

College of Education and Professional Studies University of South Alabama



Office of Field Services Overview of Clinical Experiences

Introduction

Field Services (OFS) is the unit within the College that administers the placements of clinical field experiences for graduate and undergraduate teacher education candidates.

Working collaboratively with the program faculty in the college, the OFS (1) maintains proper documentation for clinical field experiences; (2) works with the Director of Assessment and Evaluation to ensure that program evaluation is systematic; and, (3) establishes and maintains partnerships with local schools and school districts.

Clinical field experiences relate directly to classroom instruction. Candidates engage in real world settings to develop a context for learning, reflect on dispositions for working with others, enhance new skills and relate theory to practice. Documentation of these experiences verifies that candidates' required field experience standards have been met for the program in which the candidate is enrolled as well as for Alabama teaching certification.

As a component of the College's systematic program evaluation efforts, data from clinical field experiences is central to program improvement. It is the responsibility of the Office of Field Services to work with the Director of Assessment and Evaluation to gather data from candidates, cooperating practitioners, and program faculty.

Partnerships with local school districts are essential to the success of the College's mission. Working with the College's program faculty, the Office of Field Services has as a primary responsibility the establishment and maintenance of effective working relationships with school district teachers and administrators, agency personnel, and local and state governmental officials such as State Department of Education staff.

Contact Information:

Jennifer Simpson, Director

251-380-2668

jsimpson@southalabama.edu

Pam Patterson, Assistant Director

251-380-2887

ppatterson@southalabama.edu

Vicky Burtt, Placement Coordinator

251-380-2739

vburt@southalabama.edu

General Information

These policies and procedures are generic in nature and apply to field experiences in the College of Education and Professional Studies (CEPS) that lead to initial certification. Specific field experience requirements will be provided at the beginning of each semester in which the teacher candidate is enrolled in a course which requires a field experience. Additional information may be found in the respective department with program faculty, and on the USA, College of Education and Professional Studies, Field Services website.

Eligibility

Each program determines and publishes eligibility criteria for internship or practicum participation. These criteria may include grade point average, dispositions, or successful completion of prerequisite experiences or courses, among others. A candidate's progress through a program of study is determined by the program faculty.

Clinical Experiences

It is the philosophy of the faculty in CEPS, as supported by the Alabama Department of Education and CAEP, that clinical experiences are critical to teacher preparation programs at the University of South Alabama.

The OFS will ensure that all candidates, in both graduate and undergraduate programs, have experiences in a variety of school settings, in various grade levels, under the tutelage of cooperating teachers identified in cooperation with local school personnel.

Experiences Prior to Student Teaching/Internship

The majority of field experiences will occur in P-12 schools. All teacher certification programs require candidates to complete significant field experiences prior to Internship in the area in which the candidate is seeking certification. These field experiences will encompass the span of grades for which certification is sought by the candidate.

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

Student Teaching/Internship

The internships in Class B and Alternative Class A programs shall be full-time in the schools for a full semester in the teaching field for which certification is sought and which may include more than one classroom or grade level, with experiences of the intern progressing to the full responsibilities of the teacher for at least 10 full days including at least 5 consecutive days.

An intern who is absent from her or his 5 consecutive day assignment for one day, for a reason deemed acceptable by both the unit and the partner school, may exercise full responsibilities on the sixth consecutive day. However, in most cases, if an absence occurs during the 5 consecutive teaching days, the intern must start over and begin the consecutive days again.

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

For P-12 programs the internship shall be divided between elementary and middle/secondary grades.

For early childhood and early childhood special education programs, the internship shall include a placement with at least two of the following age groups: birth-3, age 3-5, age 5-8.

For elementary education or collaborative special education (K-6) programs, the internship shall include lower elementary (grades K-3) and upper elementary (grades 4-6) placements unless substantial field experiences were completed at both levels.

For the combined Health Education and Physical Education program, the internship must be divided as equally as possible across three areas: elementary physical education, secondary physical education, and secondary health education.

Interns may be required to meet on campus for seminars and professional development during the semester. These meetings will take place after school hours, or during the school day. However, the intern will not be required to miss more than five days of the internship semester for professional activities.

The internship will begin on the first day of the university semester and conclude on the last day of the university semester. Final examination days will be used for making up any days the candidate is absent during the experience. Candidates who are enrolled in internships during fall semester, may be required to begin prior to the start of university semester to complete Opening School Experience requirements. These candidates will be notified at the end of spring semester prior to internship if the internship will begin before the university semester begins.

Diversity

During field experiences, candidates will work with diverse populations of students and faculty in P – 12 schools, as well as higher education faculty and peers in their respective programs. Generally, diversity will be defined by socio-economic status and ethnicity unlike the candidate's own, as well as schools identified through Federal Programs as "Title I" as defined by the U. S. Department of Education.

If a candidate does not have the opportunity to work with diverse populations during a field experience prior to internship nor in the internship semester, candidates will be required to complete an 80 hour experience during the internship in a Title I school. For advanced programs, course professors must approve each candidate's field experience in relation to meeting the above stated diversity policy.

Field Supervisors

Faculty designated as program specialists and/or other faculty (full time and/or adjunct faculty) in academic disciplines, as agreed upon by the unit and the program area, shall share responsibility for supervising interns seeking teacher certification in their academic areas.

Responsibilities

In the following sections you will find an overview of the responsibilities of the stakeholders involved in clinical experiences. The purpose of this is to provide general guidelines, while specific requirements and criteria should be found in the respective departmental program course syllabi and handbooks.

Teacher Candidate Responsibilities

As candidates proceed through their programs of study, they assume more responsibility for their educational experiences. Increased clinical field experiences represent a significant part of this responsibility. Candidates also have specific responsibilities related to the administrative placement procedures associated with the determination of these field experiences. Progressing from field experiences to student teaching/internship, candidates must assume increasing responsibilities as appropriate for the program in which they are enrolled.

Field Experiences/Practicums

Field experiences should relate directly to academic coursework. It is the responsibility of the candidate to become familiar with the evaluation rubrics and procedures for the class associated with the experience. Final evaluation of the candidate's field experience rests on the assessment system defined by the program faculty. The appropriate program faculty and/or clinical supervisor will provide specific information related to the field experience.

Initiate Participation

Candidates should discuss their intention to participate in a field experience with their advisors at least one semester prior to the desired semester of participation.

Undergraduate teacher education candidates are generally enrolled in a tightly prescribed curriculum wherein field experiences are integrated closely with academic coursework during the last three academic semesters.

Applications for field experiences can be obtained from program faculty and in the Office of Field Services.

Consideration of School Placements

For teacher education candidates, the consideration of school placement is the responsibility of the program faculty and Office of Field Services. That is, the program faculty works with OFS to determine schools that will be used for field experiences. This coordination begins with approval from local school system administrators.

Specific Objectives/Assignments

Candidates will assume primary responsibility for fulfilling the specific objectives/assignments of the field experience in consultation with both the University Supervisor and Cooperating Teacher. Objectives will be designated on course syllabi, and come from the ALSDE, CAEP, and COE standards.

Field Experience Applications

Candidates will communicate with academic advisors and program faculty to ensure they follow the procedures to complete applications required for each experience.

Student Teaching/Internship Applications

There are two Student Teaching/Internship Application forms, one for undergraduate candidates and another for candidates who seek alternative master's degree certification.

The steps for *submitting* the Student Teaching Application form are:

- A. The candidate obtains a *Student Teaching Application* from their Academic Advisor, the Office of Field Services or the OFS website.
- B. The candidate completes the *Student Teaching Application* form and submits to OFS.

Internship Application deadlines are:

- Fall student teaching - February 28th
- Spring student teaching - September 30th

Out of Area Placement Requests

All student teaching/internship placements will be made in the greater Mobile area to facilitate the supervision of students by University of South Alabama faculty or other personnel so designated by the chair of the department in which that student is enrolled.

Students who request to complete their student teaching/internship semester outside of the greater Mobile area must first submit a written explanation of the extenuating circumstances for an out of area placement with their application. The request must then be approved by the candidates' faculty advisor and Director of Field Services.

Detailed procedures for this process can be obtained from the Office of Field Services. (NOTE: Candidates enrolled in the K-6 program *must* student teach in the Greater Mobile area in the identified partner schools.)

In order to confirm a student teaching/internship placement outside of the greater Mobile area:

- A. The requested school must be a public school accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.
- B. If outside the greater Mobile area and in another state, the institution of higher education the candidate is working with must provide an agreement to the Office of Field Services stating their role in supervision. If outside the greater Mobile area but in the state of Alabama, the principal of the school must provide a letter to the Office of Field Services agreeing to serve as the University supervisor and to complete all of the evaluation forms and observations that would normally be completed by the University supervisor.

Student e-Portfolio Assessment:

Watermark/Live Text STATEMENT

All students in the College of Education and Professional Studies (CEPS) are required to purchase a license to use Watermark (formerly LiveText) beginning with the first CEPS course that contains teacher education standards and continue to use the software throughout their program of study. The portfolio is used to assess program requirements/learning outcomes as required for state teaching certification and successful completion of the program the student is enrolled. Students will use their Watermark portfolio to provide evidence that demonstrates mastery of all standards associated with each course in order to receive credit for the course.

In general, the process consists of students submitting evidence, artifacts, or assignments related to the knowledge, skills, and abilities taught in a course or internship. The course instructor evaluates all document/artifacts submitted in the portfolio and the results are archived in an electronic database. The progress of the student in meeting the required competencies is monitored throughout their program.

For e-portfolio instructions go to <http://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/ceps/livetext.html> and click on the appropriate help screen.

Professionalism

Professional dispositions are evident each day through actions, behaviors, attitudes, and language in every situation you encounter. Each candidate is responsible for their dispositions and will be held accountable for actions that are linked to dispositions.

What Are Professional Dispositions?

The Alabama State Board of Education defines dispositions as "the commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring, fairness, honesty, and responsibility. For example, dispositions include a belief that all students can learn, a vision of high and challenging standards, or a commitment to a safe and supportive learning environment" (Rules of the Alabama State Board of Education, 2007; p.244). The Alabama Educator's Code of Ethics (Appendix A) directly links to the dispositions of a teacher.

Why Are Professional Dispositions Important?

Teacher Education Preparation programs have the responsibility to produce quality candidates who are prepared to teach effectively and who understand the expectations of the profession. The College of Education and Professional Studies works to ensure that all teacher education candidates meet all standards/expectations of both CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, National Accreditation) and Alabama State Department of Education (State Accreditation).

The following CAEP standards are linked to professional dispositions and support assessing professional dispositions of teacher education candidates:

CAEP 1.1 -Candidates demonstrate an understanding of the 10 InTASC standards at the appropriate progression level(s)¹ in the following categories: the learner and learning; content; instructional practice; and professional responsibility.

[InTASC Standard 9: The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.]

CAEP 1.4 -Providers ensure that candidates demonstrate skills and commitment that afford all P-12 students access to rigorous college- and career-ready standards.

CAEP 3.3 -Educator preparation providers establish and monitor attributes and dispositions beyond academic ability that candidates must demonstrate at admissions and during the program. The provider selects criteria, describes the measures used and evidence of the reliability and validity of those measures, and reports data that show how the academic and non-academic factors predict candidate performance in the program and effective teaching.

CAEP 3.6 -Before the provider recommends any completing candidate for licensure or certification, it documents that the candidate understands the expectations of the

profession, including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice, and relevant laws and policies. CAEP monitors the development of measures that assess candidates' success and revises standards in light of new results.

College of Education and Professional Studies

All teacher education candidates completing field experiences are expected to demonstrate appropriate professional dispositions. These dispositions are explained in detail in the USA College of Education and Professional Studies Teacher Education Dispositions documents. (Appendix B) Each candidate completing a field experience is required to sign a Teacher Educator Dispositions document each semester. This document outlines the behaviors which contribute to the development of appropriate professional standards. A copy will also be distributed to Cooperating Teachers. If, at any time during the candidates' field experience, it becomes necessary to discuss any behavior that conflicts with desired professional outcomes, the Cooperating Teacher will contact the University Supervisor. The Supervisor will then follow procedures outlined in the Teacher Education Dispositions document.

As challenges arise in field experiences, the Field Supervisor will work with the candidate and Cooperating Teacher(s) in effort to resolve the problem. If the problem cannot be resolved, the Director of Field Services will meet with the supervisor and teacher education candidate. Candidates who are asked to leave a school, violate the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics, demonstrate instructional incompetence and/or exhibit unprofessional behavior (see Teacher Education Dispositions document) may be dismissed from the placement, the course or the Teacher Education Program. These actions may result in the lowering of the candidate's course grade or a failing grade in the course. The Field Supervisor, program faculty, and appropriate administration will determine further course of action.

Educator Preparation: Field Experience and Internship Responsibilities Document

At the beginning of each required field experience, candidates have the responsibility of signing the Educator Preparation Responsibilities document (Appendix C), securing other required signatures on the form and submitting the document in the Live Text Field Experience account.

Student Academic Conduct Policy:

The University of South Alabama is committed to the fundamental value of academic honesty. The student handbook, The Lowdown, defines plagiarism as one form of academic misconduct that is "subject to investigation and disciplinary action through appropriate University procedures". Plagiarism is using somebody else's ideas and/or words in your writing without correctly identifying the sources. As one resource for helping you avoid plagiarism, your written work in this class may be submitted to Turnitin.com or a similar method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. Assignments submitted to Turnitin.com will be included as source documents in a restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting possible plagiarism of such documents. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your writing. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may be subject to some form of originality review.

Specific program requirements can be found in the University Bulletin:

University of South Alabama Bulletin <https://www.southalabama.edu/bulletin/current/>

Program Faculty Responsibilities

All clinical experiences that are required of candidates will be supervised by a member of the program faculty or by a clinical field supervisor. The Field Supervisor will participate in supervision orientations as well as orientations for the candidates. Supervisors will use the experiences to engage in intensive mentoring and induction of candidates regarding research-based, best practice of real-world experiences through conferences and observations, both through technological means and face-to-face.

Faculty who teach professional education courses or supervise interns for teaching field programs should be thoroughly familiar with the current professional responsibilities of the P-12 practitioners in that teaching field. In order to understand current responsibilities, faculty and/or field supervisors must spend sufficient time in P-12 schools and engage in activities such as co-teaching, guest teaching, and providing and/or attending professional development activities.

When candidates engage in clinical field experiences in partnering schools, it is proper that the program faculty and/or field supervisor maintains a close and professional working relationship with appropriate school personnel. For example, program faculty in teacher education should develop strong professional relationships with P-12 mentors and administrators as they (the program faculty) are routinely in the schools supervising candidates. As a result of this supervision and professional relationship, the program faculty will have firsthand knowledge of the unique strengths of potential mentors in partnering schools.

Placements

Personnel in the Office of Field Services, work with local P-12 school administrators to identify cooperating teachers for all clinical field experiences. For each academic year, P-12 administrators submit a list of teachers at their site who meet qualifications for serving as a cooperating teacher. These qualifications meet requirements from the ALSDE and are mutually agreed upon expectations identified by program faculty, field supervisors, P-12 administrators and other members of the CEPS Community Partnership Advisory Council.

Field Experience Requirements

The program faculty has the responsibility for establishing departmental policies to implement the academic standards of the program of study. These responsibilities may include, for example, course prerequisites, minimum GPA requirements, and recommending a candidate's progress through each semester of the program.

Selection of Candidates

The program faculty determines the eligibility of candidates to participate in field experiences and internships. The Office of Field Services coordinates distribution and collection of applications for field experiences with program faculty.

Candidates applying for internship, must meet with their faculty advisor to verify that all prerequisites have been met and to obtain advisor signature for recommendation on the internship application. The candidate must then submit the application to the OFS.

University Supervisor/Clinical Faculty Responsibilities

The Office of Field Services will take an active role in establishing and maintaining relationships with partnering schools. Regularly scheduled meetings will be held with school administrators and cooperating teachers to help maximize the field experience opportunities for all involved stakeholders.

Identification of Objectives and Activities

Field experience objectives are determined through specific courses that are consistent with the ALSDE, CAEP, the intention of the program, and the candidate's interests and capabilities.

The field supervisor works in conjunction with the cooperating teacher to determine activities that are consistent with the objectives and are feasible at the selected internship site.

In addition, the field supervisor indicates support of objectives and activities with signature on Educator Preparation: Field Experience and Internship Responsibilities document. (Appendix C).

The field supervisor engages in mentoring of candidates while also serving as the liaison between the university and internship location.

Supervision of Field Experiences

The field supervisor remains in contact with the cooperating teacher and teacher candidate throughout each required field experience. The supervisor will visit the candidate at the school site to monitor progress and conduct any required lesson observations. The supervisor reviews all reports/evaluations that are submitted by the cooperating teacher and/or candidate and serves as contact person when partnering school finds it desirable to discuss aspects of intern's program. Other means of supervision include email communication, reviewing documents submitted by the candidate in the course management system and group/individual meetings or seminars.

Office of Field Services Responsibilities

The Office of Field Services provides a variety of support functions for all required field experiences. The following overviews these responsibilities/supports:

Field Experience Documentation

The Office of Field Services distributes necessary forms and maintains signed agreements for all candidates. Some of these forms include:

- Field Experience Applications (Available in the OFS and on OFS website)
- Educator Preparation: Field Experience and Internship Responsibilities document (Appendix C). The form provides a detailed statement of internship objectives, activities, and assessments.
- Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix D)
- Teacher Educator Dispositions (Appendix B)

Correspondence to Partnering Schools

The Office of Field Services will prepare correspondence to partnering schools asking the appropriate administrator(s) to approve the requested clinical field placements for specified undergraduate and graduate programs.

The OFS will confirm each placement directly with the teachers and administrators at each school site. Candidates will be notified of their placements once confirmations are made.

Placement of Candidates

The Office of Field Services will work with P-12 school partners for the placement of candidates throughout the program of study. Depending on the program and placement type, a representative from the OFS will maintain communication with district administrators, school level administrators, and cooperating teachers.

The process begins with the OFS requesting local school administrators complete the School Capacity Form. This form allows administrators to submit recommendations of all teachers in their building who meet the agreed upon criteria for working with teacher education candidates. Once the Office of Field Services reviews *field applications*, candidates are matched with schools and cooperating teachers based on criteria established for the field experience in which the candidate has applied. OFS then prepares correspondence to the appropriate administrators of the partnering schools for final approval of the placement. This correspondence will indicate each candidate, the requested Mentor, the grade level and subject area as appropriate.

For student teaching, upon receipt of a completed *Student Teaching Application* signed by a faculty advisor, the OFS will review each application to verify the continuing eligibility of the candidates based on pre-established criteria set forth in the appropriate bulletin.

Contact with Cooperating Teachers

After field placements have been confirmed, the OFS will maintain a current database of cooperating teachers used to mentor candidates. This information will be maintained in the OFS for accreditation documentation related to cooperating teacher credentials.

All cooperating teachers must first be recommended by school administration as meeting the mutual partnership's agreed upon criteria for cooperating teachers. Cooperating teachers who supervise interns shall be accomplished school professionals who are properly certificated at the Class A level for their present assignment or hold National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification that is appropriate to their present assignment, have at least three years of professional educational work experience in their field of specialization, and are currently teaching classes in the intern's area(s) of specialization.

Contact with Candidates

The Office of Field Services will prepare correspondence to all teacher education candidates participating in field experiences. This correspondence will include specific information related to each placement, including:

1. Beginning and ending date of placement
2. Name of School
3. Name of Mentor
4. Date, time, and location of the appropriate Orientation
5. Name of Field Supervisor

Field Orientation for Field Experiences Prior to Student Teaching

Program faculty will conduct orientations at the beginning of each field experience through their respective courses. A representative from the OFS will attend the orientation as requested.

Field Orientation for Student Teaching

The Office of Field Services will prepare and conduct a Student Teacher Orientation each Fall and Spring Semester. The purpose of the Student Teacher Orientation is to provide candidates an overview of the student teaching semester, to confirm all placements, and to provide a comprehensive statement of College policies and procedures for candidates during the student teaching semester.

Evaluation of Clinical Field 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 supervisor will conduct evaluations. Evaluations may include lesson evaluation, 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.

Cooperating Teacher Responsibilities

Generally, the cooperating teacher will:

- Grant approval of objectives and activities - Signature on the Educator Preparation: Field Experience and Internship Responsibilities document (Appendix C) signifies that stated objectives can be achieved and stated activities are feasible at the proposed work site.
- Provide professional educational experience - Provide the opportunity for a candidate to receive a professional educational experience, including providing in-depth guidance and feedback.
- Evaluate – Complete lesson evaluations and other required evaluation forms such as midterm/final evaluation form and dispositions evaluation. Also, assist the Field Supervisor in the final evaluation of the candidate's performance.

As the candidates matriculate through the program, it is important for the mentor to offer suggestions and feedback, while scaffolding the responsibilities of the candidate. Each candidate will have specific field requirements through their coursework, and the mentor is needed to help the candidate be successful with meeting the standards.

In addition, the following activities are need of mentors:

- A. work with the candidate before the beginning of school to describe and model the preparation for the start of the school year (Opening School Experience - Fall Semester only).
- B. introduce the candidate to the school facilities, services, and personnel.
- C. allow the candidate to complete required teaching assignments in his/her classroom, even if this requires slight modification of the classroom schedule, and provide suggestions and feedback about the implementation of these assignments.
- D. offer constructive written and oral feedback to candidates on a regular basis and provide thoroughly written documentation about concerns.
- E. aid with instructional planning of both daily lesson plans and unit plans and require that lesson plans be submitted before the lessons are taught for feedback and revisions prior to teaching, if needed.
- F. collaborate and communicate with candidates throughout the semester by providing professional feedback.
- G. keep field supervisors and/or program faculty informed about the progress of the candidate. **The university supervisors are the first channel of communication. If there are any problems/concerns, even small ones, they should be discussed with university supervisors immediately.** If a satisfactory resolution is not reached, the issue will be referred to the staff in the Office of Field Services.
- H. be candid with the candidate and the field supervisor about the candidate's progress.
- I. allow members of the program faculty/field supervisors to make scheduled classroom observations of the candidate.
- J. participate in cooperating teacher seminars and orientation meetings conducted by the College.
- K. keep in contact with the Field Supervisor to report issues for discussion and to receive information from the College.
- L. complete all appropriate evaluation forms, approve the candidate's time log, attend scheduled meetings, and make recommendations for subsequent placements.
- M. delegate increasing authority to the teacher candidate to make decisions about instruction and discipline matters when you determine he/she is ready to take on new

responsibility.

N. allow the candidates to solve their own teaching problems, offering suggestions and guidance and help as needed to avoid a loss of confidence.

Partnering School Administrator Responsibilities

In most cases, the partnering school represents a P-12 public school. As outlined in the Educator Preparation: Field Experience and Internship Responsibilities document (Appendix C), the building level administrator will:

- model multiple leadership roles of effective instructional leadership,
- identify exemplary cooperating teachers,
- help the candidates understand the organization of the school, and
- provide a general level of support to the candidates.

Appendix A – ***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

An 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.

Teacher Education Dispositions

Role of Dispositions

Dispositions are built around a set of beliefs or a value system. Dispositions should lead to actions and patterns of professional conduct displayed by teachers in and out of the classroom.

Teachers should be role models and model positive behaviors for their students. Teachers with positive professional dispositions tend to act in ways that elevate the profession of teaching in the eyes of others.

Teacher education programs have a responsibility to convey, model, and promote positive standards of professional conduct. Procedures for promoting and assessing dispositions must be in place along with a referral system for candidates who exhibit unacceptable behaviors. This process helps ensure that only candidates with acceptable dispositions complete the program.

At the University of South Alabama, the College of Education has identified nine dispositions for teacher candidates. A set of procedures has been established to promote and assess teacher education candidates' dispositions and respond to candidates displaying negative dispositions and unprofessional conduct. Authority for enforcing the dispositions procedures resides in the College of Education.

Disposition Descriptors

Below you will find descriptors which clarify behaviors that exemplify professional dispositions. This list provides support for faculty and students as they search for clarity in describing professional behaviors expected of all teacher candidates in the College of Education at the University of South Alabama. Candidates first encounter this list during the orientation for their initial field experience in the teacher education program. During this orientation, the list is reviewed, and each candidate signs a copy verifying that they have been made aware of these expectations for professional behavior. These same dispositions serve as a point of reference for all parties and are frequently referred to by course instructors and field supervisors throughout the teacher education program.

The teacher candidate is expected to consistently display the following dispositions:

1. Professional Behaviors

- ❖ Excellence in attendance & punctuality
- ❖ Positive attitudes towards others
- ❖ Appropriate personal and professional appearance
- ❖ Desire to make a difference
- ❖ Understanding of the importance of a community of learners.
- ❖ Willingness to learn about and respond to the needs of all learners
- ❖ Ability to work well with others

2. Initiative and Dependability

- ❖ Asks questions when necessary
- ❖ Helps others
- ❖ Uses proactive rather than reactive behaviors
- ❖ Accepts personal responsibility for situations
- ❖ Is adaptable and flexible
- ❖ Goes above and beyond minimum requirements
- ❖ Participates actively
- ❖ Is prompt and prepared; calls if late or absent
- ❖ Responds with honesty
- ❖ Knows expectations and acts accordingly
- ❖ Completes assignments thoroughly
- ❖ Follows through on promises and responsibilities
- ❖ Prepares quality work
- ❖ Communicates fully and effectively for situations

3. Tact and Judgment

- ❖ Demonstrates sensitivity to others
- ❖ Is respectful to others
- ❖ Displays good manners
- ❖ Thinks before he/she speaks or acts
- ❖ Exhibits good judgment and an open mind
- ❖ Uses positive tone of voice and body language to communicate thoughts

4. Ethical Behavior and Integrity

- ❖ Honors confidentiality
- ❖ Displays honesty in words and actions
- ❖ Knows right and wrong
- ❖ Admits mistakes and accepts responsibility
- ❖ Considers all sides of an issue
- ❖ Is genuine and authentic in words and actions
- ❖ Displays a responsible attitude
- ❖ Is trustworthy
- ❖ Avoids plagiarism

5. Effective Communicator

- ❖ Uses professional oral language
- ❖ Uses professional written language
- ❖ Uses respectful language
- ❖ Uses effective eye contact and body language
- ❖ Is an active and reflective listener
- ❖ Responds calmly in all situations
- ❖ Is articulate, speaks clearly and kindly
- ❖ Thinks before speaking

6. Desire to Improve own Performance

- ❖ Asks for help and seeks ways to grow
- ❖ Seeks feedback from many sources
- ❖ Is aware of the importance of reflection
- ❖ Takes risks to try new ideas
- ❖ Is committed to face diversity with care and concern
- ❖ Understands his/her part in the process of growth
- ❖ Has the ability to accept criticism without taking it personally
- ❖ Shows progress in skill acquisition
- ❖ Effectively implements suggestions in practice

7. Culturally Responsive

- ❖ Appreciates student differences
- ❖ Understands that students learn differently
- ❖ Demonstrates the desire and ability to use knowledge of students and their lives in planning
- ❖ Demonstrates the desire and ability to create a community that is safe and nurturing to all students
- ❖ Shows a concern for issues of equity and social justice
- ❖ Provides multiple ways of assessing students

8. Professional Commitment

- ❖ Shows commitment to teaching excellence and willingness to work toward that purpose
- ❖ Seeks opportunities to work with children
- ❖ Shows commitment to teaching as his/her primary profession
- ❖ Demonstrates a desire to learn

Process for Assessing Dispositions

Because teaching dispositions encompass both beliefs and actions, the University of South Alabama College of Education has developed a multi-step system for evaluating dispositions. Dispositions must be demonstrated by candidates in courses and during field experiences in schools. In keeping with established assessment principles and practices, the assessments are varied, multiple, and spread throughout the teacher education programs.

Promoting and Assessing Positive Dispositions

The following procedures have been established for assessing the professional dispositions and conduct of teacher education candidates:

- Candidates complete a *Dispositions Survey* (self-assessment) as a teacher candidacy admissions requirement.
- A dispositional referral process is used through all teacher education courses.
- Observational assessments are completed during all required field experiences by both cooperating teachers and university faculty serving as field supervisors.

Responding to Negative Dispositions

If unacceptable behaviors are recognized in a teacher candidate, the following steps will be taken:

- Unacceptable response(s) on the *Dispositions Survey* results in denied admission to teacher education programs.
- Course First Referral – Unacceptable dispositions identified by a course instructor will be documented on the disposition referral form (see attached) and a conference will be held between the course instructor and teacher candidate.
- Field Experience First Referral - Unacceptable dispositions identified by a cooperating teacher or field experience supervisor will be recorded on the *Evaluation of Student's Clinical Experience* completed as a mid-term and/or final evaluation, documented on the disposition referral form, and a conference will be held between the field experience supervisor and teacher candidate.
- Subsequent Referrals – Subsequent unacceptable dispositions will follow the same documentation procedures as a first referral. The referral will be followed by a conference between the Department Chair and/or Director of Field Services, faculty member completing the referral, and the teacher candidate. A plan of action for changing dispositions will be developed at this conference. Further instances of unacceptable dispositions will be directed to the appropriate Academic Misconduct Committee for disciplinary action, and may include removal from the program.

Appeals

Any appeal to this disposition assessment process follows the University of South Alabama procedures as outlined in the current edition of the Student Handbook (*The Lowdown*).

Teacher Candidate Disposition Referral

Student Candidate: _____

Student's Major: _____

Date of Referral: _____

Disposition(s) of Concern: (Check all which apply.)

_____ Professional Behaviors

_____ Effective Communicator

_____ Initiative and Dependability

_____ Desire to Improve Own Performance

_____ Tact and Judgment

_____ Culturally Responsive

_____ Ethical Behavior and Integrity

_____ Professional Commitment

Basis of Concern:

Name of Person Referring: _____

Position of Person Referring: _____

Date Reviewed with Student Candidate: _____

Signature of Student: _____

Signature of Person Referring: _____

Signature of Chair/Director of Field Services: _____

Disposition Descriptors for Teacher Candidates

Directions: Below you will find descriptors which clarify behaviors that exemplify professional dispositions. This list provides support for faculty and students as they search for clarity in describing professional behaviors expected of all teacher candidates in the College of Education at the University of South Alabama. Please read through the list carefully and sign the bottom verifying that you have been made aware of these expectations for professional behavior.

The teacher candidate is expected to consistently display the following dispositions:

1. Professional Behaviors

- ❖ Excellence in attendance & punctuality
- ❖ Positive attitudes towards others
- ❖ Appropriate personal and professional appearance
- ❖ Desire to make a difference
- ❖ Understanding of the importance of a community of learners.
- ❖ Willingness to learn about and respond to the needs of all learners
- ❖ Ability to work well with others

2. Initiative and Dependability

- ❖ Asks questions when necessary
- ❖ Helps others
- ❖ Uses proactive rather than reactive behaviors
- ❖ Accepts personal responsibility for situations
- ❖ Is adaptable and flexible
- ❖ Goes above and beyond minimum requirements
- ❖ Participates actively
- ❖ Is prompt and prepared; calls if late or absent
- ❖ Responds with honesty
- ❖ Knows expectations and acts accordingly
- ❖ Completes assignments thoroughly
- ❖ Follows through on promises and responsibilities
- ❖ Prepares quality work
- ❖ Communicates fully and effectively for situations

3. Tact and Judgment

- ❖ Demonstrates sensitivity to others
- ❖ Is respectful to others
- ❖ Displays good manners
- ❖ Thinks before he/she speaks or acts
- ❖ Exhibits good judgment and an open mind
- ❖ Uses positive tone of voice and body language to communicate thoughts

4. Ethical Behavior and Integrity

- ❖ Honors confidentiality
- ❖ Displays honesty in words and actions
- ❖ Knows right and wrong
- ❖ Admits mistakes and accepts responsibility
- ❖ Considers all sides of an issue
- ❖ Is genuine and authentic in words and actions
- ❖ Displays a responsible attitude
- ❖ Is trustworthy
- ❖ Avoids plagiarism

5. Effective Communicator

- ❖ Uses professional oral language
- ❖ Uses professional written language
- ❖ Uses respectful language
- ❖ Uses effective eye contact and body language
- ❖ Is an active and reflective listener
- ❖ Responds calmly in all situations
- ❖ Is articulate, speaks clearly and kindly
- ❖ Thinks before speaking

6. Desire to Improve own Performance

- ❖ Asks for help and seeks ways to grow
- ❖ Seeks feedback from many sources
- ❖ Is aware of the importance of reflection
- ❖ Takes risks to try new ideas
- ❖ Is committed to face diversity with care and concern
- ❖ Understands his/her part in the process of growth
- ❖ Has the ability to accept criticism without taking it personally
- ❖ Shows progress in skill acquisition
- ❖ Effectively implements suggestions in practice

7. Culturally Responsive

- ❖ Appreciates student differences
- ❖ Understands that students learn differently
- ❖ Demonstrates desire and ability to use knowledge of students and their lives in planning
- ❖ Demonstrates desire and ability to create a community that is safe and nurturing to all students
- ❖ Shows a concern for issues of equity and social justice
- ❖ Provides multiple ways of assessing students

8. Professional Commitment

- ❖ Shows commitment to teaching excellence and willingness to work toward that purpose
- ❖ Seeks opportunities to work with children
- ❖ Shows commitment to teaching as his/her primary profession
- ❖ Demonstrates a desire to learn

I have read the above list of professional behaviors expected of all teacher candidates in the College of Education at the University of South Alabama and have been made aware of the possible consequences for not consistently displaying these dispositions.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C

EDUCATOR PREPARATION: FIELD EXPERIENCE AND INTERNSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES
OFFICE OF FIELD SERVICES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

The School Administrator(s) will

- model the multiple leadership roles of an effective instructional leader;
- identify Cooperating Teacher(s);
- assist in understanding school organization - arrange an orientation for the Candidate; and
- demonstrate ongoing support.

The Cooperating Teacher will

- model and encourage effective classroom instruction including
 - planning and preparation;
 - effective teaching and learning by implementing research-based, best practice instruction in all subject areas taught;
 - effective classroom management and discipline;
 - appropriate, on-going and summative assessment and evaluation;
 - exemplary professional attitudes, ethics, and behaviors;
 - effective conferencing skills; and
- meet weekly with the Candidate to reflect on the Candidate's progress;
- scaffold responsibility through the Gradual Release of Responsibility model; and
- meet regularly with University Supervisor to discuss Candidate progress and elements of effective mentoring including how to provide constructive feedback.

The University Supervisor will

- communicate regularly with Cooperating Teacher, School Administrator, and Candidate;
- regularly visit Candidate in schools;
- complete appropriate field related documentation; and
- award grades in consultation with the Cooperating Teacher and School Administrator.

The Candidate will

- develop professional attitudes and effective interpersonal relationships in the school environment;
- abide by the philosophy, regulations, policies and standards of behavior and dress of the school (*ask the Cooperating Teacher for information concerning these subjects*);
- present themselves as responsible members of the school community and fulfill all obligations in a professional manner;
- safeguard all personal and confidential information and use it only for professional purposes;
- follow the school district schedule during internship, the USA schedule during all other field experiences;
- participate in school functions as directed by the Cooperating Teacher;
- in anticipation of being absent from school, notify the Cooperating Teacher to obtain prior approval;
- in case of an illness or emergency requiring an absence from school, notify the Cooperating Teacher as soon as possible and then notify the University Supervisor; and
- follow all requirements as stated in the accompanying course syllabus.

Specific Candidate responsibilities for field experiences and internship are detailed in course syllabi.

Principal Signature

Date

Candidate Signature

Date

Cooperating Teacher Signature

Date

University Supervisor Signature

Date

APPENDIX D



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 and the sensitivity of the information I may review, 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 Signature

Date

Special Education Personnel Signature

Date

Principal Signature

Date