Essential Functions for Teacher Education Students

To be an effective teacher, a graduate of Misericordia University's Teacher Education program must possess a multitude of knowledge, skills, and abilities. Students who wish to quality for admission and progression in the teacher education program must meet both academic and performance requirements. Academic requirements are described in the University policies and in the TED Guidebook. In addition to the academic requirements, an entering student must be aware that the functional abilities and attributes described below are necessary to function as an effective pre-service and in-service teacher. If a student has a physical, mental, or any other disability and requires special accommodation to meet the teacher education program requirements, the student should contact the University's Office of Student Disabilities (OSD), which is located in the Student Success Center, lower level of Alumnae Hall, and can be reached at 570-674-6408. Once documentation of a Plan of Accommodation (POA) is received, the TED will endeavor to make reasonable accommodations for the student.

Below is a categorized list of essential functions or abilities for students majoring in programs offered by the TED.

Essential Functions and Related Performance Demands

Sensing/perceiving visual and auditory stimuli
Since teachers must monitor students' work, TED students should be able to utilize immediate and adequate near vision to evaluate student work.

Since teachers must monitor groups of students in classrooms and large areas, TED students should be able to utilize immediate and adequate far vision to discern the identity of students, colleagues, parents, images and objects at a distance.

Since teachers must monitor students' presented work, TED students should be able to utilize immediate and adequate auditory acuity to evaluate students' presentations and responses.

Perception and empathy
Since Teachers must read, interpret, and react to students' emotions, TED students should be able to utilize empathy to understand and react appropriately to students' basic emotional states.

Sensing/perceiving multiple stimuli
Since teachers must often simultaneously attend to multiple stimuli, TED students should be able to work comfortably in confusing or chaotic environments.

Temperance/emotional control
Since teachers are expected to behave professionally in all situations, TED students should demonstrate that they can control their emotional reactions to people and events.

Time management
Since teachers are expected to meet multiple deadlines, TED students should be able to manage time in ways that allow them to comfortably meet deadlines.

Organization of data

Since teachers are expected to gather, analyze, interpret, and react to data, TED students should be able to identify important variables and use them to make informed decisions about students and their progress.

Understanding printed language
Since teachers are expected to quickly read and react to, or use print and digital materials, TED students should be able to interpret print and digital materials, including those written or created by children.

Understanding spoken language
Since teachers are expected to effectively hear and interpret language and noise, TED students should be able hear and interpret speech, including speech used by the developmentally immature, and other auditory cues.

Using spoken language
Since teachers are expected to effectively communicate with students and others, in a variety of settings, TED students should be able to use appropriate voice to make themselves understood in various situations.

Gross motor activities
Since teachers are expected to move about classrooms and other spaces, TED students should be able to move themselves quickly through spaces.

Fine motor activities
Since teachers are expected to manipulate small items, TED students should be able to use their fingers and extremities to physically manipulate items.

Strength and stamina
Since teachers are expected to perform, literally and figuratively "on their feet", for long periods of time and because teachers are sometimes expected to restrain students, TED students should be able to demonstrate that they have sufficient strength and stamina.

Critical/analytical Thinking
Since teachers need to be effective decision makers/critical thinkers, TED students should be able to solve problems, transfer knowledge from one situation to another, identify cause-effect relationships, and synthesize information so that they are prepared to make decisions related to student learning, effective, research-based teaching methodologies and classroom management strategies, and what it means to be a professional in the field of education.

Interpersonal Skills
Since teachers are expected to interact with a wide variety of individuals, TED students should be able to interact and communicate effectively and respectfully with students, parents, guardians, colleagues, staff, and administration.

Maintain Safety

Since teachers are expected to maintain a safe environment for students, TED students should be able to recognize and react in a timely manner to emergency situations to the extent possible under the control of the student teacher.

If a student cannot demonstrate the skills and abilities listed above, it is the responsibility of the student to request accommodations. If a student's health status should change and the student is no longer able to participate in the classroom setting, it is the responsibility of the student to notify the Department Chair of the TED, who would ensure that the proper documentation is received from the student's health care provider. For more information regarding requesting reasonable accommodations, refer to the current Misericordia University Undergraduate Catalog or contact Kristen Ricardo, Director of Student Success Center/Office for Students with Disabilities at 570-674-6408.