

## **Millersville University Professionalism Policy**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Professionalism Policy is to promote and assure candidate professionalism aligned to national standards. To that end, this policy defines guidelines for educating candidates about professionalism in their discipline, evaluation of professionalism, establishment of fair process procedures for review of concerns, and for the creation of professional development plans.

Every candidate has the ability to grow and develop. This is true for knowledge and skills as well as for self-awareness, professional habits of thinking, and development of moral commitments. This happens best when candidates truly commit to open-minded and whole-hearted self-reflection, goal setting, and take personal responsibility for improvement. As learning is primarily a social and interactive activity, a candidate's growth and development also requires engaged and committed faculty who provide on-going feedback and assessment to initiate change.

### **Scope**

The Professionalism Policy applies to all programs and candidates of the School of Social Work as well as the Professional Education Unit. It is intended to support candidate professional development and program quality. This document will use the terms "candidates" and "programs" in referring to all of these groups.

### **Terms Used in the Professionalism Policy**

- Professional Performance: Demonstrations of professional knowledge, skills, and professional behavior in field-based assignments, tasks, activities, and assessments. These include, but are not limited to, culminating clinical practices such as student teaching, practicum, or internship.
- Professional Behavior: Behaviors critical to the profession such as appropriate communication that are demonstrated in all aspects of a candidate's program (field experience, courses, interactions outside of courses).
- Professional Dispositions: The habits of thinking and moral commitments that underlie a professional's performance and behavior.
- Professional Ethics: The norms and principles of appropriate conduct that guide decision-making, and help professionals monitor their own behavior, for the purpose of protecting individuals in their care as well as the general public, mitigating risk to the professional, and to the reputation of the profession.
- Laws and Millersville Policies: Millersville University policies such as academic honesty, Title IX, and legal infractions may also relate to professionalism issues, but generally go beyond the scope of this policy and are covered by other university and legal procedures. Policies regarding infractions on a candidate's clearances are described in the Field Course Clearance Policy.

### **Informing and Educating Candidates about the Professionalism Policy**

Each program will designate a course or procedure early in the program where the Professionalism Policy will be presented and explained. Candidates will complete a form (possibly electronic) indicating

that they have received and read the policy. Candidates should also be given access to officially approved evaluation instruments (Table 1) referred to in the Professionalism Policy on the College of Education and Human Services website. The process should provide the same access to information and documentation for all candidates including transfer students.

### **Evaluation Instruments and Their Uses**

- All candidates will self-evaluate, set goals, and reflect on their own professional qualities as a requirement for formal admission and at least one other time set by their program prior to clinical practicum / student teaching. Candidate self-evaluation is used to help promote self-awareness, responsibility and accountability of one's professional development. Self-evaluations may be used as a component of professional planning and advisement. Candidate self-evaluation will not be used for decision-making regarding progress through the program. Candidate self-evaluation is only used to help candidates take ownership over their professional development.
- Candidates in field experiences will be evaluated for professional performance related to the experience using instruments approved through the appropriate curriculum / policy group for that program (Table 2). An important purpose of evaluation is feedback to candidates so that they can set goals and improve. Identification of significant concerns related to professional performance is described below.
- Appropriate codes of Ethics for each profession will be identified by the appropriate curriculum / policy group for that program. All candidates will be evaluated on their knowledge of the expectations of the profession, including codes of ethics, professional standards of performance, and relevant laws and policies. Before any candidate is recommended for licensure or certification, programs must document that the candidate understands the expectations of the profession, including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice, and relevant laws and policies.
- All candidates will be assessed by faculty using the disposition and professional behavior rubric approved by the appropriate curriculum / policy group for that program as a requirement for formal admission (Table 3) and at least one other time prior to the culminating field-based experience. Evaluation of dispositions is used primarily for candidate self-reflection and growth. Disposition evaluation may be used to counsel candidates about career choices. They are used for decisions about candidate progression through a program if they are also related to professional behavior and / or professional performance.

### **Identification of Concerns and Possible Formal Review**

All candidates are developing as professionals and are expected to have specific needs for professional performance growth. Faculty should help candidates succeed and to address most needs with informal mentoring and support. However, if concerns persist after informal guidance and support, there are four ways that a concern can be identified as possibly needing further review:

1. If a field-based partner or university supervisor identifies professionalism concerns in the field and if either the field experience coordinator or the program leader (Table 4) think a formal

review process is needed, then a formal process is initiated. If the candidate has been removed by the field partner and both the field experience coordinator and program leader agree that a formal process is not needed, then a new placement will be found as soon as possible.

2. Concerns that arise outside of field experience should be discussed with the candidate and concerns should be brought to the attention of the program leader or designee. Concerns can be brought using technology notifications, direct communication with the program leader, or as part of faculty group meetings. The program leader then decides if a formal evaluation is necessary.
3. If a candidate receives a “not recommend” at a transition point based on faculty evaluation of dispositions, then a formal review process is automatically required.
4. If a program leader decides not to start a formal process or fails to act and a faculty member or other stakeholder believes a formal process is needed – the faculty member may appeal the decision to the Associate Dean of the College of Education and Human Services. The Associate Dean should attempt to consult with the program leader and then initiate a formal review if needed.

#### **Formal Review Related to Concerns**

1. Formal review will take place in a meeting including relevant faculty selected by the program leader. In cases involving field experience, the person responsible for field placements for that program (typically the Field Experience Coordinator) must be invited to participate.
2. Formal review for field based professional performance or for professional behaviors or dispositions may only be completed using evaluation instruments approved by the appropriate curriculum / policy group for that program. These guidelines will be revised to include new instruments as they are approved. All approved instruments must be consistent with and reflect recognized state or national professional standards appropriate for program. Clinical partners and faculty should be involved in the development and validation of these instruments.
3. Candidates must be notified in advance of the purpose of the meeting and the fact that it could result in an unsatisfactory review. Candidates should be made aware that they will have a right to appeal the results of the review and that they may bring advocates and relevant evidence to the meeting. There should be no decisions or plans drafted before the meeting.
4. If the meeting results in an unsatisfactory review, a Professional Development Plan will be created. Professional Development Plans should specify current deficiencies, goals, potential consequences for failure to meet goals, identification of point-in-time when goal achievement will be assessed, and rights of appeal in case of failure to meet goals of plan.
5. If the review finds that the candidate’s behavior is such that participation in any field placements would pose a risk to the safety of individuals in that field placement, and the candidate would like to continue in his/her program, the findings of the formal review, along with any written statement by the candidate, will be shared with any current or prospective field placements. As with clearance infractions, field partners hold their own standards for accepting candidates and Millersville has no control over their decisions. In the event that a field partner denies a candidate a placement, Millersville will search for another placement

opportunity twice more, for a total of three (3) attempts. If three partners refuse or deny working with the candidate in question, Millersville University then resigns all responsibility in making a field placement for the candidate during his/her enrolled semester. Candidates will not be able to complete their degree program and/or certification program if they cannot complete required field experiences.

6. Faculty make an assessment of whether the goals of the Professional Development Plan have been met as well as specific consequences for progression through their program and will inform candidates of their right to appeal.

### **Appeals Process**

1. Candidates have a right to appeal decisions from the formal review process. The first appeal is to the Professionalism Appeals Committee. Candidates initiating an appeal may bring advocates. Appeal decisions are made by majority of the committee members voting. Appeals Committee members involved in the development or review of a Professional Development Plan should recuse themselves from voting. Faculty and school partners involved in the initial formal review should be invited to explain their decisions.

This committee should include 5 faculty members with representatives from the School of Social Work, Educational Foundations, the Early, Middle, and Exceptional Education department, the Psychology department, and one member from outside the College of Education and Human Services. The chair of the committee will be selected from among the committee members. Members should serve two year terms and efforts should be made to rotate representation of the non-College of Education and Human Services representatives between different PEU departments. Members of the Professionalism Appeals Committee are jointly selected by the Dean of the College of Education and Human Services, the chair of the School of Social Work, and the chair of the Teacher Education Council (proposed name change: Teacher Education Curriculum Committee). This committee will be formed in the Fall of 2017. In order to establish both continuity of membership and rotation, in the Fall of 2017 two of the committee members, by random selection, will serve a single year term. The other three committee members will serve two year terms. In the following years committee members will all serve two year terms.

2. Final appeal is to the Dean of the College of Education and Human Services and School of Social Work.

**Table 1 Currently Approved Evaluation Instruments and Ethical Frameworks**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Professional Practice</b>	<b>Professional Behavior</b>	<b>Dispositions</b>	<b>Ethics Guidelines</b>
All Initial Teacher Education Programs	MU Adapted Danielson Framework	<b>Effective Fall 17</b> Millersville Candidate Professional Behaviors Rubric	<b>To be piloted 17-18 Academic Year</b> Millersville Growth Mindset Disposition Evaluation	??
School Counseling		Millersville Candidate Professional Behaviors Rubric	Program will vote on whether to be part of the pilot and will inform TECC, the Professional Education Assembly, and the Dean, CEHS, office of their decision.	ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors
School Psychology		Millersville Candidate Professional Behaviors Rubric	Program will vote on whether to be part of the pilot and will inform TECC, the Professional Education Assembly, and the Dean, CEHS, of their decision.	National Association of School Psychologists Principles for Professional Ethics
Reading Specialist		Millersville Candidate Professional Behaviors Rubric	Program will vote on whether to be part of the pilot and will inform TECC, the Professional Education Assembly, and the Dean, CEHS, of their decision.	
Social Work BSE, MSW, DSW		Approved instruments based on NASW Code of Ethics Quiz and CSWE	Approved instruments based on NASW Code of Ethics Quiz and CSWE EPAS Competencies	

Program	Professional Practice	Professional Behavior	Dispositions	Ethics Guidelines
		EPAS Competencies Survey	Survey	
Leadership for Teaching and Learning		Millersville Candidate Professional Behaviors Rubric	Program will vote on whether to be part of the pilot and will inform TECC, the Professional Education Assembly, and the Dean, CEHS, of their decision.	
M.Ed. Programs for teachers that do not lead to licensure		Program will vote on whether to adopt and will inform the Dean, CEHS	Program will vote on whether to be part of the pilot and will inform TECC, the Professional Education Assembly, and the Dean, CEHS, of their decision.	

**Table 2 Curriculum / Policy group**

Program	Curriculum / Policy Group
All Social Work Programs	Department Approval
All Professional Education Unit programs (those included in CAEP definitions and who recommend candidates for licensure to the Pennsylvania Department of Education)	Teacher Education Council (to be renamed Teacher Education Curriculum Committee) & The Professional Education Assembly

**Table 3 Formal Admission**

Program	Formal Admission
Initial Instructional I Teacher Licensure	Advanced Professional Studies
Social Work BA	Professional Readiness
M.Ed. and Ed.D. Programs	Degree Candidacy

**Table 4 Program Leader**

Program	Program Leader
All Social Work Programs	Department and School of Social Work Chair
BSE & post-bac prek-4, Grades 4-8, and Dual PreK-	EMEE department Chair

4 - Special Education	
7-12 / K-12 BSE & post-bac programs	Department chair or designee. The designee may be a department faculty member or may be the Educational Foundations department chair. The identification of the designee must be made to the dean of the College of Education and Human Services. Both the candidate's department chair and the EDFN department chair (or their designees) should be informed of formal review meetings.
Non-teacher education graduate program leading to licensure	Graduate program coordinator. Coordinators should inform their department chair of formal review meetings.