

St. Cloud State University - Teacher Education Unit Policy for Potential Removal of Candidates from Education Programs

Policy Type: Academic

Department/Division: Education Unit

Effective Date: October 1, 2023

Last Updated: September 2023

Applies To: Students

Responsible University Officer: Dean, College of Education and Learning Design

Policy Owner: Dean, College of Education and Learning Design

Policy Contact: College of Education and Learning Design (coeld@stcloudstate.edu)

Rationale

The Teacher Education Unit (TEU) at St. Cloud State University is committed to supporting the development of professional educators, while still maintaining high expectations for the knowledge, skills and dispositions reflected by each teacher candidate. Thus, should significant concerns arise in the candidate's demeanor, content knowledge, or pedagogical practices, a plan will be jointly created to support the candidate's professional growth and advancement in their program. It is important that those involved understand that while every effort will be made to support candidate progress in a professional education program, it may be necessary instead, to support the candidate in exploring other career paths or non-licensure degrees in which they might be more successful.

Policy

Students have a right to be treated fairly and honestly. Candidates in a professional teacher preparation program must meet the professional expectations of their discipline. Issues that arise that call into question the candidate's suitability to meet the professional dispositions as evaluated by performance-based assessments, with given timelines and procedure.

Possible areas in which significant concerns could be identified prior to and/or during, student teaching that could affect a candidate's progress in a professional education program include, but are not limited to:

1. Candidate's **academic performance** falls below program expectations. St. Cloud State requires a cumulative GPA of 2.75 to enter student teaching. In the event that a candidate's GPA presents an obstacle for continuation, the candidate would meet with their advisor and/or Student Success personnel to discuss options. Some options available to the candidate would include (a) filing a grade appeal following the [SCSU policy](#), (b) filing a department appeal to seek exception to academic requirements, (c) retaking a course or courses in which an unsatisfactory grade was received, (d) changing to a non-Education major. Candidates must also meet the course grade requirements set within their major content program and education courses.

2. Candidate has an **unresolved incident involving academic integrity**, or other **violation of the SCSU Student Code of Conduct**. In the event that the teacher candidate has been the subject of an allegation of a Code of Conduct violation, the matter must be successfully resolved prior to the student advancing to a field experience or student teaching placement.
3. A professional dispositional concern has been identified at any point in the candidate's education program, or the candidate fails to meet expectations on any **professional dispositional evaluation** prior to student teaching (examples may include: Introduction to Education evaluation, field experience evaluation, Pre-CPAST evaluation). Candidates are made aware of the dispositional expectations for professional educators in their College of Education and Learning Design Teacher Education orientation materials.
4. Candidate has received a **“recommended with reservation”** or **“not recommended”** from a cooperating teacher, or professional concerns have been identified by a university supervisor during a field experience or student teaching placement.
5. During the **student teaching experience**, the candidate receives a consensus score of 0 in any dimension (A-U), or a total score lower than 39, on the final CPAST evaluation.

Procedure

1. Notification and Communication of Expectations

The initiator who observes or first becomes aware of the dispositional/academic concern is responsible to inform the candidate of the concern. The initial method of informing the candidate is at the discretion of the initiator, in keeping with the best interest of the candidate. In addition, the concern must be communicated, in writing, and sent to the candidate by SCSU email, within five (5) university business days of observation. The College of Education and Learning Design Advising and Student Success Center must be copied the email communication to the candidate for record keeping purposes. The initiator may decide to include other stakeholders where appropriate. The email must summarize the conversation with the student as it serves as documentation that the first step of this procedure has been completed. The procedure may end at this point. Should any professional concern(s) arise at a later date, step 2 should be initiated.

2. Meeting

The process initiator and at least one other faculty/staff member should meet with the student to discuss the issue and determine the appropriate steps needed for the student to experience success or move forward in the program. **This meeting will take place within ten (10) university business days of observation** of the professional concern, using the university's academic calendar.

Regardless of whether the student participates in the meeting, the process will move forward. The student has the right to be accompanied by any consultant of their choosing. For a description of this role and sources for consultants, see the related St. Cloud State University policy for a [link](#) to assisting students with university policies and procedures.

All parties will be notified in writing of the plan and timeline determined at the meeting. The notification is delivered by email to the student's SCSU email address. The meeting outcome might be shared as necessary with: current and future cooperating teacher(s), designated program lead, university supervisor(s), Office of Clinical Experiences, as determined during the meeting. Records of the meetings are maintained in the College of Education and Learning Design Advising and Student Success Center, and in InPlace when appropriate.

If the student is at risk of being removed or counseled out of the program, the team involved collectively develops a professional growth plan that would provide the student opportunities to demonstrate progress in the current and/or following semester of registered coursework.

In some cases, it may be determined that a student cannot reasonably be successful in the professional education program and will be assisted in exploring other possible degree/career options. The Student Relations Director, or Director of Clinical Experiences when applicable, will help the student with appropriate referrals for support.

The professional growth plan developed at the meeting will be reviewed by the candidate and involved stakeholder each term until satisfied. If, upon review, adequate progress has not been maintained, the counseling out process will be reactivated.

3. Removal from Program

1. If the program/unit determines that the student may not continue in the program, the student will be provided with information about opportunities to complete an alternative program.
2. The program lead/department chair provides formal documentation to the College of Education and Learning Design Dean recommending the candidate not move forward. The documentation includes detailed evidence as to the decision to remove the candidate from the program.
3. The College of Education and Learning Design Dean reviews the documentation.
4. The student has a right to request a meeting with the College of Education and Learning Design Dean to review the program's recommendation.
5. After meeting with the student, the College of Education and Learning Design Dean makes a decision. **The decision of the College of Education and Learning Design Dean is final.** Exception: In limited circumstances where procedural concerns existed. In those circumstances an appeal may be submitted to the Associate Provost of Academic Affairs.
6. The student may contact the Associate Provost in Academic Affairs (scsuprovost@stcloudstate.edu), **only** if one of the following conditions apply:
 - There is additional information not included in the documentation that was not considered;
 - There was a flaw in the process of dismissal from the program;
 - New information arises that impacts the decision.
7. If the Associate Provost of Academic Affairs determines that circumstances warrant procedural concerns, the College of Education and Learning Design Dean will be directed to reconsider the decision in light of new information. This will be a full review and the College of Education and Learning Design Dean can seek additional information and insight from all relevant sources. The College of Education and Learning Design Dean then must reach a final decision.

Keywords, Phrases, and Definitions:

Advisor: the faculty advisor and/or professional advisor assigned to the candidate

Counseling Out: Discussion with a student is initiated by a designated SCSU representative that leads to the decision that education might not be the appropriate career path

Growth Plan: A tool to assist a student in personal/professional development to be successful in their chosen education field. Growth plans are short-term, and include clear expected outcomes

Student and Candidate can be used to refer to the SCSU student pursuing a professional educator license/credential

Switching Majors: Student initiated conversation or choice that results in the student deciding they do not feel like this is the career path for them and they are going to change majors (this is NOT considered to be counselled out)

Potential initiators of the dispositional concern review process:

- **Faculty of record or Designated Program Leads**, for concerns occurring in courses or field experiences;
- **Advisors and/or Student Success personnel**, for concerns occurring during advising session, other events and interactions, or brought to their attention by other staff or administrators;
- **The Director of the Office of Clinical Experiences**, for concerns resulting from observations or evaluations during field experience or student teaching placements.