



**John H. Lounsbury College of Education**

**Handbook  
for  
Initial Teacher Candidates**

**2023-2025**  
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# GEORGIA COLLEGE & STATE UNIVERSITY THE JOHN H. LOUNSBURY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

## *Programs Preparing Educators for Initial Certification*

### INTRODUCTION

The John H. Lounsbury College of Education (JHL CoE) is the unit of the institution responsible for the governance of all programs preparing educators for the State of Georgia. The teacher education programs at Georgia College & State University (GCSU) are fully approved by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) and are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Initial certification programs are offered at the undergraduate (Bachelor of Science) and graduate (Master of Arts in Teaching) levels. Elementary Education, Middle Grades, and Special Education initial certification programs are part of the College of Education's undergraduate programs. Music Education and Health and Physical Education are in their respective departments in the College of Arts and Sciences (Music) and School of Health Sciences (HPER). These programs are a part of the College of Education governance processes. Initial certification for Secondary Education, Middle Grades, and Special Education are available at the graduate master's level through a Master of Arts in Teaching degree. Candidates seeking secondary, middle grades, or special education certification must possess a bachelor's degree to enroll in GCSU's Master of Arts in Teaching program.

The theme, *Educators as Architects of Change*, is the organizing focus for all programs in teacher education at GCSU. To meet the needs of all students in today's public schools, educators must be able to be leaders in improving and keeping schools current with the needs of society. A strong foundation in professional preparation is based on the Liberal Arts curriculum and connects theory to practice while establishing understandings of content and pedagogy. Essential characteristics of the CoE's initial certification programs are the extensive field-based experiences, cross-disciplinary course work, and preparation in technology. The curriculum is interdisciplinary and integrative in nature, modeling the very curriculum and organization the CoE expects teacher candidates to practice when they are in their own classrooms. Strands of diversity and technology are woven into the fabric of the curriculum with the expectation that candidates will be knowledgeable and competent with addressing both areas in the field. Furthermore, the curriculum and the field experiences also prepare teacher candidates to address the human relations and diversity issues of the public schools.

The initial certification programs at GCSU center on the preparation of educators to be ready to accept the challenges of their first professional experience. The CoE programs accomplish this through solid foundations in the following areas:

- A strong liberal arts foundation in interdisciplinary understanding, aesthetic appreciation, analytic inquiry, and creativity.

- Guidance through classroom experiences by experienced educators working in collaboration with GCSU's partnership with local P-12 schools.
- An environment of respect that values individual differences as reflected in the teacher candidate's instructional and assessment practices.
- The ability of making connections between content and other disciplines and to develop skills which reflect current research in pedagogical practices.
- Purposeful reflection on the teacher candidate's effectiveness in the classroom by becoming attuned to the needs of the learners, achievements of goals, and possibilities for alternative teaching strategies and assessments.
- A strong foundation in classroom management, educational law, technology, resources, and professional ethics.
- Effective decision making and communication skills as well as the ability to demonstrate strong leadership qualities as advocates of change in the education community.

### ***Mission***

Graduates of the JHL CoE, both graduate and undergraduate, take their places as Architects of Change in the public-school systems of Georgia, working in the interest of all young people. While preserving the best of our Liberal Arts heritage, our graduates are equipped with the intellectual and social skills they need in order to serve as advocates for all PK-12 students.

### ***The Educators as Architects of Change Model***

In 1996, the faculty adopted the model, *Educators as Architects of Change* to guide our curricular and instructional decisions. *Educators as Architects of Change* exemplifies our dedication to careful, reflective and purposeful improvement of schools through the preparation of professional educators. The *Architects of Change* metaphor demonstrates our belief that effective educators require a discrete set of skills, including the ability to advocate for students, to become mentors and leaders within schools, and to reflect on the meaning of the social practices they find in schools. With this document, our faculty affirms its utility, distilling our commitment to the principles of reasoned, artful and purposeful improvement of schooling.

### **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The faculty of the JHL CoE believes that our schools must fulfill the educational needs of our populace while emphasizing fairness, democracy, and intellectual curiosity. Amid a climate of change and uncertainty, we inspire educators to create student-centered learning environments as the primary expression of strong pedagogy. We use the *Educators as Architects of Change* paradigm to guide the development of an inclusive and diverse community of stakeholders consisting of students, educators, teacher candidates, and the public.

Since the inception of *Educators as Architects of Change* as our guiding principle, the faculty has continually reassessed our programs. Informed by research and reflective analysis, we have continued our intensive cohort model for our undergraduate as well as some of our graduate programs. We seek to motivate professional educators to reach out to stakeholders to develop citizens who value formal education, literacy in its many forms, and individual differences.

This framework is designed to produce change agents, based on the following core principles:

- The Liberal Arts and integrated learning
- Professional preparation
- Human relationships and diversity
- Leadership for learning and teaching communities

In its programs of study, the GCSU faculty affirms that importance of programs that situate educators as researchers, leaders, and *Architects of Change* in the schools and the larger community.

### ***Liberal Arts and Integrated Learning***

The *Architects of Change* model demands that our graduates understand themselves as both “doing” and “thinking” about their professional practice (Hutton, 2006). We seek to preserve the intellectual commitments of the Liberal Arts college “to pose questions to the world and to reflect on what is presented in experience” (Greene, 1998, p.21). We see development as encompassing the cognitive, emotional, moral and civic dimensions found in the liberal arts.

### ***Professional Preparation***

Educator candidates in most of GC’s professional educator programs join cohorts of peers, allowing them to learn from and interact with each other in intensive, field-based courses. Integral to the cohort is a mentor leader who acts as a role model, advisor and facilitator of learning for each student. Consequently, faculty and students both live education grounded in action, community and collaboration. Through participation in our programs, educator candidates not only acquire a strong foundation in major content and pedagogical areas, but also learn to connect theory to practice by applying and conducting classroom research. We recognize that “skilled teachers are the most crucial of all schooling inputs” (Ferguson, 1991, p. 490). Our field-based cohort model serves as a powerful vehicle to integrate theory and practice by fostering close collaboration among faculty, educator candidates, and professionals in the field. We understand teaching to be complex, requiring systemic reflection on practice. In order to become true Architects of Change, educators must go beyond simple bureaucratic solutions, learning to make instructional and curricular decisions based on exigencies of real life in schools (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

### ***Human Relationships and Diversity***

Building upon strong Liberal Arts, professional and pedagogical bases, educator candidates in the GC professional education programs are encouraged to construct a well-grounded framework for appropriately addressing human relations and diversity issues in schools. As democratic educators, we understand schooling to be part of the real world and part of children's lives. "We share the knowledge gained in classrooms beyond those settings, thereby working to challenge the construction of knowledge as always and only available to the elite" (hooks, 2003, p. 41). Our educator candidates are exposed to theory and practices that foster the belief that all students can learn and should be treated as individuals with unique and various needs, skills, talents, interests, histories, and beliefs. As Architects of Change, educator candidates learn to design inclusive, culturally sustaining and relevant learning experiences in order to create learning communities in which all people are respected and appreciated, and in which academic achievement, positive intergroup relations, and critical consciousness are expected.

### ***Leadership for Learning and Teaching Communities***

By modeling successful teaching, questioning assumptions, and posing challenging problems, instructors in the GC professional education programs encourage educator candidates to construct their own understanding of education. In this way, candidates may feel empowered to continue learning throughout their lives, to be flexible in adapting to difficulties, to imagine creative solutions, to communicate effectively, and to take necessary risks in meeting future needs. "This is the road I have tried to follow as a teacher: living my convictions; being open to the process of knowing; ... being pushed forward by the challenges that prevent me from bureaucratizing my practice..." (Freire, 2001, p. 69). The professional preparation programs seek to create empowered educational leaders who have the ability to cultivate partnership within the schools and community, act as advocates for the students under their care, and collaborate with others to creatively solve problems and make decisions. Our programs foster commitment to equity and social justice, and provide students the opportunity to develop as leaders and Architects of Change.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1997). *The right to learn*. Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Ferguson, R. (1991). Paying for public education: New evidence on how and why money matters. *Harvard Journal on Legislation*, 28(2), 465-498.

Freire, P. & Clarke, P. (2001). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy, and civic courage*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Greene, M. (1988). *The dialectic of freedom*. Teachers College Press.

hooks, b. (2003) *Teaching community: A pedagogy of hope*. Taylor and Francis, Inc.

Hutton, T. (2006). The conflation of liberal and professional education: Pipe dream, aspiration, or nascent reality? *Liberal Education*, 92(4), 54-59.

## **COHORT MODEL**

All initial teacher certification programs are offered in cohorts. A cohort is defined as a group of teacher candidates who begin and end the program together. Each cohort is led by a Mentor Leader, a faculty member who teaches courses, advises teacher candidates, and consults with the field experience coordinator to secure placements for the group. The Mentor Leader has the primary responsibility for the program implementation and the development of the individual teacher candidate as well as the cohort as a whole. Teacher candidates complete the required program of study in conjunction with field experiences. The extensive field component of the initial certification programs provides teacher candidates with a wide range of experiences from which to draw as they develop their abilities to plan for and teach children and adolescents. This continual interplay of theory and practice maintains the strength and integrity of the initial certification programs by encouraging teacher candidates to become reflective practitioners who engage in authentic and student-centered pedagogy. The mentoring provided through the cohort model supports teacher candidates in becoming capable, competent, and developing professionals.

## **CERTIFICATION AREAS**

### *Undergraduate Initial Certification Areas*

- Elementary Education (P-5)
- Middle Grades Education (English/Language Arts, Science, Mathematics, Social Studies) (4-8)
- Special Education (General Curriculum) (P-12)
- Health and Physical Education (P-12)
- Music Education (P-12)

Students who wish to become secondary teachers or earn a Special Education or Middle Grades with Mathematics and Science concentration MAT must possess a Bachelor's degree in a Liberal Arts content field.

### *Graduate Initial Certification Areas*

- Master of Arts in Teaching in Secondary Education (T5) (6-12)  
Content Fields: Biology, Business Education, Chemistry, English, History, Mathematics, Physics, and Political Science; and for certification to teach in grades P-12 in Art, French, and Spanish.
- Master of Arts in Teaching in Middle Grades Education (T5) (4-8)  
Content Fields: Mathematics and Science
- MAT in Special Education (General Curriculum) (T5) (P-12)

The standard certificate for initial teacher certification in Georgia public schools is the Induction Certificate. To be eligible for this certificate, one must have completed the following:

- Complete a GaPSC-approved traditional in-state educator preparation program at the appropriate level as defined in the applicable teaching or service rule, have the degree awarded, and receive a recommendation for certification.
- Attain a passing score in the GACE content assessment at the Induction level or higher. If no GACE content assessment is available for the certification field requested, the applicant is exempt from this requirement.
- Attain a passing score on the Georgia Educator Ethics Assessment.
- Completion of the Exceptional Child course with a grade of B or better.

For information on certification upgrades, students should consult with the Certification Officer and go to [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com) (click on certificate upgrade).

For more information about the College of Education programs and faculty, please see our website at <http://gcsu.edu/education>.

## **ACADEMIC AND ETHICAL QUALIFICATIONS**

### ***Continued Enrollment***

The following academic standards apply for continued enrollment in the initial teacher certification programs:

- A grade of C or better must be maintained in all course work in the program except for Exceptional Child courses in which candidates must earn a B or better, and a grade of “S” must be earned in all field experiences. A student who receives a D or F in the teaching major or minor course work or a “U” in field experiences may be removed from the program. (Note: Students in the Middle Grades and Secondary programs are assigned letter grades for all field experiences.)
- A student in the undergraduate program must maintain a minimum of a 2.75 GPA (3.0 for MAT) to remain in the program. If a student’s GPA falls below the minimum, then the student must meet with their Mentor Leader to develop a plan of action. No student will be allowed to graduate with a GPA that falls below the program minimum.

Teacher candidates have the right to appeal when they feel that unfair or inappropriate decisions have been made concerning grades or application of policies. When situations arise in which teacher candidates have grievances of this nature, they should refer to the appropriate procedures on the following sites:



Undergraduate non-academic appeals: <https://gcsu.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2022-2023/undergraduate-catalog/academic-policies/grievances-and-appeals/>

Undergraduate academic appeals: <https://gcsu.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2022-2023/undergraduate-catalog/academic-policies/grievances-and-appeals/academic-grievances-or-appeals/>

Graduate non-academic appeals: <https://gcsu.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2022-2023/graduate-catalog/academic-policies/grievances-and-appeals/non-academic-grievances-or-appeals-process/>

Graduate academic appeals: <https://gcsu.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2022-2023/graduate-catalog/academic-policies/grievances-and-appeals/academic-grievances-or-appeals/>

### ***Personal and Professional Conduct***

Students who are fully admitted to a teacher education program at GC are expected to maintain a high level of personal and academic professionalism. The State of Georgia Code of Ethics for Educators governs all students enrolled in the JHL CoE of GCSU. See the following link for specific guidelines:

<https://www.gapsc.com/Ethics/CodeOfEthics.aspx>

**Failure to meet this code by engaging in inappropriate personal and/or professional behavior may result in removal from the program upon the recommendation of the Mentor Leader, Program Coordinator, Department Chair, and/or the Dean of the College of Education.**

A teacher candidate's unsatisfactory personal or professional conduct may come to light through observations by the Mentor Leader, school personnel, the Partner Teacher, the University Supervisor, or other GC personnel. All teacher candidates are mandated by the CoE to self-report any arrests to the Dean's office immediately.

The following violations by teacher candidates will result in dismissal from the program and/or GC:

- Use of illegal substances
- Public intoxication and/or underage drinking
- Violation of the Georgia Code of Ethics
- Violation of the GC Code of Conduct
- Criminal behavior that violates local, state or federal law

Examples of behaviors which warrant action include, but are not limited to the following:

- Excessive, unexcused absences/ Attendance issues (tardiness)
- Dishonesty
- Use of inappropriate language

- Inability to cooperate with school personnel and/or classmates
- Low academic performance
- Unprofessional behavior

***Procedures for Addressing Serious Concerns***

Continuation in the John H. Lounsbury College of Education's field-based cohort initial teacher education program is contingent upon the teacher candidate's maintenance of a high-level of personal, academic, and professional decorum. The following is the process that will be followed should there be low levels of academic, personal, or professional behavior on the part of the teacher candidate. This behavior might come to light through observations of the Mentor Leader, University Supervisor, public school personnel including the Partner Teacher, and/or GCSU instructors. It might include absences, dishonest practices, use of inappropriate language, inability to get along with school personnel and/or classmates, low performance in a course, violation of the Georgia Code of Ethics, inappropriate conduct as outlined in the GCSU catalog, or similar behavior.

1. Upon noting low performance levels in any area, the Mentor Leader may submit a letter defining the deficiency for the teacher candidate. Whether or not a letter is submitted, the leader will meet with the teacher candidate to discuss their performance. It is expected that teacher candidate deficiencies will be corrected at this less formal stage so that the teacher candidate may continue in the program in good standing. A copy of the minutes of the meeting will be given to the teacher candidate and the Mentor Leader.
2. If there is reoccurrence of the same or a similar deficiency (continued unprofessional behavior in the field or at GCSU) then a second, more formal meeting will be held with the teacher candidate, the Mentor Leader, and the department chair. Parties will be expected to produce documentation to support judgments about performance. At this time, the teacher candidate will develop a written plan to correct the deficiency, which is to be approved by the Mentor Leader and shared with the appropriate parties (Partner Teacher, instructor).
3. A date will be determined for correction of the deficiency whereupon the teacher candidate and the Mentor Leader will meet again. Copies of the minutes of this meeting will be forwarded to the teacher candidate, their file, the Mentor Leader, the department chair, and the dean(s). In addition, copies of the initial letter and minutes of the initial meeting will be forwarded to the department chair and the dean(s). This second meeting will serve as notice to the teacher candidate that it is their final opportunity to correct any deficiencies.
4. If an additional meeting is needed due to continued deficiencies, it will include the teacher candidate, the Mentor Leader, the department chair, and one of the deans. A recommendation will be made for the teacher candidate's dismissal, and the teacher candidate will be removed from the program.

5. Periodically the cohort Mentor Leader will consult with the entire faculty teaching and supervising the candidate. If there appears to be a pattern of low performance in more than one area of the program not necessarily overseen by the Mentor Leader, e.g., incomplete course work, attendance or punctuality with any function, interpersonal difficulties, display of professional dispositions, then a mandatory meeting with the teaching/supervising team and the candidate will be held. This will be considered Step 3 in the above procedure for correcting serious deficiencies.

## **POLICY FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

It is the policy of GC to provide accommodations to students identified as disabled in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the 1992 American with Disabilities Act. Students who identify themselves as disabled through the admissions process are referred directly to the Student Disability Resource Center. In addition, faculty and staff who have reason to believe that an advisee has a disability that affects learning may also refer the student to the Student Disability Resource.

For more information on policies for students with disabilities, please refer to <http://www.gcsu.edu/disability>.

The Student Disability Resource Center is located in Room 109, Russell Library, Milledgeville, Georgia. The phone number is 478-445-5931.

## **LIVETEXT**

LiveText is a **required** component of **all** initial teacher certification programs. LiveText is an online program that is used for:

- Course management
- Portfolio building and management
- Projects, lesson plans, resources
- Central repository for all of the teacher candidate's work
- Standards-based assessments
- Collaborative assignments
- CoE course work

### ***Instructions for purchasing LiveText***

1. Go to the website [www.livetext.com](http://www.livetext.com)
2. Click "*Purchase/Register*"
3. On the next screen, click "*Select This Option*" under *Purchase Membership*. Once you click that, you will see 3 steps below that you must complete.
4. Fill in the required information as follows:

- a. Step 1: Select Your Student Membership
  - Choose the \$133.00 package (Student Membership Field Experience Edition). You will not be required to use the additional resources in the more expensive package.
- b. Step 2: Enter Your Personal Information
  - Be sure to use your **Bobcats email address** for your school email address.
  - Be sure to choose **GCSU** as your institution.
  - Be sure to use your **911 student ID** number where they ask for student ID. They say this is optional, but it IS NOT. You must provide this number.
- c. Step 3: Create Your LiveText Account
  - Choose a username (firstname.lastname is always easy to remember)
  - Use any password of your choosing.

***What do I do with it when I get it?***

Your professors will require you to use LiveText in different ways. You will receive further information and instructions as you begin your courses each semester. It is important to note that you will need to use the browser **FireFox** to most optimally run LiveText. While LiveText will run using other browsers, you will most likely encounter problems if not using FireFox.

***Where can I get help if I am having trouble either registering or using LiveText?***

LiveText has wonderful online and in-person (via phone) technical support. They can help you through any question or problem. Also, the CoE LiveText coordinator, Mike Newton is readily available to assist (478-445-0150, larry.newton@gcsu.edu).

**LAW AND THE INITIAL CERTIFICATION CANDIDATE**

All initial certification candidates are bound to maintain the professional standards of conduct as set forth by the Georgia Professional Code of Ethics. The following link provides the specific guidelines <https://www.gapsc.com/Ethics/CodeOfEthics.aspx>

Teacher candidates are also bound to follow the Honor Code and Code of Conduct for GC. Those guidelines may be found at <https://www.gcsu.edu/deanofstudents/student-code-of-conduct> Furthermore, teacher candidates **MUST** be fully aware of and follow county school board policy in the schools in which they work for their field placements. Local board of education policies differ in each county, and it is the teacher candidate's responsibility to know these policies. Specific topics that all teacher candidates should know include, but are not limited to the following: reporting child abuse; self-defense; possession and use of controlled/illegal substances; privileged communication;

administering first aid/medication; conducting field trips; locker and personal searches; discipline codes/procedures; trespass of personal property; supervision and liability issues.

### ***Liability Insurance***

All initial certification candidates **MUST** provide proof of liability insurance to their Mentor Leader prior to attending any field placement assignments. Students may obtain coverage through the Student Professional Association of Georgia Educators (SPAGE), the Student Georgia Association of Educators (SGAE), or their personal insurance carrier.

SPAGE: <https://www.pageinc.org/student-membership/>

SGAE: <https://pv.gae2.org/content.asp?CatId=390&ContentType=Join>

### ***Cyberspace Policy***

Technological communications should not compromise teacher candidate's integrity, reputation, or professionalism or that of the JHL College of Education. Be aware that teacher candidate actions or behaviors, whether actual or virtual, are subject to scrutiny by the public and may be negatively interpreted even if that is not the intent. It is the responsibility of the teacher candidate to maintain professional standards in all electronic communication as set by the Georgia Professional Code of Ethics and the JHL Social Networking Policy. Additionally, students who fail to follow the aforementioned guidelines are subject to sanctions according to the Continued Enrollment section of the JHL Handbook for initial certification candidates and the Honor Code and Code of Conduct for GC. (approved by CoE faculty on 4/11/08).

### ***Social Networking Guidelines***

- Do not accept students as “friends” on personal social networking sites.
- Decline any student-initiated friend request and do not initiate any social networking with students.
- Do not “friend” parents/guardians of students.
- Do not post or update your social networking page during placement or class hours.
- Do not use technology for unrelated purposes during placement or class hours.
- Do not post student pictures or use student names on any site.
- Post only what you want the world to see.
- Visit your profile and privacy settings. At a minimum, educators should have all privacy settings set to “only friends.”
- Do not use commentary or post pictures deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libelous.
- If you learn information on a social networking site that falls under the mandatory reporting guidelines (<https://www.gapsc.com/Ethics/CodeOfEthics.aspx>) you must report it as required by law.

This policy applies to the use and content of all media including, but not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, YouTube, blogs, wikis, web pages, etc. GC will verify compliance in regard to Cyber Safety according to policies and procedures as prescribed by the State of Georgia.

### ***FERPA Compliance***

The following guidelines apply to confidentiality requirements concerning student records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Education records include all records, addresses, phone numbers, files, documents, and other materials that contain personally identifiable information on any students, as well as the personally identifiable information itself.

#### ***What teacher candidates CANNOT do:***

1. CANNOT disclose educational records to other school district employees who do not have a legitimate educational interest in the education records for the purpose of their authorized duties
2. CANNOT disclose education records to college-level student teachers, consultants, or authorized community volunteers who do not have a legitimate educational interest in the education records for the purpose of their authorized duties.
3. CANNOT disclose education records to persons who are not school district employees, college-level student teachers, or authorized community volunteers, unless authorized by the principal.
4. CANNOT disclose education records to other students.
5. CANNOT post students' grades, final grade point average or give access to the teacher's grade book.

## **FIELD EXPERIENCES**

Teacher candidates are emerging educators who are expected to conduct themselves with dignity, decorum and consummate professionalism. Teacher candidates should consider themselves as professional colleagues in the schools where they are placed. Therefore, they must follow all of the same rules, regulations, and expectations that all professional educators observe.

Start/finish dates for attendance and participation in field activities as well as days off for undergraduate junior teacher candidates coincide with the GC calendar. In order to provide the most realistic experience and best preparation for candidates, the field experiences for seniors and MAT teacher candidates follow the field placement school calendar.

### ***Professionalism in the Schools***

The following rules are applicable to every school.

1. When teacher candidates are placed in partner schools, they have accepted a guest-partner relationship with that school. Upon acceptance to a Partner school the teacher candidate acknowledges responsibility to:
  - Act in a professional manner at all times;
  - Abide by the regulations, procedures, instructional practices, professional and personal expectations of the Partner school that you have been assigned; and
  - Understand that if personal or professional behavior or ability to work as an effective prospective teacher in the learning environment is not compatible with the expectations of the school district, a teacher candidate may be asked to leave by either GC or the Partner school district.
2. Professional relationships are essential to your continued success and professional growth.
  - Teacher candidates are expected to establish and maintain proper and cordial relationships with all school personnel, learning names and responsibilities to the degree allowed by circumstances.
  - Teacher candidates are to establish and maintain proper professional relationships with students and their parents or caregivers. All Partner Teachers must be present in all meetings with family members/guardians.
  - Teacher candidates must not engage in an unethical relationship with school faculty, administrators, parents, or students.
  - Communication with students should be respectful at all times. Be mindful of casual communication related to sensitive topics.
3. Professional behaviors include exhibiting punctuality, regular attendance, observance of school policies and procedures, and other professional expectations observed by educators in the partner school.

### *Dress Code Policy*

Part of being a teacher candidate is dressing professionally in schools and other educational settings. When in these settings, teacher candidates are representing GCSU, the JHL CoE, our peers, and educators in general. Teacher candidates are also serving as role models for the children and young adults with whom they work. Despite good intentions, at times one's dress can be a distraction in the educational endeavor without our being aware of it. Obtain a copy of the teacher dress code from your partner school. Your Mentor Leader or advisor will provide additional details regarding appropriate attire for teacher candidates.

### *Partner School Expectations*

1. Teacher candidates must fulfill the duty requirements and attendance expected of the Partner Teacher. This includes attending professional development, PTO/PTA meetings, and teacher meetings before or after school, family engagement activities, and other duties requested by school administrators.
2. Teacher candidates are expected to sign in and out every time they enter or leave the school. They are also expected to be on time and to stay until the specified time every day unless a variation is pre-approved by the Mentor Leader.
3. If a teacher candidate must be absent, the teacher candidate is expected to notify (call and/or email) the Partner Teacher, School Administrator, Mentor Leader, and the University Supervisor as early as possible before the school day begins. Make-up hours may be assigned by the Mentor Leader and approved by the Partner Teacher, as well as the School Administrator.
4. Teacher candidates are expected to dress professionally (see Dress Code Section in this handbook).
5. Teachers candidates are expected to inquire about (and follow) the school's policy for use of copy machines, laminators, computers, and other types of instructional equipment. Do not use the school's equipment at **any** time for personal use.
6. Teacher candidates should defer judgment to the Partner Teacher for decisions on use of the school's copier for instructional content.
7. Teachers candidates are not to use cell phones, iPads, or other electronic devices for personal business or pleasure during instructional time. Cell phones may be used only for instructional purposes with the Partner Teacher's approval (See Cyberspace and Social Networking Policy in this handbook).



8. Follow all other procedures expected of teachers at the Partner school.
9. Do not smoke or vape on campus or engage in any behavior that violates GCSU or school board policy.
10. Never serve as a substitute teacher. Georgia law requires that a certified teacher or substitute teacher be available to supervise a teacher candidate's classroom performance.

### ***Teaching Duties and Responsibilities***

1. Teacher candidates are expected to honor the confidentiality of information about students' grades, test scores, disciplinary records, or any other personal information.
2. Teacher candidates are expected to learn and follow guidelines and practice used by the Partner Teacher including instructional materials and resources, student behavior plans, and to seek prior approval for any learning activities they implement. Any modifications need to be discussed with the Partner Teacher.
3. Teacher candidates are expected to seek the level of involvement expected by the University Instructor, but with the full cooperation of the Partner Teacher.
4. Teacher candidates are expected to provide the Partner Teacher with timely and complete information about assignments given by university instructors to be carried out in the field placements.
5. Teacher candidates are expected to take the initiative by being observant of opportunities to be instrumental in the classroom and to volunteer for instructional tasks.
6. Teacher candidates are expected to assist in teaching and supervision of students on the playground, in the cafeteria, and in other areas of the school campus. Teacher candidates should:
  - Review and report unsafe equipment and environments.
  - Be aware of registered visitors and report visitors who have not checked into the office.
  - Not accept food or money from students or parents.
  - Know the role of a Mandated Reporter.
  - Be aware of and comply with GaPSC Code of Ethics:  
<https://www.gapsc.com/Ethics/CodeOfEthics.aspx>

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In addition to maintaining the program's minimum GPA the candidate must take the content area(s) GACE as well as complete CAPS and PBDA assessments during their program. Some programs require candidates to pass the GACE content assessment as a graduation requirement. Please check with your advisor for the specifics of your program. All teacher candidates must complete a graduation application according to the GCSU deadline (two semesters prior to graduation).

### ***GACE (Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators)***

The State of Georgia requires candidates for educator certification to pass the GACE as part of the educator certification process. Middle Grades candidates are required to pass the GACE in both of their content area concentrations. Information regarding test centers and dates and preparation materials can be found at <http://gace.ets.org>

Candidates use their MyPSC account to sign-up and take GACE exams.

Mentor Leaders for all initial certification programs must give permission for the certification officer to provide eligibility for readiness for candidates prior to registering for the GACE.

**All teacher candidates also must satisfactorily complete the following in order to graduate on time:**

- Student Teaching Internship
- Comprehensive, standards-based Portfolio
- Teacher Work Sample
- Capstone Experiences  
(which may include: Portfolio Presentation, Conference Presentation, Showcase)

Teacher candidates should check with the Mentor Leader for their specific program's guidelines and requirements for each of the requirements above.

### ***Student Teaching Internship***

The student teaching internship is designed so that the teacher candidate will be able to implement several weeks of full-time teaching, which includes assumption of all duties of a full-time teacher in a classroom at an appropriate grade level under the supervision of a GCSU faculty member and Partner Teacher. The internship also includes the development and implementation of a professional project (a Teacher Work Sample) in most programs. Some departments require the Teacher Work Sample prior to the student teaching semester. Each department has very clear written guidelines for the Teacher Work Sample.

### ***Standards-Based Portfolio***

The Standards-Based Assessment Portfolio is the primary vehicle for teacher candidates to demonstrate that GCSU's JHL CoE should recommend the candidates for teacher certification. It documents to the CoE's accrediting agencies that the teacher candidates have the *knowledge, skills, and dispositions* to be an effective teacher. Therefore, the point of the accumulation of evidence to meet the 10 standards, the justification of the evidence and the oral presentation is to show a panel of faculty, themselves knowledgeable in the field, why the student should be certified as a professional teacher. The point of convening the faculty portfolio reading and presentation panels is to verify whether the aforementioned demonstration has taken place (or not) and at what level. There is a minimum level of thinking, writing, and presentation skill expected so all components will need to be met minimally for the entire portfolio to "pass" and the candidate to be recommended for certification.

The teacher candidate's portfolio contains artifacts from their entire program that demonstrate the impact of the program and their progress over time as a reflective practitioner. All of the artifacts and explanations should convey powerful reasoning for how the material fits the standard while conveying how the candidate has developed as a self-aware professional who engages in pedagogy that best suits the needs of the students. Students may be required to present both written and verbal defenses of their portfolio to a panel of faculty members.

### ***Showcase***

Senior undergraduate candidates may organize and develop a program that highlights their achievements as educators who will be Architects of Change. In preparation for this event, undergraduate teacher candidates should keep projects which demonstrate their accomplishments throughout their cohort experience.

### ***Conference Presentations***

Students in all cohort groups have opportunities to conduct research under the direction and facilitation of faculty members and Mentor Leaders. Students in the cohort programs are given opportunities to conduct research and should take the initiative to disseminate their understandings as widely as possible. Students should take advantage of opportunities to attend and participate in conferences on the local, state, regional or national level.

### ***Estimated Teacher Candidate Expenses***

GACE 360	\$30.00
LiveText	\$133.00
GACE Content Assessment	\$150.00 - \$200.00

Additional expected expenses – textbooks and course materials, liability insurance (SPAGE or SGAE), professional dues, professional conference attendance, professional attire for field placements and internship, transportation to and from field placements.

**APPENDIX A: INITIAL TEACHER CANDIDATE HANDBOOK  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**



Please print the following information:

Teacher Candidate Name \_\_\_\_\_

Program \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Leader \_\_\_\_\_

I verify that I have read and understand the contents of this handbook and will act in accord with these policies and procedures as a condition of my continued enrollment in an initial teacher education program within the JHL College of Education.

Teacher Candidate Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX B: FIELD EXPERIENCE WAIVER**

Georgia College & State University assumes no responsibility for housing, transportation, or any other personal needs that might arise as a result of field experience. GCSU assumes no liabilities for any accident or other mishaps that might be incurred by any participant involved in any way in field experience.

I, the undersigned, acknowledge my own responsibility for the risk of any accident or mishap which might be incurred by participation in this program. Further, I release and forever discharge Georgia College & State University, the Board of Regents, their members individually, officers, agents, or employees of any kind from all claims, demands, and causes of action whatever, foreseen and unforeseen, arising from and by reason of any known or unknown bodily and personal injuries, damages to property, and the consequences arising thereof, resulting from my participation in, or in any way connected with the program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**APPENDIX C: PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE VERIFICATION OF LIABILITY INSURANCE**

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE VERIFICATION

\*\*\*\*\*  
As a part of my professional teacher education preparation, I understand that I will participate in certain field experiences in school systems beyond the college campus. I am further aware that the following statement is a part of the Georgia Department of Education Guidelines for Professional Laboratory Experiences in Georgia Teacher Education: "Liability - Prior to professional laboratory experiences placement, students may provide evidence of having adequate tort liability insurance or waive such coverage in writing."  
\*\*\*\*\*

VERIFICATION OF LIABILITY INSURANCE THEREFORE:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, verify that I have tort liability insurance as follows:  
(full name printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Company

\_\_\_\_\_  
Amount Period of Coverage (verification is required)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*\*\*\*\*

**APPENDIX D: CODE OF ETHICS FORM**



Please print the following information:

Teacher Candidate Name \_\_\_\_\_

Program \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Leader \_\_\_\_\_

I verify that I have read, understand, and will abide by the Georgia Code of Ethics for Educators. The Georgia Code of Ethics for Educators is found at <http://www.gapsc.com/Ethics/CodeofEthics.aspx>

Teacher Candidate Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_