



# Georgia Professional Standards Commission Pedagogy-only Programs Guidance Document

Rule 505-3-.06

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## **Guidance for Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs)**

**Purpose:** The purpose of this guidance document is to provide structure for EPPs as they implement pedagogy-only programs.

**Definition of Pedagogy-only:** A program offered at the post-baccalaureate level to candidates who have demonstrated content expertise. Pedagogy-only programs can be offered as non-degree (certification-only) or as degree-granting programs.

### **Guideline 1: Pedagogy-only Program Eligible Certification Fields**

As described in Rule 505-3-.06, pedagogy-only programs can be offered in specified fields—Middle Grades (4-8), Secondary (6-12), and all P-12 fields except Reading and Special Education. These fields include:

#### **All Middle Grades Fields (4-8)**

- Middle Grades Language Arts
- Middle Grades Mathematics
- Middle Grades Reading
- Middle Grades Science
- Middle Grades Social Science

#### **Secondary Fields (6-12)**

- Economics Education
- English Education
- Geography Education
- History Education
- Mathematics Education
- Political Science Education
- Science Education
- Speech Education

#### **Career, Technical, and Agricultural Fields**

- Agriculture Education (6-12)
- Business Education (6-12)
- Family and Consumer Sciences Education (6-12)
- Healthcare Science (6-12)
- Marketing Education (6-12)
- Engineering and Technology (P-12)
- Career and Technical Specializations (6-12)
- Computer Science (P-12)

#### **P-12 Fields**

- Art Education
- Dance Education
- Drama Education
- ESOL Education
- Foreign Language Education
- Health and P.E. Education
- Music Education

## **Guideline 2: Admission Requirements**

Because candidates are only taught how to teach the content they will deliver to future P-12 students, candidates must provide evidence of expertise in the content of the field of certification sought prior to enrolling in a pedagogy-only program. Although demonstration of content can be accomplished through one of three following options, it is important to note that regardless of which of the three ways candidates demonstrate content expertise, they must hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree from a GaPSC-accepted, accredited institution of higher education.

1. A major in the field of certification sought earned in conjunction with a bachelor's or higher degree from a GaPSC-accepted, accredited institution of higher education;
2. A passing score on the Georgia state-approved content assessment in the field of certification sought; or
3. Evidence of successful completion of a specified number of semester hours of content area coursework earned in conjunction with a bachelor's or higher degree or through additional coursework from a GaPSC-accepted, accredited institution of higher education. The number of semester hours of content area coursework required for secondary (6-12) and P-12 fields (excluding Reading and Special Education) is twenty-one (21) semester hours. For Middle Grades (4-8) fields, fifteen (15) semester hours of coursework is required in one of the content areas of Language Arts, Mathematics, Reading, Science, or Social Science. Candidates must demonstrate depth and breadth in the content of their chosen field.

As a reminder, all admission requirements for initial teaching programs described in [Educator Preparation Rule 505-3-.01](#) (e.g., GPA, Program Admission Assessment) are required for admission to pedagogy-only programs.

## **Guideline 3: Standards for Pedagogical Knowledge**

Because candidates demonstrate their understanding of the content prior to enrolling in a pedagogy-only program, EPPs must offer a preparation program described in program planning forms, catalogs, syllabi, and key assessments addressing the [Model Core Teaching Standards](#). These standards were published in 2011 by the Council for Chief State School Officers Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC).

## **Guideline 4: Clinical Practice and Field Experience Requirements**

GaPSC-approved EPPs shall ensure candidates complete a clinical practice experience in the field and grade levels of preparation. Although a yearlong residency is preferable, the minimum clinical practice requirement is one semester.

In addition, EPPs shall ensure candidates complete supervised field experiences consistent with the field and grade levels of certification sought. For middle grades education programs, field experiences are required in two (2) grade levels: 4-5 and 6-8. Programs leading to P-12 certification require field experiences in four (4) grade levels: PK-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12; and secondary education programs (6-12) require field experiences in two (2) grade levels: 6-8 and 9-12.

## **Guideline 5: Requirements for Program Completion**

Although some candidates will have passed the appropriate GACE content assessment prior to entering a pedagogy-only program, those who have not must attempt it prior to program completion. As a reminder, candidates seeking middle grades certification through a pedagogy-only program are not required to

complete the GACE assessment in two fields because post-baccalaureate candidates are required to seek certification in only one middle grades field.

Candidates completing a pedagogy-only program in middle grades must understand, use, and reflect on the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to young adolescent development and use that knowledge in their practice, as described in the [Middle Grades Education Program Rule 505-3-.19](#).

Candidates completing a pedagogy-only program in middle grades must also understand and apply principles of teaching reading and writing in grades 4-8. This requirement may be met in a separate three (3) semester-hour course, or the content may be embedded in courses and experiences throughout the preparation program.

All candidates in pedagogy-only programs are required to meet the exceptional child requirement. This includes three (3) or more semester hours of coursework in the identification and education of children who have special educational needs or the equivalent through a Georgia-approved professional learning program. This requirement may be met in a separate course, or content may be embedded in courses and experiences throughout the preparation program (see Rule 505-2-.24, SPECIAL GEORGIA REQUIREMENTS). In addition, candidates in all fields must have a working knowledge of Georgia's framework for the identification of differentiated learning needs of students and how to implement multi-tiered structures of support addressing the range of learning needs.

#### **FAQs:**

1. Should EPPs approved to offer the pedagogy-only program maintain approval for MAT programs in single fields (e.g., English Education, Mathematics Education)?  
Some candidates may need additional content prior to enrolling in a pedagogy-only program, so continuing to offer those content programs may be helpful in meeting candidate needs.
2. If an EPP decides to discontinue approval of single-field programs (e.g., English Education, Mathematics Education), how should candidates enrolled in those programs be listed in TPMS?  
Withdraw the candidates from the original program and enter them into the pedagogy-only program. E-mail [TPMS@gapsc.com](mailto:TPMS@gapsc.com) to alert GaPSC TPMS administrators of the plan to withdraw the candidates.
3. Are pedagogy-only program candidates required to meet the exceptional child requirement?  
Yes. The exceptional child requirement must be met in the pedagogy-only program. The Certification Division must be able to identify that candidates earned a grade of B or higher in the course.
4. How should candidates be entered in TPMS?  
The EPP will select the approved program (pedagogy-only) and the appropriate certification field (e.g., English Education).
5. Might a candidate be employed as the teacher of record while completing clinical practice for a pedagogy-only program?  
Yes. Although employment is not a requirement for enrollment in a pedagogy-only program, candidates may be employed as teachers of record while completing the program.

6. Are pedagogy-only program candidates employed as teachers required to complete grade band experiences?

Yes. Field experiences must occur outside candidates' classrooms in at least two settings with students with diverse learning needs and varied backgrounds.

7. What is required if a candidate employed as a teacher of record is re-assigned to teach in a different subject area?

Candidates enrolled in a pedagogy-only program who are employed as the teacher of record in one subject and then assigned to teach a different subject can continue in the pedagogy-only program if they have met the admission requirements for the new (second) field. When this happens, the EPP must withdraw the candidate from TPMS and re-enter the candidate in the program with the new (second) field of certification. If the candidate did not pass the GACE assessment prior to enrolling in the pedagogy-only program, the assessment attempt in the new (second) field will be required for completion.

8. Must an EPP offer separate methods courses for all certification fields (e.g., Assessment for Mathematics Teachers)?

No. Instead of offering individual content methods courses, EPPs might offer a course in assessment and require assignments be tailored to each of the certification fields sought by enrolled candidates.

9. Might candidates complete the pedagogy-only program in two different fields?

No. Candidates must be prepared in one teaching field, focusing on that particular field during all field and clinical experiences.

10. What is the difference between a pedagogy-only program that leads to a master's degree and one that is considered a "certification-only program?"

Since both require the bachelor's degree for admittance, the master's degree program allows a candidate to obtain certification while completing a higher degree in the field. The master's degree also typically includes research coursework, deepened theory concepts, and more credit hours than a certification-only program. The certification-only program allows a candidate to obtain certification, but the degree level does not change.