



Compliance Audit Report Summer of 2009 Southwestern University Initial Teacher 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. Sherry Adrian

County/District Number: 246501

Program Specialist, Mixon Henry, conducted a Texas Education Agency Compliance Desk Audit of Southwestern University. The focus of the compliance audit was the initial teacher 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 Southwestern University stakeholders. Forth-four (44) stakeholders responded to the questionnaires: Among the responses, eight (8) were from advisory committee members; eight (8) from student teachers, clinical teachers, interns; four (4) from field supervisors; three (3) from principals; and fifteen (15) from 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:

Southwestern University is not in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Rule 228.20. The Advisory Committee ceased meeting in 2005 due to a significant change in district personnel and reduced commitment with the cessation of CPD funding. Southwestern University is aware of the need for the Advisory Committee and its requirement by TEA. They are very willing to comply and have started the process to re-establish the committee. A new Advisory Committee will begin in the 2009-2010 school year to support the university program. The new members have been contacted and have agreed to serve. The new members represent the four required categories. Arrangements have been made to meet twice yearly. Roles and responsibilities are being established for new member and documentation will be supplied with agenda and minutes.

Based on the evidence presented, Southwestern University is not in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.20 – Governance of Educator Preparation Programs.

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

FINDINGS:

Southwestern University is in compliance with TAC rule 227.10. Requirements include: 2.5 GPA over the last 60 hours, C+ or better in coursework required for teacher certification, completed application, successful background check, and completion of a 20 clock hour project called "Intercultural Experience" with a reflection of that experience. English proficiency for non-native English speakers is determined by TOEFL. Student records are stored, both electronically and in a hard copy format, in secure conditions. Recruiting of candidates is done by website, catalogs, brochures and campus-wide information sessions.

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

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

FINDINGS:

Southwestern University is in compliance with TAC rule 228.30. All faculty members have advanced degrees, Texas standard teaching certificates, and experience in teaching higher education. The curriculum is comprehensive and the PPR topics are embedded throughout the coursework. The university has specific courses to address core content areas, reading across the curriculum, and differentiated instruction. Technology is incorporated into various course and methods. Data collection, analysis, spreadsheets for case studies (with Mathematics and Science), and presentation with Websites and Webquests are a few of the technological tools used in the coursework. Quality of the curriculum is supported by the success on the TExES on content and PPR. The pass rate for Southwestern is 98%-100% over the last five years.

Based on evidence presented, Southwestern 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:

Most coursework has a field experience component to enhance and create a practical application to the curriculum for the candidate. The field experience component is so engrained into the program that Generalist EC-4 accrues 279+ clock hours, Generalist 4-8 accrue 244+ clock hours, Secondary certification candidates accrue 202+ clock hours, and candidates seeking EC-12 certificates accrue 111+ clock hours, prior to student teaching. This does not count the 95 clock hours of volunteer time donated by each candidate. Another highlight of the program is the senior field-based experience called "Teaching for Social Justice". This is a 10-12 clock hours of co-teaching lessons (with volunteer faculty) in a diverse populated school setting. Student teaching is a twelve week program with a three way conference (student teacher, cooperating teacher, and field supervisor) during the first week of placement. Roles, expectations, required documentation and student teaching contract are written. There are weekly visits by field supervisors with observations (formal and informal) and interaction with cooperating teachers. Each field supervisor is a faculty member responsible for six student teachers. Teachers from the previous year return for a full day of technical support, reflections, and program evaluation. This name of the program is "Semester of Support" (SOS). This allows the university to add support and receive feedback.

Based on evidence presented, Southwestern 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:

Southwestern University is in compliance with TAC rule 228.40. The university evaluates the students throughout their coursework and student teachers during their teaching experience.

Coursework is evaluated in traditional methods and grades are assigned. The field-experience component has written reflections as the evaluation and feedback instrument. During the student teaching phase, field supervisors and cooperating teachers use a variety of instruments to evaluate the student teacher (lesson plans are graded on a rubric; formal and informal observation evaluations are completed by field supervisors and cooperating teachers; student teachers and cooperating teacher evaluate progress with a weekly conference report; mid-point and final evaluations are conducted by a three way conference with student teacher, cooperating teacher, and field supervisor). Evaluations of the program are done by student teachers, cooperating teachers, alumni of the program, and district personnel. This feedback is evaluated by faculty, staff with the Institutional Research Dept., staff with the Provost's office, and Alumni (SOS). The newly formed Advisory Committee will be added to the evaluation process and provide feedback beginning with the 2009-2010 school year.

Based on evidence presented, Southwestern 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:

TAC §228.20 Governance of Educator Preparation Programs

Re-implement the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee needs to meet twice during the calendar school year, re-establish its roles and responsibilities, and provide guidance to Southwestern University, implement for the 2009-2010 school year in accordance to TAC rule §228.20.

TAC §228.35(f) Program Delivery and On-Going Support

According to TAC rule §228.35 (3)(f) Field Supervisors will provide written feedback of student teacher's observations to the campus administrator, implement for the school year 2009-2010.

OTHER PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

None at this time.