

CCSU PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM FOR TEACHER CERTIFICATION (PPTC)

STANDARDS FOR CONTINUATION

Once admitted to the Professional Program for Teacher Certification (PPTC), a teacher candidate is required to maintain a semester grade point average (GPA) of 2.70 and a cumulative GPA of 2.70 for all coursework completed at CCSU and elsewhere. If a candidate's GPA drops below this level, he or she may be denied enrollment in PPTC courses and student teaching until the GPA reaches the required level. In addition, teacher candidates must receive grades of C or better in every professional program course; candidates may not proceed to the next sequence of professional program courses until such grades are earned. The Graduate School requires candidates enrolled in graduate or post baccalaureate certification programs to maintain at least a 3.00 GPA.

Continuation in the PPTC

In addition to academic good standing, teacher candidates must:

- Engage in professional behavior, attitudes, and attributes that positively impact performance as a teacher;
- Demonstrate acceptable performance during field experiences and student teaching;
- Perform at an acceptable level on all program assessments;
- Adhere to the *Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibilities for Teachers*;
- Maintain the confidentiality of professional information at all times; and
- Exhibit integrity and honesty in written and verbal communications, documentation, and coursework.

Continuation Issues Related to Field Experiences and Student Teaching

Issues revealed in criminal background checks, conviction of crimes, or other due and sufficient cause may lead to removal from field experiences, student teaching, and the PPTC. The university makes every effort to secure appropriate field placements for every professional program candidate; however, there are times when such placements cannot be procured. If three requests to districts to obtain a field placement for a candidate are denied based on the candidate's criminal background check, other public records, and/or the candidate's performance in interviews, this could also result in removal from the PPTC. If a candidate encounters difficulties in a field experience, the opportunity to move forward may be delayed or denied. Should a candidate experience difficulties during student teaching, the Competency Review Team (see Student Teaching Handbook) will convene and make recommendations regarding continuance in Student Teaching and the PPTC.

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APPEALS POLICY

Admission to the Professional Program for Teacher Certification (PPTC) at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) and continuation in the PPTC are academic decisions which reflect careful and deliberate judgment by the PPTC faculty. Factors which are considered in such decisions include, but are not limited to, the credentials, performance, and progress of the PPTC student relative to PPTC requirements and performance standards, the Connecticut *Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers*, professional performance standards and attributes mandated by the Connecticut State Department of Education, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) standards, and the PPTC's unique responsibilities to children and schools.

The University recognizes that on occasions there may be an error or palpable injustice in decisions about admission to the PPTC or in decisions regarding continuation in or removal from the PPTC program or a PPTC course or practicum (field experience, internship, or student teaching). A student who believes that an error or a palpable injustice has occurred in arriving at any of these decisions may elect to pursue an appeal.

This policy applies to all appeals of admission to, continuation in, and removal from the professional program for the PPTC or any element of the PPTC. The policy applies to undergraduate and graduate students seeking initial teacher certification as well as any student completing coursework, practica, or internships required for cross endorsement. The appeals available under this policy pertain to the procedures followed to reach the academic decision in question, to insure that no error or palpable injustice occurred in reaching the decision. This policy replaces all previous appeal policies that applied to the PPTC. This policy does not apply to appeals for grade change, which are governed by the University Appeal for Grade Change Policy found in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs. This policy does not apply to items covered by the Graduate Studies Non-Graded Appeals that are governed by the Graduate Studies appeals process found in the graduate catalog.

In addition to appeals based on an error or palpable injustice, a student whose undergraduate cumulative GPA is below 2.70 may elect to appeal for a waiver of the PPTC GPA requirements. The process for submitting an appeal for such a waiver for purposes of program admission is described in the final section of this policy.

Professional Program for Teacher Certification (PPTC) Appeals Committee

The SEPS Dean has identified a PPTC Appeals Committee with the following membership: The steering committee of the Central Teacher Education Committee (CTEC) and the coordinator or designated representative of the student's program. The PPTC Appeals Committee quorum shall be 3 members and must include the coordinator or designated representative of the student's program. This committee typically meets once a month throughout the school year and at least once in the summer months.

Professional Program for Teacher Certification (PPTC) Appeals Process

If a student is not permitted to continue in the PPTC or is not allowed to enter, continue in, return to, or repeat some element of the PPTC, the student will be notified in writing by the SEPS Dean. In such a case, the student will be advised to meet with a SEPS Counselor to explore the academic options available to him or her at the university. If the student elects to appeal the decision the appeal must be

submitted by the deadline given in the notification letter. For students already in the PPTC, the student will remain suspended from the PPTC while any appeal is being reviewed.

The student will not visit or contact field experience or student teaching sites or cooperating teachers during the appeals process without express written permission from the program coordinator and the Coordinator of the SEPS Office of School/Community Partnerships.

If a student elects to appeal a PPTC decision, the student should submit a formal written letter of appeal with supporting documentation. Because the student will not have the opportunity to supplement an appeal once it has been submitted, it is important that the appeal packet submitted include all relevant information. The appeal letter should a) identify the error or palpable injustice the student believes occurred, and b) describe the circumstances of the alleged error or palpable injustice. In addition, the student should attach all corresponding documentation, providing evidence of error or palpable injustice.

A signed, hard copy of the appeal letter and appended documentation should be submitted to the Office of the SEPS Dean within 14 days of removal from the Professional Program for Teacher Certification or denial of access to any element of the program. A *second* copy of the appeal must be submitted as an attachment to an email to the SEPS Dean. The Dean will forward the appeal to the PPTC Appeals Committee to determine if an error or palpable injustice has occurred. The committee will review the appeal submitted and may request additional information from other University sources. If an appeal is submitted less than two weeks prior to a scheduled appeals meeting, review of the appeal may need to be deferred to allow adequate time for investigation; however, the PPTC Appeals Committee will make a recommendation within 30 days of receipt of the appeal when reasonably possible. The PPTC Appeals Committee will report its recommendation along with supporting documentation to the SEPS Dean who will notify the student of his or her final decision within 2 weeks of receiving the committee's recommendation. The decision of the SEPS Dean is final and no further appeal is available within the university.

Denial of PPTC admission based on cumulative undergraduate GPA below 2.70 or test score(s)

A cumulative undergraduate GPA of B- (2.70 GPA) on all undergraduate coursework from all institutions attended is mandated by state law. In addition, the CCSU PPTC requires that students have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.70 at CCSU. (Some programs have additional GPA requirements specific to that program.) The state allows the University to grant a limited number of GPA waivers; however, CAEP accreditation standards, specific programmatic requirements (e.g. a specific GPA in the content area), evidence that the student has the potential to pass teacher licensure tests, and state teacher preparation priorities are factors in the decision to grant any GPA waiver.

If the student is denied consideration for PPTC admission based on a cumulative undergraduate GPA below 2.70, the student may elect to submit a written appeal requesting a waiver of the requirement for purposes of program admission. A signed, hard copy of the appeal should be submitted to the Office of the SEPS Dean by the deadline given in the denial letter. A *second* copy of the appeal must be submitted as an attachment to an email to the SEPS Dean. The Dean will forward the appeal to the PPTC Appeals Committee for review.

To be considered, the appeal must include a formal letter explaining how the applicant believes he or she has addressed the following criteria:

- a. Evidence of a pattern of recent exemplary academic performance in courses required in the degree program or certification endorsement sought. The appeal letter should cite evidence supporting the claim that the pattern of recent academic performance is exemplary and provide an explanation for this change in the pattern of performance.

- b. Evidence of recent experience working with children or in a profession/vocation that has contributed to the applicant's growth and development relevant to teaching. The appeal letter should describe the experience and explain how it has enhanced their potential for and commitment to teaching. A letter of reference documenting the cited experience and the applicant's performance in that experience should be submitted with the appeal letter. (Note: Previous experience cannot be used to meet requirements of field experiences and student teaching in the PPTC.)
- c. The applicant should append any additional evidence that documents potential for success in the program. Relevant Praxis II or ACTFL scores are a primary example of such evidence.

The PPTC Appeals Committee will review the student's appeal and the student's PPTC application file. The committee may also request additional information from other University sources. The committee will send the SEPS Dean its recommendation along with supporting documentation and the Dean will make the final decision regarding the appeal. The decision of the SEPS Dean is final and there is no further appeal available within the university. The Dean will notify the student in writing of the final decision within 2 weeks of the PPTC appeals committee meeting. A GPA waiver addresses only one portion of PPTC admission requirements: applicants granted such a waiver must also meet all other requirements to be admitted.

If the student is granted a GPA waiver and earns less than a 2.70 GPA for the semester in which the GPA waiver is granted, or in any semester, including a summer session, before beginning professional program classes, the waiver will be immediately withdrawn and admission to the PPTC will be revoked. Once in the PPTC a student admitted under a GPA waiver must, like all other PPTC candidates, earn no less than a 2.70 GPA in each subsequent semester if an undergraduate and no less than a 3.00 GPA in each subsequent semester if a graduate student as well as meet all other PPTC standards to continue in the PPTC.

If an admissions appeal is denied, the student may reapply to the PPTC in a future application cycle.