

California State University, Dominguez Hills College of Education

Referral Process for Candidates Not Meeting Equitable Standards in Clinical Practice

Purpose and Background

The CSUDH College of Education (COE) is committed to preparing educators who demonstrate high-quality, cultural competence and responsiveness within clinical practice. COE students are expected to effectively build rapport and positive relationships with site supervisors, students, and clients at clinical practice sites. University interns and student teachers are also expected to follow the expectations and regulations of host institutions. This document is intended to support students and faculty when there are concerns or issues in clinical practice settings.

This referral process aligns with the vision and mission of the COE, whose goal is to prepare critical educators to co-create and enact transformative change. It reflects the accreditation requirements of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) and the guidelines and ethical codes of numerous professional associations affiliated with the COE's programs (see Appendix A).

In clinical practice settings, clinical supervisors, mentor teachers, and district support personnel must contact the appropriate clinical coordinator, graduate program director, or department chair in the COE if concerning behaviors are observed. Although clinical supervisors, mentor teachers, district support personnel, or other non-CSUDH employees can dismiss students from clinical placement sites, they are not authorized to remove students from COE programs or assign failing grades. Only the faculty of record can assign a grade. If other students or cohort members experience or observe behaviors referenced above, they are encouraged to alert their instructor, graduate program director, or department chair to the concern.

Should a student not meet COE's equitable standards during their clinical practice, the faculty/staff/university supervisor will alert the student to this concern in a confidential and supportive manner. In most cases, communicating concerns with a student will resolve the concerning behavior. If the behavioral concern is resolved, no further action is necessary. If the concern is not resolved, the improvement plan below will take effect.

Use of Improvement Plans in the College of Education

There are three levels involved in the use of improvement plans in the COE. Level 1 shall be used to address student conduct matters that create minimal disruption to the clinical practice setting, the program, and/or the student's academic progress. Level 2 shall be used to address student conduct matters that require immediate attention due to clinical practice concerns. Level 3 shall be used when steps outlined in levels 1 and 2 have not been successful in remediating student conduct matters. At all levels, college faculty and administrators share these primary objectives:

1. Identify, emphasize, and describe COE expectations for equitable standards with students who exhibit concerning behaviors.
2. Provide students with opportunities to develop or improve behaviors and ethical obligations aligned with the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) Teacher Performance Expectations, School Counseling Performance Expectations, and the California Professional Standards for Education Leaders (see Appendix A).
3. Adopt a series of steps starting with alerting students to concerns that arise, providing supportive feedback, documenting actions to be taken (Improvement Plans), and in rare cases, disqualifying a student from an academic program when behaviors continue despite interventions and due process.

General Student Conduct at CSUDH and Issues of Discrimination, Harassment & Retaliation

In general, COE students must adhere to CSUDH's Rules and Regulations for [Student Conduct](#) administrated by the [CSUDH Office of Community Standards](#). All Title IX-related issues, reports of discriminatory behaviors toward others based on age, culture, national origin, gender, ability, race, religion, or sexual orientation, and claims of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation will be referred to the [CSUDH Office of Equity and Inclusion](#). Referring concerns with either of the CSUDH offices described above may take place immediately, before the College of Education level 1, level 2, or level 3 processes described below take place.

It is important to note that any claims of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation should be directed to the CSUDH Office of Equity and Inclusion. If deemed necessary, a [Toro CARE](#) referral may also be submitted to provide a student with potential support through campus-level resources (e.g., psychological services, disability accommodations, basic needs). If behaviors also violate the CSUDH Student Conduct Code, the [CSUDH Office of Community Standards](#) should be contacted. In these cases, concurrent investigations and interventions may occur through both the CSUDH Student Conduct Administrator and their team, and the College of Education.

Notification

The student commitment form will be signed, collected and stored with other preliminary credential student application documents. Each program shall review this process with its enrolled students annually. A copy of the **Referral Process for Candidates Not Meeting Equitable Standards in Clinical Practice** is included in each program's clinical practice handbook. The process and form will be shared with COE faculty and staff at the COE fall retreat.

Equitable Standards Improvement Plan Referral Process: 3 Levels

Level 1: Instructor/Program level

- Level 1 occurs at the instructor level. If inequitable student behavior, as described in clinical practice handbooks for respective programs, is observed by an individual (e.g., mentor teacher, administrator, other student), it should be reported to the course instructor to be resolved. If the instructor cannot resolve the concern, then the clinical coordinator/graduate program director of the affiliated program is notified.
- The clinical coordinator/graduate program director must then set up a meeting with the student and instructor to communicate concerns, document concerning behaviors, and create some goals on an improvement plan. This will serve as the student's plan for intervention to improve behaviors. Then, the clinical coordinator/graduate program director should make the department chair aware of the student of concern.
- The clinical coordinator/graduate program director will follow up with the student using the agreed upon timeline to evaluate improvements as stipulated in the improvement plan. If improved behaviors have been observed, no escalation is required at that time. The clinical supervisor/coordinator will continue to monitor for support.
- However, if concerning behaviors continue to be observed after the agreed upon timeline, the department chair is notified and level 2 begins. The student will be allowed to submit a statement for review in level 2.

Documentation: Written summary documentation of the student meeting and a copy of the improvement plan should be shared with the department chair. All improvement plans and meeting notes must be kept in a department Dropbox folder for seven years. If improvements to student behaviors have been observed, then no further action is required.

Level 2: Referral to Department Chair

- The department chair formally initiates the level 2 process by meeting with the student of concern to review the improvement plan developed in level 1. Together, they review the improvement plan and develop a timeline with actionable items.
- The department chair and student should set up a follow-up meeting within 20 instructional days. The department chair will work with the clinical coordinator to assess improvements in behavior as stipulated in the improvement plan. If the issues have been resolved, then no further action is required.
- If the concerning behaviors continue or a new referral is received, then department chair, in consultation with the associate dean and/or dean, will initiate the formal process for requesting the student be placed on administrative/academic notice. The department chair will provide all documentation and improvement plans implemented to this point and level 3 process will begin.

Documentation: Written summary documentation of the student meeting and a copy of improvement plans should be shared with the department chair. All improvement plans and meeting notes must be kept in a department Dropbox folder for seven years. If improvements to student behaviors have been observed, then no further action is required.

Level 3: Administrative/Academic Notice and Consultation with the COE Student Sustainability Committee for Academic Disqualification

- Level 3 is initiated when the department chair (in consultation with the associate dean and/or dean) and student develop a timeline and the conditions that the student needs to meet for the administrative/academic notice to be removed. This notice will be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for appropriate approvals.
- The department chair and student should set up a follow-up meeting within five instructional days to assess improvements in behavior as stipulated in the administrative/academic notice. If there has been improvement in the concerning behaviors, then an additional follow up meeting will be scheduled within 20 instructional days. If it is determined at this second follow-up meeting that the issues have been resolved, then the administrative/academic notice will be removed and no further action will be necessary.
- If the required milestones are not met on the specified timeline or a new referral is received, then the department chair will initiate the formal process for requesting administrative/academic disqualification of the student.
- The administrative/academic disqualification request along with all previous documentation will be sent by the Department Chair to the COE Student Sustainability Committee for their review. The COE Student Sustainability Committee chair will convene the committee within ten working days to review the request and documentation. The committee will deliberate around the evidence, conduct any necessary follow up consultations with the student, program director, clinical coordinator, department chair, and/or instructor.
 - If the committee approves the disqualification request, all materials will be sent by the Committee Chair to the College of Education associate dean and/or dean and then the Office of Graduate Studies and Research for processing and enactment.
 - If the committee rejects the disqualification request, it will be sent back to the department chair with recommendations for remediation. The department chair will begin level 2 process again with the student.
 - *Note: If students are referred for behavioral standards reasons when faculty are off contract, or if the semester ends in the middle of the review process (and the COE Student Sustainability Committee is unable to meet), the associate dean will fill the role of the COE Student Sustainability Committee in level 3.*

Documentation: All formal documentation and any meeting notes from the COE Student Sustainability Committee should be shared with the department chair and kept in the department office for seven years.

Appendix A

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) Performance Expectations

Teacher Performance Expectations-6: Developing as a Professional Educator Beginning

Teachers:

1. Reflect on their own teaching practice and level of subject matter and pedagogical knowledge to plan and implement instruction that can improve student learning.
2. Recognize their own values and implicit and explicit biases, the ways in which these values and implicit and explicit biases may positively and negatively affect teaching and learning, and work to mitigate any negative impact on the teaching and learning of students. They exhibit positive dispositions of caring, support, acceptance, and fairness toward all students and families, as well as toward their colleagues.
3. Establish professional learning goals and make progress to improve their practice by routinely engaging in communication and inquiry with colleagues.
4. Demonstrate how and when to involve other adults and to communicate effectively with peers and colleagues, families, and members of the larger school community to support teacher and student learning.
5. Demonstrate professional responsibility for all aspects of student learning and classroom management, including responsibility for the learning outcomes of all students, along with appropriate concerns and policies regarding the privacy, health, and safety of students and families. Beginning teachers conduct themselves with integrity and model ethical conduct for themselves and others.
6. Understand and enact professional roles and responsibilities as mandated reporters and comply with all laws concerning professional responsibilities, professional conduct, and moral fitness, including the responsible use of social media and other digital platforms.

Pupil Personnel Services: School Counseling Performance Expectations

SCPE 2: Professionalism, Ethics, and Legal Mandates

1. Develop and apply an ethical decision-making process.
2. Articulate school counseling philosophy as it pertains to school counselor professional
3. identity.
4. Locate and identify key state provisions such as California Education Codes (EC § 49600,
5. 49602) and California Code of Regulation (CCR § 80049.1) and key local provisions in board policy, school counselor job description and certificated collective bargaining agreement.
6. Examine the key provisions of Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as related to the scope of the school counseling program.

7. Understand the responsibility of maintaining confidentiality of student records, ethical considerations regarding counseling relationships, limits pertaining to maintaining confidentiality, and the legal responsibilities within school counseling.
8. Articulate and provide an example of an individualized self-care plan to ensure long-term wellness and professionalism to successfully cope with high stress situations.
9. Understand and apply ethical and the legal obligations to students, parents, administrators, and teachers.
10. Knowledge of empirically validated practices and programs, and apply those practices and programs in an ethical manner.
11. Knowledge of federal and state laws, county ordinances, and district policies related to the rights of historically marginalized populations, including but not limited to: special needs population, English learner, undocumented youth, racial and ethnic minorities, foster youth, homeless, social and economically disadvantaged, and LGBTQ+.
12. Maintaining professional and ethical boundaries in school counseling relationships per professional association ethical guidelines created by American School Counselor

School Leadership Program: California Professional Standards for Education Leaders

CPSEL 5: Ethics and integrity

Education leaders make decisions, model, and behave in ways that demonstrate professionalism, ethics, integrity, justice, and equity and hold staff to the same standard.

1. **Reflective Practice:** Leaders act upon a personal code of ethics that requires continuous reflection and learning.
2. **Ethical Decision-Making:** Leaders guide and support personal and collective actions that use relevant evidence and available research to make fair and ethical decisions.
3. **Ethical Action:** Leaders recognize and use their professional influence with staff and the community to develop a climate of trust, mutual respect, and honest communication necessary to consistently make fair and equitable decisions on behalf of all students.