



## Compliance Audit Report Summer of 2009 Texas College 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](http://www.tea.state.tx.us) for details.

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**County/District Number:** 212-502

**SBEC Approval Date:** 1998

Program Specialist staff members conducted a Texas Education Agency Compliance Desk Audit of Texas College Educator Preparation Program during the summer of 2009. 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, and §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 Texas College Educator Preparation stakeholders. Five (5) stakeholders responded to the questionnaires: No advisory committee members; Three (3) student teachers, clinical teachers, interns; No field supervisors; Two (2) faculty members/instructors; No campus 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:**

Texas College did not have an active Advisory Committee during the 2008-2009 academic year or prior years. Thus, Advisory Committee meetings were non-existent. The educator preparation program has, however, recruited prospective individuals to serve on its Advisory Committee for the 2009-2010 academic year. It hopes to compose a 7-member committee that will actively participate in an advisement capacity in the required areas indicated in the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §232.20. Two meeting dates have been placed on the calendar, one in fall 2009 and one in spring 2010. Evidence submitted by the program indicates that the Vice President for Academic Affairs sent invitational letters to members from the lay community as well as school personnel. Although the proposed members will serve in numerous leadership roles, it is noted that all are members of surrounding school districts. Thus, the program will need to make a concerted effort to include members that represent as many of the other categories listed in the Texas Administrative Code as possible. These include the regional education service centers, institutions of higher education, and/or business and community interests.

The Texas College Division of Education should also ensure that, when the Advisory Committee is composed, members understand their roles and responsibilities. According to TAC §228.35(d), the Advisory Committee must also assist in determining the policies regarding field-based experiences. In essence, creation of the Advisory Committee can provide support to the program by increasing communication and collaboration with sources within as well as outside the college. This added perspective can impact program success.

**Based on the evidence presented, Texas College Educator Preparation Program 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:**

Texas College admission requirements for the traditional undergraduate educator preparation program meet the minimum standards provided in Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227.10. Students must meet all general admission requirements, pass the Foundations of the Teaching Profession course, and have a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.50. Action Plan documentation indicates that students must have a minimum GPA of 2.70. Clarification in this area will be sought. The candidate must also have passing scores in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics on the Texas Higher Education Assessment Test (THEA). In addition, the Teacher Education Committee must interview and approve all candidates. Program documentation includes a Screening Criteria Checklist. Retention in the program requires passing a speech test, other assessments prescribed by the faculty, and 120 clock hours of clinical field experience prior to student teaching. Candidates for Student Teaching must submit their application within the required deadline. Students are recruited through utilization of standard avenues such as the program's website, catalog, and brochures. The records retention policy is also in adherence with rule. Texas College maintains records in an organized and secured manner for a minimum of five years.

**Based on the evidence presented, Texas College Educator Preparation Program is in compliance with TAC §227 - Admission Criteria.**

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

### **FINDINGS:**

The course syllabi, in general, cover the required topics. Because, however, there is not a consistent template for the syllabi, there are some syllabi that are more extensive than others. Some align the courses with the Standards, Domains, and Competencies; however, most of these are included as addendums at the end of the syllabi. It would be more helpful to actually integrate the Standards, Domains, and Competencies within the syllabi and indicate where within the curriculum these are taught. As per the institution's Self-Report responses, one of the areas that lacks emphasis is differentiated instruction. It is addressed, according to the report, in the lower division education classes. An area that also lacked documentation was the work done on online coursework and evaluations section, folder #11 information of the Document Review Checklist. The Self-Report responses indicated that some courses were offered online and that technical support was provided to candidates. The folder, however, indicated that this area was non-applicable. According to the Document Review Checklist, Texas College is planning to move in the direction of offering more online courses and/or modules.

At the present time, according to the program's presentation materials, Texas College has a modern telecommunication center that has the ability to send and receive distance learning courses. Thunder, the center's latest state-of-the-art technology, provides opportunities for candidates and faculty to receive distance learning courses and valuable resources from outside sources. It was noted that education courses are sent and received via the technological advances available at the center. A breakdown of the total coursework hours submitted on the Schematic of Program Hours form indicates that the college requires more than double of the minimum 300-hour state requirement. The total coursework hours are listed as 680 clock hours plus a 12-week, full day Student Teaching experience. Educator candidates receive instruction in the Code of Ethics just prior to the Student Teaching experience and are also required to sign the Code. Texas College is commended for sequencing the Code of Ethics instruction just prior to the candidates' Student Teaching experience as well as requiring that candidates sign the Code. Texas College is commended for requiring, according to the Schematic of Program Hours submitted by the institution, 680 hours of total coursework. This is 380 clock hours over the state's minimum requirement of 300 clock hours.

**Based on evidence presented, Texas College Educator Preparation Program 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:**

Texas College requires more than 6 hours for TExES test preparation and 120 clock hours of field experience prior to Student Teaching. None of the field-based experiences are via video media; all are experienced directly in the classroom. Reflective exercises as well as appropriate forms document the experience. Ongoing support is offered to candidates who struggle with the TExES exams or who experience difficulties during the Student Teaching experience. Tutoring and additional workshops are offered in the area of test preparation, and field supervisors intervene if student teachers need additional support. According to the Self-Report and Document Review items, there are numerous areas that are not in compliance with TAC Chapter 228; thus, the following should be addressed to ensure adherence: (1) Student Teaching substitute policy implemented fall 2006 - [TAC §228.2(17) & §228.35(d)(2)] (2) Lack of scientifically-based training for cooperating teachers - [TAC §228.35(e)] (3) Field Supervisors' certification requirements and training - [TAC §228.2(10) & §228.35(f)] (4) Failure to provide written feedback to the candidates' campus administrator regarding the candidates' performance and evaluation - [TAC §228.35(f)]

Regarding #1 above, the Student Teaching experience cannot be waived. As per definition and rule, it must consist of a supervised 12 week full-day teaching practicum. Regarding #2 above, appropriate training must be provided to cooperating teachers by the program. If districts provide the training, it must be appropriately documented, such as with Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credit. According to the Document Review, there are no program training agendas, handouts, handbooks, policies, or contractual agreements with the schools where candidates are placed. Regarding #3 & #4, the Texas Administrative Code sections cited above state that the field supervisor must be a certified educator, who is trained and who provides written feedback to the campus administrator. The Document Review responses indicate lack of supervisors' training and failure to provide written feedback to the campus administrator. It is

imperative that the program address all the issues listed in #1-#4 above for the 2009-2010 academic year.

**Based on evidence presented, Texas College Educator Preparation Program is not 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:**

At the end of the completion year 2008, the program's status was Accredited-Under Review. The results for Completion Year 2009 available at this time also indicate the status of Accredited-Under Review; however, the report is still Pending Further Results. Evaluation responses in the Self-Report indicate that scores have increased from 60% to 80% during the 2008-2009 academic year; thus, score results after December 2009 should be reviewed for a more current evaluation report. Documents utilized by Texas College for evaluation of its Division of Education include the following forms: Division of Education Program Evaluation 2008-2012 Academic Years, Division Chairperson's Evaluation of Faculty Member, and the Faculty Satisfaction Survey Spring 2009. There is no indication of accessing evaluation information from outside sources, such as the community or campus/district personnel from districts where candidates are placed. Candidate observation forms were also included. Overall program progress must continue to be addressed through the program's Action Plan results and an enhanced study of candidates' score reports and increased program evaluation reports from participants, community and district personnel, and the institution's faculty and administration.

**Based on evidence presented, Texas College Educator Preparation Program 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:

- Create an Advisory Committee for the 2009-2010 academic year that addresses the criteria listed to ensure adherence to Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Rule §228.20(b), which states that the preparation of educators shall be a collaborative effort among public schools accredited by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and/or TEA-recognized

private schools; regional education service centers; institutions of higher education; and/or business and community interests; and shall be delivered in cooperation with public schools accredited by the TEA and/or TEA-recognized private schools. An advisory committee with members representing as many as possible of the groups identified as collaborators in this subsection shall assist in the design, delivery, evaluation, and major policy decisions of the educator preparation program. The approved educator preparation program shall approve the roles and responsibilities of each member of the advisory committee and shall meet a minimum of twice during each academic year;

- Ensure that the Advisory Committee assists in the design of the field-based experiences as required in TAC §228.35(d).
- Revise the program's Student Teaching substitute policy by not waiving the 12-week full day Student Teaching practicum during the 2009-2010 academic year to ensure adherence to TAC §228.2(17) & TAC §228.35(d)(2);
- Provide scientifically-based training for Cooperating Teachers, starting during the 2009-2010 academic year, to adhere with TAC §228.35(e);
- Ensure that Field Supervisors meet certification and training requirements, starting during the 2009-2010 academic year, to adhere to TAC §228.2(10) & TAC §228.35(f); and
- Implement the process of Field Supervisors providing written feedback to the candidate's campus administrator regarding the candidate's performance and evaluation, starting with the 2009-2010 academic year, to adhere to TAC §228.35(f).

#### **OTHER PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Consider creating specific suggestions and/or requirements for a course syllabi template to ensure that all courses address Standards, Domains, and Competencies;
- Acquire evaluation input from outside sources, such as the community and district personnel, to enhance the methods and frequency of overall program evaluation to best address the needs of the division, of candidates, and of the community;
- Review the instruments utilized in providing feedback to candidates by Cooperating Teachers and Field Supervisors to better prepare them for the classroom environment;
- Increase utilization of Thunder and the telecommunication center's technological advances to stay abreast of online curriculum offerings; and
- Continue to address the issues listed on the program's Action Plan to positively impact program progress and success.