

ENGLISH EDUCATION—THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA QUALITY ASSURANCE CONTRACT

In 1998-99, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia published *Principles for the Preparation of Educators for the Schools*. This document states that teacher educators from The University of Georgia must be able to guarantee the *quality* of its graduates in teacher education programs. As a result of that mandate, we ask teacher candidates in the secondary English teacher education program to read, discuss, and sign this Quality Assurance Contract. The contract spells out the principles of professional conduct that you agree to uphold, efforts we will make to assist teacher candidates who are not meeting those expectations, and possible consequences for those who do not live up to this agreement. By living up to the Quality Assurance Contract, you will have demonstrated your potential to become an effective teacher and a good citizen of the school community and the teaching profession.

EXPECTATIONS

1. To demonstrate in UGA coursework, including field-based courses, a commitment to an intense and critical engagement with the literature of English Education that enables the development of a theorized practice in both UGA classes and the public school classroom.
 - Exhibits the willingness to develop a professional disposition.
 - Maintains a professional relationship with UGA faculty, teaching assistants (TAs), and fellow students.
 - Responds to constructive criticism and feedback.
 - Avoids absences and tardies.
 - Maintains an even behavior. Is not erratic.
 - Consults with UGA faculty as soon as problems arise. Does not let problems continue so that they cannot be resolved.
 - Shows initiative. Figures out how to get things done. Does not require step-by-step instruction.
 - Seeks out additional learning experiences beyond course requirements.
 - Demonstrates ability to work productively with others, respecting and learning from people's differences. Is a good colleague.
 - Develops an organizational system to keep track of all materials, dates, etc.
 - Turns in work on time.

2. To provide the best possible learning environment and learning experiences for students in the areas of planning, showing initiative, attending to learners, and management & organization.
 - Planning
 - Understands student learning goals.
 - Submits lesson plans to mentor teacher (MT) at least 3 days in advance. Revises plans according to suggestions.
 - Enacts plans so learning occurs.
 - Addresses classroom management through careful instructional planning.
 - Showing Initiative
 - Accepts responsibility for own decisions and actions.

- Seeks out and incorporates suggestions for improvement from mentor teachers and university supervisors (US).
- Seeks out a variety of experiences during practicum, including extracurricular activities.

Attending to Learners

- Attends to student response to teaching by observing behaviors indicating, for example, boredom, confusion, anger, etc.
- Teaches all students, not just those who respond or demand attention.
- Shifts attention from self to students very quickly.
- Challenges students at appropriate levels.

Managing/Organizing

- Practices good time management in class. Meets deadlines and administrative responsibilities on time.
- Addresses classroom management by having policies for student conduct.
- Develops an organizational system to keep track of all materials, dates, etc.

3. To support the policies of the school.
 - Knows and enforces school and county rules and regulations pertaining to such issues as child abuse, drug use, sexual harassment, etc.
 - Tracks student movement in and out of the classroom and knows where students are at all times during a class period.
 - Consults appropriate school personnel about evidence of student problems extending beyond the expertise of the teacher candidate.
4. To behave in a professional manner at all times while in public schools.
 - Responds to MT's and US's constructive criticism and feedback.
 - Avoids absences except for serious illness and emergency situations. Informs and delivers plans to MT well in advance of absence.
 - Follows MT's daily schedule. Is not tardy.
 - Maintains a professional relationship with MT and other faculty, staff, and administrators.
 - Maintains a professional relationship with students.
 - Maintains an even behavior. Is not erratic.
 - Maintains a professional appearance.
 - Upholds school and district rules regarding drug and alcohol use and sexual harassment.
 - Consults with MT and US as soon as classroom problems arise. Does not let problems continue so that they cannot be resolved.
 - Shows initiative. Figures out how to get things done. Does not require step-by-step instruction.
 - Abides by the Georgia Professional Practices Commission Code of Ethics, which was signed as part of the teacher candidate's Application for Admission to Teacher Education.
5. To abide by English Education Policies (Appendix A on page 4). See Appendix B for examples of unacceptable behavior.

OPTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT IN MEETING QUALITY ASSURANCE EXPECTATIONS

In order to guarantee that graduates of our program meet the standards for Quality Assurance, we are prepared to implement appropriate measures for addressing an array of concerns. Teacher candidates may anticipate the following kinds of interventions being used to address a problem:

1. Scheduling a conference with parties involved to discuss problems.
2. Gathering data to document MT/US concerns. For TC who is teaching, data might be an audiotape or videotape of TC teaching a class. For TC who is still taking classes, data might be papers/emails written for classes.
3. Asking TC to contract with faculty, TAs, and MTs as appropriate a plan for improvement and method of tracking progress of contract. May go to #6 (see below) at any time.
4. Scheduling peer mediation with successful TC. Observing successful TC teaching and/or reading TC's written work as appropriate.
5. Asking TC to reflect on progress in writing to solicit response from faculty, TAs, peers, and MTs as appropriate.
6. If necessary, holding a decision-making conference to determine whether to withdraw TC from classes and/or practicum placements and/or establish alternate work (readings on professional demeanor, discipline, cultural awareness, planning, etc.; cross-school visits in and outside cohort group; in-depth writing; other assignments to be determined to fit individual needs). This measure could result in the following:
 - A. Failing individual courses (3 hours each; a C in each course is required Fall Semester to continue Spring Semester), or
 - B. Being denied placement in schools for practicum (s), or
 - C. Failing student teaching semester (9 hours), or
 - D. Passing student teaching but without a letter of reference from MT, US, or faculty, or
 - E. Passing student teaching with a degree in English Education but without a Georgia Teaching Certificate, or
 - F. Receiving an English Education degree without certification, or
 - G. Being withdrawn from the English Education initial certification program. This measure requires that the TC select another major in another department at the university.

Each of these interventions may include a set of checkpoints along a timeline agreed upon by those involved. If no progress is made in an appropriate period of time, #6 will go into effect. If a school or school district terminates the TC's placement, the TC may be withdrawn from the English Education initial certification program without recourse to remediation procedures.

I have read, will abide by the conditions of this contract, and will accept the consequences for not meeting the Quality Assurance Contract expectations.

Name (please print) _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Sign two copies. Keep a copy for your files and leave one with your University Contact Person.

Appendix A

English Education Initial Certification Program Policies

1. Teacher candidates cannot take a course outside the Advanced Professional Education Course Sequence (APECS) during their year-long initial certification program. All coursework, including independent studies, must be completed prior to APECS. Course requirements and fieldwork experiences during the year are demanding, time-consuming, and require teacher candidates' full attention. This rule, and the rules that follow, are designed to help teacher candidates focus on their teaching responsibilities. The English Education initial certification program has an ethical and professional obligation to students, parents, and schools to provide fully-prepared teachers whose attention is solely on teaching. From time to time, teacher candidates take English courses during the summer after student teaching if they have not been able to complete all eight prior to the APECS year.
2. Teacher candidates cannot work during their full-time Spring student teaching practicums. Student teaching is a full-time job, approximately 60 hrs/wk, that is even more demanding of teacher candidates than of in-service teachers. Taking on other jobs that cut into teacher candidates' time, energy, and attention will negatively affect the education of scores of students.
3. Teacher candidates may not change placements once mentor teachers have been assigned by the school district and university unless the English Education Program Director approves the change. Teachers base their year-long planning on these placements, which are made well in advance. It would be unethical and unprofessional for the university to make an agreement with a school-based teacher about a student teaching placement, have that teacher accommodate the university's request and anticipate mentoring a teacher candidate, and then withdraw the placement because a teacher candidate changes preferences later on. Teacher candidates are encouraged to observe in both a middle and a high school before they select their placements in the Spring prior to the APECS year to avoid this problem.
4. Teacher candidates are required to teach the equivalent of 4 English classes or 2 out of 3 blocks during their full-time Spring student teaching practicum. They should not teach *more* than 4 classes or 2 out of 3 blocks since they need additional time for planning.
5. Teacher candidates cannot teach out of field, and this restriction may include ESOL and Talented & Gifted classes.

Appendix B

Example of Behavior from Real Student Teachers in Violation of Quality Assurance Contract

- Showing up for student teaching without plans for the classes to be taught.
- Being excessively absent (excused or unexcused absences) or tardy (excused or unexcused tardies).
- Being absent even once in such a way that the absence raises questions about your reliability as a teacher.
- Being openly hostile to and/or confrontational with the MT and/or other teachers and/or administrators in the school.
- Failing to notify school/MT when absent.
- Making sexual references to or having sex with students.
- Inviting student of the opposite sex to live with you.
- Smoking on campus, or off-campus within view of students.
- Using drugs or alcohol on school property.
- Coming to school smelling of alcohol or marijuana.
- Attending student party where alcohol is served.
- Having serious personal hygiene problems.
- Disciplining a student by taping his mouth shut.
- Attempting to live on school property during student teaching.
- Showing profane South Park TV program to ninth-graders.
- Committing criminal acts after having previously been cleared by the [Criminal Background Check](#) process.