

A CELEBRATION OF BEST PRACTICES  
COVER PAGE

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Which NMSA/NCATE approved Middle Level Teacher Preparation Standard does your submission address? (Check all that apply)

- Standard 1 Young Adolescent Development
- Standard 2 Middle Level Philosophy and School Organization
- Standard 3 Middle Level Curriculum and Assessment
- Standard 4 Middle Level Teaching Fields
- Standard 5 Middle Level Instruction and Assessment
- Standard 6 Family and Community Involvement
- Standard 7 Middle Level Professional Roles

Descriptive Title of Best Practice

**Dealing with "Dispositions"**

**With emphasis on teacher disposition and concerns about addressing problem behaviors, it is important to engage in early detection. This plan looks at behavior "patterns," targeting, identifying, remediating, and responding to troubling, though sometimes minor behaviors, with either a single department or campus-wide approach.**

**The Student Concerns Profile is based on a student version of "best practices" expected of teacher education candidates. Introduced on admission to the Teacher Education Program, it is used by faculty with a concern in any targeted area not serious enough alone to warrant program dismissal. A file on the student is initiated in the Department Chairperson's office at that time. If no further form is submitted, no action is taken. However, if a second form is submitted by the same or a second faculty member at any time while in the program, the student, the two faculty members, and the Department Chair have a conference to remediate, or respond to the behavior(s). Any further form submitted by a faculty member reactivates the conference process and further action is taken. This has had a significant impact on reducing problems during Student Teaching, by identifying problems with dispositions, unrelated to course grades, while still early in the program.**

## **IMPETUS**

Beginning in 1992, faculty in the Missouri Southern State University (MSSU) Department of Teacher Education began to voice concerns about student issues that are today classified as “Dispositions.” The same students who were objects of concern during the program, later had difficulties as student teachers in the classroom. Some of these student teachers ultimately had to be removed from their student teaching experience and the Teacher Education Program. It was generally during the meetings by the Admission and Retention Committee to formalize this action that it became apparent the faculty throughout the Department of Teacher Education and other departments on campus had experienced the same concerns. Alone, none of the problems were sufficient to remove a student from the program, but together they formed patterns of behavior that indicated a need for remediation, career counseling, or referral to the Admissions and Retention Committee. In response, an ad hoc Ethics Committee was formed to investigate what other universities were doing to address similar concerns.

Once the committee was satisfied that an appropriate ethics pledge had been adopted, the next matter was to create a means of follow-through. This poster presentation illustrates the **PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS, and APPLICATION** of the described approach.

## **PLANNING**

Regular meetings were held by ad hoc Ethics Committee members to determine a plan, hold open forums with students to hear concerns and observations, and share research collected on Ethics/Codes of Conduct at other colleges and universities. Based on those meetings and information gathered, the Standards of Professional Conduct was developed, and faculty approved, for introduction in the beginning junior level teacher education class as part of admittance into the MSSU Teacher Education Program. A Student Concern Profile form was developed for use in identifying faculty concerns outside traditional academic measures.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS**

Presentations were made at faculty meetings across campus, presenting and explaining the use and purpose of those forms.

## **APPLICATION**

The Purpose and Procedure for Use page addresses this in a step-by-step manner. Once a student is identified as in need of counseling, the result of the meeting is individualized to meet their particular circumstances.

The opportunity to address problems as part of a pattern of behavior has helped to correct those problems, improve student professionalism, and reduce concerns which could lead to removal during student teaching.

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**MSSU Teacher Education Dispositions**  
**(taken from the MSSU Teacher Education**  
**"Standards of Professional Conduct")**

**Dispositions :**      **Habits of the mind, including beliefs, attitudes and values, that underlie one's practices, behaviors and relations.**

**Area 1 Professional Conduct** (MoStep Quality Indicator 9)

1. High Academic & Professional Goals
2. Model of Professionalism & Citizenship
3. Good Character
4. Dedicated to the best interests of students
5. Behavior (on campus/K-12 setting)
6. Professional Appearance

**Area 2 Commitment and Disposition** (MoStep Quality Indicator 7, 9)

1. Communication (reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, visually representing)
2. Academic Honesty & Integrity
3. Attitude Toward Study (class attendance, class participation, class preparation, assignment completion)

**Area 3 Professional Excellence** (MoStep Quality Indicator 9, 10)

1. Freedom of Expression (respect the rights & views of all)
2. Spirit of Collaboration (collaborative spirit, collegiality)
3. Professional Vision
  - personal & professional growth
  - acceptance of diverse groups and/or individuals
  - disposition toward a holistic & global society

**MSSU DEPARTMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION**  
**STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FORM**  
PURPOSE & PROCEDURE FOR USE

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the Standards of Professional Conduct Form is to provide an *intervention procedure* to address faculty concerns regarding candidates in the MSSU Teacher Education Program. The main objective is to make the best decision regarding the candidate concern(s) taking into consideration the candidate, the MSSU Teacher Education Program, the candidate's future students, and the teaching profession. Such intervention seeks to keep promising candidates within the program.

Note: If a concern is immediate or severe, the candidate associated with the act may be referred directly to the Admission and Retention Committee and/or be dealt with by the most appropriate authority. In that case, the SPCF is not necessary.

**Procedure:**

Any related documentation should support the use of this form, and may include absences, tardies, and anecdotal information which support the concern.

**Step One:**

Faculty member discusses concern(s) with candidate.

**Step Two:**

If the concern(s) persists, faculty member details the concern(s) on the Standards of Professional Conduct Form available in the office of the Teacher Education Department Head.

**Step Three:**

Faculty member submits the form to the Teacher Education Department Head to be filed. In the case of a secondary or K-12 concern, a copy should be filed with the content area department head.

**Step Four:**

If two or more forms are received by the Department Head regarding a candidate, the Department Head will call a meeting of the faculty members submitting concerns, who jointly will seek to intercede and resolve the matter.

**Step Five:**

Following are possible results of steps one through four:

- A. The candidate concern is addressed, a plan is formulated to remediate the concern, the concern is corrected, and the candidate continues in the Teacher Education Program.
- B. The candidate concern is addressed, but the concern proves to be one that cannot be remediated; therefore, the candidate is referred to the Student Support Office to consider other professional opportunities.
- C. The candidate concern is addressed, but the concern is so critical or grave that the candidate is immediately called before Admission and Retention Committee, where dismissal from the Teacher Education Program will be recommended by the Department Head.
- D. The candidate of concern may choose to have a faculty member receive documentation emerging from steps one through four. The faculty member will be invited to speak on behalf of the candidate at all Admission and Retention Committee meetings where the candidate concern is an agenda item.
- E. Should a candidate disagree with the concerns identified on the SPCF, the candidate can submit a written description of his or her points of disagreement to the Department Head of Teacher Education.

MSSU TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM  
STUDENT CONCERN PROFILE FORM  
CAMPUS VISITS

Goal: Completed by October 31, 2003

1. All departmental courses that teacher education majors take during their program of study will be identified.
2. A meeting will be arranged with the corresponding Department Heads and the faculty who teach the courses that the TE majors take.
3. The **Student Concern Profile Form** will be taken to those meetings where the purpose and procedure will be explained.

**VISITS TO OUR FRIENDS ACROSS CAMPUS**

DEPARTMENT	CONTENT AREA REPS	DEPARTMENT MEETING			TEACHER ED REP
		Date	Time	Place	
Art	Robert Kujda				Vikki Spencer
Biology	Mike Lawson				Al Cade
Business	Beverly Block				Vikki Spencer
Chemistry	Larry Albright				Al Cade
English	Dale Simpson & Doris Walters				Jane Scholl
Kinesiology	Sheri Beeler				Al Cade
Language	Rose Maria Mejia				Jane Scholl
Mathematics	Kerry Johnson				Al Cade
Music	Jeffrey Macomber				Jane Scholl
Physics	John Summerfield				Al Cade
Social Studies	Conrad Gubera & Steve Wagner				Vikki Spencer
Spanish	Rita Guzman				Jane Scholl
Speech	Karolyn Yocum				Vikki Spencer
Theatre	Alex Pinkston				Vikki Spencer

**MSSU Teacher Education Measures of Disposition  
(taken from the "Standards of Professional Conduct")**

Performance Assessment (note: numbers reflect disposition question on form)									
Dispositions	Faculty Recommendation Form	Speaker Competency Form	Autobiography Form	JI Final Evaluation Form	321 Candidate Recommendation Form	PBTE Form	Student Concern Profile	Student Teaching Mid-term & Final	Exit Interview
High Academic & Professional Goals	1			5			1, 5, 6, 7, 8		2
Model of Professionalism & Citizenship				8			1 - 8	Personal & Professional 7	
Good Character	5	5	dispositions				1 - 5		
Dedicated to the best interest of students			content	6,7		5,16,21	1 - 8	Personal & Professional 1	3
Behavior (on campus & K-12 setting)	5	5		4			1 - 8		
Professional Appearance				2			1, 5, 6	Personal & Professional 7	
Communication	4	3	writing		3, 4	23	7, 8	Personal & Professional 6	
Academic Honesty & Integrity	5						1 - 5	Personal & Professional 4	
Attitude Toward Study	2	5		1,3	1,2		1 - 8	Personal & Professional 7	
Freedom of Expression							1, 5, 7, 8	Personal & Professional 2	
Spirit of Collaboration	3			7			1, 5	Personal & Professional 3,5	
Professional Vision	dispositions						1 - 5	5 Diversity 1-4	7

**STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT  
FOR CANDIDATES AT  
MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY**

**PREAMBLE**

**The Missouri Southern State University (MSSU) Teacher Education Program is preparation for a noble calling which has special standards of professional conduct.**

Welcome to our candidates who are preparing to become teachers of young children and young adults. You are participating in one of the most exciting and challenging programs at Missouri Southern State University. In the MSSU Teacher Education Program, you will encounter the challenge of high academic and professional goals, while also preparing yourself to participate in one of our most noble callings – educating the children and youth of our world. With these challenges come responsibilities. You will not only help your students develop their knowledge and skills, you will serve as a model of professionalism and citizenship. Therefore, as teachers, you must understand and be prepared to uphold special standards of conduct.

**The MSSU Teacher Education Program is entered voluntarily; therefore, it is expected that candidates will uphold the Program's special standards of professional conduct.**

Candidates enter the MSSU Teacher Education Program voluntarily, with the goal of servicing the public good by assisting all students to meet their learning potentials. Our responsibility is to assure, throughout your preparation and as you begin your teaching career, that you, as a teacher education candidate, are of good character and are dedicated to the best interests of your students. Therefore, before you enter this Program we must both agree to uphold the special standards for candidates outlined below.

**STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

**I. Standards in Contexts Where Candidates Perform:**

**A. Missouri Southern State University and the State of Missouri**

Entrance to the MSSU Teacher Education Program is limited to enrolled Candidates in good standing at Missouri Southern State University who have met prescribed Program entrance criteria. In addition, candidates must uphold regulations governing pre-service teacher training as prescribed by the MSSU Teacher Education Program, Missouri Southern State University, National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

**B. Missouri Southern State University and K-12 Schools**

When participating either as observers in in-service teachers' classrooms or as student teaching candidates under the direction of in-service teachers in a school environment away from MSSU, candidates will accept additional responsibilities and, occasionally, constraints on their behavior and grooming. As participants in classrooms away from the university, candidates accept the responsibilities and code of professional conduct of that institution, as well as those of Missouri Southern State University. Should these responsibilities seem to conflict, the situation is to be discussed with the Director of Clinical Field Experiences and/or his or her designated representative.

**II. Standards in Commitment and Disposition of Candidates:**

**A. Basic Communication Skills**

Candidates must provide sufficient evidence that they have achieved competence in the areas of the language arts (reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and visually representing), in order to profit from their training in teacher education.

**B. Academic Honesty**

As educators and professionals, it is expected that candidates assume their responsibilities and complete their work independently. Candidates whose actions reflect academic honesty are moving toward meeting these expectations. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, nor will it go unchallenged. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the use or appropriation of ideas, materials, and text produced by others as one's own (i.e., plagiarism), cheating on examinations, and showing favoritism to students (during practicums, field experiences, and student teaching assignments).

**C. Attitude Toward Study**

The candidates' attitudes toward study should reflect a love for learning. Behavior should reflect an intrinsic interest in learning the curriculum necessary for success as a teaching professional, not merely efforts that result in a desired grade or credential.

Evidence of this should include, but not be limited to:

- regular class attendance.
- active class participation.
- conscientious class preparation.
- punctual assignment completion.

**III. Standards in Professional Excellence**

**A. Freedom of Expression**

Education relies on the free exchange of ideas and information. For that exchange to take place effectively, there must be respect, trust, and courtesy on all sides.

Candidates must respect the rights of all participants to express their own opinions and views. Candidates are not prevented from challenging those opinions and views, but they must do so in a civil manner, avoiding personal attacks on those who disagree. Remarks that fail to reflect respect for other individuals will not be tolerated, nor will they go unchallenged.

**B. Spirit of Collaboration**

Candidates are expected to develop a collaborative spirit:

- as they pursue MSSU Teacher Education Program goals.
- as they perform in future workplace relations.

**C. Professional Vision**

Through reflection, candidates are expected to envision themselves as teachers. They must be able to synthesize their academic learning experiences as effective teachers.

Accomplishment of this will be exemplified by:

- personal and professional growth.
- an acceptance of the uniqueness of diverse groups and/or individuals.
- a disposition toward a holistic and global society.

**IV. Summation - Standards of Professional Conduct**

In conclusion, the MSSU Teacher Education Program must re-emphasize its responsibility to assure, throughout teacher training, that candidates are of good character and are dedicated to uphold the standards of professional conduct established in Standard I - Contexts in Performance, Standard II - Commitment and Disposition, and Standard III - Professional Excellence. The MSSU Teacher Education Program Standards are designed to effectively guide candidates into society's most time-honored profession--preparing the next generation for the future.

Revised: 8/03

**MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE COLLEGE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION**  
**Student Concern Profile**

**To:** Teacher Education Department Chair **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Semester:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_ **SSN:** \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

**Certification Level:** Elementary \_\_\_\_\_ Middle School \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary \_\_\_\_\_ Content Area \_\_\_\_\_

**Course:** \_\_\_\_\_

X	Number Areas of Concern	Name Standards	Comments
	1. Professional Attitude	I.B, II.B, II.C, III.A, III.B, III.C	
	2. Absences & Tardies	I.A, I.B, II.C, III.C	
	3. Late Assignments/ Unpreparedness	I.A, I.B, II.C, III.C	
	4. Dishonesty	I.A, I.B, II.B, II.C, III.C	
	5. Professional Conduct (in-class and/or while participating in college- sanctioned functions)	I.A, I.B, III.B, III.C	
	6. Grooming (hygiene & attire)	I.B	
	7. Oral Communication/ Spoken Grammar	I.B, II.A, II.C	
	8. Written Communication	I.B, II.A, II.B, II.C	
	9. Other		

**Outcome of conference:** \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty signature indicates a conference occurred with this student regarding the concerns.  
 Student signature indicates that the student has reviewed the form, but may not necessarily agree.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Faculty Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_