**Essay Directions**

In a separate document, address the writing prompts below. Each response should be typed, double-spaced and not exceed 500 words. The quality of the essays submitted will be used as a criterion for evaluating your communication skills and should represent your best effort. The rubric used to assess the essays is adapted from the CBASE Essay Rubric.

1. Indicate your motivation for selecting the teaching profession. Highlight experiences that will contribute to your efficiency as a teacher, including travel, or other topics pertinent to your preparation for teaching.

2. Most students have had some type of difficulty in one course or another. Difficulties stem from various sources, such as teacher-student conflicts or lack of interest in the subject field. In an essay to be read by an audience of educated adults, identify one class in which you faced a difficulty either as a student or as a teacher, describe the difficulty, and explain how you handled the situation.

3. Educators debate extending high school to five years because of increasing demands on students from employers and colleges to participate in extracurricular activities and community service in addition to having high grades. Some educators support extending high school to five years because they think students need more time to achieve all that is expected of them. Other educators do not support extending high school to five years because they think students would lose interest in school and attendance would drop in the fifth year. In your opinion, should high school be extended to five years? In your essay, take a position on this question. You may write about either one of the two points of view given, or you may present a different point of view on this question. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.

**Standards for Essay Submitted to Teacher Education**

The guidelines below provide you with an overview of writing expectations. The rubric used to assess the essay is adapted from the CBASE Essay Rubric.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content:</th>
<th>Apparent central idea supported with concrete detail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the whole theme:</td>
<td>Plan method of theme apparent; unified paragraphs generally effective in their development; infrequent omission of transitions between paragraphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Structure:</td>
<td>Sentences correctly constructed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling:</td>
<td>Infrequent deviations from standard grammar, punctuation, and spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Format:</td>
<td>Typed, double-spaced and not more than 500 words each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CBASE Essay Rubric**

**Score of 6**

Essays assigned a “6” will be excellent in nearly all respects, although the circumstances under which the essays were written allow for some imperfections. The “6” essay should employ a sound organizational strategy with clearly developed paragraphs proceeding from a sharply focused and clearly identifiable main idea or thesis. Assertions should be sufficiently developed and directed to engage the specified audience and should be supported though appropriate examples, details, and/or other fully integrated rhetorical techniques (e.g., analogy, narration). Again, considering the writing situation, there should be few, if any, distracting grammatical and mechanical errors.
Score of 5
Essays assigned a “5” will be good, but not excellent, in almost all respects. Specifically, look for a thesis or main idea that is clearly discernible and for sophisticated reasoning and/or support, going well beyond the information provided by the prompt. The writer will engage the opposition, beyond a passing reference, and may even redefine the problem while not evading it. A “5” may be marred by some stylistic and/or organizational problems, or it may be well-organized and fairly sophisticated at the sentence level but fail to use or fully integrate a variety of rhetorical devices. There should be few distracting grammatical and mechanical errors.

Score of 4
Essays assigned a “4” will present a competent thesis and adequate organization and will acknowledge the opposition, even if that acknowledgment takes the form of an indictment. A “4” may rely heavily on the prompt for ideas but supply sophisticated examples, or it may present ideas beyond the prompt but offer scant or predictable support. An essay which show some insights but fails to unite them may also receive a “4.” Generally, a “4” may contain a few distracting grammatical and mechanical errors, although essays appreciably damaged by major errors should not receive a “4.”

Score of 3
Essays assigned a “3” will contain some virtues, although they may contain an unengaging or poorly focuses main idea or thesis or be marred by inadequate development. A “3” might, for example, express some ideas that reflect a thoughtful consideration of the problem, but at the same time be obscured by unclear or “incorrect” writing. On the other hand, it might represent clear and competent writing but convey superficial ideas, or ideas which fail to account for information provided in the prompt. A “3” may be primarily a list of responses to the prompt, but with some development of the listed ideas, or it may show an organizational strategy which goes beyond listing, but offers support only in list form. As an argumentative essay, it may exhibit specious or circular reasoning or lack the coherence necessary to foster a complete understanding of the writer’s meaning. A number of major and distracting grammatical and mechanical errors may place an otherwise thoughtful and well-written essay in this category.

Score of 2
Essays assigned a “2” are weak because they are poorly written throughout (with consistent errors in grammar or mechanics), or because they fail to support major points, or because they are exceedingly superficial. A “2” may be flawed by a lack of unity or discernible organizational pattern, or it may rely upon a clearly organized list with little or no development of simple development which presents personal examples as proof.

Score of 1
Essays assigned a “1” will be clearly unacceptable as college-level writing or will demonstrate an only momentary engagement with the topic, concentrating instead upon some tangential concern(s). A “1” will be riddled with major grammatical and mechanical errors and/or will consist of a collection of random thoughts or undeveloped ideas. In short, essays that appear to have been written in careless haste or without effort should receive a “1.”