



**Georgia Professional Standards Commission**  
**Application Package**  
**for**  
**Course Approval**  
**of an**  
**Instructional Effectiveness Course**

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A PSC approved teacher training course can be used as annual credit toward certification renewal for educators in lieu of five days of classroom teaching. The title “instructional effectiveness course” is used herein as a general title to refer to the teacher training course. (A+ Reform, Section 20-2-200).

The information included in this package will assist you in applying for PSC approval of your course(s) to meet each A+ Reform annual requirement. The package contains detailed information about: (1) the criteria for course development; (2) the PSC course approval process; (3) an application for course approval; (4) timelines for obtaining approval; and (5) the process your agency must use to establish course credit toward certification renewal for educators who complete a PSC approved course.

Please read all of the information and complete the forms in this package as requested. If you need additional forms, please contact our office or download them from our website, or e-mail the PSC with your request. For questions, further information, you may contact the Educator Preparation Office by phone at (404) 232-2500 or check the website [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com).

Please apply for approval of one course per application. Submit your completed application package and supporting documentation by mail or electronically to:

**Georgia Professional Standards Commission**  
**Educator Preparation**  
**Two Peachtree Street, Suite 6000**  
**Atlanta, GA 30303**  
**(404) 232-2500**  
[www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com)

## Information for Instructional Effectiveness Course Approval

### **Introduction:**

In today's schools, beginning and veteran educators alike are confronting problems of changing technology, more diverse school environments, increased consumer demand for quality and accountability for student learning. A PSC approved instructional effectiveness course should provide opportunities for educators' professional growth that relate directly to this changing work environment and increased responsibilities for instruction and student achievement.

Georgia's House Bill 1187 A+ Reform legislation requires that educators in positions to impact instruction shall teach five days in a classroom each year of his/her five year certificate period, or participate in a teacher training course that is approved by the Professional Standards Commission as a valid means of credit toward certificate renewal.

### **The legal reference for this requirement is as follows:**

**Legal Reference:** Code Section 20-2-200; Subsection (b)(9). Before granting a renewable certificate required for teaching or for administering or supervising a school system, school, or school program to an applicant who holds a valid renewable certificate at the time of application, the commission shall require such applicant to demonstrate that he or she has worked as a teacher in a classroom for not less than five days during each school year preceding the expiration of such applicant's certificate or has completed a teacher training course approved by the Commission.

And

**Professional Standards Reference:** Rule 505-2-.13 Standard Renewal Requirements; Subsection

(9) For certificates that expire June 30, 2001, or after, an applicant for renewal must demonstrate that he or she has worked as a teacher in a classroom for not less than five days during each school year beginning on or after July 1, 2000, or has completed a PSC-approved teacher training course.□

(a) At the request of an employing Georgia school system/agency, the individual may apply to the Commission for a one-year nonrenewable certificate. During the one-year validity, the individual must demonstrate that he or she has completed a PSC-approved teacher training course.

(b) When the PSC-approved teacher training course requirements have been addressed, the individual may apply for clear renewable certification.□

## **Professional Standards Commission Approval Process**

The Professional Standards Commission is the state agency responsible for approving courses that can substitute for five days of class teaching and for verifying that the courses are credited toward certificate renewal. Any school system, RESA, or institution of higher education may seek approval for courses that are intended to meet the A+ Reform annual requirement for educators.

The general requirements for course approval are as follows:

1. Each approved course must have a specified instructional purpose that relates to an identified school improvement plan, focuses on increasing the educator's ability to build capacity for learning and improve student achievement.
2. Individual course content must be designed around one or more of the following four criteria and their descriptors. These are:
  - A. Curriculum
    - Prioritized Standards with Benchmarks
    - Grade Level and Course Expectations
    - Essential Concepts and Understandings
  - B. Instruction
    - P-12 Literacy Instruction
    - Reading, Writing, Mathematics in the content areas P-12
    - Cognitive and Differentiated Strategies
    - Acceleration and Remediation Options
  - C. Assessment
    - Focus on Assessment to Increase Learning
    - Quarterly Benchmark Assessments
    - Consistent Use of Rubrics
  - D. Organization
    - Collaborative Teaming
    - Instructive Blocks of Time
    - Multiple Options for Safety-Nets
    - Environments conducive to Learning
    - Safe Schools
3. Each course must contain an assessment plan based on explicit participant performance.
4. Each course must have a plan for crediting participants' participation for certification renewal through a local school system.

### **Professional Standards Commission Approval Process**

5. Each course must be PSC approved prior to being offered for certification renewal.
6. One course should be submitted for approval per application package.
7. Completed applications must be sent to the Professional Standards Commission. The PSC will review the course approval application using a course review checklist for completeness and clarity. (A copy of the checklist is included with this application).
8. The chair or designee of the Professional Standards Commission's Evaluation Review Panel will review each course application using the course review checklist and make a recommendation whether to approve or not approve the course. The recommendation is forwarded to the Professional Standards Commission that makes final course approval decisions during its monthly meeting agenda.
9. If the course does not approve the course, the PSC staff will request needed information to complete the approval process.

### **Timeline for Course Approval:**

Applications for course approval may be submitted at any time to the Professional Standards Commission. The entire approval process will require no more than 60 days from the date of submission to date of the approval decision.

## **Questions and Answers for the Instructional Effectiveness Course**

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### **Who should apply to the PSC for instructional effectiveness course approval?**

Any school system, RESA or institution of higher education may apply for course approval. Course approval should be granted by the PSC before the course is offered.

### **What is the PSC approval process applicable to this course?**

The education agency completes a course approval application for each course that it wishes to have approved and submits the application to the Professional Standards Commission. The Commission staff uses a course review checklist to verify completeness of the application, forwards it to the Evaluation Review Panel, the Panel reviews the application and forwards its approval recommendation to the Commission, and the Commission makes the final approval decision. The education agency is notified by written response from the Commission's executive secretary of the approval decision. When this response is received, the education agency can either offer the course(s) or submit any additional information that may be requested for reconsideration of approval.

### **What is the timeline required for the PSC approval process?**

The PSC needs a 60 day turn-around time to approve courses.

### **What is the process for obtaining course credit toward an individual's certification renewal?**

Educators completing the Instructional Effectiveness Course will follow normal school system procedures to obtain course credit for certification renewal. It is the educator's responsibility to make sure that all course credit is forwarded to his or her certification file.

### **How is individual course credit for PSC certification renewal maintained?**

Records of course completion are kept as staff development credit and reported to the PSC by the school system in which the certificated person is employed. An assigned number for an approved course is posted on the individual's certification record. School system employers will maintain employee renewal documentation files and make them available for state monitoring upon request. All public school systems are required to use the ACRES electronic renewal system. Private schools are also encouraged to use the ACRES system. Those school systems not enrolled currently and using ACRES should contact the PSC Support Services Division at (404) 657-9028 for enrollment and training to use the system.

### **What certificated persons may use an approved course to meet this requirement?**

Any employed Georgia educator is eligible to use the instructional effectiveness course if he/she holds a Clear Renewable Teaching Certificate and is required to meet the five days classroom teaching requirement.

## **Questions and Answers for the Instructional Effectiveness Course**

**My certificate expires this year, and I am not employed. Does this requirement apply to me?**

No, you can renew your certificate without meeting this requirement until such time that you resume employment in a Georgia school.

**I am a Georgia certificated person but I am teaching out-of-state. Does this apply to me?**

No, you can renew your certificate without meeting this requirement until such time that you resume employment in a Georgia school.

**When is this renewal requirement effective?**

It is effective for certificates that expire as of 6/30/01 or after.

**How many courses equal 5 days per year?**

One 5 SDU/3 semester hour teacher training course equals FIVE days of classroom teaching.

## **Instructions for Preparing the Instructional Effectiveness Course Approval Application**

The Professional Standards Commission considers an application for course approval complete when all required documents have been received by the Educator Preparation Section. The following information is required for a complete application. Use the checklist to assure that you have provided all the necessary information for a course review.

A complete PSC approval application package includes the following:

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- 1. An application cover sheet
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- 2. An explanation of the collaborative arrangements for offering the course (if applicable)
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- A brief description of the school improvement plan for which the course is designed
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- A succinct statement that describes how the course supports and complements the school improvement plan to build capacity for learning
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- A brief statement of the course purpose, performance resulting from the course.
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- A course matrix that describes how selected content criteria and performance expectations are met
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- A description of how the course is administered, who has responsibility for organizing, offering, and assuring that the course credit information is forwarded to the employee's certification renewal file
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- A list of any criteria that may be used as prerequisites or admission to the course
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- A list of faculty with assignments in the course and their credentials
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- A copy of any available written policies or procedures that guide or govern each program
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- A copy of any assessments used during and at the completion of the course to determine if the participants are better prepared to impact on student achievement (Attach a copy if available)

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMISSION  
COVER SHEET  
Instructional Effectiveness Course Approval**

Course Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Education Agency requesting approval)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

The exact course title offered for review in this document:



Check the description listed below that best fits the course to be reviewed for approval.

- \_\_\_ (a) An overview of all four criteria related to instructional effectiveness
- \_\_\_ (b) An indepth focus on curriculum
- \_\_\_ (c) An indepth focus on instruction
- \_\_\_ (d) An indepth focus on assessment
- \_\_\_ (e) An indepth focus on organization
- \_\_\_ (f) Other (Describe) \_\_\_\_\_

The number of equivalent semester hours to be granted for successful course completion.

\_\_\_ # of Semester Hours

Signature of Agency Head: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Georgia PSC Application for Course Approval**

Please submit two copies of the cover sheet and completed program application to the Educator Preparation, Professional Standards Commission, Two Peachtree Street, Suite 6000, Atlanta, GA 30303

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- Identify the Education Agency that is sponsoring the course.
  
- Describe any collaborative efforts with other education agencies or institutions of higher education to offer the course.
  
- Provide a brief description of the Agency's School Improvement Plan that is used to plan the course.
  
- Explain how the course supports and complements the School System Improvement Plan.
  
- List the purpose(s) of the course and identify the expected performance(s) resulting from the course.
  
- Describe any in-class observation and participation required for candidates.
  
- List the formative and summative assessments used in the course. Identify the performances measured by each assessment. Attach a copy of assessments, if available.
  
- List the person who has administrative responsibility for the course.



## **Course Matrix: Using the Criteria for Course Content Development**

Select from the following the appropriate criteria and descriptors that meet the purpose of the course you are preparing. Prepare a matrix format that lists the course descriptor(s) in the left column and lists the instructional activities, experiences and expected performances to meet the selected course criteria in columns to the right.

### A. Curriculum

- Prioritized Standards with Benchmarks
- Grade Level and Course Expectations
- Understanding Essential Concepts and Understandings

### B. Instruction

- P-12 Literacy Instruction
- Reading, Writing, Mathematics in the Content areas P-12
- Cognitive and Differentiated Strategies
- Acceleration and Remediation Options

### C. Assessment

- Focus on Assessment to Increase Learning
- Quarterly Benchmark Assessments
- Consistent Use of Rubrics

### D. Organization

- Teaming – Collaborative Leadership
- Instructive Blocks of Time
- Multiple Options for Safety-Nets
- Environments Conducive to Learning
- Safe Schools