



Compliance Audit Report Summer of 2009 St. Edward's University Initial Teacher Certification Program

According to Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10(c), "An entity approved by the SBEC under this chapter...shall be reviewed at least once every five years under procedures approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff; however, a review may be conducted at any time at the discretion of the TEA staff." Per TAC §228.1(c), "All educator preparation programs are subject to the same standards of accountability, as required under Chapter 229 of this title." The Texas Education Agency administers Texas Administrative Code rules required by the Texas legislature for the regulation of all educator preparation programs in the state. Please see the complete Texas Administrative Code at www.tea.state.tx.us for details.

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Program Specialist, Corrina Noriega, conducted a Texas Education Agency Compliance Desk Audit of St. Edward's University. The focus of the compliance audit was the initial teacher certification program. The following are findings and recommendations for program improvement.

SCOPE OF THE COMPLIANCE AUDIT:

The scope of the audit was restricted solely to verifying compliance with Texas Administrative Code §227, §228, §229,

Data Analysis:

Information concerning compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) governing educator preparation programs was collected by various qualitative means. A self-report was submitted to the Texas Education Agency via Survey Monkey along with requested verifying documents. Because student records contain confidential information and could not be transmitted to TEA, student records were checked by the program using a check list supplied by TEA. In addition, electronic questionnaires developed by TEA were sent to St. Edward's University stakeholders. Twenty-three (23) stakeholders responded to the questionnaires: Four (4) advisory committee members; six (6) student teachers, clinical teachers, interns; one (1) field supervisor; three (3) principals; and three (3) cooperating teachers/mentors responded. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation of the data were used to evaluate the evidence. Evidence of compliance was measured using a rubric aligned with Texas Administrative Code. After the review of the information, the program specialist arranged

a telephone debrief to cover the findings of the audit. The findings were incorporated into the original survey monkey form and sent to the program. This summary report provides the findings and recommendations resulting from the audit.

COMPONENT I: Governance of Educator Preparation Programs- Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.20

FINDINGS:

The St. Edward's University Advisory Committee consists of eight (8) active members, and three (3) members that will be new to the board. Four (4) committee members responded to the survey. According to surveys completed by four advisory committee members, they are aware of their roles and responsibilities. The advisory committee is kept abreast of issues with a "state of the union" address regarding progress of the university program, and every member is allowed opportunities to ask questions, provided constructive feedback, and offer alternative solutions. Review of documents and self report indicated that although the advisory committee met twice in a calendar year, they did not meet twice within an academic year. During discussions with the dean and advisory committee members, it was noted that changes in leadership interrupted the regular advisory committee meeting schedule. The program is currently planning their meeting calendar to ensure compliance with TAC rules.

Based on the evidence presented, St. Edward's University 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:

St. Edward's University has met all of the requirements in accordance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section §227.10 - Admission Criteria. In addition to the state requirements, St. Edward's requires a completion of all foundation skills courses (except foreign language) with a grade of C or better, completion of 12 semester hours in the major content area, and successful completion of St. Edward's University Computer Competency Requirements. The candidate application is also reviewed by the Teacher Education Advisory Committee which is composed of St. Edward's University Education faculty, Dean, and Associate Dean. The university uses creative recruiting methods. In addition to the standard recruitment activities including job fairs, media outlets, and brochures, the university gains new teacher candidates through a variety of programs. Project Jumpstart is a program aimed at high school students who want to become teachers. The Teacher's Pipeline, a collaborative effort between the university, Austin Independent School District, and Capital Idea, gives bilingual teaching assistants funds to earn a college degree and certification in bilingual education. The Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship program recruits math and science teachers from underrepresented populations. Program and student records are kept in a secure location, retained for at least five years, and stored both electronically and in paper format.

Based on the evidence presented, St. Edward's University is in compliance with TAC §227 - Admission Criteria.

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

FINDINGS:

St. Edward's University has met all of the requirements in accordance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section §228.30 - Educator Preparation Curriculum. Review of course syllabi indicated all seventeen topic areas prescribed by rule are embedded throughout the coursework. Review of documents indicates most courses are topic specific, addressing each of the seventeen areas as prescribed by rule. Review of syllabi indicates a variety of assessment methods are used to measure candidate readiness, including presentations, portfolios, lesson plan development, self-reflection, journals, and practice TExES tests. The syllabi review indicated they are complete and detailed. Course description, assignments, due dates, required texts, and course expectations are all included. Field experiences are embedded into the coursework to solidify mastery of concepts and translate theory into practice. Courses for students seeking elementary level certification are placed on elementary campuses where they provide tutoring and support. Students seeking certification in EC-4, 4-8, and 8-12 are also required to take ESL or Bilingual Education coursework. Courses for those seeking secondary level certification are held on school campuses, so the students are given opportunities to apply their learning. They are able to process what they have learned through reflections, class discussions, and assignments. Technology use is also a requirement that is weaved throughout the coursework. Student teacher surveys substantiate these findings. The four student teachers who responded to the survey felt the topics had been adequately covered. All four faculty members who responded to the survey have advanced degrees and are Texas certified teachers. ASEP data scores reflect a 96-100 percent passing rate for the past three years.

Based on evidence presented, St. Edward's University is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Section §228.30 – Educator Preparation Curriculum.

COMPONENT IV: Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training (TAC) §228.35

FINDINGS:

St. Edward's University has met all of the requirements in accordance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Section §228.35 - Program Delivery and On-Going Support. The total number of clock hours ranges from 360-460 depending on area of certification. According to the self-report and the responses to questionnaires, more than thirty (30) hours are required. These experiences are structured as part of the coursework. St. Edward's University has partnership schools in the Austin ISD. The teacher candidates are placed with experienced teachers. To ensure the transference of theory to practice, candidates are required to complete various assignments based on their field experiences. Both cooperating teachers and student teachers are given handbooks which outline responsibilities and expectations. St. Edward's University meets the requirements for first contact, observation, and length of observations. Observation forms are shared with the student teacher, and the cooperating teachers, and each university supervisor keeps a copy of observations forms. It was noted that the program does not provide the observation form to the campus administrator. According to the TAC Section §228.35 (f), a copy must be provided to the campus administrator. The program is small, so personal attention

can be provided. One-on-one support is provided for struggling students through discussion sessions, and a growth plan is initiated if necessary.

Based on evidence presented, St. Edward's University is 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:

St. Edward's University has met the requirements of Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.40 - Program Assessment and Evaluation. Candidates' progress is monitored over time throughout the coursework, and each education course requires various assignments which demonstrate mastery of concepts. The student teaching experience is evaluated using a variety of forms, including PDAS and university- developed observation forms. Candidates formally meet with an academic advisor twice a year, and formal Teacher Education Advisory Committee meetings are held to evaluate applicants into the teacher education program as well as applicants for student teaching. Internal program evaluation consists of course evaluations, mid-term feedback, class conversations, student retention information, and advisor evaluations. The university also undergoes accreditation reviews by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The university has maintained high pass rates on state required exams the last three years.

Based on evidence presented, St. Edward's University is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.40 – Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Program Compliance Recommendations are based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency compliance audit. If the program is out of compliance with any component, please consult the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) and correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. General Recommendations are suggestions for program improvement only.

PROGRAM COMPLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS: In order to meet requirements of Texas Administrative Code governing educator preparation programs, the following recommendations must be implemented immediately:

TAC §228.20 Governance of Educator Preparation Programs

- St. Edward's University must hold advisory committee meetings twice a year as prescribed in TAC Rule §228.20(b)

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

- Provide written feedback of observations to the campus administrator as prescribed by TAC Rule §228.35 (f).

OTHER PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

None at this time.