

**B.S. IN ENGLISH**  
**WITH CERTIFICATION**  
**(GRADES 7-12)**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

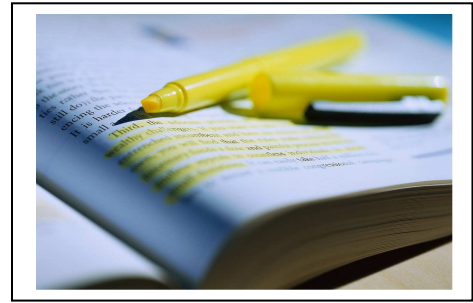
**AN OVERVIEW OF *SAILS* &  
THE FOUR GATES  
FOR UNDERGRADUATES**

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

updated Fall 2009

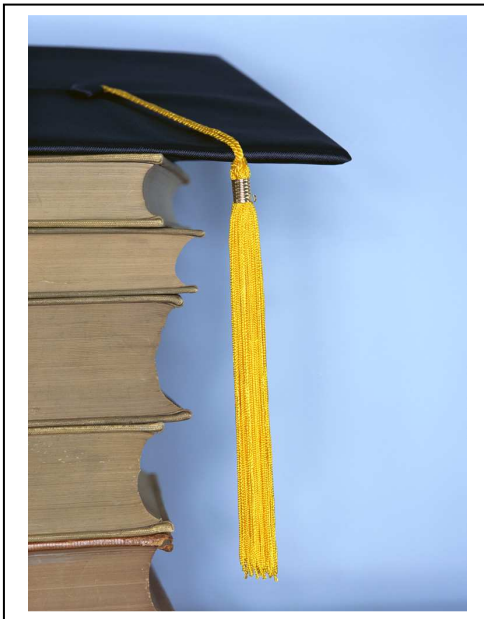


## **PREFACE**



This handbook has been created for *you*, the candidate majoring in English and pursuing teaching certification in grades 7-12. It contains information you will need to successfully complete the Secondary English Education program. Please keep this handbook in a convenient place and use it to guide your progress through your courses and other requirements. Though the information here is helpful in planning your sequence of courses, please remember to consult frequently with your advisor or the Secondary English Education Coordinator if you have questions.

We wish you the best of success in your studies, and in your future teaching!



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>SAILS</i> : AN OVERVIEW .....	4
<i>SAILS</i> COMPETENCIES FOR ENGLISH CERTIFICATION .....	4
THE FOUR GATES: A BRIEF OVERVIEW .....	5
GATE 1: ENTRY INTO THE PROGRAM .....	7
GPA Requirements .....	7
Praxis I .....	8
PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION COURSES .....	10
SUGGESTED COURSE SEQUENCE.....	11
GATE 2: FIELD EXPERIENCE & INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING .....	12
Academic Probation .....	12
Application to Student Teach.....	14
GATE 3: THE METHODS COURSE, ENG 493 .....	15
GATE 4: STUDENT TEACHING & PROGRAM COMPLETION .....	17
Final Portfolio .....	17
Praxis II .....	17
Applying for Certification and Graduation .....	19

## ***SAILS: AN OVERVIEW***

*SAILS* is an acronym that stands for **S**cholarship, **A**ttitudes and dispositions, **I**ntegrity, **L**eadership, and **S**ervice. These five categories represent the conceptual framework developed by the School of Education at Southern Connecticut State University. Every teacher certification program at SCSU is guided by *SAILS* and is organized by a four-gate system. Each gate addresses the five *SAILS* categories, and every candidate must meet certain competencies at each gate.

### ***SAILS* COMPETENCIES FOR ENGLISH CERTIFICATION**

The following explanations detail how each *SAILS* category is defined within the field of English Education:

#### **Scholarship**

Scholarship refers to the demonstration of content and pedagogical knowledge in English. According to NCTE (National Council of Teachers of English), “candidate knowledge” refers to “knowledge about language; literature; oral, visual, and written literacy; print and nonprint media; technology; and research theory and findings” (NCTE/NCATE Program Standards, p. 6). These competencies are conveyed through a strong academic record, in English and other courses, as well as through major assignments in program coursework. Passing Praxis I and II also reflect candidate knowledge.

#### **Attitudes and Dispositions**

Teacher education programs at SCSU expect candidates to be self-reflective and to value the diversity of students. In addition, NCTE expects that candidates attend to the affective needs of students, design instruction that validates students’ cultures, recognize connections between the real world and English/Language Arts curriculum, and integrate the arts into learning.

#### **Integrity**

SCSU expects candidates to behave in an honest, professional, and ethical manner. Candidates must be reflective practitioners—aware of both strengths and weaknesses—who are invested in personal and

professional growth in all their coursework and fieldwork, as they collaborate with peers, professors, supervisors, and area teachers.

## **L**eadership

Leadership refers to candidates' willingness to become leaders among students, parents, peers, teachers, and other members of the school community. They must serve as models for literacy and critical thinking skills in the classroom.

## **S**ervice

Service refers to candidates' involvement in and collaboration with the school community and wider professional community. Joining organizations that work toward common goals, volunteering to help with extra-curricular activities, and getting to know students outside of the classroom are considered service activities. Involvement in professional development opportunities and professional organizations, such as NCTE, is desirable for a pre-service teacher.

### **THE FOUR GATES in SECONDARY ENGLISH EDUCATION: A BRIEF OVERVIEW**

Each certification candidate, regardless of subject area, must pass through a set of four gates to complete his/her certification program. Every department has developed its own set of gates for its certification candidates. The gates provide “checkpoints” to track candidates' progress and growth in their teacher training. The gates also ensure that candidates complete the program requirements in the optimal order, working toward the culminating experience of student teaching.

In the Secondary English Education program, the four gates, in brief, are . . .

**Gate 1:** Entry into the Secondary English Education program and School of Education

**Gate 2:** Field experience and instructional planning in ENG 492, *Teaching Literature to Adolescents*

**Gate 3:** ENG 493, *English (Secondary School)*, the methods course for the teaching of writing

**Gate 4:** Student teaching and final portfolio

At each gate, certification candidates will be assessed according to the five *SAILS* categories and will be allowed to proceed to the next gate if they demonstrate competency in all categories.

In this handbook, we will explain each of the four gates in detail.

*Reminder: Always consult with your advisor or the Secondary English Education Coordinator if you have questions.*



## **GATE 1: ENTRY INTO THE PROGRAM**

In Gate 1, candidates apply to the Secondary English Education Program and to the School of Education, either in the spring or fall semester. To do so, candidates must submit an application portfolio containing the following materials to the Secondary English Education Coordinator:

- Academic transcripts (unofficial copies are accepted)
- Two recommendation forms with accompanying letters of recommendation
- A completed application form to the School of Education, found on the School of Education website: <http://www.southernct.edu/education/professionalprogramrequirements/>
- Admission essay
- Academic writing sample from an English course
- Proof of passing Praxis I or a CT State Praxis I waiver

The application portfolio, along with the interview with members of the English Department's Secondary Education Committee, offers candidates the opportunity to reflect the competencies necessary for admission into the program. Below is a list of these competencies:

### **GPA Requirements**

The English Department requires that candidates have a **3.0 GPA** (grade point average) in English courses, including those taken at other institutions.

The School of Education requires that candidates have a minimum overall **GPA of 2.7**. This GPA also includes course work taken at other universities. Hence, if a candidate has transferred in courses from other universities and the *overall* GPA from those universities and SCSU is below 2.7, the candidate is not eligible to pass through Gate 1 and, therefore, cannot apply to the program.

The application process occurs during the fall and spring semesters. If a candidate does not meet the GPA requirements, it is possible to wait a semester, earn a higher GPA, and apply at a later time.

### **Course Requirements**

Candidates should have successfully completed ENG 112, *Composition II*, and EDU 201, *Introduction to the Teaching Professions*.

## **Passing Praxis I**

Praxis I is a state-required examination for candidates wishing to pursue certification in any subject area. All candidates must pass Praxis I in order to be admitted into the English Education program and the School of Education.

The Praxis I exam can also be waived, if the candidate meets requirements based on SAT or ACT scores. To download the waiver form, go to

[http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/Cert/certform/ed\\_192.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/PDF/Cert/certform/ed_192.pdf)

More information about registering for the Praxis I can be found at

<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2613&q=321260>.

**Note:** It takes approximately four weeks, sometimes longer, to receive test results for Praxis I. If applying for a waiver, it may take four to six weeks to receive a confirmation letter from the State of Connecticut. Therefore, it is imperative that you plan ahead to meet this requirement for application to the program.

## **Letters of Recommendation**

Each candidate must submit two letters of recommendation indicating the candidate's potential as an English major and teacher. It is recommended that at least one of these letters come from an English professor to speak about a candidate's proficiencies as a student of English. Letters from people who can speak to a candidate's experience with working with students, or leading or serving others, is also highly suggested.

School of Education Recommendation Forms should accompany letters of recommendation. Forms are available in the School of Education in Davis Hall or to download at <http://www.southernct.edu/education/professionalprogramrequirements/>.

## **Admission Essay**

Each candidate must submit a two-page essay addressing the question, "What life experiences have led me to want to become an English teacher?" This should speak to the candidate's interest in the subject of English, as well as the desire to work with middle and/or high school students. This statement also serves as a writing sample, so it's important to submit a carefully reviewed paper. This essay is also a popular topic during the department interview.

## **Department Interview**

Each candidate must meet with two members of the English Department's Secondary Education Committee. The interview will only be scheduled once we have a candidate's complete application

portfolio. The interview usually lasts about 20 minutes. Please arrive on time, come professionally dressed, and be prepared to discuss the contents of the application portfolio, including the writing samples. Also, bring along any questions for the committee members conducting the interview.

### **The Review Process**

Once submitted, each portfolio is reviewed by members of the Secondary Education Committee, who are looking for competencies in each of the SAILS categories. In Gate 1, the committee is looking for the following characteristics:

**Scholarship:** excellent performance in English courses as reflected on transcripts; evidence of analytical thinking, written communication skills, and control of language conventions in the writing samples; strong overall academic record

**Attitudes and Dispositions:** desire to work with students, an interest in social justice and educational equity, developing awareness of the diverse needs of students, passion for learning and teaching, clarity about personal and professional goals

**Integrity:** a sense of pride in one’s work and accomplishments, self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses, sense of responsibility and dependability

**Leadership:** evidence of leading others, working with students, or being involved in organizations; confidence to serve as a model for students

**Service:** desire to help others; prior experience with helping others, working on a team, or in organizations working toward common goals

Given these *SAILS* standards, the committee considers the application materials and interview, and either recommends or denies a candidate’s admission to the program and the School of Education. Admission into the program automatically grants admission into the School of Education. Once a candidate is accepted, application materials are sent to the School of Education, where a file is kept as the candidate’s

official record throughout the program. Some weeks after this time, each candidate will receive an official acceptance letter from the Dean of the School of Education.

At this point, a candidate has successfully passed through Gate 1 and is given permission to take the professional education courses required for certification. **Until a student has been admitted to the School of Education, he/she may not take more than 2 professional education courses.**

Below is a complete list of the **professional education courses** required for certification in English:

### **Professional Education Courses**

- EDU 201—Introduction to the Teaching Professions
- SHE 203—School Health
- EDU 413—Secondary Education
- MDS 340—Media Literacy Education for Students and Teachers
- PHI 370—Philosophy of Education
- PSY 370—Educational Psychology
- RDG 517—Content Area Literacy in Middle and Secondary Schools
- IDS 471—English Language Learners in the Classroom
- SED 482—Teaching Exceptional Students in the Secondary Education Classroom
- ENG 492—Teaching Literature to Adolescents
- ENG 405—Techniques of Teaching Writing
- ENG 493—English (Secondary School)
- EDU 455—Secondary School Student Teaching in English
- EDU 453—Student Teaching Seminar

## **Suggested Course Sequence for Professional Education Courses**

As candidates advance through the program, it is recommended that the professional courses be taken in the following gates:

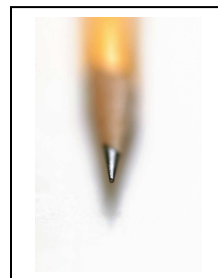
**Gate 1:** EDU 201, SHE 203

**Gate 2:** ENG 492, EDU 413, RDG 517, MDS 340, ENG 405, SED 482, PHI 370,  
PSY 370

**Gate 3:** ENG 493\*—English (Secondary School), IDS 471

**Gate 4:** EDU 455—Secondary School Student Teaching in English, EDU 453—  
Student Teaching Seminar (taken concurrently in the final semester)

\*A prerequisite for student teaching.



## **GATE 2: FIELD EXPERIENCE AND INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING**

In Gate 2, candidates' progress in the program is assessed through their performance in ENG 492, *Teaching Literature to Adolescents*. The following competencies must be met before a candidate can complete this gate:

### **Course Requirements**

All candidates must take EDU 492—*Teaching Literature to Adolescents*.

### **GPA Requirements**

Each candidate must maintain a minimum overall GPA of 2.7 for the School of Education. Additionally, each candidate must maintain a 3.0 average in all English courses. If a candidate's GPA does not meet these standards, the candidate is placed on **Academic Probation** and has one semester to raise the GPA to satisfy the program's GPA requirements. If, after one semester, the candidate's GPA does not meet the standards, the candidate can no longer remain in the Secondary English Education program or School of Education.

### **Field Experience Portfolio**

As part of the course work in ENG 492, candidates complete a field experience with a local secondary English teacher, after which they submit a portfolio containing observation reports, original lesson plans, reflective self-evaluations, and teachers' evaluations.

### **Adolescent Literature Unit**

As part of the course work in ENG 492, candidates provide evidence of their understandings of teaching methods by creating an instructional unit for a work of adolescent literature. This unit should convey understandings about adolescent readers, instructional objectives, backwards design curriculum model, frontloading, reader response theory, reading instruction, and assessment methods.

The field experience portfolio and the instructional unit are evaluated, along with candidates' performance in ENG 492, according to the SAILS categories:

**Scholarship:** evidence of pedagogical knowledge in the teaching of literature and of students' reading processes; knowledge of young adult readers and literature; excellent performance in English courses; evidence of analytical thinking, written communication skills, and control of language conventions in coursework; strong overall academic record

**Attitudes and Dispositions:** ability to create a supportive learning environment; ability to participate as an active member of a learning community; ability to take criticism and use it for self-improvement; desire to work with students; an interest in social justice and educational equity; developing awareness of the diverse needs of students; passion for learning and teaching; clarity about personal and professional goals

**Integrity:** a sense of pride in one’s work and accomplishments; self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses; sense of responsibility and dependability to self and others

**Leadership:** evidence of leading others, working with students, and/or being involved in organizations; confidence to serve as a model for students

**Service:** ability to collaborate; desire to help others; prior experience with helping others, working on a team, or in organizations working toward common goals



## **GATE 3: THE METHODS COURSE, ENG 493**

In Gate 3, the following competencies must be met:

### **Course Requirements**

All candidates enroll in ENG 493—*English (Secondary School)*.

### **GPA Requirements**

All candidates must maintain a minimum overall GPA of 2.7 for the School of Education. Additionally, candidates must maintain a 3.0 average in all English courses.

### **Educational Philosophy**

In this class, candidates formally communicate the philosophical stances that will inform their pedagogy.

### **Unit Plan**

All candidates must complete an instructional unit demonstrating their pedagogical knowledge.

### **CMT/CAPT Lesson Plan**

All candidates must complete a lesson plan addressing Connecticut State standards testing in reading and writing.

### **Fieldwork**

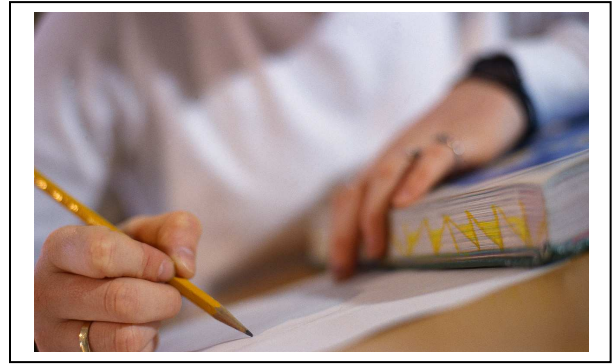
Candidates spend 30 hours in a classroom observing, planning, and teaching during their fieldwork experience. Candidates will also write formal, focused observations

These requirements are evaluated, along with candidates' performance in ENG 493, according to the SAILS categories:

**Scholarship:** evidence of pedagogical knowledge, including multiple literacies and technology; excellent performance in English courses; evidence of analytical thinking, written communication skills, and control of language conventions in coursework; strong overall academic record

**Attitudes and Dispositions:** ability to create a supportive learning environment; ability to participate as an active member of a learning community; ability to take criticism and use it for self-improvement; desire to work with students; an interest in social justice and educational equity; awareness of the diverse needs of students; passion for learning and teaching, clarity about personal and professional goals

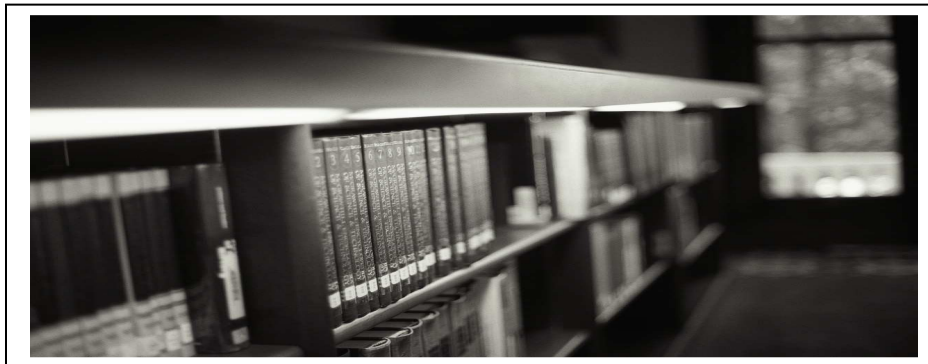
**Integrity:** a sense of pride in one's work and accomplishments; self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses; sense of responsibility and dependability to self and others, particularly in the school community; an interest in growth



**Leadership:** evidence of leading others, working with students, or being involved in a professional organization, such as NCTE; confidence to serve as a model for students

**Service:** ability to collaborate; desire to help others; prior experience with helping others, working on a team, or in organizations working toward common goals; being professional and reliable in fieldwork responsibilities

Successful performance in Gate 3 allows a candidate to continue to Gate 4.



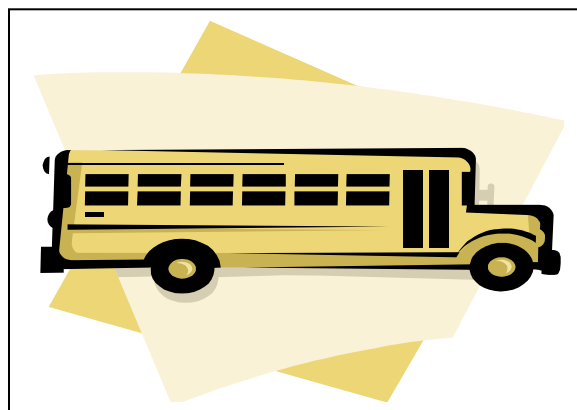
## **Application to Student Teach**

During or after completion of Gate 3, candidates apply for Student Teaching. Successful performance of the Gate 3 requirements allows candidates to continue to Gate 4 of the program. In order to apply, candidates must be in good standing in ENG 493 and must meet all program GPA requirements established by the English Department (3.0 GPA in English courses) and School of Education (2.7 GPA overall). Candidates will not be accepted to student teach if these GPA requirements are not met. Student teaching candidates must also have completed all other program courses before applying to student teach; only EDU 455 and EDU 453 should remain.

The student teaching application process occurs early in both the spring and fall semesters. Informational meetings are held by both the Director of Student Teaching and by the Secondary English Education Coordinator. Candidates should attend both meetings. **Candidates must submit an application one semester before their student teaching semester. For example, if a candidate plans to student teach in the fall, he/she must submit an application during the preceding spring semester.**

The application includes a Student Teaching Application form, along with three copies of the Personal Data Sheet. These items must be submitted directly to Director of Student Teaching, who will later notify candidates once a school placement has been made for the following semester. These forms are available online at <http://www.southernct.edu/education/studentteaching>.

Candidates must also provide one copy of the application and data sheet to the Secondary English Education Coordinator.



## **GATE 4: STUDENT TEACHING AND PROGRAM COMPLETION**

In Gate 4, candidates complete Student Teaching and the Student Teaching Seminar, and apply for certification. The following competencies must be met before a candidate can apply for certification and complete this gate:

### **Course Requirements**

All candidates enroll concurrently in EDU 455 (*Secondary School Student Teaching in English*), and EDU 453 (*Student Teaching Seminar*). Students must successfully earn “P’s” (for passing) in EDU 455 and EDU 453.

### **GPA Requirements**

In order for candidates to be approved to student teach, they must maintain 3.0 GPA in all English courses and a 2.7 GPA overall.

### **Student Teaching**

Both the candidate’s cooperating teacher and University Supervisor will evaluate his/her teaching performance throughout the semester. Evaluations are measured according to SCSU, NCTE, and Connecticut State standards for English/Language Arts teachers.

### **Final Portfolio**

Each candidate will present a portfolio containing work samples and reflective writing indicating successful completion of the program, with particular emphasis on the student teaching experience.

### **Praxis II**

Before the completion of student teaching, candidates must pass Praxis II, a state-required content examination for certification. This exam cannot be waived. Candidates applying for certification in English must pass two exams: *English Language, Literature, and Composition: Content Knowledge* (0041) and *English Language, Literature, and Composition: Essays* (0042). Information about this exam can be found at [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org), or <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2613&q=321262>

A candidate who does not pass Praxis II by the end of student teaching will receive an I+ (for incomplete) until the candidate has passed Praxis II. This could delay graduation, so begin taking the exam early. Once a candidate passes the exam, he/she must present proof of the scores to the Secondary English Education Coordinator and the Director of Student Teaching.

These requirements are evaluated according to the SAILS categories:

**Scholarship:** evidence of the application of pedagogical and content knowledge—including the integration of multiple literacies and technology—during student teaching; excellent written and oral communication skills, as evidenced through lesson/unit planning and execution of lessons

**Attitudes and Dispositions:** ability to create a supportive learning environment; ability to participate as an active member of a learning community; ability to reflect on teaching practice, accept criticism and use it for self-improvement; desire to work with students; an interest in social justice and educational equity; awareness of the diverse needs of students, including the use of the arts; passion for learning and teaching, clarity about personal and professional goals

**Integrity:** a sense of pride in one’s work and accomplishments; self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses; sense of responsibility and dependability to self and others, particularly in the school community; an interest in growth; a strong sense of professionalism

**Leadership:** evidence of leading others, working with students, or being involved in a professional organization, such as NCTE; confidence to serve as a model for students

**Service:** ability to collaborate; desire to help others; prior experience with helping others, working on a team, or in organizations working toward common goals

## **Applying for Certification and Graduation**

Upon completion of all the requirements for Gate 4, candidates may apply for state certification by submitting an application (found at the back of the Student Teaching Handbook) to the Director of Student Teaching. Candidates must also apply to graduate with the SCSU Registrar's Office.



### **FINAL WORDS**

The best advice we can offer teacher candidates is to stay informed—about your progress through the four gates and certification requirements. It *is* possible that the State of Connecticut could add certification requirements that would necessitate changes to this program. So, stay in touch with your advisor and the Secondary English Education Coordinator. We're happy to answer your questions and address your concerns as you work your way toward a rewarding career. Best of luck!