

SECTION II

POLICIES FOR THE INTERNSHIP

Liability

Tort liability and litigation are a valid concern today for anyone working in a public school classroom. For this reason, students preparing to become teachers are **required** to have professional liability insurance. Professional organizations whose memberships carry liability coverage are: Georgia Association of Educators (GAE), Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE), and American Federation of Teachers (AFT). The State of Georgia provides free Educators Professional Liability insurance against claims arising out of performance of duties. Interns must complete a form indicating their source and type of liability coverage prior to beginning the internship. When determining your source for liability coverage, we encourage you to consider the additional benefits derived from membership in professional organizations.

Housing and Transportation

It is the responsibility of the intern to make arrangements for living accommodations during the semester of the internship. (Such arrangements must be consistent with North Georgia College and State University policy as listed in the "Housing and Living Accommodations" section of the NGCSU Catalog.) The intern is also responsible for arranging transportation to and from the cooperating school.

Course Load

The semester devoted to the internship is a full course load. Interns are not allowed to take any other courses during this semester except for ECE/SPED majors who are required to take EDUC 3010 in conjunction with their internship. Interns are to be free from outside responsibilities so that they can function as a full-time member of the staff in the school to which they have been assigned. Any request for a waiver of this requirement must be submitted in writing to the Field Placement Coordinator and signed by the intern's advisor.

Outside Paid Employment

Because the internship is a time when NGCSU students' total efforts must be directed toward assisting those students in their charge, it is strongly recommended that interns have no outside paid employment during the internship semester. In the event of extenuating circumstances, a request for a waiver of this requirement must be submitted in writing to the Field Placement Coordinator in the Department of Teacher Education. The letter of request must include the type of employment, the number of work hours per week, and the days on which the intern will work.

Placement Policies

The Field Placement Coordinator is responsible for all field placements. The NGCSU School of Education has contractual agreements with designated school systems for placement of Teacher Education students for field experiences and internships. Each site has its own deadlines, procedures and requirements. Students must not attempt to arrange their own placements or supervision. Students are, however, given the opportunity to express placement preferences or to describe specific needs.

Teacher Education students will not be placed for internship in a school which they attended within the last five years or in which they have immediate family employed or enrolled.

A student who had to extend or repeat block/field placement will have only one opportunity to complete internship. However, a student who successfully completed block/field placement in one semester will have one opportunity to extend or repeat internship.

A student who had to repeat block/field placement must pass GACE II before attempting internship. A student who does not successfully complete internship in one semester must pass GACE II before repeating the internship.

Internships are offered during the fall and spring semesters.

Dress Code

Student dress for field experiences and internship will be in compliance with the dress code for the faculty of the school to which the student is assigned. Students representing NGCSU may not have visible body ornamentation such as noticeable body piercing (other than pierced ears) or uncovered tattoos. Personal hygiene must be acceptable.

Attendance and Absences

Fall Semester internships begin with the assigned school's pre-planning and end on the last day of university classes for that semester. Spring Semester internships begin in January on the date of the assigned school's return from Christmas Holidays and ends on the last day of university classes for that semester. Interns will have the spring holidays of the school to which they are assigned and not NGCSU's spring holidays. Interns are to function as members of the school faculty and are expected to fulfill the same attendance requirements and arrival and dismissal times as the school faculty. Tardiness will not be tolerated and can result in the termination of an internship assignment. There are no provisions for sick leave or personal leave during the internship. If an absence is unavoidable, the principal, cooperating teacher, and college supervisor must be notified at the earliest possible time, at least prior to the opening of the school day. The intern will be required to make up days missed as a result of serious illness. A grade of "incomplete" may be given until such work is made up.

Monitoring Candidate Progress in Field Experiences

Most students grow and prosper during field experiences. However in some cases, difficulties of varying degree of severity are encountered as a part of field experiences. Immediate, open and honest communication about any problem is essential. Typically, teacher candidates will encounter and solve the problem by following the guidance of the cooperating teacher. If more assistance is needed, the university supervisor will become involved and develop a plan of action. If problems become more severe, the Field Placement Coordinator and the Dean of the School of Education may become involved and a written professional growth plan containing behaviors, time lines and conditions will be developed.

Termination of Internship Assignment

All assignments are for the duration of the entire semester.

Any intern who wishes to withdraw at any point during the semester will receive a grade consistent with the North Georgia College and State University grading procedures. (See the "Academic Regulations" section of the North Georgia College and State University catalog.)

In the event that the intern has not made satisfactory progress or the intern's continued presence in the cooperating teacher's classroom is detrimental either to the intern or to the educational progress of the students in

that classroom, the intern will be removed from the placement site. This decision may be made either by the school administration, the Dean of the School of Education, the Field Placement Coordinator, or jointly by all parties. Depending upon the circumstances, one of the following actions will be recommended by the university: (a) the intern may be given the opportunity to complete the internship in another assignment if the placement change is early in the semester; (b) the intern may be given a grade of "Incomplete" and begin in a new placement the next semester; (c) the intern may be required to complete additional experiences prior to re-attempting the internship; (d) the intern may withdraw from all courses associated with the internship; or (e) the intern will earn a failing grade of "D" or "F" in each internship course. The Dean of the School of Education and the Field Placement Coordinator will discuss with the teacher candidate the options, other career alternatives, and available supporting campus resources. The intern will be notified of the final decision in writing and in conference and of the appropriate appeal procedure.

Substituting

Interns are not permitted to serve during the course of the internship as a substitute teacher in the absence of the cooperating teacher or any other teacher in the school. A qualified substitute should be employed to replace the cooperating teacher. A prolonged illness or absence of the cooperating teacher should be reported to the university supervisor or the Field Placement Coordinator.

Confidentiality

Interns must respect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information regarding students or their family members or members of the faculty unless disclosure is required by law or is necessary for the personal safety of the students or others.

Grading

Evaluation of the intern's progress is the continuous and cooperative effort on the part of the university supervisor, intern, and the cooperating teacher. Each cooperating teacher provides input as to the final grades for the student under her/his supervision. The assignment of the final letter grades for the internship, however, is ultimately the responsibility of the university supervisor. North Georgia College and State University awards three grades for internships in the areas of:

- (1) Facilitator (Internship Performance)
- (2) Decision-Maker (Internship Planning)
- (3) Leader (Professionalism)
- (4) Applied Data Analysis (Worksample)

Final grades will be based on the intern's fulfillment of internship requirements and demonstration of competence in the roles of Facilitator, Decision-maker, and Leader as assessed through use of the instrument "Evaluation of Intern's Teaching Competencies".

A grade of less than "C" in any of these three areas will constitute an unsuccessful internship experience. Certification recommendation will not be made until these below average grades are removed in a manner determined cooperatively by the cooperating teacher, the university supervisor, and the Field Placement Coordinator or by repeating the entire internship.

Problem Solving and Complaints

Undergraduate and graduate students over the age of 18 are considered to be adults. The university is prohibited from divulging personal and academic information about its students to others without their written permission as set forth in the Family Educational Right to Privacy Act. Information about our policies can be found on the Registrar's Office web page. Please work directly with your advisor if you need assistance in resolving problems or completing paper work. The definition of "others" includes parents and spouses.

Academic and grade appeal procedures, along with other academic regulations, are described in the NGCSU Academic Affairs Handbook and the academic regulations section of the most current university catalog. Please note that there is a thirty-day limitation on grade appeals. Additional policies are contained in the NGCSU Student Handbook. The Student Handbook is distributed through the Office of Student Affairs, Hoag Student Center.

To resolve other problems relating to academics, policies and procedures, first meet with the faculty or staff member involved. If the problem is not resolved, first make an appointment to see the department head, and then the dean. If neither of those can resolve your problem, you will be counseled about appropriate next steps. Depending on the nature of the problem, those steps could be the formation of an appeals committee, a referral to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, or a referral to another campus committee including alternative dispute resolution.

Professional Conduct

The Teacher Education Program is a professional program. Students enrolled in the program are expected to adhere to standards of professional conduct, which represent the conduct generally accepted by the education profession. Those standards are reflected in the following statements:

Teacher Education students adhere to the University's Honor Code and the Code of Ethics for Educators.

Teacher Education students foster a sense of collegiality and community within each class and within the department as a whole.

Teacher Education students are respectful and courteous toward instructors and classmates and all with whom they interact in field experiences.

Teacher Education students recognize the value of the views of others even if they differ from the individual's view.

Teacher Education students attend class, seminars, and field assignments on each scheduled day, arrive on time, and remain for the allotted time.

Teacher Education students dress professionally and appropriately for field experiences in the schools.

Teacher Education students respond to matters of concern as responsible adults and do not defer that responsibility to a parent or spouse.

Recommendation for Certification

Upon a student's completion of the Teacher Education Program, the School of Education is responsible for recommending that student to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission for certification as a professional educator. The recommendation is based not only on successful completion of coursework but also on the student's demonstration of professional conduct throughout the Teacher Education Program in university classrooms, in coursework, in field experiences, and in the internship. For that reason, it is essential for students to adhere to standards of professional conduct and to abide by the policies as set forth in this handbook.

The North Georgia College & State University Department of Teacher Education reserves the right to change curriculum and educational policies as considered necessary for the progressive development of the program or as required for program approval by state or accrediting agencies. Students will be notified of such changes in writing, by advisors or by e-mail, with as much advance notice as possible.

THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS
Georgia Professional Standards Commission
www.gapsc.com/professionalpractices/NEthics.asp

505-6-.01 THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS

(1) **Introduction.** The Code of Ethics for Educators defines the professional behavior of educators in Georgia and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The Professional Standards Commission has adopted standards, which represent the conduct generally accepted by the education profession. The code protects the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators, ensures the citizens of Georgia a degree of accountability within the education profession, and defines unethical conduct justifying disciplinary sanction.

(2) Definitions

(a) “Certificate” refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate, license, or permit issued by authority of the Professional Standards Commission.

(b) “Educator” is a teacher, school or school system administrator, or other education personnel who holds a certificate issued by the Professional Standards Commission and persons who have applied for but have not yet received a certificate. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics for Educators, “educator” also refers to paraprofessionals, aides, and substitute teachers.

(c) “Student” is any individual enrolled in the state’s public or private schools from preschool through grade 12 or any individual between and including the ages of 3 and 17.

(d) “Complaint” is any written and signed statement from a local board, the state board, or one or more individual residents of this state filed with the Professional Standards Commission alleging that an educator has breached one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators. A “complaint” will be deemed a request to investigate.

(e) “Revocation” is the invalidation of any certificate held by the educator.

(f) “Denial” is the refusal to grant initial certification to an applicant for a certificate.

(g) “Suspension” is the temporary invalidation of any certificate for a period of time specified by the Professional Standards Commission.

(h) “Reprimand” admonishes the certificate holder for his or her conduct. The cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.

(i) “Warning” warns the certificate holder that his or her conduct is unethical. The warning cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.

(j) “Monitoring” is the quarterly appraisal of the educator’s conduct by the Professional Standards Commission through contact with the educator and his or her employer. As a condition of monitoring, an

educator may be required to submit a criminal background check (GCIC). The Commission specifies the length of the monitoring period.

(3) Standards

Standard 1: Criminal 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; a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted; and a situation where an adjudication of guilt or sentence was otherwise withheld or not entered on the charge or the charge was otherwise disposed of in a similar manner in any jurisdiction.

Standard 2: Abuse of Students - An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. committing any act of child abuse, including physical and emotional abuse;
2. committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment;
3. committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act;
4. engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, sex, national origin, religion or disability;
5. soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, or physical relationship with a student; and
6. furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs.

Standard 3: Alcohol or Drugs - An educator should refrain from the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs during the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs; and
2. being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcohol beverages. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity sponsored by the school or school system (booster clubs, parent-teacher organizations, or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum i.e. Foreign Language trips, etc).

Standard 4: Misrepresentation or Falsification - An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting or erroneously reporting professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credit and/or degrees, academic award, and employment history when applying for employment and/or certification or when recommending an individual for employment, promotion, or certification;
2. falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting or erroneously reporting information submitted to federal, state, and other governmental agencies;

3. falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting or erroneously reporting information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel;
4. falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting or erroneously reporting reasons for absences or leaves; and
5. falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting or erroneously reporting information submitted in the course of an official inquiry/investigation.

Standard 5: 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. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. misusing public or school-related funds;
2. failing to account for funds collected from students or parents;
3. submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay; and
4. co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts; &
5. using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing board.

Standard 6: Improper Remunerative Conduct - An educator should maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. 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 board of education/governing board;
2. accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there may be the appearance of a conflict of interest;
3. tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or superintendent; and
4. coaching, instructing, promoting athletic camps, summer leagues, etc. that involves students in an educator's school system and from whom the educator receives remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or the superintendent. These types of activities must be in compliance with all rules and regulations of the Georgia High School Association.

Standard 7: Confidential Information - An educator should comply with state and federal laws and local school board/governing board policies relating to the confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test materials and other information covered by confidentiality agreements. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. sharing of confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, personal confidences, health and medical information, family status and/or income, and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required by law;
2. sharing of confidential information restricted by state or federal law;
3. violation of confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, violating local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items, etc.;

4. violation of other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

Standard 8: Abandonment of Contract - An educator should fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or education agency for the duration of the contract. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. abandoning the contract for professional services without the prior release from the contract by the employer; and
2. willfully refusing to perform the services required by a contract.

Standard 9: Failure to Make a Required Report - An educator should file reports of a breach of one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators, child abuse (O.C.G.A. §19-7-5), or any other required report. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. failure to report all requested information on documents required by the Commission when applying for or renewing any certificate with the Commission.
2. failure to make a required report of a violation of one or more standards of the Code of Ethics for educators of which they have personal knowledge as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner.
3. failure to make a required report of any violation of state or federal law as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. These reports include but are not limited to : murder, voluntary manslaughter, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, kidnapping, any sexual offense, any sexual exploitation of a minor, any offense involving a controlled substance and any abuse of a child if an educator has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused.

Standard 10: Professional Conduct - An educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards. Unethical conduct is any conduct that seriously impairs the certificate holder's ability to function professionally in his or her employment position.

(4) Reporting

(a) Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of local policies and procedures and/or the chain of command for reporting unethical conduct. Complaints filed with the Professional Standards Commission must be in writing and must be signed by the complainant (parent, educator, personnel director, superintendent, etc.).

(b) The Commission notifies local and state officials of all disciplinary actions. In addition, suspensions and revocations are reported to national officials, including the NASDTEC Clearinghouse.

(5) Disciplinary Action

(a) The Professional Standards Commission is authorized to suspend, revoke, or deny certificates, to issue a reprimand or warning, or to monitor the educator's conduct and performance after an investigation is held and notice and opportunity for a hearing are provided to the certificate holder. Any of the following grounds shall be considered cause for disciplinary action against the holder of a certificate:

1. unethical conduct as outlined in The Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-10 (PSC Rule 505-6-.01);

2. disciplinary action against a certificate in another state on grounds consistent with those specified in the Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-10 (PSC Rule 505-6-.01);

3. order from a court of competent jurisdiction or a request from the Department of Human Resources that the certificate should be suspended or the application for certification should be denied for non-payment of child support (O.C.G.A. §19-6-28.1 and §19-11-9.3);

4. notification from the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation that the educator is in default and not in satisfactory repayment status on a student loan guaranteed by the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation (O.C.G.A. §20-3-295);

5. suspension or revocation of any professional license or certificate;

6. violation of any other laws and rules applicable to the profession (O.C.G.A. §16-13-111);
and

7. any other good and sufficient cause that renders an educator unfit for employment as an educator.

An individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied for disciplinary reasons, or suspended may not serve as a volunteer or be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, substitute teacher or any other position during the period of his or her revocation, suspension or denial for a violation of the Code of Ethics.

Authority O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200; 20-2-981 through 20-2-984.5