



Compliance Audit Report Summer of 2009 Argosy University Principal Certification Program

According to Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10(c), "An entity approved by the SBEC under this chapter...shall be reviewed at least once every five years under procedures approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff; however, a review may be conducted at any time at the discretion of the TEA staff." Per TAC §228.1(c), "All educator preparation programs are subject to the same standards of accountability, as required under Chapter 229 of this title." The Texas Education Agency administers Texas Administrative Code rules required by the Texas legislature for the regulation of all educator preparation programs in the state. Please see the complete Texas Administrative Code at www.tea.state.tx.us for details.

Contact Information: Dr. Nannette Glenn

County/District Number: 057714

Program Specialists, Mary Black and Corrina Noriega, conducted a Texas Education Agency Compliance Desk Audit of Argosy University. The focus of the compliance audit was the principal certification program. The following are findings and recommendations for program improvement.

SCOPE OF THE COMPLIANCE AUDIT:

The scope of the audit was restricted solely to verifying compliance with Texas Administrative Code §227, §228, §229,

Data Analysis:

Information concerning compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) governing educator preparation programs was collected by various qualitative means. A self-report was submitted to the Texas Education Agency via Survey Monkey along with requested verifying documents. Because student records contain confidential information and could not be transmitted to TEA, student records were checked by the program using a check list supplied by TEA. In addition, electronic questionnaires developed by TEA were sent to Argosy University stakeholders. Six (6) stakeholders responded to the questionnaires: two (2) advisory committee members; one principal candidate; no field supervisors; no principals; and no cooperating teachers/mentors responded. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation of the data were used to evaluate the evidence. Evidence of compliance was measured using a rubric aligned with Texas Administrative Code. After the review of the information, the program specialist arranged a telephone debrief to cover the findings of the

audit. The findings were incorporated into the original survey monkey form and sent to the program. This summary report provides the findings and recommendations resulting from the audit.

COMPONENT I: Governance of Educator Preparation Programs- Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20

FINDINGS:

The advisory committee consists of eight representatives from institutions of higher education and three representatives from public or private schools. No representatives from business or the community are included. Only two surveys out of a possible eleven were received from advisory committee members. Both advisory committee surveys said that collaboration with public and private schools needs improvement. This might be improved by additional committee members from the area of public and private schools.

In addition, the two advisory committee members returning surveys indicated they were unclear about a number of issues: the total number of hours required in the program, Texas Administrative Code rules, the number of students in the program, whether foreign students are recruited or enrolled, and qualifications for instructors. They were also unclear about whether the advisory committee reviews admissions, the admission requirements for the program, and elements of curriculum such as reading instruction and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics. The Director should train all advisory committee members in these details in order to facilitate better decision making. Surveys and document review both indicate that advisory committee meetings are held twice annually and that minutes and agendas are kept for each meeting.

Based on the evidence presented, Argosy University is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.20 – Governance of Educator Preparation Programs.

COMPONENT II: ADMISSION CRITERIA - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227.10

FINDINGS:

A review of documents and eight student folders indicates that all admission requirements are currently being met.

Argosy requires a 3.0 GPA for admission to its principal program. Argosy also requires a current Texas teaching certificate and residency or employment in a K-12 school in Texas. These served as screening activities for admission to Argosy's principal program, as required by TAC §241.5.

Based on the evidence presented, Argosy University is in compliance with TAC §227 - Admission Criteria.

COMPONENT III: CURRICULUM - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.30

FINDINGS:

Texas Administrative Code §241.15 serves as the curricular basis for principal certification. These standards include 1) Learner –Centered Values and Ethics of Leadership; 2) Learner-Centered Leadership and Campus Culture; 3) Learner-Centered Human Resources Leadership and Management; 4) Learner-Centered Communications and Community Relations; 5) Learner-Centered Organizational Leadership and Management; 6) Learner-Centered Curriculum Planning and Development; and Learner-Centered Instructional Leadership and Management.

Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that all principals have an understanding of the laws regarding and characteristics of students with special needs, gifted and talented students, and English language learners, including the English language proficiencies. The same applies to parent conferencing and communication skills. Today's school principals often face difficult communication situations, and must be fully prepared to handle such situations with skill, both orally and in writing. We recommend that Argosy evaluate their curriculum in the areas of special populations and communication skills because the self-report indicates that these topics are not currently taught.

The two faculty surveys received by TEA indicate that some faculty are unaware of the whole system of the principal certification curriculum, particularly the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics, reading instruction for principals, and the Texas Technology Standards for all Educators.

Online courses must meet ADA requirements for students with special needs.

Based on evidence presented, Argosy University is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Section §228.30 – Educator Preparation Curriculum.

COMPONENT IV: Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training (TAC) §228.35

FINDINGS:

After discussion with Argosy administrators, it was determined that the total number of clock hours offered for principal certification is 450, not including the internship. This is in contrast to the self-report which stated that 150 clock hours were offered. All principal certification programs in Texas must offer at least 200 clock hours of instruction and a minimum of 160 hours of internship by rule.

TAC §241.10(b) requires a field-based practicum for principal certification. Argosy appropriately facilitates and supervises this practicum for its candidates.

Many questions in this section do not apply to principal certification, but to initial teacher certification instead. According to the syllabi and online courses view by the TEA program specialists, Argosy meets all standards for program delivery.

Based on evidence presented, Argosy University is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Section §228.35 – Program Delivery and On-Going Support.

COMPONENT V: Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement – Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.40

FINDINGS:

The document review revealed program and course evaluation documents, including online course evaluations. Both internal and external data sources for evaluation were evident.

Benchmarks and assessments of candidate progress as required by TAC 241.10 are evident in the syllabi and course materials review by program specialists.

Based on evidence presented, Argosy University is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.40 – Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Program Compliance Recommendations are based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency compliance audit. If the program is out of compliance with any component, please consult the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) and correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. General Recommendations are suggestions for program improvement only.

PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS: In order to meet requirements of Texas Administrative Code governing educator preparation programs, the following recommendations must be implemented immediately:

Argosy University principal certification program is in compliance with all TAC rules.

OTHER PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- TEA recommends that Argosy University recruit more members from local schools and districts to its advisory committee in order to facilitate better understanding of local needs and receive more input from local stakeholders. In addition, the Director should inform the advisory committee of admission requirements and curriculum.
- A review of the curriculum is also recommended to ensure that appropriate information about special populations; ethics and communication are included in course work.
- Online courses must meet ADA requirements for students with special needs.

- Two recommendations to improve the evaluation process are 1) to share the Institutional Effectiveness evaluation process and report with the advisory committee and actively involve them as possible; and 2) share information about the principal certification program with the campus program advisory board and/or recruit one or more members to join the advisory committee. It will create stronger understanding and more stakeholders input for the program.