

Advanced Programs



Student Handbook

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Welcome from the Dean

Dear Students,

It is my privilege to welcome you as you embark on this exciting journey of learning, growth, and professional development.

Education is a powerful tool for individual and societal change. Here at Southern Connecticut State University's College of Education, we are committed to equipping you with the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to make a lasting impact in the field. We are committed to supporting your academic and personal success.

Throughout your time with us, you will have access to innovative programs, hands-on learning opportunities, and a community that values collaboration, diversity, and excellence. I encourage you to engage with your peers, seek guidance from your professors, and take full advantage of the many resources available to you.

Your journey in education is not just about acquiring knowledge. It's about inspiring and transforming lives. I have no doubt that each of you will contribute meaningfully to the future of education, and I look forward to celebrating your achievements along the way.

Cordially and with best wishes for a fulfilling and successful academic experience,

Christopher E. Trombly, Ph.D.

Dean, College of Education

Southern Connecticut State University

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Introduction

Congratulations on your acceptance into an Advanced Educator Preparation Program at Southern Connecticut State University! You are now part of a vibrant and committed community dedicated to preparing highly qualified, equity-minded educators ready to meet the diverse needs of today's learners.

The College of Education at SCSU serves as the **Educator Preparation Provider (EPP)** with programs approved by the State of Connecticut and nationally accredited by the [Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation \(CAEP\)](#). We are proud recipients of the CAEP Frank Murray Award for Excellence in Educator Preparation—an honor that reflects our commitment to preparing future teachers who are knowledgeable, skilled, and ready to make a meaningful impact in the classroom.

This handbook is designed to supplement your program-specific handbook. Inside, you will find essential information about academic policies and procedures, professional expectations, and certification requirements. Please note that the handbook is updated annually, or whenever the Connecticut State Department of Education makes changes to policies or certification requirements. To ensure you are always working with the most current information, always check the latest version available on our [webpage](#).

This handbook complements the [University Student Handbook](#), and your program specific handbook. Candidates are responsible for understanding and adhering to the academic policies and procedures outlined herein.

The faculty and staff of the College of Education are here to support your growth and success. This handbook is just one of many resources to help guide you along the way, so use it well, and don't hesitate to ask questions or seek support when needed.

We look forward to working with you and watching you grow into the kind of educator who makes a lasting difference.

Welcome to the next phase of your journey!

I. Professional Behavior Expectations and Code of Ethics

Through your matriculation in an advanced educator preparation program in the College of Education at SCSU, you are entering a profession that demands high standards of conduct, integrity, and ethical responsibility. From the moment you are admitted into your program, you are expected to consistently model professional behavior—both in your university coursework and during clinical experiences.

Your actions and dispositions reflect not only on you as an individual, but also on the College of Education, the university community, and the profession. Candidates are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates respect, fairness, confidentiality, and ethical decision-making in all interactions with faculty, staff, peers, field-based professionals, students, families and community partners.

Candidates are expected to adhere to applicable state professional and ethical standards, as well as to follow the professional codes of ethics, standards of practice, and conduct expectations associated with their intended profession.

As part of these expectations, you are expected to demonstrate the following:

- **Personal attitudes and dispositions** such as responsibility, adaptability, and respect for diversity.
- **Professional behavior** that is appropriate to the context, recognizing that your conduct directly impacts how others perceive the profession.
- **Confidentiality** in handling any information obtained during your coursework or clinical work (e.g. internship, practicum) related to students, families, peers, and school personnel.
- **Integrity and honesty** in all academic and professional communications including assignments, discussions, assessments, and interactions with faculty and school partners.

Any violation of these expectations would result in review in accordance with the ***Guidelines for implementing the Scaffolding for Success Action Plan (SSAP)***, detailed in [Appendix 1](#), and may affect your standing in the program.

By meeting these expectations, you demonstrate your readiness to join a respected profession and your commitment to the students and communities you will one day serve.

II. Academic Standards and Progress in the Program

Throughout their program, candidates are continuously assessed on their **content knowledge, professional skills, and professional dispositions. Each semester**, and as part of the continuous assessment of candidates, faculty review student performance in three key areas: Key course grades and overall GPA, Performance on **key assessments**, and Professional dispositions and attitudes, both on and off campus in clinical settings.

These evaluations help ensure that candidates are progressing appropriately and are prepared for the responsibilities of the profession. When concerns arise, follow-up actions are taken in accordance with the guidelines for implementing the Scaffolding for Success Action Plan (SSAP) ([Appendix 1](#)).

II.1. Programmatic Checkpoints (“Gates”)

In addition to the **ongoing semester monitoring** of academic performance, key assessments, and professional dispositions, candidates must also successfully pass through a series of **programmatic checkpoints**, or “gates,” at critical stages of the preparation program.

These gates are designed to ensure that candidates are ready to advance to the next phase in their preparation and ultimately enter the profession with the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Gate 1: Admission to the College of Education

In addition to meeting the general admission requirements of the Graduate School, applicants seeking admission to the College of Education must also fulfill all program-specific criteria and requirements.

- **Conditional Admission:** Candidates who do not meet one or more of the prerequisite requirements may be considered for **conditional admission**. In such cases, they must satisfy the stipulated conditions by the specified deadline in order to maintain their enrollment status.
- **Appeal for extensions:** In cases of extenuating circumstances, candidates may request an extension of the deadline by emailing coeadmissions@southernct.edu prior to the original deadline

Gate 2:

Midway through the program, candidates must complete all required coursework, pass all key assessment, demonstrate appropriate professional dispositions, and fulfill any additional program-specific requirements.

Gate 3: Program Completion and Certification Recommendation

To be recommended for **Connecticut Educator Certification**, candidates must meet all program and state requirements at the time when the application is submitted. Currently these include:

- Completion of all required coursework and conferral of the degree
- Passing all state-mandated exams (if any), see [Appendix 2](#), which includes a recommended timeline for when to take those exams. It is important that candidates do not take these exams too early in the program, as adequate preparation is essential for success. For specific questions regarding those exams, candidates should contact their program coordinator.
- Information on exam **registration procedures** are provided in [Appendix 3](#), and details regarding **testing accommodations** can be found in [Appendix 4](#).

II.2. GPA Requirements and Academic Monitoring

Once admitted to the graduate program in teacher preparation, candidates must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 in order to continue progressing through the program, as per the university policies for graduate programs. More information may be found in the Graduate Catalog.

II.3. Dismissal of admission to the College of Education

Candidates may be dismissed from the professional program at the College of Education due to concerns related to professional behavior and dispositions.

Dismissal may result based on the outcome of a Level 2 review conducted by the College of Education. This review follows the procedures outlined in the *Guidelines for implementing a Scaffolding for Success Action Plan (SSAP)* (see [Appendix 1](#)), and may include one or more of the following:

- Violations of the professional code of ethics of the program
- An inability to meet professional expectations that impacts the candidate's performance as an educator
- Providing falsified or misleading documentation or information related to programmatic, academic, or professional qualifications or competencies

- Other due and sufficient cause.

III. Become Certified

III.1. Certification in Connecticut

To become **certified** by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), candidates must be formally **recommended** by the **Certification Officer** in the College of Education Dean's Office. This recommendation confirms for the CSDE that you have completed an **approved educator preparation program** and are eligible for certification (see [Appendix 5](#) for details on the Institutional Recommendation process).

To be recommended for certification in CT, candidates must:

- Successfully complete all program requirements
- Have their **degree conferred**
- Fulfill additional state-mandated requirements, including:
 - Completion of required online training modules
 - Passing all relevant licensure exams (e.g. Praxis® II, Pearson).

III.1.1. Important:

Certification requirements are determined by the date your application **is received** by the CSDE.

If state requirements change, you may be required to meet the new requirements in effect at that time. It is your responsibility to stay informed about Connecticut's teacher certification regulations. You can find updates and alerts on the CSDE [Certification News & Alerts](#) page.

III.1.2. Applying for Connecticut Teacher Certification

The College of Education and CSDE now use a fully electronic certification application process. Do not fax, mail, or drop off paperwork; all submissions must be completed online.

Detailed guidance on the Connecticut teacher certification application process can be found in [Appendix 6](#).

III. 2. Verification Requests for Out of State Certification

If you are applying for certification in another state, you may have to provide proof that you completed an *approved program* through the College of Education.

Important: Please *do not* fax, mail, or hand-deliver paperwork — please email your request to certification@southernct.edu

If you already have a form to be verified, please attach it to your email. For your own security, ***do not* include your Social Security Number or any other sensitive information.**

In your email, be sure to include:

- Your full name (include any former names)
- Your SCSU ID number
- The program you completed
- Your completion date

We wish you the very best as you begin your professional journey.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Guidelines for Implementing the Scaffolding for Success Action Plan (SSAP) for College of Education Candidates

These guidelines apply to all Teacher and Educator preparation programs (initial and advanced), and Professional programs in the College of Education.

Overview

Throughout their program, candidates are continuously being assessed on their content knowledge, professional skills, and professional dispositions. As part of the continuous assessment of candidates, faculty discuss with **either** the program coordinator or the department chair the performance of their students in three categories: key course grades and GPA, performance on key assessments, and professional dispositions and attitudes on campus or during clinical experiences (including student teaching).

Issues related to course grades and low GPA are handled according to the established guidelines of the College of Education (for UG programs) or the University policy for Graduate Programs as applicable. For detailed guidance, please consult the UG student handbook, or the Grad school catalog, as applicable.

Addressing concerns

Low-level concerns: Low-level concerns refer to minor or isolated issues that do not significantly impact a candidate's academic progress or professional behavior. These may include situations such as a missed assignment, a single instance of tardiness, or a minor lapse in professionalism. Typically, such concerns are addressed directly between the instructor, advisor, or clinical supervisor and the candidate. The goal is to resolve the issue promptly, without the need for formal documentation or additional intervention. However, if the same concern recurs, it may warrant further review and escalation.

Recurring or Significant Concerns: Recurring or significant concerns refer to issues that arise in relation to a candidate's performance on key assessments, gate assessments, or professional dispositions. These concerns may persist over time or be of such seriousness that they could impede the candidate's ability to meet the expectations of the program. These concerns may be raised by the same faculty member or by different individuals across various settings, such as clinical supervisor, or cooperating teacher. Examples include repeated absences, persistent professionalism concerns, or failure to meet the code of ethics specific to the candidate's program of study or clinical competencies and standards.

When such concerns arise, they are referred to a Review Committee – either Level 1 or Level 2, depending on the severity of the concern. The committee then works collaboratively with the candidate to develop a Scaffolding for Success Action Plan (SSAP), which outlines specific strategies and supports.

ESTABLISHING A SCAFFOLDING for SUCCESS ACTION PLAN (SSAP)

Level 1- Designated Program Review Committee

When concerns about a candidate's performance or professional dispositions recur - either with the same faculty member or across different instructors, supervisors, or settings, and depending on the level of severity - the candidate may be referred to a designated Program Review Committee. This referral may be initiated by an instructor, advisor, supervisor, program coordinator, or department chair. The purpose of this referral is to collaboratively develop a Scaffolding for Success Action Plan (SSAP), a structured support plan designed to help the candidate address identified concerns and succeed in the program.

The designated program review committee (in many departments known as the Student Evaluation and Appeals Committee) will adhere to the following guidelines:

Notification & Attendance:

- The candidate is notified by the Department Chair **via email** about their referral to the Program Review Committee, including a summary of the concerns and an invitation to schedule a meeting with the committee.
- The email will also inform them of their right to bring a support person to the meeting and that the support person may not participate in the discussion.
- The email should include a copy of this document (Guidelines SSAP).
- The meeting must be held within ten (10) business days of the notification. If the candidate fails to schedule the meeting or attend the scheduled meeting without providing documentation of extenuating circumstances, a meeting will then be held in the candidate's absence.
- The program review meeting will include the program coordinator (or designee) and the department chairperson (or designee) and will be chaired by the department chairperson. The meeting may also include the referring faculty member (instructor, advisor, or supervisor). If the referring faculty member is the program coordinator or department chair, an additional faculty member who is familiar with the candidate or

has taught them will be invited to participate in the meeting. The total number of faculty participants will not exceed three (3).

- Interviews may be conducted virtually, via Teams, provided that cameras must remain on for all attendees throughout the meeting, and all attendees are joining the meeting from private, professional setting free from distractions.

Meeting Procedure:

- The chair will begin by outlining the procedure of the meeting.
- If the candidate chooses to have a support person with them at this meeting, the support person is reminded that they are present to support the candidate and may not participate in the discussion.
- The chair will present the concerns raised with the candidate. The candidate will be given adequate time to respond to the concerns and share their perspective.
- Following the discussion, the committee will convene without the candidate, the support person (if any), or the referring faculty, to determine if an SSAP is required and if so to devise the plan.
- The committee will reconvene with the candidate and share the next steps.
- The department chair (or designee) will write the summary of the meeting, enumerating the concerns raised, the candidate's responses, and the devised SSAP (if any), following the template format provided by the College of Education.
- Copies of the summary document are sent via email to the candidate, the committee members, and the Associate Dean of the College of Education, within three (3) business days of the meeting.

Appeal:

Candidates may request that the decision of the program committee be reviewed. A request for the review must be made in writing to the Associate Dean of the College of Education within three (3) business days of electronic receipt of the decision letter.

Candidate may request a review of the decision on the following grounds: 1) the procedures set forth in this document were not followed and as a result the decision was substantially affected; 2) the action plan devised was not appropriate for the concerns that are raised; or 3) new information that was not discussed at the original meeting because such information was not known is provided which is sufficient to alter the decision.

The appeal shall be limited to a review of the written records, and when applicable to seek clarification about newly presented information.

A response to the appeal will be sent to the candidate within three (3) business days of the request of the appeal.

Follow up:

The department chair and/ or program coordinator will monitor the implementation of the SSAP. If new information arises that warrants a revision of the plan, a new Level 1 meeting shall be convened to modify the existing SSAP.

If the candidate does not fulfill the requirements of the SSAP within the established timeline, one of two actions may occur:

- A new Level 1 review may be conducted to revise or reinforce the plan, provided that the concerns remain of the same level of severity.
- If the concerns escalate in seriousness or persist despite prior interventions, the candidate may be referred to a Level 2 review by the College of Education Review Committee (CoERC).

Note: A Level 1 review can be repeated more than once, as long as it is intended to modify the plan and the concerns remain classified as Level 1.

Level 2: College of Education Review Committee (CoERC).

For cases where the severity and/or the recurrence of the concerns warrant broader support or consideration of dismissal from the program – particularly when there is failure to adhere to the code of ethics specific to the candidate's program of study (e.g., MCEE or CT Code of Professional Responsibility for initial teacher preparation) – the matter will be referred to the College of Education Review Committee (CoERC) for further review and action.

Notification & Attendance:

- The candidate will be notified by the Associate Dean of the College of Education or designee about their referral to the College of Education Review Committee, with the list of concerns that were identified and a request to schedule a meeting.
 - For cases related to field/clinical placement or student teaching in teacher preparation programs, the Director of the Office of Educational Services needs to submit a written report about the concerns – inclusive of any documentation from the cooperating teacher or district liaison – to the Associate Dean.
 - For cases related to field/clinical placement/internships for educator preparation or professional programs, the program fieldwork coordinator needs to submit a written report about the concerns-inclusive of any documentation from the Site Supervisor to the Associate Dean

- The candidate will be notified that they can bring a support person to the meeting. If the candidate chooses to have a support person with them at this meeting, the support person cannot participate in the discussion.
- The CoERC meeting needs to be held within 10 business days of the date of the notification. If a candidate fails to schedule the meeting or does not attend the meeting without proof of any extenuating circumstances, the meeting will be held in the candidate's absence.
- The CoERC is chaired by the Associate Dean of the College of Education, or designee, and includes the Department chair (or Program Coordinator), and the Associate Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences or Associate Dean of Health and Human Services (when the candidate is enrolled in an Undergraduate program from the other Colleges).
- When the program coordinator or the chair is the referring faculty, an additional faculty member who knows the candidate or has taught them would need to be part of the meeting.
- The committee should not exceed four members.
- Interviews may be conducted virtually, via Teams, provided that cameras must remain on for all attendees throughout the meeting, and all attendees are joining the meeting from private, professional setting free from distractions.

Procedure of the meeting:

- The Associate Dean of the College of Education, or designee, will share with the candidate the concerns that are raised.
- The candidate will use this meeting time to respond to the concerns and share their viewpoint. When the candidate chooses to have a support person with them at this meeting, the support person cannot be part of the discussion. Their role at the meeting is to support the candidate during the meeting.
- The committee will then convene without the candidate, the support person (if any), or the referring faculty to determine if an SSAP is required and if so to devise the plan, or to determine if dismissal from the program is appropriate for cases where the code of ethics specific to the candidate's program of study are not met (e.g., MCEE or CT Code of Professional Responsibilities for initial teacher prep).
- The committee will reconvene with the candidate and share the next steps.
- The Associate Dean of the College of Education, or designee, will write the summary of the meeting including the decisions taken. A copy of the document is sent via email to the committee members and to the candidate within five (5) business days of the meeting.

Appeal:

Candidates may request that the decision of the program committee be reviewed. A request of the review must be made in writing to Dean of the College of Education within five (5) days of electronic receipt of the decision letter.

A candidate has the right to request the review of the decision on the grounds that: 1) the procedures set forth in this policy were not followed and as a result the decision was substantially affected; 2) the action plan imposed was not appropriate for the concerns that are raised; and/or 3) new information that was not discussed at the original meeting because such information was not known is provided which is sufficient to alter the decision.

The appeal shall be limited to a review of the written records, and when applicable to seek clarification about newly presented information.

A response to the appeal will be sent to the candidate within three (3) business days of the request of the appeal.

Any action plan made by the committee shall be in effect pending the outcome of the appeal.

Follow up:

The department chair will monitor the implementation of the SSAP.

If there is new information that warrants a revision of the SSAP, or if the candidate does not fulfill the requirements of the SSAP by the timeline, a new Level 2 review takes place.

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Appendix #2: Licensure Exams

Licensure exams vary depending on the certification sought. For each certification program, this handbook lists the required exam name and code, and the required passing score. Registration guidelines are outlined in [Appendix 3](#), and information about accommodations can be found in [Appendix 4](#).

SYC-EDL & PMC-EDL

Provider	Code	Test Name	Passing Score
ETS	6412	Connecticut Administrator Test	146

Program recommendations:

- Take 6412 during the last semester of the program

MS-RDG

Provider	Code	Test Name	Passing Score
Pearson	802	Reading Specialist	240

Program recommendations:

- Take Foundations of Reading test after successful completion of RDG 546

Appendix #3: Registration Guidelines for Licensure Exams

Different educator preparation programs require specific certification exams, as outlined in [Appendix 2](#). These exams are administered by one of two vendors: **ETS, or Pearson**, and registration guidelines are listed below. It is highly recommended that candidates prepare thoroughly for licensure exams before registering.

Create an account

To register for an exam, you must create an account with the appropriate testing vendor as explained below. Be sure to use a **personal email address** (not your Southern email) as you might need future access to these portals after graduation, and your SCSU email will eventually become inactive.

While setting up the account, it is important that you provide an **accurate Social Security Number (SSN) and birth date**. If you are unsure of your SSN, it is best to leave it blank and **update it later** once you have verified the correct number.

ETS

1. Your first step is to create a PRAXIS account
 - Visit [ETS-Create Account](#) to create an account
 - Use a personal email and not your SCSU email
2. Find and register for your exam(s):
 - Click the “Find Tests & Prep” button to search for the tests
 - Register for the test(s) required.
3. Send your scores directly to the required institutions
 - List **SCSU as a score recipient** using the **Institution code: 3662**
 - List **Connecticut Bureau of Educator Standards** as a score recipient using **institution code: 7050**

Exam preparation and Score reporting

- Free test preparation material can be found at: [ETS Test Prep](#)
- Official scores can take up to 20 business days (4 weeks) to be reported. Please plan accordingly to ensure your scores will be available in time to meet application deadlines. See [ETS-Getting Scores](#) for more info.

Financial Assistance

ETS offers financial assistance in the form of fee waivers, to those who qualify. More information can be found on the ETS website: [ETS-Fees-Waivers](#)

Note, fee waiver requests must be received by the appropriate deadline listed on the application form.

Pearson

1. Your first step is to create a CTCE account
 - Visit [CTCE-Connecticut Teacher Certification Examinations](#) to create an account
 - Use a personal email and not SCSU email
2. **Information about each test.** Get specific information about a test, including **when** and **where** you can take the test and access preparation materials
3. Send your scores directly to the required institutions:
 - Select **Southern Connecticut State University** as a recipient
 - Select **Connecticut Bureau of Educator Standards** as a recipient
 - Select the option to have your scores emailed to you during time of registration.

Exam preparation and Score reporting

- Free test preparation material can be found at: [PEARSON-Test Prep](#)
- Scores will be available approximately 3 weeks after testing. Score reports will be available in your account for 2 years.

Appendix #4: Testing Accommodations

Different educator preparation programs require different certification exams, as outlined in [Appendix 2](#). These exams are administered by one of two vendors: **ETS, or Pearson**. If you require testing accommodations, each vendor has its own process for submitting requests.

Below, we provide a step-by-step guide to help you navigate the accommodation request procedures for each testing provider.

Requesting Accommodations from ETS

For test takers with disabilities or health-related needs, or whose primary language is not English (PLNE), please see the [ETS website](#) for information on how to apply for testing accommodations:

ETS Disability Services must approve accommodation requests before your test date can be scheduled. Please note, disability and health-related accommodation requests take approximately six weeks to be reviewed by ETS.

Requesting Accommodations from PEARSON

Examinees with documented physical, learning, or cognitive disabilities, or for whom English is not a primary language, may be eligible for [alternative testing arrangements](#).

Appendix # 5: Institutional Recommendation Process

Eligibility Criteria

Before initiating the certification process, ensure the following requirements have been fully met:

1. **Conditional Acceptance Requirements:** If you were conditionally accepted to the College of Education, all stipulations must be fulfilled.
2. **Passing Licensure Exams (where required)**
 - Passing all required licensure exams (Praxis II exams). For more information, refer to [Appendix 2](#).
 - For more information, check [CSDE portal](#) for passing scores, and test registration information
3. **Program Completion and Transcript Updates:**
 - Successfully complete your program or degree.
 - Have your degree conferred and completion date is posted on your transcript.

Requesting the Institutional Recommendation

To request the Certification Officer's recommendation, complete and submit the form linked here: [Institutional Recommendation Request](#).

Important Notes:

You may initiate the certification process during your last semester if the **first two requirements** are completed. However, the Certification officer **cannot certify the institution's recommendation** and send it to CSDE until the passing scores for all licensure exams are received, and the program completion date is posted on transcripts by the Registrar's Office.

Also note that certification recommendations are processed **in the order they are received**.

Appendix # 6: Guidance on the CT Teacher Certification Application Process

Step 1: Create an account

- If you already have a CECS account, proceed to Step 2
- Visit [the Connecticut Educator Certification System \(CECS\)](#) portal
- Create a new account:
 - Use a **personal email** address (not your Southern email). You will need future access to the portal, and your SCSU email will eventually become inactive.
 - **Save your password** securely, as you will need it to access the portal
 - Once your account is created, you will be issued an **Educator Identification Number (EIN)**. You will need it for the institutional recommendation form.

Step 2: Apply online

- Log in to your CECS account
- Click “Apply Online” and **select the appropriate** “Teacher/Educator” certification.

Step 3: Request Transcripts

- Request Transcripts **from all colleges/universities attended**.
- Do not send your SCSU transcript prematurely - wait until your degree date is posted on the transcript. You will receive an email from the Registrar’s Office when your degree has been posted to your student records.

Transcript Submission options:

- Electronic Transcripts can be sent to teacher.etranscript@ct.gov
- Paper copies of official unopened transcripts can be mailed to:
Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Educator Standards and Certification
P.O. Box 150471
Hartford, CT 06115-047

To Request Official Transcripts from SCSU:

- Visit: <https://inside.southernct.edu/onestop/studentrecords>
- Click on the **TRANSCRIPTS** dropdown and follow the instructions for “**Current Students**”