Initial Certification Timeline—NY State

At the beginning of your program:
If you are in a program that is registered with NY State Education Department (NYSED) as leading to initial teacher certification program, you should be fine in terms of the courses and student teaching required for certification, as long as you follow program guidelines and the advice of your advisor regarding what classes to take, student teaching placements, etc.

As you plan how many classes to take each semester, note that if you wish to graduate and begin teaching at the start of the next school year, it is best to plan to graduate in May of that year. This is because there are processing timeframes of several weeks for degree clearance at the Registrar’s office and the subsequent processing of your certification application at the Office of Teacher Education (OTE). Then, NYSED will need from several weeks to months to complete the certification approval process. Yes, it is possible for Summer A graduates’ applications to be processed in time to begin teaching in September. However, there is a much smaller window of time for turnaround, especially should any complications arise.

To enable you to begin a teaching position while your certification application is still in process at NYSED, our office will issue you an official letter certifying that you have completed a course of study that leads to certification (but not that you are certified). However, it is vital that you follow this timeline in order to complete all of the requirements in a timely fashion.
Late in your 2nd to last semester:
1. Register for the certification tests that you will need to take. Please consult our web-site www.ote@tc.edu or call our office if you are uncertain as to which tests to take. We have test registration and study materials as well.
2. Get fingerprinted. (packets available in OTE)
3. If you have not taken HBSS 4116—Health Ed for Teachers, take the online Child Abuse and Violence Prevention courses: www.violenceworkshop.com ($50) and www.childabuseworkshop.com ($39.95) (if taken together, you receive a $15 rebate on the Violence workshop)

In the beginning of your last semester:
1. Register with TEACH online services (instructions available in the OTE or online at www.tc.edu/ote)
2. Fill out the data sheet for institutional recommendation (available in the OTE or online at www.tc.edu/ote click on “certification and licensing”) and turn in:
   - By March 1st if graduating in May
   - By July 1st if graduating in October
   - By December 1st if graduating in February
3. Turn in non-TC transcripts, child abuse workshop form, and school violence workshop form to the Office of Teacher Education with your data sheet (no money order; you pay the state directly online using TEACH)
4. File for graduation (green form) with the registrar’s office. Check www.tc.edu/registrar for exact deadlines.

Keep a copy of everything you turn in for your own records.

In the middle of your last semester:
1. Take the certification tests if you haven’t by now. OTE has exam preparation books which you can check out for up to three weeks.
2. Order your official transcripts (do not open the sealed envelopes) from all non-TC institutions

A few weeks before the end of the semester:
1. Turn in your student teaching record of hours and grid of hours to OTE
Keep a copy of everything you turn in for your own records.
***Turning student teaching forms in late or incomplete will delay your graduation AND your certification***

What happens after I turn in my certification application?
Once the Registrar’s office has cleared you for graduation, meaning:
- Your grades are in and recorded by the Registrar’s office
- Your student teaching hours for ALL of your placements are turned in to the OTE and recorded by the Registrar’s office
- Any special Master’s projects and other degree requirements are turned in and recorded
- Any financial holds have been cleared with the Student Accounts office
- All library books and any other borrowed materials are turned in

Then, the OTE will begin processing your data sheet for institutional recommendation:
- Due to a high volume of applicants, this process can take **3-4 weeks** because it entails a review of your application, academic records and verification that you have met NY State requirements for certification in the subject area for which you are applying.
- Once we have processed your data sheet for institutional recommendation, we will send you a letter stating that you have been institutionally recommended for the specified area of certification pending fingerprint clearance and passing scores on exams.
- You may use that letter for employment purposes. We strongly recommend that you keep a copy of it for your records.
- We will electronically submit our institutional recommendation and will mail your materials to the New York State Education Department on your behalf. It usually takes **months** for them to send you your actual teaching certificate.

If you have not received the letter verifying institutional verification from OTE by a month after your classes are over and grades are turned in, kindly contact our office to inquire about the status of your certification recommendation.
Certification in other states:

NY State has interstate reciprocity agreements with 41 other states. For a list of states, please go to http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/teachrecother.htm

- Reciprocity means that these states will accept the coursework that you have taken for a certification area in NY State toward the closest area of certification in that state.
- You will still need to get fingerprinted again, take their state certification teacher tests, and fulfill any additional requirements they may have for certification.

Other states require verification of program completion or verification of education:
- either on a form they provide (Connecticut, New Jersey, etc.);
- or on an official letter from us (for example, California).
- The states that have forms require you to fill out part of it and our office to fill out a part of it.
- Some states require us to send this form to them directly, others require you to send it to them with your other certification application materials. These instructions should be on the form.

Please see the Office of Teacher Education during the middle of your last semester to request completion of these forms or letters, and with any questions about reciprocity.

Please note that we cannot release a completed form or letter to you or to the state in which you are seeking certification until you have been conferred a degree by the Registrar's Office.
Please allow 10 business days processing time AFTER degree clearance for this form or letter to be completed for you.

If you have not received the form or letter from OTE by a month after your classes are over and grades are turned in, kindly contact our office to inquire about the status of your certification recommendation.