



Compliance Audit Report 2009-2010 Texas A&M University-Texarkana

According to 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 for details contained in each rule.

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Texas Education Agency (TEA) program specialists, Corrina Noriega and Sandra Jo Nix, conducted a compliance audit on December 1-2, 2009. The following are the findings and recommendations for program improvement.

Date Self-Report Submitted: November 4, 2009

Information concerning compliance with Texas Administrative Code rules 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 surveys were sent to Texas A&M University Texarkana participants by TEA. A total of 112 responses to the surveys were received by TEA, including thirty-four from candidates, eight from field supervisors, thirteen from school principals, twenty-nine from campus mentors/cooperating teachers, and nine from advisory committee members. A self-report was submitted to TEA by Texas A&M University - Texarkana. Qualitative methods of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation were used to evaluate the evidence.

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

Findings:

The Texas A&M University-Texarkana is in compliance with TAC Section 228.20- Governance of Educator Preparation Program. In reviewing the self-report, the advisory committee questionnaire, and the document review items, it was found that two meetings of the committee were held as required. The fifteen member advisory committee represents a balanced membership comprised of the four prescribed groups. Review of the meeting minutes indicated the advisory committee is aware of their roles and responsibilities. The advisory committee questionnaire validated the members' participation in overall program evaluation. Since advisory

committee membership tends to be somewhat fluid, it is recommended that a handbook be developed and yearly training be provided on the committee's roles and responsibilities. The yearly training should also include program specifics such as certification areas offered, program clock hours, curriculum offered, coverage of the 17 required PPR topics, field based experiences, and the student teaching process. The advisory committee members view their participation as a positive experience. According to one advisory committee member, "the Advisory Committee had been very successful in keeping the community connected to the university programs." However, a concern expressed in the questionnaire was the very low number of potential secondary teachers.

Based on the evidence presented above, Texas A&M University-Texarkana is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20 – Governance of Educator Preparations Programs.

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

Findings:

Texas A & M University-Texarkana is in compliance with TAC Section 227.10- Admission Criteria. The program has met and exceeded the state minimum requirements for admission and test scores. The grade point average (GPA) required for admission is 2.80 for EC-4/EC-6 certification. For the 4-8 and 8-12 certifications, the required GPA is 2.60. The overall GPA for all courses is 2.60. Instructors complete checklists that evaluate the students' potential for success in the teaching profession. Prior to the field-based and student teaching semester, the candidates must complete an application, request faculty reference forms be submitted, and complete an essay on why they want to be a teacher. Prior to student teaching, eligible students must interview with staff of partnership school districts to ensure an effective and appropriate student teaching placement is made. Texas A & M University-Texarkana uses traditional methods of student recruitment such as website information, brochures, posters, and media including public service announcements. University staff also attends career fairs and make school and community college visits. The university actively recruits students from Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana.

Based on the evidence presented above, Texas A&M University-Texarkana is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10 – Admission Criteria.

Commendations:

Texas A & M University-Texarkana is commended for 1) requiring higher grade point averages than required by the state; 2) requiring higher testing scores than required by the state; and 3) implementing student interviews with partner school districts' staff prior to candidate placement in their student teaching semester.

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

Findings:

Texas A & M University-Texarkana is in compliance with TAC Section 228.30- Educator Preparation Curriculum. The faculty credentials consist of twelve doctoral degrees and seven master degrees. Sixteen of the faculty members are certified teachers with many years of both public and college teaching experience. In reviewing the syllabi provided for the document review, it was noted that all used a similar format, and in discussions with the faculty, noted that a standardized syllabi format is currently being developed. The correlation between the PPR topics and the course syllabi provided evidence that content coverage was in depth and thorough. It was also noted that the faculty models a variety of instructional strategies and appropriate technology use. In return, students are expected to use appropriate instructional strategies and technology in the production of their various course products. From the self-report, PPR correlation chart, and student teacher questionnaire, it was verified that reading instruction was provided to all candidates in all certification areas. Further review of the syllabi indicated adequate embedded instruction of the required seventeen PPR topics.

Assessments of content understanding were evident in the form of tests, reports, lesson plans, presentations, and projects. One strategy used in the behavior management and motivation topics was the Behavior Support Model which stresses identification of the cause of the behavior issue, seeks ways to neutralize the problem, and provides positive ways to redirect behavior. A variety of assessment strategies, including authentic, performance, and portfolio, are taught to candidates. An emphasis on differentiated instruction was prevalent throughout the curriculum. Six hours of test preparation are provided. A high pass rate on TExES exams is evidence of a quality preparation curriculum. Since fifty percent of the curriculum is not presented online, existing online courses were not reviewed.

Based on the evidence presented above, Texas A&M University-Texarkana is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.30 – Educator Preparation Curriculum.

Commendations:

Texas A & M University-Texarkana is commended for 1) developing a comprehensive and challenging curriculum; 2) ensuring that the 17 PPR topics spiral throughout the curriculum.

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

Findings:

Texas A & M University-Texarkana is in compliance with TAC Section 228.35 - Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training. The program operates two teaching sites: Mt. Pleasant and Hallsville, Texas. The primary mode of instruction is face-to-face with some online courses presented in the areas of special education and reading. The program clock hours for the EC-4/EC-6 candidates are 543 hours while clock hours for 4-8 and 8-12 are 316 clock hours. The professional development school, in partnership with Texarkana ISD, provides an intensive approach to teacher preparation for ten interns assigned to three cooperating teachers for one year. The clock hours for this program are 501. The program officially requires seventy-two clock hours of field based experiences for EC-4/EC-6 candidates and forty clock hours for 4-8/8-12 candidates, and 30 clock hours for ten candidates assigned to the professional development school. Additional field based experiences are embedded into a variety of reading, special education, and other education courses as part of content delivery. Currently, there are nine field supervisors who are all certified teachers. The cooperating teachers are identified by the school district and participate in interviews of their prospective student teachers in order to ensure an effective placement. Once the teaching candidate is accepted into a campus placement, 15 weeks of student teaching are required. The student teachers in the regular program receive four formal observations by the field supervisor, and four evaluations by the cooperating teacher. The special education student teachers receive six formal observations by the field supervisor, and three observations by their cooperating teacher. The initial field supervision contact and formal observation schedule meet the state requirements. Field supervisors utilize a lesson evaluation report form and a student teaching completion form to record student teacher progress. Copies of the official field based evaluations were not supplied to the campus administrator as prescribed by TAC rule. Through the document review and the cooperating teacher questionnaire, it was verified that the cooperating teachers receive training from Texas A & M University-Texarkana. In addition, Saturday training sessions are provided by the university to the cooperating teachers on topics pertinent to student teacher supervision. Field supervisor training is provided once a year. They attend the training session with the student teachers over the various operational procedures for student teaching. The training provided consists of operational issues and delineating the responsibilities of the student teachers, cooperating teachers, and field supervisor. It was noted that no training was provided to the field supervisors on coaching techniques while this topic was covered in a Saturday session for cooperating teachers. It is believed that this training is vital to both groups.

Based on the evidence presented above, Texas A&M University-Texarkana is not in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.35 – Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training REPARATION PROGRAM COURSEWORK AND/OR TRAINING

Commendations:

Texas A & M University-Texarkana is commended for 1) exceeding total required program clock hours; 2) exceeding the field based experience clock hours requirement; 3) embedding additional field based experiences in other course content 4) exceeding the number of required formal student teacher field observations; and 5) operating an innovative professional development school in partnership with Texarkana ISD.

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

Findings:

Texas A&M University-Texarkana is in compliance with TAC Section 228.40 - Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement. Every five years the university utilizes external evaluators to review the program and the curriculum and make recommendations for improvement. The next external evaluation is scheduled for 2012. In addition, each year, a program and student learning outcomes assessment report is compiled by the faculty on each course and certification area. The first part of the report includes an assessment plan that addresses student learning outcomes, means of assessment, and criteria for success. The second part is an assessment report noting the summary of the results and changes implemented based on the learning outcomes noted. An instructor appraisal is conducted in each course by the students at the end of each term. Students are asked to evaluate areas of the courses that were most and least beneficial. Suggestions are requested for course improvement. The degree of challenge of the course is of primary interest. The self report indicated that the overall program and curriculum are evaluated once every twelve months using a variety of internal and external data as indicators of improvement. Texas A & M University-Texarkana students are assessed for content mastery by tests, daily assignments, and projects. In a display of work produced in a special education course required for all education candidates, it was evident that the assignments and projects were motivational, challenging and stressed the use of data to address student needs. Students are evaluated for readiness to test for certification based upon practice tests, course grades, and completion of program requirements. Should a student be struggling to meet the requirements for test approval, individual profiles based on the practice examination results are provided to the student. Additional remedial workshops and individual tutoring sessions are available. Record management complies with state requirements of retaining records for five years. Records are retained in electronic and paper format and kept in a secure environment. A university prescribed process is in place to address student grievances.

Based on the evidence presented above, Texas A&M University-Texarkana 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 Progress Report will be required in one year.

Provide a copy of the formal observation results to the campus administrator per TAC Section 228.35 (f). This should begin with the spring 2010 semester.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS: No progress report is necessary.

It is recommended that Texas A & M University-Texarkana

- 1) align their program terminology to match TEA definitions;
- 2) provide annual training for Advisory Committee members;
- 3) develop a comprehensive handbook for advisory committee members;
- 4) provide training to field supervisors with an emphasis on mentoring and coaching techniques; and
- 5) continue to address communication issues between the educator preparation program and the school districts.

Reformatted from the Survey Monkey report on 1/17/2013 in order to post on Consumer Information.