
TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM – A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW

The Teacher Education Program (TEP) at Athens State University promotes professional development of students who seek teaching as a career. Admittance into the TEP is reserved for those students who are highly committed and have demonstrated that they will be a positive reflection of the Athens State University College of Education.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

- Meet the TEP requirements: http://www.athens.edu/college_edu/tep-info.php
- Apply for an interview: http://www.athens.edu/college_edu/tep-info.php
- Establish an interview date and time
- Submit your candidate portfolio to your advisor at least one week prior to the interview
- Complete the interview process

PRIOR TO THE INTERVIEW

PREPARATION

Are you approaching your TEP interview as you would a final class project? The amount of work you put into your interview impacts the interview.

- **Portfolio:** Prepare your portfolio in accordance with the specified requirements using well thought out and meaningful rationales. Be sure that sentence structure and grammar demonstrates effective communication skills.
- **Interviewing Skills:** Do you know the questions you will be expected to answer? Just as important do you know the questions they expect you to ask? Assessing yourself (skills, attributes, strengths, areas of improvement) and researching the TEP program are critical pre-interview assignments. See [Examples of Typical Interview Problems](#).
- **Work Products:** Select a couple of your best work products and prepare these to take to the interview. Be sure that you present them in a professional manner, without torn edges, loose paper, etc.
- **Taking Notes:** Locate a notebook and writing utensil that you can take and use during the interview. You should always be prepared to write down any information that you may need to retain from the interview, such as answers to questions that you ask, follow-up procedures, etc.

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

Attention to detail is crucial, so here are some tips for both men and women. Make sure you have:

1. Clean and polished conservative dress clothes
2. Well-groomed hairstyle
3. Cleaned and trimmed fingernails
4. No visible body piercing beyond conservative ear piercings for women
5. Well-brushed teeth and fresh breath
6. No gum, candy, or other objects in your mouth
7. Minimal jewelry
8. No visible body piercings or tattoos
9. No heavy perfumes or colognes

Finally, check your attire in the rest room just before your interview for a final check of your appearance—to make sure your tie is straight; your hair is combed, etc.

THE INTERVIEW

ATTITUDE

- **Expectations:** Students sometimes believe that admittance into the teacher education program is guaranteed – something that is owed to them because they have chosen the teaching profession. Athens State University has a lot on the line when they admit students into TEP – it is important that only students who will positively reflect on Athens State be admitted. Additionally, attributes such as poise and professionalism can make or break the interview. Did you approach the interview humbly and appreciatively for the opportunity?

BEGINNING WITH A GREAT START

- **First Impressions:** What kind of first impression are you making? A solid versus a shaky handshake; appropriate eye contact versus none at all; speaking clearly versus talking low. Did you enter the room with confidence, introduce yourself and shake the hand of your interviewer?
- **Confidence:** Your portfolio may make you look like the perfect TEP candidate. But that's why we conduct interviews. You'll have a shot at being a qualified candidate only when you believe it for yourself and demonstrate this fact to your interviewer.

THROUGHOUT THE INTERVIEW

- **Communication Style:** Are you presenting yourself as a college student *just hoping* to be admitted into the teacher education program or are you clearly demonstrating that you are a quality pre-service teacher candidate? Are your answers complete and well thought out? Do you speak clearly and concisely? Do you appear knowledgeable about your chosen profession? Are you knowledgeable about the Athens State College of Education Conceptual Framework?

- **Work Product:** Did you bring and share with the interviewer an example or two of excellent work products that you have produced? Did you discuss their relevance to your commitment to positively represent Athens State University and the teaching profession?
- **Notes:** Did you write down anything during the interview? Did you take notes?

ENDING ON A GOOD NOTE

- **Questions:** What questions do you have for the interviewer? If asked if you have questions – a good interviewee should always be prepared to ask a question or two.
- **Final Farewell:** Did you end the interview with a final handshake and demonstration of appreciation for the interviewer’s time, information provided, etc.?

FOLLOWING THE INTERVIEW

- Did you send a thank-you note and/or follow-up correspondence?

RESOURCES

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

You may be asked a variety of questions throughout your interview. These questions will be used to evaluate:

- Knowledge of the teaching profession and the Athens State College of Education’s conceptual framework
- Communication skills
- Commitment to positively representing the Athens State College of Education and the teaching profession

QUESTION POOL

While you may be asked other questions, the following is a list of possible interview questions

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What else would you like to share about yourself?
3. Do you like to be challenged? (Give an example to back up your answer.)
4. Why do you want become a teacher?
5. What do you find most appealing about a teaching career?
6. Describe “professionalism.” What does it mean to you?
7. What does it mean to be a teacher?
8. What part of teaching do you look forward to most? Explain your answer.
9. What part of teaching do you look forward to least? Explain your answer.
10. What is the ideal relationship between a teacher and student? Provide an example.
11. Describe an extraordinary teacher.
12. Describe a motivating teacher.
13. What are the three most important characteristics of an effective educator/teacher? Explain your answer.

14. The Common Core (College Career and Readiness Standards) has been implemented in Alabama schools; please tell me how you would address this in planning for classroom instruction.
15. Classroom management is considered the weakest area for most new teachers; provide specific examples of how you would deal with common misbehaviors.

INTERVIEW RUBRIC

Outcomes	Objectives	TARGET	ACCEPTABLE	UNACCEPTABLE
Knowledge of the teaching profession	Show evidence of how present skills and coursework relate to the teaching profession and evidence of knowledge of specific abilities needed for a career in education.	Demonstrates knowledge of the teaching profession and various abilities needed for a career in education are evident and incorporated through-out the interview	Some evidence of knowledge of the teaching profession and abilities needed for a career in education are shared at times in the interview	Minimal evidence of knowledge of the teaching profession and abilities needed for a career in education
Knowledge of the Athens State College of Education's conceptual framework (not memorization of conceptual framework)	Show evidence of knowledge of the Athens State College of Education's conceptual framework in discussions about coursework, professional dispositions, teacher preparation, and the teaching profession.	Clearly correlates the ASU College of Education's conceptual framework with coursework, professional dispositions, teacher preparation, and the teaching profession and is able to articulate these.	Some connections of the ASU College of Education's conceptual framework with coursework, professional dispositions, teacher preparation, and the teaching profession are evident, but the candidate does not clearly articulate these.	The ASU College of Education's conceptual framework is not understood. The candidate is not familiar with the conceptual framework and cannot articulate the purpose of the conceptual framework.
Communication Skills	Display effective verbal and nonverbal skills: clarity of expression, eye contact, body language, voice, grammar, word usage and pronunciation, friendly, poised, and personable.	Confident, poised, personable, relates well to the evaluators, answers questions clearly and effectively	Answers most questions well, but displays signs of self-conscious or nervousness in his/her nonverbal communication	Interview is brief because candidate lacks the ability to carry on a conversation or answer questions in detail
Response to Evaluators' Questions	Provide clear and concise answers to evaluators' interview questions.	Responses to questions were appropriate and given without hesitation	Responded adequately to all questions, but without ease or accuracy	Did not answer; Unable to answer
Professional Appearance	Attire and grooming suitable for professional	Professional appearance, attire	Neat appearance, attire and grooming	Non-professional appearance, attire

	job interview.	and grooming	but lacks polish	and/or grooming
Voice	Speak clearly with appropriate pitch, tempo, and volume.	Voice quality is outstanding and pleasing to listen to	Voice quality is good, but could improve	Voice quality is adequate
Body Language/ Clothing Choice	Use appropriate body language including gestures, posture, mannerisms, and eye contact.	Body language enhances the candidate's presence	Body language shows minimal amount of nervousness	Body language shows nervousness
Grammar/Word Usage/ Pronunciation	Use proper grammar and pronunciation.	No grammatical or pronunciation errors	Some (1–5) grammatical and pronunciation errors	Extensive (more than 5) grammatical and/or pronunciation errors

PORTFOLIO RUBRIC

The College of Education changed portfolios between Summer 2014 and Fall 2014 because of the new conceptual framework, therefore, there are currently two different portfolio assessments. Click on the link below that represents when you completed ED 301.

- [Took ED 301 Fall 2014 or later](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzw27cwAbzfBY3d3dFJXymlxOEK/edit?usp=sharing)
(<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzw27cwAbzfBY3d3dFJXymlxOEK/edit?usp=sharing>)
- [Took ED 301 Summer 2014 or earlier](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzw27cwAbzfBMngwdjZrNWIVekU/edit?usp=sharing)
(<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzw27cwAbzfBMngwdjZrNWIVekU/edit?usp=sharing>)

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL INTERVIEW PROBLEMS

1. Extreme Shyness – Interviewees who avoid eye contact with the interviewers may be perceived as frightened or uncomfortable. They give very short answers to questions, forcing interviewers to probe with numerous follow-up questions to receive even a fraction of the response they were seeking.
2. Abrasiveness – Interviewees appear negative and, at times, seem hostile. They are abrupt in their responses. In many cases they also appear to be opinionated and lack the openness to hear other viewpoints.
3. Over Anxious to Please – Interviewees appear willing to say anything they think the interviewer wants to hear. They come across as not having an opinion of their own. They also tend to leave the board with the impression as lacking courage or convictions.
4. Overconfidence – Interviewees appear to believe they are already sure of acceptance into the program. They appear to be overly impressed with themselves, thereby communicating to the Admissions Boards that the interview process is unimportant.
5. Vagueness – Interviewees who display this trait generally communicate they are uncertain of what the whole process is about; they are uncertain about what they should say to the Admissions Boards and why they are choosing to enter the teaching profession.

REFERENCES:

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Road to Teaching (n.d.). Teacher interview questions – Largest collection on the Web. Retrieved from <http://roadtoteaching.com/teacher-interview-questions/>