

West Virginia State University
Department of Education
Teacher Candidate Dress Code Policy

The mission of the Education Department at West Virginia State University (WVSU) is “To prepare teachers as Human Developers who love to teach.” To achieve this mission, the Education Department has adopted three professional dispositions: (1) Student Focused, (2) Role Model, and (3) Member of a Profession. The Teacher Education Candidate Dress Code is designed to assist all teacher education candidates to meet WVSU Professional Dispositions- (2) Role Model and (3) Member of a Profession. This policy was developed in accordance with Guidelines established by the West Virginia Board of Education and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education. In addition, the public schools, where WVSU teacher education candidates are placed, provided additional input.

The West Virginia State University (WVSU) Department of Education Faculty expects all teacher candidates representing the program in any field or clinical placement and professional arena to be a role model for public school students by projecting a positive disposition and conducting themselves with a high level of professional decorum. One part of this professionalism includes dressing appropriately at all times to reflect positively on the candidate, West Virginia State University, the WVSU Education Department, and the education profession.

Personal appearance has direct bearing on the authority, confidence, and self-esteem of teacher candidates and inappropriate dress may create distractions to instruction and student learning. All candidates are expected to adhere to this dress code policy and project common practices of modesty, cleanliness, and neatness in the academic learning environment. The candidate who fails to comply with this dress code may be removed from any professional experience and be subject to disciplinary actions.

WVSU teacher candidates have traditionally upheld high standards of professionalism, including that of appropriate, professional attire. In accordance with that tradition, the WVSU Department of Education is adopting this policy to support its candidates’ tradition of excellence. The following standards of dress and provisions of this policy are applicable to all WVSU Teacher Education candidates:

Skirts, Dresses, and Skirted Suits

For female candidates, dresses and skirts should be of an appropriate length. Dresses and skirts, and skirts that are split at or below the knee are acceptable. Mini-skirts, skorts, beach dresses, and spaghetti-strap or strapless dresses (worn without a sweater or jacket) are **inappropriate**.

Shirts, Tops, Blouses, and Jackets

Dress shirts, sweaters, golf-type shirts, and turtlenecks are acceptable attire to be worn by male and female candidates. All shirts, blouses, sweaters, etc. must have sleeves. Bare shoulders or low-cut necklines and/or backless clothing are unacceptable. Shirts or blouses must cover the entire torso at all times, even in movement. Crop tops, tube tops, and halters are **unacceptable**. Any garment made of transparent and/or see through material is considered **unacceptable**.

Most suit jackets or sport jackets are also acceptable attire, if they do not violate the prescribed guidelines. In addition, inappropriate attire include tank tops; midriff tops; shirts with potentially offensive words, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, or slogans; halter-tops; tops with bare shoulders; sweatshirts, and t-shirts unless worn under another blouse, shirt, jacket, or dress. All these items are **not allowed** during professional experiences.

Slacks, Pants, and Suit Pants

Slacks/pants that are similar to cotton khakis or synthetic material are appropriate and acceptable. Wool pants, flannel pants, and dressy capris are also acceptable.

Inappropriate slacks/pants are jeans, sweatpants, exercise pants, pajama bottoms, Bermuda shorts, short shorts, shorts, bib overalls, tights, leggings, spandex, bicycle pants or any other form-fitting pants. Candidates shall wear their trousers, slacks, or pants properly. For example, the waist of the garment at their natural waist level without sagging. Intentionally torn, ripped, cut, or slashed pants are considered inappropriate and are **not** to be worn by candidates representing the education program.

No undergarments, i.e. bras, panties, briefs or boxers may be visible. Also, no body parts of a personal or private nature should be exposed. Oversized or baggy clothing, which may present a safety hazard, may not be worn.

Shoes and Footwear

All candidates must wear soled, enclosed shoes for personal safety reasons. Conservative athletic or walking shoes, loafers, clogs, sneakers, boots, flats, dress heels, and leather deck-type shoes are acceptable. Shower shoes, house shoes, slippers, flip-flops, sandals, or thongs may **not** be worn. Additionally, any similar flip flop/thong type shoes fitting between the toes are considered unsafe and therefore, are **not allowed** to be worn during field/clinical experiences.

Hats and Head Covering

Any type of head covering (this includes hats of any type, scarfs, wraps, baseball caps...) is **unacceptable**. Head covers that are required for religious purposes or to honor cultural traditions are allowed with appropriate documentation and approval.

Accessories and Jewelry

Accessories and jewelry should be selected with great care to promote public school student and teacher education candidate safety. Appropriate professional ties, scarves, belts, and

jewelry are acceptable as long as these items are worn in moderation. Modest piercing of the ears is acceptable; however, excessive ear piercings, other facial, tongue, spacers or visible body piercing is **unacceptable**. Also, chain or spike jewelry is **unacceptable for safety reasons**.

Any clothing, accessories, symbols, jewelry, or other paraphernalia, that depict or suggest association with a gang **shall not** be brought to school, worn at school, or in any way be present at any school related event.

Makeup, Perfume, and Cologne

Students and other school personnel may be **highly allergic** to the chemicals in perfumes and make-up. Therefore, candidates should check with the school (teacher or principal) before going to their professional assignments to discuss what the school policy is regarding this subject.

Grooming Standards

All candidates are expected to maintain appropriate masculine and feminine hygiene. Facial hair should be neat, clean, closely trimmed and not be a distraction to the learning environment. **Tattoos and/or body art may be a distraction to the learning process; therefore, all tattoos must be covered.**

Hair should be kept neat, clean, and reasonably styled. Hairstyles are to be moderate, clean, kept and of natural color. Startling and/or extreme hairstyles (i.e., spiked, Mohawk, dyed with an unnatural color/tint, etc.) are **unacceptable**.

Dress Code Exceptions

Candidates in Physical Education (PE) placements may wear athletic shorts (not stretch) one inch above the knee during instructional PE classes. Also, teachers of art, theater and/or the lab sciences may be required to wear the appropriate clothing and safety goggles unique to their content specialization.

Candidates performing duty at ball games and/or other extracurricular activities shall dress in a manner befitting to their profession or the occasion (which may require work-type clothes, as approved by the principal).

At times, candidates may be exempt from some of parts of the dress code during special activities such as field trips and other similar events. However, candidates must always adhere to standards of good taste. Specific appropriate attire may be worn on spirit days or school dress up days as announced or designated by the principal.

Disclaimer:

While this list is seemingly inclusive, with any situations that are not addressed in this policy, candidates are to use their professional judgment and adhere to the spirit of this policy. During field/clinical experiences and professional experiences, if questions arise about the dress code policy then candidates are encouraged to discuss these questions with their university supervisor or professor.

NOTE: *Any teacher education candidate in violation of any part of this policy could be excused from their field/clinical experience and/or subject to consequences described in the WVSU Department of Education Teacher Handbook including DISAPPROVAL*

The Dress code appeal process is the same as the Challenge of an Academic Grade in the University Catalog. (See Academic Catalog for details)

Source:

KANAWHA COUNTY DRESS CODE - Student Dress Policy
Series: J36 - Issued: 11.17.2000
Revised: 05.15.2008