



## **Education Department Dispositions Policy**

### **Purpose**

The mission of the University of Valley Forge is to prepare individuals for lives of service and leadership in the Church and in the world. The aim of UVF's Education Department is that all students grow to be excellent, ethical, well-equipped, and well-prepared professionals as they graduate and enter the teaching profession. We acknowledge that preservice and in-service teachers must meet the highest standards of professionalism and ethical conduct.

We understand that students will grow in maturity during the college years and, therefore, do not expect perfection from our students. However, we also believe that teachers are held to a higher standard (see James 3:1) and that adherence to that standard begins during the preservice period.

The purpose of this policy is to describe the behaviors and dispositions expected of students enrolled in the UVF Education Department and to describe the processes and procedures that will be followed if it is believed that a student may be at risk of not continuing in the education program. This policy applies to all students in all education programs (private, public, and noncertification) on the undergraduate and graduate level at UVF. This document is intended to adhere to the requirements listed in 22 Pa. Code § 49.14(4)(i) Professional Ethics Program Framework Guidelines.

### **Expected Dispositions and Behaviors**

UVF students may be at risk of not continuing in the education program for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to:

#### **In the UVF classroom and other campus environments**

- Academic honesty/integrity – repeated incidents of plagiarism or other forms of cheating
- Academic performance – the Pennsylvania Department of Education requires a GPA of 3.0 or above in order to enter and maintain participation in any public-school certification program
- Consistent lack of courteous relationships, congeniality, cultural sensitivity, and respectful communication with faculty and peers in and out of the classroom
- Failure to obtain necessary child abuse clearances in a timely manner
- Consistent lack of adherence to UVF Student Life and other policies

### **In Field Experience Settings**

- Consistent lack of professional behavior in the areas of dress, punctuality, dependability, affect, confidentiality, preparation, following school regulations, etc.
- Attendance at a field site without the required clearances (grounds for immediate dismissal from education program)
- Consistent lack of communication with cooperating teachers or other placement site personnel
- Inappropriate behavior toward students or staff at field site
- Cultural insensitivity toward students or staff at field site
- Continued lack of engagement during field experience sessions
- Other violations of the PDE Professional Ethics Program Framework Guidelines

### **Adherence to local, state, and federal laws**

Criminal activity that results in arrest and conviction on the local, state, or federal level

### **Process**

Students at risk of not continuing in the UVF education program will be informed during a review meeting with the Education Department faculty and in writing through email sent to the student's UVF email account. During that meeting the concerns about the student will be explained, using the UVF Professional Disposition Tool,\* the Model Code of Ethics for Educators,\*\* and the PDE Professional Ethics Program Framework \*\*\* as guidelines of expected behaviors and dispositions. Failure to attend the review meeting is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program.

In situations where infractions are severe, the student may be dismissed from the program at the time of the meeting (reasons for dismissal will be provided in writing). However, it is more likely that the student will be given opportunity to participate in an improvement plan (also given to the student in writing). Students given an improvement plan will be provided with adequate time to show improvement, ranging from one month to six weeks. At the end of that time, the student will meet again with the Education Department to review the student's adherence to the improvement plan and a final decision regarding the student's status will be given. The decision will be confirmed in writing.

In the case of immediate or eventual dismissal the student will have the right to appeal the decision of the Education Department faculty by contacting the Vice President of Academic Affairs in writing within seven (7) days of the Education Department's written decision. The VPAA will confer with Education Department faculty within another seven (7) days before a final decision is made. Depending on the severity of the infraction, students dismissed from the public and private school programs may have the option of completing the non-certification degree (undergraduate only).

The Education Department will document all relevant observations of behaviors and interactions with students at risk, together with email, personal, or phone conversations that suggest the possibility of problematic standing and will provide that documentation to students upon request.

\*adapted from University of Central Arkansas

\*\*[https://www.nasdtc.net/page/MCEE\\_Doc](https://www.nasdtc.net/page/MCEE_Doc)

\*\*\* <https://www.education.pa.gov/Documents/Teachers-Administrators/Certifications/Professional%20Ethics%20Program%20Framework%20Guidelines.pdf>