

## **Professional Dress Code**

This statement clarifies the language around the professional dress code used within the College of Education at Illinois State University. We recognize the various interpretations of the dress code. This statement clarifies how the dress code should be interpreted. Our aim is to mitigate any inequitable circumstances that the various interpretations create. The College of Education dress code seems to have been written to be equitable and non-discriminatory, as required by Illinois State University Policies<sup>1</sup>. We realize that there will still be some room for interpretation, but these interpretations should be made in relation to clothing that is practical for the classroom environment which includes consideration of safety.

We believe

- I. Teacher candidates should be permitted to wear clothing that fits their bodies in the way that they deem to be most appropriate for themselves and their bodies, meaning that tight or loose clothing can still be professional.
- II. Teacher candidates shall not be penalized for colors, ornate designs, graphics, words, on their choice of clothing<sup>2</sup>.
- III. Teacher candidates should be allowed to wear clothing that they have access to already, and if placed in a school where a uniform is required then the candidate shall only be held to the standards put in place by ISU, unless the student speaks to the school.
- IV. Teacher candidates should be allowed to wear clothing that best aligns with their gender expression.
- V. We want to be clear that we are not advocating for explicit rules for male or female clothing rather we are emphasizing people's right to choose what's most appropriate for their bodies regardless of gender dichotomies.
- VI. No student shall be reprimanded for wearing cultural regalia, or clothing items associated with their ethnic identities. Including but not limited to head wraps, sarees, dashikis, turbans (marjar hats), and hijabs.
- VII. No teacher candidates shall be penalized for hair including length, style (afros, braids, dreadlocks, mohawks etc. ), and colors.
- VIII. Teacher candidates cannot be penalized for different footwear outside of open toed shoes\* for safety reasons.
- IX. Teacher candidates shall not be penalized for body decoration i.e. piercings, tattoos, jewellery<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The aforementioned policies state, "Illinois State University values freedom of expression as a core principle of the University Dress codes should be developed in fair and open consultation with all affected groups....To the extent possible, dress codes should impact all groups evenly regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, ect.". As found on the University Website, <https://policy.illinoisstate.edu/academic/4-1-4.shtml>.

<sup>2</sup> unless graphic depicts violence, hateful rhetoric, or illegal paraphernalia

<sup>3</sup> unless for safety reasons