

3.21 *Teacher Education*

3.21.1 Purpose

In order to provide the best possible education for teachers prepared within the State System, the State Regents have adopted this policy to enhance the quality of teacher education. This policy includes the State Regents' teacher education admission policies; guidelines for facilitating the transfer of course work for teacher education students; general education curriculum required for early childhood, elementary, and special education students; requirements for secondary education teachers; suggested teacher education program requirements; and guidelines for the preparation of teachers by teacher education program faculty.

3.21.2 Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in the Chapter, shall have the following meaning, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

“Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA)” is the average of a student’s earned grades calculated by point values assigned to letter grades that includes grades for all attempted regularly-graded course work, including activity courses and forgiven course work. The use of the CGPA on the transcript is optional, but it may be used to determine financial aid eligibility, admission to graduate or professional programs, or for graduation honors.

“General Education” is a standard curriculum required in all undergraduate programs. The general education curriculum provides broad exposure to multiple disciplines and emphasizes the learning of facts, values, understandings, skills, attitudes, and appreciations believed to be meaningful concerns that are common to all students by virtue of their involvement as human beings living in a global society.

“Liberal Arts and Sciences Courses” are those traditional fields of study in the humanities; social and behavioral sciences; communication, natural and life sciences; mathematics; and the history, literature and theory of the fine arts (music, art, drama, dance). Courses in these fields whose primary purpose is directed toward specific occupational or professional objectives, or courses in the arts which rely substantially on studio or performance work are not considered to be liberal arts and sciences for the purpose of this policy.

“Mentor Teacher” is a teacher holding a standard certificate who is employed in a school district to serve as a teacher and who has been appointed to provide guidance, support, coaching, and assistance to a resident teacher employed by the school district.

“Retention/Graduation Grade Point Average (hereinafter referred to as GPA unless preceded by another descriptor such as ‘high school’)” is the average of a student’s earned grades calculated by point values assigned to letter grades that is used to determine a student’s eligibility to remain enrolled or graduate from an institution. Activity courses and forgiven course work are not calculated in the GPA. (See the State Regents’ *Grading* policy) This GPA may be used to

determine financial aid or eligibility, admission to graduate or professional programs, or for graduation honors.

“Residency Committee” is a committee in a school district for the purpose of providing professional support, mentorship and coaching to the resident teacher.

“Resident Teacher” is a certified teacher who is employed to teach in an accredited school and whom the school district has elected to place under the guidance and assistance of a mentor teacher and residency committee.

3.21.3 Criteria for Admission to Teacher Education Programs

This section includes the criteria for admission to teacher education programs. Students may qualify for admission to teacher education in Oklahoma system institutions of higher education by meeting one of the four performance criteria described below:

- A. Achieve a GPA of 3.0 or higher in all liberal arts and sciences courses.
- B. Students may qualify for admission if they achieve a GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale in all liberal arts and sciences courses (a minimum of 20 hours) as defined in the State Regents’ *Undergraduate Degree Requirements* policy.
- C. Score at or above the level designated by the State Regents for math, reading, and writing on the PRAXIS Core Academic Skills for Educators Test (PRAXIS).
- D. The PRAXIS test will be administered to students who have completed at least 30 semester hours of credit. Students who score below the designated level on any section(s) of the PRAXIS test will be permitted to retest.
- E. Achieve a passing score at the level required by the Oklahoma Office of Educational Quality and Accountability for state certification on the Oklahoma General Education Test (OGET).
- F. Baccalaureate degree graduates from accredited universities in the United States are assumed to have the basic skill competencies tested by the PRAXIS and may be exempt from this requirement.
- G. Institutional and individual programs' admission policies should be considered minimum. Institutions are encouraged to propose more rigorous standards for approval by the State Regents. These standards should be based on indices which have been shown to be related to success in the program.

3.21.4 Degree Requirements and Guidelines for Articulation of Teacher Education Programs

The offering of courses and programs classified as professional teacher education is reserved to those universities with approved degree programs leading toward certification as a public school teacher or administrator. Community colleges are approved to offer paraprofessional programs in areas related to, but not identical with, teacher education. Such programs, including child care and library technical aide, frequently utilize course content which is similar to that of professional teacher education courses. Community colleges have an active role

in providing general education course requirements to teacher education students as detailed below. Select requirements are listed below.

- A. Students majoring in early childhood, elementary, and special education are required to successfully complete a minimum of 12 semester hours in liberal arts and sciences course work in each of the academic core areas: English, mathematics, science, and social sciences. These courses may be taken at either a community college or university.
- B. Students majoring in secondary and elementary/secondary education are required to have an undergraduate major, in a subject area, including 18 hours in each assigned subject area.
- C. Institution officials are permitted to select the course work in each of the core areas that is appropriately suited to meet the established teacher preparation competencies and related assessments. However, professional education courses (methods courses) may not be included in the minimum twelve-hour blocks.
- D. College and university officials are to review the mathematics curriculum and develop and/or modify courses that will meet the standards proposed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.
- E. Teacher preparation programs at the pre-service level shall require that teacher candidates demonstrate listening and speaking skills at the novice-high level, as defined by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, for a language other than English, including American Sign Language. The assessment for such competency may occur at any point in the teacher candidate's program and does not require specified course work or credit hours except as may be required by the institution.

3.21.5 Professional Teacher Education Guidelines

- A. Professional teacher education courses are developed by universities to meet required Oklahoma teaching competencies. Universities with teacher education programs are encouraged to develop articulation agreements with community colleges. Such agreements must be consistent with state and national program accreditation standards.
- B. Area of specialization courses for early childhood, elementary education, and special education majors must be offered by a university with an approved teacher education program.
- C. Paraprofessional courses such as those designed for early childhood care, library aides and similar career programs may or may not substitute for required area of specialization courses in early childhood education, library education, and similar teacher education programs.
- D. Awarding credit for CLEP exams will follow guidelines established in the State Regents' *Credit for Prior Learning* policy.
- E. Advisement processes would be aided if titles and descriptions of general education courses at all colleges and universities do not utilize terminology such as "public school," "elementary teacher," or other professional education phrases.

3.21.6 Guidelines for Teacher Preparation Faculty

The following guidelines are recommended to address the concern that teachers preparing teachers should be aware of and sensitive to the variety of environments of today's classrooms.

- A. In order to keep teacher education faculty attuned to and cognizant of the realities of today's public education classrooms and schools, teacher education faculty, including the deans of the colleges of education, should: (1) teach regularly scheduled classes in a state accredited school(s); and/or (2) perform a professionally appropriate role at the school site(s) which involves direct contact with students. A minimum of 10 clock hours per school year is recommended.
- B. It is recommended that this experience be scheduled in blocks of time longer than one hour, so that the classroom experience is one of greater depth. Ideally, the classroom experience should be active teaching rather than entry-year observation time and in a variety of school environments, ranging from large, urban to small, rural.
- C. Faculty members are expected to incorporate their varied common school classroom experiences into their teacher preparation at the university level. Specifically, faculty members have the responsibility to make students aware of and to provide teaching strategies for maximizing student learning in the multitude of various classroom environments. These efforts should include empowering students with an awareness of and teaching strategies for maintaining classroom order and appreciating the diversity in students' ethnicity, language, family environments and relationships, and socioeconomic circumstances. It should be noted that these teaching skills are required for students to be successful teachers regardless of the size of the community in which they teach and should be modeled for these students. Additionally, students should have successfully acquired these teaching skills and strategies prior to assuming responsibility for a classroom.

3.21.7 Guidelines for Participation on Residency Year Committees

- A. A residency committee may consist of one or more mentor teachers, the principal or an assistant principal of the employing school, one or more administrators designated by the school district board of education, a teacher educator in a college or school of education of an institution of higher education, or an educator in a department or school outside the institution's teacher education unit.
- B. Teacher education faculty may serve on novice teacher residency committees. It is recommended that teacher education faculty who participate on these committees, have expertise and experience in the teaching field for the resident teacher.

Criteria for Admission to Teacher Education in Oklahoma Institutions Policy: Approved December 1989. Revised May 29, 1992; May 28, 1993; January 26, 1996; May 24, 2002. Guidelines for Articulation of Teacher Education Programs Policy: Approved September 26, 1977. Revised October 15, 1999. Guidelines for Teacher Preparation Policy: Approved May 27, 1994. January 29, 2015.