

College of Education and Allied Professions
MAT/MAED Dispositions Assessment, Fall 2014

At the undergraduate and/or initial licensure level, the following dispositions are expected of all developing professionals in the College of Education and Allied Professions.

1. Students will project a positive demeanor.
2. Students will behave responsibly.
3. Students will exhibit trustworthiness.
4. Students will build positive interpersonal relationships.
5. Students will demonstrate cultural responsiveness.
6. Students will be engaged learners.
7. Students will demonstrate emotional and social self-control.
8. Students will collaborate effectively.
9. Students will use effective communication.
10. Students will engage in appropriate decision-making.

Advanced licensure seeking candidates admitted to an M.A.Ed. or M.A.T. graduate education program in the College of Education and Allied Professions are expected to already hold an initial license, and therefore demonstrate the aforementioned dispositions. As such, these candidates will be building upon a foundation of initial dispositions and will, through the program, be cultivating the values, beliefs and dispositions that are prerequisite to a recommendation for advanced licensure. Candidates are expected to be informed about these required dispositions and to display behavior demonstrating appropriate dispositions across all settings associated with their graduate university program and field based requirements. Should a concern regarding one or more disposition be raised by a university or field setting official, a disposition rating form will be completed to document concerns, shared with the candidate, and filed in the candidate's electronic file. An action plan for remediation may be developed and similarly filed. Repeated documentation of dispositional concerns can result in removal from the program.

Introduction and Rationale: The North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission developed teaching standards based on a “new vision of teaching” in light of 21st century opportunities, needs and demands. The following five graduate program standards are parallel to and expand upon those standards. These are advanced standards, appropriate for teacher education programs to use as guidelines in developing their graduate level teaching programs. Teachers granted the advanced license are expected to be teacher leaders in their specialty area, to facilitate the creation of healthy educational environments, to have deep knowledge and skills in their content and curriculum, to use research in making decisions about effective practice for student learning, and to be continuous, reflective practitioners who model the values of lifelong learning, critical thinking, problem-solving and innovation.

As such, the MAED/MAT programs seek to produce students who demonstrate competency in the following areas: Assessment, Differentiation/Diversity, Leadership and Research. Technology is a theme that is evident in each of the core theme areas.

The following dispositions are expected in all advanced licensure seeking candidates enrolled in M.A.Ed. and M.A.T. graduate programs in WCU's College of Education and Allied Professions:

1. Candidates will demonstrate a commitment to equity and social justice.
2. Candidates will demonstrate a commitment and understanding of using assessment in an appropriate and ethical manner.
3. Candidates will meet the needs of diverse students by demonstrating a commitment to the principles of a culturally responsive curriculum, pedagogy and classroom management practices that model caring and respect.
4. Candidates acting as teacher leaders will use knowledge, skills and dispositions to promote an educational culture that values collaboration, sustains reflective practice, and seeks to build leadership capacity in school settings.
For examples, the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession (CSTP, 2009) identifies five categories of knowledge and skills that are needed to be effective teacher leaders: working with adult learners, communication, and collaboration, knowledge of content and pedagogy, and systems thinking. Additionally, "in order to be seen as a leader, they must also have a set of positive dispositions and attitudes." (Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession, 2009. Teacher leadership skills framework. Retrieved from <http://www.cstp-wa.org>)
5. Candidates will demonstrate a commitment to the fundamental assumptions, goals, and practices of educational research as a means to adapt instruction and promote student learning.

As advanced competency dispositions, it is expected that candidates will demonstrate these values, beliefs and dispositions in the work done in the graduate education program. These dispositions will be clearly associated with the electronic evidences that are included in each candidate's advanced licensure portfolio. In the final semester, candidates will be asked to provide a written reflection where they will assess themselves on these dispositions and provide examples from the work they have done as part of the MAT/MAED program to document demonstration of these advanced dispositions; this written reflection will be included in the graduate advanced competency portfolio.

Admissions (Beginning Dispositions)

The goal of the beginning dispositions assessment is to document that candidates have the prerequisite skills to be a successful teacher (MAT) and the necessary foundation for acquiring the advanced dispositions (MAED). MAT candidates will be seeking both an initial and advanced teacher license in the program; MAED candidates are required to already hold an initial license and will only be seeking advanced licensure in the program.

Two assessments currently serve this goal for all MAT/MAEd programs:

1. Candidates applying to the MAT or MAED are required to submit references (2 or 3 depending upon the program) from individuals who have supervised them or worked with them in a professional capacity. Items related to dispositions on the recommendation form include professional potential, teaching potential, motivation, work ethic, self-reliance and self-direction.
2. Candidates need to meet undergraduate GPA requirements. To qualify for Regular Admission to the Graduate School, a student must have earned an overall grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale for the last 60 hours of undergraduate work OR 2.85 on a 4.0 scale cumulatively. Some MAT/MAEd programs have additional GPA requirements.

Additional assessments for specific programs include:

1. Special Education MAT/MAEd: Candidates applying to the MAT/MAED are required to submit a writing sample (i.e., a written essay in response to a prompt). The writing sample will be reviewed by a program faculty member. If questions arise, the sample will be brought before the full special education faculty for review. The writing sample will give a baseline with regard to candidate dispositions. Candidates will be asked to select one prompt and respond with a one to two-page, singled-spaced, essay addressing the topic.
 - Why should a society provide a “free and appropriate” education to students with disabilities who will not be able to achieve academic or other skills at the same level as students without disabilities?
 - What are the *most important skills or characteristics* a teacher should possess, and *why* do you say these are the most important?
 - Describe your position on inclusion of students with disabilities in general education. What are the benefits of inclusion and the potential barriers?
 - It is a commonly held belief that gifted students do not need special services because they can “make it on their own.” Why is it important for schools to provide programming for gifted and creative students?
2. Secondary Science, English, Social Sciences and K-12 Art MAT/MAEd
 - a. Candidates applying to the MAT/MAED will be required to submit a writing sample. The writing sample can be a product from previous coursework and/or material prepared in a professional capacity. The writing sample will be used to assess prerequisite knowledge, skills and dispositions of potential candidates and will be reviewed by the graduate education program coordinator. If questions arise, the sample will be reviewed by at least one other program faculty member.

- b. Candidates applying to the MAT/MAED programs will participate in an interview with the education program coordinator where they will be asked to discuss their values, beliefs and dispositions in relation to education and schooling in the 21st century. Candidates with concerns will be asked to meet with an additional program faculty member.
- c. Candidate files will be evaluated by at least two faculty members; the program coordinator and another faculty member associated with the candidate's major area of study.

Mid-Point Dispositions Assessment

The goal of midpoint dispositions assessment is to address satisfactory student progress and the acquisition of appropriate knowledge, skills and dispositions. Due to the structure and organization of the MAT/MAED programs, there is no clearly delineated mid-point for dispositions assessment.

The following processes and assessments are used to address mid-point dispositions for all programs:

1. During Sped 639 (MAT) and SPED 620 or SPED 640 (MAED) candidates complete the *Personal and Professional Beliefs about Diversity Scale* (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001).
2. Candidates who display inappropriate and/or unprofessional behavior in courses will be identified by faculty. An action plan will be developed for those students and kept on file.
3. A candidate's progress is closely monitored and any student receiving three C's or an F in the program will be dismissed and required to apply for readmission prior to continuing the program.

Additional assessments for specific programs include:

1. Secondary Science, English, Social Sciences and K-12 Art MAT/MAEd

In EDCI 607 and/or EDCI 616, candidates write reflective essays in which they identify and consider their knowledge, skills and dispositions as teacher leaders and reflective practitioners. MAT candidates will take both EDCI 607 and EDCI 616, and as such, will complete the reflection in both classes; however, MAED candidates will complete the reflective essay only once. EDCI 607 is typically taken in the beginning or midpoint of the program and EDCI 616 can be taken at any point in a candidate's program of study.

Final Dispositions Assessment

The goal of the final dispositions assessment is to document and evaluate culminating attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs associated with the advanced dispositions.

To that end, two assessments are in place for all programs.

1. Candidates complete the *Personal and Professional Beliefs about Diversity Scale* (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001) when submitting the graduate advanced competency portfolio.
2. Candidates complete a final reflection as part of the graduate advanced competency portfolio.
 - a. Elementary, Middle Grades, Secondary (English, Science, Social Sciences), K-12 Art: The reflection addresses personal strengths and weaknesses in each of the advanced competency dispositions. Candidates will be asked to provide examples from the work they have done as part of the MAT/MAED program to document demonstration of these advanced dispositions.
 - b. Special Education: The reflection includes a statement outlining professional goals, leadership skills, advocacy for students with disabilities or students who are gifted, and collaborative skills.