

2018 IACTE Day at the Iowa State Capitol Information Guide



Thursday, February 15, 2018 is the Sixth Annual IACTE Day at the State Capitol. All institutions are encouraged to participate. Our physical presence at the Capitol during the legislative session is one avenue for increasing our visibility and for ensuring that our voices are heard. We need faculty, current students, and alumni to attend who are willing to share their teacher preparation experience with legislators. **NOTE: This is NOT a day for you to “sit and get” information from others. This day is for you to SHARE information about your personal experience in one of Iowa’s teacher education programs with your state legislators and to NETWORK with other students and your IACTE colleagues.**

**“Fuel Up” Event—Wednesday, February 14, 2018
Upper Iowa University
5000 Westown Parkway, Suite 200
West Des Moines, IA 50266
6:30 p.m.**

Teacher Education programs are encouraged to bring teacher candidates to the Day at the Capitol (DAC). Financial support is being offered to TE programs bringing teacher education candidates to DAC.

1) The first TEN programs that RSVP to bring students will be reimbursed up to \$200 (@ \$.535/mile) per program.

Students and faculty are encouraged to attend the “Fuel Up” event Wednesday evening. This event is hosted by Upper Iowa University at the West Des Moines campus. This event will include tips for talking with your local policy maker, key talking points regarding teacher education, time to network with future professional colleagues, and pizza.

Each faculty contact from the respective institution should collect the **RSVPs** from your institution and submit the count (students and faculty) to **Jodi Grover at Upper Iowa University. (groverj@uiu.edu).**

- **Bad Weather**

In case of bad weather, each institution will determine whether their representatives can travel to Des Moines as planned.

- **Parking**

Parking near the Capitol is free; it is best to find a parking spot before 7:30 a.m.

Allow plenty of time to arrive, park, and go through security (on the ground floor) prior to the start of the day’s scheduled activities. The less you have with you (things in your pockets, handbags, tote bags, etc.), the faster you will get through security.

- **Dress**

Please advise students to dress professionally and *wear COMFORTABLE shoes.*

- **Contact Your Legislators In Advance**

Contact your legislators NOW to set up appointments to talk with them in person on February 15th. By scheduling appointments in advance, you are more likely to receive at least a few minutes of undivided attention from local legislators. Senators and representatives are usually more than happy to accommodate “people from home,” especially students and young professionals.

It is best to make the initial contact with your legislators by phone. If you don’t know the names of the legislators from your area, use the following website to locate them:

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find>

To contact your legislators, call:

The Iowa Senate	515-281-3371
The Iowa House	515-281-3221

Explain who you are and why you’re calling. Express your excitement about your upcoming visit to the Capitol and request a time to meet with them. If you’ve not called a legislator before, below is a sample of what you might say:

“Hello, Senator _____ (OR Representative _____). This is _____. I am an education student (OR teacher educator) at _____. I will be visiting the State Capitol on February 15, 2018 with other students (OR teacher educators) from my institution and the state. I would very much like you to stop by the Rotunda for an informal breakfast that morning from 7:30-9:00 a.m., so I can talk with you about teacher preparation in Iowa. We are members of the Iowa Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. I would like to share with you how my institution prepares effective teachers and how we are working to make our programs across the state even more rigorous. Would you be available on Thursday, February 15, 2018 for a short time to visit with me? If breakfast will not work for you, is there another time that I might meet with you on that day as your constituent? Thank you for your consideration of my request. I can be reached at _____ to confirm a meeting time with you.”

Remember: If leaving a voice message, be sure to leave your phone number so the legislator or member of his/her staff can return your call.

After initial contact is made by phone, it is nice to follow up with an e-mail or letter as well. Be sure to include your mailing address, since the legislator or staff member will want to confirm that you are a resident of his/her district.

- **Meeting Face-to-Face with Your Legislators using a Call Slip**

If you arrive at the Capitol while the legislators are at work in their chamber, it may be necessary for you to notify them of your arrival. You can do this by completing a *call slip* outside the appropriate chamber. This “message” will then be taken to your legislator on the House or Senate floor by one of the officials located outside of each chamber.

Depending on the number of groups visiting the Capitol each day, the rotunda area often becomes very crowded. You will need to watch for your legislator as he/she comes out of the chamber, so you can approach him/her quickly and the legislator can approach you easily.

- **To be a Successful Advocate, Remember the following:**

- ✓ Be familiar with our legislative process. An easy way to do that is to visit the following website: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/Resources/legisProcess.aspx>.
- ✓ Be on time – Members of the legislature are very busy, so don’t be late for a scheduled appointment.
- ✓ Be professional – Speak clearly and establish eye contact during your visit. **Decide who the spokesperson(s) for your institution will be, but be sure that EVERYONE is prepared to say**

something about their specific involvement in teacher preparation. After an initial greeting and introduction by your spokesperson, legislators will often ask other participants questions like: “How are you involved in _____?”, “What do you think about _____?”, “What difference will _____ make to you, your students, or your program?”, “What should I be supporting related to _____? Why?” etc.

- ✓ Be prepared –practice what you’re going to say. For example:

“Thank you, Senator/Representative _____ for taking time from your busy schedule to visit with us today. I’m _____ from _____. As you know, we’ve been preparing teachers for a long time. We have some of our students/student teachers/graduates with us here today. We’d like to share some of our thoughts with you about _____ and would like your support on/for _____. ” (Share facts about your program and let students share their personal stories as an Iowa-prepared teacher. Concentrate on what concerns you most about issues being discussed. Offer your recommendations and why.)

- ✓ A “Talking Points” sheet will be prepared once more information is known about the issues to be discussed during this legislative session. The sheet will be distributed prior to the event and will also be available at the breakfast the day of the event.
- ✓ Be positive and brief – Remember to share your information and experiences as concisely as possible.
- ✓ Remember to say “Thank You.” Thank your legislator for his/her time and for their continued support of teacher preparation programs and education. Invite him/her to visit your institution to learn more about your program and the difference it makes in preparing quality teachers.

- **Viewing in the Galleries**

You will be introduced in each chamber (while sitting in the galleries).

You are reminded that important state business is being conducted in each chamber. All visitors to the galleries must remain seated and quiet and may not applaud. Signs are not permitted in the gallery. Visitors are not allowed to lean on the gallery railing from the first row. Applause, hisses, or other disruptive noises in the gallery (or in the lobbies) during any speech or legislative proceeding will be promptly suppressed, and you may be asked to leave the gallery (or lobby).

- **Cameras/Videos inside the Capitol**

The public may take photographs from the galleries at any time. However, the use of flash, other artificial lighting, and video is prohibited.

- **Tours at the Capitol**

Information about self-guided and formal guided tours of the Iowa Capitol is available at the following website: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/resources/tourCapitol/request>

- **Final Thoughts**

Groups must remain quiet and orderly as they wait in the rotunda outside the chambers and meeting rooms. Remember the Capitol is a professional workplace where important state business is being conducted. Take advantage of the opportunity to network with teacher education colleagues from across the state as much as you can during the day. Have lunch with others, share thoughts on the issues being discussed, and brainstorm how we can become more active participants in the legislative process.