



Compliance Audit Report University of Texas at Tyler UTeach 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 rules at www.tea.state.tx.us for details.

Contact Information: Dr. Kathy Morrison, Director of Teacher Education

County/District Number: 212 503

TEA Approval Date: prior to 2001

A compliance audit of the educator certification program at the University of Texas at Tyler (UTT), in Tyler, Texas, was conducted on November 28-30, 2011, by Texas Education Agency (TEA) Program Specialists Dr. Mary S. Black and Mr. Mixon Henry in compliance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §229.6 (a). The compliance audit focus was on the recently initiated UTeach program to certify candidates in math and science. UTeach program was created at the University of Texas at Austin and is currently being replicated across the state at other University of Texas campuses.

Data Collection and Analysis:

The audit used information from a self-report submitted by the University of Texas at Tyler, a review of documents, syllabi, and curriculum correlation charts, and responses from electronic questionnaires as evidence of compliance with Texas Administrative Code. From a total of three hundred-one (301) questionnaires sent by TEA to program stakeholders, seventy-six (76) were returned. The break down per category is as follows: twenty-two (22) of seventy-two (72) principals, three (3) of twenty-one (21) student teachers/interns, fifteen (15) of twenty-one (21) field supervisors, fifteen (15) of fifty-five (55) advisory committee members, and twenty-one (21) of one hundred thirty-two 132 cooperating teachers. Qualitative methods of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation were used to evaluate the evidence. Evidence of compliance was measured using a rubric correlated to Texas Administrative Code.

Opening and Closing Sessions:

An Opening Session was held on November 29, 2011. The meeting was attended by 35 people, including Dr. Kathy Morrison, Director of Teacher Education, Dr. Bambi Bailey, Director of

UTEACH Tyler, and Dr. William L. Geiger, Dean of the School of Education. Dr. Morrison presented an overview of the certification program.

A Closing Session was held on November 30, 2011. In attendance were, Dr. Morrison, Dr. Bailey, and Dr. Geiger.

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

FINDINGS:

Component I concerns governance, or the advisory committee, for educator preparation programs. Program support was indicated by the governing body of University of Texas -Tyler per TAC §228.20(c) as evidenced by the participation of staff members in various aspects of the compliance audit.

The University of Texas at Tyler's advisory committee has a total of 33 members. Twenty-two members represent local schools and districts, two are from an Education Service Center, and three members represent local businesses and community organizations. The remaining six members represent institutions of higher education. The advisory committee members represent a balanced composition with ample opportunity for input from local schools and community. University of Texas at Tyler meets TAC §228.20(b) requirements for advisory committee composition.

The advisory committee meets twice annually, as evidenced by the self-report and minutes, agendas, and sign-in sheets. Meetings generally occur in November and March, with the last documented meeting on November 10, 2011. The next scheduled meeting will be March 28, 2012. Documents for the November 2011 and March 2011 meetings were reviewed. Minutes, agendas and sign in sheets for two meetings per year were available for three years (2009, 2010, and 2011). The program meets the requirements for conducting a minimum of two advisory committee meetings per academic year as required by TAC §228.20(b).

PowerPoints from advisory committee meetings documented training in the roles and responsibilities of the advisory committee members [TAC §228.20(b)]. Responses from the electronic questionnaires indicate that nine of 13 responding advisory committee members understand Texas Administrative Codes 227, 228, and 229 which govern educator preparation programs. Eight of 10 who responded to the questionnaire reported that field-based experiences are reviewed as required by TAC §228.35(d). Since UTeach is a new program, data is currently being gathered which will be presented at the next advisory committee meeting.

Based on the evidence presented, the University of Texas at Tyler is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code §228.20 – Governance of Educator Preparation Programs.

COMPONENT II: ADMISSION CRITERIA - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227.10– Admission Criteria

FINDINGS:

Component II concerns admission criteria to educator preparation programs. The University of Texas at Tyler UTeach program requires applicants to have a 2.5 GPA, with no exceptions of GPA allowed [TAC §227.10(A)]. A review of 11 candidate records confirmed that all had submitted an application [TAC §227.10(6)] and official transcript. Candidates were appropriately screened for having completed 24 or more semester credit hours in math or science, with at least 12 of those being upper division [TAC §227.10(C)]. Records reveal that candidates demonstrated basic skills by success on the ACT, SAT, Accuplacer, or THEA [TAC §227.10(4)]. No out-of-country students are currently enrolled in the UTeach program, however, the university has policies and procedures in place should the need arise [TAC §227.10(7)]. Admission criteria is published on the university website and in the university catalog [TAC §227.10(7)].

Texas Administrative Code §227.10 (6) requires that candidates complete an interview or other screening instrument prior to admission. In the past, University of Texas at Tyler advisors conducted informal interviews with applicants, but failed to document them. During the document review, formal interview questions accompanied by a rubric and written procedures for how to conduct and score an interview were available. This formal process will be instituted spring 2012. Because of the lack of a documented interview in the past, University of Texas at Tyler is not in compliance in this area.

Based on the evidence presented, the University of Texas at Tyler is not in compliance with TAC §227 - Admission Criteria.

COMPONENT III: CURRICULUM - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.30 – Educator Preparation Curriculum

FINDINGS:

Component III concerns the curriculum for the UTeach program in math and science. Course syllabi and three correlation charts indicating alignment of courses to standards and the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) were reviewed. The curriculum meets all standards set by the State Board for Education Certification (SBEC). All 17 mandated topics in TAC §228.30 are included.

The UTeach curriculum was developed at the University of Texas at Austin, and is essentially the same at all replication campuses. Course outlines and other materials are found online through a secure site at the University of Texas at Austin. In addition, UTeach holds regular meetings with all directors across the state to train, coordinate and evaluate academic success of candidates. The candidate can begin the UTeach program as early as introductory courses in the freshman or sophomore year, in which candidates visit local K-12 schools to observe and perform designated activities. Candidates are not admitted into the full sequence for certification, until they have completed at least 24 semester hours in their field and hold junior standing. Generally students take in their freshman year (EDUT 1170 and EDUT 2170) in their freshman year. In their sophomore year, students take Knowing and Learning in Math and Science (EDUT 3370) and Perspectives on Science and Mathematics (HIST 3360). Upon

completion of these courses, the candidate may apply for admission to the educator preparation program.

Reading concepts are taught to all math and science UTeach candidates in the courses Classroom Interactions (EDU 3371), Knowing and Learning (EDU 3370), and Project-Based Learning (EDU 4370). Classroom management is taught in Classroom Interactions, Project-Based Instruction, and Apprentice Teaching (EDU 4170) or student teaching. Instruction on special populations is taught in Classroom Interactions, and in an introductory course known as Step I (EDUT 1107). Classroom assessments, diagnosing learning needs, and differentiated instruction are covered in six of the eight required courses. In this way, candidates increase their understanding for teaching special populations as well.

Based on evidence presented, the University of Texas at Tyler is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Section §228.30 - Educator Preparation Curriculum.

COMPONENT IV: PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ONGOING SUPPORT - Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.35 – Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training

FINDINGS:

UTeach candidates must complete 1020 clock hours of coursework and training, well above the state minimum of 300 clock hours [TAC 228.25(a)(3)]. UTeach candidates earn 69 clock hours through field-based experiences in local schools [TAC §228.35 (d)(3)(A)]. Candidates complete 945 clock hours prior to student teaching [TAC §228.35(a)]. Evidence verifying the number of hours required in the program was found in the UTT degree plan and online on their website. The university does not allow field-based experience to be replaced by video [TAC §228.35(a)(6)], nor substitution of previous experience for coursework or training [TAC §228.35(a)(6)].

Since the UTeach program has just been initiated, no cohort has yet completed student teaching. The first cohort will complete in spring 2012. Procedures for mentoring and field supervision are in place as indicated in their self-report and document review. Training for mentors [TAC §228.35(e)] and field supervisors [TAC §228.35(f)] is required annually. Training meetings were held August 30, 2011, for potential mentors and August 16, 2011, for field supervisors. These were documented by agendas and sign-in sheets reviewed by TEA Program Specialists. UTeach intends to pay stipends to all mentors and have signed mentor agreements. The vitas of the field supervisors indicated that they are all certified educators with graduate degrees. Field supervisors also have a handbook for training purposes that was created in fall 2011.

The plan also calls for 12 formal observations of UTeach candidates during 2012 [TAC §228.35(d)(2)(C)(ii)], plus another 12 observations during the early field-based experiences in Steps 1 and 2. Blank observation forms in the document review included space for noting time in/time out [TAC §228.35(f)(4)], and signatures of the candidate and the field supervisor, as well as the campus administrator [TAC §228.35(f)]. Since no UTeach candidates have completed student teaching, TEA Program Specialists reviewed three candidate records for the Generalist 4-8 certification, one candidate record for Math 4-8, and one candidate record for Math 8-12 to gain knowledge of how the university generally documents observations. Six to eight formal observation evaluations were documented for these candidates.

Based on evidence presented, the University of Texas at Tyler is in compliance with Texas Administrative Code Section §228.35 – PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ON-GOING SUPPORT.

COMPONENT V: PROGRAM EVALUATION – Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.40 – Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement

FINDINGS:

The University of Texas at Tyler assesses candidates through a benchmark process in the UTeach program [TAC §228.40(a)]. Benchmarks include completion of Steps 1 and 2 prior to entry into the formal certification program. Coursework for Step 3 must be completed before candidates progress to Step 4, which includes student teaching. Candidate readiness for the testing is evaluated by successful completion of courses in an identified sequence. Candidates are not allowed to take the TExES exam until they have completed six hours of test preparation [TAC §228.40(b)].

The University of Texas at Tyler conducts an annual assessment summit to evaluate each department in the college [TAC §228.40(c)]. Reports from these summits are available online at the university website. A variety of data including test scores and qualitative surveys from students, principals, and faculty are used to evaluate the overall educator certification program. This information is shared with the advisory committee for their input.

Candidate records are kept for a minimum of five years in a locked area per TAC §228.40(d).

Based on evidence presented, the University of Texas at Tyler 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 code of ethics is covered in the candidates' coursework.

Senate Bill 174/Texas Administrative Code §229

Current Accreditation Status

The University of Texas at Tyler is currently rated "Accredited"

Standard I: Results of Certification Exams

Pass Rate Performance:	2008-2009 Final 80% Standard	2009-2010 70% Standard	2010-2011 75% Pass Rate
Overall:	99%	99%	96%

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Program Compliance Recommendations are based on the findings of the Texas Education Agency technical assistance 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: In order to meet requirements of all Texas Administrative Code rule governing educator preparation programs, the following recommendations are made:

TAC 227.10(6): Admission Criteria

- Implement the structured interview with an evaluation rubric as part of admission criteria. Retain the scoring rubric in the candidate's record.

GENERAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Attend all Dean/Director meetings;
- Participate in stakeholder meetings/webinars/trainings.
- Adhere to all TAC rules and processes adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification.