

Elon University Teacher Education Program

PDAP Process: Addressing Professional Dispositions/Academic Performance Concerns

Overview and Purpose

Our goal as teacher educators is to ensure that teacher candidates who graduate from the Elon University Teacher Education Program are excellent beginning teachers who demonstrate professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions. While serious concerns about performance do not occur often, when a concern does exist, it is best for the candidate and program to address it honestly and directly. The Professional Dispositions/Academic Performance (PDAP) process has been created for this purpose.

- The PDAP process documents the interventions required for teacher candidates (or applicants) who demonstrate inadequate performance in areas related to professional dispositions and/or who demonstrate patterns of inadequate academic performance in courses.
- Information provided during this process is designed to be of value to the candidate in planning for growth and to the program faculty in facilitating growth.
- The information may have important implications in decisions regarding Admission to the Teacher Education Program, continuance in the program, admission to student teaching, and recommendation for licensure.

Process

A **communication of concern** will be completed by the Director of Teacher Education whenever there are consistent reports concerning a teacher candidate's dispositions and/or when academic concerns may limit that candidate's ability to successfully complete the Teacher Education Program or perform in a professional manner. When necessary, the PDAP process will be used to create and implement a plan for success.

Admission to the Teacher Education Program

If concerns are communicated during the process of applying to the Teacher Education Program, and/or during pre-requisite coursework, the following procedure is followed:

1. The applicant/candidate is sent an email or letter describing the areas of concern and indicating that an interview is necessary with the program screening committee (which may include the Director of Teacher Education, Education and Wellness Department Chair and/or program coordinator, the candidate's academic advisor, and relevant faculty).
2. The program screening committee interviews the applicant, reviews all available evidence, and makes one of the following recommendations:
 - **Admit to the program**
 - **Deny admission**
3. Applicants may appeal the decision to the Teacher Education Committee by submitting a letter of explanation. The decision of the Teacher Education Committee is final.

Continuance in the Teacher Education Program

If concerns arise after full admission to the Teacher Education Program, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The teacher candidate is sent an email or letter describing the areas of concern and indicating that an interview is necessary with specific individuals from the program screening committee

(which may include the Director of Teacher Education, Education and Wellness Department Chairperson and/or program coordinator, the candidate's academic advisor, and relevant faculty).

A. Dispositional Issues

1. For dispositional issues in an Education course on campus:

- a. The faculty member informs the candidate and the Education and Wellness Chairperson about the dispositional issue in writing even if it is first shared verbally, as soon as it is evident.
- b. The Department of Education and Wellness Chairperson may set up a meeting with the candidate, if warranted, which may also include the Director of Teacher Education, program coordinator, the candidate's academic advisor, and relevant faculty, to discuss the dispositional issue.
- c. **The** outcome of the meeting is documented in the candidate's folder in the Dean's office. The faculty member will be informed of the outcome from the Education and Wellness Department Chairperson. The advisor may also be informed if it will impact graduation or sequencing of courses for the candidate. If no action is required at the time, the faculty member and Education and Wellness Department Chairperson will continue to monitor the candidate's progress.

2. For dispositional issues in a clinical experience (practicum or student teaching):

- a. The faculty member/supervisor/school informs the candidate and the Director of Education Outreach of the dispositional issue in writing even if discussed verbally as soon as it is evident. The Director of Education Outreach "investigates" the issue, and then informs the Director of Teacher Education.
- b. The Director of Education Outreach sets up a meeting with the candidate which will include the Director of Teacher Education and may also include Education and Wellness Department Chairperson, Program Coordinator, the candidate's Academic Advisor, and relevant faculty to discuss the dispositional issue.
- c. The recommendation of the meeting is documented in the candidate's folder in Dean's Office. The faculty member/supervisor/school personnel will be informed of the outcome keeping FERPA in mind by the Director of Education Outreach. The advisor may also be informed if it will impact graduation or sequencing of classes for the candidate.

B. Clinical Experiences Performance Assessments

1. For candidates who receive an emergent on the Elon Formative Teacher Observation Instrument in the fall (senior) methods class.

The methods instructor should

- a. inform the candidate.
- b. Send an email to the Director of Education Outreach and the Education and Wellness Department Chairperson explaining the "1" (which category, rationale).
- c. The Director of Education Outreach should file the email in the candidate's folder in the Dean's Office and inform the Director of Teacher Education.

2. For candidates who receive an emergent on the Elon Formative Teacher Observation Instrument during student teaching:

- a. The Student Teaching Supervisor informs the Director of Educational Outreach of the "1" on the observation tool.
- b. The Director of Education Outreach informs the Director of Teacher Education.

- c. The Director of Education Outreach and the Student Teaching Supervisor with input as needed from the Director of Teacher Education create a two-week improvement plan related to the "1" area(s) that is discussed with the candidate and signed by all parties (Candidate, CT, STS, DEO),
- d. If at the end of two weeks, if there is not improvement by the candidate, a program continuance contract will be put into place.

Decision Options

In any of the scenarios above, the one of the following decision options will be implemented.

1. **Continuance in the program** (no conditions)
2. **Probationary status** (contract with specifications or self-developed improvement plan)
3. **Dismissal from the program**

Appeal

The candidate may appeal the decision of probationary status or dismissal to the full Teacher Education Committee through a letter within 10 days of the decision addressed to the Director of Teacher Education. The Teacher Education Committee will review the letter at the next scheduled meeting. The decision of the Teacher Education Committee regarding the appeal is final.

Program Continuance Contract

When necessary a **Program Continuance Contract** will be drafted.

- The contract will consist of specific objectives, actions, procedures for assessing progress, and a timeline for contract completion.
- The program screening committee as noted above, assumes responsibility for writing and monitoring the contract. Copies of the contract will be sent to the teacher candidate and placed in the candidate's file.
- **Successful completion of the contract** will result in the teacher candidate being allowed to continue in the program. Documentation of fulfillment of the contract will be sent by the program screening committee to all persons involved in the program continuance decision. A copy will be placed in the candidate's file.
- **Unsuccessful completion of the contract** may result in (a) continuance of provisional/probationary status with an updated contract, or (b) dismissal from the program. This recommendation is made by the program screening committee.
- Candidates may appeal the decision of Provisional/Probationary Continuation or Dismissal from the program to the full Teacher Education Committee. The decision of the Teacher Education Committee is final.
- All communication will be kept on file in the Dean's office.

Successful resolution of all contract objectives is required to receive approval for admission to the program, continuance in the program, application for student teaching, or recommendation for licensure.