

Portland State University  
College of Education  
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE GUIDELINES  
Effective September 15, 2006  
Revised October 1, 2020

## I. Introduction

This document outlines the academic and performance expectations for students (i.e., candidates) in Portland State University's (PSU) College of Education (COE). It also outlines procedures that the COE will follow where COE faculty develop concerns surrounding these academic and performance expectations. The COE designed the following expectations and procedures to create a fair process that addresses academic and performance matters in a predictable manner and that honors the COE's program responsibilities and duty to the education profession. These expectations and procedures help ensure that candidates complete their programs fully prepared for the professional practice. These procedures complement those of the Graduate School and supplement those in Program Handbooks. In the event of a conflict between this document and Program Handbooks, these COE Academic and Performance Expectations control.

Students in the COE are preparing for careers as professionals who work with children, clients, and/or adult learners. COE students must demonstrate competence consistent with the expectations of their profession. Students in field placements, practica, internships, and/or student teaching in P-12 schools, in social service agencies, and/or in institutions of higher education must exemplify the attitudes and actions of teachers, administrators, librarians, counselors, or adult educators rather than those of college students. (These experiences are referred to below more generally as "field placements" or "field experiences.")

Students are responsible for knowing and complying with all rules, standards, and procedures required by the University, the COE, and their profession's code of ethics (Appendix A). Students can find University and other COE requirements in the

- *Portland State University Bulletin (PSU Bulletin)* (<http://www.pes.edu/academic-affairs/psu-bulletin>)
- Student Code of Conduct (<http://www.pdx.edu/dos/psu-candidate-code-conduct>)
- COE Program Handbooks (found on program websites at <http://www.pdx.edu/education/>)

In no case will a rule, requirement, or standard be waived or an exception granted because of ignorance of the rule, requirement or standard, or due to the assertion that a faculty advisor or other authority did not inform the candidate of the rule, requirement or standard. Students must follow program rules, requirements, and standards to complete and receive a recommendation for licensure.

Failure to adhere to the ethical code applicable of the relevant profession, or discovery by COE of conduct that would likely preclude successful field placement and/or professional licensure, may be grounds for termination from the COE and/or the student's educational program.

## II. Definitions

**A.** "Day" means a PSU workday, which is Monday through Friday, excluding weekends and holidays, identified on the Academic Calendar.

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- B.** “Review Panel” means the committee appointed by the Department Chair that is charged with reviewing concerns raised about a candidate’s performance, professional competencies, and/or academic progress. A review panel can be a department’s Candidate/Student Affairs Committee.
- C.** “Candidate” means the PSU student enrolled in the COE.
- D.** “Dean’s Office” communications go to the COE Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
- E.** “Written” notice is an Official Communication under the University’s Email Communication Policy and shall be provided by the COE to the candidate via the candidate’s University email account. If there is no active University email account for the candidate, delivery shall be via an alternative email address provided by the candidate (if any) and to the candidate’s last known mailing address via first-class U.S. mail, postage prepaid. Candidates satisfy “written” communication requirements by delivery to the COE recipient via their official University email account.

### III. Advancement Requirements

**A.** All COE candidates must make satisfactory academic progress. Students enrolled at the graduate level have additional requirements.

1. Graduate Student Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirements:

- Maintain 3.0 GPA each term in the program
- Satisfactorily complete each course attempted (B- or better)
- Does not have any I, W, X, or NP grades

**B.** Academic Alert Notification. A graduate candidate will receive an Academic Alert Notification if they fail to meet any of the guidelines listed above. The student’s advisor will also be notified and may require an advising meeting to identify supports needed for academic improvement. Advisors will complete the Advising Form for Early Alert\* when meeting with the candidate. Candidate can continue to enroll in classes to demonstrate improvement. If the candidate continues to perform below academic expectations, the candidate is referred to a Performance Review in a subsequent term.

**C.** When candidates are in field experiences, they must demonstrate professional competence and reasonable growth in their placements. Further, candidates must demonstrate a high level of ethical and professional behavior and relate effectively with faculty, candidate peers, public school or agency personnel, and the candidates and/or clients with whom they work and interact. In addition, candidates must comply with all PSU codes of conduct, the professional standards of the school and/or agency in which they are placed, and the code of ethics in their particular professions. The COE (or a specific program/department within the COE) may restrict, delay, or deny a candidate’s placement in a field experience if a candidate has an Incomplete in any course in the candidate’s program or has not successfully completed any prerequisite course or field work. Individual programs may invoke additional student progress requirements. As a general rule, candidates are automatically advanced from one stage of their program to the next, and should consider themselves advanced unless they are informed otherwise.

### IV. Academic Requirements

**A.** Requirements of the University. The requirements for a candidate to remain in good academic standing are stated in the *PSU Bulletin*. In addition, a candidate’s admission to the University may be

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affected by additional terms or conditions particular to that candidate (such as admission on University Conditional status) and in such instances the candidate must comply with all such additional terms or conditions of admission as well. A candidate may be academically disqualified from the COE program at PSU and have their admission to the COE cancelled for any violation as stated in the *PSU Bulletin* (see Graduate Studies: Enrollment and Graduate Studies: Admission statuses).

**B.** Requirements of the College of Education. In addition to meeting the requirements of the University, candidates admitted to COE programs must:

1. make satisfactory progress toward meeting the required competencies for licensure/degree programs, which includes maintaining minimum grade requirements and satisfactory performance in required field experiences as stated above in Section III, Advancement Requirements;
2. if applicable, satisfy any COE terms or conditions placed on admission to the program within the timeline outlined at the time of admission; and
3. present work that meets the standards for quality of the profession and the program.

## **V. Leave of Absence**

**A.** For candidates who wish to initiate a leave of absence, the candidate must fulfill the requirements outlined by the Graduate School (see Graduate Studies: Enrollment: Leave of Absence), and a candidate in good standing must request a leave of absence from the COE program as set forth below. A leave of absence will be granted for no more than four consecutive terms. If the candidate has not returned at the end of the approved leave of absence their admission will be cancelled and they must reapply for admission.

**B.** Candidates must submit their request for a leave of absence to the Department Chair. The Department Chair will consult with relevant program faculty, staff and/or other University officials to determine if the leave request should be granted. The Department Chair will notify the candidate in writing of the decision. The Department Chair will also specify any conditions and requirements of the leave and of the candidate's return to the program. If a leave is approved, the candidate is notified in writing of conditions for their return. A candidate on a leave of absence must notify the Department Chair in writing three months before they plan to return to University to complete their program.

## **VI. Performance Review (initiated by a COE faculty member or field supervisor)**

**A.** When a faculty member or field supervisor has a serious concern about a candidate's academic or field-based performance, the faculty member or field supervisor may request a performance review. A performance review, if merited, is undertaken by a performance review panel (Review Panel) as further described below. A performance review is a meeting and conversation between the members of the Review Panel and the candidate to discuss the candidate's performance, progress, success, and challenges related to academic program and/or field experiences.

**B.** The types of performance that could prompt a request for performance review include but are not limited to performance that (a) violates ethical or legal standards, (b) interferes with others' opportunity to learn, (c) reflects a lack of judgment that suggests inability to consistently meet the standards of the profession, (d) could preclude or has precluded successful field placement; (e) could result in the candidate failing to meet the qualifications for professional licensure, or (f) does not meet expectations outlined in the PSU Bulletin or in COE program handbooks.

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**C.** The composition of a Review Panel varies by each department of the COE as stated in their respective Program Handbooks. A COE department or program may elect to have a standing panel (e.g., Student Affairs Committee) while other COE departments and programs may convene a Review Panel on an *ad hoc* basis. Review Panels may or may not include the Department Chair.

**D.** Performance review processes can vary depending upon the COE department or program as set out in the respective Program Handbooks; however, all COE performance review processes must at a minimum comply with the following:

1. Written request for review: The faculty member or field supervisor submits a written request for performance review stating the concerns to the Department Chair and the cohort leader/advisor. The statement must include specific information about behavior and/or performance of concern, provide examples of the performance problems, identify any prior corrective actions and guidance related to the issue presenting a concern, and make specific reference to any standards, rules, or procedures that the candidate has failed to meet or adhere to (see Appendix B).
2. Department Chair determination and notification (within 5 days of receipt of request): The Department Chair reviews the request for performance review and then determines whether the concern warrants a performance review. If the Department Chair decides that the concern does not warrant a performance review, the Department Chair will deny the request and work with the referring faculty member or field supervisor, as well as other applicable faculty and staff, to address the concern. If the Department Chair decides that the concern warrants a performance review, the Department Chair will notify the referring faculty member or field supervisor, the Dean's office, and the candidate of this decision, giving the candidate written notice of the issues of concern to be discussed at the performance review. The Department Chair will inform the Director of the Disability Resource Center of the name of the student prior to the pending review. The Department Chair also refers the matter to the appropriate department or program Review Panel. Regardless of the choice to convene a panel, the request for review is documented in the COE confidential student information system for record keeping.
3. Performance Review meeting (within 15 days of receipt of request): The Review Panel, once notified by the Department Chair, will schedule the performance review within 15 days after the Department Chair received the request for performance review.

The candidate shall speak for themselves at the performance review. The candidate is invited to submit additional evidence on their behalf to the Review Panel at least 24 hours in advance of the review. The candidate is allowed to invite up to two support persons, who are not directly involved in the matter, to the performance review; the candidate may bring a DRC representative as a support person to the performance review; the candidate may bring an attorney as a support person, however the COE is not responsible for any costs associated with the candidate's use of an attorney. The candidate will notify the panel at least 24 hours in advance of the performance review with the names of the support persons that will attend the performance review. Support persons are not permitted to participate directly in the performance review, but candidates may take breaks to consult with their support persons as needed.

The Review Panel will provide written notice, at least five days in advance of the performance review, to the candidate, and Department Chair, that includes the following:

- a) date and location of the performance review;

- b) any documents provided to the Review Panel including the written request for performance review (the chair may elect include these documents to the notice consistent with FERPA requirements);
- c) the names of the members of the Review Panel;
- d) the names of other persons that the Review Panel will invite to provide information to the Review Panel;
- e) inform the candidate that they may provide additional documentation for the Review Panel to consider at least 24 hours in advance of the review;
- f) inform the candidate that they may bring up to two support persons to the performance review according to the guidelines above.

7. Notification of Outcome: After the performance review, the Review Panel will issue a written decision of the outcome within 15 days of the performance review to the candidate, the Department Chair (if different), and the Dean's Office. The outcome of a performance review will be a recommendation to the Department Chair for one or more of the following actions:

- a) No action: The basis for the review was unwarranted or no longer relevant and the matter is closed.
- b) Candidate Plan of Assistance: The candidate should remain in the program while addressing the areas of concern according the Plan of Assistance (section VII below).
- c) Candidate Leave of Absence with conditions for return: A candidate Leave of Absence is suggested, for up to four consecutive terms. If the candidate agrees to take this action, it is outlined in an associated Plan of Assistance. The Review Panel will list conditions the candidate must meet to return to the department, program and/or COE in good standing (see section X below). The Review Panel should provide an alternative outcome if the candidate decides not to decide to take the leave of absence suggested, which could be no action, a plan of assistance, or removal from the program and/or COE.
- d) Candidate Removal: The candidate should be removed from the program and/or from the COE.

Where the panel recommendation is a leave of absence or removal from the program and/or the COE, the Department Chair will communicate directly with the candidate to enact the recommendation.

## **VII. Plans of Assistance**

**A.** A Plan of Assistance may be initiated as a result of a performance review. The Plan of Assistance will, at a minimum, include the following:

- 1. a description of the behavior, disposition, or performance issues;
- 2. the goals the Plan of the Assistance will help the candidate address;
- 3. a clear statement of the criteria for evaluating successful remediation of issues;
- 4. a description of specific actions the candidate will take and assistance the COE program will provide, if any;
- 5. a designated faculty member who will monitor the candidate's progress (as appropriate to the particular Plan of Assistance) and report to and confer with the appropriate Department Chair; and
- 6. a timeline for evaluating the candidate's performance and making a decision about next steps (with all decisions about next steps made in consultation with the appropriate Department Chair).

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**B.** According to the timeline established in the Plan of Assistance, the designated faculty member(s) will meet with the candidate to evaluate the candidate's progress on and/or compliance with the Plan of Assistance. Possible subsequent processes and scenarios include:

1. The candidate has demonstrated adequate progress toward meeting the required competencies and the candidate continues in the program.
2. The candidate has made progress, but has not demonstrated the level of competence required. The designated faculty may make recommendations to the review panel including: extend the deadlines, suggest a revision the Plan of Assistance, provide additional resources for remediation, and set a new date for evaluation. The Review Panel must approve any changes.
  - a. If the extended deadline goes beyond the current term, the candidate may be given a grade of Incomplete for the course or field experience in question with an extension of time in the Plan of Assistance, in alignment with the requirements outlined in the PSU Bulletin.
  - b. If the extension involves additional field experiences, the candidate will be required to register and pay tuition for those additional field experiences.
  - c. Satisfactory completion of the extension will be required for removal of any incompletes.
3. The candidate has not made sufficient progress toward meeting the required competencies and the designated faculty member(s) will initiate a request for a new performance review to determine if the candidate should be removed from the program and/or the COE. The process under section V D, above, will apply.

### **VIII. Special Procedures Related to Field Placements**

**A.** Field placements are integral to COE programs to prepare candidates for work in their chosen profession. Because field placements often serve as the culmination of a COE academic program, and because field placements often involve children and other vulnerable populations, the COE has the responsibility to assure that each candidate's performance in their placement is consistent with expectations for professionals in those settings.

**B.** A candidate may be removed immediately from a field placement if the on-site administrator, Cooperating Professional and/or University field supervisor for that placement requests the candidate's removal. The Department Chair must be informed prior to this decision.

**C.** Where a candidate is removed from a field placement, the Department Chair or a faculty member or field supervisor may request a performance review unless the University field supervisor recommends an alternative field placement for the candidate. If the University field supervisor recommends an alternative placement, the COE's Field Placement Coordinator will attempt to locate an alternative placement. If an appropriate alternative site cannot be found, the program faculty will work with the candidate to develop a new timeline and plan for program completion.

**D.** If there is a request for a performance review for a candidate from a faculty that involves concerns about the appropriateness of the candidate continuing to work in a field placement, the Department Chair may, at any point in a performance review process, and in consultation with the cohort leader/advisor and the Review Panel (where not the Department Chair), make an interim decision to discontinue or limit the candidate's participation in the field placement pending the decision of the Review Panel. The Department Chair's interim decision will be communicated to the candidate in writing and

their continuance in the field will be dependent upon the outcome of the Performance Review (section V E above)

#### **X. Return after Leave of Absence or Removal**

A candidate who has been removed from a COE program may apply to the same, or a new, COE program for admission after one calendar year from the date of their removal. A former candidate seeking admission after removal must apply during the regular admission cycle and their application will be evaluated through the appropriate program's admission process.

Where a candidate has been given a leave of absence as a result of a performance review, the candidate may submit a written request to return to the Department Chair that includes their progress meeting the conditions provided in the outcome of their performance review (section V). The Department Chair will refer the matter to the appropriate Review Panel. Upon receipt of the request to return, the Review Panel will meet to determine if the conditions of the leave or suspension have been met so the candidate can return to the department, program and/or COE in good standing and/or whether the candidate remains otherwise eligible to return. The outcome of this decision is provided in writing to the candidate and the Department Chair.

#### **XI. Appeal of Performance Review Panel Decision**

A candidate may appeal a decision of a Review Panel by submitting a letter of appeal to the Dean's Office no later than five days after the date of distribution of the Review Panel's written decision. Appeals will be granted 1) where there is a demonstrated error in the process that had an effect on the decision of the Review Panel, or 2) where the candidate demonstrates that there is new, relevant information that was not available when the Review Panel held the performance review. The letter of appeal should include detailed information describing the procedural error and/or the new information and how that error and/or information would impact the decision of the Review Panel. The Dean (or their designee) will issue a written decision on the appeal within five days of the date the candidate submitted the letter of appeal. The decision of the Dean or their designee is final.

#### **XII. Appeal of Grade or Academic Evaluation**

**A.** A candidate may request an academic review if they dispute an academic evaluation such as a grade for an assignment or for a course. A candidate requests this review by submitting a written request for review to the Department Chair within 15 days of the award of the grade or evaluation. The request should include information that supports the candidate's contention that their work was unfairly evaluated. The Department Chair will issue a written decision to the candidate within 15 days of the date the candidate submitted the request for review.

**B.** If the candidate is dissatisfied with the Department Chair's decision, the candidate may appeal that decision by submitting a written request for review to the Dean's Office no later than five days of the Department Chair's decision. The Dean (or their designee) will issue a written decision to the candidate within 15 days of the date the candidate submitted the request for review.

**C.** If the candidate wants to continue to contest the decision further, the candidate may use other University processes applicable to the issue and under the procedures for those processes. These

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processes may include the Academic Appeals Board, the Deadline Appeals Board, and the Scholastic Standards Committee.

### **XIII. Candidate Services**

**A.** The COE is committed to creating a learning environment that is equitable, useable, inclusive, and welcoming. The COE provides disability-related reasonable accommodations to candidates to support their access to education. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to a candidate's inclusion or learning, they should contact the DRC. The DRC can assist with making the classroom, course materials, exams and quizzes, off-campus field placements, and any other aspect of PSU more accessible to you. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, [drc@pdx.edu](mailto:drc@pdx.edu), <https://www.pdx.edu/drc>. Although candidates may be asked by the DRC to submit documentation from a qualified provider that supports a candidate's request for accommodation, the COE does not collect this information from candidates. If a candidate who has received accommodations believes that they are not being granted their accommodations or that they need additional accommodations to be successful, the candidate is encouraged to discuss their accommodations with their instructor(s) and/or field placement supervisor and/or to resume the interactive process with the DRC.

**B.** If a candidate believes that they have been subjected to prohibited discrimination or harassment, they are encouraged to contact the University's Office of Equity and Compliance [<http://www.pdx.edu/diversity/equity-compliance>] where the conduct involves a faculty or staff member of the University or to contact the Office of the Dean of Student Life [<http://www.pdx.edu/dos/student-conduct-at-psu>] where the conduct involves another student.

#### Appendix A:

Ethical Codes of Conduct

Oregon Administrative Rules for teachers and administrators

Council for Exceptional Children's Code of Ethics

National Education Association's Code of Ethics of the Education Profession

American Association of School Administrators' Statement of Ethics

American Library Association's Code of Ethics,

American Counseling Association Code of Ethics

American School Counseling Association Code of Ethics

Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification Code of Ethics

American Association of Adult and Continuing Educators' standards

#### Appendix B:

Plan of Assistance Form

Request for Performance Review Form

Advising Form for Academic Alert

#### Appendix C:

Academic Performance Review Communication Details and Timeline

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## Appendix C Academic Performance Review Communication Details and Timeline

### Performance Review Requests must include the following:

- Student name and PSUID
- Faculty member requesting review
- Program information (program, cohort, online/hybrid, content area)
- Faculty members with whom the student works closely (methods teachers, cohort leader, supervisor)
- Placement information (Ct name, school, district) *if placed*.
- Reason for referral (open ended field)
  - Options for additional checklist accompanying open-ended field include: academic/course performance, field performance, dispositions, mental/emotional/physical health, general progress concerns)
- What policy/procedure/guideline/law is the concern raised related to (to the best of your knowledge)?
- What actions have already been taken, by whom, and when?
- Requesting faculty member's recommendations for next steps
- Supporting documentation attached (should include emails to and from student, previous actions, referrals, transcripts, or other information related to the student's progress)

### Chair letter to student (copied to review panel, dean's office) must include the following (sent within 5 days of receipt of the request):

- Concern raised
- When concern was raised
- Notice that the review panel will schedule a meeting within 15 days of this date to discuss student performance in light of the concerns raised

### Review panel letter to student (copied to department chair) must include the following (sent 5 days in advance of the meeting):

- Date and location of performance review
- Names of attendees (review panel members)
- Summary of the request for performance review (concerns raised)
- Outline of student rights
  - Candidate may bring up to two support persons, who do not speak for the candidate (e.g., counselor, attorney, DRC representative, family member)
  - Candidate may provide additional documentation no later than 24 hours in advance of the meeting to the review panel (include contact information and exact date)

### Review panel letter to student (copied to department chair and dean's office) with recommended outcome must include the following:

- Recommended outcome – no action, plan of assistance, leave of absence, exit from program
- Next steps (chair will communicate directly with candidate about enacting the outcome, identify supports available, inform about appeals process and/or other resources for candidate)

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**A plan of assistance for a student must include the following:**

- Description of the performance issue
- Measurable goal(s) the plan of assistance will help the student toward
- Clear criteria used to evaluate successful remediation of issue (should align with stated goals)
- Clear description of steps candidate will take
- Clear description of supports COE is providing, where applicable
- Name of designated faculty member who will monitor progress, evaluate success, and report to department chair (or review panel)
- Timeline of progress monitoring and determining next steps in program