Policies and Procedures Manual

For NPQS Pro-Board
Delegated Authority

Accredited Certification Levels
Fire Officer I, II, III and IV
Fire Inspector I
Fire Instructor I and II

Re-accreditation

Fire Advisory Board:
Chief S. Wirth – Heard County Fire, Chief M. Smith – West Point Fire,
Administrative Deputy Chief – LaGrange Fire, Chief D. Knight – Troup County
Fire, Chief S. Blue – Carroll County Fire, Chief S. Spencer – Douglas County
Fire, Chief J. Teters – Coweta County Fire,
and Chief R. Jolivette – Manchester Fire

Updated February 27, 2015
**General Statement:**

West Georgia Technical College (WGTC) is a State of Georgia educational institution – considered an open admissions school and is required to comply with all applicable state and federal laws. It is the philosophy of the institution to treat all candidates in a fair and impartial manner. WGTC has policies against discrimination of any kind. The Fire Science program certification testing process is included as part of the educational institutions policy.

**Section 1: Delegation of Authority**

West Georgia Technical College (WGTC) does not delegate its authority to conduct professional qualification examinations or certification to any political subdivision or entity.

**Section 2: Definitions**

**Accreditation:** The process of comparing established professional standards defined by the accrediting agency to an organization seeking recognition for quality programs and accountability. The accrediting agency uses documentation such as a self-study and analysis, an assessment of an organization's mission, as well as a site visit to determine the organizations achievement in meeting the standards.

**Candidate:** The individual who is testing for certification based on an NFPA professional qualification or competency standard.

**Certification:** Verification that an individual has shown competent performance meeting a defined set of cognitive and/or psychomotor behavioral objectives (requisite knowledge and skills). This verification process is achieved through testing.

**Certification Team:** The group consisting of a proctor and where applicable evaluator(s) who have been appointed to administer a specific certification exam on a specific date.

**Certified:** For a given certification level, candidates who have successfully met the established prerequisites and minimum passing criteria on the certification exam.

**Competence/Competently:** Performed in a manner which satisfies the criteria set forth on a given skill sheet for a given level of certification.

**Evaluator:** A certification team member assigned to observe candidates performing skills. Evaluators determine if a candidate's performance meets skill sheet criteria.

**FSP:** Fire Science Program

**GFSTC:** Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council – State agency which allows Delegated Authority to college

**Live Fire:** An activity/skills exam that consists of tasks exposing candidates to actual fire conditions.

**NFPA:** National Fire Protection Association – national organization which recommends standards in a number of areas, but particularly on the fire service.

**NPQS or ProBoard:** National Board on Firefighter Service Qualifications Board – national board which recognizes training of firefighters

**P&P Manual:** Policy and Procedures Manual which contains program information on operations.

**Proctor:** The certification team member who administers and coordinates the certification exam at a specific site.

**Program Chair** – the member who oversees and manages the program.

**Reciprocity:** The acceptance of accredited levels of certification from other entities.

**Safety:** To perform a task in a manner that would prevent injury to self or others.

**Skill Sheet:** The document that sets forth the criteria to show competency requirements for a JPR, objective, or portion thereof.

**WGTC:** West Georgia Technical College – college agency requesting NPQS recognition.
Section 3: NFPA Standard Revisions

WGTC will update certification requirements based on changes contained within newly issued editions of NFPA Standards. Once the NFPA issues a revised edition, WGTC will update the corresponding certification level(s) and begin testing the new standard edition within 2 years.

Section 4: Safety

The safety of all candidates, evaluators, and support staff is of primary importance. WGTC staff and representatives shall take all efforts necessary to ensure that certification examinations are conducted in a safe manner. Any WGTC representative, proctor/monitor or evaluator shall have the authority to halt any operation that places personnel in jeopardy due to hazardous conditions or dangerous weather conditions.

It is the policy of WGTC Fire Science program to ensure the testing environment is safe and comfortable with adequate lighting, ventilation and without interruptions or distractions for classroom as well as skills examinations.

The assigned evaluator(s) are required to check each candidate for proper gear or equipment that is to be utilized in the skills test. Any candidate noted lacking gear or equipment not meeting safety requirements will be removed and given time to replace the item(s). Candidates that do not or unable to replace safety requirements will be removed from the skill and asked to leave the grounds. The candidate would be directed to the GFSTC test calendar to arrange a future exam based upon the availability on dates on the calendar.

Section 5: Live Fire Testing

WGTC does not participate in live fire training as listed in NFPA 1403.

Section 6: Facilities and Equipment (where applicable)

Facilities at which testing is to be conducted will be deemed adequate and safe for a specific level. WGTC maintains a database of supplies that have been approved for testing at specific levels.

The minimum equipment needed shall be established by the Georgia Firefighter Standards Training Council (GFSTC) testing administered through discussion prior to certification depending on the skills to be tested and can be found online at: http://www.gfstconline.org/index.php/forms/test/equipment-lists

Section 7: Host Facility Responsibilities (where applicable)

The local fire departments are responsible to ensure that the test site, apparatus, and equipment all meet or exceed applicable NFPA standards. Host site must have submitted the GFSTC Test Request form a minimum of 30 days in advance of any administration of tests, found at: http://www.gfstconline.org/index.php/files/download/2665b7bb335ee35 Due to the logistics required for certain skills, a facility may be deemed appropriate with the condition that an alternate site will have to be used if a certain skill or type of skill will be tested during specific testing period. Unless other arrangements are agreed upon in advance, the local department will be responsible for providing all of the necessary materials listed in the testing any skill contained within a certification level.
**Section 8: Candidate Responsibilities**

It is a policy and practice of WGTC to provide all testing and certification services to all constituents without regard to race, sex, or ethical origin. Testing certification be made available to all qualified fire service personnel by scheduling certification exams based upon the needs of local consistency and available resources. WGTC provides each candidate who successfully completes the fire science program and/or certification exam, a letter is sent electronically to the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council (GFSTC) NPQS representative for issuing of the proper level of NPQS a link to his/her application for the candidate to apply for certification.

Testing certification be made available to all qualified individuals certification shall be issued to any candidate who satisfies all prerequisite and job performance requirements for the pertinent certification category and or level.

Certification candidates need to bring a government issued picture I.D. to verify their identity and any materials required for specific certifications to the exam site, such as the Life Safety Code book. The building and or fire codes book will only be provided with prior arrangements.

**Section 9: Requirements for Participation**

WGTC Fire Science program is open to any candidate who is 18 years of age or older. Candidates must meet all requirements and prerequisites for the level of testing requested.

**Section 9.1 Extension/Reciprocal Certification**

WGTC does not provide any extension of standards as this our agency is Delegated Authority through the State Agency – GFSTC - who can authorize such options.

It is the policy and practice of the WGTC Fire Science Program (FSP) that we do not accept any outside accreditations as WGTC follows the guidelines established by GFSTC. GFSTC Reciprocity Request form for candidates with International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) or Department of Defense (DOD) must go to: [http://www.gfstconline.org/index.php/files/download/b7032db15f0b8c0](http://www.gfstconline.org/index.php/files/download/b7032db15f0b8c0) to complete the form for reciprocity. It must be submitted to GFSTC for issuance of the application from them. Once GFSTC issues the application for ProBoard, it will be accepted and used as meeting prerequisites for higher levels of certifications upon request to individuals currently certified by entities whose certifications.

**Section 10: Completion of WGTC Course Work**

WGTC certification courses are developed to meet applicable professional qualifications or competency standards. Single courses may not be totally inclusive of the knowledge and skills required within a specific standard. Two or more classes may be required to meet all the requirements of a level. Applicable WGTC course deliveries are generally concluded with the delivery of the appropriate certification examinations.

**Section 11: Challenging Certification Examinations**

The WGTC is an open system, meaning that candidates may obtain training from sources other than WGTC Candidates who challenge certification exams based on training received from an outside source will be required to document this training by supplying the Fire Science office with sealed college transcripts or transcripts from the GFSTC or verification of such certification on the ProBoard online site.
The Program Chair may deny any challenge requests that are not requested at least 10 working days prior to the exam. Candidates may only challenge exams during the final exams of each college term. Candidates who request transfer credit for college courses are restricted to a maximum of two courses thru the college exemption credit.

**Section 12: Denial**

WGTC reserves the right to disallow any candidate to participate in any certification exam for cause.

**Section 13: Availability of Certification/Application for Accreditation**

WGTC makes all certification services available to its constituents without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, or ethnic origin. Exam dates/locations are available upon request and on the WGTC Fire Science website. Exams for certifications carrying Pro-Board accreditation will be offered at a Monday – Thursday 0900 – 1100 hrs. And 1300 – 1600 hrs. or when there is a minimum of two days’ notice is given from the requestor. The most current dates and times are available online under Fire Science programs-NPQS Information, then NPQS Examination Schedule.

WGTC program strives to provide adequate testing dates and times for testing and is flexible. The testing schedule is authorized from the Fire Science Advisory Board based upon their needs and recommendations.

Information on test announcements, forms, handbooks, skill sheets, sample exams, exam notices and the link http://www.westgatech.edu/academics/firescience/forms.htm

**Section 13.1 Certification**

WGTC sends an electronic and hard copy via mail to the Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council (GFSTC), who will issue the Application for National Registration and National Certification, COA-7 to the candidate who successfully pass certification exams. GFSTC posts the Application for National Registration and National Certification, COA-7 on the GFSTC webpage for the candidate can download the application.

**Section 14: Accommodation**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), appropriate examination accommodations may be made on an as needed basis. Requests must be made in accordance with WGTC policy and supported by appropriate documentation of disability. Candidates with reading deficiencies may be provided extended test time limits. Information regarding A.D.A assistance is available through the WGTC Admissions Office. The WGTC information can be found in the Disability Services Candidate Handbook http://www.westgatech.edu/DS/2013-2014_Candidate_Handbook.pdf

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Section 14.1 Disabilities:
WGTC is committed to providing college education to candidates with special needs through the special population’s assistance program as defined by The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. This program is available upon request from the candidate and or family member to the Special Populations Coordinator. Documents available for review.

Section 15: Academic Honesty

Dishonesty of any kind, with respect to examinations or alteration of records to obtain certification, will not be tolerated. WGTC reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to require any candidate to retest any examination. If required, grades will be awarded on the basis of the second examination. Requiring a candidate to retest any examination is not considered an accusation of academic dishonesty. Examinations must represent the candidate's own work without the assistance of texts, notes, devices, or outside assistance, unless specifically allowed by WGTC examination policies and procedures. Candidates who give information to a dishonest candidate will be considered as liable as the candidate being assisted and subject to corrective action. Candidates found in violation of this policy may have certification denied. If certification has been granted prior to discovery of the occurrence, such certification may be withdrawn.

WGTC Academic Integrity policy can be found at: 
http://www.westgatech.edu/catalog/Academic_Integrity.pdf

Family Educations Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) - site below.

As an educational institution, WGTC administers individual subject tests during each course offering. WGTC complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1997 (FERPA), found at http://www.westgatech.edu/HEAInfo/FERPA.html Georgia State confidentiality and anti-discrimination rules and regulations when dealing with testing. Candidates receive fair and impartial treatment from examiners.

All skill test performance produced from the evaluators are checked for accuracy and submitted to the onsite Proctor/Monitor who collects them at conclusion of the exam. Candidates who do not a skill exam are told of opportunity for a retake. The retake skills examination is done by another evaluator. A maximum of two skills can be redone. If the candidate fails either of the retake, he/she does not complete the skills evaluation. He/she must then return at a future scheduled skills evaluation available on the GFSTC calendar. Once all skill sheets are evaluated for correctness, graded, signed and then the proper form(s) is forwarded to GFSTC for verification.

Section 16: Fees and Cost Recovery

West Georgia Technical College does not charge any fees for NPQS examinations.

Candidates taking any exemption exams (maximum of two) for courses completed elsewhere cost is based upon credit hours – at present fee is $18 per hour. Example $18 x 4 credit hours = $72.00

Section 17: Observation/Comments

Scheduled certification examination dates and locations are available to the NFPA Pro-Board Administration upon request. Representatives from these agencies are welcome to observe any testing process with a minimum of 48-hours notice.
Section 17.1 Other Community Involvement
The community in general are represented by a group of local citizens who serve on the College Board of Directors. Open meeting law in Georgia requires anyone seeking access to both state and local board meetings, where personnel can express their views. West Georgia Technical College solicits input from graduates of the program as well as their employers. The college provides graduation program evaluation forms to employers to complete. The college Candidate Services also conducts regular surveys of candidate seeking their opinions and comments on general programs.

Section 18: Testing

Section 18.1 General
Testing for each professional qualifications level includes a written examination and, if indicated, an evaluation of randomly selected skills. Candidates must successfully complete the written examination and all evaluated skills criteria within specified time limits. The use of any unauthorized outside materials is prohibited. "Requisite knowledge" and/or cognitive objectives will be examined by written testing. Questions on a written test may be correlated to a skill.

In following GFSTC policy, the written examinations are graded with 70% as the minimum passing score. The results of written examinations are recorded as "pass" or "fail." Time limits for the exams are determined by allowing 1 hour for each 50 questions. Manipulative objectives, JPRs, "requisite skills," or portions thereof will be examined by skills examinations. The Fire Science program maintains the ability to test all objectives, JPR's, and requisite knowledge and skills from the applicable standard, however to ensure brevity only a random selection of all requirements covered in the standard will be tested.

Skills examinations shall consist of a minimum of 100% of the JPRs. The pass/fail criterion for each skill is outlined on a corresponding skill sheet. Skill examinations require 100% as the minimum passing score. Critical skill components are identified on appropriate skill sheets and must be successfully completed to obtain a passing score. The results of skill examinations are recorded as "pass" or "fail." After all permitted attempts are expended; candidates who fail a manipulative skill will be informed of the reason. Candidates will be made aware of the skill(s) failed as soon as practical and will be permitted to review the reason for failure.

Section 18.11 Test Instrument Analysis
The Fire Science adjunct staff reviews written questions over a two year time frame, or when standards change. If during the course test, they note a change is needed or questioned, they contact the program chair. It is the practice and policy of WGTC that upon request from a candidate, the proctor/monitor will note the test name, question, and version of exam and shall notify the program chair. The program chair will review the subject matter and decide if the test analysis, using verification of the test bank with text materials. The test question is cross referenced again the LXT test bank question and the local validated produced questions. The test analysis outcome will be forwarded to the candidate.

WGTC utilizes methodologies when have been provided by GFSTC NPQS testing representative prior to the testing period. The job performance requirements that will be sampled in a test are determined by the topic being studied, the knowledge and skills necessary to demonstrate mastery of the material, and how the candidate is expected to perform in “real world” conditions. Those JPR’s that are vital to safety and survival and other “critical” event are given priority. WGTC policy is that skills competencies be randomly selected from a list.
The test item and test analysis areas are sampled - determined by the topic being studied, the knowledge and skills necessary to demonstrate mastery of the material, and how the candidate is expected to perform in “real world” conditions.

If there are a number of candidates failing the same skill station, the Lead Evaluator will review the skill, equipment and evaluation instrument. It will the decision of the Lead Evaluator to replace the skill station and each candidate will be given a chance to do the new skill.

**Instrument Improvement**
WGTC policy is that fire science staff members do written test analysis over a set time frame or as the standards change.

Cognitive:
Test scores below 70% produced from the use of scantron evaluation are reviewed by hand for correctness. Any changes will be listed on the scantron and the test instrument in question will be revaluated. The action taken can be one of the following: repair, replace or accept it as listed. The review by the SME’s must discuss, reference, and approve the changes or take no action to ensure that it will be meet the standard.

WGTC utilizes a random selection of test items from each subsection of the associated bank of questions. The number of questions are randomly selected from each group of questions that are associated to each requisite knowledge listed point. The random selection can also be arranged to ensure complete coverage on all the standards.

If the analysis indicates a problem with a question or questions, it is replaced from the validated test bank to achieve the meet the same standard.

Psychomotor:
Skill evaluation will follow the guidelines set forth by GSTC.

The pass/fail criterion for each skill is outlined on a corresponding skill sheet. Skill examinations must be passed with 100% as the minimum passing score. Critical skill components are identified on appropriate skill sheets and must be successfully completed to obtain a passing score. The results of skill examinations are recorded as "pass" or "fail." After all permitted attempts are expended; which have been evaluated by two separate evaluators, candidates who fail a manipulative skill will be informed of the reason. Candidates will be made aware of the skill(s) failed as soon as practical and can review the reason for failure. Those JPRs that are vital to safety and survival and other “critical” events are given priority.

The job performance requirements sampled in a test are determined by the topic being studied, the knowledge and skills necessary to demonstrate mastery of the material, and how the candidate is expected to perform in “real world” conditions.

This analysis is conducted to identify trends or deficiencies in the test instrument. This is accomplished by tracking the end and those critical skills that were failed during evaluations.

**Section 18.12 Test Sites**
The main testing site location will be on the LaGrange campus of West Georgia Technical College. There is one alternate test site available for candidates for written examinations who might reside closer to at St. Marys Fire, St Marys, Georgia. Candidates wishing to take exams at this site must complete the necessary exam application and submit it for verification. Once the application is verified, the Program Chair will notify the St. Marys Fire examiner (employed part time as adjunct with WGTC) to contact the applicant so the applicant and examiner can arrange a time and date.
Section 18.2 Testing Procedures

Section 18.2.1 Test Bank Security
It is the policy and practices of the WGTC FSP that test banks are maintained both electronically and in hard copy form. The electronic test banks are stored on the agency network, and are accessible only to Program Chair via personal password. The FSP computer is supported by a dedicated printer on which examination booklets are generated as needed. Several versions of each exam are randomly generated from the banks, and these versions are revised periodically. Test items are reviewed every other year to ensure content and job reference validity. All hard copy printed masters, answer keys and exams; along with test bank CDs, are secured in locked file cabinets when not being utilized.

Section 18.2.2 Exam Booklet Security
It is the policy and practice of the WGTC Fire Science Program that exam booklets and answer forms (exam packets) be provided upon request directly to the WGTC Program Chair via U.S. Mail or thru the online testing program. A minimum of ten business days advance notice shall be provided at the time the request is made. Requests must be made in writing to the WGTC Request information shall include:

- Date, time, and location of the scheduled exam
- Category and/or level of scheduled exam
- Total number of exam packets needed

If supplied by mail, the exam packets shall be provided in sealed envelopes. Upon receipt, the Fire Service examiner shall secure the envelope under lock and key until such time the test is administered to the candidate(s). Once completed all materials will be returned to WGTC Program Chair for grading.

Section 18.3 Test Site Conditions
The test site shall comply with Safety and Facilities and Equipment Sections. In addition, the site shall be arranged so that it is conducive with a learning/testing environment. It shall be free from outside distractions and give candidates every opportunity for success. Provisions must be made for restroom and break facilities.

Locations used for written examinations must be well lit, temperature-controlled and quiet. In addition, a suitable chair and writing surface with ample separation between candidates, with a minimum of 4-5 feet must be provided. The proctor must ensure that all candidates have the same opportunity to see any projected audio/visuals.

Locations used for manipulative skills examinations must have ample areas for separation of candidates to prevent peer assistance and/or studying by observation. Consideration must be given to temperature extremes, and rehab must be provided where necessary. All skill evaluations will be made by recognized GFSTC evaluators and evaluator cannot be the person who taught the skill being evaluated.

Section 18.4 Test Site Security
All review materials are stored electronically and a quantity are available as hard copies in the Fire Science Program Chair’s office. All hard copy printed masters, answer keys and exams are secured in locked cabinets when not being utilized.

All testing materials are secured under lock in the Fire Science Program Chair’s office. The information is removed only during testing time. Any exams removed are tracked by placing the test name, numerical listing, amounts (any series listing), name of person authorized to sign it out and date returned are placed on a sign out form. Additionally a colored paper is placed vertical with the tests number missing in the folder to note tests have been removed. All hard copy of printed masters, answer keys and exams are
secured in locked cabinets when not being utilized. Any tests transported are placed in a locked briefcase and the key is only available to the Fire Science Program Chair.

Only specific personnel are allowed to receive/administer exams based upon the authorization from GFSTC or completion of "proctor/monitor" training.

Only candidates, proctor/evaluator(s), and necessary staff/host(s) are allowed at the testing site. Instructors and/or representatives from the candidate's organization may not attend or view testing. This policy alleviates unnecessary nervousness and ensures that candidates will demonstrate their own knowledge.

All review materials are stored electronically and a quantity are available as hard copies in the Fire Science Program Chair’s office. All hard copy printed masters, answer keys and exams are secured in locked cabinets when not being utilized. No other locations are authorized.

Any removal of the test instruments:
The cabinet is unlocked, verifies the proctor picking up the exam(s), the proctor signs check out sheet with name of the recognized proctor and date removed. A colored folder is placed into the missing exam area as a backup procedure to visually note a missing exam(s). The cabinet is then secured.

Return test instrument
The cabinet is unlocked, the contact information is updated, the exams are verified, the exam(s) are returned in the locked file, the colored folder is removed and the cabinet is secured.

An audit occurs once a year to verify all exams are accounted for and secured in the cabinet.

The following procedures shall be adhered to by all WGTC representatives:
• Do not leave test materials unattended unless all materials are sealed and materials are stored in a secure fashion. If the test kit must be left unattended, the proctor is responsible to ensure it stays secured.
• Any test found open, tampered with shall be considered compromised; the proctor must cancel the exam, and report this incident immediately to the Fire Science Staff.
• If an unused test must be left unattended, all materials must be placed in a secure and locked location (i.e. car trunk).
• Do not reproduce, give away, nor take any of the materials in the test without the express permission of the Program Chair.

Section 18.5 Proctor and Evaluator Pre-Test Briefing
A "Pre-Test Briefing" to proctors and evaluators shall be conducted prior to beginning the test and shall include the following information:
1. Review the proctor and evaluator's responsibilities/determine the evaluator assignments for the practical exam
2. Proctors are to read the first page of the test booklet as copied from GFSTC out loud to the candidates.
3. Direct all evaluators check candidates identification and to refer to and follow the skill checklists provided.
4. Review the skills to be tested.
5. Identify safety procedures to be followed during testing. They can stop any evolution which they deem unsafe
6. Review of the acceptable performance criteria.
7. Ensure there is proper tools and equipment available. In addition, a suitable chair and writing surface with ample separation between candidates, with a minimum of 4-5 feet must be provided.
8. Assign and instruct any role players on their roles and responsibilities.
9. Assign evaluators to check all equipment to be used by candidates for proper operation.
10. Give direction in the proper completion of all forms used for evaluation.
11. Describe test logistics, rotation, breaks, holding areas, and site-control. Not to leave the test area during evaluation.
12. Explain the procedures to be used for handling questions or problems which may arise during testing.
13. Explain the procedures for verifying the test packet and scantron (to match) and place into secure area before the candidate leaves the test area.
13. Clarify any questions.

Section 18.6 Registration
Registration is through the submission of the individual certification application which shall take place by using the NPQS application process found at: [http://www.westgatech.edu/academics/firescience/forms.htm](http://www.westgatech.edu/academics/firescience/forms.htm) (there are no fees for NPQS tests)

Section 18.7 Written Testing
The time allowed to complete each written examination shall begin after the proctor has completed the registration, given the pretest briefing, read the instructions for that examination, and answered all questions. From that point forward all discussion shall cease, and candidates will not be allowed to talk or otherwise communicate with other candidates until they complete the examination, return the examination materials to the proctor, and leave the testing room. (WGTC discourages testing of “on-duty” candidates; however, there are times when this will be necessary. If a candidate is called away to an incident during a test, the proctor must secure the candidates testing materials and note the time. When the candidate returns, he/she will be granted the full remainder to complete the test.)

Section 18.8 Candidate Pre-Test Briefing – Written Script – Following the first page from GFSTC
Prior to beginning any written testing, brief/instruct candidates as follows:
1. Instruct candidates to space themselves appropriately and to clear all non-test related items from the desk area.
2. Direct candidates to turn off all cellular phones and pagers. (Radios/pagers are not allowed for on-call personnel).
3. Review the emergency procedures for weather emergencies and the safety areas.
4. Distribute test answer sheets - Candidates should fill out required areas.
5. Distribute any other materials required for the written exam.
6. Pass out test booklets.
   • Direct candidates not to open test booklets until instructed.
   • Instruct candidates to write test #, version # and booklet # in the “Test No.” area on the answer sheet (scantron card)
7. Provide Instructions:
   • Advise candidates to take care of personnel matters as they will not be able to leave the test room, once the test begins.
   • Multiple choice with (4) possible answers. An occasional question is a “true-or-false.”
   • Select the one best answer for each question.
   • Erase any unwanted or stray marks.
   • DO NOT write in the test booklets.
   • DO NOT remove any test materials from the test area.
   • There can be no communication with other candidates during the test.
   • Candidates are responsible for doing their own work – if a proctor or evaluator suspect’s academic dishonesty, your test will be collected and you will be dismissed from the testing site.
   • No visitors are allowed in the room during the test.
   • Candidates may only use the materials provided - no outside reference materials. Removal of all phones, and etc. are to be removed from their desks.
   • You will have 120 minutes to complete the test.
• Minimum passing score for written tests: 70%.
• Return the answer sheet, scrap papers and test materials to the proctor when finished.
• Instructions what to do/where to go when finished.
• If you need ask a question during the test, raise your hand. One person may leave the testing area until you are complete with the exam.

8. Ask if there are any questions.
9. Instruct candidates to open their test booklets and begin.

Section 18.9 Concluding the Written Exam
1. Place answer sheets inside of the folder provided.
2. Verify the return of each test against the one listed on the scantron card.
3. Organize and account for all other test materials.

Section 19: Skills Testing

Examination Administration Guidelines
It is the policy and practice of the WGTC Fire Science Program that practical skills examinations be administered only to individuals who have met all prerequisites.
• Practical skills examinations shall only be conducted at approved sites.
• Only approved station examiners or state representatives will be involved in the administration of practical skills certification examinations.
• Station Examiners shall not have been the candidate’s instructor(s) for the skills they are evaluating.
• Pre-registration of candidates shall be the responsibility of the WGTC Fire Science Program staff.
• Candidates reporting to the examination site shall have all equipment and/or materials necessary to participate including personal protective equipment (PPE), and self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA).
• Candidates shall provide photo ID for verification upon arrival at the test site.
• Any individual will be accepted to maximum number of “walkins” listed on the GFSTC Test Request form.
• All exams shall be graded on a pass/fail basis.
• Practical skills examinations will be conducted weather permitting. Cancellations due to adverse weather conditions shall be at the discretion of the examiner(s).
• The maximum time limit for certification practical skills examinations is 4 hours. Timing begins at completion of examiner’s address to the candidate group and ends with completion of all required stations, including any same-day retests by each candidate group.
• Candidates may be allowed to retest on the skill examination, the same day as time and resources allow for retesting. Such retests will only be conducted after all other candidates have completed testing. Retesting shall be conducted by a different station examiner.
• Candidates failing more than the maximum allowed for the pertinent certification category and/or level are required to completely retest at a future date.
• Candidates choosing to withdraw from an exam for any reason shall sign a withdrawal form. The completed form shall be forwarded to the Program Chair. Skills testing shall be conducted in a manner that provides consistency from candidate-to-candidate and from test-to-test. WGTC skills’ testing is designed to measure desired outcome rather than a desired procedure. Desired outcomes are directly related to NFPA objectives or JPRs and are detailed on individual skill sheets. Skill sheets will also identify if candidates will be tested individually or as a team. Instructors who taught a portion of a course may serve as a certification test evaluator for the same course; however, he/she may not evaluate the same skill(s) he/she taught during the course. In addition, they may not communicate with other candidates until the testing period is over. If it is an option, it is preferred that candidates who fail the
skill portion of the exam be dismissed at that time. However, a candidate can reschedule another evaluation when appropriate.

WGTC utilizes the list of Proctor/Monitors from any of the listed 16 State Regional Test Sites. In addition, each agency has personnel that have completed Evaluator program and these are utilized, if there is an offsite test

WGTC follows the recommendations of GFSTC Evaluator course prerequisite which states “At least 5 years of experience in the Fire Service, or 3 years of experience and hold Pro Board Instructor I certification” and/or demonstrate technical competence in the area that they will evaluate. Certification to the commensurate level is preferred; however, consideration will give to other education and/or related job or educational experience.

The assigned proctor for the testing site will walk around all evaluations sites to insure consistency in evaluator performance.

The assigned proctor for the testing will walk around all evaluations sites to insure consistency in evaluator performance.

Section 19.1 Test Site Arrangement (where applicable)
When a skill testing that requires multiple simultaneous testing stations is conducted, the test area and rotation sequence shall be arranged so that the identities of the skills being tested are protected, and candidates are not permitted to “study” after testing has commenced. For a three skill test, the ideal test setup would consist of rotation with three pre-test holding areas (one for each skill), three testing areas, and three post-test holding areas. The enrollment would be split into three groups and each group would begin in a pre-test holding area. As candidates finish the skill, they would go to the corresponding post-test holding area. When all groups are finished, they would rotate to the next pre-test holding area and begin testing for the next skill. A candidate who has failed a first attempt at a station shall not be allowed to enter a pre or post-test holding area where he/she could either divulge information about a skill or get help from other candidates.

Section 19.2 Use of Skills Exam Fails a Skill (where applicable)
If a candidate fails a skill, the evaluator records the reason for failure on the original skill evaluation form for certification.

Section 19.3 Skills General Evaluation Guidelines
The following are general guidelines for evaluating candidate performance:
- The evaluator will state the skill/objective to be tested and the time limit.
- Evaluators may not assist or coach candidates in any skill once the certification exam has begun.
- Before the candidate begins, evaluators may answer specific questions on equipment including but not limited to loaner PASS devices, loaner SCBAs, powered equipment, foam educators, and audio visual equipment. Answers shall be limited to those that do not disclose how to operate the equipment, but will assist the candidate with equipment that is different than that of their local jurisdiction.
- Evaluators may not answer any questions once a candidate has begun performing a skill.
- Evaluators are to allow the candidate to complete the skill uninterrupted, unless:
  1. The safety of the candidate, the evaluator, or other personnel is in question.
  2. One candidate is instructing other candidates in the performance of skills.
- Evaluators will only indicate to the candidate “Pass or Fail.” Evaluators shall not disclose information concerning the specific item on the skills sheet that the candidate did or did not complete successfully. For example, evaluators may not tell a candidate their SCBA donning time.
• The evaluator (and candidate if necessary) shall reset the skill station before a new candidate is permitted to enter the station.
• Any issues/decisions in which the evaluator is in question shall be directed to the proctor.
• If the proctor observes an evaluator's performance and considers the performance questionable, the proctor may assign the candidate to another evaluator and meet, in private, with the evaluator; or discuss the concern with the evaluator, in private, after the candidate completes the practical skill exam.
• The performance of an evaluator must not affect a candidate's ability to successfully complete a skill demonstration. If the proctor witnesses a flagrant violation of testing procedures, the candidate must retest the skill under the observation of another evaluator.

Section 19.4 Skills Candidate Pre-Test Briefing:
Before starting the skills exam, brief the candidates on the following:
1. Detail the schedule, logistics, rotation, breaks, holding areas and site-control.
2. Candidates will not be informed of the skills before they arrive at the skills station.
3. Candidates may not assist each other, study, divulge information about skills, or otherwise give an unfair advantage to themselves or another candidate.
4. The evaluator at each station will read the objective, time, and any pertinent instructions and provide explanation of PASS FAIL criteria. Candidates may ask questions and arrange/check equipment before beginning.
5. Candidates performing team skills are encouraged to communicate and work as a team.
6. Give directions to follow and where to go, if a candidate has a question or if a candidate needs to take a break during a test and how the candidate should indicated completion of the skill to the evaluator.
7. Identify proper safety procedures to be followed during testing.
8. Explain the use of Number ID’s.
9. Allow for a question and answer period.

Section 19.5 On-Site Retesting
If permitted by the applicable skill sheet, candidates failing to demonstrate a skill involving hands-on equipment shall be granted one immediate on-site retest on one skill only. This retest (2nd attempt) must be evaluated by either the proctor or a different evaluator (assigned by the proctor). The evaluators for the 1st and 2nd attempts must not discuss the candidate’s performance on the first attempt. No additional retests are authorized. Skills involving some manipulative skills, presentations, and written documents do not lend themselves to on-site retesting. If an on-site retest on one skill section is indicated, the candidate must complete that entire skill over again on the second attempt.

Section 19.6 Dealing with Candidates Who Fail
When a candidate fails a skill, the proctor should discuss with the candidate his/her option to retest and encourage the candidate to do so when he/she feels comfortable. The examiner will document the offer to retest on the candidates skill sheet.

Section 19.7 Test Site Records/Paperwork
Upon completion of the examination, the proctor shall place the following in the folder(s) provided:
• Answer sheets
• Skill Sheets
• Scratch paper
• Examination booklets shall be counted, organized by number, placed back in the test envelop, seal it and return it to the Fire Science Office

Section 19.8 Problems
Any problems that arise with a certification exam that do not require the immediate attention of the onsite proctor/evaluator should be communicated to the Fire Science office.
**Section 19.9 Written Examinations**
An overall grade of 70% is required for the successful completion of a written examination. All written examinations are graded by WGTC and are recorded in WGTC database.

**Section 19.10 Skills Examinations**
Successful completion of skills evaluated on a given examination day shall be required for certification. Successful completion shall mean a minimum of 100% of the items listed on each skill sheet with no failure to properly complete any listed critical skills. All skills examinations are graded by a WGTC representative and shall be recorded WGTC database.

**Section 19.11 Notification of Test Scores**
Test results will normally be electronically or mailed to the candidate within 2 weeks of the test by GFSTC or WGTC. This will also apply to the results for any skills tests that were not graded on-site. When possible and practical, the proctor will notify candidates of their skills exam results on the day of the exam. Skills examinations which are scored at the time of the evaluation may be reviewed with the test proctor on the day of the test. Skills exams which are graded after the testing period may be reviewed in the Fire Science office by appointment.

When test scores are mailed, they will be accompanied by a standard letter indicating whether the candidate passed or failed each portion of the exam. This letter contains information pertaining to retests for candidates who fail a portion of an exam.

WGTC will not give out exam results over the telephone or via e-mail. Requests for exam results must be made in writing by mail or fax to the Program Chair. Requests for test scores will not be granted until 2 weeks after the date of the exam.

**Section 19.12 Retest Procedures**
If a candidate fails to successfully complete either portion of an examination (written or skills), the candidate will be allowed to retest the portion(s) failed at a later date as listed in this section.

Candidates who score less than 70% on a written exam must retest the entire written portion of the exam. A different version of the written exam will be used for the retest examination. Candidates who fail to successfully complete all required skill components of a skills exam must retest the entire skills portion of the exam. Skills evaluated during the retest will be randomly selected. Upon successful completion of any previously failed portion(s), the final grade of record for the examination shall be the passing score received during the successful reexamination. The score(s) of the reexamined portion(s) shall then become candidate's final score.

A candidate may retake any written or skills examination not earlier than 10 working days after the previous attempt.

Retake policy as used by the Georgia Firefighter Standard and Training Council – Retake Policy is as follows: [http://gfstconline.org/pdf/RetakePolicy.pdf](http://gfstconline.org/pdf/RetakePolicy.pdf)


*Individuals may re-take a specific level exam up to three times before remediation is required. After the third un-successful attempt, candidates must remediate on specific subject matter not mastered on previous attempts. If the candidate does not gain a successful score on the fourth attempt, he/she must re-take the course for the exam level being challenged."
Before an individual will be allowed to retest for the fourth attempt, he/she must wait a minimum of 15 calendar days and present written documentation on departmental letterhead under the signature of the fire chief or designee attesting the individual has completed the remediation requirements.

Retests for written exams are normally conducted at the Fire Science office during normal working hours.

Retests for skills exams will not normally be administered at the Fire Science office; however, the Program Chair reserves the right to offer these retests when there is not another exam available or the location/date of the next exam is prohibitive. The Fire Science staff also reserves the right to make special arrangements for retesting when it is feasible and logical.

Section 19.13 Test construction
It is the policy and practice of WGTC that test validity be achieved by referencing each test question and evolutions to the appropriate NFPA or other adopted standard(s) and dedicated reference material(s).

The Program Chair (Director) has access to current NFPA standards that cover the standards tested through the Fire Science Advisory Board members. Test banks shall be maintained which give the ability to test all JPRs through written or skills testing. Written test banks for each level shall contain a minimum of two times the number of questions as found on a written exam for that level. In addition, written test banks shall contain a minimum of one question for each area that is designated by the WGTC as cognitive.

All test revisions, developments, or changes shall be submitted to the WGTC staff for review to ensure uniformity and consistency. Editorial changes shall be made as needed to maintain compliance with appropriate standards and WGTC policies and procedures. Correlation sheets shall be maintained for each level. At a minimum, correlation sheets include:
- The appropriate standard component(s) and requisite knowledge and skill number/identifier.
- A description of how the standard component(s) are to be tested.
- Number of test items evaluating each number/identifier.

Section 19.14 Written Tests
Standard Coverage
WGTC will be utilizing the LXR testing program from Performance Training Systems (P.T.S.) Inc. Performance Training Systems 395 Tequesta Drive Unit 2B, Tequesta, Florida 33469 phone 516-277-9396 developed by Dr. Ben Hirst and his subject matter experts. These test banks are evaluated to meet NFPA standards with referenced location in specific text books. The original testing review are done by P.T.S., then the test banks are reviewed by local subject matter experts for validity and correctness. The total questions developed from this review are then utilized to produce examinations for testing.

It is the policy and practice of WGTC that test validity be achieved by reference each test question and evolution to the appropriate NFPA or other adopted standard(s) and dedicated reference materials. Additionally, the subject matter experts review each test evaluation for job reference.

WGTC utilizes texts that are referenced in the related LXR examinations. The text name, edition and publisher is listed and available on the www.westgatech.edu NPQS link. The information is also available to all candidates in the course syllabi and examinees upon registering for the examination so they will have the correct information.

Candidates are provided a list of materials to study upon request and are emailed the current book list. Additionally, the technical materials needed for each standard exam can be found at: http://www.westgatech.edu/academics/firescience/forms.htm - “Examination Handbooks
Texts utilized:

REFERENCE LIST FOR FIRE INSPECTOR I - v.9.0
Publisher/Title/Edition


REFERENCE LIST FOR FIRE INSTRUCTOR I – v9.0.1
Publisher/Title/Edition

2. IFSTA, Fire and Emergency Services Instructor, 8th Edition, 1st Printing
3. Jones and Bartlett, Fire Service Instructor, Principles and Practice, 2nd Edition 1st Printing

REFERENCE LIST FOR FIRE INSTRUCTOR II – v9.0.1
Publisher/Title/Edition

2. IFSTA, Fire and Emergency Services Instructor, 8th Edition, 1st Printing
3. Jones and Bartlett, Fire Service Instructor, Principles and Practice, 2nd Edition 1st Printing

REFERENCE LIST FOR FIRE OFFICER I – v-9.0
Publisher/Title/Edition/Printing

1. NFPA, Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, NFPA 1021, 2014 Ed.
2. IFSTA, Fire and Emergency Services Company Officer, 4th Edition, 1st Printing
3. Jones and Bartlett, Fire Officer, Principles and Practices, 3rd Edition

REFERENCE LIST FOR FIRE OFFICER II - v9.0
Publisher/Title/Edition

2. IFSTA, Fire and Emergency Services Company Officer, 4th Edition
3. Jones and Bartlett, Fire Officer, Principles and Practices, 3rd Edition
4. IFSTA, Fire Investigator, 2nd Edition

REFERENCE LIST FOR FIRE OFFICER III – v9.0
Publisher/Title/Edition

1. NFPA 1021, Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, 2014 Ed.
2. IFSTA, Chief Officer, 3rd Edition
3. Jones and Bartlett, Chief Officer, Principles and Practice, 1st Edition
REFERENCE LIST FOR FIRE OFFICER IV - v8.5 (v9.0 coming soon!)
Publisher/Title/Edition

1. NFPA 1021, Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, 2009 Ed.
2. IFSTA, Chief Officer, 2nd Edition
4. Jones and Bartlett, Chief Officer, Principles and Practice, 1st Edition

WGTC does not utilize the method of multiple level testing within a single examination. All examinations are in single certification type.

Test Developer (Performance Training Systems)

Received from PTS “Reference from PTS documentation:
PTS develops cognitive test items. Each cognitive test item is developed by trained and experienced fire service persons (Subject Matter Experts, SMEs). Their work is then reviewed by PTS staff for compliance to test-item writing standards and format models. Once this work is completed a Technical Review Committee composed of 5 to 7 SMEs is reviews every test item to ensure the knowledge being measured is required on the job using a must-know and need to know consensus model. The test items are then coded to specific portions of the appropriate NFPA Standard. This work culminates with the production of a comprehensive cross-reference table by question and specific areas of the NFPA Standard. The cross-reference table is provided to all certification customers along with the test item bank at no additional charge’.

Test Methodologies
WGTC utilizes methodology which have been established by GFSTC. The job performance requirements will be sampled is a test are determined by the topic being studied, the knowledge and skills necessary to demonstrate mastery of the material and how the candidate is expected to perform in “real world” conditions Those JRR’s that are vital to safety and survival and other “critical” events are given priority. Our college is that all identified course competencies are taught and are available to be evaluated. The questions pool is validated by committee of subject matter experts. Any questions selected in order to insure every standard is addressed in the pool. Test questions area then selected randomly to insure each standard is covered on each version of the test.

Texts Utilized for ProBoard Examinations (see 19.14 for listing)
WGTC utilizes texts that are referenced in the related LXR exemptions. The text name, education and publisher is listed and available on the www.westgatech.edu NPQS link. The information is also available to all examinees upon registering for the examination so they will have the correct information.

IFSTA book(s) related to course being taught
Incident Command book(s) related to course being taught
Jones and Bartlett book(s) related to course being taught
Other books or review book(s) related to course being taught

Written examinations shall consist of the number of questions deemed appropriate by WGTC to adequately measure the cognitive knowledge of the objectives required for certification of the level specified. At a minimum, test banks are maintained and specified as follows:
• Enough questions to correlate to 100% of the appropriate standard/level.
• At least twice as many questions as required to generate each version of a written exam. WGTC staff shall identify the total size of the test bank.
• Each professional qualification level shall have its own test bank. Each question shall be referenced to the appropriate standard, edition, and supporting text.
• Reading assignments are maintained for each test. If the reference materials are not readily available for candidates to purchase they will be made available by request from WGTC reserves the right to charge for these materials.
• Time limits for written tests will be 1 hour for each 50 questions.

Written certification examinations are drawn from test banks maintained by WGTC Test banks for each level of certification are maintained in categories by their appropriate Job Performance Requirements (JPRs) or objectives. When constructing different versions of an examination, questions are randomly selected within each category.

**Section 19.15 Skills Tests**
Skills examinations shall evaluate the number of practical skills deemed appropriate by WGTC. A minimum of 100% of the applicable skills shall be evaluated. The procedures used in selecting skills will ensure a fair dispersion of the JPRs/pre-requisite skills/objectives. Skills are randomly drawn. The following are two exceptions to this procedure:
1. At selected levels, some skills areas are mandatory and will be included in the 10% minimum selected.
2. At selected levels, skills are grouped prior to random selection.

The time allowed for each examination shall be as deemed appropriate by the WGTC Skills sheets shall be developed with the outcome as the basis for success. Skill sheets shall allow for different methodology, but ensure that the following criteria are met:
• Shall be performed swiftly, safely and with competence.
• Each objective shall be met in its entirety.
• Unless so indicated on the practical skills evaluation sheet, it is not required for the objectives to be mastered in the order they appear.

The skill sheet (and associated skill exam if applicable) shall also serve as a grading implement. Items/criteria may be weighted as follows:
1. On manipulative skills exams, items designated as critical are required to be completed successfully to pass the skill. If critical items are not completed, the candidate, other emergency responders, or civilians may be placed in jeopardy, or the task would not be completed.
2. On-paper skills exam, items may be weighted by point value representing their importance to the successful completion of the skill.

**Section 19.151 Skills Testing Methodology**
W.G.T.C policy involves testing for each professional qualification level includes a written Examination and, if indicated, an evaluation of 100% randomly selected skills. Candidates must successfully complete all evaluated skills criteria within specified time limits. The use of any unauthorized outside materials is prohibited. “Requisite knowledge” and/or cognitive objectives will be examined by written testing. Questions on a written test may be correlated to a skill.

WGTC utilizes the specific level skills available from GFSTC and if not available –use those established locally by SME’s. GFSTC does not have current FOIII or FOIV skills so WGTC was permitted to develop skill sheets through the evaluation by SME’s. GFSTC offers skills evaluation continuously prior to the time of reaccreditation and opens it up to statewide subject matter experts.
The pass/fail criterion for each skill is outlined on a corresponding skill sheet. WGTC follows the recommended minimum score established by GFSTC. Skill examinations must have 100% as the minimum passing score. Critical skill components are identified on appropriate skill sheets and must be successfully completed to obtain a passing score. The results of skill examinations are recorded as "pass" or "fail." After all permitted attempts are expended, which have been evaluated by two separate evaluators, candidates who fail a manipulative skill will be informed of the reason. Candidates will be made aware of the skill(s) failed as soon as practical and can review the reason for failure. Those JPRs that are vital to safety and survival and other “critical” events are given priority.

The job performance requirements sampled in a test are determined by the topic being studied, the knowledge and skills necessary to demonstrate mastery of the material, and how the candidate is expected to perform in “real world” conditions.

Testing for each professional qualifications level includes a written examination and, if indicated, an evaluation of 100% randomly selected skills. Candidates must successfully complete all evaluated skills criteria within specified time limits. The use of any unauthorized outside materials is prohibited. "Requisite knowledge" and/or cognitive objectives will be examined by written testing. Questions on a written test may be correlated to a skill.

WGTC SME’s help approved the following skill sheets for current test banks to complement any missing GFSTC skill sheets:
- Fire Officer I – 15 skill sheets
- Fire Officer II – 13 skill sheets
- Fire Officer III – 1 skill sheet
- Fire Officer IV – 1 skill sheet
- Fire Instructor I – 1 skill sheet
- Fire Instructor II – 11 skill sheets
- Fire Inspector I – 22 skill sheets

Manipulative objectives, JPRs, "requisite skills," or portions thereof will be examined by skills examinations. The college Fire Science program maintains the ability to test all objectives, JPR's, and requisite knowledge and skills from the applicable standard, however to ensure brevity only a random selection of all requirements covered in the standard will be tested.

The job performance requirements sampled in a test are determined by the topic being studied, the knowledge and skills necessary to demonstrate mastery of the material, and how the candidate is expected to perform in “real world” conditions.

WGTC policy is that fire science staff members do written test analysis over a set time frame or as the standards change. This analysis is conducted to identify trends or deficiencies in the test instrument. This is accomplished by tracking the end results and broken down by questions missed.

WGTC policy is that fire science staff members do written test analysis over a set time frame or as the standards change.

Cognitive:
Test scores below 70% produced from the use of scantron evaluation are reviewed by hand for correctness. Any changes will be listed on the scantron and the test instrument in question will be reevaluated. The action taken can be one of the following: repair, replace or accept it as listed. The review by the SME’s will discuss, reference, and approve the changes or take no action to ensure that it will be meet the standard.
WGTC utilizes a random selection of test items from each subsection of the associated bank of questions. The number of questions are randomly selected from each group of questions that are associated to each requisite knowledge listed point. The random selection can also be arranged to ensure complete coverage on all the standards.

Psychomotor:
Skill evaluation will follow the guidelines set forth by GSTC.

The pass/fail criterion for each skill is outlined on a corresponding skill sheet. Skill examinations must be passed with 100% as the minimum passing score. Critical skill components are identified on appropriate skill sheets and must be successfully completed to obtain a passing score. The results of skill examinations are recorded as "pass" or "fail." After all permitted attempts are expended; which have been evaluated by two separate evaluators, candidates who fail a manipulative skill will be informed of the reason. Candidates will be made aware of the skill(s) failed as soon as practical and can review the reason for failure. Those JPRs that are vital to safety and survival and other “critical” events are given priority.

The test item and test analysis areas are sampled - determined by the topic being studied, the knowledge and skills necessary to demonstrate mastery of the material, and how the candidate is expected to perform in “real world” conditions.

If there are a number of candidates failing the same skill station, the Lead Evaluator will review the skill, equipment and evaluation instrument. It will the decision of the Lead Evaluator to replace the skill station and each candidate will be given a chance to do the new skill.

Section 19.16 Re-test Examinations
Test materials used for re-testing are constructed following the procedures listed above; however, a different version of the written examination is used and skills are randomly selected.

Section 19.17 Reliability/Validity of Testing Instruments
All written test questions are referenced to an appropriate text, or resource (i.e. course handout). Where possible Fire Science texts/materials will be used as reference materials for tests.

Cognitive:
WGTC follows the recommendations set forth by GFSTC. At the completion of the test bank, the committee will determine the number of test questions for the level testing. The test bank contains numerous questions dealing with each standard covered. WGTC utilizes the random selection of questions from the correlated bank of test items from that level being evaluated. The bank test items are those questions validated through our process and covers and consists of all the required standard areas. The randomization of the questions allows for greater flexible in the testing process.

Psychomotor:
WGTC utilizes the specific level skills available from GFSTC and if not available – use those established locally by SME’s. GFSTC does not have current FOIII or FOIV skills so WGTC was permitted to develop skill sheets through the evaluation by SME’s.

Skill sheets not available through GFSTC were established by WGTC SME’s. The SME’s developed such skill sheets to augment that of GFSTC.

GFSTC offers skills evaluation continuously prior to the time of reaccreditation and opens it up to statewide subject matter experts.
Psychomotor for as needed WGTC:
• WGTC parallels the action of GFSTC to evaluate the most current skills requirements found in the NFPA standards.
• SME’s/Committee members will reference manipulative skills identified by the standard.
• Each member reviews the skill checklist and it is discussed and approved before moving on.
• The SME’s feedback could to delete, add or change the individual evaluation grading based upon to meet the needs for the local jurisdiction.
• Before skill sheet is repaired, replaced or approved, the review committee must discuss, reference, and approve the changes to ensure that it will be meet the standard.
• SME’s members agree on the checklist.
• These psychomotor skill sheets become the most current evaluation grading sheets for the evaluated standard.

WGTC follows the recommendations set forth by GFSTC found at

GFSTC Validation Statement:

Scope
The general idea is to ensure that the test instrument used is developed with the concerns of the fire service in mind. A cross section of individuals from around Georgia are invited to take part in the process, the committee will consist of Subject Matter Experts (SEM), who serve in the fire service in Georgia at some capacity such as full-time, part-time, or volunteer, who have demonstrated a level of understanding for the identified level being validated through experience, knowledge, and/or certifications

Purpose
This set of responsibilities is provided to make the National Professional Qualifications System evaluation process easier, to decrease the possibility of problems for firefighter candidates, evaluators, and proctors. To ensure that each evaluation is conducted in a fair and consistent manner regardless of where it is given or irrespective of which proctor is serving during an evaluation.

The Georgia Firefighter Standards and Training Council (GFSTC) will evaluate personnel for National Professional Qualification (NPQ) certification by: (1) a written examination and (2) a performance evaluation.

“GFSTC VALIDATION MEMBERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR:
• Prior to meeting gathers all the required resource materials, in order to validate the test instruments such as the standard, identified reference material, current skill sheets, and any other related materials. Setting up an agenda for the committee, and sending it out prior to the meeting.
• Ensures that a roster is developed for each day of the validation process that records such information as name of committee members attended, date, associated department, and contact information (phone number and e-mail address).
• Ensure that throughout the process that all reference materials used and notes taken during the validation process are not allowed to leave the room with committee members. Test questions are only displayed by digital projection equipment operated by GFSTC staff members.
• Ensure that each member reviews the test item and/or skill checklist one at a time and it is discussed and approved before moving on.
• Ensures that the use of computers by committee members is forbidden during the validation process. All validation review notes and scrap paper used must be turned in to GFSTC staff members, before anyone is allowed to leave the room.
Validation Procedures

- All reference material is available and assigned to a panel member.
  - Copy of the applicable standard
  - Reference material identified by the test bank
  - Matrix for the level validating
  - A matrix will have to be filled out to identify that the test instrument used for that level covers the standard.
  - A completed matrix must have a total number of times that the test instrument covers each section of the standard in the cognitive and manipulative area.

- Validate Test Banks
  - Each member reviews the test item and/or skill checklist one at a time and it is discussed and approved before moving on.
  - Before a test question and/or skill sheet is repaired, replaced or approved, the review committee must discuss, reference, and approve the changes to ensure that it will meet the standard.
  - At the completion of the test bank, the committee will determine the number of test questions for the level testing.

- Validate Skill Sheets
  - Each member reviews the test item and/or skill checklist one at a time and it is discussed and approved before moving on.
  - Before a test question and/or skill sheet is repaired, replaced or approved, the review committee must discuss, reference, and approve the changes to ensure that it will meet the standard.
  - In some cases, it will be required that the validation committee will have to develop and validate the skill sheets.
  - Identify the grading criteria for the skill sheets, however it must be objective based, consistent, and fair for the candidate and evaluator.

- Identify How the Skills testing will be conducted
  - How many skills a candidate must pass to obtain certification
  - Individual Skills
  - Group skills
  - Identify the method in which the skills process should be conducted

- Identify the Required Facilities and Equipment for an Approved Skills Testing Site (ASTS)
  - Determine the facilities and Equipment that will be required at a site to conduct a skills test

- Validate Prerequisite Form
  - Determine what a candidate must complete prior to testing

Section 20: Proctors and Evaluators Responsibilities

Section 20.1 Program Chair/Certification Staff
- Confirm the location, date, and time for the examination.
- Provide all materials and equipment required for the examination.
- Select the test version and skills to be evaluated.
- Select the evaluation team.
- Process test materials and issue final grades.
- Support the evaluation team as needed.

Section 20.2 Proctor
The proctor is responsible for the security and administration of the examination. The proctor's responsibilities include:
- Manage the test site and initiate the exam process.
• Proctor the written examination.
• Assign duties to assisting evaluators.
• Ensure that all safety precautions are followed.
• Ensure the security of test materials and integrity of the exam process.
• Complete all necessary exam and personnel paperwork.
• Support the evaluation team as needed.
• Perform 2nd attempt testing on skills as needed.
• Discuss the basis for a candidate's failure with the skills evaluator prior to dismissing the candidate from the skills test – inform candidates of reason for failure.
• Grade on-paper skills exams.
• Return all test materials and paperwork to the Program Chair.
• Monitor testing for compliance with procedures.
• Evaluate the performance of evaluators.

Section 20.3 Evaluator(s)
• Assist the proctor with the skill examination.
• Evaluate each candidate in accordance with the criteria identified on the skill sheet(s).
• Ensure that all safety precautions are followed.
• Monitor candidates waiting to test or who have completed the test.

20.4 Selection of Cognitive Proctors/Evaluators
WGTC will select and assign all proctors and evaluators for certification examinations. All proctors and evaluators must meet requirements through completion of GFSTC Evaluator program or through WGTC in order to be eligible. Training is offered periodically by the WGTC Proctor and evaluator training address pertinent WGTC policies and procedures and testing methodology.

WGTC follows the recommendations of GFSTC Evaluator course prerequisite which states “At least 5 years of experience in the Fire Service, or 3 years of experience and hold Pro Board Instructor I certification” and/or demonstrate technical competence in the area that they will evaluate. Certification to the commensurate level is preferred; however, consideration will give to other education and/or related job or educational experience.

In addition, by networking with fire service and other emergency response professionals, the Fire Science staff receives recommendations for potential proctors and evaluators. From these recommendations, the Program Chair in conjunction with the fire departments will recruit, and recommend GFSTC Evaluator training to selected individuals.

Proctors shall sign a letter of agreement acknowledging full understanding and intention to comply with WGTC policies and procedures and prior to any evaluation, the GFSTC Proctor/Monitor or Evaluator form are distributed and discussed before being sent to their assigned roles.

The assigned proctor for the testing will walk around all evaluations sites to insure consistency in evaluator performance.

Section 20.5 Training/Qualifications for Cognitive and Psychomotor Staff
All proctors and evaluators must meet requirements through completion of GFSTC Evaluator or through WGTC in order to be eligible. GFSTC Evaluators are used as the primary in the evaluations of psychomotor skills. Training is offered periodically by the WGTC Proctor and evaluator training address pertinent WGTC policies and procedures and testing methodology.
WGTC follows the recommendations of GFSTC Evaluator course prerequisite which states “At least 5 years of experience in the Fire Service, or 3 years of experience and hold Pro Board Instructor I certification” and/or demonstrate technical competence in the area that they will evaluate. Certification to the commensurate level is preferred; however, consideration will give to other education and/or related job or educational experience. Required training is as follows:

**Qualification Training/Requirement (where applicable)**

Proctor/Evaluator:
HM Awareness, HM Operations, FFI, FFII, Instructor I

- Commensurate certification, education, or experience. Must be certified to the level or higher of the certification they are testing the candidate.

Note: Specialty Certifications are granted on a level-by-level basis.

- Specialty Certification – (Obtained through mentoring or special training in specific certification levels).

All certification courses which require cognitive testing for course completion must meet the following guidelines for the selection of test proctors and test administration:

Proctor selection will be limited to either WGTC or recognized personnel by a Regional Test Site coordinator or instructors having lead evaluator status.

The test proctor cannot be a member of the host department or have taught in the course (Exception – the WGTC Program Chair) being evaluated unless the following conditions have been met:

a. The WGTC Program Chair or an authorized designee may audit the test delivery to ensure compliance with accreditation procedures.

b. The proctor agrees to comply with the testing procedures of WGTC Policies and Procedures Manual or has been certified as an authorized test proctor by GFSTC

c. WGTC fire science faculty members are recognized as certified test proctors.

The Program chair maintains a list of all certified test proctors. The Program Chair will select and assign all proctors and evaluators for certification examinations. Through its program delivery efforts, Fire Science Program (FSP) maintains a list of approved instructors representing various emergency response organizations. Successful instructors are the primary source of evaluators. In addition, by networking with fire service and other emergency response professionals, the program chair receives recommendations for potential proctors and evaluators. From these recommendations, the program chair in conjunction with the evaluators will qualify, screen, select and train proctors and evaluators. All evaluators and proctors must meet the minimum requirements specified by Program Chair.

Proctors or evaluators shall receive training based upon GFSTC course and acknowledging full understanding and intention to comply with policies and procedures before being approved to act in their assigned roles.

**Section 20.6 Performance Monitoring/Evaluation**

WGTC maintains a list of GFSTC Regional Test sites where personnel can be requested to assist as well as from prior use of them. At each test offering where evaluators are used, the proctor shall monitor and evaluate the performance of each evaluator.

Proficiency of skills and knowledge, compliance with rules and procedures, and the need for additional training will be considered.
Proctors and evaluators performing below acceptable levels will undergo retraining before they are permitted to participate in any other certification exams. Any proctor/evaluator who continues to perform below acceptable levels will not be allowed to participate in the certification process.

The assigned proctor for the testing will walk around all evaluations sites to insure consistency in evaluator performance.

The Program Chair makes periodic visits to test sites. Upon these visits, the Program Chair will perform an evaluation of the proctor/evaluators.

Section 20.7 Dress Code and Equipment/Tobacco Use Policy
WGTC proctors and evaluators are expected to wear appropriate professional clothing, gear and equipment at exams.

Local fire departments shirts are discouraged and fire department T-Shirts are prohibited. For administration of exams, the appropriate dress is "casual office." Dress slacks, golf shirt or similar shirt, and dress shoes/boots or loafers are expected. Selected skills may require adjustments to the dress code. The proctors and evaluators are expected to respond to those requirements while meeting the intent of the dress code. Tobacco and tobacco product use is prohibited on the fire training academy grounds and during all WGTC testing periods (written and psychomotor skills).

Section 20.8 Code of Conduct
A Proctor/Evaluator:
• Acts at all times in a professional and positive manner - as WGTC’s primary ambassador.
• Presents and grooms him/her in a manner that is appropriate for the high level of influence and responsibility that accompany the role of a WGTC representative.
• Arrives on time, showing respect for our customers by being ready to begin the test at the designated start time.
• Shows respect for candidates and other evaluators in language and actions, and through the exercise of fundamental human courtesy and a respect for diversity of all people.
• Refrains from any sexual advance, innuendo, or harassment towards candidates or other evaluators.
• Treats candidates and evaluators with the same honesty he/she expects – honesty that extends to his/her handling of certification, assessment of candidates' abilities, and any circumstances that might exhibit potential for conflicts of interest.
• Uses WGTC materials and resources in proper and authorized manners.
• Supports and helps evaluators who are less experienced so that they can achieve a high level of success.
• Recognizes the confidential nature of information concerning candidates and only gives information about a candidate to authorized personnel.
• Does everything possible to achieve excellence in professional conduct and delivers the highest quality instruction and evaluation services to our customer.

Section 21: Internal Certification Staff Procedures

Section 21.1 Generating Certification Tests
Only approved individuals have access to the Fire Science certification files.

Section 21.2 Written Tests
Written tests for each skill are generated using a test generating software package.
Section 21.3 Skills
Skill sheets are stored in a locked file cabinet located in Fire Science office. Each skill folder contains the skill sheet, skill exam, and the key (as applicable) for a given skill. Skills are randomly selected for each examination.

Section 21.4 Written Exams
- The appropriate subject and level should be obtained from the secure test cabinets.
- In case of a retest, the exam version shall be different from the original exam. (The test version of the original exam can be found printed on the test site folder or on the original scantron.)

Section 21.5 Instructor's Policies and Procedure Manual
The instructor’s notebook contains information for the lead evaluator. It includes procedures for administering the exams and skills. It also describes the skills evaluation process. The notebook contains examples of all necessary documents that are to be completed following a certification exam. It also addresses the procedure for returning the secure test kit. Lastly, the instructor's notebook contains any skills for that particular test.

It is important to note that each test kit may require materials in addition to the basic test kit materials.

These additional materials are as follows:

Section 21.8 Instructor I
1. Basic test kit contents
2. Minimum of two (2) randomly selected skills --- skills based on national codes
   • Micro-lessons (skill #1) --- candidates utilize lesson plans to teach lesson
   • Verify overhead projector availability at the test site.
   • Verify electronic projector which will allow use of Power Point projection.
   • Verify candidates have overhead transparencies needed.
   • Review randomly selected skills to determine any other necessary supplies/materials.

Section 21.9 Instructor II
1. Basic test kit contents
2. Minimum of two (2) randomly selected skills --- skills based on national codes
   • One (1) randomly selected skill --- if instructor evaluation is selected skill - TV/VCR is required
   • Verify overhead projector availability at the test site.
   • Verify electronic projector which will allow use of Power Point projection.
   • Verify candidates have overhead transparencies needed.
   • Review randomly selected skills to determine any other necessary supplies/materials.

Section 21.10 Inspector I
1. Basic test kit contents
2. Minimum of two (2) randomly selected skills --- skills based on national codes
   • Review randomly selected skills to determine any other necessary supplies/materials.

Section 21.11 Fire Officer I
1. Basic test kit contents
2. Minimum of two (2) randomly selected skills --- skills based on national codes
   • Review randomly selected skills to determine any other necessary supplies/materials.
Section 21.12 Fire Officer II
1. Basic test kit contents
2. Minimum of two (2) randomly selected skills --- *skills based on national codes*
   • **Review randomly selected skills to determine any other necessary supplies/materials.**

Section 21.13 Fire Officer III
1. Basic test kit contents
2. Minimum of two (2) randomly selected skills --- *skills based on national codes*
   • **Review randomly selected skills to determine any other necessary supplies/materials.**

Section 21.14 Fire Officer IV
1. Basic test kit contents
2. Minimum of two (2) randomly selected skills --- *skills based on national codes*
   • **Review randomly selected skills to determine any other necessary supplies/materials.**

Section 22: Printing / Copying Certification Exams

Certification exams can only be copied by Fire Science full time staff members. When duplicating examinations the Fire Science staff member is responsible to maintain a secure environment. Master copies of the exams can be found in the Fire Science office.

Section 23: Record Keeping

NPQS certification records for candidates are retained electronically in perpetuity and paper copies of tests created for examinations are retained for a period of 5 years. These records shall include the following on the application:
   • Names of candidate
   • Social Security number (candidate ID number or identifier)
   • Email address
   • Date of exam
   • Fire department name
   • Scores received and Pass/Fail on Skills

The Program Chair shall maintain candidate records at the WGTC office at 1 College Circle LaGrange, GA. 30240. A record of all candidates successfully completing each certification level shall be generated, filed, and maintained. A file created for each certification exam shall contain written exam results, skills evaluation results, candidate registration forms, number of persons tested, distribution of test scores, and average test scores. The WGTC office will only retain any pertinent skill cards and any pertinent skill exams of failed individuals.

All records shall be maintained in a secure environment under the direct control of WGTC staff. All sensitive material on computer systems shall be password protected to prevent unauthorized access to the information.

Section 24: Security

All test materials shall be maintained in a secure environment under the direct control of WGTC staff. All sensitive material on computer systems shall be password protected to prevent unauthorized access. Test items under development shall be distributed to subject matter experts who are employed or selected by
WGTC and have been trained to ensure test security. Upon completion of the development tasks at hand, all electronic and hard copy test materials shall be returned to the WGTC staff for secure storage. All other material no longer needed, will be destroyed by proper means (erased from electronic format/paper copies shredded). Copies of test booklets shall be maintained within a locked cabinet until used. Only selected WGTC staff shall have access to these items.

Names of individuals on subject matter development committees shall be maintained in a folder. Only the WGTC's Program Chair and Fire Science staff member are the only individuals who have access to secured testing materials. This is achieved by limiting access to others by restricting computer access with password restricted areas of the computer network and by storing testing items in locked cabinets.

Test security is maintained following recommendations of PTS as well as those stated under the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) TCSG Candidate Records Retention Schedule Policy-
https://tcsg.edu/tcsgpolicy/docs/V.R.TCSG_Candidate_Records_Retention_Schedule.htm
Recommendation is 5 years and that is what our policy for retention of records.

Section 25 Appeals Process

It is the policy and practice of the WGTC to ensure candidates are provided an orderly and systematic means to appeal professional qualifications certification testing and/or WGTC policies and procedures without fear of restraint, coercion, or reprisal. When an appeal has been placed, a review may occur. Candidates will follow the guidelines:

All appeal assessment outcomes or test results must be made in writing and sent within 15 days of the incident to the Program Chair for review and response.

An appeal must include the following:
   a. Name of person initiating request for appeal
   b. Examination date
   c. Type of examination
   d. Question number that is challenged
   e. Reason/basis for appeal.

The Program Chair will research the challenge and report to the candidate the finding. The Program Chair will make a decision on the appeal based on a review of the test results and statements from the candidate and the evaluator/proctor.

If the candidate disagrees with the decision of Program Chair, the candidate has 15 days to appeal to a review board of a minimum of three (3) member of the Fire Science Advisory Board. Each Advisory Board member will review the appeal and make a written recommendation to the Program Chair. Based on the recommendation, the Program Director will make the final decision for resolution of the appeal.

If a problem is identified with a test question, the question can be removed from the test and all test scores will be adjusted for that testing event.

Actions to correct any problem identified through the appeals process may include editing or removal of the question or skill sheet and revalidation of the affected test item.
If the policy or procedure involves any area covered by the W.G.T.C. Delegation of Authority, the Fire Science Program Chair will forward all information to G.F.S.T.C. for their board to review and make final decisions.

**Section 25.1 On-Site Appeals**
Candidates may appeal any of the conditions listed above to the proctor on the day of the examination. The proctor may correct deficiencies in the process used or reexamine practical skills to correct a valid grievance.

Any candidate may inspect their practical skills grading sheet to verify the mathematical accuracy of the grade and may upon request, be apprised as to which section needs further preparation.

**Section 26: Fire Science Advisory Board Members**

West Georgia Technical College Fire Science Advisory Board and member information is listed here:

Chief Scott Blue Chair  
Carroll County Fire  (from June 2007)  (October 2014)  
501 Old Newnan Road  
Carrollton, GA 30112  
770-830-5880  
770-830-5984  
sblue@carrollcountyga.com

Chief Steve Wirth - Vice Chair (temporary)  
Heard County EMA  (October 2014)  
11816 Hwy 100  
Franklin, GA. 30217  
706-675-6186  
706-675-3195 (fax)  
chiefwirth@heardfire.com

Chief Mitt Smith  
West Point Fire  (Since 2000)  
PO Box 487  
West Point, GA. 31833-0487  
706-645-3508  Direct Office: 706-645-3084  
706-643-8150 (fax)  
msmith@cityofwestpointga.com

Chief Dennis Knight  
Troup County Fire  (May 8, 2014)  
2471 Hamilton Road  
LaGrange, GA. 30240  
706-883-1717  
706-883-1718 (fax)  
dknight@troupco.org
Administrative Deputy Chief (rotates yearly per the Public Safety Director)
LaGrange Fire                              (May 8, 2014)
115 Hill Street
LaGrange, GA. 30241
706-883-2650
706-883-2654 (fax)
price@lagrange-ga.org

Chief Scott Spencer
Douglas County Fire                             (Dec. 2010)
6856 Broad Street
Douglasville, GA. 30134
770-942-8626
(fax)
sspencer@co.douglas.ga.us

Chief Johnny Teters
Coweta County Fire Dept.                       (May 8, 2014)
483 Turkey Creek Road
Newnan, GA 30263
770-254-3400
770-254-3903 (fax)
jteeters@coweta.ga.us

Chief Roderick Jolivette
Manchester Fire Dept.                          (May 8, 2014)
234 West Perry Street
Manchester, GA. 31816
706-846-2134
706-846-2134 (fax)
rjolivette@manchester-ga.com
washjolly@yahoo.com