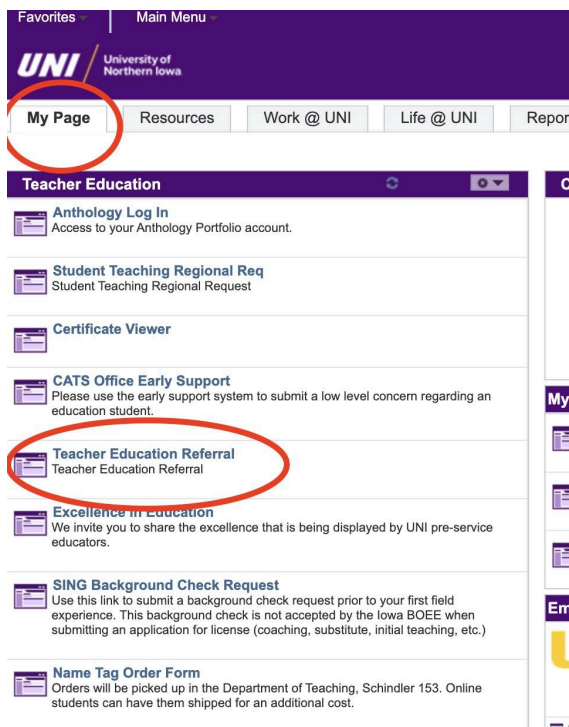


Teacher Education Referral (TER) Faculty Guide

Student Supports and Concerns Documentation

If you have a **low level concern regarding an education student**, complete a [CATS Office Early Support](#) form. A low level concern would be something such as: student frequently missing classes, not completing work, seems to be “lost”, struggling to meet your expectations, etc. A CATS advisor will then reach out to the student to help counsel and direct the student as warranted by the situation.



If you have a **medium or high level concern**, or a low concern that is persisting despite attempts to intervene and support the student, you will **complete a Teacher Education Referral**.

Medium concerns worth noting and that should be resolved with an action plan and support might include:

- Early support issues that are not resolved.
- Student outbursts, behavioral concerns
- Students are not meeting expectations in coursework - poor lesson planning, etc.

High concerns are issues that you think could result in removal from the teacher education program and may include:

- Legal issues during student teaching (e.g., drinking with K-12 students present)
- Inappropriate conduct with students
- Serious dispositional events and/or behaviors.
- Academic dishonesty/ethical violations

When you write a Teacher Education Referral, it is important to include an action plan that the student would need to demonstrate in order for you to resolve the issue.

Documenting concerns in the TER system is important because Iowa legislation SF2411 allows students to apply for [equivalency credit that can be applied to student teaching](#). In other words, a student who has worked as a certified substitute teacher or paraprofessional can potentially reduce their student teaching by up to 8 weeks. One consideration for approval is a review of the TER system to ensure the student did not have any past concerns. This also allows faculty to help provide additional support for the student to be successful and, in some cases, to prompt a more formal conversation with the student about career goals.

When you write a TER, it is suggested that you start with a positive about the student, then detail the concern - citing evidence from the course or situation. Finally, set the action steps that need to occur for the TER to be resolved.

Below are examples of TERs / Action plans.

Example 1:

XXXXX completed the hours required for his Level 2 Field Experience during the fall semester of the 2024-2025 academic year. XXXXX demonstrated strengths in the areas of reflection, using feedback as a means to improve, and a willingness to accept his growth areas and be aware of where he might struggle as a future teacher.

The most significant concerns for XXXXX involve his teacher presence, social awareness and withitness as a teacher. XXXXX struggled to demonstrate a confident and authoritative presence in the classroom. His hesitance to jump in with students communicated a passive presence in the classroom. This passive presence was evidenced in XXXXX's quiet voice, his struggle to interact informally with students, and his difficulty moving with purpose in ways that guide the learning process for students. XXXXX's mentor teacher commented, "I confidently can say he would struggle handling the multitasking, quick turn-around of having to make flexible decisions "on the fly," or speak professionally to colleagues or students when escalated over seemingly small things in the teaching world."

XXXXX also demonstrated concern in the areas of professionalism and communication. XXXXX missed seminar on more than one occasion and missed important content due to those absences. There were instances where XXXXX's communication came across as opinionated and judgmental to his mentor teacher. For example, a fellow teacher at his school commented that XXXXX offered suggestions to his mentor teacher on ways she might respond to a struggling student. I know XXXXX's actions were well intended as a way to support that student; however, it's really important to remember that as pre-service teachers, we are there to learn from people who have the license and experience that he does not have.

ACTION PLAN:

I do think XXXXX's heart is in the right place, but I am confident he needs more time to develop in the areas of teacher presence, social awareness and professional communication with mentor teachers. In order to earn credit for Level 2, XXXXX will need to redo his Level 2 experience to practice these skills. If he is successful, he would be able to move on to his Level 3 experience the following semester. XXXXX must also request a meeting with Career Services to discuss alternative opportunities that would fit his skillset and strengths. XXXXX does have enough credits to graduate with English non-teaching and it would be worthwhile to explore possible routes should teaching not be what he continues to pursue.

Example 2:

XXXX is enrolled in Methods of XXXX course this fall with me. XXXX has wonderful ideas and participates often in class when they are present. XXXX has had difficulty with attendance and because of this, it has hurt their performance. XXXX has missed 6 classes this semester and has not turned in 2 of 3 major assignments and turned in the 3rd major assignment late.

I met with XXXX on 10/12 to check in with them and share my concerns about their absences and missing assignments. We discussed how they could not miss any more classes. I gave them an extension on missing assignment (due 10/8 and extension until 10/24). We also discussed difficulties XXXX is experiencing and I explained that the Dean of students could offer support and XXXX agreed I could share their name and concerns with the Dean of students. I also discussed that if my concerns continued, I would file a TER to develop a further action plan. I shared links to the Dean of Students and TER process and handbook with XXXX during our meeting on 10/10.

Unfortunately XXXX did not turn in the extended assignment or the following assignment, a lesson plan, which was due 10/29. On October 28th, the Dean of students notified me that they have reached out to XXXX multiple times and have not been able to contact them. XXXX's GPA has dropped below a 2.5 so they cannot move further in the Teacher Education Program because of GPA and has two D notices at midterm.

ACTION PLAN:

Here are a few things I want XXXX to do:

XXXX needs to reach out/ reply to the Dean of Students and work on getting the support they need for this semester and in the future. XXXX please update me when this happens so I know you are following your action plan and can add it to your TER notes to show your progress.

XXXX should reach out to professors who filed D midterms notices to discuss if they are able to bring their D grades up this semester or if they need to drop courses this semester: Last Day to Drop a Full-Semester course without a "F": November 12 by 4:30pm.

Last: XXXX can work to raise their GPA next semester by taking only 12 hours and retaking Survey of XXX History (grade F) will be very helpful for XXXX. I am happy to meet and help with any of these action plan items.

The TCPRC (Teacher Candidate Performance Review Committee) is tasked with monitoring the TER system and any student who has 3 TERs will be brought before the TCPRC to discuss the possible removal from the teacher education program. The TCPRC can meet with a student earlier if the TER is serious enough.

If you file a TER, it is suggested that you reach out to any additional professors that would be connected to the experience. For example, if you are teaching an internship course, it would be wise to reach out to the paired methods professor to share your concerns.

Your role in resolving a TER:

Another way to support your action plan is to create ways that students can report back. For example, “please notify me when you have completed your meeting with the Dean of Students or Career Services...”. This can help get action plans completed and possibly resolve TERs. You will receive a reminder email at the end of each semester asking if you are ready to resolve a TER. This is an important time to go back, review the action plans and follow up with students or faculty involved. Resolve any TERs that have been successfully completed and make notes on TERs that still need attention. If a student leaves the program, and you are concerned about resolving the TER, know that it is archived and if they were to reapply to UNI TEP, the TER will resurface and your information will be referenced.