE/Health Merged Education
- Secondary English Language Arts
- Secondary Mathematics
- Secondary General Science
- Secondary Social Studies
- Special Education (6-12)
- Alternative Masters Early Childhood Education
- Alternative Masters Elementary Education
- Alternative Masters Secondary Education
- Alternative Masters English as a Second Language
- Alternative Masters Special Education (K-6)
- Alternative Masters Special Education (6-12)

The Music Education programs (Instrumental and Vocal) are housed within the College of Arts and Sciences and are accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). While these programs are not accredited by CAEP, the clinical experiences and final certification processes are administered through the College of Education and Professional Studies.

UTeach Program

The UTeach program at the University of South Alabama (UTeach South) is a nationally recognized teacher preparation pathway designed for undergraduate students majoring in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) who wish to minor in education. The program allows students to earn a STEM degree and secondary teacher certification at the same time, without extending time to graduation. UTeach South is built on a research-based model that emphasizes early and sustained classroom experiences, strong content knowledge, and effective teaching practices, making it an attractive option for students interested in teaching middle or high school mathematics or science.

UTeach South is a collaborative program between the College of Education and Professional Studies and the College of Arts and Sciences. Students begin with early field-based courses that allow them to explore teaching in real classrooms, followed by progressively more intensive clinical experiences. Throughout the program, candidates receive support from faculty, master teachers, and academic advisors while developing instructional skills, professional dispositions, and confidence as educators. Graduates of UTeach South are well prepared to enter the teaching profession and to meet the workforce needs for highly qualified STEM teachers in Alabama and beyond.

Certifications

In Alabama, the primary pathway to initial teacher licensure is the Class B Professional Educator Certificate. This certificate is awarded to candidates who complete a state-approved educator preparation program at the bachelor's level and fulfill all certification requirements, including coursework, assessments, and clinical experiences. It authorizes individuals to teach in a designated subject area and grade range and is the standard route for candidates graduating from traditional undergraduate teacher education programs.

Individuals who already hold a bachelor's degree in a non-teacher certification area, or who do not hold a current teacher certification, may pursue certification through an Alternative Class A program. This pathway involves completion of a state-approved, graduate-level educator preparation program that leads to both a master's degree and Class A Professional Educator Certification. Designed for candidates who did not complete a traditional undergraduate teacher preparation program, these programs include coursework in education and the candidate's content area, structured clinical experiences in P–12 settings, and a culminating internship. Together, these components ensure candidates develop the advanced knowledge and instructional skills required for master's-level licensure.

II. Educator Preparation Program Policies

Clinical experiences are intentionally structured to provide teacher candidates with progressively greater opportunities to observe, practice, and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary for effective teaching. Each experience builds upon previously developed competencies and prepares candidates for increasing levels of instructional responsibility, culminating in the internship semester.

Throughout their preparation program, candidates engage in clinical experiences that emphasize instructional planning, classroom management, student engagement, differentiation, assessment, professional collaboration, and reflection. Candidates develop and implement instruction aligned with applicable Alabama Course of Study standards, district-adopted curricula, and the instructional needs of P–12 students. Clinical experiences provide opportunities for candidates to examine and utilize high-quality instructional materials, including district-adopted resources and assessment tools. Instructional planning emphasizes alignment among learning standards, measurable objectives, instructional activities, instructional materials, and assessments. Program faculty, Cooperating Teachers, and University Supervisors provide guidance, feedback, and opportunities for improvement appropriate to each candidate's stage of development.

Clinical experiences also provide opportunities for candidates to work with diverse student populations, grade levels, and instructional settings, preparing them for the varied educational environments they may encounter as professional educators.

Pre-Candidacy Field Experiences
All programs require students to complete field experiences before entering the candidacy phase of their program. These experiences are embedded within courses for which state certification requirements mandate a clinical component prior to admission to candidacy.

Field Experiences Prior to Internship
The Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education collaborates with program faculty and University Supervisors to ensure that, across the 2–4 semesters of field experiences in each program, candidates receive placements that build the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions essential for teaching. Before beginning their final internship semester, all candidates complete the minimum hours for their program, in field settings to prepare for full classroom responsibilities. The Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education and program faculty also work together to provide candidates with opportunities to engage with diverse P–12 student populations across grade levels and subject areas. Throughout their field experiences, candidates in all programs gain experience working with P–12 students with special needs. Additionally, all placements are made in regionally accredited public schools.

All teacher certification programs require candidates to complete substantial field experiences prior to their internship in the area of certification they are pursuing. Most of

these experiences take place in P–12 school settings and span the grade levels associated with the candidate's intended certification. In accordance with the Alabama Administrative Code:

- Candidates enrolled in **Elementary Education** programs must complete field experiences in lower elementary (K-3) and upper elementary (4-6) classrooms.

- **Early Childhood Studies/Education** candidates must complete field experiences in at least two of the three main types of early education settings (early school grades K-3), child care centers and homes, and Office of School Readiness programs.

- **Secondary Education** candidates must complete field experiences in middle grades (6-8) and high school (9-12) classrooms.

- Candidates enrolled in P-12 certification programs must complete field experiences in elementary (K-6) and secondary (6-12) classrooms.

Internship

Internships in Class B and Alternative Class A programs are full-time, semester-long placements in school settings within the candidate's certification area. These experiences may occur across multiple classrooms or grade levels and must culminate in the assumption of full teaching responsibilities for a minimum of 10 full days, including at least 5 consecutive days.

If an intern is absent for one day during the required five consecutive teaching days for a reason approved by both the University Supervisor and Cooperating Teacher, the intern may extend the sequence and assume full teaching responsibilities on a sixth consecutive day. In most cases, however, an absence during the five-day sequence requires the intern to restart the consecutive teaching period.

For candidates pursuing certification in two or more related fields (e.g., elementary education and elementary-level collaborative special education), the internship may be divided between the certification areas.

In P–12 programs, the internship must include placements at both the elementary level and either the middle or secondary level.

For early childhood and early childhood special education programs, the internship must include placements serving at least two of the following age groups: birth–3, ages 3–5, and ages 5–8.

For elementary education and collaborative special education (K–6) programs, internships must include both lower elementary (K–3) and upper elementary (grades 4–6) placements, unless candidates have previously completed substantial field experiences at both levels.

For the combined Health Education and Physical Education program, the internship must be distributed as evenly as possible across elementary physical education, secondary physical education, and secondary health education.

Interns may be required to attend on-campus seminars and professional development sessions during the semester. These may occur outside of regular school hours or during the school day; however, interns will not be required to miss more than five days of the internship for professional activities.

The internship begins on the first day of the university semester and concludes on the final day of the semester. Final examination days may be used to make up absences incurred during the internship. Candidates completing internships in the fall semester may be required to begin prior to the start of the university term to fulfill Opening School Experience requirements. Affected candidates will be notified by the end of the preceding spring semester if an early start is required.

Gradual Release of Instructional Responsibility During Internship
During the internship, candidates gradually assume increased responsibility for instructional planning, teaching, assessment, classroom management, and other professional responsibilities. The progression of responsibility is determined collaboratively by the Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor based on program requirements and the candidate's demonstrated readiness.

Candidates begin by observing classroom procedures, instructional practices, and student learning needs. As the internship progresses, candidates assume responsibility for planning and delivering lessons, assessing student learning, and managing instructional activities with decreasing levels of direct assistance. Candidates are expected to demonstrate increasing independence while continuing to receive guidance, observation, and constructive feedback.

All candidates must complete the minimum full-teaching requirements established by the Alabama State Department of Education and their respective programs.

The Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor collaborate to ensure that candidates receive appropriate opportunities to demonstrate readiness for professional teaching responsibilities.

Eligibility

Each program establishes and publishes its own criteria for clinical experience participation. These requirements may include passing state certification exams, meeting minimum grade point averages, demonstrating appropriate professional dispositions, successfully completing prerequisite coursework or field experiences, and achieving passing scores on program-specific certification assessments. A candidate’s progression through the program is determined by program faculty.

See Appendix A for Program Transition Points.

Candidacy
Candidacy is the formal stage in a teacher preparation program during which a student is approved to advance toward internship and certification. Upon admission to candidacy, a student is recognized as a teacher candidate rather than a pre-education major. This designation indicates that the individual has met established academic, professional, and dispositional standards and is eligible to proceed to advanced coursework and clinical experiences.

Certification
Upon successful completion of all graduation and certification requirements, teacher candidates complete the necessary documentation to be recommended for state certification through the college's Certification Office.

III. Clinical Experiences - General Policies

Teacher candidates are responsible for adhering to all policies, procedures, and administrative requirements associated with their clinical experiences. These experiences are closely aligned with academic coursework and are designed to support candidates in meeting established program expectations and professional standards.

Clinical experiences should align directly with associated academic coursework. Candidates are responsible for becoming familiar with the evaluation rubrics and procedures for the course(s) connected to each experience. Final evaluation of clinical experiences is determined by the assessment system established by program faculty and detailed in course syllabi. Program faculty and/or the University Supervisor will provide specific details, expectations, and requirements for each clinical experience.

Initiate Participation
Candidates should discuss their intent to participate in a clinical experience course with their academic advisor at least one semester prior to the anticipated term of participation.

Undergraduate teacher education candidates typically follow a structured curriculum in which clinical experiences are closely integrated with academic coursework during the final semesters of the program.

Consideration of School Placements
For teacher education candidates, school placement decisions are the responsibility of the program faculty in collaboration with the Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education (OELTE). Program faculty work with OELTE to identify appropriate school placements, beginning with approval from local school system administrators.

In addition to certification requirements and placement availability, consideration is given to the following characteristics when identifying appropriate clinical placement sites:

- A professional school environment that supports collaboration, instructional improvement, and the development of future educators
- Opportunities to observe and participate in effective instructional practices
- Access to qualified Cooperating Teachers who demonstrate instructional effectiveness and professional dispositions
- Opportunities to work with students representing varied academic, cultural, socioeconomic, linguistic, and educational backgrounds
- Opportunities to work with students with disabilities and other learning needs
- Experiences across appropriate grade levels, school settings, and instructional environments
- Alignment with program expectations and the instructional responsibilities candidates are likely to encounter upon entering the teaching profession

Specific Objectives/Assignments
Candidates are primarily responsible for completing all objectives and assignments associated with their clinical experience, in consultation with both the University Supervisor and Cooperating Teacher. These objectives and assignments are outlined in course syllabi and are based on CEPS requirements as well as ALSDE and CAEP standards.

Clinical Experience Applications
Applications for clinical experiences are available electronically through academic advisors or OELTE. Candidates are responsible for communicating with OELTE to ensure all required application procedures are completed.

Out of Area Placement Requests
All clinical experience placements are typically made within the service area of the University of South Alabama to allow for effective supervision by University of South Alabama faculty. Exceptions may be granted with approval by the academic advisor or program coordinator.

Students requesting to complete clinical experiences outside the service area must indicate this request when submitting their clinical experience application. The request will be reviewed by OELTE, as well as the academic advisor or program coordinator for approval.

If approved, the student will work with OELTE to secure a placement that meets all program and state requirements. The student will also be responsible for obtaining a letter of agreement from the school site.

Clinical Experience Software Requirements
All students in the College of Education and Professional Studies are required to use Experiential Learning Cloud (ELC) for all supervised clinical experiences. The software is used to collect data and documentation to assess program requirements and learning objectives as required by the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) and our national accreditor, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Evidence collected through this system allows for students to demonstrate mastery of all state and national standards.

IV. Clinical Assessments

Praxis Content Exams
The **Praxis Content exam**, developed by Educational Testing Service (ETS), is a subject-specific licensure assessment used to determine whether prospective teachers have the content knowledge needed to teach a particular subject area. The computer-based exam consists of selected-response questions and, in some cases, constructed-response items that require written explanations or problem solving. ALSDE sets the passing scores for each exam and candidates must meet those benchmarks to qualify for certification in their intended teaching field.

Foundations of Reading
The **Foundations of Reading (FoR)** exam is a requirement for certification for candidates in our K6 Teaching Education, Alt Masters Early Childhood Education, Alt Masters Elementary Education, and Alt Masters Special Education K6 programs. This exam is used to ensure educators understand scientifically based reading instruction, particularly for early learners. It measures knowledge of reading development (including phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension), reading assessment and data analysis, and effective instructional practices for diverse learners, including students with dyslexia and English learners. The computer-based test includes multiple-choice questions and written open-response items that require analyzing student data and recommending targeted instruction. The exam emphasizes the science of reading and the ability to apply research-based practices in real classroom situations.

CPAST
The **Candidate Preservice Assessment of Student Teaching (CPAST)** is a standardized, research-based assessment tool designed to evaluate teacher candidates during their student teaching experience. It measures two major components: pedagogy and dispositions. The pedagogy section assesses how effectively a candidate plans lessons, delivers instruction, differentiates for diverse learners, uses assessments to guide instruction, and manages the classroom environment. The dispositions section focuses on professional behaviors such as ethical conduct, collaboration, reflection, and responsiveness to feedback. The assessment is completed jointly by the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor using a detailed rubric, which provides consistent, evidence-based feedback on a candidate’s strengths and areas for growth. Ultimately, the CPAST is intended to support both accountability and professional development by ensuring teacher candidates are prepared to enter the classroom as effective, reflective practitioners.

EdTPA
The **edTPA portfolio assessment** is completed during the beginning of the internship semester. It consists of students providing evidence of the application of their knowledge and skills in the classroom during their student teaching semester. The edTPA portfolio “requires aspiring teachers to demonstrate readiness to teach through lesson plans designed to support their students' strengths and needs; engage real

students in ambitious learning; analyze whether their students are learning, and adjust their instruction to become more effective" (edTPA, 2019). To complete the portfolio, teacher candidates apply what they have learned from their coursework about research, theory, and strategies related to teaching & learning by providing artifacts documenting teaching & learning during a learning segment lasting approximately one week and commentaries explaining, analyzing, and reflecting on the artifacts. The portfolio consists of three main parts; Task 1, Planning for Instruction and Assessment; Task 2, Instructing and Engaging Students in Learning; and Task 3, Assessing Student Learning. (Elementary Education candidates complete Tasks 1-3 for literacy and are required to complete an additional Task 4 for mathematics.)

V. Teacher Candidate Responsibilities

Teacher candidates are responsible for participating actively and professionally in all required clinical experiences. Candidates work collaboratively with their Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor to meet course and program requirements, support P–12 student learning, and demonstrate continued growth in instructional practice and professional dispositions.

By signing the Site Placement Memorandum of Understanding for Clinical Experiences (Appendix D), candidates acknowledge their responsibilities to the university and partnering school. Each candidate is expected to:

1. **Demonstrate professional attitudes and effective interpersonal relationships.** Communicate respectfully with students, families, school personnel, peers, and university faculty. Demonstrate reliability, initiative, sound judgment, and openness to feedback throughout the placement.
2. **Follow school and district expectations.** Become familiar with and abide by the university and partnering school's philosophy, regulations, policies, and standards for professional behavior and dress.
    a. Maintain a professional appearance by wearing attire that is appropriate for the school environment, instructional responsibilities, and interactions with P–12 students. Follow all university and district dress code requirements and expectations.
    b. Personal cellphone use should be limited to designated breaks or emergencies and must not interfere with instructional responsibilities, student supervision, or professional interactions. Cellphones should remain silenced and put away during instructional time unless use is specifically authorized for educational or professional purposes. Seek clarification from the Cooperating Teacher or University Supervisor when expectations are unclear.
3. **Fulfill instructional and professional obligations.** Arrive punctually and prepared to carry out assigned responsibilities. Complete instructional planning, prepare necessary materials, and deliver instruction appropriate to the placement and stage of preparation. Submit lesson plans sufficiently in advance for Cooperating Teacher review and revision according to course and placement expectations.
4. **Protect confidential information.** Safeguard personal and confidential information about students, families, and school personnel and use it only for authorized professional purposes. Follow the Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix E) and applicable school and university requirements when handling student records, work samples, photographs, recordings, and electronic information.
5. **Follow the appropriate calendar.** Follow the school district calendar during internship and the University of South Alabama calendar during all other field experiences. Coordinate attendance and placement schedules with the Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor.

6. **Participate in the professional life of the school.** Attend school functions and participate in meetings, collaborative planning, and professional learning activities as directed by the Cooperating Teacher and/or University Supervisor, consistent with placement expectations and confidentiality requirements.
7. **Communicate promptly about absences.** Notify both the Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor as soon as possible when an illness or emergency requires an absence. Follow established procedures for documenting absences and completing any required make-up time or responsibilities.
8. **Complete course and program requirements.** Follow the course syllabus and clinical experience requirements, including required hours, assignments, observations, assessments, and submission deadlines. Maintain accurate records of participation and submit required documentation through the designated university systems.
9. **Report challenges immediately.** Notify the University Supervisor and the Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education immediately when challenges arise that affect the placement, candidate performance, professional relationships, or successful completion of clinical requirements. Seek assistance promptly and participate in efforts to resolve concerns.

Instructional Growth and Collaboration

In addition to the responsibilities outlined in Appendix D, candidates are expected to:

- Meet regularly with the Cooperating Teacher, including the weekly planning and reflection meetings described in Appendix D, to review instructional plans, discuss student learning, and identify areas for growth.
- Participate actively in observations, feedback conferences, and required evaluations. Reflect on feedback from the Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor and apply it to subsequent instructional planning and teaching. Candidates are expected to demonstrate improvement in identified areas of instructional practice and professional performance throughout their clinical experiences.
- Use evidence of student learning to evaluate instructional effectiveness and adjust teaching practices to address students' needs.
- Assume increasing responsibility for planning, instruction, assessment, and classroom management as determined collaboratively by the Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor.
- Complete applicable internship teaching requirements and participate in any required support or improvement plan.

Professional Conduct and Accountability

Candidates must uphold the University of South Alabama Student Academic Conduct Policy, Code of Student Conduct, Alabama Educator Code of Ethics (Appendix B), and CEPS Teacher Education Dispositions Policy (Appendix C). These expectations apply to coursework, clinical experiences, professional communication, and required documentation.

Each candidate completing a clinical experience is required to sign a Teacher Education Dispositions document in ELC/Tevera each semester. This document outlines the professional behaviors and expectations essential to effective teaching. A copy is also provided to Cooperating Teachers. Concerns regarding a candidate's professional dispositions should be documented and communicated promptly to the University Supervisor. The Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor will follow the established CEPS Teacher Education Dispositions Policy (Appendix C), including applicable referral and reporting procedures.

Candidates are responsible for understanding and following course-specific expectations and university policy regarding generative artificial intelligence (AI). When permitted uses are unclear, candidates must obtain clarification from the course instructor before using these tools.

Candidates must meet and maintain all program eligibility requirements, including a clear background check. Concerns regarding professional conduct, dispositions, or performance will be addressed in accordance with applicable university and CEPS policies and procedures. Violations of the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics may result in delayed program progression or dismissal from the program. Failure to maintain a clear background check is grounds for dismissal from the program.

Failure to meet clinical experience requirements, demonstrate satisfactory instructional progress, or maintain appropriate professional dispositions may result in delayed progression, or removal from a clinical placement, consistent with applicable university and CEPS policies.

VI. Program Faculty Responsibilities

All required clinical experiences are supervised by a member of the program faculty or a clinical University Supervisor. University Supervisors participate in both supervision and candidate orientation sessions. Through observations, conferences, and the use of both in-person and technological methods, University Supervisors provide intensive mentoring and support, emphasizing research-based best practices within real-world settings.

Faculty members who teach professional education courses or supervise candidates for teacher education programs should maintain a thorough understanding of the current professional responsibilities of the P-12 practitioners in their respective fields. To remain current, faculty and/or University Supervisors must spend adequate time in P-12 school settings and engage in activities such as co-teaching, guest teaching, and participating in or facilitating professional development. This fulfills the ALSDE recency requirement for University Supervisors.

Program faculty and/or University Supervisors are expected to maintain strong, professional relationships with school personnel in the schools where candidates are completing their clinical experiences. For example, teacher education faculty should cultivate ongoing relationships with P-12 Cooperating Teachers and school administrators, as they regularly work within these settings while supervising candidates. These relationships provide faculty with direct knowledge of the strengths and qualifications of potential Cooperating Teachers in partner schools.

Program faculty are responsible for monitoring program standards such as course prerequisites, minimum GPA requirements, and candidate progress throughout each semester of the program.

Selection of Candidates
Program faculty determine candidate eligibility for participation in clinical experiences. OELTE coordinates the distribution and collection of clinical experience applications in collaboration with program faculty.

VII. University Supervisor Responsibilities

The Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education plays an active role in establishing and maintaining partnerships with participating schools. Regularly scheduled meetings with school administrators and Cooperating Teachers are conducted to enhance field experience opportunities for all stakeholders. The University Supervisor supports candidates through mentoring while also serving as the primary liaison between the university and partnering school.

Identification of Objectives and Activities
Field Experience objectives are established through specific courses and are aligned with ALSDE and CAEP standards, as well as the goals of the program. The University Supervisor collaborates with the Cooperating Teacher and candidate to ensure that clinical experience activities are aligned with program requirements. The University Supervisor agrees to this collaboration by signing the Site Placement Memorandum of Understanding for Clinical Experiences document (Appendix D).

Supervision of Clinical Experiences
The University Supervisor maintains ongoing communication with both the Cooperating Teacher and the teacher candidate throughout each required clinical experience. The University Supervisor conducts site visits to monitor candidate progress and complete required lesson observations. Observations are conducted throughout clinical experiences to monitor candidate development and provide opportunities for candidates to implement feedback and demonstrate improvement. Each formal observation includes documented, evidence-based feedback identifying instructional strengths, areas for growth, and specific recommendations for improvement. University Supervisors provide opportunities for candidates to discuss observation feedback, reflect on instructional decisions, and establish goals for continued professional development.

In addition, the University Supervisor reviews all reports and evaluations submitted by the Cooperating Teacher and/or candidate and serves as the primary point of contact when partnering schools wish to discuss aspects of the candidate's experience. University Supervisors collaborate with Cooperating Teachers to review candidate performance, discuss evidence of instructional effectiveness, and promote consistency in the assessment and feedback provided to candidates. University Supervisors participate in required training activities to support consistent interpretation and application of established evaluation instruments, including CPAST, as applicable.

Additional methods of supervision may include, but are not limited to, email communication, review of candidate-submitted materials through Canvas and ELC, and participation in group or individual meetings or seminars. The University Supervisor is also responsible for ensuring candidates upload required documents in Canvas and ELC by the established due dates.

Reporting Professional Dispositions Concerns

University Supervisors are responsible for monitoring teacher candidates' professional dispositions throughout their clinical experiences and promptly addressing and documenting concerns as they arise. When a candidate demonstrates behaviors inconsistent with the professional dispositions and ethical expectations established by CEPS, the University Supervisor must follow the established CEPS Dispositions Referral Process (Appendix C), including timely documentation and submission of referrals through ELC/Tevera. University Supervisors should communicate concerns directly with the candidate, collaborate with the Cooperating Teacher as appropriate, and notify the Director of OELTE when concerns persist or warrant additional intervention. Concerns should be reported as they occur rather than delayed until midterm or final evaluations, allowing for timely intervention, remediation, and appropriate support for the candidate.

VIII. Cooperating Teacher Responsibilities

In general, the cooperating teacher is expected to:

- Approve objectives and activities by signing the Site Placement Memorandum of Understanding for Clinical Experiences document (Appendix D), indicating that the stated objectives are achievable and the proposed activities are appropriate for the placement site.
- Provide a professional learning experience by offering candidates meaningful opportunities for engagement, along with consistent guidance and feedback.
- Evaluate candidate performance by completing lesson evaluations and all required assessment forms, including midterm/final evaluations and dispositions assessments, and by assisting the University Supervisor with the candidate's final evaluation.

As candidates progress through the program, Cooperating Teachers play a critical role in supporting their development by modeling effective instructional practices, providing constructive feedback, engaging candidates in reflective coaching, and gradually increasing their instructional responsibilities. Effective mentoring requires the ability to support candidates through professional communication, collaborative problem-solving, and specific, actionable feedback that promotes continuous improvement. Each candidate's clinical experience includes specific requirements tied to coursework, and the Cooperating Teacher helps ensure these requirements are met successfully.

Additional Responsibilities
Cooperating teachers are also expected to:

- Collaborate with the candidate prior to the start of the school year to model and explain preparation activities (Opening School Experience – fall semester only).
- Introduce the candidate to school facilities, services, policies, and personnel.
- Provide opportunities for the candidate to complete required teaching assignments within the classroom, making reasonable adjustments to the schedule when necessary, and offering feedback on implementation.
- Provide regular, timely, and constructive written and verbal feedback based on observed instructional practices. Feedback should identify specific strengths, areas for improvement, and actionable recommendations that support growth. Document concerns thoroughly and monitor the candidate's implementation of feedback.
- Support instructional planning by reviewing lesson plans in advance, allowing time for feedback and revision prior to instruction.
- Maintain ongoing professional communication and collaboration with the candidate throughout the semester, including regular opportunities to discuss instructional planning, classroom experiences, professional growth, and areas requiring additional support. Encourage candidates to reflect on their instructional decisions and identify strategies for continued improvement.

    - Engage candidates in reflective coaching conversations that encourage them to analyze instructional decisions, evaluate student learning, identify areas for improvement, and develop strategies for strengthening their teaching practices.
- Maintain regular, professional communication and collaboration with the University Supervisor and/or program faculty regarding candidate progress, instructional performance, program expectations, and areas of concern.
    - Collaborate in reviewing evidence of candidate performance, providing consistent feedback, and identifying appropriate professional growth goals.
    - Concerns regarding candidate performance or professional dispositions should be communicated promptly to the University Supervisor. If concerns are not resolved, they should be escalated to the Director of the Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education.
- Allow program faculty and University Supervisors to conduct scheduled classroom observations.
- Participate in Cooperating Teacher orientations, mentoring training, and professional development opportunities conducted by CEPS. These activities support effective adult mentoring practices, instructional coaching, observation and feedback strategies, and consistent understanding of clinical experience expectations and evaluation procedures.
- Complete all required evaluation forms, approve the candidate's time log, attend scheduled meetings, and provide input regarding future placements.
- Gradually delegate increased responsibility to the candidate for instructional and classroom management decisions as readiness is demonstrated.
- Encourage candidates to develop problem-solving skills by allowing them to address instructional challenges independently, while providing guidance and support as needed.

IX. Partnering School Administrator Responsibilities

In most cases, the partnering school is a P-12 public school. As outlined in the Site Placement Memorandum of Understanding for Clinical Experiences document (Appendix D), the building level administrator is expected to:

- Model the multiple leadership roles of an effective instructional leader.
- Identify and recommend qualified, exemplary Cooperating Teachers who demonstrate effective instructional practices, professional dispositions, and the ability to mentor and support teacher candidates. Collaborate with OELTE in identifying appropriate clinical placement opportunities that support candidate development and program expectations.
- Assist candidates in understanding the structure and organization of the school.
- Provide general support to the candidates throughout their field experiences, including opportunities to participate in appropriate school-based professional learning activities, collaborative planning, and other experiences that contribute to their preparation as future educators.
- Meet with University Supervisor at the beginning of each semester and as needed throughout the semester; and
- Notify the University Supervisor and Director of the Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education immediately if challenges arise.

In addition to the responsibilities outlined in the Site Placement Memorandum of Understanding, partnering building level administrators are encouraged to maintain ongoing communication and collaboration with OELTE and University Supervisors regarding clinical placement experiences, candidate performance, mentoring effectiveness, and concerns requiring additional support or intervention. School administrators may also provide feedback regarding the preparation and readiness of teacher candidates, the effectiveness of clinical experiences, and the knowledge and skills expected of beginning teachers. This collaboration supports continuous improvement of clinical partnerships and helps ensure that teacher preparation programs remain responsive to the needs of partnering schools and districts.

X. Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education Responsibilities

The Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education provides a variety of support functions for all required clinical experiences. The following outlines these responsibilities/supports:

Placements

OELTE collaborates with local P-12 school administrators to identify qualified Cooperating Teachers for all clinical experiences. Each academic year, P-12 administrators submit a list of teachers who meet the qualifications to serve as Cooperating Teachers. These qualifications align with requirements established by the ALSDE and reflect mutually agreed-upon expectations developed by program faculty, University Supervisors, and P-12 administrators. Once teachers are recommended, a Cooperating Teacher Agreement form is collected stating their willingness to host a preservice teacher candidate. The information from these completed forms is maintained in the OELTE Cooperating Teacher database. In addition to meeting established qualifications, Cooperating Teachers are expected to demonstrate effective instructional practices, exemplary professional dispositions, and the ability to mentor and support teacher candidates. OELTE considers available information regarding Cooperating Teacher qualifications, previous mentoring experiences, and mentoring effectiveness when making future placement decisions. Feedback collected through established evaluation processes may be used to identify professional learning needs, provide additional support, and inform continued participation as a Cooperating Teacher.

Each semester, as OELTE reviews clinical experience applications, candidates are matched with schools and Cooperating Teachers based on criteria established for the field experience in which the candidate has applied. Placement decisions consider certification requirements, candidate developmental needs, previous clinical experiences, school characteristics, and the availability of qualified Cooperating Teachers. When possible, placements are intentionally selected to provide candidates with varied instructional experiences and opportunities to work with diverse P–12 student populations. OELTE then prepares correspondence to the appropriate administrators of the partnering schools for final approval of the placement. This correspondence will indicate each candidate, the assigned Cooperating Teacher, and the dates/requirements of the placement.

Contact with Candidates

OELTE works with the Director of Academic Assessment and program faculty to provide specific information related to each placement through ELC. This includes:

- Beginning and ending date of placement
- Name of School
- Name of Cooperating Teacher
- Name of University Supervisor
- List of assignments to be submitted

OELTE also serves as a resource for candidates regarding clinical placement procedures, program expectations, and concerns that may arise during clinical experiences, collaborating with University Supervisors, program faculty, and partnering school personnel to provide appropriate guidance and support.

Orientation for Field Experiences Prior to Internship
Program faculty will conduct orientations at the beginning of each field experience through their respective courses. A representative from OELTE will attend the orientation as requested. Relevant University Supervisors will be invited to attend as well.

Orientation for Internship
OELTE will prepare and conduct an Internship Orientation each fall and spring semester. The purpose of the Internship Orientation is to provide candidates an overview of the internship semester, to confirm all placements, and to provide a comprehensive statement of CEPS policies and procedures for candidates during the internship semester. Program faculty and/or University Supervisors will also meet with candidates during the orientation. The orientation also reinforces expectations regarding professional dispositions, instructional responsibilities, communication with Cooperating Teachers and University Supervisors, clinical assessments, and procedures for reporting concerns during internship.

Evaluation of Clinical Experiences
Program faculty will determine the appropriate types of evaluations needed for the varying placement types at various points in a candidate's program. These expectations and evaluations will be communicated through course syllabi. At a minimum, both the Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor will conduct evaluations. Evaluations may include lesson evaluations, midterm/final overview of the experience evaluations, and dispositional evaluations. Because the field component is the most individualized component of a student's program of study, the number of evaluations and method of evaluation may vary by student and program.

In addition to evaluating candidate performance, OELTE collaborates with program faculty and University Supervisors to monitor the quality and effectiveness of clinical experiences. Feedback from teacher candidates, Cooperating Teachers, University Supervisors, and partnering school personnel provides valuable information regarding placement quality, mentoring effectiveness, supervision, and opportunities for candidate development. Information collected through established evaluation processes is reviewed to identify strengths, address concerns, and inform future placement decisions and professional development opportunities.

OELTE collaborates with the Director of Academic Assessment and program faculty to review clinical experience data as part of the College's continuous improvement efforts. Information may include candidate performance on established assessments, observation and evaluation results, clinical placement information, stakeholder feedback, and available program outcome data. Findings are used to identify trends in candidate preparation, evaluate the effectiveness of clinical experiences, and determine

opportunities for program improvement. When appropriate, feedback and findings may be shared with partnering school districts to support collaborative planning and strengthen clinical partnerships.

Clinical Experience Documentation

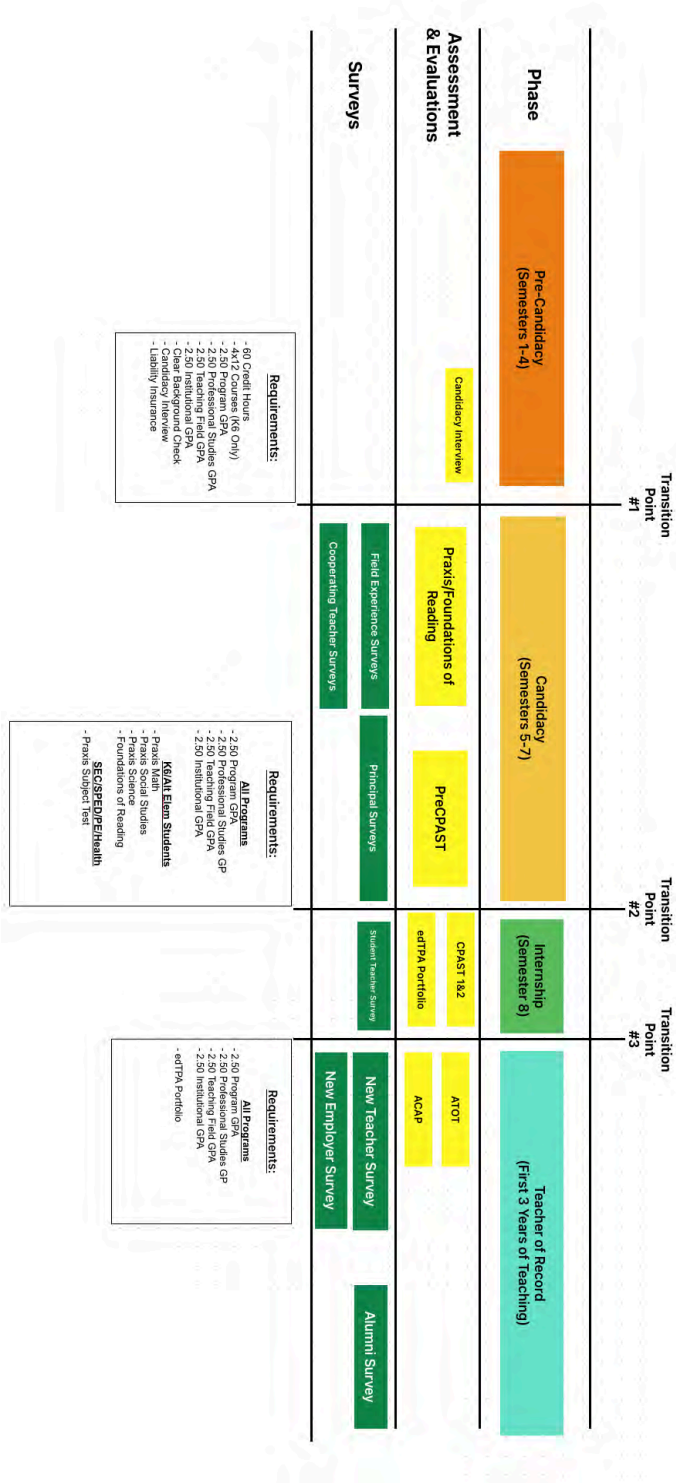
OELTE, program coordinators, academic advisors and/or faculty in courses which require a clinical experience work collaboratively to distribute necessary forms and maintain signed agreements for all candidates.

Some of these items include:

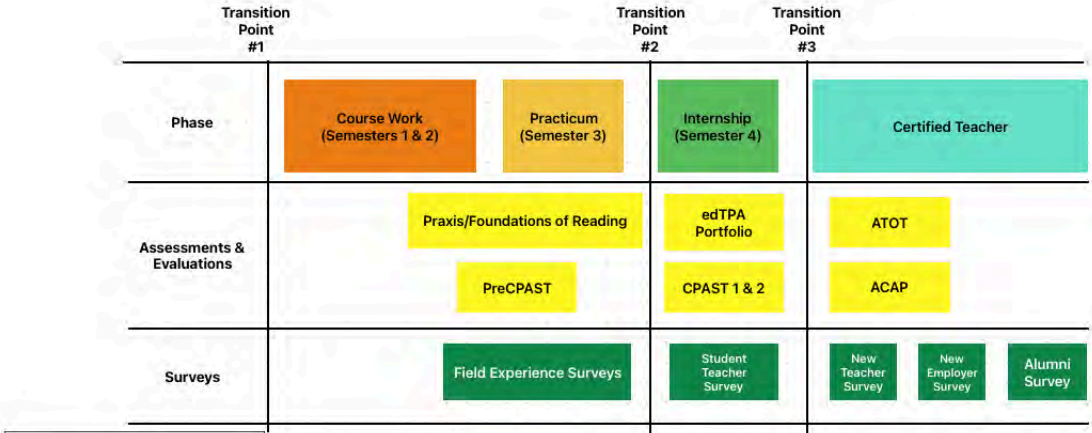
- Clinical Experience Application
- CEPS Teacher Education Dispositions Policy (Appendix C)
- Site Placement Memorandum of Understanding for Clinical Experiences document (Appendix D)
- Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix E)

OELTE also maintains appropriate records related to clinical placement assignments, Cooperating Teacher qualifications, clinical educator evaluations, and other documentation necessary to support placement quality, accountability, and continuous improvement. Records are maintained and shared in accordance with applicable university policies and confidentiality requirements.

Appendix A - Program Transition Points



Transition Point Monitoring
Initial Certification - Graduate



Requirements:

Admission to the Graduate School

- Bachelor's Degree from an accredited institution with a final GPA of 2.50 or higher

OR

- Master's Degree from an accredited institution with a final GPA of 3.00 or higher.
- Clear Background Check
- Personal Statement

Program Specific Requirements

Alt Elementary/ Alt Early Childhood

- Passing score on Praxis Elementary (Math, Science, and Social Studies) exams AND 12 hours of coursework in English

OR

- 12 hours of coursework in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies.

Alt Secondary

- Passing Score on Praxis Content Exam

OR

- An academic major in the teaching field

OR

- 30 semester hours of credit appropriate to the teaching field including 18 semester hours of upper-division credit.

Alt Special Education

- 6 semester hours in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies

OR

- Passing score on the respective Praxis exams.

Requirements:

- 3.00 GPA
- Passing score on appropriate Praxis Content Exam if not used for admission to the program
- Passing score on Foundations of Reading (Alt Elem/Alt ECE/Alt SPED K6)

Requirements:

- 3.25 GPA
- edTPA Portfolio
- Passing Score on Special Education Praxis Exam (Alt SPED)

Appendix B. Alabama Educator Code of Ethics

Introduction
The primary goal of every educator in the state of Alabama must, at all times, be to provide an environment in which all students can learn. In order to accomplish that goal, educators must value the worth and dignity of every person, must have a devotion to excellence in all matters, must actively support the pursuit of knowledge, and must fully participate in the nurturance of a democratic citizenry. To do so requires an adherence to a high ethical standard.

The Alabama Educator Code of Ethics defines the professional behavior of educators in Alabama and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The code protects the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators; outlines objective standards of conduct for professional educators; and clearly defines actions of an unethical nature for which disciplinary sanctions are justified.

Code of Ethics Standards
Standard 1: Professional Conduct
An educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Encouraging and supporting colleagues in the development and maintenance of high standards.
- Respecting fellow educators and participating in the development of a professional and supportive teaching environment.
- Engaging in a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences essential to developing professionally in order to promote student learning.

Unethical conduct is any conduct that impairs the certificate holder's ability to function in his or her employment position or a pattern of behavior that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Harassment of colleagues.
- Misuse or mismanagement of tests or test materials.
- Inappropriate language on school grounds.
- Physical altercations.
- Failure to provide appropriate supervision of students.

Standard 2: Trustworthiness
An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Properly representing facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
- Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children.
- Embodying for students the characteristics of intellectual honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting professional qualifications, criminal record, or employment history when applying for employment or certification.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information submitted to federal, state, and/or other governmental agencies.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting reasons for absences or leaves.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation.

Standard 3: Unlawful Acts
An educator should abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought or a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted.

Standard 4: Teacher/Student Relationship
An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Fulfilling the roles of trusted confidante, mentor, and advocate for students' growth.
- Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and civic potential of all students.
- Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
- Creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all Students.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Committing any act of child abuse, including physical or verbal abuse.
- Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment.
- Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act.
- Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion, or disability.
- Soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, or physical relationship with a student.
- Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs.

Standard 5: Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession
An educator should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or tobacco during the course of professional practice and should never use illegal or unauthorized drugs.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Factually representing the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and abuse to students during the course of professional practice.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Being under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs.
- Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcoholic beverages or using tobacco. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity that is sponsored by a school or a school system or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum such as club trips, etc., where students are involved.

Standard 6: Public Funds and Property

An educator entrusted with public funds and property should honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Maximizing the positive effect of school funds through judicious use of said funds.
- Modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Misusing public or school-related funds.
- Failing to account for funds collected from students or parents.
- Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay.
- Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts.
- Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing body.

Standard 7: Remunerative Conduct

A*n educator should maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation.*

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Insuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain.
- Insuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities from any person or organization.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local governing body.
- Accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there appears to be a conflict of interest.
- Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education.

Standard 8: Maintenance of Confidentiality

An educator should comply with state and federal laws and local school board policies

relating to confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material, and other information covered by confidentiality agreements.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Keeping in confidence information about students that has been obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
- Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test supplies and resources.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Sharing confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status/income, and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law.
- Violating confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, and violating local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items.
- Violating other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

Standard 9: Abandonment of Contract

An educator should fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or educational agency for the duration of the contract.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the employer;
- Refusing to perform services required by the contract.

Reporting

Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics as soon as possible, but no later than sixty(60) days from the date the educator became aware of the alleged breach, unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of their local school board policies and procedures and/or chain of command for reporting unethical conduct.

Complaints filed with the local or state school boards, or with the State Department of Education Teacher Certification Section, must be filed in writing and must include the original signature of the complainant.

Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-2-.05

(1)-5-c Each Superintendent shall submit to the State Superintendent of Education within ten calendar days of the decision, the name and social security number of each employee holding an Alabama certificate or license who is terminated, or nonrenewed, resigns, or is placed on administrative leave for cause, and shall indicate the reason for such action.

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action shall be defined as the issuance of a reprimand or warning, or the suspension, revocation, or denial of certificates. “Certificate” refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate issued by the authority of the Alabama State Department of Education.

Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-2-.05

(1) Authority of the State Superintendent of Education

(a) The Superintendent shall have the authority under existing legal standards to:

1. Revoke any certificate held by a person who has been proven guilty of immoral conduct or unbecoming or indecent behavior in Alabama or any other state or nation in accordance with Ala. Code §16−23−5 (1975).
2. Refuse to issue a certificate to an applicant whose certificate has been subject to adverse action by another state until after the adverse action has been resolved by that state.
3. Suspend or revoke an individual's certificate issued by the Superintendent when a certificate or license issued by another state is subject to adverse action.
4. Refuse to issue, suspend, or recall a certificate for just cause.

Any of the following grounds shall also be considered cause for disciplinary action:

- Unethical conduct as outlined in the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics, Standards 1-9.
- Order from a court of competent jurisdiction.
- Violation of any other laws or rules applicable to the profession.
- Any other good and sufficient cause.

An individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended may not be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, or substitute teacher during the period of his or her revocation, suspension, or denial.

Appendix C. CEPS Teacher Education Dispositions Policy

I. Introduction

Professional dispositions are grounded in an individual's beliefs and value system and are reflected through consistent actions and patterns of conduct demonstrated by teachers both inside and outside the classroom. Teachers are expected to serve as role models by exhibiting positive behaviors that support student learning and development. Educators who demonstrate strong professional dispositions contribute to enhancing the reputation and integrity of the teaching profession.

Teacher education programs have a responsibility to communicate, model, and uphold high standards of professional conduct. Accordingly, programs must implement procedures to promote and assess candidate dispositions, as well as establish referral processes for candidates who exhibit unprofessional behaviors. These measures help ensure that only candidates who demonstrate appropriate professional dispositions successfully complete the program.

At the University of South Alabama, the College of Education and Professional Studies has identified eight professional dispositions for teacher candidates. Comprehensive procedures are in place to promote and assess these dispositions and to address instances of negative dispositions or unprofessional conduct. The College of Education and Professional Studies holds the authority for implementing and enforcing these dispositional procedures.

II. Professional Dispositions

The following descriptors define behaviors that exemplify professional dispositions. This list is intended to support faculty and students by providing clear expectations for professional behavior required of all teacher candidates in the College of Education and Professional Studies at the University of South Alabama.

Professional Behaviors

General conduct, demeanor, and adherence to program rules expected of educator preparation candidates in academic and clinical settings.

Professional Behaviors describe the consistent habits and professional presence candidates demonstrate as they learn to assume the responsibilities of an educator. This disposition category emphasizes day-to-day reliability and readiness, professional demeanor and appearance, and a demonstrated commitment to working productively with others in ways that support student learning. Professional Behaviors are reflected through recurring patterns of conduct—how candidates prepare, communicate, collaborate, and respond to expectations—across coursework, clinical experiences, and all program-related responsibilities.

Elements of Professional Behaviors

- **Attendance & Punctuality:** Demonstrates consistent reliability in showing up and being on time for required classes, meetings, and clinical responsibilities, including appropriate communication when circumstances affect participation.
- **Preparedness:** Arrives ready to carry out instructional and professional responsibilities with appropriate planning, materials, organization, and timely completion of required tasks and deadlines.
- **Professional Attitude:** Maintains a constructive, solution-oriented demeanor in coursework and clinical settings, including openness to feedback, perseverance through challenges, and respectful engagement with others.
- **Professional Appearance:** Presents self in a manner consistent with school and professional expectations, including appropriate attire, grooming, and overall demeanor aligned with the role of an educator.
- **Responsibility for Student Learning:** Demonstrates ownership of professional impact on students by reflecting on practice, adjusting when needed, and engaging in actions that support student growth and achievement.
- **Community of Learners:** Contributes to a positive learning community through collaboration, shared responsibility, and conduct that supports respectful, productive group and school/classroom culture.
- **Responsiveness to All Students:** Demonstrates willingness to learn about students' needs and to respond appropriately through differentiation, accommodations, and practices that support equitable access to learning.
- **Working with Colleagues and Families:** Builds professional relationships through respectful communication, collaboration, reliability, and appropriate interactions with peers, faculty, school personnel, and families.
- **Adaptability:** Responds flexibly to changing roles, expectations, feedback, and professional responsibilities by adjusting plans and behaviors to meet evolving demands.

Initiative and Dependability

Following through on commitments, proactive engagement, attendance, and punctuality.

Initiative and Dependability describe the consistent reliability, accountability, and proactive engagement candidates demonstrate as they fulfill professional responsibilities in academic and clinical settings. This disposition emphasizes honoring commitments, completing responsibilities independently, communicating appropriately about attendance and obligations, and engaging actively rather than passively in professional work. Initiative and Dependability are reflected through recurring patterns of conduct—how candidates participate, prepare, follow through, and respond to expectations—across coursework, clinical experiences, and all program-related responsibilities.

Elements of Initiative and Dependability

- **Proactive Engagement:** Demonstrates initiative by asking questions when clarification is needed, participating actively in professional and instructional responsibilities, and using proactive rather than reactive behaviors.
- **Follow-Through on Responsibilities:** Completes assignments thoroughly, prepares quality work, and follows through on promises, tasks, and professional obligations without requiring repeated reminders.
- **Attendance and Punctuality:** Is prompt and prepared for classes, meetings, and clinical experiences; demonstrates consistent attendance and punctuality.
- **Professional Communication Regarding Commitments:** Communicates appropriately and in a timely manner when late or absent, including notifying University Supervisors or colleagues according to expectations.
- **Accountability and Honesty:** Accepts personal responsibility for situations and outcomes and responds with honesty in words and actions rather than shifting responsibility to others.
- **Adaptability and Reliability:** Demonstrates flexibility in response to changing roles, expectations, or responsibilities while maintaining dependable performance and follow-through.

Tact and Judgment

Ability to handle sensitive situations appropriately and make sound, ethical decisions.

Tact and Judgment describe the degree to which candidates demonstrate sensitivity, respect, and sound decision-making in professional interactions and responsibilities. This disposition emphasizes the ability to respond thoughtfully in sensitive or complex situations, to regulate words and actions in professional settings, and to consider the impact of decisions on others. Tact and Judgment are reflected through recurring patterns of conduct—how candidates interact with others, exercise discretion, make choices, and remain open to feedback and differing perspectives—across coursework, clinical experiences, and all program-related responsibilities.

Elements of Tact and Judgement

- **Sensitivity to Others:** Demonstrates awareness of and responsiveness to others' feelings, perspectives, and needs, particularly in sensitive or challenging situations.
- **Respectful Interactions:** Interacts with others in a respectful and professional manner, including appropriate language, tone, and behavior in academic and clinical settings.
- **Sound Decision-Making:** Makes thoughtful, well-reasoned choices that reflect professional standards, ethical considerations, and awareness of consequences.
- **Professional Manners:** Displays good manners and professional decorum, including self-control, discretion, and appropriate conduct in all professional contexts.
- **Open-Mindedness and Judgment:** Exhibits good judgment and an open mind by considering feedback, differing viewpoints, and new ideas before acting or responding.

Ethical Behavior and Integrity

Honesty, trustworthiness, and adherence to the professional code of ethics.

Ethical Behavior and Integrity describe the extent to which candidates demonstrate honesty, trustworthiness, and adherence to professional, legal, and ethical standards expected of educators. This disposition emphasizes acting in accordance with the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics, maintaining confidentiality, demonstrating moral responsibility, and aligning words and actions consistently with professional expectations. Ethical Behavior and Integrity are reflected through recurring patterns of conduct—how candidates make decisions, accept responsibility, interact with others, and uphold academic and professional standards—across coursework, clinical experiences, and all program-related responsibilities.

Elements of Ethical Behavior and Integrity

- **Knowledge of Ethical Standards:** Demonstrates understanding of the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics and applies ethical principles to professional decisions and actions.
- **Adherence to Laws and Policies:** Follows professional standards of practice and complies with applicable laws, policies, and institutional requirements governing educator conduct.
- **Confidentiality:** Honors confidentiality by appropriately protecting sensitive student, family, school, and program information.
- **Honesty and Truthfulness:** Displays honesty in words and actions; represents information accurately and avoids deceptive or misleading behavior.
- **Accountability and Responsibility:** Admits mistakes, accepts responsibility for actions, and demonstrates a responsible attitude toward professional obligations.
- **Integrity and Authenticity:** Acts in a genuine and trustworthy manner, ensuring consistency between words and actions.
- **Ethical Reasoning:** Considers multiple perspectives when making decisions and demonstrates sound moral judgment in complex or ambiguous situations.
- **Academic Integrity:** Avoids plagiarism and upholds standards of academic honesty in all coursework and professional submissions.

Effective Communication

Clear, respectful, and professional communication with students, families, colleagues, and faculty.

Effective Communication describes the extent to which candidates communicate clearly, respectfully, and professionally across verbal, nonverbal, and written contexts. This disposition emphasizes thoughtful expression, active listening, emotional regulation, and the ability to adjust communication to meet professional and cultural expectations. Effective Communication is reflected through recurring patterns of conduct—how candidates listen, speak, write, respond, and collaborate—across coursework, clinical experiences, and all program-related responsibilities.

Elements of Effective Communication

- **Professional Communication Skills:** Applies effective verbal, nonverbal, and written communication techniques to convey ideas clearly and appropriately in academic and clinical settings.
- **Respectful Language and Tone:** Uses and fosters respectful, professional language and tone; avoids dismissive, sarcastic, or inappropriate speech.
- **Active and Reflective Listening:** Demonstrates attentive listening by considering others' perspectives, reflecting before responding, and engaging meaningfully in dialogue.
- **Emotional Regulation and Thoughtful Response:** Responds calmly and thoughtfully in all situations, providing responses that demonstrate prior consideration rather than impulsivity.
- **Support for Academic Language:** Models and supports students' use of vocabulary and academic language to enhance learning and communication.
- **Professional Communication with Families:** Engages in respectful, culturally appropriate communication with parents and guardians.
- **Collegial Communication and Collaboration:** Demonstrates civility with colleagues and University Supervisors and collaborates productively with others to support shared professional goals.

Desire to Improve Own Performance

Receptiveness to feedback, self-reflection, and continuous professional growth.

Desire to Improve Own Performance describes the extent to which candidates demonstrate openness to feedback, engage in self-reflection, and actively pursue professional growth. This disposition emphasizes recognizing personal responsibility for improvement, seeking support and feedback from others, and using reflection to refine practice. Desire to Improve Own Performance is reflected through recurring patterns of conduct—how candidates respond to feedback, reflect on their actions, take instructional risks, and implement suggested improvements—across coursework, clinical experiences, and all program-related responsibilities.

Elements of Desire to Improve Own Performance

- **Receptiveness to Feedback:** Seeks feedback from multiple sources and accepts constructive criticism without becoming defensive or taking it personally.
- **Self-Reflection:** Demonstrates awareness of the importance of self-reflection and engages in thoughtful analysis of practice to inform improvement.
- **Growth-Seeking Behavior:** Asks for help when needed and actively seeks opportunities to grow professionally rather than avoiding support or development.
- **Willingness to Take Instructional Risks:** Demonstrates openness to trying new ideas, strategies, or approaches to improve instruction and professional practice.
- **Responsibility for Improvement:** Understands and acknowledges personal responsibility for student growth and instructional improvement.
- **Implementation of Feedback:** Effectively applies feedback and suggested improvements in practice, demonstrating learning through action.

Respectful and Responsive Teaching

Demonstrating respect for all students and adapting instructional practices to support effective learning.

Respectful and Responsive Teaching describes the extent to which candidates demonstrate professionalism, respect for all students, and the ability to adapt instruction to meet a range of learning needs. This disposition emphasizes recognizing individual differences, maintaining high expectations for every student, and creating positive learning environments where all students have the opportunity to succeed. Respectful and Responsive Teaching is reflected through consistent patterns of professional conduct, including instructional planning, interactions with students, reflective practice, and responsiveness to individual learning needs across coursework, clinical experiences, and all program-related responsibilities.

Elements of Respectful and Responsive Teaching

- **Respect for All Students:** Treats all students with dignity and respect while maintaining high expectations for learning and achievement.
- **Responsiveness to How Students Learn:** Recognizes that students have different strengths, experiences, and learning needs and adjusts instruction, when appropriate, to support student success.
- **Knowledge of Students:** Uses appropriate knowledge of students' interests, prior learning, experiences, and academic needs to inform instructional planning and decision-making.
- **Positive Learning Environment:** Creates a classroom environment that is safe, orderly, supportive, and conducive to learning for all students .
- **Respectful of Multiple Perspectives:** Facilitates respectful discussion of a variety of viewpoints and encourages students to engage in thoughtful, evidence-based dialogue.
- **Student Engagement:** Encourages participation by all students and values their questions, ideas, and contributions to classroom learning.
- **Reflective Professional Practice:** Engages in ongoing self-reflection to improve instructional effectiveness and professional decision-making.
- **Fair and Consistent Practice:** Demonstrates fairness, impartiality, and professionalism in interactions, expectations, and instructional decisions.
- **Varied Assessment Practices:** Uses a variety of appropriate assessment methods that allow students multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning.

Professional Commitment

Dedication to the field, students, and program requirements.

Professional Commitment describes the extent to which candidates demonstrate dedication to the teaching profession, commitment to students, and responsibility for meeting program and professional expectations. This disposition emphasizes maintaining current knowledge in content and pedagogy, engaging in continuous learning, and viewing teaching as a professional responsibility rather than a set of isolated tasks. Professional Commitment is reflected through recurring patterns of conduct—how candidates pursue growth, engage in professional learning, apply evidence to practice, and uphold responsibilities related to students and the profession—across coursework, clinical experiences, and all program-related responsibilities.

Elements of Professional Commitment

- **Content and Pedagogical Competence:** Demonstrates competence and current knowledge in subject matter and pedagogical practice.
- **Commitment to Teaching Excellence:** Shows dedication to teaching excellence and a willingness to work toward continual improvement of practice.
- **Reflective Practice:** Engages in reflection and self-analysis as a means of improving instruction and professional effectiveness.
- **Professional Engagement:** Seeks opportunities to work with children and participate in professional development experiences beyond minimum requirements.
- **Professional Identity:** Demonstrates commitment to teaching as a primary profession and exhibits a developing professional identity as an educator.
- **Continuous Learning:** Shows a desire to learn and continually improve through ongoing growth and development.
- **Evidence-Informed Practice:** Seeks and uses evidence to inform instructional decisions and professional practice.
- **Ethical Use of Student Data:** Uses and maintains student data in accordance with professional standards and ethical expectations.

I. Professional Dispositions in the Curriculum

Because educator dispositions reflect both beliefs and behaviors, the University of South Alabama College of Education and Professional Studies has implemented a multi-step process for introducing students to the expectations of the teaching profession as they relate to professional dispositions.

Syllabus Statement	All Coursework (beginning of term)	All Candidacy **courses** (per the policy) must contain the standardized syllabus statement regarding expectations, referencing the full college policy (see pages 28-36).
Candidate Orientation **Pre-Candidacy Interview**	Pre-Candidacy	A mandatory, formal session explicitly reviewing the **CEPS Teacher Education Dispositions Policy**, assessment process, and consequences. Students complete a writing prompt and participate in dispositional on-site interviews with faculty.
Methods Courses	Mid-Candidacy	Dispositions are taught and assessed using the **CPAST** tool at the conclusion of these courses, linking theory to practice.
Internship Orientation	Final Phase	A mandatory session reiterating the high-stakes nature of dispositions during the internship, including the two required **CPAST** assessments and **edTPA**.

II. Policy Application and Consequences

Appropriate professional dispositions are expected of all students enrolled in educator preparation programs within CEPS at the University of South Alabama. The dispositions and behaviors outlined in section II of Appendix C should be adhered to not only during clinical experiences outside of the university classroom but also during all courses within their prospective program.

In the event that a university student enrolled in an educator preparation program displays negative dispositions, the following policy and procedures are followed:

A. All negative dispositions should be reported using the Google form (University classroom issues) or ELC (clinical experience issues). The levels of dispositional issues are as follows and must be documented on the Google form or ELC:
    i. First instance: conversation only with student
    ii. (Referral Level 1) Second instance: student completes Action Plan
    iii. (Referral Level 2) Third instance: student is referred to CEPS Disposition Committee
    iv. (Referral Level 3) Fourth instance: student is referred to the CEPS Associate Dean
    v. (Referral Level 4) Fifth instance: student is referred to the University Disciplinary Committee (UDC) and/or removed from the program
B. Faculty are allowed to use their professional judgement in addressing dispositional issues on the first instance. However, any conversation or redirection by the faculty or University Supervisor must be documented on the Google form or ELC.
C. A second dispositional issue (Referral Level 1) requires the student to complete an action plan.
    a. Student completes a brief (200–250 word) written reflection addressing the following:
        i. The dispositional concern raised by the faculty (what happened?).
        ii. Why this disposition is important for professionalism in P-12 schools.
        iii. What the candidate will do to correct the behavior, including action steps and a timeline [e.g., “Effective at the next class session (or field experience day), I will…”].
        iv. What resources are needed (from the university/program/etc.) to help ensure this behavior does not become a pattern?
    b. Students will submit the action plan to the Director of OELTE.
D. A third dispositional issue (Referral Level 2) will result in a referral to the CEPS Dispositions Committee. OELTE will email the CEPS Dispositions Committee, as well as the Program Coordinator and referring party. The Committee may require an advanced action plan with monitoring and follow-up or escalate to the CEPS Associate Dean. The Committee will consist of a Chair (Director of OELTE), the Program Coordinator (or their representative), and Executive Director of CEPS Student Services. The individual reporting the dispositional issue shall not serve as a member of the committee.
E. A fourth dispositional issue (Referral Level 3) will result in a referral to the CEPS Associate Dean of Student Services, Academic Affairs, Accreditation and Pedagogy. OELTE will email the Associate Dean, CEPS Dispositions Committee, Program Coordinator, and referring party. Outcomes may range from additional remediation, removal from the field experience/internship/course, or referral to the University Disciplinary Committee (UDC).
F. A fifth dispositional issue (Referral Level 4) will result in referral to the University Disciplinary Committee (UDC) and/or removal from the program. Consequences may range from removal from course or field experience to dismissal from the program. OELTE will fill out the USA Student Conduct Incident Report (dropdown menu).

Any instance of unethical conduct, as defined by the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics, will result in immediate referral to the CEPS Dean's Office and the University Disciplinary Committee (UDC). Violations of the law will be referred to law enforcement.

Disposition referrals will be monitored by OELTE; others will be notified as necessary based on the referral process.

III. Academic Assessment of Professional Dispositions

Pre-Candidacy Interview

All students applying for Candidacy are required to demonstrate positive dispositions as aligned to the Alabama Educators Code of Ethics and the Model Code of Ethics for Educators. Students who meet eligibility requirements will participate in an interview the semester in which they apply for Candidacy. Prior to the interview, applicants will be asked to respond, in writing, to a set of prompts related to teacher dispositions and their beliefs related to P-12 education. Each applicant's written response, as well as their oral interview, will be scored using the PreCandidacy Dispositions Rubric.

Students who do not show positive professional dispositions will be asked to:

Participate in additional interviews with the CEPS Associate Dean of Student Services, Academic Affairs, Accreditation and Pedagogy

The additional interview will either:

a. Allow the student to proceed with candidacy or
b. Provide the student with a plan that must be followed to proceed with candidacy

CPAST

The College of Education and Professional Studies utilizes the Candidate PreService Assessment of Student Teaching (CPAST) to assess candidate dispositions. CPAST is a standardized assessment tool designed to evaluate teacher candidates during their internship semester. It measures two major components: pedagogy and dispositions. The dispositions section focuses on professional behaviors such as ethical conduct, collaboration, reflection, and responsiveness to feedback. The assessment is completed jointly by the Cooperating Teacher and the University Supervisor using a detailed rubric, which provides consistent, evidence-based feedback on a candidate's strengths and areas of growth.

edTPA Portfolio

Teacher candidates in our program are required to pass the edTPA portfolio assessment to graduate and to become certified in the state of Alabama. In this assignment, students plan a lesson, teach the lesson, and then reflect on their own teaching. Candidates submit videos of their teaching as well as lesson plans and artifacts that are then scored by national reviewers. Two of the rubric scores associated with edTPA measure candidate dispositions as it relates to their teaching. These rubrics are Rubric 10: Analyzing Teaching Effectiveness and Rubric 15: Using Assessment to Inform Instruction.

Appendix D. Site Placement Memorandum of Understanding for Clinical Experiences

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES
OFFICE OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN TEACHER EDUCATION
SITE PLACEMENT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Building Level Administrator(s) will:

- model the multiple leadership roles of an effective instructional leader;
- identify instructionally effective Cooperating Teachers based on mutually agreed criteria;
- assist Candidates in understanding the structure and organization of the school through a campus orientation;
- provide general support to the Candidate throughout their clinical experience;
- meet with USA Supervisor at the beginning of each semester and as needed throughout the semester; and
- notify the USA Supervisor and USA Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education immediately if challenges arise.

The Cooperating Teacher will:

- model and support development of effective classroom instruction including:
    - planning and preparation;
    - research-based, best practices in all subject areas taught;
    - effective classroom management and discipline;
    - appropriate, ongoing assessment and evaluation; and
    - exemplary professional attitudes, ethics, and behaviors;
- meet weekly with the Candidate to support planning and reflect on the Candidate's progress;
- scaffold and gradually release management and instructional responsibilities throughout the semester;
- meet regularly with the University Supervisor to discuss Candidate progress, mentoring strategies, and constructive feedback;
- attend mentor training or provide evidence of prior effective mentoring;
- model effective communication with parents and other stakeholders;
- include the Candidate in team/grade level meetings, IEP meetings, and professional development sessions; and
- notify the USA Supervisor and USA Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education immediately if challenges arise.

The University Supervisor will:

- communicate regularly with Cooperating Teacher, Building Level Administrator, and Candidate;
- regularly visit the Candidate in schools;
- support candidate in planning;
- observe lessons and provide feedback;
- complete appropriate field-related documentation;
- award grades in consultation with the Cooperating Teacher; and
- notify the USA Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education immediately if challenges arise.

The Candidate will:

- demonstrate professional attitudes and effective interpersonal relationships;
- abide by the philosophy, regulations, policies, and standards of behavior and dress according to district guidelines;
- present themselves as responsible members of the school staff and fulfill all obligations in a professional manner, including the planning, preparation, and delivery of instruction;
- safeguard all personal and confidential information and use it only for professional purposes;
- follow the school district calendar during internship, the USA calendar during all other field experiences;
- participate in school functions as directed by the Cooperating Teacher and/or University Supervisor;
- notify the Cooperating Teacher and University Supervisor as soon as possible in case of an illness or emergency requiring an absence;
- follow all requirements as stated in the course syllabus; and
- notify the USA Supervisor and USA Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education immediately if challenges arise.

Building Level Administrator Signature	Date	Candidate Signature	Date
Cooperating Teacher Signature	Date	University Supervisor Signature	Date

Appendix E - Confidentiality Agreement



I agree to protect the confidentiality and privacy of each student at _____.
(name of school)

I understand the importance of the documents to which I may have access, the sensitivity of the information to which I may be privy, and agree to:

- Refrain from discussion of any information regarding students or school personnel outside the school and/or the spectrum of daily instruction.
- Refrain from posts of any school-related content to any social media outlet.
- Access only the documents containing information for students whose instruction I may impact.
- Review student documents on school premises, only, in a location designated by supervising personnel.
- Participate as a member of an education review/placement team as an observer, only, unless specifically requested to give input.

_____ _____
Student's Signature Date

_____ _____
University Supervisor's Signature Date

_____ _____
Building Level Administrator's Signature Date

Signatures of Cooperating Teachers with whom student is working: Date:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Glossary

Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE)
ALSDE is the state agency that runs public K-12 schools, sets learning rules, and handles teacher licenses in Alabama. This is the Alabama state accreditor.

Building Level Administrator
Principal of P-12 School

Candidacy
Candidacy is the formal stage in a teacher preparation program during which a student is approved to advance toward internship and certification.

Candidate/Teacher Candidate
Upon admission to candidacy, a student is recognized as a teacher candidate rather than a pre-education major. This designation indicates that the individual has met established academic, professional, and dispositional standards and is eligible to proceed to advanced coursework and clinical experiences.

Clinical Experience
Extended practice that candidates complete prior to certification. Clinical experiences can occur as field experiences, a practicum, apprenticeship, and/or internship. Field experiences are generally course embedded. A practicum generally is a separate course that allows concentrated exposure in the P-12 environment. An internship is generally a culminating experience that occurs in a program where candidates demonstrate their ability to implement the concepts learned throughout the program. (ALSDE)

College of Education and Professional Studies (CEPS)
The College of Education and Professional Studies at the University of South Alabama is responsible for preparing professionals in education, among other related fields. The college's mission is to transform communities through excellence in education and human services, innovative research, and service. Its vision is to prepare exemplary professionals who are committed to lifelong learning and leadership in a diverse and changing world.

College of Education and Professional Studies Dispositions Committee
The CEPS Dispositions Committee handles Level 2 referrals through the dispositions referral process. The Committee will consist of a Chair (Director of OELTE), the Program Coordinator (or their representative), and Executive Director of CEPS Student Services.

Cooperating Teacher (CT)
Students are assigned a P-12 mentor, also known as a Cooperating Teacher, during clinical experiences. As candidates progress through the program, cooperating teachers play a critical role in supporting their development by offering constructive feedback and gradually increasing their responsibilities. Each candidate’s clinical experience includes specific requirements tied to coursework, and the cooperating teacher helps ensure these requirements are met successfully.

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)
CAEP is a national nongovernmental agency that reviews and accredits college and university teacher preparation programs.

Candidate Preservice Assessment of Student Teaching (CPAST)
The Candidate Preservice Assessment of Student Teaching (CPAST) is a standardized, research-based assessment tool designed to evaluate teacher candidates during their internship. It measures two major components: pedagogy and dispositions.

Disposition
Professional dispositions are grounded in an individual's beliefs and value system and are reflected through consistent actions and patterns of conduct demonstrated by teachers both inside and outside the classroom.

edTPA
The edTPA portfolio assessment is completed during the beginning of the internship semester. It consists of students providing evidence of the application of their knowledge and skills in the classroom during their student teaching semester. To complete the portfolio, teacher candidates apply what they have learned from their coursework about research, theory, and strategies related to teaching & learning by providing artifacts documenting teaching & learning during a learning segment lasting approximately one week and commentaries explaining, analyzing, and reflecting on the artifacts. The portfolio consists of three main parts; Task 1, Planning for Instruction and Assessment; Task 2, Instructing and Engaging Students in Learning; and Task 3, Assessing Student Learning. (Elementary Education candidates complete Tasks 1-3 for literacy and are required to complete an additional Task 4 for mathematics.)

Experiential Learning Cloud (ELC; formerly Tevara)
All students in the College of Education and Professional Studies are required to use Experiential Learning Cloud (ELC) for all supervised clinical experiences. The software is used to collect data and documentation to assess program requirements and learning objectives as required by the state and national accreditors. Evidence collected through this system allows for students to demonstrate mastery of all state and national standards.

Field Experiences
Prior to the internship, a variety of early and ongoing field-based contacts in P-12 schools and other appropriate settings that are provided as a part of the instructional program available through observation, study of school situations, assisting in instruction, participation in professional development opportunities in the content area or specific to teaching in the content area, and supervised teaching that contribute to the understanding and competence of the candidate. Field experiences may be course-embedded or standalone. (ALSDE)

Internship
Experiences in public P-12 schools, charter schools, and accredited private schools culminating in the exercise of responsibility for the teaching or instructional support role for which the candidate is preparing under the supervision of P-12 personnel and the institution of higher education in which the candidate is enrolled. (ALSDE)

Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education (OELTE)
The Office of Experiential Learning in Teacher Education provides a variety of support functions for all required clinical experiences, such as establishing and maintaining partnerships with participating schools, collaborating with local P-12 school administrators to identify qualified Cooperating Teachers for all clinical experiences, reviewing clinical experience applications and matching candidates with schools

and Cooperating Teachers, preparing and conducting an Internship Orientation each semester, and working collaboratively to distribute necessary forms and maintain signed agreements for all candidates.

Praxis
The Praxis Content exam, developed by Educational Testing Service (ETS), is a subject-specific licensure assessment used to determine whether prospective teachers have the content knowledge needed to teach a particular subject area. The state accreditor sets the passing scores for each exam and candidates must meet those benchmarks to qualify for certification in their intended teaching field.

Pre-Candidacy
This is the stage before a teacher education student is formally admitted to Teacher Candidacy. During this phase, students complete foundational coursework and meet the eligibility requirements necessary to enter the professional teacher education sequence.

University Supervisor
All required clinical experiences are supervised by a member of the program faculty or a clinical University Supervisor. University Supervisors participate in both supervision and candidate orientation sessions. Through observations, conferences, and the use of both in-person and technological methods, University Supervisors provide intensive mentoring and support, emphasizing research-based best practices within real-world settings.

UTeach
The UTeach program is a nationally recognized teacher preparation pathway designed for undergraduate students majoring in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) who wish to minor in education. The program allows students to earn a STEM degree and secondary teacher certification at the same time, without extending time to graduation.