Compliance Audit Report
2011-2012
University of Texas at San Antonio

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 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.

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County/District Number: 015505

SBEC Approval Date: 9/15/1989

Program Specialists, Ms. Vanessa Alba and Mr. Mixon Henry, conducted a Texas Education Agency (TEA) Compliance Audit of University of Texas at San Antonio's traditional initial teacher certification program on January 30 – February 1, 2012. The following are findings and recommendations for program improvement.

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 (TEA) on January 2, 2012. An onsite review of documents, candidate records, course materials, and curriculum correlations charts provided evidence regarding compliance. In addition, electronic questionnaires were sent to University of Texas at San Antonio's (UTSA) program stakeholders by TEA staff. Eleven (11) out of fifteen (15) advisory committee member, forty-two (42) out of two hundred thirty-eight (238) student teachers, fifteen (15) out of twenty-nine (29) field supervisors, fifty-three (53) out of one hundred forty-two (142) principals, and one hundred twenty (120) out of two hundred sixty-nine (269) cooperating teachers responded. Qualitative methods of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation of the data were used to evaluate the evidence. Evidence of compliance was measured using a rubric correlated to TAC.

Opening and Closing Session:

The opening session on January 30, 2012, was attended by fifty (50) people, including Dr. Betty Merchant, Dean of the College of Education and Human Development, Dr. Blanche Desjean-Perrotta, Professor and Associate Dean for Teacher Education, Dr. Joseph Lazor, past Director of the General Educational Excellence in Mathematics and Science (GE²MS), Ms. Deborah Weissling, present Director of GE²MS, and six (6) advisory committee members. The closing session on February 1, 2012, was attended by twenty-eight (28) people including Dr. John Fredrick, Provost, Dr. George Perry, Dean of College of Sciences, Dr. Blanche Desjean-Perrotta, Professor and Associate Dean for Teacher Education, Dr. Joseph Lazor, past Director of the General Educational Excellence in Mathematics and Science (GE²MS), Ms. Deborah Weissling, present Director of GE²MS, and five (5) advisory committee members.

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

FINDINGS:

Program support was indicated by the governing body of University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) per TAC §228.20(c) as evidenced by the participation of Dr. Blanche Desjean-Perrotta in various aspects of the compliance audit.

The advisory committee consists of fifteen (15) members. Seven (7) members are from local school districts, six (6) from higher education, and two (2) members represent community/business interests. UTSA meets TAC §228.20(b) requirements for advisory committee composition. In reviewing questionnaires about input requested by program, the following data was collected and compared to minutes and agendas provided by program:

- Familiar with Texas Administrative Code: yes - 10 of 11 responses (91%)
- Agenda and minutes provided: yes - 10 of 11 responses (91%)
- Participate in design and revision of curriculum: yes – 7 of 11 (64%)
- Program policy decisions: yes – 8 of 11 (73%)
- Overall program evaluation: yes – 6 of 11 (56%)
- Types of field-based experience: yes – 10 of 11 (91%)

In reviewing the advisory committee meetings' agendas and minutes, there was evidence that the program addressed the above topics. Agendas, minutes, and attendee records were available to substantiate that the advisory committee meetings were held. The meetings are held once a semester with the following meetings reviewed: December 3, 2009; August 11, 2010; April 26, 2010; and November 1, 2011. The next advisory committee meeting is scheduled for May 1, 2012. At the last advisory committee meeting held on November 1, 2011, of this academic year eleven (11) members attended. The following topics were addressed:

- Additional members joining the advisory committee, representing middle and high school teachers and representatives from the Mathematics and Science departments;

- Roles and responsibilities of the advisory committee were reviewed, a webinar presented by TEA was suggested, and for those unable to attend, Dr. Desjean-Perrotta will send a PowerPoint of the presentation;
- Field placement;
- Technology training;
- Code of Ethics and "Fitness to Teach";
- Dyslexia training; and
- LiveText and ASEP data.

The second meeting for the academic year is to be held on May 1, 2012.

At the December 3, 2010, advisory committee meeting, eight (8) members attended. The following topics were addressed:

- Highly Qualified (HQ) Standards;
- Accountability and data collection; and
- Mentoring of newly certified teachers from program.

At the August 11, 2010, advisory committee meeting, eight (8) members attended. The following topics were addressed:

- Curriculum additions (i.e. school law and additional classroom management);
- EC-6 marketability; and
- Ways in which UTSA candidates can stand out.

Feedback from advisory committee members encouraged UTSA to continue as is and continue to track the hiring patterns.

The April 26, 2011, meeting addressed the following issues:

- Reviewed and evaluated the program with data from pass rates;
- LiveText, and principal surveys; and
- The topics of out-of-state student teaching and lowering the 2.5 grade point average criteria for admissions were discussed and feedback was negative with regards to both options.

UTSA meets the requirements for conducting a minimum of two advisory committee meetings per academic year as required by TAC §228.20(b).

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

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

FINDINGS:

To enter the University of Texas at San Antonio's teacher certification program, the candidate must have sixty (60) hours, complete an online tutorial, submit an application [TAC §227.10(6)];

show mastery of basic skills proficiency with passing scores on THEA, ACCUPLACER, COMPASS, SAT, or ACT [TAC §227.10(4)]; exhibit adequate oral communication skills by earning a C or better in WRC 1013, COM 1043, COM 2123, COM 2113, SPN 3003 or SPN 3033 [TAC §227.10(6)]; and earn a C in WRC 1023 (writing and composition); other UTSA requirements include reading and signing the code of ethics and purchasing LiveText [TAC §227.10(7)].

Additionally, an ongoing screening device called "Fitness to Teach" addresses the following items:

- Academic requirements;
- Communication skills;
- Personal and Professional requirements;
- Cultural and Social attitudes and behaviors;
- Physical skills; and
- Emotional disposition.

If a candidate is having issues in any of the above identified areas, a process is in place to address the concerns and guide the candidate into acceptable behaviors or attitudes.

No out-of-country applicants, whose first language is not English, were in the program at the time of the compliance audit. However, should an out-of-country applicant seek admission, procedures have been established that require submission of an official minimum score on the written or computer-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) [TAC 227.10(a)(5).

In a review of the nineteen (19) candidates' records, it was found that all records presented as verification of adherence to admission criteria contained the appropriate items.

It was noted that no candidates were admitted with a grade point average of less than 2.5.

The self-report submitted by University of Texas at San Antonio stated that information about admission criteria and their program is available through the university website, catalogs, brochures, Facebook, twitter, and an e-newsletter [TAC §227.10(7)].

Based on the evidence presented, University of Texas at San Antonio is in compliance with TAC § 227.10 - Admission Criteria.

COMPONENT III: CURRICULUM - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.30 – Educator Preparation Curriculum

FINDINGS:

The University of Texas at San Antonio is approved to offer teacher certification in thirty (30) fields and five (5) classes. For the purpose of this compliance audit, the Mathematics (8-12) and Science (8-12) certification fields were selected for in-depth review.

Qualifications necessary to be selected as a course instructor require a Master's Degree or Doctorate and classroom teaching experience. Instructors' credentials were presented for review and criteria for selection were verified. It was verified that the instructors have the appropriate background or experience to provide instruction in these certification areas.

In reviewing the Mathematics (8-12) and Science (8-12) curriculum syllabi and alignment charts, it was found that the educator standards were the curricular basis for instruction as required by TAC §228.30(a). It was also noted that the curriculum provided evidence that it addressed the relevant Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as required by TAC §228.30(a). The seventeen (17) subject matter topics were included in the coursework as prescribed by TAC §228.30(b). Six hours of test preparation were provided for candidates prior to TExES testing as per TAC §228.30(b)(17) and TAC §228.35(a)(3)(C).

Student teachers were asked to respond to a series of questions prepared by TEA and sent to them electronically in order to verify aspects of the curriculum, its delivery, and its effectiveness. Forty-two (42) of the student teachers responded to the questionnaires. In responding to specific curriculum areas, one hundred percent (100%) felt that the university prepared them in the areas of utilizing TEKS in the content areas and how to develop a lesson. Ninety percent (90%) or more felt they were prepared in the following areas: child and adolescent development; TEKS organization, structure, and skills; utilizing a variety of classroom assessments; using formative assessments to diagnose student learning needs; standards and teaching strategies for students with limited English proficiency; and differentiating instruction to meet individual student needs. The student teachers indicated that they would like more emphasis placed on the following areas: reading strategies across the curriculum; teacher's responsibilities for administering the STAAR test; classroom management; and preparing for and conducting parent conferences. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of the student teachers indicated that they would recommend the teacher education program to others.

One hundred twenty (120) cooperating teachers responded to questionnaires. They expressed that they felt that the student teachers were well prepared in the following areas: understanding the child and adolescent development; TEKS organization, structure, and skills; TEKS in the content areas; and lesson development. They also indicated that the student teachers would benefit from more emphasis on the following areas: standards and strategies for teaching student with limited English proficiency; standards and strategies for teaching gifted and talented students; laws and standards regarding special needs students; and using formative assessments to diagnose student needs.

Fifty-three (53) principals responded to their questionnaires. Principals reported that they felt the students were well prepared in academic and behavioral needs of students with disabilities, communicating clear expectations of achievement and behavior, collaborating to meet the academic, developmental, and behavioral needs of students, and using technology in the classroom. However, they also expressed that the student teachers would benefit from more emphasis on working with students with limited English proficiency and classroom management.

Based on evidence presented, University of Texas at San Antonio is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Section §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:

Currently, the University of Texas at San Antonio's initial teacher preparation program is delivered in a face-to-face format. The total program consists of 866 clock-hours for elementary certification, 651 clock-hours for middle school, and 441 clock-hours for secondary certification, and 981 clock-hours for all-level certification. When the clock-hours required for teacher certification are added to the overall degree plan hours required for graduation, the total is 1800 clock-hours. This exceeds the requirements set forth in TAC §228.35(a)(3). Evidence was found in the self-report and in the degree plans included in the Teacher Education Handbook.

Completion of field-based experience comes from three courses: C&I 4203, Rdg 3773, and IDS 2013 which requires 25-30 clock-hours of field-based experience per course. This was documented on instructors' logs provided to TEA. This exceeds the 30 clock hours of required field-based experience as required by TAC §228.35(d)(2)(A). Four hundred forty-one (441) clock-hours of coursework are required prior to student teaching. This was verified by review of the degree plans presented [TAC §228.35(a)].

UTSA student teaching [TAC §228.35(d)(2)(A] consists of fifteen weeks and is currently offered during the fall or spring semesters. Evidence was presented in the form of student teacher placement information and it was verified that student teaching took place in an actual school setting approved by TEA, rather than a distance learning lab or virtual school setting as prohibited by TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C)(ii).

According to TAC §228.35(e), UTSA is responsible for providing cooperating teachers training that is scientifically–based or verify that training has been provided by a school district or education service center. UTSA provided as evidence training material that is used, which is done by way of an online vodcast (Video podcast, sometimes shortened to vodcast, is a term used for the online delivery of video on demand video clip content.). The student teacher and cooperating teacher watch and discuss the information presented in the vodcast. The student teacher signs a form documenting that the training has been completed by both the cooperating teacher and student teacher. Due to the lack of signature by cooperating teachers, verification of their participation in the activity could not be documented.

TAC §228.35(f) states that supervision of each candidate shall be conducted with the structured guidance and regular ongoing support of an experienced educator who has been trained as a field supervisor. Twenty-nine (29) individuals were identified as field supervisors for student teaching sessions. Several field supervisors are also faculty members. All field supervisors have teaching certification and advance degrees. Field Supervisor training is provided each semester. Documents provided to TEA verified the last two training dates as August 22, 2011, and January 12, 2012. UTSA produced evidence of agendas and sign-in sheets. Topics addressed in the training consisted of the following: review of changes in the field supervisor handbook; meeting time and location (on UTSA campus) of the meeting with student teachers; dates of observations; and many housekeeping items.

Initial contact is made within the first three weeks of the assignment by the field supervisor as required by TAC §228.35(f). This is done in a face-to-face format at the UTSA campus and again on the district campus. This was verified in a review of the student files. The purpose of the district campus meeting is to explain handbooks, meet cooperating teachers and campus principals, and to review roles and responsibilities.

A total of three observations [TAC §228.35(f)(4)] must be conducted during the student teaching assignment and must be at least 45 minutes in duration [TAC §228.35(f)]. TAC §228.35(f) also states that the first observation must be conducted within the first six weeks of student teaching. In a review of the candidate folders, evidence confirmed that the observations were conducted on the schedule prescribed. UTSA's observation form has five domains, each of which is graded on a 0-6 rating scale. The observation rubric is divided into the following sections:

- Learner centered instruction (lesson plan and content knowledge);
- Active, successful student participation in the learning process (beginning lesson, students engaged, challenged students, and student comprehending the lesson);
- Evaluation of and feedback on student progress (questioning and discussion, assessment and feedback, and reflection);
- Management of student behavior (classroom management, social environment, and physical environment); and
- Professionalism (communication, relationships, professional growth, and professional behavior).

Furthermore, TAC §228.35(f) requires that field supervisors document instructional practices observed and provide written feedback through an interactive conference with the candidates. Evidence was presented to support an interactive conference with signatures of student teacher and field supervisor.

It is also the responsibility of UTSA to provide a copy of the written feedback to the candidate's campus administrator as required by TAC §228.35(f). Evidence was presented to support that the field supervisor had provided the feedback to the campus administrator. The campus administrator or his/her representative is provided with a copy of the observation form via email with a read receipt requested. The email read receipt is kept by UTSA to verify the distribution of the written feedback.

Additional informal observations and coaching were provided by the program as specified in TAC §228.35(f). Evidence was presented in the form of additional observation forms and emails between the field supervisor and student teacher.

Based on evidence presented, University of Texas at San Antonio is not in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Section §228.35 – PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ON-GOING SUPPORT.

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

FINDINGS:

The University of Texas at San Antonio has a candidate assessment and benchmarking process as prescribed by TAC §228.40(a). Evidence in the form of a degree plan and course assessments was presented to support an assessment and benchmarking process.

Readiness for testing [TAC §228.40(b)] is determined by 10 to12 clock-hours of test preparation which includes a representative test and review of the results of the test by domains and competencies. According to TAC §228.40(b), the program shall not grant test approval for the pedagogy and professional responsibilities test until the candidate has met all the requirements for admission to the program and has been fully accepted into the educator preparation program.

Evaluation of the program's design and delivery of the curriculum should be continuous per TAC §228.40(c). Information such as performance data, scientifically-based research practices, and the results of internal and external assessments should be included in the evaluation process. The evaluation process is enhanced by a new program called LiveText. This web-based assessment program provides data that can be aggregated in a number of ways, depending on the need, from overall program data to individual candidate data. This tracking system enables UTSA to follow a student through each course and identify strengths and weaknesses of the candidate by standard. Additionally, data is gathered from ASEP, TExES scores, evaluations from candidates, cooperating teachers, and field supervisors. This information is presented to the advisory committee for review and input.

According to TAC §228.40(d), the program will retain documents that evidence a candidate's eligibility for admission to the program and evidence of completion of all program requirements for a period of five years after program completion. This documentation is kept electronically and in hard copy. The electronic copies are maintained in the Banner online tracking system and hard copies of records are kept in a locked room and locked offices.

Based on evidence presented, University of Texas at San Antonio is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.40 – ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES FOR CERTIFICATION AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT.

COMPONENT VI: Professional Conduct Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.50

TAC §228.50(a) states that during the period of preparation, the educator preparation entity shall ensure that the individuals preparing candidates and the candidates themselves demonstrate adherence to Chapter 247 of this title (relating to Educators' Code of Ethics). At the University of Texas at San Antonio, each student is required to sign an acknowledgment of reading and understanding the code of ethics. A copy of the acknowledgment was found in the candidates' records. In addition, each faculty member must abide by the university policies and procedures which incorporate the Code of Ethics.

Texas Administrative Code §229

Current Accreditation Status

University of Texas at San Antonio is currently “Accredited”.

Standard I: Results of Certification Exams

Pass Rate Performance:	2008-2009 Final 80% Standard	2009-2010 70% Standard	2010-2011 75% Pass Rate
Overall:	95%	92%	92%
Test Areas:	Bilingual Generalists 4-8	Generalist 4-8 ESL	Life Science
Area	50% (2-1)	0% (0-1)	0% (1-0)
	Superintendent	LOTE (Spn)	
	50% (4-2)	0% (1-0)	
		Math 8-12	
		64.3% (14-9)	

Program Recommendations:

The following are recommendations based on the findings of the compliance audit. If the program is NOT in compliance with any identified component, please consult the TAC rules and correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. A Compliance Status Report will be required every sixty days until the compliance issues are totally corrected. General program recommendations are suggestions for general program improvement and no follow-up is required.

PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

- Require the signature of the cooperating teacher when documenting the cooperating teacher training.

GENERAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

Component I General Recommendations:

- Consider expanding the depth of the advisory committee to include human resource directors, principals, and cooperating teachers/mentors among others;
- Continue having rolling terms of advisory committee members to ensure that new perspectives are brought to the advisory committee; and

- Continue advisory committee training on an annual basis to prepare any new members for their roles and responsibilities.

Component IV General Recommendations:

- Consider creating a remediation processes for unsuccessful test-takers to re-test, such as possible additional test preparation where the focus is on the unsuccessful competencies or if needed, additional coursework and training to strengthen the weak areas. Add this consideration to the agenda for the next Advisory Committee meeting for input. If agreed upon, publish the new criteria so no further issues related to unsuccessful candidates goes unaddressed.