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## Student Candidate of Concern : Process and Referral Forms

University of South Florida St. Petersburg. College of Education.

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Processes for Students of Concern-Revised based upon feedback, adopted April 13, 2007

Rationale-The faculty of the College of Education is responsible for ensuring that its teacher candidates exhibit the knowledge, skills and dispositions outlined in its conceptual framework and in state and national standards. Of particular importance to the College, is ensuring that candidates from every program are committed to All children's learning in their respective roles, including those children most often underserved and burdened with low expectations. Candidate learning is assessed in classes, field experiences and advanced practica. Sometimes candidate behaviors and/or performances indicate that candidate knowledge, skills and/or dispositions fail to provide evidence of meeting the college's outcomes required to successfully teach ALL children. In fact, some candidate behaviors are unacceptable for a professional educator.

If concerns exist regarding a candidate's knowledge, skills or dispositions, it is important the candidate be made aware of these concerns and that there be formal opportunities to address these concerns. These concerns must be communicated in a manner that is sufficiently formative to allow the candidate to reflect, consider aspirations. The process must be compassionate, discreet, and clear. There must be provisions so that the faculty and supervisors, who work with the candidate in subsequent semesters, are aware of the concerns and the plans developed to address those concerns. This process should be internal and managed by a small committee of faculty. The written concerns and plans of action need to be documented and contained in the committee's files as formative feedback is suggested and followed.

In other institutions, this process has been called "student concerns" or "care team." The process is intended to be formative and supportive, not punitive. At the same time, the concerns require an action plan within a given time frame to which the candidate will be accountable...

### **The processes themselves-**

In this proposal, there are two levels of intervention

1. Candidates with demonstrated concerns that can be easily described and remedied are reported through a 'students of concern form' filed with the Students of Concern committee. Candidates may also file such a form themselves. Faculty members on the committee notify the candidate and the subsequent semester's faculty to monitor the student for a particular behavior of concern. The candidate would also be notified as to the report and will respond at the "care team" meeting as to how he or she plans to address. The "care team" meets and formulates a plan of action. The care team reviews actions at the end of the semester and reviews the concern at the onset of the following semester after notifying the subsequent semester's faculty as appropriate. Should the concerns remain; an additional "care team" meeting will be scheduled.
2. A serious concern is documented in the performance of a candidate. The faculty member/supervisor wants it to be formally addressed with the candidate so that a

formal conference is warranted to assist the candidate in developing a plan of action to address the concern. Following the meeting with the candidate, the candidate will be expected to submit quarterly reports of progress co-signed by or initialed by the faculty member and/or supervisor who documented the serious concern. At least once during the semester, the care team will canvass the other faculty who are teaching the candidate to ask whether or not evidence of the serious concern persists in other classes and/or the field. At the end of the semester, the candidate and the care team sign off on the completed document, which is reviewed at least once by the team in the subsequent semester, with feedback provided to the candidate.

- a. For example, such circumstances might be
  - i. The results of the end of term folder/student review which demonstrates the student's inadequate performance in classes or clinical experiences.
  - ii. A College of Education or clinical faculty member deems a concern exists regarding the candidate's professional or personal interests-as these interests impact the candidate's performance with his/her program.
  - iii. The candidate, in consultation with the advisor or another faculty member thinks he/she could benefit from care team support.
- b. The care team will be composed of:
  - i. The committee chair/faculty member and, typically, convener
  - ii. A faculty member working with the candidate during the term the team is convened
  - iii. A faculty member not directly working with the candidate
  - iv. A colleague/support person of the candidate, should he/she so desire.

Care teams once organized, will meet as necessary and appropriate to be determined by the convener and/or the candidate in consultation with each other. In "extreme" circumstances, the concerned faculty member will convene the care team; this may be solely at the faculty member and committee chair's discretion or at the request of a faculty member or the candidate.

- c. The care team will review the areas of concern, provide a forum for discussion of how the concerns might be resolved, and provide a plan

of action to address the area of concern. It will also provide a timeline by which concerns must be addressed.

Candidates will commit to the action plan through articulating steps to address the areas of concern and a timeline. Candidates and the care team will articulate specific outcomes from the action plan that must be achieved. Failure to achieve those steps may result in failure to advance beyond the tiers or program completion.

### 3. Records of the processes

Since the process is formative, records of the processes must be a part of candidates' formative files and the committee's records; they should not be part of the CDN or permanent records. The role of the undergraduate advisor will have to be delineated in this process.

Admissions decisions made at each tier should account for concerns as part of the admissions decisions.

There needs to be constant monitoring of the care team proceedings. Since these are limited, there should be a limited, but committed level of involvement by the faculty.