



Compliance Audit Report 2012-2013 West Texas A & M University 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 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.

Contact Information: Dr. Amy Anderson, Department Head, Education

County/District Number: 191-501

SBEC Approval Date: November 18, 1988

Program Specialist, Mixon Henry and Program Manager, Sandra Jo Nix, conducted a Texas Education Agency Compliance Audit of West Texas A&M University (WTAMU) traditional initial teacher certification program located at WT Box 60208, Canyon, Texas, 79016 on October 23-25, 2012. The focus of the compliance audit was the initial 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 26, 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 by TEA to West Texas A&M University traditional certification program stakeholders. A total of one hundred sixteen (116) responses out of the three hundred and ninety-four (394) or 29.4% were received as follows: Fourteen (14) out of seventeen (17) advisory committee members or 82%;

twenty-one (21) out of two hundred eleven (211) student teachers or 9.9%; sixteen (16) out of twenty (20) field supervisors or 80%; thirty-one (31) out of sixty-two (62) campus principals or 50%; and thirty-four (34) out of eighty-four (84) cooperating teachers or 40%. 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 23, 2012, was attended by seventeen (17) people. The noted members of the WTAMU program present included:

- Dr. E.W. Henderson, Dean of the School of Education;
- Dr. Amy Andersen, Department Head of the School of Education;
- Mr. Buddy Fox, Director, Office of Teacher Preparation and Advising; and
- Ms. Susan Allen, Alternative Certification Program (ACP) Director, Instructor, & Certification Officer.

The closing session on October 25, 2012, was attended by five (5) people including Dr. Henderson, Dr. Andersen, Mr. Fox, and Ms. Allen.

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

FINDINGS:

Program support was indicated by the governing body of West Texas A&M University traditional certification program per TAC §228.20(c) as evidenced by the participation and cooperation of Dr. Andersen, Mr. Fox, and Ms. Allen in all 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, WTAMU uses two separate committees to serve as the advisory committee. The two committees are the Teacher Education Unit and the Department of Education Advisory Board. The Teacher Education Unit consists of thirteen (13) members: one (1) member represents public/private schools; eleven (11) members represent higher education; and one (1) member represents WTAMU student population. The composition of Department of Education Advisory Board consists of seventeen (17) members; five (5) members represent public /private schools; eight (8) members represent higher education; four (4) members represent business and community interests; and no members represent the Education Service Center. Though it is unusual to have two committees, the representation within the two committees meets the requirements of TAC §228.20(b). West Texas A&M University met the requirements for advisory committee composition.

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

April 18, 2012:

Department of Education Advisory Board:

- Enrollment and hiring;
- ACP test scores required by TEA;
- Follow-up questions asked by superintendents to Dr. Henderson;
- Requested feedback from Advisory Board Members;
- Community partnership with WTAMU and the Learning Disability website; and
- Newly remodeled Literature Reading Room.

October 18, 2012:

Teacher Education Unit Members:

- Policies, planning, and decision-making;
- Review of program operations;
- Program evaluation;
- Curriculum review; and
- Curriculum evaluation.

October 19, 2011:

Teacher Education Unit Members:

- Changes in courses-approved;
- Approval of minutes from October 21, 2010 meeting; and
- Discussion of SBEC report, test scores, and interpretation of scores.

October 21, 2010:

Teacher Education Unit Members:

- Changes in courses;
- Approval of minutes from October 7, 2009 meeting; and
- Discussion of SBEC report, test scores, and interpretation of scores.

The university did not meet the requirements for conducting a minimum of two advisory committee meetings per academic year as required by TAC §228.20(b). WTAMU did not meet a second time for either the Teacher Education Unit or Department of Education Advisory Board during an academic year (September 1-August 31 of any given academic year).

Agendas and minutes reflect that the university provides evidence of input on curriculum and program evaluation but not on relevant field-based experiences as determined by the advisory committee as specified in TAC §228.35(d). As a result, WTAMU is not in compliance with TAC §228.35(d).

Based on the evidence presented, West Texas A&M University traditional teacher certification 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:

According to the self-report submitted by the West Texas A&M University traditional teacher certification program staff, to be admitted to the teacher certification program, the candidate must have:

- Received a GPA of 2.50 [TAC §227.10(a)(3)(A)];
- Completed a minimum of twelve (12) semester credit hours in a content field [TAC §227.10(C)];
- Demonstrated basic skills proficiency with THEA, TASP, or exceptions noted in Texas Success Initiative [TAC §227.10(4)];
- Demonstrated adequate oral communication skills [TAC §227.(a)(5) and TAC §230.413];
- Submitted an application [TAC §227.10(a)(6)];
- Participated in an interview or other screening instrument to determine the educator preparation candidate's appropriateness for the certification sought, coursework required with Foundations 3340; [TAC §227.10(a)(6)];
- Prepared a resume and have it evaluated by the program [TAC §227.10(b)]; and
- Met 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 Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). 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(7)]. The self-report indicated that the university required the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and an equivalent to 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 were 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)].

In twenty (20) candidates' records reviewed, it was noted that seventeen (17) of twenty (20) candidates were admitted with a grade point average between 2.08 to 4.0. [TAC §227.10(A)]. The number of candidates admitted with a GPA lower than 2.5 did not exceed 10% of the cohort of candidates allowed by TAC §227.10(a)(3)(b). Because candidates were admitted using the 10% rule, evidence was required that admission of the candidate(s) was approved by the program director and was granted because of extraordinary circumstances. There was no documentation found in the candidates' records to meet the requirement of TAC §227.10(3)(B).

All twenty applicants' records had transcripts indicating a minimum of 12 semester credit hours in the subject-specific content area for which certification was sought. This met the requirements of TAC §227.10(C).

Mastery of basic skills per TAC §227.10(4) were met with the official transcripts showing SAT, ACT, THEA, TASP, or Texas Success Initiative. This was verified in a review of the twenty applicants' records. An additional program requirement was a reading score of 260 or better on the THEA or an Accuplacer Reading score of 98.

Applicants are required to take and pass Foundations 3340 to meet the "other screening requirement." Course completion was documented on candidates' transcripts. The use of the course as a screening instrument met the requirement of TAC §227.10(6). No face-to-face interview was utilized. Instead, the university uses a writing response questionnaire with eight (8) questions to further evaluate candidates' admittance into the program. The program met the requirements of TAC §227.10(7).

The self-report submitted by West Texas A&M University traditional teacher certification program stated that information on their program and its admission requirements were available on the WTAMU website and in the university catalogue. In reviewing both, it was confirmed that the information was aligned to documentation found in the candidates' records.

Based on the evidence presented, West Texas A&M University traditional teacher certification program is not in compliance with TAC §227.10 - Admission Criteria.

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

FINDINGS:

West Texas A&M University traditional teacher certification program is approved to offer teacher certification in thirty-nine (39) fields and six (6) professional areas. For the purpose of this compliance audit, the Generalist EC-6 certificate was selected for in-depth review.

According to the self-report, the qualification necessary to be selected as a course instructor was to have attained an advanced degree. Instructors' vitas were presented and a review verified that instructors had Doctorate or Master's degrees. Some instructors were certified teachers and had classroom teaching experience. All instructors had the appropriate background or experience to provide instruction in the Generalist EC-6 certification area.

In reviewing the WTAMU'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 vehicle for reviewing the syllabi provided by the program. The syllabi did not reflect the educator standards in art, music, and theater. In conversations with university instructors and program staff, it was confirmed that candidates' curriculum did not always include coursework covering the fine arts standards. In reviewing the other areas required for the Generalist EC-6 certification, 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 the Generalist EC-6 curriculum addressed the relevant Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as required by TAC §228.30(a). The alignment charts submitted

were used to review the syllabi. In discussion with instructors regarding where TEKS instruction was provided, 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 prescribed 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. The syllabi and formal discussions with WTAMU staff revealed that instruction was provided in four (4) courses (EDEC 2383, EDRD 3302, EDRD 4306, and EDEL 4372). These four courses addressed 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 two (2) courses (EDEC 2383 and EDPD 3340). 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 (EDEL 4372 and EDEL 4373). 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 five (5) courses (EDEC 2383, EDRD 3302, EDPD 3340, EDPD 4340, and EDEL 4372). 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 two (2) courses (EPSY 3341 and EDEL 4372). 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 three (3) courses (EPSY 3341, EDEC 3384, and EDEL 4372). 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 one (1) course (EDRD 4302). 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 one (1) course (EDEL 4372). 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 four (4) courses (EDEC 2383, EDEC 4385, EDRD 4302, and EPSY 3350). 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 one (1) course (EDRD 4302). 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 four (4) courses (EDEC 4385, EDRD 3302, EDPD 3340, and EDPD 4340). 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 one (1) course (EDPD 4340). 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 seven (7) courses (EDEC 2383, EDEC 4385, EDRD 3302, EDRD 4302, EDPD 4378, EDEL 4372, and EPSY 3350) depending on the specific special population group addressed. 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 five (5) courses (EDRD 4302, EDEC 2383, EDEC 4385, EDPD 4340, and EPSY 3350). 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 four (4) courses (EDEC 2383, EDT 3343, EDRD 3302, and EDEL 4372). 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 five (5) courses (EDEC 3384, EDPD 3340, EDPD 4340, EDEL 4372, and EPSY 3350). 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 three (3) courses (EDRD 3302, EDPD 3340, and EDPD 4378). This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(16); and
- Evidence of six hours of certification test preparation per TAC §228.30(b)(17) was verified by attendance sign-in sheets. This met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(17) and TAC §228.35(a)(3).

Each course syllabi detailed how candidates would be assessed in order to ensure acquisition of knowledge and skills of the content as prescribed by TAC §228.40(a).

Responses from the principals' questionnaires regarding curriculum preparation of the candidates were as follows:

- Knowledge of and use of models and methodologies of classroom management: Yes – 93.3% No – 6.7%
- Knowledge of academic and behavioral needs of students with disabilities: Yes – 86.7% No – 13.3%
- Skill in communicating clear expectations for achievement and behavior: Yes – 96.6% No – 3.4%
- Knowledge of and use of technology to support and extend student learning: Yes – 96.7% No – 3.3%
- Collaboration with others: Yes – 100% No – 0%
- Knowledge of academic and behavioral needs of students with Limited English Proficiency:
Yes – 93.3% No – 6.7%

- Knowledge of and use of formal and informal assessments: Yes – 73.3% No – 26.7%

Responses from the cooperating teachers' questionnaires regarding curriculum preparation of the candidates were as follows:

- Knowledge of and use of reading strategies: Yes – 88.9% No – 11.1%
- Knowledge of the Code of Ethics: Yes – 100% No – 0%
- Knowledge of child and adolescent development: Yes – 100% No – 0%
- Knowledge of and use of instructional methods to motivate students: Yes – 93.1% No – 6.9%
- Knowledge of and use of theories of how people learn: Yes – 100% No – 0%
- TEKS: organization, structure, and skills: Yes – 96.6% No – 3.4%
- Use of TEKS in the content areas: Yes – 96.6% No – 3.4%
- Knowledge of and role in STAAR testing: Yes – 84.6% No – 15.4%
- Skill in developing lessons: Yes – 100% No – 0%
- Knowledge of curriculum development: Yes – 96.2% No – 3.8%
- Knowledge of and use of classroom assessments: Yes – 85.2% No – 14.8%
- Knowledge of and use of formative assessments: Yes – 85.2% No – 14.8%
- Knowledge of and use of models and methodologies of classroom management: Yes – 96.6% No – 3.4%
- Knowledge of laws and standards for Special Education: Yes – 92.9% No – 7.1%
- Knowledge of and use of standards and teaching strategies for GT students: Yes – 85.5% No – 18.5%
- Knowledge of and use of standards and teaching strategies for LEP students: Yes – 92.9% No – 7.1%
- Skill in preparing and conducting parent conferences: Yes – 67.9% No – 32.1%
- Knowledge of and use of a variety of instructional methods: Yes – 92.6% No – 7.4%
- Knowledge of and use of technology to support and extend student learning: Yes – 85.7% No – 14.3%

Responses from the student teachers' questionnaires regarding their perception of their curriculum preparation were as follows:

- Knowledge of and use of reading strategies: Yes – 95% No – 5%
- Knowledge of the Code of Ethics: Yes – 100% No – 0%
- Knowledge of child and adolescent development: Yes – 100% No – 0%
- Knowledge of and use of instructional methods to motivate students: Yes – 95% No – 5%
- Knowledge of and use of theories of how people learn: Yes – 100% No – 0%

- TEKS: organization, structure, and skills: Yes – 100% No – 0%
- Use of TEKS in the content areas: Yes – 100% No – 0%
- Knowledge of and role in STAAR testing: Yes – 85% No – 15%
- Skill in developing lessons: Yes – 100% No – 0%
- Knowledge of curriculum development: Yes – 85% No – 15%
- Knowledge of and use of classroom assessments: Yes – 95% No – 5%
- Knowledge of and use of formative assessments: Yes – 100% No – 0%
- Knowledge of and use of models and methodologies of classroom management:: Yes –95% No – 5%
- Knowledge of laws and standards for Special Education: Yes – 85% No – 15%
- Knowledge of and use of standards and teaching strategies for GT students: Yes – 90% No – 10%
- Knowledge of and use of standards and teaching strategies for LEP students: Yes – 100% No – 0%
- Skill in preparing and conducting parent conferences: Yes – 80% No – 20%
- Knowledge of and use of a variety of instructional methods: Yes – 95% No – 5%
- Knowledge of and use of technology to support and extend student learning: Yes – 100% No – 0%

Specific concerns of TEA centered upon that fact that art, music and theater were not present in coursework for all candidates seeking the Generalist EC-6 certificate.

Based on evidence presented, West Texas A&M University 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, West Texas A&M University 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 1,800 clock-hours for elementary certification. Evidence was found in the self-report submitted by the university and verified in the university degree plan. The total clock-hours met the requirements set forth in TAC §228.35(a)(3).

Evidence of six clock-hours of test preparation not embedded in any other curriculum elements per TAC §228.35(a)(3) was verified with original sign-in sheets. Readiness to test was based on completion of coursework and noted within the degree plan. Content and PPR test preparation included a representative test. The program met the requirements of test preparation per TAC §228.35(a)(3).

Forty (40) clock-hours of field-based experience was verified in two scenarios: 1) Embedded early field-based experience (5 clock hours per course) in courses EDPD 3340 and EDPD 3341 and 2) an additional thirty (30) clock hours of field-based experience with guided questions and reflections submitted to the WTAMU’s Department of Education. Per TAC §228.35(a)(7),

WTAMU may allow candidates to substitute prior ongoing experience and/or professional training (i.e. teacher aide experience and substitute teaching experience) for part of the educator preparation requirements as long as previous experience does not replace internship, student teaching, or clinical teaching. Even with the exemptions, a reflection (response to a set of five questions) must be completed and submitted. Additionally, district verification of teacher aide and substitute teaching experience must be submitted to the program by the candidate. Field-based observations occurred in local schools with diverse student populations. The observations included modeling, and demonstration of effective practices to improve student learning. A minimum of thirty clock-hours of field-based experiences were completed as prescribed in TAC §228.35(d).

Eighty (80) clock-hours of coursework prior to student teaching were verified through benchmarks and university requirements within the degree plan. Approximately 1800 clock-hours occurred prior to the student teaching assignment per the candidates' degree plans. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.35(a)(3)(B).

Student teaching [TAC §228.35(d)(2)(B)] was verified for a minimum of twelve (12) weeks. Record of student teaching assignments were found in the candidates' records and confirmed that student teaching took place in an actual school setting rather than a distance learning lab or virtual school setting. All student teaching occurred in local independent school districts. Student teaching met the requirements prescribed by TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C)(ii).

According to TAC §228.35(e), WTAMU's traditional teacher certification program is responsible for providing mentors or cooperating teachers training that is scientifically-based or verify that training was provided by a school district or education service center. WTAMU did not provide cooperating teacher or mentor training, and therefore, does not meet 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 twenty (20) field supervisors. The university provided verifiable evidence that the field supervisors were trained by producing agendas and original attendance sign-in sheets. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

Initial candidate contact by the field supervisors was made within the first three weeks of the candidate's assignment as required by TAC §228.35(f). On September 17, 2012, university staff including field supervisors conducted a meeting on the WTAMU campus prior to initiation of student teaching. The staff explained the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved. Then field supervisors met with candidates who were in attendance. Documentation of the last four orientation meetings from 2010 to 2012 was available.

The three observations [TAC §228.35(f)(4)] conducted must be at least 45 minutes in duration [TAC §228.35(f)] and the first observation conducted within the first six weeks of the student teaching experience. 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. WTAMU created a new observation instrument to include a start and stop time of the observation. Additionally, in reviewing candidates' records, fifteen (15) of the eighteen (18) folders contained evidence of three observations.

TAC §228.35(f) requires that the field supervisors document observed instructional practices and provide written feedback through an interactive conference with the candidates. The dated observation forms served as verifiable evidence of the observed practices. On the university's

older observation document, there was no verification of the interactive conference, but there was a newly created section on the new observation form that verified the interactive conference by signatures of candidates and field supervisors that an interactive conference was conducted. This had been implemented prior to the TEA audit. WTAMU did meet the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

WTAMU traditional teacher certification program is required to provide a copy of the written feedback to the candidate's campus administrator per TAC §228.35(f). The observation instrument is a multi-copy instrument and one copy is left with the campus administrator or his/her representative. Field Supervisor logs included signatures to verify that the campus principals were provided a copy. The university met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

Evidence of additional informal observations and coaching were requested during the audit. Emails among program staff, field supervisors, and candidates served as verifiable evidence that additional observations or coaching occurred. The university met the requirements specified in TAC §228.35(f).

Based on evidence presented, West Texas A&M University 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:

West Texas A&M University traditional teacher certification program benchmarked the candidates' progress through the program by reviewing degree plans and through transcript reviews. 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. Evidence of compliance was found in the admission dates of candidates found in their records.

Readiness for testing [TAC §228.40(b)] was determined by the university after the candidate attended 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 results of internal and external assessments should be included in the evaluation process. West Texas A&M University provided a document detailing the evaluation activity, timeline, and person responsible. The advisory committee agendas of the last two meetings verified that evaluative information was shared and input sought. 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 into the program and evidence of completion of all program requirements for a period of five years after program completion. The university maintained records for the past five years in both electronic and paper formats. The records were securely stored in locked cabinets located in locked offices. The retention of records met the requirements of TAC §228.40(d).

Based on evidence presented, West Texas A&M University 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 addressed the Code of Ethics in six (6) courses and in the candidates’ handbook. Each candidate signed a statement found in the candidates’ records that they had read and understood the Educator’s Code of Ethics. Adherence to TAC §228.50(a) and TAC §228.30(b)(2) was verified. Additionally, university staff was provided information on the Educator’s Code of Ethics in their staff handbook.

Based on evidence presented, West Texas A&M University traditional teacher certification program is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.50 – Professional Conduct.

Texas Administrative Code §229

Current Accreditation Status

West Texas A&M University traditional teacher certification program is currently rated "Accredited" based on the September 1, 2010 - August 31, 2011 accountability ratings.

Standard I: Results of Certification Exams

Pass Rate Performance:	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
	70% Standard I	75% Standard I	80% Standard I
Overall:	98%	96%	95%

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 actions must be taken immediately:

TAC §228.20 Governance of Educator Preparation Programs

- Meet with the Department of Education Advisory Committee twice each academic year (September 1 to August 31) and seek assistance from them on design, delivery, evaluation, policy decisions, and field-based experiences;
- Meeting minutes should be specific to document the conversations and requests for input from the advisory committee. In past minutes, it was not possible to determine the volume received or input requested from the advisory committee members on these issues.
- As an alternative, combine the two existing advisory groups to represent the advisory committee for the teacher certification programs and have that group meet twice yearly.

TAC §227.10(3)(B) Admission Criteria

- If an exemption to the 2.5 GPA is allowed by the program, documentation of extraordinary circumstance that allows for the candidate's enrollment must be included in the candidate's record.

TAC §228.30 Educator Preparation Curriculum

- Require that all Generalist EC-6 candidates' coursework include art, music, and theater. This curriculum must be based on the educator standards for this certification area and must be implemented immediately.

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

- Create, deliver, and document training for cooperating teachers.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

Component I: Governance of Educator Preparation Programs:

- Conduct yearly training for the advisory committee (TEA PowerPoint);
- Rotate membership to allow new views and ideas;
- Create a handbook for new advisory committee members; and

- Use the meeting template (provided by TEA) to ensure that required topics are addressed.

Component II: Admission Criteria:

- Remove the term conditional admissions; consider changing it to admitted to Phase I and Phase II; it needs to be clear when the candidate is officially admitted into the educator preparation program;
- Conduct face-to-face interviews to better evaluate the English language proficiency of candidates;
- Consider moving the candidates' interview to the advisors, establish a five question interview with a rubric, and train the advisors on the questions and scoring of the rubric to implement the objective oral screening device; and
- Consider removing the resume construction component from admissions criteria to coursework or exit criteria. This allows the resume to have immediate purpose and value.

Component III: Educator Preparation Curriculum:

- Consider identifying all field-based experiences embedded in courses to note contact time in the classroom prior to student teaching, specifically the field experience hours that require interaction with students; and
- Consider adding standards and TEKS addressed in all syllabi for easier identification by candidates;
- Utilize the TEA developed training for meeting "Teachers' Responsibilities for the STAAR test administration at <http://texas.testsecuritytraining.com/TestAdministratorTraining.aspx>. It may be used for a whole group or individually. A certificate can be printed upon completion. This is the same training that teachers must complete prior to STAAR testing;
- Utilize the dyslexia information found on the TEA website at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=4434> or at <http://www.region10.org/dyslexia/>.

Component IV: Program Delivery and On-Going Support:

- Consider expanding the 12 week student teaching practicum to 13 or 14 weeks to allow more classroom experiences and provide a window of time for unforeseen circumstances such as illness or district training.

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

- Consider seeking additional external feedback from cooperating teacher and campus administrators to expand and enhance identifying candidates' needs.

Component VI: Professional Conduct

- Consider utilizing the TEA approved Ethics training for both candidates and staff within the program to ensure that this topic is adequately addressed by the program & maintain evidence that that the training has occurred. For more information visit <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/ethics/>

Other 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 West Texas A&M University 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 West Texas A&M University traditional teacher certification program Educator Preparation Program to that of current Texas Administrative Code (For example: Applicant / Candidate / Field Supervisor / Student Teacher / Cooperating Teacher).