



## Compliance Report 2012-2013 Western Governors University Alternative 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](http://www.tea.state.tx.us) for details.

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**County/District Number:** 101708

**SBEC Approval Date:** January 10, 2003

Educator Preparation Manager, Sandra Nix, Program Supervisor, Scott Lewis, and Program Specialist, Danielle Warren, conducted a Texas Education Agency (TEA) Compliance Audit of Western Governors University (WGU) alternative certification program located at 221 W. Sixth Street, Suite 1050, Austin, Texas on February 26-28, 2013. 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 February 1, 2013. 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 Western Governors University alternative certification program stakeholders. Out of thirty-seven questionnaires sent to stakeholders, a total of 16 responses or 43% were received as follows: two (2) out of five (5) advisory committee members (40%); two (2) out of eight (8) educator

candidates (25%); six (6) out of eight (8) field supervisors (75%); three (3) out of eight (8) campus principals (37.5%); and three (3) out of eight (8) cooperating teachers (37.5%). Quantitative and qualitative methods of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation of 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 February 26, 2013, was attended by Dr. Phil Schmidt, Dean, (via phone conference), Dr. Sean Spear, Manager of Compliance, and Stacey Ludwig Johnson, Associate Provost, Academic Services.

The closing session on February 28, 2013, was attended by Dr. Sean Spear, Tyson Heath, Assistant Project Manager, and Christopher Tamlyn, IT Site Support Technician.

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

### **FINDINGS:**

Program support was indicated by the governing body of Western Governors University per TAC §228.20(c) as evidenced by participation and cooperation of Dr. Sean Spear and WGU staff in all steps and stages of the compliance audit.

According to the self-report and evidence found during the audit, the advisory committee is composed of five members. Three (3) members represent public/private schools; one (1) member represents an education service center (ESC Region 11); and one (1) member represents community/business interests. According to the Advisory Committee Handbook, the members serve rotating terms of three years. Western Governors University alternative teacher certification program met TAC §228.20(b) requirements for advisory committee composition.

Each advisory committee member was sent an invitation letter which outlined expectations for their participation in the design, delivery, evaluation, and major policy decisions for the program. The advisory committee operates with the guidance of by-laws and an Advisory Committee Handbook. Acknowledgements of receipt of the handbook were available for review.

WGU presented evidence of two meetings during the 2011-2012 academic year and one meeting to date during the 2012-2013 academic year. The next scheduled advisory committee meeting is in April, 2013. The meetings are held virtually and the attendance is automatically recorded. Agendas and minutes were available as evidence of compliance. WGU met the requirement for conducting a minimum of two advisory committee meetings per academic year as required by TAC §228.20(b).

Past agendas reflected evidence of input by the advisory committee on technology, program operations, evaluation, curriculum evaluation, and review of on-going and relevant field-based experiences as specified in TAC §228.35(d).

**Based on the evidence presented, Western Governors University 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 Western Governors University alternative certification program staff and the WGU website, to be admitted into the program, the candidate must have:

- completed a bachelors' degree from a regionally accredited university [TAC §227.10(a)(2)];
- achieved a C+ on coursework which, according to WGU, is equivalent to between 2.5-2.7 GPA [TAC §227.10(a)(3)(A)]. It was noted that Western Governors does not issue grades but instead uses pass/fail. WGU is contemplating changing their system of grade reporting.
- completed a minimum of twelve (12) semester credit hours in a content field [TAC §227.10(C)];
- demonstrated basic skills proficiency with the THEA or Praxis. In addition, the program requires that candidates complete the WGU readiness assessment prior to admission. [TAC §227.10(4)];
- demonstrated adequate oral communication skills for out-of-country candidates (TOEFL with a speaking score of 26) [TAC §230.413];
- submitted an application which is the same application as the one used for entry into WGU [TAC §227.10(a)(6)];
- participated in a 20-30 minute intake interview conducted by an Enrollment Counselor utilizing additional screening instruments to determine the educator preparation candidate's appropriateness for the certification sought [TAC §227.10(a)(6)]. The interview questions are a set of uniform, structured questions, and there is a check list for scoring; and
- adhered to any other academic criteria for admission that are published and applied consistently to all educator preparation candidates – (THEA, WGU Readiness assessment including a writing sample, resume evaluation, and background check) [TAC §227.10(7)].

Out-of-country applicants whose first language is not English must demonstrate competence in the English language by submission of a minimum score (26 Oral) on the computer-based 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 transcript evaluation service [TAC §227.10(7)]. According to the self-report, the program requires the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), a Bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. institution, or a minimum of a Bachelor's degree from out-of-country English speaking university. It was noted in the self-report and confirmed at the audit that no out-of-country candidates have been admitted to date but policies are in place if needed.

In review of eight candidates' records, it was confirmed that the published admission's criteria were aligned with the documentation found in the candidates' records.

The self-report stated that information about the program and its admission requirements were available through the Western Governors University's website and in its university catalogue. Information about Texas requirements for testing and certification were found in the Western Governors University Student Handbook.

**Based on the evidence presented, Western Governors University is in compliance with TAC §227.10 - Admission Criteria.**

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

#### **FINDINGS:**

Western Governors University alternative certification program is approved to offer teacher certification in eight (8) certification fields and two (2) supplemental areas. The two supplemental fields, English as a Second Language and Special Education, are currently inactive. For the purpose of this compliance audit, the Generalist EC-6 certificate was selected for in-depth review.

WGU has a tiered instructional support system for candidates that included Student Mentors, Course Mentors, Program Faculty, and Evaluators. Student Mentors are the primary faculty support for the candidate. The role of the Student Mentor is to provide advice, coaching, and support from enrollment to graduation. This support provides weekly scheduled academic progress conversations and active involvement in other aspects of the candidate's academic career. While not an expert in all subjects, the Student Mentor guides the candidate through the overall program and offers coaching, direction, and practical advice.

Course Mentors are subject matter experts who support candidates as they engage specific sections of the WGU Curriculum. Their experience and training is specific to the courses they support. The Course Mentor is responsible for bringing the course of study to life with candidates via one-to-many or one-to-one forums, providing instructional help, facilitating learning communities, and providing content expertise for candidates who are struggling with course material. This type of support varies based upon the unique needs of the candidate.

Program Faculty are academic experts who serve as program managers, assessment and curriculum developers, and academic program council members. They work alongside the Course Mentors and Student Mentors to facilitate candidate learning.

Evaluators are subject matter experts who are responsible for reviewing assessment submissions in a fair and unbiased manner to determine if a competency has been demonstrated.

According to the WGU website, about 85% of the Student Mentors and 98% of the Course Mentors have a graduate degree.

In reviewing the Generalist EC-6 curriculum, it was verified that the educator standards were not the curricular basis for instruction as required by TAC §228.30(a). The alignment charts and online coursework found on the WGU site served as the basis for reviewing the curriculum content. The areas of concern centered on the appropriate fine arts instruction to address the

Generalist EC-6 educator standards and inclusion of the TEKS in instruction and skill development. Coursework and alignment charts for the Generalist EC-6 curriculum did not reflect that the relevant Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) were addressed to the depth required by TAC §228.30(a). Candidates were instructed to “Search the Internet and locate your state board of education’s website, and then find the page for your state’s standards.” The only other reference for the candidate was found is TaskStream where links to the TEKS and other Texas information was located. However, no direct instruction was provided on the TEKS. A statement to find the standards and a list of links to access information is not adequate to comply with TAC 228.30 (a). As a result, the program did not meet the requirements of TAC §228.30(a).

In addition to incorporating Texas educator standards into all certification areas they are approved to offer, Western Governors University in Texas must include curriculum concerning the seventeen (17) topics identified in Texas Administrative Code TAC §228.30. In review of the 17 topics, the following was discovered:

- Evidence that the specified requirements for reading instruction for the Generalist EC-6 certificate per TAC §228.30(b)(1) was provided in EAT2 Teaching Methods – Literacy and Elementary Reading, and ELT2 – Literacy and Elementary Language Arts and Handwriting and ELO5 Elementary Education Integration. These courses addressed the five essential components of reading (phonemic awareness, word structure, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension strategies). Reading instruction in the five essential components of reading required by TAC in all other certification areas that WGU is approved to offer was not evident on the degree plans for science, social studies, or math. In a review of the science, social studies, or math course of study, it reading was referenced in EIT5 Effective Teaching Practices: Instructional Planning and Strategies. In reading through the course of study, reading was referred to as a study skill and candidates were to explain a strategy to help students pronounce words in texts, explain a strategy to help student locate word meanings, and explain a strategy to help students learn how to use glossaries. No referenced articles, textbooks, or videos concerning the actual teaching of reading in the content areas was noted. The instruction provided does not meet the standard of TAC §228.30(b)(1);
- Evidence of instruction in child development [TAC §228.30(b)(3). motivation [TAC §228.30(b)(4)], learning theories [TAC §228.30(b)(5)], was verified in eleven (11) courses. Instruction provided in these areas met the minimum requirements of Texas Administrative Code;
- Evidence of instruction in the state assessment of students (STAAR) per TAC §228.20(b)(8) was not found in the coursework. WGU did not meet the requirement of TAC §228.30(b)(8);
- Evidence of instruction on the process of curriculum development and lesson planning, per TAC §228.30(b)(9), was found in twelve (12) courses. Information presented on these areas met the minimum requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(9);
- Evidence of instruction in classroom assessments was found in thirteen (13) courses. Provided instruction met the minimum requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(10);
- Evidence of instruction in classroom management per TAC 228.30(b)(11) was found in five courses. The provided instruction met the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(11);

- Evidence of instruction in special populations per TAC §228.30(b)(12) was found in seven (7) courses covering special education, gifted and talented, ESL/bilingual, ELPS, and Dyslexia: FTC5 Foundations of Teaching Practice Integration, EIT 5 Instructional Planning and Strategies, EIO 5 Instructional Planning, Strategies and Presentation, EAT2 Literacy and Grammar, ELT2 Literacy, Elementary Language Arts and Handwriting, EFT5: Specific Teaching Practice: Math and Science, EFT5 Specific Teaching Practices: Health, VPA, and Social Studies. The instruction provided met the minimum requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(12);
- Evidence of instruction in parent conferencing was reported as occurring during the clinical teaching portion of the preparation. Clinical teaching does not address uniform instruction for all candidates and therefore did not address preparing for the conference, providing basic negotiating skills that might be needed to reach consensus with parents, or handling of problematic conferences [TAC §228.30(b)(13)];
- Communication skills [TAC §228.30(b)(13)] was found in FTC5 – Foundations of Teaching Practice Integration. The instruction provided met the minimum requirement;
- Evidence of instruction in instructional technology was found in three (3) courses: FTC5 Foundations of Teaching Practice Integration; ETT5 Presentation and Follow Up; EITS Instructional Planning and Strategies. The instruction provided met the minimum requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(14);
- Evidence of instruction in pedagogy and instructional strategies [TAC §228.30(b)(15)] and differentiated instruction [TAC §228.30(b)(16)] was found in three (3) courses: FTC5 Foundations of Teaching Practice Integration; ETT5 Presentation and Follow Up; EITS Instructional Planning and Strategies. The instruction provided met the minimum requirements of Texas Administrative Code;

Evidence of six hours of test preparation per TAC §228.30(b)(17) will be required by completing T-CERT online test preparation modules. However, the T-CERT requirement was initiated effective February 1, 2013. Prior to this date, the required 6 clock hours of test preparation was not provided to candidates. In addition, no criteria to determine a candidate's readiness to test existed. In the future, readiness to test [TAC §228.40(b)] will be determined by the program after a candidate completes the T-CERT online training and presents the certificates of completion to WGU. Evidence of completion will be placed in the candidates' electronic records. WGU did not meet the requirements of TAC §228.30(b)(17), TAC §228.35(a)(3), and TAC §228.40(b)

Instructional module assessments include writing assignments, observations, objective tests, and performance assessments. Each course has structured competency assessments. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.40(a).

In summary, a review of the Generalist EC-6 coursework is built to accommodate candidates across multiple states. The degree plan identifies the certification as Elementary (K-8) instead of the Texas designation of Generalist EC-6 or Generalist 4-8. The online material and other course information omitted the Texas educator preparation standards, domains and competencies, as well as the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR), and Texas Educators' Code of Ethics. Links to the TEA website were listed in Task Stream but no direct instruction was provided. In discussion with program staff, it was indicated that flexible degree plans had been developed, but they



were not expected to be used in the teacher college for about a year. When implemented, a customized degree plan reflecting unique Texas requirements would be available.

Responses from the three principals who responded to the questionnaire regarding curriculum preparation of candidates were as follows:

- Knowledge of and use of models and methodologies of classroom management: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of academic and behavioral needs of students with disabilities: Yes – 100%
- Skill in communicating clear expectations for achievement and behavior: Yes - 100%
- Knowledge of and use of technology to support and extend student learning: Yes – 100%
- Collaboration with others: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of academic and behavioral needs of students with Limited English Proficiency: Yes – 50%  
No – 50%
- Knowledge of and use of formal and informal assessments: Yes –66.7% No – 33.3%

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

- Knowledge of and use of reading strategies: Yes –100%
- Texas Educators Code of Ethics: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of child and adolescent development: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of instructional methods to motivate students: Yes –100%
- Knowledge of and use of theories of how people learn: Yes – 100%
- TEKS: organization, structure, and skills: Yes – 100%
- TEKS in the content areas: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and role in STAAR testing: Yes – 50% No – 50%
- Skill in developing lessons: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of curriculum development: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of classroom assessments: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of formative assessments: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of models and methodologies of classroom management: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of laws and standards for Special Education: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of standards and teaching strategies for GT students: Yes – 50% No – 50%
- Knowledge of and use of standards and teaching strategies for LEP students: Yes – 0% No – 100%
- Skill in preparing and conducting parent conferences: Yes – 66.7% No – 33.3%

- Knowledge of and use of a variety of instructional methods: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of technology to support and extend student learning: Yes – 100%

Responses from two (2) student teachers in regard to their perception of their curriculum preparation were as follows:

- Knowledge of and use of reading strategies: Yes –100%
- Knowledge of the Code of Ethics: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of child and adolescent development: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of instructional methods to motivate students: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of theories of how people learn: Yes – 100%
- TEKS: organization, structure, and skills: Yes – 50% No – 50%
- Use of TEKS in the content areas: Yes – 50% No – 50%
- Knowledge of and role in STAAR testing: Yes – 50% No – 100%
- Skill in developing lessons: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of curriculum development: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of classroom assessments: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of formative assessments: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of models and methodologies of classroom management: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of laws and standards for Special Education: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of standards and teaching strategies for GT students: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of standards and teaching strategies for LEP students: Yes – 100%
- Skill in preparing and conducting parent conferences: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of a variety of instructional methods: Yes – 100%
- Knowledge of and use of technology to support and extend student learning: Yes – 100%

**Based on evidence presented, Western Governors University 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, Western Governors University alternative certification program is delivered in an on-line format. In reviewing the self-report and course of study, four hundred fourteen (414) clock-hours of training were completed prior to clinical teaching for the Generalist EC - 6 certificate. An additional four hundred eighty (480) clock hours were accumulate during clinical teaching for



a total of eight hundred ninety-four clock hours. The total clock-hours exceeded the minimum requirements set forth in TAC §228.35(a)(3).

Completion of the required thirty clock-hours of field-based experience was verified by documentation found in candidates' records. Field-based observations were completed through a combination of coursework and in-classroom observations. In the field experience handbook, candidates are provided a list of in-school tasks to be completed during the pre-clinical experience. In addition, there is a Pre-Clinical Experiences Verification Form which is completed by the principal which asked the principal to certify that they have received a copy of the WGU task list and have agreed to allow the WGU student perform his/her tasks at their school. Once completed, the principal returns the form to the WGU Field Placement Department. Field-based experiences were completed as required in TAC §228.35(d). It appeared from a review of the documentation that there was no variety of classrooms or diversity in the students observed. The observation forms generally reflected that candidates observed one teacher [TAC 228.35(d)].

Eighty (80) clock-hours of coursework prior to clinical teaching/internship were verified through the WGU benchmarks.

Clinical teaching [TAC §228.35(d)(2)(B)] was conducted for a period of twelve (12) weeks. The requirements were explained in the Field Experience Handbook. Clinical teaching placement information was found in the candidates' records and in the WGU tracking database. The Internship program which consists of serving as "teacher of record" for one academic year or a minimum of 180 days at a TEA approved school [TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C)] was discontinued in November 2012.

Evidence found in the candidates' records for clinical teaching verified that it took place in an actual school settings rather than a distance learning lab or virtual school setting. All clinical teacher placements occurred in school districts. The candidates' placements met the requirements of TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C)(ii).

According to TAC §228.35(e), Western Governors University is responsible for providing mentors and/or cooperating teachers training that is scientifically-based or verify that training was provided by a school district or education service center. Evidence of online training presented was the log-on information of the cooperating teacher as they signed on to complete the training. The program 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. WGU has a pool of twenty-seven (27) field supervisors to be utilized by the program as needed. Credentials of all potential field supervisors were reviewed and found to meet the requirements. Only one field supervisor was needed in 2012 and one in 2013. Verifiable evidence was available that field supervisors were trained using online training which recorded his/her login. Documentation in the form of database records was available for review. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

Initial candidate contact by the field supervisor was made within the first three weeks of their assignment as required by TAC §228.35(f). A record of the field supervisors' first contact was found in the candidates' records.

Six observations, which exceeds the number required by TEA, [TAC §228.35(f)(4)] are required by WGU during clinical teaching and were at least 45 minutes in duration [TAC §228.35(f)]. The

observation form reflected the start and stop time of the observation. The first observation was conducted during the first three weeks per documentation in the WGU electronic database.

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 with comments on observed proficiencies and the online database were available for review. The program met the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

Western Governors University alternative certification program is required to provide a copy of the observation with written feedback to the candidate's campus administrator [TAC §228.35(f)]. Upon the advice of WGU's attorney, the program was advised not to provide this information to the campus administrator because of FERPA issues. However, beginning in February, each candidate will be required to sign a FERPA release in order to provide his/her observation information to the campus administrator. This information will be delivered by the field supervisor. However, beginning with the next cohort, the candidates will be asked to sign a FERPA agreement and the observation results will be emailed to the campus administrator with a delivery receipt. The program did not meet the requirements of TAC §228.35(f).

Evidence of additional informal observations and coaching was verified by records of emails, phone calls, and other records of contact maintained by the WGU support staff and content experts. The program met the requirements as specified in TAC §228.35(f).

**Based on evidence presented, Western Governors University 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:**

Western Governors University has established transition points to ensure that candidates have met specific benchmarks and requirements during each phase of the program before proceeding to the next phase. Each transition point is tied to the assessment system which assures that candidates have demonstrated proficiency in all competencies. Transition point 1 is admission to WGU and to the teacher education program. Transition point 2 is completion of the core content. Transition point 3 is completion of field-based experiences, and Transition point 4 is completion of the program. In addition, on the WGU candidate's online page, there is a coursework bar graph for candidates to use in tracking completion of competencies for the specific course. Benchmarking met the requirements prescribed by TAC §228.40(a).

Evaluation of the program's design and delivery of the curriculum should be continuous per TAC §228.40(c). WGU collects data for evaluation such as pass rates by program, retention rates, TExES pass rates by program, clinical supervisor feedback, cooperating teacher feedback, principal feedback, and through candidate exit surveys. The program also uses information gathered from a student satisfaction survey and employer survey. The program completed an overall evaluation plan as part of their self-report. Western Governors University 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. Western

Governors University retains records for the past five years in an electronic format with several layers of security. The retention of records met the requirements of TAC §228.40(d).

**Based on evidence presented, Western Governors University alternative 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). No evidence was provided by Western Governors University of meeting this requirement [TAC §228.50(a) and TAC §228.30(b)(2)].

**Based on lack of evidence presented, Western Governors University is not in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.50 – Professional Conduct.**

#### **Texas Administrative Code §229**

##### **Current Accreditation Status**

Western Governors University alternative certification program is currently rated "Accredited" based on the September 1, 2011 - August 31, 2012 accountability status.

##### **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:	97%	100%	100%
Demographics			
Hispanic	0%		

## PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Compliance actions are based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency audit. If the program is not in compliance with any component, please consult the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) for details and correct the issue IMMEDIATELY. 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.

Other recommendations are suggestions for program improvement only.

### **Compliance Actions:**

#### TAC 288.30 Educator Preparation Curriculum

- Provide candidates Generalist EC-6 instruction based on the Texas Educator Standards for the certification. This instruction should include all core areas plus address art, music, and theater, physical education, and health standards. Provide Texas candidates with state-specific information such as Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR), educator standards, licensure requirements, and TExES domains and competencies for all certifications offered on the WGU Texas website until the flexible schedule is available. (2007).
- Provide thorough reading instruction for all certifications. (2007)

#### TAC 228.35 Program Delivery and Ongoing Support

- Have candidates sign a FERPA agreement and deliver copies of the Texas candidate's formal observations to the candidate's campus administrator. The must be maintained in the candidates' records for audit purposes.
- Document that six (6) clock hours of test preparation is provided to each candidate. Documentation must be kept in candidates' records for audit purposes.

#### TAC 228.35 Professional Conduct

- Have Texas candidates read and sign an acknowledgment of understanding the Texas Educator Code of Ethics. Maintain the acknowledgements in the candidates' records.
- Identify appropriate WGU staff to read and sign an acknowledgment of understanding the Texas Educator Code of Ethics. These records must be maintained for audit purposes.

### **OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:**

#### **Component I: Governance of Educator Preparation Programs:**

- Expand the handbook to explain which policies WGU will involve advisory committee members;

- Provide more quantitative data to the advisory committee members in order to engage in meaningful program evaluation discussions;
- Provide more detail to the recorded minutes to reflect the depth of discussion and recommendations of the advisory committee members;
- Use the advisory committee meeting template to ensure coverage of all items required by TAC;
- Ensure committee membership reflects the areas/regions where the enrolled candidates are located;
- Expand membership to include human resource directors to aid in networking and determining hiring needs of school districts;
- Expand advisory committee membership to include current and former candidates as well as cooperating teachers in order to receive perceptions from their viewpoints.

### **Component II: Admission Criteria:**

- Ensure that the finisher list reported to ASEP reflects the candidates who have completed the WGU Texas teacher certification program and are seeking certification in Texas;
- On the WGU Texas website, explain the minimum qualifications for admission in the program in Texas – GPA, etc.;
- Consider using the Pre-Admission Content Testing for interested applicants seeking admission into the WGU internship teacher certification program;
- Consider revising the student handbook contents to use as an orientation guide for potential candidates and ensure that it is easily accessed on the WGU Texas website.

### **Component III: Educator Preparation Curriculum:**

- Increase technology integration preparation into the curriculum;
- Increase curriculum depth on the use of data by candidates to make learning decisions for students;
- Increase curriculum depth on English Language Learners pedagogy;
- Consider activating the ESL and special education supplemental certificates to increase marketability of the Texas candidates ;
- Use the Texas STaR chart for technology instruction for evaluating the skill level of the candidate and the technology implementation level at the campus at <http://starchart.epsilon.com/docs/TxTSC.pdf> and <http://starchart.epsilon.com/docs/TxCSC.pdf>.

- Utilize Project Share for candidates and course instructors at [http://www.projectsharetx.org/sites/default/files/PS\\_EducatorGuide.pdf](http://www.projectsharetx.org/sites/default/files/PS_EducatorGuide.pdf) as a resource for planning instruction, sharing of lesson plans and professional development.
- Utilize the TEA developed training for meeting “Teachers’ Responsibilities for the STAAR” test administration at <http://texas.testsecuritytraining.com/TestAdministratorTraining.aspx>. A certificate can be printed upon completion. This is the same training that Texas 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/>.
- Ensure that the educator standards are the basis of curriculum instruction in all certifications that WGU is approved to offer. [http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=5938&menu\\_id=2147483671&menu\\_id2=794](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=5938&menu_id=2147483671&menu_id2=794)

#### **Component IV: Program Delivery and On-Going Support:**

- Document that candidates receive 15 clock hours of field-based experiences that require direct student interaction. Maintain documentation in candidates’ records for audit purposes;
- Consider reinstating the internship program in Texas for certification candidates;
- Include more student interaction contact time in the secondary certification areas to accumulate at least 15 clock hours of student contact;
- During clinical teaching or internship have Texas cohort seminars which is facilitated by an experienced Texas teacher who discusses his/her teaching experiences from a Texas perspective.

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

- Share evaluative data information with the advisory committee annually.

#### **Component VI: Professional Development**

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

#### **Standard 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 and Fingerprinting 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 Western Governors University alternative 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 Western Governors University alternative certification program to with current Texas Administrative Code (For example: Applicant / Candidate / Field Supervisor / Student Teacher / Intern/ Mentor/ Cooperating Teacher).