

Program Policies with Signature Page

This document is required if you are pursuing any of the following programs:

- Educational Diagnostician Certification Program
- M.Ed. Special Education
- M.S. Special Education

Important Notes on How to Make a Correct Submission:

- Please read all information carefully.
- You will need to sign and date recognition of each policy on the last page of this document.
- Electronic signatures will not be accepted. Please use an ink pen.
- The Signature Page will need to be scanned and returned to the graduate school at graduate.school@tamuc.edu

Program Handbook Information:

The program handbook can be found on the TAMU-C website. You can also receive a copy by emailing Dr. Beth Jones at Beth.Jones@tamuc.edu.

It is your responsibility to obtain and review the program handbook before signing the Signature Page.

This document includes:

- Code of Ethics Policy
- FERPA Policy
- Program Dismissal Policy
- Signature Page (Return Completed Form to Graduate School)

PLEASE READ ALL INFORMATION!

Code of Ethics for Texas Educators

Texas Administrative Code

Rule §247.2 Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators

In compliance with the Texas Education Code, §21.041(b)(8), the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) adopts an Educators' Code of Ethics as set forth in §247.2 of this title (relating to Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators). The SBEC may amend the ethics code in the same manner as any other formal rule.

The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty and good moral character. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community. This chapter shall apply to educators and candidates for certification.

The SBEC is solely responsible for enforcing the Educators' Code of Ethics for purposes related to certification disciplinary proceedings. The Educators' Code of Ethics is enforced through the disciplinary procedure set forth in Chapter 249 of this title (relating to Disciplinary Proceedings, Sanctions, and Contested Cases) pursuant to the purposes stated therein.

As provided in §249.5 of this title (relating to Purpose), the primary goals the SBEC seeks to achieve in educator disciplinary matters are as follows:

Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performance.

- A. Standard 1.1. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.
- B. Standard 1.2. The educator shall not knowingly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.
- C. Standard 1.3. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.
- D. Standard 1.4. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.
- E. Standard 1.5. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents of students, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.

- F. Standard 1.6. The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.
- G. Standard 1.7. The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other state and federal laws.
- H. Standard 1.8. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.
- I. Standard 1.9. The educator shall not make threats of violence against school district employees, school board members, students, or parents of students.
- J. Standard 1.10. The educator shall be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.
- K. Standard 1.11. The educator shall not intentionally or knowingly misrepresent his or her employment history, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.
- L. Standard 1.12. The educator shall refrain from the illegal use or distribution of controlled substances and/or abuse of prescription drugs and toxic inhalants.
- M. Standard 1.13. The educator shall not consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues

- A. Standard 2.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- B. Standard 2.2. The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.
- C. Standard 2.3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.
- D. Standard 2.4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.
- E. Standard 2.5. The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.
- F. Standard 2.6. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.
- G. Standard 2.7. The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or who provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.

Ethical Conduct toward Students

- A. Standard 3.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- B. Standard 3.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health, or safety of the student or minor.
- C. Standard 3.3. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.
- D. Standard 3.4. The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status, or sexual orientation.
- E. Standard 3.5. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student or minor.
- F. Standard 3.6. The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor.

- G. Standard 3.7. The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child or knowingly allow any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.
- H. Standard 3.8. The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.
- I. Standard 3.9. The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:
 - i. the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
 - ii. the subject matter of the communication;
 - iii. whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;
 - iv. whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
 - v. whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
 - vi. whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

FERPA

I understand that under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (“FERPA” 20 USC 123g; 34 CFR §99; commonly known as the “Buckley Amendment”) no disclosure of my records can be made without my written consent unless otherwise provided for in legal statutes and judicial decisions. I also understand that I may revoke this consent at any time (via written request to the educator preparation program) except to the extent that action has already been taken upon this release. Further, without such a release, I am unable to participate in any field-based experiences including 30 clock hours of observation, clinical teaching, student teaching, or internship.

NOTE: Texas A&M University-Commerce expressly discloses the following:

1. As a provider of teacher education programs, Texas A&M-Commerce must ensure its students demonstrate adherence to the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices of Texas Educators, which requires the observance of federal and state law. An arrest, indictment, conviction and/or deferred adjudication may result in a student being dismissed from the program.
2. While Texas A&M-Commerce does not perform criminal history background checks, Texas public schools are permitted by state law to conduct criminal history background checks on a person intended for hire or a person who has requested a volunteer position. As a participant in an internship in a Texas public school, you may be subject to a criminal history background check.
3. While Texas A&M-Commerce does not perform criminal history background checks, The Texas State Board for Educator Certification requests information regarding any previous arrest, indictment, conviction, and/or deferred adjudication. When applying for state certification, you will be subject to a criminal history background check by the State Board for Educator Certification. An applicant with a criminal history may be denied certification.

Department of Psychology and Special Education
Status of Concern/Dismissal Procedures
Special Education Graduate Programs

Rationale: Department Correspondence Addressing Status of Concern/Dismissal

If any or all of the following occur, it is reason for student dismissal from the program:

1. Documented attempts (3) by Advisor to contact student for three (3) consecutive semesters about status of concern in designated program
2. Lack of reciprocity from student to inquiries of concern for three (3) consecutive documented attempts by Advisor
3. One or more courses in Plan exceeding six-year timeframe for completion of all coursework
4. Lack of enrollment in courses in Plan for three (3) consecutive semesters with no communication from student as to plans to reenroll
5. Grade Point Average (GPA) less than 3.25 (Note: Students obtaining Educational Diagnostician certification must maintain a 3.5 in order to be eligible for Practicum)
6. Three grades of C on coursework in Plan
7. Student has (2) disposition reports/conduct referrals placed in their file by a faculty member for any of the following reasons (including, but not limited to):
 - failure to observe the stated e-mail policy/inappropriate communication with faculty and/or other students, plagiarism, cheating, or inappropriate behavior in the classroom or Practicum setting

Frequency: Department Correspondence Addressing Status of Concern/Dismissal

1. **Letter of Concern #1** when any criteria in **Rationale** is met
2. **Letter of Concern #2** during next semester after **Letter of Concern #1**
3. **Letter of Dismissal** during next semester after **Letter of Concern #2** if **Concern** has not been rectified by student

Readmission Procedures

1. After **Letter of Dismissal**, the student may initiate a readmission application into the special education degree and/or certification program through re-applying to the Graduate School and Center for Educator Certification & Academic Services.

2. Re-admission will only occur with special education faculty approval to do so.

3. Upon approval, Plan will be developed by Advisor based upon current catalog year criteria.

Program Suspension:

In accordance with Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedure 13.99.99.R0.10 (Academic Honesty), a student may be suspended or expelled for academic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, falsifying assignments, and plagiarism. If the student disagrees with the charge or level of penalty related to academic honesty, University procedure 13.99.99.R0.10 provides the appeals process. *University Procedure 11.04.99.R0.16* (Graduate Academic Probation, Retention and Suspension) states "individual departments may reserve the right to suspend from their programs, students who, in their judgment, would not meet the professional expectations of the field for which they are training" (Revised April 2004). Therefore, a student who fails to demonstrate appropriate communication, interpersonal, or professional skills as identified by a faculty member may be required by the department to seek remediation including, but not limited to, repeating a clinical skills course and/or receiving counseling. In addition, a student who demonstrates personal limitations that impede professional performance, who is harmful to clients, or who violates ethical standards, may be removed from the program.

Note: The Department of Psychology and Special Education applies the same expectations of all graduates whether special education is a major or minor. Hence, the department reserves the right to suspend from the program any student, who in the judgment of a duly constituted departmental committee would not meet the professional expectation of the field.

THIS PAGE MUST BE SIGNED
AND RETURNED TO THE
GRADUATE SCHOOL



Signature Page

Educator Candidate (Print Name)

CWID

CODE OF ETHICS

I affirm that I will comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom, as set forth by the Texas Administrative Code §247.2. As a Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, I shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty. In exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, I shall extend just and equitable treatments to all members of the profession. In accepting a position of public trust, I shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. In fulfilling responsibilities in the community, I shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community.

I hereby affirm that I have read and thoroughly understand the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics TAC 247.2, and shall abide by all enforceable standards of this rule.

Signature

Date

FERPA

I understand that under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ("FERPA" 20 USC 123g; 34 CFR §99; commonly known as the "Buckley Amendment") no disclosure of my records can be made without my written consent unless otherwise provided for in legal statutes and judicial decisions. I also understand that I may revoke this consent at any time (via written request to the educator preparation program) except to the extent that action has already been taken upon this release. Further, without such a release, I am unable to participate in any field-based experiences including 30 clock hours of observation, clinical teaching, student teaching, or internship.

I hereby affirm that I have read and thoroughly understand the FERPA and shall abide by all enforceable standards of this rule.

Signature

Date

PROGRAM HANDBOOK

I hereby affirm that I have read and thoroughly understand the Department's Program Handbook and shall abide by all enforceable standards outlined in the handbook.

Signature

Date

PROGRAM DISMISSAL POLICY

I hereby affirm that I have read and thoroughly understand the dismissal policy for my educator certification program. I understand that I will be dismissed from the program for violating program expectations for academics, ethics, actions, and/or conduct. I agree to abide by the rules and processes set forth in the dismissal policy.

Signature

Date