



## Compliance Audit Report 2012-2013 University of Texas at El Paso Traditional 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 rules at [www.tea.state.tx.us](http://www.tea.state.tx.us) for details.

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**County/District Number:** 071-501

**SBEC Approval Date:** September 15, 1989

Program Specialists, Mixon Henry and Vanessa Alba, conducted a Texas Education Agency Compliance Audit of University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) traditional teacher certification program located at 500 W. University, El Paso, TX 79968 on October 9-11, 2012. The focus of the compliance audit was the traditional teacher certification program and the Generalist EC-6 certificate. The following are findings and recommendations for program improvement.

### **SCOPE OF THE COMPLIANCE AUDIT:**

The scope of this audit was restricted solely to verifying compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227, §228, §229, and §230.

### **Data Analysis:**

Information concerning compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) governing educator preparation programs was collected by various quantitative and qualitative methodologies. A self-report was submitted to the Texas Education Agency on September 12, 2012. An on-site review of documents, student records, course material, and curriculum correlations charts provided evidence regarding compliance. In addition, electronic questionnaires were sent to University of Texas at El Paso traditional certification program stakeholders by TEA staff. A total of one thousand two hundred seventy (1,270) questionnaires were sent to stakeholders. A total of one hundred thirty-nine (139) responses out of the one thousand two hundred seventy (1,270) or 10.9% were received as follows: Ten (10) out of fourteen (14) advisory committee

members or 71%; fifty-nine (59) out of nine hundred ninety-six (996) student teachers or 6%; ten (10) out of twelve (12) field supervisors or 83%; twenty-five (25) out of seventy-eight (78) campus principals or 32%; and thirty-five (35) out of one hundred seventy (170) cooperating teachers or 21%. To ensure the anonymity of the respondents, the number and percent of responses received from each stakeholder group were only shared at the opening session presentation. Quantitative and 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 aligned to Texas Administrative Code.

### **Opening and Closing Session:**

The opening session on October 9, 2012, was attended by forty-eight (48) people in support of The University of Texas at El Paso. Members of the UTEP program present included:

- Dr. Josie Tinajero, Dean of the School of Education;
- Dr. Judith Munter, Associate Dean; and
- Mr. Hector Hernandez, Manager of the traditional certification program.

The closing session on October 11, 2012 was attended by eight (8) people. They included Dr. Tinajero, Dr. Munter, and Mr. Hernandez.

## **COMPONENT I: COMMITMENT AND COLLABORATION - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20**

### **FINDINGS:**

Program support was indicated by the governing body of The University of Texas at El Paso traditional certification program per TAC §228.20(c) as evidenced by the participation and cooperation of Dr. Tinajero, Dr. Munter and Mr. Hernandez in all phases and stages of the compliance audit.

According to the self-report, the advisory committee email list, and the original sign-in sheets provided in the document review, the advisory committee consists of twenty-six (26) members. Thirteen (13) members represent public/private schools; nine (9) members represent higher education; one (1) member represents the education service center (ESC Region #19); and three (3) members represent community/business interests. The University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program met TAC §228.20(b) requirements for advisory committee composition.

Following were the dates of each advisory committee meeting noting topics covered per meeting (all meetings had sign-in sheets, agendas, and minutes for verification):

#### October 1, 2012:

- Advisory committee training;
- Program updates;
- Minutes from the previous meeting (September 6, 2012);

- Policy input;
- Curriculum review;
- Field-based experience for candidates;
- Program evaluation; and
- Advisory committee membership input.

September 6, 2012:

- Introduction of new members;
- Discussion of roles, decision-making, and policy evaluation;
- Review of number of candidates;
- Admission requirements;
- Curriculum updates;
- Field-based experiences;
- Program evaluation; and
- Input from advisory committee members noted in minutes.

May 5, 2012:

Program updates and highlights.

November 2, 2011:

Discussion of Texas Administrative Code (TAC).

May 2, 2011:

Discussion of rules by which the program must adhere.

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

The agendas, minutes, and PowerPoint presentations reflected that the university is implementing a process to ensure that the advisory committee continues to meet twice per year (September 1-August 31 of any given academic year) as prescribed in TAC §228.20(b).

Agendas and minutes provided by the university reflected that the university addressed on-going and relevant field-based experiences as determined by the advisory committee as specified in TAC §228.35(d).

**Based on the evidence presented, The University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program 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:

According to the self-report submitted by the University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program staff, to be admitted to the traditional teacher certification program, the candidate must meet the following criteria:

- Achieve a GPA of 2.50 [TAC §227.10(a)(3)(A)];
- Complete a minimum of twelve (12) semester credit hours in a content field [TAC §227.10(C)];
- Demonstrate basic skills proficiency noted with THEA, TASP, or exceptions noted in Texas Success Initiative [TAC §227.10(4)];
- Demonstrate adequate oral communication skills; [TAC §227.10(5)]
- Submit an application [TAC §227.10(a)(6)];
- Participate in an interview or other screening instrument to determine the educator preparation candidate's appropriateness for the certification sought, coursework required with Business/Public Communications 1301 or 1302; [TAC §227.10(a)(6)];
- Provide three reference letters of recommendation [TAC §227.10(7)]; and
- Meet any other academic criteria for admission that are published and applied consistently to all educator preparation candidates [TAC §227.10(7)].

Out-of-country applicants whose first language is not English must demonstrate competence in the English language by submission of an official minimum score on the computer-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) [TAC §227.10(5)]. In addition, the applicant must have his/her transcripts from an out-of-country non-English speaking university evaluated by an approved evaluation service [TAC §227.10(e)]. It was reported in the self-report that the university requires the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and a Bachelor's or Graduate Degree from an accredited U.S. institution for entry into the university. It was also noted that no out-of-country applicants have been admitted into the traditional certification program who required verification of the ability to speak and understand the English language at a level where they could readily participate in conversations and respond appropriately [TAC §227.10(5) & TAC §230.413(b) (5)].

The program has not admitted any candidates who were seeking the career and technology certificate. A review of candidates' records provided verifiable evidence to support that the experience and preparation requirements as stated in TAC §230 and §233 [TAC §227.10(d)] was not currently applicable for the program.

Of the twenty candidates' records reviewed, it was noted that all twenty candidates were admitted with a grade point average of greater than 2.5 [TAC §227.10(A)]. The GPA scores recorded ranged from 2.55 - 4.0. The number of candidates admitted with a GPA lower than the requirement did not exceed 10% of the cohort of candidates allowed by TAC §227.10(a)(3)(b).

As a result, evidence was not required that admission of the candidate(s) was approved by the program director and was granted because of extraordinary circumstances.

It was noted all twenty applicant files had transcripts that reflected a minimum of 12 semester credit hours in the subject-specific content area for which certification was sought as required by TAC §227.10(C).

Mastery of basic skills per TAC §227.10(4) was met with the official transcript showing THEA, TASP, or Texas Success Initiative. This was verified in a review of the twenty applicant files.

Applicants are required to take and pass Business/Public Communications 1301 or 1302 to meet the other screening instrument [TAC 227.10(6)]. The course completion was documented on transcripts. No face-to-face interview was utilized to better evaluate the English language proficiency of candidates. Principal questionnaires indicated that this was an issue with some candidates. Another reason for face-to-face interview was the lack of success of some test takers. If language was a factor for nonsuccess, it could be identified and remediated or the candidate's admission could be denied.

All applicants are required to submit three letters of reference. Fourteen (14) of the twenty (20) applicants' files reviewed contained evidence of three letters of reference. This met the requirements of TAC §227.10(7).

The self-report submitted by the University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program stated that information about their program and its admission requirements were available through the UTEP website and the university catalogue. In reviewing the website, it was confirmed that the information was aligned to documentation verified in candidates' folders.

**Based on the evidence presented, The University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program is in compliance with TAC §227.10 - ADMISSION CRITERIA.**

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

#### **FINDINGS:**

The University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program is approved to offer teacher certification in thirty-six (36) certification fields and twelve (12) professional certification classes. For the purpose of this compliance audit, the Generalist EC-6 certificate was selected for in-depth review.

It was documented in the self-report that the qualification necessary to be selected as a course instructor required an advanced degree. Instructors' vitas were presented for review and the criteria for selection verified that instructors had a Doctorate or Master's degrees. Some instructors were certified and had classroom teaching experience noted on the vita. All instructors had the appropriate background or experience to provide instruction in this certification area.

In reviewing the UTEP's traditional teacher certification Generalist EC-6 curriculum, it was found that the educator standards were not the curricular basis for instruction as required by TAC §228.30(a). The alignment charts submitted by the program were the basis for reviewing the syllabi provided by the program at the time of the on-site audit. The syllabi did not reflect the educator standards in Art, Music, and Theater Arts. In formal conversations with university

instructors and program staff, it was determined that candidates' curriculum did not always include coursework covering these standards. In reviewing other Generalist EC-6 curriculum, no other alignments issues were noted; standards were addressed and verified in syllabi and alignment charts submitted for the audit.

It was also noted that Generalist EC-6 curriculum did provide evidence that it addressed the relevant Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as required by TAC §228.30(a). The alignment charts submitted by the program were used to review the syllabi provided by the program. In the formal discussion with instructors regarding where the TEKS were addressed, it was determined that the program met the requirements of TAC §228.30(a) as prescribed.

A review of the seventeen (17) subject matter topics required by TAC §228.30(b) yielded the following results:

- Evidence that the specified requirements for reading instruction for the Generalist EC-6 certificate per TAC §228.30(b)(1) was provided in the alignment charts and in the instructor syllabi provided by the university. The syllabi and formal discussions revealed that instruction was provided in three (3) courses (ECED 4335, BED 4345, and RED 4341). These three courses provide the five essential components of reading (phonemic awareness; phonics; fluency; vocabulary; and comprehension). This met the minimum requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(1);
- Evidence that the specified requirements for child development per TAC §228.30(b)(3) was found in the alignment charts and was verified in the syllabi of thirteen (13) courses provided by the university. This met the minimum requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(3);
- Evidence that the specified requirements for motivation per TAC §228.30(b)(4) was found in the alignment charts and verified in the syllabi of two (2) courses provided by the university. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(4);
- Evidence that the specified requirements for learning theories per TAC §228.30(b)(5) was found in the alignment charts and verified as being present in the syllabi of eleven (11) courses provided by the university. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(5);
- Evidence that TEKS organization, structure, and skills per TAC §228.30(b)(6) was found in the alignment charts and in the syllabi of sixteen (16) courses provided by the university. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(6);
- Evidence that TEKS in the content area were being addressed per TAC §228.30(b)(7), was found in alignment charts and in the syllabi of eleven (11) courses provided by the university. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(7);
- Evidence that the state assessment of students per TAC §228.20(b)(8) was found in the alignment charts and in the syllabi of five (5) courses provided by the university. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(8);
- Evidence that curriculum development per TAC §228.30(b)(9) was found in the alignment charts and in the syllabi of fifteen (15) courses provided by the university. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(9);

- Evidence that classroom assessment for instruction per TAC §228.30(b)(10) was found in the alignment charts and in the syllabi of twelve (12) courses provided by the university. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(10).
- Evidence that diagnosing learning needs per TAC §228.30(b)(10) was found in alignment charts and in the syllabi of twelve (12) courses provided by the university. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(10);
- Evidence that classroom management per TAC 228.30(b)(11) was found in the alignment charts and verified in the syllabi of six (6) courses provided by the university. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(11);
- Evidence that developing a positive learning environment per TAC 228.30(b)(11) was found in the syllabi of six (6) courses provided by the university. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(11);
- Evidence that special populations were addressed per TAC §228.30(b)(12), was found in alignment charts and syllabi of one (1) to six (6) courses depending on the specific special population group addressed. As a result, the university met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(12);
- Evidence that parent conferencing and communication skills were addressed per TAC §228.30(b)(13) was found in both the alignment charts and syllabi of eleven (11) courses provided by the university. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(13);
- Evidence that instructional technology was addressed per TAC §228.30(b)(14), was found in alignment charts and syllabi of nine (9) course provided by the university. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(14);
- Evidence that pedagogy and instructional strategies were addressed per TAC §228.30(b)(15) was found in the alignment charts and verified in the syllabi of seventeen (17) courses provided by the university. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(15);
- Evidence that differentiated instruction per TAC §228.30(b)(16) was found in alignment charts and in the syllabi of seven (7) courses provided by the university. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(16); and
- Evidence that certification test preparation per TAC §228.30(b)(17) was offered. The university produced documentation of six clock-hours of test preparation for candidates that were held on afternoons and weekend in the form of workshops. Attendance was verified by sign-in sheets. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(17) and TAC §228.35(a)(3).

Responses from the principal stakeholder group questionnaire regarding curriculum, specifically candidate preparedness, were as follows:

- Classroom management: Yes – 82.6% No – 17.4%
- Academic and behavioral needs of students with disabilities: Yes – 56.5% No – 43.5%

- Communicate clear expectations for achievement and behavior:  
Yes – 73.9% No – 26.1%
- Technology to support and extend student learning: Yes – 78.3% No – 21.7%
- Collaboration with others: Yes – 78.3% No – 21.7%
- Academic and behavioral needs of students with Limited English Proficiency:  
Yes – 68.6% No – 36.4%
- Develop and interpret formal and informal assessments: Yes – 50% No – 50%

Responses from the cooperating teachers' questionnaire in regards to curriculum preparation reflected the following:

- Reading strategies: Yes – 77.4% No – 22.6%
- Code of Ethics Yes – 93.5% No – 6.5%
- Adolescent development: Yes – 86.7% No – 13.3%
- Instructional methods to motivate students: Yes – 87.5% No – 12.5%
- Theories of how people learn: Yes – 84.4% No – 15.6%
- TEKS; organization, structure, and skills: Yes – 80.6% No – 19.4%
- TEKS; in the content areas: Yes – 81.3% No – 18.8%
- STAAR testing: Yes – 53.6% No – 46.4%
- How to develop lessons: Yes – 87.5% No – 12.5%
- Curriculum development: Yes – 63.3% No – 36.7%
- Utilize classroom assessments: Yes – 71.9% No – 28.1%
- Use of formative assessments: Yes – 58.1% No – 41.9%
- Models and methodologies in classroom management: Yes – 76.7% No – 23.3%
- Laws and standards for Special Education: Yes – 53.6% No – 46.4%
- Standards and teaching strategies for GT students: Yes – 33.3% No – 66.7%
- Standards and teaching strategies for LEP students: Yes – 71.4% No – 28.6%
- Conducting parent conferencing: Yes – 53.6% No – 46.4%
- Variety of instructional methods: Yes – 73.3% No – 26.7%
- Technology in the classroom: Yes – 79.3% No – 20.7%

Responses from the student teachers' questionnaires in regards to curriculum preparation indicated the following:

- Reading strategies: Yes – 70.2% No – 29.8%
- Code of Ethics Yes – 72.3% No – 27.7%
- Adolescent development: Yes – 89.4% No – 10.8%
- Instructional methods to motivate students: Yes – 66% No – 34%
- Theories of how people learn: Yes – 89.4% No – 10.6%
- TEKS; organization, structure, and skills: Yes – 78.7% No – 21.3%
- TEKS; in the content areas: Yes – 85.1% No – 14.9%
- STAAR testing: Yes – 53.2% No – 46.8%
- How to develop lessons: Yes – 93.6% No – 6.4%
- Curriculum development: Yes – 63.8% No – 36.2%
- Utilize classroom assessments: Yes – 76.1% No – 23.9%
- Use of formative assessments: Yes – 68.1% No – 31.9%
- Models and methodologies in classroom management: Yes – 66% No – 34 %
- Laws and standards for Special Education: Yes – 76.1% No – 23.9%
- Standards and teaching strategies for GT students: Yes – 68.1% No – 31.9%
- Standards and teaching strategies for LEP students: Yes – 78.7% No – 21.3%
- Conducting parent conferencing: Yes – 51.1% No – 48.9%
- Variety of instructional methods: Yes – 83% No – 17%
- Technology in the classroom: Yes – 75% No – 25%

The specific compliance concern of TEA centered upon that fact that Art, Music and Theater Arts were not a requirement for all candidates seeking the Generalist EC-6 certificate.

**Based on evidence presented, The University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program is not in compliance with TAC §228.30 – EDUCATOR PREPARATION CURRICULUM.**

## COMPONENT IV: PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ONGOING SUPPORT - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.35

### FINDINGS:

Currently, The University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program is delivered in a face-to-face format, though a few courses can be taken online. The self-report stated that the total program consists of 1,710 clock-hours for elementary certification. The evidence was found in the self-report submitted by the university and verified in the university degree plan. The total clock-hours met the minimum requirements set forth in TAC §228.35(a)(3).

The university provided verifiable evidence that six clock-hours of test preparation that is not embedded in any other curriculum elements per TAC §228.35(a)(3) is offered to all candidates. The documentation provided by the program within the document review stated that readiness to test is based on completion of coursework and noted within the degree plan. Content and PPR test preparation was provided in workshops. These workshops were held during afternoon and weekend sessions with attendance verified with original sign-in sheets. The program met the requirements of test preparation per TAC §228.35(a)(3).

Thirty clock-hours of field-based experience was verified in two scenarios: Fifteen clock (15) hours could come from El Paso Community College in a pre-educational course with an additional fifteen (15) clock hours from SPED 3310 taken at UTEP or candidates are required to take EDPC 2300 and SPED 3310 (both courses taken at UTEP) with fifteen (15) clock-hours of field-based experience embedded in each course. Because the fifteen (15) clock-hours of field-based experiences could occur prior to admission, there is an articulation agreement (policy) with El Paso Community College. TAC §228.35(a)(7) allows programs to substitute prior experience for part of the preparation program requirements. However, previous experience cannot replace internship, student teaching, or clinical teaching. The University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program did allow for such an accommodation with the field-based experience and this is stated in university policy. Due to the articulation agreement with the community college and the recommending entity, the program met the requirements of TAC §228.35(a)(7). Because the 30 clock-hours of field-based experiences were completed as prescribed in TAC §228.35(d), it was also verified that the field-based observations occurred in a variety of educational settings with diverse student populations including observation, modeling, and demonstration of effective practices to improve student learning. Fifteen clock-hours of field-based experience may be provided by use of electronic transmission, or other video or technology-based method per TAC §228.35(d)(1). The self-report submitted by the UTEP traditional teacher certification program reflected that this option was not utilized.

Eighty (80) clock-hours of coursework prior to student teaching were verified as having occurred through benchmarks and university requirements within the degree plan. Approximately 1700 clock-hours occurred prior to the student teaching assignment. The verifiable evidence provided by the university was the degree plan found in candidates' folders which met the requirements of TAC §228.35(a)(3)(B).

Fifty (50) clock-hours of training provided by a school district and/or campus were not utilized toward the total number of program hours. This was reported in the self-report program hours chart submitted by the program and verified through a review of candidate files [TAC §228.35(a)(5)].

Student teaching [TAC §228.35(d)(2)(B)] was conducted for a minimum of twelve (12) weeks. UTEP has implemented a fifteen (15) week student teaching experience in local school districts [TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C)(ii)] rather than a distance learning lab or virtual school setting, conducted full day and within one semester. The evidence that verified that student teaching was offered and utilized included the program requirements in the candidates' handbook provided by the program and the student teaching placement information in the current student teaching candidates' records. It was reported that no student teaching practicum took place in a Head Start Program. The evidence presented verified that this option was not utilized when reviewing candidates' folders and observation documents.

According to TAC §228.35(e), UTEP's traditional teacher certification program is responsible for providing mentors or cooperating teachers training that is scientifically-based or verify that training has been provided by a school district or education service center. Evidence presented by the program verified that the cooperating teacher received a UTEP handbook and training at the annual ABC conference held on September 12, 2012. Verification was noted by the attendance of cooperating teachers at the conference, meals, and seating charts. This training met the requirements of TAC §228.35(e).

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. There were a total of twelve (12) field supervisors assigned to the candidates within the program. The university did provide verifiable evidence that the field supervisors had been trained. This was documented in the form of meeting dates, agendas, and original sign-in sheets. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

Initial contact by the field supervisor was made within the first three weeks of the assignment as required by TAC §228.35(f). The university held a meeting on the UTEP campus prior to student teaching for field supervisors, student teachers, and staff. The staff explained roles and responsibilities of all parties involved. Field Supervisors met with candidates and noted which candidates were in attendance.

The three observations [TAC §228.35(f)(4)] conducted during student teaching 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. The observation forms signed by the teaching candidate and field supervisor, as well as the field supervisor contact logs, provided evidence that the program met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f) for student teaching. It was discovered in candidates' files that there was an inconsistency in the start and stop times documented by a field supervisor. This was brought to the attention of the program manager. The program manager provided a binder of 100+ observations and through its review, it was determined that this error was an exception and not a common practice among all field supervisors. So with that evidence, it was clear that observations were conducted for 45 minutes.

Furthermore, TAC §228.35(f) requires that the field supervisors document instructional practices observed and provided written feedback through an interactive conference with the candidates. The dated observation forms served as verifiable evidence that the field supervisor documented instructional practices observed, but it was not noted on the observation forms that an

interactive conference took place by signatures of candidates or field supervisors or other documented methods. UTEP corrected the observation instrument, to ensure documentation of the interactive conference, during the audit and plans to implement immediately. The university did not meet the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

It is also the responsibility of the UTEP traditional teacher certification program to provide a copy of the written feedback to the candidate's campus administrator as required by TAC §228.35(f). The observation instrument is a multi-copy document and one copy is left with the campus administrator or his/her representative. Field Supervisor logs provided by the program included documentation of signatures to verify that the campus administrator received a copy of the written feedback. The university met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

Evidence of additional informal observations and coaching were requested during the audit. Emails between program staff and field supervisors served as verifiable evidence that additional observations or coaching occurred. These emails were provided by the program and, as a result, the university met the requirements as specified in TAC §228.35(f).

**Based on evidence presented, the University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification 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:**

The University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program has a candidate assessment and benchmarking process as prescribed by TAC §228.40(a). Evidence provided by the university included syllabi detailing assessments and university degree plans. The degree plans identify benchmarks, timelines, persons responsible, and candidate transcripts showing the candidates' progression through the program. The documents met the requirements of TAC §228.40(a).

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. Readiness for testing [TAC §228.40(b)] was determined by the university after candidate attendance at the test preparation sessions. The university met the requirements of TAC §228.40(b).

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 evidence provided included a document detailing the evaluation activity, timeline, and person responsible as well as the documentation verifying that the information was shared at the last two advisory committee meetings. Additionally, Dr. Arturo Olivarez has implemented an extensive data collection process and aggregated the data to provide insight as to the strengths and weaknesses of the university program. The university is in an on-going process of evaluating the design and delivery of the curriculum and program processes. This detailed information is provided to the advisory committee for input. This met the requirements of TAC §228.40(c).

According to TAC §228.40(d), an educator preparation program shall 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. The university has kept records for the past five years in both electronic and paper formats. The records are securely stored in locked cabinets in locked offices located in the education building. The retention of records met the requirements of TAC §228.40(d).

**Based on evidence presented, the University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.40 – ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES FOR CERTIFICATION AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT.**

**COMPONENT VI: Professional Conduct (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). The university curriculum addresses the Code of Ethics in eight (8) courses. It is also provided in the candidates’ handbook and each candidate signs a document, which states that they have read and understood the Educator’s Code of Ethics. This documentation was found in the candidates’ records. This served as verifiable evidence of adherence to TAC §228.50(a) and TAC §228.30(b)(2).

**Based on evidence presented, the University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.50 – PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT.**

**Texas Administrative Code §229**

**Current Accreditation Status**

The University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program is currently rated “Accredited” based on the September 1, 2010 - August 31, 2011 accountability ratings. The 2011-2012 pass rates were shared and discussed with the program. The program is aware of the passing standard requirement for the 2011-2012 academic year and will be prepared to submit an action plan.

**Standard I: Results of Certification Exams**

<b>Pass Rate Performance:</b>	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
	70% Standard I	75% Standard I	80% Standard I
Overall:	92%	87%	80%
Demographics			
Hispanic			75%
Female	NA	NA	77%

## PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Program Compliance Recommendations are based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency compliance audit visit. 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. Failure to comply with TAC rules governing educator preparation programs may result in action by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) per TAC §229 beginning in 2010.

**PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS:** In order to meet requirements of all Texas Administrative Code rule governing educator preparation programs, the following recommendations are made:

### TAC §228.30 Educator Preparation Curriculum

- Require that all Generalist EC-6 candidates' coursework include Art, Music, and Theater Arts. This curriculum must be based on the educator standards and must be implemented immediately.

### TAC §228.35 Program Delivery and On-going Support

- Create an observation instrument that allows documentation of the interactive conference and includes signatures of the field supervisor and student teacher; implement immediately.

## GENERAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

### Component II: Admission Criteria – General Recommendations:

- Consider a face to face interview with potential candidates to determine the English proficiency level (noted as an area of concern by principals in their questionnaires) and score the interview with a rubric to demonstrate objectivity. It will give the university the option to reject the candidate's application for admittance or provide remediation for English proficiency. It is possible that the multi-test takers have language issues that factor into the lack of success in testing.

### Component III: Educator Preparation Curriculum – General Recommendations:

- Consider identifying all field-based experiences embedded in course to denote contact time in the classroom prior to student teaching; specifically the field-experience hours that are interactive with students.

Component IV: Program Delivery and On-Going Support - General Recommendations:

- Consider a more efficient method to confirm that the 45 minutes observation instrument is accurately denoted on the instrument; and
- Consider a more efficient method to provide the observation feedback to the campus administrator, obtain signature of campus administrator or his/her representative, and retain in candidates' folders.

Component V: Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement – General Recommendations:

Consider utilizing the aggregated data provided by Dr. Arturo Olivarez to review program effectiveness and improvement.

General Overall Program Recommendations:

- Continue to follow the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and the State Board of Education (SBOE) meetings and/or review the minutes to ensure that the program staff is knowledgeable about current Texas Administrative Code;
- Continue to participate in Annual Deans/Directors Meetings to ensure that the program director is knowledgeable about current Texas Administrative Code and future changes to Texas Administrative Code (Webinar Series);
- Continue to participate in webinars provided by the Division of Educator Certification & Standards to ensure that the program staff is knowledgeable about current requirements and changes in Texas Administrative Code;
- Continue to maintain communication with the program specialist assigned to the University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program for the purpose of asking questions about current requirements in TAC for Governance; Admissions; Curriculum; Program Delivery & On-Going Support; and Program Evaluation (TAC § 227-229); and
- Align the verbiage of the University of Texas at El Paso traditional teacher certification program Educator Preparation Program to that of current Texas Administrative Code (For example: Applicant / Candidate / Field Supervisor / Student Teacher / Cooperating Teacher).