



## Compliance Audit Report 2010-2011 Texas A & M University-College Station

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 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 rules at [www.tea.state.tx.us](http://www.tea.state.tx.us) for details contained in each rule.

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**County-District Number:** 021501

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**Date of Compliance Review:** March 22-24, 2011

**Date Self-Report Submitted:** February 7, 2011

A continuing approval compliance review for the Texas A&M University traditional undergraduate educator certification program was conducted on March 22-24, 2011, by Texas Education Agency (TEA) Program Specialists Dr. Mary S. Black and Mr. Mixon Henry in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10(c).

Information concerning compliance with Texas Administrative Code governing educator preparation programs was collected by various qualitative means. A review of documents, syllabi, and curriculum correlation charts provided evidence regarding compliance. In addition, electronic questionnaires were sent to Texas A&M University (TAMU) stakeholders by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). A total of 670 responses to the questionnaires were received by TEA, including 150 responses from interns or student teachers (out of 730 total sent); 70 responses from field supervisors (out of 159 total sent); 116 from school principals (from 372 sent), 281 from campus mentors or cooperating teachers (out of 855 sent), and 53 from advisory committee members (out of 128 sent). A self-report was submitted to TEA by TAMU on February 7, 2011. Qualitative methods of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation were used to evaluate the evidence.

The Opening Session of the compliance review on March 22, 2011, was attended by 25 people including the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development, Dr. Doug Palmer; the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Dr. Jim Kracht; Chair of the Department of Teaching Learning And Culture (TLAC), Dr. Dennie Smith; and coordinator for teacher education in TLAC, Dr. Glenda Byrnes. Also present were representatives from six other departments and colleges, including Dr. Tim Scott and Dr. Carolyn Schroeder from the College of Science representing AggieTeach. Representatives from two local school districts and one business partner were also

present. Mary Black from TEA presented a brief advisory committee training and an overview of data received from the electronic questionnaires during the Opening Session.

The following report describes compliance with Texas Administrative Code regarding educator preparation at the TAMU traditional undergraduate teacher preparation program through the Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture (TLAC) for certification in Generalist EC-6. The university offers a post-baccalaureate program leading to a masters' degree and certification in secondary content fields. In addition, the university offers an online alternative certification program for certification in English Language Arts and Reading 8-12, History 8-12, Languages Other Than English EC-12, and other content areas. The Department of Education Administration offers principal and superintendent certification. The Department of Educator Psychology offers certification in Special Education EC-12 and Bilingual Generalist EC-6. The Department of Health and Kinesiology offers all-level certification in school health and physical education. AggieTeach through the College of Science is specifically for math and science students who want to become teachers. Each of these routes has its own application and slightly different requirements. This report focuses on the traditional undergraduate Generalist EC-6 certification offered through the Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture (TLAC) in the College of Education and Human Development.

## **COMPONENT I: COMMITMENT AND COLLABORATION - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20 – GOVERNANCE OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS**

### **Findings:**

Component I concerns governance of the educator preparation program by the advisory committee. TAMU has a two-tiered advisory committee system. The Brazos Valley Cooperative Teacher Education Center (BVCTEC) is composed of 128 members, with 71 representing schools or school districts, 43 from TAMU, six from Regional Education Service Centers IV and VI, and four representing local business interests. BVCTEC meets twice annually in October and February to advise college and university educator preparation programs in the region, such as Blinn Community College and Texas A&M University. TAMU also has a university Council on Teacher Education (CTE) composed of 22 TAMU faculty, two school district representatives, and two business representatives which meets monthly. The purpose of this committee is to encourage cross-disciplinary involvement in educator preparation across the university. For example the College of Science, the College of Liberal Arts, and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences also participate in the CTE, and help prepare students for teaching careers.

The two advisory committees have different roles and duties as spelled out in committee bylaws. BVCTEC functions as a network to assist with activities related to teacher education as well as to develop guidelines for the selection of cooperating teachers and field experiences. [TAC §228.35(d)] The CTE reviews all revisions to TAMU's educator preparation program and reviews and responds to all correspondence and requests from the Texas Education Agency. Both groups participate in decisions regarding design, delivery, and evaluation of educator preparation at Texas A&M University. [TAC §228.20(b)].

Minutes, agendas and attendance records from both committees were reviewed during the document review by TEA program specialists. BVCTEC minutes and agendas from February 28, 2011, November 1, 2010, February 22, 2010, February 24, 2009, and October 26, 2009, show that the typical meeting provides for updates from each area represented and discussion of bylaws. The CTE meets monthly, but minutes for only one meeting per year (January 20, 2011, October 26, 2010, and June 23, 2009) were reviewed by TEA staff as a representative sample. Meeting files also contained handouts and examples of PowerPoint presentations given at various meetings. The advisory committees meets the composition and meeting requirements of TAC §228.20(b).

**Based on the evidence presented above, Texas A&M University is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20 – GOVERNANCE OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS.**

## **COMPONENT II. ADMISSION CRITERIA - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227.10 - ADMISSION CRITERIA**

### **Findings:**

Component II concerns admission criteria for educator preparation programs. The Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture (TLAC) at Texas A&M University in College Station requires a grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 for admission into preparation for the Generalist EC-6 certification, which is above the mandated minimum GPA of 2.5 per TAC §227.10(A). Ten student folders for candidates enrolled in the Generalist EC-6 certification area were selected at random and reviewed by TEA program specialists. The average GPA recorded for these ten random candidates was 3.32. Three of these ten candidates had GPAs of 3.7. High grade point averages such as these attest to the quality of candidates selected for admission into this program.

Review of the transcripts of the same ten random candidates in Generalist EC-6 revealed that all have 12 or more semester hours in the required courses for the certification. [TAC §227.10(c)]. They have all met the basic skills requirements through THEA, SAT, ACT, or coursework. [TAC §227.10(4)]. All students have demonstrated English oral language proficiency through either coursework, interview [TAC §227.10(5) and §227.10(6)], or both. All student folders reviewed contained a signed application. [TAC §227.10(6)].

Admission criteria for TAMU College of Education and Human Development are published online and in the university catalog. No candidates are admitted who have a GPA below 2.5 [TAC §227.10(b)]. No out-of-country candidates were seen in the folder review, and TAMU staff reported that none were enrolled in the Generalist EC-6 certification program. [TAC §227.10(7)(e)]. A student handbook is published online by TLAC that contains policies and procedures for candidates.

**Based on the evidence presented above, Texas A&M University is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227.10 – Admission Criteria.**

### **COMPONENT III. CURRICULUM - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.30 - EDUCATOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM**

#### **Findings:**

Component III concerns required curriculum for educator preparation programs. Syllabi for all courses in the Generalist EC-6 certification area were reviewed by TEA program specialists. All syllabi contained course descriptions, objectives, requirements, and assignments. Some syllabi also contained the TExES standards, domains and competencies covered in the course, and some did not.

The TLAC department prepared three charts for review by TEA program specialists: 1) the Standards Correlation Chart for the Generalist EC-6 Certificate; 2) the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities Standards Correlation Chart for Generalist EC-6; and 3) the TEKS Correlation Chart for the Generalist EC-6 Certificate. These three charts reveal in which course each standard is taught. All required standards and TEKS are included in the TAMU curriculum for this certificate area [TAC 228.30(a)]. All 17 topics required by Texas Administrative Code §228.30(b) are also included.

**Based on the evidence presented above, Texas A&M University is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.30 – EDUCATOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM.**

### **COMPONENT IV. PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ONGOING SUPPORT – Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 228.35 – PREPARATION PROGRAM COURSEWORK AND/OR TRAINING**

#### **Findings:**

Component IV concerns the program delivery, required number of clock hours of coursework, field supervision and classroom mentoring.

All Generalist EC-6 courses are taught face-to-face, with no online courses in this certification field. All faculty advanced credentials as evidenced by review of faculty curriculum vitae.

The TAMU Generalist EC-6 certification program requires 430 clock hours, far above the minimum requirement of 300 clock hours per TAC 228.35(a)(3). TAMU connects field-based experiences to several required courses, for a total of 72 clock hours of field observation and activities for Generalist EC-6 candidates. Logs verifying these hours were seen in student folders. The state minimum number of field observation hours is 30 per TAC 228.35(d)(1). Six

hours of test preparation are offered through the online T-Cert website. T-Cert was developed by Texas A&M University and Tarleton State University to provide online test preparation to educator certification candidates. Each review module is timed to provide the required six hours of preparation through a variety of exercises, questions and activities. [TAC 228.35(a)(3)(B)]. TAMU candidates have access to all modules developed so far, including a review for Generalist EC-6 and PPR EC-12.

Candidates for the Generalist EC-6 certificate at TAMU complete a minimum of 12-weeks of student teaching as required by TAC 228.35(d)(2). Cooperating teachers are suggested by the BVCTEC advisory committee. Each cooperating teacher receives a handbook with policies, procedures, and necessary forms. Training agendas with dates and attendance records were reviewed by TEA program specialists, and no district training for cooperating teachers is accepted by TAMU [TAC 228.35(e)]. In addition to a campus cooperating teacher, each candidate is assigned a field supervisor by the university as per TAC 228.35(f). Field supervisors receive substantial handbooks with policies, procedures and forms, as well as training from TLAC. Training agendas with dates and attendance records were in evidence, as well as examples of training materials. [TAC 228.35(f)].

Observation records by field supervisors show that the first contact with candidates is made within the first three weeks of assignment. [TAC 228.228.35(f)]. Each field supervisor is assigned 12-15 candidates, according to the self-report. Observation evaluation forms seen in student folders indicate an average of four formal observations per semester and two more informal walk-through visits by the field supervisor. [TAC 228.228.35(f)]. Each form includes the date and time in/out. Each campus principal receives a copy of the form after the evaluation from the field supervisor. [TAC 228.35(f)]. The first observation of the candidate is accomplished within the first six-weeks of assignment. [TAC 228.35(f)(1)(2)].

**Based on the evidence presented above, Texas A&M University is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.35 – PREPARATION PROGRAM COURSEWORK AND/OR TRAINING**

#### **COMPONENT V. PROGRAM EVALUATION - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.40 - ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES FOR CERTIFICATION AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT**

##### **Findings:**

Component V concerns assessment of candidates and overall program evaluation processes. TLAC evaluates the certification program once every year and the department as a whole is evaluated by the university every three-to-five years, according to the self-report. The Department of Teaching, Learning and Culture (TLAC) completed an external review in 2010 that is contained in six volumes. [TAC §228.40(c)]. Some of the specific internal data used to analyze the program includes the number of candidates' passing the TExES on the first attempt, and candidate retention information. Data from the Southern Association of Colleges and

Schools (SACS) is used as external data for evaluation. An example of course revision based on program evaluation comes from the Detailed Assessment Report for the Bachelor of Science Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies for 2009-2010. In this case, the intensive writing status was removed from one course (TEFB 471) and a child development component was inserted in order to strengthen that area of critical knowledge for teachers.

TEXES pass rates for completers in 2010 ranged from 96% to 100%, which is far above the minimum passing rate of 70%. Even with increasing pass rate standards in 2011 and 2012, TAMU expects to maintain their current high rate. Texas A&M University has computed candidate retention rates in the profession for two years, three years, and five years after certification. Of 645 students considered for the 2008 cohort, 489 (75.8%) were still teaching two years later. Of the 673 students considered for the 2007 cohort, 505 (75%) were still teaching three years after graduation. And of the 498 students considered for the 2005 cohort, 369 students (74%) were still teaching five year later. While many factors must be considered in retention in the field, good preparation and support, such as provided by TAMU plays a strong role.

While candidates are in the program, various benchmarks must be met in order to continue. For example benchmarks include maintaining good academic standing, satisfactory evaluations by the cooperating teacher and university field supervisor, and meeting with an academic advisor each semester to evaluate overall progress. If any benchmark is not met, the student is put on a growth plan with a timeline. Follow up is required with the advisor in order to confirm progress [TAC §228.40(a)].

Both electronic and paper-based student files are maintained by the university. Paper-based files are moved into long-term storage and kept for a minimum of five years, as required per TAC §228.40(d).

**Based on the evidence presented above, Texas A&M University is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.40 – ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES FOR CERTIFICATION AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT.**

## **PROGRAM RECOMMENDATION**

The following are recommendations based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency Compliance Audit. If the program is NOT in compliance with any component, please consult the Texas Administrative Code and initiate actions to correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. A Compliance Status Report will be required in sixty days on compliance recommendations.

General program recommendations are suggestions for general program improvement and do not require follow-up.

**PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS: A Compliance Status Report will be required in sixty days.**

**There are no compliance issues at this time.**

**GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS: No progress report is necessary.**