

GTEP HANDBOOK

Revised Fall 2026



Educator Preparation

Spencer College of Education & Human Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA

Disclaimer: The University of North Alabama Spencer College of Education and Human Sciences reserves the right to make changes of any nature to this handbook when they are deemed necessary or desirable. This handbook is for informational purposes and does not constitute a contract. Teacher candidates are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the contents of the handbook. The University of North Alabama Teacher Education Preparation handbook does not establish a contractual relationship; rather, the manual sets forth academic and other requirements that a learner must meet to be granted a degree and, in some circumstances, to continue to be enrolled at the institution. UNA reserves the right to address issues not covered in this handbook that arise during a given semester on an individual basis. Procedures stated in this handbook require continuing evaluation, review, and approval by appropriate University and School of Education (SOE) officials. Advisors and other personnel are available to guide the learner with respect to the requirements; it is the ultimate responsibility of the learner to follow them.

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DISPOSITIONS

1. The candidate demonstrates commitment to professional responsibility.
2. The candidate demonstrates commitment to ethical standards.
3. The candidate demonstrates commitment to continually evaluate his/her practice to meet the needs of all learners.
4. The candidate demonstrates commitment to using current technology for improving student learning and enriching professional practice.
5. The candidate demonstrates commitment to deepening his/her understanding of cultural, ethical, gender, and learning differences with the goal of building stronger relationships and creating more relevant learning experiences.
6. The candidate demonstrates commitment to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other professionals, and community members in order to ensure learner growth and advance the profession.

The Spencer Spencer College of Education and Human Sciences prepares knowledgeable practicing professionals by "engaging learners, inspiring leaders, and transforming lives".

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:

https://www.alabamaachieves.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Alabama_Educator_Code_of_Ethics.pdf

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Alabama State Board of Education approves all Educator Preparation programs. The Educator Preparation Program in the Spencer College of Education and Human Sciences is accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), now the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), <http://www.caepnet.org/accreditation>. This accreditation covers initial teacher preparation programs and advanced educator preparation programs at the University of North Alabama. However, the accreditation does not include individual education courses that the institution offers to P-12 educators for professional development, re-licensure, or other purposes. Degree requirements are subject to change in order to comply with state and/or federal guidelines. Students/candidates should consult with their academic advisor throughout their program to ensure all requirements are met.

The Spencer College of Education and Human Sciences has the responsibility to ensure all candidates admitted to the Graduate Teacher Education Program (GTEP) remain in good standing throughout the program. Educator preparation candidates may be placed on probation, suspended, or removed from GTEP by the College for issues including but not limited to grade point average deficiencies, dispositions, academic dishonesty, or institutional sanctions. Educator Preparation candidates must be in good standing in GTEP to enroll in restricted courses, including the internship.

ADMISSION TO GTEP

How do I get admitted into the Graduate Teacher Education Program (GTEP)?

Candidates should consult with their academic advisor(s) throughout the program to ensure all requirements are met. To be considered a candidate in an educator preparation program, students must be formally admitted to the UNA Educator Preparation Program and meet the following requirements:

University Admission:

Students must be admitted to the University of North Alabama. Admission to the University is not equivalent to unconditional admission to an approved program in Educator Preparation.

Major:

An education major must be declared in the Spencer College of Education and Human Sciences.

Background Clearance:

Attain suitability clearance from the Alabama State Department of Education based on your ABI/FBI fingerprints. The candidate is responsible for the non-refundable, non-transferable fee. A candidate whose suitability determination precludes admission to a State-approved teacher education program has the right to due process procedures in accordance with Rule 290-3-3-.02(6)(d), Educator Certification Chapter of the Alabama Administrative Code. See Appendix B.

Liability Coverage:

Teacher candidates may be subject to lawsuits during their field or clinical placements. Liability insurance is a mandatory requirement for all teacher candidates enrolled in courses that have a field or clinical experiences component at the University of North Alabama. Students may obtain liability insurance through any company of their choice, but documentation (printed receipt) of coverage in the amount of \$1,000,000.00 MUST be obtained in ED 292 prior to any field hours within the P-12 classroom setting. Teacher candidates can also obtain this coverage by becoming members of a professional organization such as National Education Association's Student Program (SAEA), Association of American Educators (AAE), or the Alabama Conference of Educators (ACOE). Teacher candidates interested in joining SAEA, AAE, or ACOE on-line can visit www.nea.org, www.aaeteachers.org/, or www.acoe.us. Teacher candidates must maintain liability coverage throughout the program and should be able to show proof of membership to the University at any time. A final proof of membership will be submitted during the internship orientation meeting prior to the student teaching experience.

GTEP Application:

Submission of formal application to GTEP. The digital application is available on your MyUNA Profile. The deadline to apply for admission to GTEP is posted each semester at the following link: <https://www.una.edu/education/educator-preparation/applying-to-tepgtep.html>

A late application must be accompanied by a \$50 late fee. Admission to GTEP audit is completed by the Certification Officer.

Coursework:

Complete ED 585 or ECE 500 with a grade of "C" or better.

Required Assessments:

Candidates are required to take and pass the content-specific Praxis and Foundations of Reading (if applicable) assessments in their teaching field before unconditional admission to the program. Students with an overall GPA of 2.0 – 2.49 in undergraduate studies will be

required to pass the Praxis at the alternate score. For Early Childhood Education majors, please speak to your advisor for additional information. More information regarding required Assessments can be found at the following link:

<https://www.una.edu/education/educator-preparation/praxis-testing.html>

Grade Point Average:

Maintain a grade average of "B" or better on all graduate work attempted. A student who makes a grade of "C" or below on more than six semester hours of graduate work is automatically eliminated from the program.

- A grade point average of 2.75 overall for admission to TEP
 - A grade point average of 3.25 overall for graduation
- See Appendix A for GPA calculator.

Interview:

Successful completion of the GTEP Interview, which occurs during the semester the student is enrolled in ED 585 or ECE 500. The interview includes assessments of oral communication and professional dispositions. Candidates are allowed a maximum of two attempts to successfully complete the interview.

When will I know if I'm admitted to GTEP?

At the end of the semester in which you apply, the Certification Officer will notify you of the admission decision. This official notification will be sent to your UNA Portal email account.

- Students may not pre-register for courses that require admission to GTEP.
- Once you receive your formal admission notice, you may proceed with either regular or late registration.
- If admission is denied, you must submit a new application for future consideration.

Once I have been admitted to GTEP, can my admission status ever be revoked?

Once admitted to the GTEP, you are required to maintain all standards outlined in the GTEP Handbook. Admission may be rescinded if you fail to meet these expectations, including but not limited to:

- Meeting the required GPA in each category (UNA, overall, teaching field(s), and professional studies).
- Maintaining current ASBI/FBI background clearance.
- Demonstrating satisfactory knowledge, skills, and dispositions (see Appendix D).
- Accumulating more than six semester hours of graduate coursework with a grade of "C" or below.

Failure to enroll in GTEP coursework for more than one academic year will result in inactive status. Students who are not admitted to GTEP may reapply by submitting a new application. Please note:

- Re-application does not guarantee admission.
- All deficiencies must be corrected before re-admission is considered.
- Inactive students who reapply may be required to follow an updated state-approved program checklist.
- Students should consult with their academic advisors to ensure appropriate course selection and program planning.

COMPLETION OF GTEP

I've been admitted to GTEP, what's next?

Coursework:

Complete remaining coursework on the official program of study.

Field Experiences:

The purpose of field experiences in the teacher education program is to allow candidates to become familiar with and participate in a variety of instructional situations beginning with the first professional education course and extending through the program with the culminating activity of the internship. From one semester to the next, candidates are provided opportunities to become more involved in classroom settings until they assume full internship responsibilities and manage entire classrooms. The comprehensive set of field experiences in the professional education program enables candidates to make practical applications of knowledge, learning principles, teaching techniques, and instructional materials in a supportive classroom environment with monitoring and specific feedback from school-based personnel and University supervisors. All education courses require a variety of field experiences in diverse settings. This is an integral preparation component embedded throughout the curriculum. Alternative A students must satisfy 51 additional hours of field experiences outside of class requirements. See Appendix C.

Required Assessment(s):

The subject assessments required in the AECTP consist of selected tests from Praxis Subject and Foundations of Reading Assessments that are administered by Educational Testing Services (ETS and/or Pearson). Candidates are required to take and pass all appropriate Praxis Subject and Foundations of Reading Assessments required for their major prior to internship. Also, candidates must meet current edTPA cut scores to be recommended for certification.

- Score reports are available 4-6 weeks after the test. Plan to take the test in enough time for your score reports to be on file PRIOR to the start of the internship semester.
- Make sure you have your score report sent to UNA and the Alabama State Department of Education.
- *Spring Internship Applicants:* Praxis and Foundations of Reading passing scores must be on file with UNA by November 1st.
- *Fall Internship Applicants:* Praxis and Foundations of Reading passing scores must be on file by July 1st.

Internship:

A nine (9) hour internship for an Alternative Class A candidate is the last requirement before graduating and applying for certification. Before a candidate can be admitted to internship, the following requirements must be met:

- Maintain all requirements listed under Admission and Retention to GTEP.
- *Submit a formal application to the Office of Educator Preparation by the posted deadlines listed on the Educator Preparation website.*
 - Applications submitted after the deadline will be considered only during the late acceptance window.
 - All late applications must include a \$50 non-refundable late fee.
 - Placement is not guaranteed for late applications.
- Provide proof of personal liability insurance.
- Complete all required coursework prior to the internship.
- Complete all required Field Experience hours.
- Pass all appropriate PRAXIS Subject Assessments/Foundations of Reading Test
 - Score report must be on file in the Office of Educator Preparation and must reflect the passing score(s) set by the Alabama State Department of Education.
- GPA:
 - Overall GPA minimum GPA of 3.25
- Meet all eligibility requirements for internship placement prior to the internship semester.

Candidates shall not be enrolled in additional coursework during the internship semester.

Interns are prohibited from terminating their student teaching placement early for the purpose of accepting employment. Undergraduate candidates are further prohibited from receiving contractual compensation from school districts for supplemental duties (e.g., athletics, band, dance team, clubs, committees, or similar assignments).

Enrollment in the Graduate Teacher Education Program constitutes an acknowledgment of the candidate's obligation to devote the necessary time and effort to the assigned school and to comply fully with all codes of conduct, policies, and regulations established by that school and the school district.

Candidates bear full responsibility for securing and maintaining reliable transportation to and from their internship placement.

Pinning Ceremony:

Candidates seeking initial certification must have completed all academic and certification requirements to be eligible to participate in the Teacher Education Pinning Ceremony held at the conclusion of the spring and fall semesters.

Graduation:

Educator Preparation candidates must meet the following requirements prior to graduation:

- Apply for graduation by the designated date. Please refer to the Office of the Registrar webpage at www.una.edu/registrar for details on applying.
- Have an overall GPA of 3.25 or higher on graduate work.
- A grade of "C" or better is required in each course, with no more than two grades of "C" allowed.
- Successful completion of an exit assessment covering professional education.
- Satisfactory completion of all coursework, field experiences, and the internship.
- For candidates seeking initial certification, obtain a passing score on the edTPA portfolio prior to graduation.

APPLYING FOR TEACHER CERTIFICATION

How do I apply for certification?

Students are responsible for applying for certification in conjunction with graduation. All required forms and instructions are available on the Educator Preparation website under the Certification section. <https://una.edu/education/educator-preparation/certification.html>

Candidates must submit a formal application to the Office of Educator Preparation by the deadlines posted on the Educator Preparation website and pay the required certification fee to the Alabama State Department of Education.

- Applications submitted after the deadline will be considered only during the late acceptance window.
- All late applications must include a \$50 non-refundable late fee.

- Late submissions may not be included in the first batch of certification applications sent to the Alabama State Department of Education, which may delay the issuance of certification.

At the completion of the semester when degrees have been conferred, all recommendations for certification will be sent to the Alabama State Department of Education, along with transcripts from UNA, documenting the following:

- An official transcript from an accredited institution documenting an earned master's degree.
- Passing scores on a comprehensive assessment(s) documenting mastery of the curriculum of professional studies and the teaching field, which may include, but may not be limited to, an oral examination. Passing scores on the Alabama Educator Certification Testing Program (AECTP) exams, including both the Praxis Core Academic Skills Exam (if unconditionally admitted to TEP prior to 6/11/2020), Praxis Subject Assessment(s), Foundations of Reading, and a passing edTPA score.
- Satisfactory completion of a program approved by the Alabama State Board of Education with a minimum GPA of 3.25 on all courses on the approved checklist.
- An individual who completes a State-approved program must submit an application for Alabama certification within 60 calendar months of program completion.
- Coursework used to meet Class B certification requirements may not be used to meet requirements for Class A certification in any teaching field or area of instructional support.
- Candidates who wish to complete a teacher education program at UNA and apply for teacher certification in another state are responsible for contacting the Department of Education of that state to determine specific requirements of that state.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Advising and GPA

Advising

You are strongly encouraged to work closely with your assigned faculty advisor(s) regarding both academic planning and professional development. Meeting with your advisor at least **once each semester** is recommended to ensure you remain on track with your program requirements and progress toward graduation.

Early Childhood Education Majors

- Students in these programs are assigned one advisor. The name of your advisor can be found in the UNA Student Portal.

Secondary Education Majors

- Students in secondary education programs are assigned **two** advisors:
 - An advisor from the Spencer College of Education and Human Sciences.
 - An advisor from the content area of your chosen teaching field.

Students may view the name of their assigned advisor in the UNA Student Portal.

For additional guidance about advising, please contact the administrative assistant for your department.

GPA Calculation

The University of North Alabama is on a four-point system. Every grade received earns you a number of quality points for that grade. Quality Points are determined using the following 4-point scale:

A = 4 quality points

B = 3 quality points

C = 2 quality points

D = 1 quality point

F = 0 quality points

Calculate Quality Points

If you take a 3-hour course, and you earn a grade of B in that course, you have earned a total of nine (9) quality points using the following calculation:

Quality Points * credit hours taken = quality points earned for the course

$$3 * 3 = 9$$

Calculate GPA

After calculating your Quality Points earned for each course, you can now calculate your GPA using the following calculation: Total Quality Points / Total Hours Taken = GPA

For example, if you completed 4 courses and you earned the following grades:

Course	Credit Hours	Grade	Quality Points Earned per Course
ED292	1	A (4QP)	4
ED331	3	C (2QP)	6
SOM201	3	B (3QP)	9
EN232	3	B (3QP)	9
Total	10		28

You have taken a total of 10 Credit Hours among all your courses.

You have earned a total of 28 Quality Points among all your courses.

Total Quality Points / Total Hours Taken = GPA

28 / 10 = 2.80

Appendix B – Fingerprint Clearance

All education majors at the University of North Alabama must obtain background suitability clearance from the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE), based on ABI/FBI fingerprint results. This clearance is required prior to enrollment in any education course that includes field or clinical experiences.

Step 1: Registration

Follow the sequence below in order:

- Create an **AIM Account** at <https://aim.alsde.edu>
- Complete the **Background Check Registration** in AIM
- Create a **Fieldprint Account** using UNA's instructions: [Fieldprint Registration Guide](#)
- Complete authorization forms, schedule your appointment, and pay the fingerprinting fee

Step 2: Fingerprinting Appointment

- The closest Fieldprint location to UNA is **Central Mail Stop**. A full list of Fieldprint sites is available here: [Fieldprint Locations](#)
- Bring the following to your appointment:
 - A printed copy of your fingerprint registration receipt
 - A valid, state-issued photo ID
- At your appointment, your fingerprints will be scanned electronically and transmitted directly to the Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE).
- Processing usually takes **2–3 business days** for ALSDE to receive your clearance.

Step 3: Clearance Confirmation

- Within **7–10 business days**, you should receive an official **clearance letter from ALSDE**.
- Email the following to the Office of Educator Preparation at **edprep@una.edu**:
 - Your L# (UNA student ID number)
 - A **color photo or scanned copy** of your ALSDE clearance letter
- Keep the **original ALSDE clearance letter** for your records. *The Office of Educator Preparation cannot provide replacement copies.*
- Allow a minimum of **two hours** for the Office to update your status in the UNA system.

Appendix C – Field Experience Guidelines

Participation in field experiences is a privilege; candidates are required to carry out their work in field placements in a professional manner. Candidates are visitors in school settings and must adhere to school policies and guidelines while completing course-related requirements.

Alabama State Teacher Education Code: Field experiences in Class B and Alternative Class A programs:

1. All Class B, Alternative Class A, Class A and Class AA programs shall require extensive field experiences in diverse settings. If permitted by written EPP policy, individuals who are employed in position appropriate to the area of their current program may complete field experiences on the job, but those experiences must be planned with specific purposes and assessment.
2. The majority of field experiences must occur in P-12 schools.
3. At least half of the field experiences shall be in the candidate's teaching field or area of instructional support.
4. For early childhood education and early childhood special education programs, field experiences shall include placements in at least two of the three main types of early education settings [early school grades (K-3), child care centers and homes, and Head Start programs].

University Expectations:

Field experiences are scheduled by the professor or will be your responsibility to acquire. Below are expectations for you to follow:

- **Begin your field experience immediately and attend consistently throughout the semester.** It takes time to make the initial contact and for the cooperating teacher to set up a schedule for your visits, so it is important to get started right away.
 - Send a well-constructed and grammatically correct email to the teacher. Be sure to include the content area, a timeframe for when you would like to start, and give contact information for yourself. Do not tell the teacher when you will be coming. Ask for times you can be in their room. Remember that you are a visitor in schools and must ask to be there.
 - Be on time and call the school if you are late or will be unable to attend.
 - Your tardiness in beginning the field placement should not be a concern to the teacher. It is your responsibility to work it out. Do not ask the teacher to accommodate you.
 - Clinicals should not be scheduled with immediate family members.
- **Professional attire is required.** You are now in the role of a professional and your dress needs to reflect the role. Unprofessional dress will not be tolerated by our

public school partners. Principals will ask you to leave the premises if your attire does not meet their dress code. Please take a look at dress codes before entering the schools. Below are some general guidelines to follow:

- **Hair:** Neat and natural styles. No extreme colors or cuts. No wet hair.
- **Tops:** Shirt should be clean without wrinkles. Avoid tight-fitting blouses, tank tops, hoodies, and t-shirts. Do not expose midriffs, undergarments, or cleavage. No clothing that promotes alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances or displays profanity or sexual words and symbols.
- **Pants/Skirts:** Pants should be neatly pressed, clean, and should fit comfortably. Skirts should be no higher than an inch above the knee. Avoid jeans, yoga pants, and pants with rips.
- **Shoes:** Clean shoes and no stilettos heels. Remember, teaching involves prolonged periods of standing, so take comfort into consideration when choosing footwear.
- **Accessories:** Make-up should be natural and jewelry kept to a minimum. There should be no visible body/facial piercings and tattoos should be covered. Keep perfumes to a minimum.
- **Hygiene:** Appropriate grooming and bathing should be reflected in appearance and smell.
- **Your professional reputation is being established while in the schools.**
Appropriate language and behavior are expected at all times. During field experiences, you are working in the local schools and representing the university. The following must be observed at all times to ensure you are professionally presenting yourself:
 - Grammatically correct speech and writing
 - Adherence to the Alabama Code of Ethics and the University dispositions
 - Appropriate use of technology
 - Monitoring of all your social media
 - No cell phone use (including text messaging) while on school grounds
 - No smoking or tobacco use on school grounds
- **All lesson plans must be submitted to your cooperating teacher/university professor for approval.** If your requirements include teaching lessons, you must submit lesson plans in a timely manner to the cooperating teacher. This ensures that your lesson will support and fit the curriculum being taught in the classroom.
- **It is very important that you sign in at the main office as a school visitor and wear your Mane Card.** This way, all school personnel know who you are and why you are there. You must return to the main office before leaving the school to sign out after each visit.

- **Bring your Field Experience Verification Log to the school so that your teacher can sign and verify your hours/requirements after every visit.** Turn in completed forms to your course instructor once you have completed your field experience requirements.
- **Closing out a field experience is very important.** Verbally express gratitude for the use of the classroom to your cooperating teacher. A thank you note would be an appropriate gesture. Make sure the area you used each time is left clean and that any work samples are given back to the teacher (ask if you can make a set of copies). Discuss with the teacher what your strengths and weaknesses were during the process. These learning experiences will help you gain valuable information. The changes you make based off feedback will determine your success as a future intern and teacher.
- **Fire Arms/Medication:** Interns are not permitted to have a firearm, tobacco products, or other restricted items (knives, mace, pepper spray, etc.) on his/her person at any time while on school property. The use of prescription medication must be disclosed to the Director of Clinical Experiences, cooperating teacher, and school administration if consumed on school grounds. The medication must be in the original prescribed bottle with the label. The medication is to be kept in a lock area and away from students at all time.

Appendix D – Teacher Candidate Due Process, Referrals, and Appeals

Overview

All University of North Alabama students seeking teacher certification are informed that the Spencer College of Education and Human Sciences Education (Spencer COEHS) Preparation Program establishes dispositions for prospective teachers. The field and clinical teaching program is a collaborative relationship between UNA, cooperating school districts, mentor teachers, and the teacher candidate. The Spencer COEHS routinely monitors the professional dispositions throughout the program for all teacher candidates. Those candidates who are not progressing or adequately meeting the expectations outlined in the Candidate Discipline Referral (Form A) may be required to complete a formal remediation plan. Occasionally, there are circumstances that warrant the candidate's removal from the field or clinical teaching experience and/or Teacher Education Program. The Spencer COEHS has prescribed specific steps to be followed for intervention or possible removal of the teacher candidate. Such steps are detailed below. All cases of intervention or possible removal of teacher candidate(s) will be referred to the Professional Ethics Committee (PEC). The PEC will consist of five members representing the Spencer COEHS. A minimum of three members shall constitute a quorum. A quorum must be present at meetings for proceedings to be valid.

Reasons for Intervention or Possible Removal of the Teacher Candidate

1. Mutual consent and agreement for withdrawal by the candidate, cooperating school, and university mentor for reasons of illness, injury, or other unforeseen problems (students may have the opportunity to intern the following semester).
2. Failure by the candidate to establish and maintain a satisfactory performance level in the P-12 classroom setting instruction and management.
3. Failure by the candidate to abide by the policies of the cooperating school and/or UNA.
4. Breach of Alabama Code of Ethics.
5. Other reasons as determined by UNA.

Due Process Procedures for Intervention or Possible Removal of Teacher Candidate

Removal of the field or clinical assignment of a teacher candidate for the reasons previously stated above should follow these prescribed steps:

1. The teacher candidate shall be informed by the cooperating teacher and university supervisor of any unsatisfactory performance. This shall be done through written evaluations, personal conferences, and/or written documentation (Form A) of any infractions of school district policy, UNA policy, professionalism, or violations of state or federal law.
2. An intervention plan will be crafted through the collaboration of the university supervisor, cooperating teacher, Director of Clinical Experiences, and teacher candidate.
3. If UNA determines that a teacher candidate does not comply with the prescribed verbal and written suggestions for improvement, as documented in their intervention plan or a third referral is issued, the university supervisor and Director of Teacher Education shall initiate a hearing with the Professional Ethics Committee (PEC). The teacher candidate will be removed from the P-12 classroom setting until future notice.
4. The teacher candidate will receive notice (Form B) of the scheduled hearing through university email within three (3) business days of removal from the P-12 classroom setting. The notice will also include the date, time and location of the scheduled hearing. The teacher candidate is permitted to have a university advisor of their choosing present at the hearing (as defined in UNA Student's Procedural Rights).

During the hearing, the Director of Teacher Education or designee will present information concerning the teacher candidate's unsatisfactory performance and removal from the classroom. The teacher candidate will also have the opportunity to present information about their performance and removal as well. During the hearing, the PEC may ask questions at any time.

After the hearing concludes, the PEC will review and discuss the information presented. The decision concerning the teacher candidate's standing in the program will be made by the Associate Dean, using a preponderance of evidence standard. The decision will be communicated to the student teacher via university email within five (5) business days, preceding the hearing. The teacher candidate has three (3) business days to appeal the Associate Dean's decision to the Dean of the Spencer COEHS.

If the teacher candidate fails to appear at the hearing, the hearing may be held without their presence or statements.

5. A situation in which the teacher candidate places classroom students in danger or shows severe behavioral misconduct (refer to the Alabama Code of Ethics) toward a student(s), their family, school staff, university staff, or other university student(s), or violates state or federal law, will be cause for immediate removal from the classroom setting. Such behavior may result in suspension or dismissal from the Spencer COEHS Teacher Education Program. The Dean shall have final authority to remove a teacher candidate, including, but not limited to reasons previously described.

Appeals Procedure

If the teacher candidate wishes to appeal the decision of removal from field experiences, internship, or the teacher education program (TEP), they should follow these prescribed steps:

1. Within three (3) business days from the date of the decision by the Associate Dean, the teacher candidate must submit a written appeal through their university email to the Dean explaining why the decision of the Associate Dean should be reconsidered.
2. The Dean will review the appeal.
3. If the Dean accepts the appeal, the Associate Dean will provide a letter via university email within three (3) business days explaining to the teacher candidate further steps recommended.
4. If the Dean denies the appeal, the Associate Dean's decision is final and such notification will be delivered via university email within three (3) business days to the teacher candidate.

Dismissal from the Graduate Teacher Education Program

When a field or clinical teaching placement is withdrawn, a determination will be made regarding the standing of the candidate in the graduate teacher education program (GTEP). Withdrawal may happen with or without continued good standing in the program,

depending on the circumstances. Status shall be established in writing at the time of the withdrawal. When withdrawal of a field or clinical placement occurs coupled with withdrawal of full admission status from the university, the Spencer College of Education and Human Sciences will not thereafter support a candidate's application to the Education Preparation Program.

Appendix E – Teacher Education Programs

The Educator Preparation Program in the Spencer College of Education and Human Sciences is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), <https://caepnet.org/>.

For a list of programs, view the Catalog, <https://catalog.una.edu/>.

Appendix F – Frequently Asked Questions

If I attended another institution prior to UNA, can I transfer in the education courses I took at the other institution?

Education courses taken at other institutions will automatically transfer in to UNA as electives. If you think a course you took at another institution would be equivalent to a course we require at UNA, you can request a course substitution for that particular course.

Transferred courses and/or credits used to meet approved program requirements in professional studies, instructional support, or other approved program requirements (courses other than general studies and Arts and Sciences type courses used to meet academic major requirements) must have been completed at a regionally accredited institution that prepares teachers on the same degree level of certification. Also, the candidate must meet all current ALSDE requirements. Please speak with your advisor regarding this.

After I have been admitted to UNA's Educator Preparation Program, can I take a transient course at another institution and then transfer it back into UNA?

Candidates who wish to take coursework at another institution and transfer those credits back in to UNA must secure pre-approval from the Dean of the college in which the course(s) are taught for both the enrollment and the specific courses to be taken. Candidates on academic probation, academic warning, or conditional admission cannot be approved for transient work. Candidates may not receive transient approval for courses failed in residence at UNA. Candidates seeking transient approval for work at a junior or community college should be aware that a minimum of 64 semester hours must be earned from UNA or other senior institutions to fulfill graduation requirements.

Transferred courses and/or credits used to meet approved program requirements in professional studies, instructional support, or other approved program requirements (courses other than

general studies and Arts and Sciences type courses used to meet academic major requirements) must have been completed at a regionally accredited institution that prepares teachers on the same degree level of certification. Please speak with your advisor regarding this.

Can I complete the Educator Preparation Program at UNA and use it to become certified in another state?

Candidates who wish to complete the educator preparation program at UNA and apply for teacher certification in another state are responsible for contacting the Department of Education of that state to determine specific requirements for licensure in that state.

Can I take online courses in the Educator Preparation Program?

Some courses are offered online but some courses require presence on campus. If you wish to see which courses are offered online, please review the Class Schedule.

Appendix G – Faculty and Staff

Administrative

Dr. Katie Kinney, Dean

Dr. Matt Green, Associate Dean

Dr. Jean Ann Helm Allen, Associate Dean, Educator Preparation & Certification

Staff

Ms. Kiara Erbe, Senior Administrative Assistant

edprep@una.edu

Ms. Christy Waters, Director of Clinical Experiences

ccwaters@una.edu

Ms. Bretta Cagle, Senior Certification & Data Coordinator

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Ms. Amber Carruth, Certification & Data Coordinator

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Ms. Connie Sparks, edTPA Coordinator

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Appendix H – Definition of Terms

Certification: state licensure of an individual to teach one or more subjects at a specified range of grades in the PK-12 classroom.

Chair of the Department: has the overall responsibility for the department of either elementary or secondary education.

Clinical/Field Experiences: time preservice teachers spend in P-12 schools and classrooms working with mentor teachers. Commonly, a university faculty member oversees field experience and provides onsite feedback.

Conceptual Framework: establishes a shared vision in preparing educators to work effectively in P-12 schools and provides direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance, scholarship, service and accountability.

Cooperating/Mentor Teacher: full time teacher who has demonstrated effectiveness in the classroom and will provide mentoring and professional guidance. Cooperating teachers that oversee interns must hold a master's degree or National Board Certification, three years of teaching experience, and be recommended by school administration.

Dean of the Spencer College of Education and Human Sciences: has the overall responsibility for the program of teacher education, its relationship with other departments and offices of the university, the State Department of Education, and university administration.

Director of Clinical Experiences: oversees field hours, cooperating teachers, internship placements, and works closely with university supervisors and P-12 schools.

Discipline Referral: intended to assess unsatisfactory dispositions displayed by the teacher candidate.

Dispositions: are professional attitudes, values and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development.

FERPA Form: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that regulates how students' educational records are maintained and under what provisions certain student records can/should be released. FERPA forms can be located on the UNA website.

Major: student's primary field of study.

Praxis: Praxis Subject tests measure subject-specific content knowledge that K-12 educators need for beginning teaching.

Prerequisite: a course that must be taken prior to another specified course.

Professional Ethics Committee (PEC): cases of intervention or possible removal of teacher candidate(s) will be referred to the Professional Ethics Committee (PEC), which consists of five members: Associate Dean and four faculty members and representatives of the Spencer COEHS.

Program of Study Check Sheet: is a comprehensive, structured approach for delivering academic and career education to prepare students for postsecondary education and career success.

Student Teaching/Internship: fifteen consecutive weeks of full school days leading to gradual increase of teaching responsibilities in the P-12 classroom setting.

Teacher Candidate: person enrolled in higher education for the purpose of earning initial or advanced certification in a teaching field.

Teaching Field: the specific discipline or concentrated area of study in a State approved program that leads toward educator certification.

Transcript: an academic record of a student's earned credits and grades that is maintained in the Office of the Registrar.

University Supervisor: university employee that directly supervises, mentors, and evaluates the teacher candidate.

Watermark (SLL): web-based data management system the university uses to collect individual assessment information for all teacher candidates. The cooperating teacher, university supervisory, and student intern will submit all assessment data during internship via Watermark (SLL).

Appendix I – Handbook Signature Sheet



UNIVERSITY OF North Alabama

Graduate Teacher Education Program (GTEP) Handbook Confirmation

I, _____ have read the Graduate Teacher Education Program Handbook and understand that it is my responsibility to continue to update myself with new standards set by the Spencer College of Education and Human Sciences at the University of North Alabama and the Alabama State Department of Education. I also realize that I have certain requirements and rules that I must follow while completing my program of study.

The University of North Alabama Ethics Pledge:

I profess my intention to maintain high standards of ethical conduct in the field and clinical setting. I have read and understand the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics standards reflected on the ALSDE website. I pledge to act according to its principles.

The University of North Alabama Confidentiality Pledge:

I acknowledge that all information regarding students and any other school related information learned during the field and clinical setting are confidential. As such, I will not disclose it through social media or other communication. If I learn of a situation that may be harmful to any individual, I will immediately report it to the proper parties.

Teacher Candidate Name (print):
Teacher Candidate Signature:
Date: