

Single Subject Credential Program, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
Professional Aptitude Interview (PAI)
Information Packet for Applicants

Purpose of the PAI

- The PAI is a formal interview with your prospective credential program advisor and other faculty and staff from the School of Education (and related departments/colleges).
- The PAI provides you with an opportunity to explain your interest in pursuing a career in teaching and relevant experiences you have had working with school-age students.
- The PAI will also be an opportunity for you to learn about the credential program at Cal Poly and have your questions answered.

What to Complete Prior to the PAI

Prior to your scheduled PAI, you should have completed and/or submitted the following (the items should have been completed as part of the application process):

- ✓ Applied to the single subject credential program on CSU Mentor (with a \$55 online fee) prior to the application deadline (April 1).
- ✓ Submitted official transcripts from any university other than Cal Poly to Admissions.
- ✓ Submitted proof of passing the Basic Skills Requirement (CBEST) to the SOE (Building 02, Room 120; 805-756-2126; soe@calpoly.edu) by **April 1**.
- ✓ Submitted proof of passing all subtests of the CSET for your discipline (or the completion of a subject matter waiver program) to the SOE (soe@calpoly.edu) by **April 1**.
- ✓ Submitted your Certificate of Clearance to the SOE (soe@calpoly.edu) by **April 1**.
- Contacted your prospective program advisor.
- Requested that two professional letters of recommendation be sent on your behalf to your prospective program advisor. (Letters must be submitted by **April 1**)
- Submitted a cover letter to your prospective program advisor (see “Description of Required PAI Materials” to learn more about this cover letter). (Cover letter must be submitted by **April 1**)

What to Bring to the PAI

Please **dress professionally** and bring the following materials with you to the PAI (held in **early April**):

- _____ Copy of any passing score reports and issued clearances (CBEST, CSET, Certificate of Clearance)
- _____ Unofficial transcript from all universities attended
- _____ Health Clearance Verification (TB & Rubella) (if available)
- _____ Copy of cover letter
- _____ Pen and paper

Description of Required PAI Materials

Cover letter

Your cover letter is a professional one-page business letter in which you introduce yourself to a **potential secondary school site (teachers and administrators)**. Your cover letter should include the following information:

- Name and contact information (email and phone number)
- Brief background on your education
- Description of experiences teaching and/or working with adolescents
- Description of areas of expertise/specialty within your content area
- Description of hobbies and interests

Letters of recommendation

Each letter of recommendation should focus on the applicant's (a) content knowledge, (b) ability to work well with others, and (c) perceived success in teaching. Please see the letters of recommendation rubric for more information about this component of the PAI.

<i>Letters of Recommendations</i>	Unacceptable (0)	Adequate (1)	Acceptable (2)	Exemplary (3)
Applicant's Score: _____	<p>_____ Letters were written by individuals who had no knowledge of the applicant's particular skills/attributes.</p> <p>_____No letters described the candidate's (1) content knowledge, (2) ability to work well with others, and (3) perceived success as a teacher.</p>	<p>_____One or both letters were written by individuals with limited knowledge of the applicant's particular skills/attributes.</p> <p>_____No letters clearly described candidate's (1) content knowledge, (2) ability to work well with others, and (3) perceived success as a teacher.</p>	<p>_____Both letters were written by individuals with knowledge and understanding of education.</p> <p>_____Recommenders described applicant's skills/attributes and satisfactorily described the candidate's (1) content knowledge, (2) ability to work well with others, and (3) perceived success as a teacher.</p>	<p>_____Both recommenders stated that applicant is very qualified to pursue a teacher credential and specify relevant skills/attributes observed by the authors to warrant that conclusion.</p> <p>_____Letters described positive views of the candidate's (1) content knowledge, (2) ability to work well with others, and (3) perceived success as a teacher.</p>

Interview

During the PAI, the interview panel may pose at least one question from each category of questions during your interview. Please see the interview questions and two interview rubrics for more information about this component of the PAI.

Professionalism

1. What events led you to choosing a career in teaching?
2. What relevant experience have you had in regards to working with school-age persons?
3. How do you feel about teaching English Language Learners?
4. Given your own experience with a wide range of teachers and candidates, what three behaviors distinguish a professional teacher from one whom you would consider unprofessional?

Diversity

5. What does a diverse class look like?
6. During your full-time student teaching, you are assigned to a 10th-grade class with seven English Language Learners, a group of five gifted and talented students, two students with Individual Educational Plans (IEP) related to slow processing skills, one child who is autistic, and a variety of students who identify themselves as white, African-American, Latino-American, and Asian-American. After your first day, you go home to describe this class to your friends. What would you say?

Collaboration

7. How is one's success as a middle or high school teacher influenced by one's attitude toward working with colleagues?
8. In what ways have you demonstrated teamwork within your own life?

Fairness/Social Justice

9. To what extent does the class environment affect student success? How is a positive environment created?
10. If there were two or three things a K-12 education should guarantee each learner, what would they be?

Content Knowledge

11. What does it mean to have an exemplary level of content knowledge in the subject you plan to teach?
12. How do you plan to grow as an educator?
13. What elements of your content do you find most challenging to teach?
14. What is the impact on student learning with a teacher who has a deep understanding of their content, compared to a teacher with less understanding of the content?

Mixed Dispositions

15. Describe a typical day in your classroom.
16. What is the difference between a poor lesson and a good lesson presented to high school students?
17. Why are you confident you can fulfill the roles and responsibilities of a teacher?
18. What does student success look like in your class?
19. During the 9th week of the quarter in your part-time student teaching, your cooperating teacher leaves the room and a fight between two individuals breaks out in class. The fight is over a racial slur that was made during lunch. What would you do?

<i>Interview Response</i>	Unacceptable (0)	Adequate (1)	Acceptable (2)	Exemplary (3)
Applicant's Score: <hr/>	<p>____ Responses did not clearly address the questions and provided vague understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a teacher in the public school.</p> <p>____ Presented dispositions did not align with SOE expectations.</p> <p>____ Student's content knowledge was limited and difficult to understand.</p>	<p>____ Responses inconsistently addressed the questions and provided limited understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a teacher in the public school.</p> <p>____ Some dispositions aligned with SOE expectations.</p> <p>____ Student's content knowledge was limited in scope.</p>	<p>____ Responses consistently addressed the questions and provided clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a teacher in the public school.</p> <p>____ Dispositions aligned with SOE expectations.</p> <p>____ Breadth of student's content knowledge was well communicated.</p>	<p>____ Responses consistently addressed the questions.</p> <p>____ Provided clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a teacher through personal experiences with students in the public schools.</p> <p>____ Related personal experiences that demonstrated how their dispositions aligned with SOE expectations.</p> <p>____ Breadth and depth of student's content knowledge was well communicated.</p>

<i>Interview Response</i>	Unacceptable (0)	Not Clearly Demonstrated (1)	Acceptable (2)	Exemplary (3)
<p>Applicant's Score: _____</p>	<p>____ Professional dress: Clothes are <u>not neat</u>, clean and in good repair, shoes, clothing, and/or accessories are <u>inappropriate</u> for classroom teaching.</p> <p>____ Eye-contact & body language: Communicates <u>insecurity and anxiety</u>, <u>makes minimal or excessive</u> eye contact, <u>fidgets extensively</u> or shows other signs of anxiety or discomfort.</p> <p>____ Formal speech: Word choice, speech patterns, and syntax are <u>informal and unprofessional</u> and inappropriate for a formal interview; <u>excessively uses fillers</u> to the point that it is distracting (e.g., ums, ahs, like, etc.).</p>	<p>This score is most appropriate for a candidate who has <u>less than 3 items</u> checked from the 'acceptable' or 'exemplary' range and no more than <u>one item</u> in the unacceptable range.</p> <p>____ Professional dress</p> <p>____ Eye contact & body language</p> <p>____ Formal speech</p> <p>____ Punctuality & preparedness</p> <p>____ Interpersonal skills</p>	<p>____ Professional dress: Neat, clean and in good repair, shoes, clothing, and accessories are mostly appropriate for professional situations.</p> <p>____ Eye-contact & body language: Appears confident and open, makes appropriate eye contact, may <u>minimally fidget</u> or show other signs of anxiety or discomfort.</p> <p>____ Formal speech: Word choice, speech patterns, and syntax are professional and appropriate for a formal interview, may minimally use some fillers (ums, ahs, like, etc.).</p> <p>____ Punctuality & preparedness: On time, prepared and ready to go when the interview begins, has most materials on-hand.</p>	<p>____ Professional dress: All of "acceptable" + presentation exemplifies that of a professional educator establishing a strong first impression.</p> <p>____ Eye-contact & body language: <u>Clearly</u> communicates confidence and openness, makes eye contact while answering questions, <u>does not fidget</u> or show any signs of anxiety or discomfort.</p> <p>____ Formal speech: All of "acceptable" + uses rich vocabulary & engaging syntax to clearly communicate complex ideas.</p> <p>____ Punctuality & preparedness: Arrives <u>early</u>, prepared and ready to go when the interview begins, has <u>all materials</u>, <u>organized</u> and on-hand.</p>

	<p>____ Punctuality & preparedness: <u>Late or no-show with no explanation, unprepared and does not seem ready to go when the interview begins, missing some materials, may be disorganized or flustered.</u></p> <p>____ Interpersonal skills: Demonstrates <u>awkward or limited interpersonal skills, no evidence of active listening, shows discomfort interacting with others, minimally engages with interviewers, and shows negative or reluctant interest in the program and PAI learning experience.</u></p>		<p>____ Interpersonal skills: Demonstrates interpersonal skills, listening, and interacting with others, engages with interviewers (e.g., greets, asks questions, thanks them, etc.), and shows interest in the program and PAI.</p>	<p>____ Interpersonal skills: demonstrates <u>strong interpersonal skills, active listening, comfort interacting with others, engages respectfully with interviewers (greet appropriately, asks clarifying questions, thanks them, etc.), and shows positive interest in the program and PAI learning experience.</u></p>
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