

THE STUDENT TEACHING APPLICATION TIPS, TOOLS, and POSTULATIONS

The time has finally arrived when you, the secondary education student, have come far enough in your educational endeavors to imagine yourself in a different role: the student teacher. The first step towards that new role is, of course, the timely completion and submission of your student teaching application.

Currently, the **application dates** to keep in mind are **December 1**, for the **Fall trimester**, and **January 31**, for the **Winter trimester**. **Do not submit your student teaching application unless you have successfully passed through Gateway One:**

Gateway One Requirements

Cum GPA 2.5 or better with a C or better in each course
GPA 2.75 or better in all GSU gen. ed. courses
Submit scores from the MAPP exam to advisor
SESPC Accepted Admissions essay
Pass IL Basic Skills Exam

Tip #1: Do not over estimate your capabilities as you near your goal.

If you are currently working full-time, taking three, 3-credit courses per trimester, and putting family and fun on the back burner to maintain a B average, it is probably not a good idea to commit yourself to six such courses for the next three terms so that you can student teach a trimester early. Add to that the possibility that one of the courses you've anticipated taking is not offered during the term you need it, and you are already behind.

Tip #2: Keep in mind your application is all that a school has to assess you – make a great first impression.

Complete the application carefully and accurately. Go over each page of your application to check for spelling, typing and grammar errors. You are being entrusted to educate hundreds of young minds – you do not want to make the same types of errors you will be teaching your students not to make. Obviously, sections IV (special skills) and V (personal statement) on the application are the most important, but all sections of the application require attention to detail and accuracy. For instance, your education and employment lists should always begin with the most recent – think of group e-mail exchanges: would you want to re-read all the previous mail to get to the latest message? Employers (your student teaching school is employing you without monetary pay) want to see the most pertinent information up front, and that is *what you are doing now*, not what you did ten years ago.

Tip #3: Make sensible school selections.

Most schools choose their student teachers with the same criteria they use for hiring regular faculty. It would not benefit you to have your application sent to a school that only considers transcripts with a 4.0 when you have a 3.0; your application will only be delayed from being sent to another school. However, there is a school for everyone. If you want advice on where you would fit best, ask your advisor.

Tip #4: Follow the application chain of command.

The first person to see your application should be your advisor. **Make a back-up copy of your application just in case.** Do not assume that you need only to shove your application under your advisor's door and wait. Follow up by calling or e-mailing your advisor and asking if everything seems in order. Your advisor will be able to tell you what coursework, tests, GPA, etc., are necessary before your application will be processed. All applications are accepted, but not all are approved.

Your advisor then sends your application and copies of your transcripts to the Coordinator of Secondary Education who signs in agreement to whatever assessment your advisor has made concerning your readiness for student teaching.

The third stop for your application is in the Office of Secondary Education where your pertinent information is entered in a data base.

A copy of your application is then put before the Secondary Education Student Progress Committee for approval; and, finally, your application is sent to the Director of Field Experiences in the College of Education, who is responsible for your student teaching placement.

Tip #5: Keep the lines of communication open.

The application has a place for your GSU e-mail address. This is the address where all correspondence concerning your placement will be sent. Anything that is sent through U.S. mail will go to the home address you put on your application and phone messages will go to the phone number on the application. If any of your personal information changes, it is imperative that you let the Director of Field Experiences and your advisor, know.