



**Compliance Report
For
Amberton University
School Counselor Certification Program
March 16-17, 2010**

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.

A continuing approval visit of the school counselor certification program of Amberton University was conducted on March 16-17, 2010 by Texas Education Agency (TEA) program specialists Dr. Mary S. Black and Mixon Henry in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) 228.10 (c).

Information concerning compliance with Texas Administrative Code rules governing educator preparation programs was collected by various qualitative means. TEA sent electronic surveys to all 17 school counselor interns, school counselor campus mentors, faculty, advisory committee members, program staff members, field supervisors, and campus principals connected with the Amberton University school counselor certification program. Due to technical problems, only 11 surveys were returned: 2 from school counselor interns, 7 from school counselor mentors, 6 from school counseling faculty, 2 from advisory committee members, 1 from a campus principal, and 1 from Amberton staff. In addition a review of documents, syllabi, and a curriculum correlation chart provided evidence regarding compliance. A self-report was submitted to TEA by Amberton University on February 11, 2010. Qualitative methods of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation were used to evaluate the evidence.

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

Findings:

Amberton University is in compliance with TAC §228.20 regarding governance or advisory committees for educator preparation programs. The advisory committee has only 5 members, but includes representation from local schools and districts, the Education Service Center, community, and higher education. Ten people attended the Opening Session of the monitoring visit, including the Academic Dean, Dr. Don Hebbard, and the President, Dr. Melinda Reagan.

Sign-in sheets, agendas, and minutes showed that the advisory committee has met twice this academic year, on December 2, 2009 and February 18, 2010. Amberton provides a training handbook to advisory committee members denoting their roles and responsibilities. Minutes from meetings reveal that the advisory committee is involved in decisions concerning the design, delivery and evaluation of the program.

Based on the evidence presented above, Amberton University program is in compliance with TAC 228.20.

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

Findings:

Amberton University is in compliance with TAC §227.10 regarding admission criteria. A review of student folders revealed that all candidates admitted must have a bachelor's degree from a four-year accredited university and an overall GPA of 2.5. Applicants submit an application to the program for admission, but no other screening instruments are required as the university has an open admissions policy for professional certification. No foreign students have been admitted to Amberton, and no students are admitted with less than a 2.5 GPA. Admission criteria is published online and in the catalog and is applied consistently, according to a review of student folders.

Based on the evidence presented above, Amberton University is in compliance with TAC §227.10.

COMPONENT III. SCHOOL COUNSELOR CURRICULUM -- Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 239.15

Findings:

Amberton University is in compliance with TAC §239.15 concerning required curriculum for school counseling certification. Amberton submitted a chart titled *School Counselor Standards as a Curricular Basis Course Correlation TAC §239.15 Subchapter A* as a substitute for the revised *School Counselor Standards Curriculum Correlation*, which showed the correlation of their courses in school counseling with the six standards required by TAC rule.

Program specialists reviewed syllabi for each course during the document review. Each syllabus clearly states the standards, domains and competences covered in the course. Seven courses have been adapted for optional online delivery. Each course has appropriate assessments, such as a data-driven guidance lesson project, facilitation of an experiential group process, and the demonstration of assessment instruments for school use in evaluating cognitive

and behavioral growth. Because all candidates are already certified, degreed teachers prior to admission, the program does not include specific instruction in pedagogy and classroom management as noted in TAC §239.15 (10). The program and the candidates follow the guidelines of the American School Counselor Association and the TEA Developmental Guidance Plans.

Based on the evidence presented above, Amberton University is in compliance with TAC §239.15.

COMPONENT IV: PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ONGOING SUPPORT — PREPARATION PROGRAM COURSEWORK AND/OR TRAINING -- Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.35 and TAC §239.10

Findings:

Amberton University is in compliance with TAC §228.35, which concerns program hours for professional certifications. According to the program hours chart submitted to TEA, Amberton University offers 520 clock hours, or 39 semester hours, of school counseling coursework prior to the practicum. Candidates receive a master’s degree at the completion of all requirements. A memorandum dated February 23, 2010 in the document review revealed that practicum hours increased from 150 to the minimum requirement of 160 set by the state.

Comment [msb1]: 520 hours 39 semester hours per Jo Lynn Loyd, april 13, 2010

Amberton University is also in compliance with TAC §239.10 regarding prior professional training and field experiences. Amberton University has developed and implemented specific criteria to substitute related professional counselor training for part of the coursework for school counselor as required by this rule. For example, certain courses taken for the Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) licensure may also fulfill school counseling requirements. School counseling candidates from Amberton have held practicum positions in over 70 school districts in north central Texas, according to placement lists reviewed, surveys, and informal interviews with faculty and staff. This fulfills the mandate for experiences with diverse students, grade levels and campuses. Candidates are placed at all grade levels: elementary, middle school and high school.

Mentor and field supervisor training manuals were reviewed by program specialists. These manuals contain policies, procedures and necessary forms for coaching, observing, and evaluating novice school counselors. Campus mentors and schools sign agreement forms for the practicum which are kept on file by Amberton University.

Based on the evidence presented above, Amberton University is in compliance with TAC §228.35 and TAC §239.10.

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

Findings:

Amberton University is in compliance with TAC §228.40 concerning assessment of candidates and the overall program. Candidates are assessed prior to admission and continually while they are enrolled in the program through objective and criterion-referenced means. Student records are retained for a minimum of five years in a safe location.

According to the self-report, advisory committee surveys and advisory committee minutes and agendas, the program is evaluated by the advisory committee and others once a year using TExES scores, candidate surveys and semester course evaluations. Curriculum is kept up to date and revised according to new rules from TEA. Program specialists also reviewed the school counseling *Program Assessment Report 2008-2009* produced by Amberton to document evaluation of its program.

Based on the evidence presented above, Amberton University is in compliance with TAC §228.40.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Program Compliance Recommendations are based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency continuing approval visit. If the program is out of compliance with any component, please consult the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) rules 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: None. Amberton University is in compliance with all TAC rules at this time.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS: None.