

## PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES and RESPONSIBILITIES POLICY

The OLLU Education Department offers a curriculum to prepare individuals for the teaching profession. In addition to curriculum and testing requirements, all teacher candidates in the OLLU Educator Preparation Program, including TEACH Undergraduate students, Master of Arts in Teaching, Master of Education, and School Counseling students, are expected to demonstrate professional dispositions that show they are prepared to instruct children and youth. This preparation results from completing university coursework and demonstrating important intra- and interpersonal characteristics and dispositions that all effective teachers should possess.

### Admission Into TEACH

Formal entry into the teacher education program (TEACH) is contingent upon the following qualifications being met:

- Junior-level standing (minimum of 60 accrued credit hours)
- Completion of all foundation courses with a grade of a C or higher;
- All courses must be taken for a grade unless specified as a Pass/Fail;
- Minimum grade point average of 2.75; and
- Provide proof of scores demonstrating basic reading, math, and writing skills via one of the assessments in the Student Success Initiative. Passing scores must be within the past five years *OR* providing college transcripts showing proof of transfer in satisfactory completion of college-level coursework [TAC §4.54](#) exemptions: English. Lit.-Reading, English Comp.-Writing, & College Alg.-Math.

Additionally, if any students are out-of-country applicants, OLLU will require a score of a 26 on the speaking section of the TOEFL-IBT, for demonstration of oral communication skills per [TAC 227.10\(a\)\(5\)](#).

### Academic Expectations and Requirements

#### Academic Requirements

- Scholastic Integrity
- A minimum overall G.P.A. of 2.75

All candidates admitted into the teacher certification program (TEACH) will be engaged in a rich learning experience. Our interdisciplinary curriculum includes the following instructional foundations:

- reading and writing across the curriculum;
- integration of technology as a tool for learning;
- inclusion of relevant TEKS, including the English Language Proficiency Standards in instruction and planning;
- reading instruction, including instruction that improves students' content-area literacy;
- appreciation of diversity;
- value differentiated instruction;
- creating a positive and productive classroom environment; and
- implementing effective and responsive instruction and assessment to promote student learning.
- understanding and adhering to legal and ethical requirements for educators;

Through their course work, field experiences and assessments students are expected to demonstrate mastery of the skills and competencies captured in the Texas teacher standards, as indicated in [Chapter 149 of the Rules Concerning Educator Standards](#), which include:

- instructional planning and delivery;
- knowledge of students and student learning;
- content knowledge and expertise;
- learning environment;
- data-driven practice; and
- professional practices and responsibilities;

### **Demonstrates Competency in Oral, Written and Digital Communication**

The teacher candidate knows the importance of clear, accurate communication – oral, digital and written.

- The teacher candidate communicates clearly, accurately and with appropriate level of detail orally, in writing and through electronic communication. Teacher candidates are able to speak in a manner appropriate to the context of the classroom. Teacher candidates refrain from inappropriate electronic communication.
- Scholastic Integrity - OLLU pre-service teacher candidates are expected to adhere the guidelines for scholastic integrity, honesty and ethical behavior as stated in the OLLU Student Handbook. Teacher candidates demonstrate honesty and integrity by being truthful about background, experiences, and qualifications; doing one's own work; giving credit for the ideas of others; and providing proper citation of source materials.

### **Demonstrates Positive Work Habits, Communication and Interactions**

As a member of the teaching profession, it is important for pre-service teachers to model positive work habits, responsibility, dependability, honesty and commitment to the profession.

- The teacher candidate attends all classes as expected. Exhibits preparedness for class, engagement, and punctuality.
- The teacher candidate demonstrates enthusiasm and a positive attitude towards the teaching profession and learners.
- The teacher candidate dresses appropriately for the professional context and demonstrates positive personal hygiene habits.
- The teacher candidate demonstrates honesty and integrity by truthful about background, experiences, and qualifications; submitting one's own work; giving credit for the ideas of others; and providing proper citation of source materials.
- Scholastic Integrity - OLLU pre-service teacher candidates are expected to adhere the guidelines for scholastic integrity, honesty and ethical behavior as stated in the OLLU Student Handbook. Teacher candidates demonstrate honesty and integrity by being truthful about background, experiences, and qualifications; doing one's own work; giving credit for the ideas of others; and providing proper citation of source materials.

### **Cognitive Dispositions**

- Teacher candidates think analytically about educational issues.
- Teacher candidates are thoughtfully reflective about their practice.
- Teacher candidates are flexible, open to new ideas, and willing and able to modify their beliefs and practices.
- Teacher candidates question and test their assumptions about teaching and schooling.

- The teacher candidate will demonstrate content knowledge appropriate for the level of certification they are seeking.
- The teacher candidate will demonstrate the effective utilization of technology for instructional purposes.
- The teacher candidate will demonstrate and utilize a wide variety of effective teaching practices.
- The teacher candidate will use formal and informal assessments to evaluate learners and teaching practices and utilizes the findings in instructional planning
- The teacher candidate will recognize students' unique prior knowledge, life experiences and interests as part of the context for learning
- The teacher candidate will promote achievement of students at all levels by providing equitable learning opportunities.
- The teacher candidate will apply effective planning and classroom organization as tools in maximizing instructional and learning time
- The teacher candidate will make a positive contribution to the cooperating school community and school services.
- The teacher candidate will demonstrate a commitment to continued professional growth – reflect on their own strengths and professional learning needs

### **Demonstrates Respect for Diversity and Individual Differences**

In preparation for responsible teaching the teacher candidate understands the importance of creating a learning environment in which diversity and individual differences are respected.

- The teacher candidate interacts with others in ways that reflect support and show respect for all students and colleagues.
- The teacher candidate exhibits acceptance of and addresses the needs of exceptional learners.
- The teacher candidate understands and appreciates the value of diversity and pursues cultural competency.
- The teacher candidate knows how to facilitate cooperation and productivity.
- The teacher candidate works cooperatively and collegially in groups. This includes interactions with fellow students, faculty, teachers, staff, parents and administrators.
- Teacher candidates understand and appreciate the value of diversity and look beyond self in interactions with others; respect differences of race, ethnicity, religion, and social class, national allegiance, and cultural heritage. Teacher candidates do not impose personal, religious, sexual, and/or cultural values on others.
- The teacher candidate collaborates with their colleagues; are self aware of their interpersonal interactions and are open to constructive feedback from peers, faculty and administrators.
- The teacher candidate seeks out feedback and demonstrates the ability to accept and act on reasonable criticism.
- The teacher candidate maintains supportive and cooperative relationships with fellow students.
- The teacher candidate engages in collaborative decision-making.
- The teacher candidate understands others' perspectives' and is open to new and innovative ideas about teaching.

### **Models Ethical and Respectful Behaviors**

The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationship and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.

- Teacher candidates demonstrate compliance with all laws, regulations, OLLU University Policies, The Texas Administrative Code of Ethics and Standards for Texas Educators, as well as the TEA professional program standards.
- Teacher candidates maintain appropriate confidentiality at all times - A teacher candidate does not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
- The teacher candidate maintains a professional teacher-student relationship and teacher-parent relationship.
- The teacher candidate serves as an advocate; he/she demonstrates the disposition to act always for the benefit of all students.

### **Maintains Composure and Self Control**

- The teacher candidate follows appropriate channels of communication and authority.
- The teacher candidate reacts professionally when under stressful situations.
- The teacher candidate responds with flexibility to various situations.
- The teacher candidate uses sound judgment, emotional and self-control, and self-determination in personal interactions.

### **Emotional Dispositions**

- **Stress Management** - The teacher candidate demonstrates the ability to deal with current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms. He or she handles stress effectively by using appropriate self-care and developing supportive relationships with colleagues, peers, and others.
- **Emotional and Mental Capabilities** - The teacher candidate uses sound judgment, emotional and social self-control, and self-determination in personal interactions. The teacher candidate demonstrates the emotional and mental health required to function effectively as a teacher.

### **Physical Skills**

The teacher candidate exhibits motor and sensory abilities to attend and participate in class and field placements, with or without accommodations as recommended by the OLLU Disability Coordinator.

**Note:** No otherwise qualified teacher candidate shall, on the basis of disability, be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation in the Teacher Certification Program. A teacher candidate with a disability may be protected by Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act and be eligible for a reasonable accommodation that will provide an equal opportunity to meet the academic criteria related to professional behavior and scholastic performance.

Any otherwise qualified teacher candidate with a qualified disability who requests a reasonable accommodation must notify the Office of Disability Services and provide documentation as needed. The Disability Services Coordinator makes recommendations for accommodations.

### **Field Experience and Clinical Teaching Requirements**

#### **Field Experience ([TAC §228.43](#))**

In accordance with the State Board of Education the Educator Certification the (TEACH) Program at OLLU offers a wide variety of ongoing and relevant of field-based experiences for our students ([TAC §228.61](#)). Students will complete at least 30 clock hours of observation/field experience prior to student teaching. Pre-service teachers will have the opportunity to observe instruction by content certified teachers. In addition, candidates, under

supervision, will be actively engaged in instructional activities in authentic school settings in a public school accredited by the TEA for an additional 15 clock hours. Pre-service teacher candidate will work with actual students in classrooms/instructional settings and they will critically reflect on their observation experiences ([TAC §228.41](#) or [TAC §228.43](#)). Students will be required to keep a log of their field experience hours and activities and engage in thoughtful written reflection about what they have observed.

### **Clinical Teaching** ([TAC §228.41](#))

The purpose of the clinical teaching experience is to support the transition from college student to becoming a professional educator. As they experience the day-to-day routine of the classroom teacher, the clinical teacher will gain a better understanding of the inter-relationships and dynamics of classrooms and schools. Clinical Teaching provides for the opportunity for the clinical teacher to benefit from the professional guidance of an experienced teacher and group of colleagues. Through this, the clinical teacher will gain confidence in assuming their role of the teacher and grow professionally.

Clinical Teaching is the culminating experience of the OLLU teacher preparation program. Clinical Teachers will be placed with an experienced certified cooperating teacher. Clinical teachers must complete 14 weeks off full-time (100% of the school day) supervised clinical teaching in their certification area. During Clinical Teaching students demonstrate their ability to effectively plan and teach developmentally appropriate lessons, implement effective classroom management strategies, and the apply of a variety of evaluation methods and assessments to their instruction. Clinical teachers will be assessed on these important elements of teaching and their professional dispositions through observations completed by their university supervisor(s) and cooperating teachers.

### **Clinical Teaching Eligibility**

To be eligible to begin clinical teaching, candidates must complete certain specified courses and meet the following criteria:

- Completion of all coursework other than clinical teaching; registering for more than 9 semester hours during your clinical teaching requires permission from the Director of Field Experience.
- Must be in "good standing" in the Education Department, e.g., 2.75 GPA.

Clinical teaching (6 semester hours) is taken on a Pass/Fail basis. Due to the importance of the clinical teaching experience, students are expected to complete the entire clinical teaching experience.

### **Background Check Requirements**

In accordance with [Texas Education Code §22.083](#), each school district will complete a criminal background check on all candidates placed in their classrooms prior to participation in any field-based coursework including student/clinical teaching and practicums. School districts usually request a social security number and/or a driver's license number for all candidates to process background checks according to their procedures. Students are responsible for submitting all of the required background check information in the right format at the right time to the Director of Field Experience. School districts may deny placements to students with a criminal background.

### **Maintaining Academic Requirements and Professional Behaviors**

This policy was developed as a support to Education candidate development as a professional. Therefore, any behaviors that are contrary to those described in the PPRA will be addressed immediately and a support plan will be developed.

- Faculty will call a meeting with the candidate; the faculty member will complete the PPRA form and identify the behavior or academic area that needs addressing by the student. The purpose of this meeting is for the student and faculty member to explore ways in which the student can better meet the expectations for professional behaviors or academic requirements in the classroom and to develop a support plan. Both the student and professor will sign the completed PPRA form; a copy will be provided the student and the second copy will be maintained in the student's departmental file.
- If a second infraction occurs, the same procedure described above will be employed. In addition, the department chair will participate in the meeting and explain the university responsibility as gatekeeper to the profession. As a professional program, the Education Department reserves the right to recommend or deny teacher candidates for certification. If all criteria are not met satisfactorily, teacher candidates may be denied full acceptance into the Teacher Certification Program (TEACH) and/or denied the opportunity to complete clinical teaching.
- A third infraction may lead to removal from the program. Without unconditional acceptance into TEACH and successful completion of all course work, fieldwork, and clinical teaching or its equivalent, the university does not recommend TEACH candidates for Texas teacher certification. All TEACH candidates referred for review are expected to participate in the process. Refusal to participate will not terminate or invalidate the process.

Updated: 11/06/2024