

## **DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES FOR DISMISSAL FROM THE USM TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The following due process guidelines shall apply to all dismissals from the USM Teacher Education Program, which includes all ETEP and TEAMS options and pathways.

### ***Administrative Withdrawal***

Difficult as it is to discuss in a positive manner, some actions will result in interns being removed from the program. A few of these are so severe that one instance will warrant immediate dismissal. They include: any physical or sexual harassment by the intern; reasonable cause to believe the intern may have committed a felony or other grossly unacceptable behavior; improper interaction with a student, including any adult-child sexual advances or other interactions which are clearly harmful; willful and unjustifiable disregard of a proper request by a duly responsible school official regarding conduct or actions associated with that school's operations; or willful and unjustifiable disregard of a proper request by a duly responsible school official which results in the dismissal of the student from school grounds.

A site coordinator may unilaterally and immediately suspend the intern from the program for such serious causes. Such a suspension may lead to a recommendation to the Chair of the Teacher Education Department for Administrative Withdrawal from the program. In cases where investigations are initiated to determine the truth of these causes, the student will remain effectively suspended from the program and will not be allowed to continue with coursework or internship in the program.

### ***Academic Withdrawal***

An accumulation of other, less serious, behaviors related to program coursework and/or internship may also result in dismissal.

- Interns assigned to a school are expected to follow the procedures and schedules followed by practicing teachers. Repeated lateness or unwarranted absences may lead to dismissal from the program.
- Interns are also expected to complete University requirements in a timely and worthy fashion. Repeated instances of late or unprofessional University work may lead to dismissal from the program.
- Interns are expected to interact with all children and adults in a civil and professional manner. Repeated instances of inappropriate communication may lead to dismissal from the program.
- Interns are expected to comply with the judgments of host and mentor teachers regarding desired classroom behavior and management. Repeated instances of usurping the legitimate responsibility of the classroom teacher may lead to dismissal from the program.
- Interns are expected to continue to develop their teaching skills and their disposition to enhance learning environments and activities for the learners they teach. Lack of adequate progress in the development of teaching skills and self-assessment and refinement patterns may lead to dismissal from the program.

For cumulative causes such as those listed above, the following procedure will normally be utilized:

1. The site coordinator will convene a meeting with the intern and a committee consisting of the mentor, supervisor, and other appropriate parties, one of which will be a university faculty member representing the program. In the case where a university faculty member serves as the site coordinator and/or supervisor, this person may serve in multiple roles.

- At this meeting, the problem will be discussed and a formal action plan for improvement will be written, with expected outcomes, activities, methods of evaluation, and timelines. It will be signed by all parties. The Director of Teacher Education and Chair of the Teacher Education Department will be notified of this meeting and sent copies of the action plan generated.
2. The site coordinator will convene a second meeting with the intern and the committee to evaluate the implementation of the action plan. After this meeting, a recommendation will be made on behalf of the committee by the site coordinator concerning whether or not the intern remains in the program. The site coordinator will write a letter to the intern explaining the reasons for the recommendation. If the recommendation is for dismissal, the site coordinator will forward that recommendation to the Chair of the Teacher Education Department for approval as an Academic Withdrawal.

### ***Student Conduct Code***

In addition to the causes for withdrawal cited above, infractions of the USM Student Conduct Code may result in administrative or academic withdrawal. This code may be found on the USM website: <http://www.maine.edu/policyscc501.html>.

### ***Appeals***

Appeals for dismissals from the USM Teacher Education Program must be in writing and should be directed to the Director of Teacher Education at USM. The Director will convene a committee to consider the appeal. This committee will consist of faculty members from the USM Teacher Education Department and may also include site coordinators from a site other than that from which the appeal originates. Appeals should address the reasons why a student thinks the dismissal was inappropriate and should specify the outcome sought.

The committee will meet to consider the intern's appeal. At the intern's request, the committee will provide an opportunity at this meeting for the intern to present his or her case for appeal. The committee may also choose to invite to the meeting others involved in this case. At the conclusion of this meeting, the committee will make a recommendation to the Director. The Director, after consultation with the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development, will make a decision on the appeal. The Director will then write a letter to the intern explaining the decision. If dismissal is upheld, further appeal may be made to the USM Associate Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies for review.

At each stage of appeal, the intern is entitled to a written judgment as promptly as possible without sacrificing necessary discovery and deliberation from the appeal agent. Unless the appeal agent explains in writing sufficient cause for delaying judgment, the decision should be conveyed within ten university working days following the receipt of the written appeal statement. During the appeal process, the student will remain effectively withdrawn from the program and will not be allowed to continue with coursework or internship in the Teacher Education Program.