



Early Field Experiences Handbook

Office of Field Experiences



College of Education

Teacher Education Programs

2011-2012

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OFFICE OF THE DEAN
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - PAN AMERICAN

1201 West University Drive • Edinburg, Texas 78541-2999 • Office (956) 381-3627 • Fax (956) 381-2184

A Letter from the Dean

Dear Intern:

You are about to embark on the profession that impacts all other professions. You have committed your life to the profession that will significantly impact all children. You have chosen the profession that will make all the difference in the world - TEACHING. As you begin the capstone course of your program, you will encounter challenges, obstacles and successes. Continue to move forward; look for mentors, both at your school and at UTPA. The faculties at UTPA are available to provide you with support and assistance for a successful semester. Best of luck and congratulations for selecting teaching as your life-long profession.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Salvador Hector Ochoa".

Salvador Hector Ochoa, Ph.D., Dean
College of Education

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the College of Education at the University of Texas Pan American is to continually improve the educational process in the College and the community through teaching, research, and service. The College values the rich cultural and linguistic history of the international border area and directs its program and course offerings toward the preparation of professionals for an increasingly diverse population of learners.



Terms and Definitions

Pre-service teacher, teacher candidate or student intern	UTPA student enrolled in teacher education program leading to teaching certification.
Mentor Teacher	Cooperative teacher; certified classroom teacher hosting UTPA student.
Early Field Experiences	State-required on-going field experiences in public school setting completed during coursework in Teacher Education Program prior to Internship II/Student Teaching practicum; must be appropriate to area/level of certification (relevant).
Internship II/Student Teaching	A state-required full-day, full time practicum consisting of two courses for elementary program (EDCI 4399 and 4398) and one six-hour course EDUC 4611 for all-level program (includes high school, middle school) supervised by university supervisor and mentor teacher.
Field Assignments	Field assignments may take form of program benchmarks. Required through program courses (defined in respective course syllabi) and to be completed in respective campuses.
TEExES Representative Form	A required practice TEExES test taken during program.
TEExES Exams	Required exams for becoming certified teacher in Texas.
Student Weekly Log Sheet	A State-audited document used by student for recording field hours/dates/times along with mentor teacher signature and university instructor; must submit to Office of Field Experiences each semester. Verify all information is complete and accurate.
Early Field Experiences Placement Application Form	A form to be completed by All Level Program and evening students for purposes of either requesting placement from OFE (Office of Field Experiences) or identifying campus, district and mentor teacher (s) in which field experiences will take place (selecting own site).
Campus Administrator Letter	A official letter provided by OFE to be presented to campus administrator if seeking own field experience placement.
Field-Based Courses to Facilitate Field Experiences	Courses to facilitate field experiences placements, OFE will contact students through these courses (i.e. email or class presentations). For Elementary Program: EDCI 3331, EDCI 3333, EDCI 3335 = 32 hours per course 96 Total Field Hours For All-Level Program: EDUC 4304 = 30 hours minimum
University Instructor	University instructor or professor teaching courses identified as field-based courses.

Field Experiences Overview

Overview

Field experiences are an important part of a student's preparation in becoming a professional teacher. Teacher Educator Programs in Texas use Learner-Centered Proficiencies to guide pre-service preparation, professional development and teacher appraisal practices. The Learner-Centered Proficiencies for Texas Teachers articulate a vision of a learning community in which success for students is paramount. These proficiencies reflect the desire of educators to work together to build learner-centered schools (TAC RULE §150.1002).

Field Experiences are designed to allow pre-service teachers to work with Rio Grande Valley teachers and students in our unique bicultural schools in ways that capitalize on students special strengths and provide effective instructional practices to address areas of academic need.

Our Role

The Office of Field Experiences assists Teacher Certification Programs in the College of Education by facilitating field experiences in schools for students and coordinating placement and supervision for the Internship II/ Student Teaching Program.

Early Field Experiences

Field experiences in the teacher education programs enrich the academic coursework by providing pre-service teachers opportunities to interact with teachers and students in content-specific academic settings. **Field experiences must be relevant; therefore, they must be in area/level of certification (major).** Every program define number of field hours per blocks and the purpose and scope of the field work. Refer to Program Handbooks for specific field hour requirements. Field-Based courses will delineate specific field assignments. Some of these field assignments may be considered benchmarks that will be showcased in the Electronic Portfolio.

Internship II/Student Teaching Program

A semester prior to projected semester of Internship II/Student Teaching semester (either Fall or Spring), students **must apply** for Internship II through the Office of Field Experiences. The office is responsible for screening applications for meeting Internship II requirements, facilitating the process of placing prospective student teachers in public schools and coordinating the supervision of student teachers during the semester.

Student teaching is defined as a full day, full time, school-based practicum that is supervised by both an mentor teacher, an experienced certified teacher, and a university supervisor. The primary goal of student teaching is to provide the opportunity for acquisition and demonstration of instructional competence for beginning professional educators. The student teaching experience has been designed to provide future teachers the practical experiences that help shape the professional career of beginning teachers. The student teacher will assume full teaching responsibility with the assistance of the mentor teacher. Internship II/Student Teaching consists of six semester credit hours (EDCI 4399 and 4398 or EDUC 4611) and considered part-time status. Students may take a minimum of six (6) additional semester credit hours on

Policies and Procedures

Early Field Experiences Placements

Field-Based Courses

All Teacher Education Programs are field-based programs, meaning that courses require field assignments and experiences in schools. However, specific field-based courses are EDCI 3331, 3333, 3335 and EDUC 4304 which are used to facilitate field experiences placements. Student lists used for placement purposes are generated through official enrollment in these courses throughout each semester in the teacher education program. In the day program, students submit Student Weekly Log Sheets to professor of this course. For evening program, students submit Student Weekly Log Sheets directly to the Office of Field Experiences and/or university professor. Students are placed in classrooms with a mentor teacher, cooperating teacher according to areas (major/minor) and level of certification. The following tables identify these courses but do not include the final block, Internship II/Student Teaching.

EC-6 Elementary Teacher Education Program

Day and Evening Program= Total Field Hours Required: 96

**Block I: 4 full days of field
7:45 a.m.-3:45 p.m.**

EDCI 3331 =32 hours

- 30% of this course credit consists of field-based Experiences*
- Other courses in Block may have field experiences assignments*

**Block II: 4 full days of field
7:45 a.m.-3:45 p.m.**

EDCI 3333 = 32 hours

- 30% of this course credit consists of field-based experiences*
- Other courses in Block may have field experiences assignments*

**Block III: 4 full days of field
7:45 a.m.-3:45 p.m.**

EDCI 3335 = 32 hours

- 30% of this course credit consists of field-based experiences*
- Other courses in Block may have field experiences assignments*

Early Field Experiences Placements (cont.)

All-Level Teacher Education Program (includes Middle School and High School Programs)

Field-Based Course	Total Field Hours
EDUC 4304	30 minimum
	<i>*may exceed minimum</i>

Placement Procedures

For all students in All-Level, Middle School or High School Teacher Education Programs, field experiences will be completed through EDUC 4304 course, although you may complete field experiences/ assignments in other All-Level Teacher Education Program courses that you are taking with this field-based course.

An Early Field Experiences Placement Application will be completed to request placement from the Office of Field Experiences (OFE). If you volunteer/work at a school, you may identify your own site for field experiences with the approval of Human Resources Office at respective district. An official letter from UTPA OFE must be presented to district administrators at Human Resources Office prior to beginning field experiences. The Office of Field Experiences verifies placements.

Early Field Experiences Placements

Selection of School Sites

Schools each semester are selected using a rotation of schools that have hosted UTPA students. In addition, department chairs, and program coordinators recommend schools and districts for this purpose.

Procedures for Providing Day Program Field Placements

1. Office of Field Experiences will use the official enrollment of the field-based course to identify students that will completing field experiences for the semester. Students will be emailed with information regarding specific district procedures for completing and clearing a criminal background check along with informing students to have a copy of a current TB test (6 months). Students are also required to have a current Texas driver's license or identification card when visiting schools.
2. An orientation will be provided by school. Attendance is mandatory as campus policies and procedures will be outlined for students. Compliance with all district policies and Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators (RULE §247.2) are required when visiting schools.
3. All Field Experiences begin approximately six weeks from the time the semester begins for a period of six weeks; This timeframe is for all program students (day and evening). Under no circumstances should the student begin completing field experiences *before* or *after* this scheduled timeframe. Absences from field experiences must be made-up. Arrangements must be made with administrators. No days may be made up **after** the last day of field experiences.
4. Field assignments and activities will be defined in respective course syllabi. Brief descriptions will be provided in the Weekly Log Sheet that will be submitted to the Office of Field Experiences (OFE). A deadline for submitting the Weekly Log Sheet will be provided. Make sure this form includes date/times of observations, mentor teacher signature and university instructor signature. Make a copy for your records (to upload to Electronic Portfolio) and submit form to your professor by deadline.

*The Weekly Log Sheet is a State-audited document; **all information must be correct and complete on this form** (i.e., name, student identification number, block, course, mentor name, campus principal name, etc.). Failure to report accurate information is a violation of Fitness to Teach.*

All these forms may be accessed via the OFE website at <http://www.utpa.edu/colleges/coe/ofe/>
These field experiences requirements are mandated by the State. Refer to Texas Administrative Code (TAC) RULE §228.30 in Appendix.

Early Field Experiences Placements

Procedures for Providing Evening Program Field Placements

1. Office of Field Experiences will contact students via field-based course each semester to instruct students to complete Early Field Experiences Student Placement Application which will specify **either request for field placement or identify own site selected**. Paraprofessionals, teacher aides, staff employees or parent volunteers at a school district may have access to their own school; therefore, they may just identify campus, district and mentor teacher (s) on this form **with approval from District Human Resources Office**. School contact information should also be provided on this form. If you are selecting your own school, you must provide school officials a campus administrator letter from our office specifying requirements and request. *The Office of Field Experiences will contact and verify field placements for all students as part of certification requirements.* ***Important notice to Employees of a District, you may not be able to complete field hours during your regular work-day; for this reason, teacher aides/paraprofessionals assist in unpaid tutoring after-school or Saturday school.**
2. All students must adhere to district policies and procedures such as clearing a criminal background check and having a copy of a current TB test *before* field experiences begin. If OFE is providing you a placement, you will be contacted regarding specific procedures. If you are selecting your own field site, it is your responsibility to inquire with Human Resources at respective district regarding these procedures. Compliance with all district policies and Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators (RULE §247.2) are required when visiting schools.
3. All Field Experiences begin approximately six weeks from the time the semester begins for a period of six weeks; This timeframe is for all program students (day and evening). Under no circumstances should the student begin completing field experiences before or after this scheduled timeframe.
4. Field assignments and activities will be defined in respective course syllabi. Brief descriptions will be provided in the Weekly Log Sheet that will be submitted to the Office of Field Experiences (OFE). A deadline for submitting the Weekly Log Sheet will be provided to students each semester. Make sure this form includes date/times of observations, mentor teacher signature and university instructor signature. Make a copy for your records (to upload to Electronic Portfolio) and submit form to OFE by deadline. Keep in mind that for Elementary Program students, **30 hours of field experiences is required for each of the following courses: EDCI 3331, EDCI 3333 and EDCI 3335.**

*The Weekly Log Sheet is a State-audited document; **all information must be correct and complete on this form** (i.e, name, student identification number, block, course, mentor name, campus principal name, etc.). Failure to report accurate information is a violation of Fitness to Teach. OFE will verify information.*

All these forms may be accessed via the OFE website at <http://www.utpa.edu/colleges/coe/ofe/>
These field experiences requirements are mandated by the State. Refer to Texas Administrative Code (TAC) RULE §228.30 in Appendix.

Early Field Experiences Forms



Student Evaluation of Early Field Experiences and Classroom

Office of Field Experiences Field Experience Evaluation

Please complete the items below regarding your perception of your field experience. Return form with your Weekly Log In Sheet to Section Leader.

Certification Area _____ Semester _____

School _____ School District _____

Block _____ Mentor Teacher Name _____

(Please put an X in the appropriate box for items 1-5)

Outstanding Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

Rate your field experience. [] [] []

2. Rate the teacher's response to your presence in the classroom. [] [] []

3. Rate the response of the school personnel that made the placement when you arrived. [] [] [] classroom

4. Rate your ability to complete field assignments/activities. [] [] []

5. Rate the relevance of the field assignments/activities to classroom curriculum and instructional practices in school. [] [] []

6. **In this experience I.....(mark all that apply)**

a. _____ observed.

b. _____ worked with an individual student.

c. _____ worked with a group of students.

d. _____ assisted the teacher.

e. _____ taught a lesson.

f. _____ documented development of a student.

_____ interacted with a parent/ teacher/ administrator (circle all that apply)

_____ assessed student(s).

Additional Comments (if answered Unsatisfactory to any above please elaborate):



The University of Texas-Pan American
 College of Education
 Early Field Experiences/Internship I Placement Verification Sheet

Program: EC4 Generalist _____ Middle School 4-8 _____ SEMESTER _____
 EC4 Bilingual Generalist _____ High School 8-12 _____ BLOCK _____
 EC6 Generalist _____ All-Level EC-12 _____
 EC6 Bilingual Generalist _____

Name: _____ SID# _____

Mailing Address: _____
 Street City State Zip Code

Permanent Address: _____
 Street City State Zip Code

Day Phone: _____ Evening Phone #: _____ Cell Number: _____

*Preferred Email Address: _____

Section A: Field Experiences Placement (if you work at a school or have access to a school, please provide the following information).

CISD Information:

School: _____ District: _____

Campus Principal (full name): _____ Campus Telephone #: _____

Mentor Teacher (full name): _____ Subject Area/Grade Level: _____

Room Number: _____ Conference Time: _____

Please list Mentor Teacher(s)

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____

Section B: Placement Request (if you need a campus/district placement, please complete the following information).

CISD Preference:

School: _____ District: _____

Available to visit campus on (circle all days/times that apply): Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

Mornings: _____ (times)

Afternoons: _____ (times)

As per the Texas Administrative Code Rule §228.30, Educator Preparation Programs are required to document on-going and relevant field-based experiences throughout the program before being eligible to apply for Standard Teaching Certificate. Office of Field Experiences will receive a copy of student's documentation of field hours (Early Field Experiences/Internship I Weekly Log Sheet) each semester.

Example of Campus Administrator Letter



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF FIELD EXPERIENCES

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS - PAN AMERICAN

1201 West University Drive • Edinburg, Texas 78541-2999 • (956) 665-7952

September 1, 2011

Dear District/Campus Administrator:

The University of Texas-Pan American's College of Education is currently implementing a very successful field-based teacher preparation program for all undergraduate students seeking public school teaching certification. This field-based teacher preparation program meets the requirements set by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and approved by the Texas State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). Our students as pre-service teachers value tremendously from gaining first-hand experience in public school classrooms and working directly with teachers and students in our schools. The success of these students and our program rests largely on the mutual collaborations established among the university, the surrounding school districts, and the business community. Therefore, we are asking for your collaboration and assistance.

Teacher Education Program students are required to participate in this field-based program. In order for students to obtain the necessary relevant field-experiences (defined as time spent in a classroom setting working with children in and teachers in grade level of certification sought), they must spend some time in the public school classroom. Students may assist in classroom teaching activities with teachers to reinforce lesson concepts/skills with children, tutor individual students, and fulfill any other field assignments related to their preparation program.

These students are instructed to:

- a) dress and act professionally while on school campus,
- b) request campus permission prior to attendance
- c) submit a consistent schedule of attendance to respective campus
- d) sign in at the front office upon arrival at the campus
- e) exhibit identification card
- f) submit a copy of Tuberculosis (TB) test results to campus prior to attendance and adhere to district policies on criminal background checks
- g) keep a log of all field experiences using the *Intern weekly Log Sheet* with Mentor Teacher signatures and field hours.

If you have any further questions, please contact our office at (956) 665-3407. Thank you for your attention and support of these students.

Sincerely,

*Dr. Criselda Garcia, Director
College of Education Office of Field Experiences*

Internship II/Student Teaching Program

Application Process for Internship II/Student Teaching Program

Application Process for Internship II/Student Teaching Program

All students must apply for Internship II/Student Teaching Program or Student Teaching Exemption Program (waiver of EDCI 4399 and EDCI 4398 or EDUC 4611). Students must meet all Fitness To Teach Internship II requirements to be eligible to student teach.

Internship II/Student Teaching Program is a full day, one semester practicum at an assigned school with an experienced mentor teacher, cooperating teacher in either fall or spring semester. One semester before you are scheduled to complete Student Teaching Program, apply for Internship II/Student Teaching, a complete application and supporting documents must be submitted to the Office of Field Experiences by the deadline. All students must meet FTT Internship II requirements.

Documents to be submitted with the Internship II/Student Teaching Program application include an updated signed degree plan (meet with advisor for “final degree audit”), official transcripts, and degree audit.

Semester deadlines are typically:

Spring Internship II/Student Teaching

Applications available mid September –due in late
October

Fall Internship II/Student Teaching

Applications available mid February – due early April

For **graduation deadlines and application information**, contact the **Office of Registrars** (956) 665-2481 or visit http://portal.utpa.edu/utpa_main/dess_home/registrar_home

Application Process for Student Teaching Exemption for Eligible Teacher Aides

Application Process for Student Teaching Exemption Program (THECB Rule)

Educational aides that are receiving tuition exemption through the UTPA Financial Services Office and awarded by Financial Services Office are eligible for the Student Teaching Exemption Program (waiver of student teaching courses as per Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Rule). If a student has an official award letter, he/she may apply for the student teaching exemption (refer to Appendix page 25). An application and supporting documents such as an official THECB award letter, a signed degree plan, official transcripts, and degree audit will be submitted to the Office of Field Experiences one semester before scheduled student teaching semester. All students must meet FTT Internship II requirements. For more information, please visit Student Financial Services (956)665-2501 or visit http://portal.utpa.edu/utpa_main/dess_home/sfs_home

Despite receiving an exemption/waiver from student teaching, all students must meet advanced hour and minimum degree plan hour requirements in order to graduate. *Students may be required to take six semester credit hours of coursework to fulfill degree hour requirement to graduate. Please visit with advisor. All students must have a minimum of 124 hours on a transitional degree plan and 51 advanced hours to graduate and a minimum of 120 hours on a EC-6 degree plan and 51 advanced hours.* For graduation deadlines and application information, contact the **Office of Registrars** (956) 665-2481 or visit http://portal.utpa.edu/utpa_main/dess_home/registrar_home

New Policy for All Students Admitted in Summer 2011: Two Directed Electives Required

If you qualify for the Teacher Aide Exemption from Student Financial Services, you are eligible to apply for exemption from student teaching courses; however, for all students admitted summer 2011 and after, you will be required to take Directed Electives, two education courses, in lieu of student teaching courses. *This policy was approved by Curriculum and Instruction Faculty and the University Curriculum Committee in spring 2011.*

Please visit with your C&I program advisor for specific course listing.

Timeframe for applications:

Spring Student Teaching Exemption Program

Applications available mid September—due late October

Fall Student Teaching Exemption Program

Applications available mid February – due early April

Fitness to Teach Internship II/Student Teaching Requirements for All Students Admitted Spring 2009



College of Education Office of Field Experiences

12 01 W. University Drive/ EDCC 1.506
Edinburg, Texas 78541 (956) 316-7952

Internship II/Student Teaching Requirements

A. Conditions for Enrollment in Internship II/Student Teaching

The Office of Field Experiences (OFE) will review all teacher candidates for admission into Internship II/Student Teaching Program. In accordance with Texas Education Code 22.083, an examination of each teacher candidate's criminal history will be conducted before student teaching. Criminal history record information, which includes both conviction and arrest records, are obtained. An ISD may deny placement of students with a criminal background. The student's clearance for field work is the prerogative of the ISD and not UTPA. *It is solely at the discretion of the ISD to accept a student teacher with a criminal background.* If a student is unable to obtain a field-based placement, he/she will not meet UTPA's requirements for recommendation for teacher certification. A current negative TB test must be provided with application. Internship II/Student Teaching applications will be evaluated for all teacher candidates using the following requirements:

- (1) Successfully complete all respective program requirements (including field experience hours, portfolio, etc);
- (2) Be within 12 hours of graduation (may be missing six hours on degree plus student teaching coursework 4399 and 4398);
- (3) Pass respective TExES content exams (*for elementary program students only*);
- (4) Complete all education coursework (interdisciplinary area/academic major **and** minor/academic specialization) with a minimum of 2.50 GPA in respective major **and** minor; and
- (5) Have a cumulative 2.50 GPA on an official degree plan.

B. Conditions for Completion of Student Teaching/Internship II

Upon acceptance to Internship II, the student successfully meeting all program requirements, as stated in *Internship II/Student Teaching Handbook*, will continue on Provisional Status as a Student Teacher Intern. During Internship II, a student not successfully meeting all program requirements may be placed on Probationary Status by the Director of the Office of Field Experiences in consultation with the university supervisor. If placed on Probationary status, the student will be placed on a Growth Intervention Plan. This affords the student an opportunity to clear his or her status. While on Probationary Status, if the student does not demonstrate progress, he or she may be dropped from the program. However, in cases of serious legal and ethical violations, the Office of Field Experiences in consultation with the OFE Advisory Council reserves the right to remove a student from a classroom and drop a student from Internship II. The student has the right to appeal at any phase of this process.

Completion of Internship II (student teaching) is a condition for meeting Texas teacher certification requirements. Students may attempt Internship II a maximum of two times. If a student does not successfully complete the second Internship II experience, he or she will not be eligible to enroll a third time. The student has the right to appeal to the Office of Field Experiences Advisory Council, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Dean. *Fitness To Teach Policy (approved Fall 2008)*

Documentation Needed for Internship II

1. *An official transcript (which includes the last semester of completed course work)*
2. *A copy of your official degree plan*
3. *A completed Internship II Application*
5. *A completed T.B. skin test that is no more than one year old from entry date into the public school classroom.*

Note: Documentation of T.B. Test results must be presented to school personnel on the first day you report to your assigned campus.

Internship II Application Deadlines

Fall – Early April Spring – Late October

Note: All G.P.A. requirements for admission to Internship II must be maintained for final certification

In accordance with Article 6252-13c, Texas Civil Statutes, the Texas Commissioner of Education may suspend or revoke a teaching certificate, or refuse to issue a teaching certificate to a person who has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor for a crime that directly relates to the duties and responsibilities of the teaching

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

What can I expect from field experiences?

From your first field experiences, it is recommended that you interact with teachers and students. You may work with small groups, tutor individual tutors or co-teach with the mentor teachers.

What is appropriate dress for field experiences?

Dress professionally but comfortably. Remember that you will be active in working with children and need to be comfortable, but also you are to represent yourself professionally.

How are mentor teachers/cooperating teachers selected for field experiences?

Campus administrators select mentor teachers based on area and level of certification.

What if I am placed at the same grade level each block? May I request a change?

Yes, if you have the same grade level in two blocks, you may ask to switch with another student. Please ask your section leader/university professor to assist you with this. It's to your benefit to gain experience in different grade levels.

What if I'm absent from field experiences?

*First notify your university professor of your absence. **You must make up hours.** This must be arranged with mentor teacher and campus administrator and completed by deadline to submit your Weekly Log Sheet. Do not arrive late or leave early; you must count daily hours completed in order to meet required hours (8 hours per visit) for Day Elementary Teacher Education Program students.*

What if I work as a paraprofessional/teacher aide? Do I still have to complete field hours?

Yes, field experiences/assignments must be content-specific, and relevant, meaning they must be in your area/level of certification. Employers may not allow you to complete field hours during work-day (as federally-funded Teacher Aides are required to work with specific students); for that reason many teacher aides must volunteer for unpaid after-school tutoring, or Saturday school or in some cases may have to take "personal leave" to complete field hours.

How do these field experiences help me?

These field experiences are learning opportunities that provide you experience in working with students and teachers in our schools. These experiences help you decide on grades that you prefer to teach and districts that you prefer. You will be able to include these in your resume and show future employers the varied experiences you have had.

Appendix

DIRECTORY

Office of the Dean

Dr. Salvador Hector Ochoa, Dean.....EDCC 3.102 (956)665-3627
 Dr. Laura Saenz, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies.....(956)665-2425
 College of Education Webpage.....<http://www.utpa.edu/colleges/coe>

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Dr. Jaime Curts, Chair.....EDCC 2.510 (956)665-8792
 C&I Webpage.....http://www.utpa.edu/dept/curr_ins

Starr County Upper-Level Center (SCULC)

Dr. Alma Perez, Director
 142 FM 3167 Rio Grande City, Texas.....(956) 488-0085
 SCULC Webpage.....www.utpa.edu/sculc

Department of Health and Kinesiology

Dr. Paul Villas, Chair.....HPE 1, 1.110B (956)665-3505

Office of Teacher Certification and Admission Services

Ms. Sandra Pena, Director.....EDCC 1.302 (956)665-3420
 Ms. Sara Villarreal, Certification Officer.....(956)665-3485
 General Information, Admissions, Advisor Referrals, TExES Exam registration,
 Teacher Certification (application for standard certificate).

Office of Field Experiences

Dr. Criselda Garcia, Director.....EDCC 1.506 (956)665-7223
 Undergraduate Program Fieldwork, Student Teaching Internship II (956)665-3410
 OFE Webpage.....<http://www.utpa.edu/colleges/coe/ofe/>

Educational Technology Resource Center (ETRC)

Dr. John Lowermilk, Director.....EDCC 2.504 (956)665-3449
 ETRC Webpage.....<http://etrc.panam.edu>

Curriculum Resource Center (CRC)

.....EDCC 2.216 (956)665-2427
 Open Computer Labs, Copies, Supplies, Instructional Resources (State-adopted textbooks)

UTPA Testing Center

2412 Closner Blvd., Rm. 180.....(956)292-7584
 Webpage.....<http://www.utpa.edu/dept/testing>
 THEA, Quick THEA, Accuplacer, CLEP, TExES

Office of Services for Persons With Disabilities.....ESRH 1.101 (956)316-7005

Office of the Dean of Students/Student Judicial Affairs.....(956)381-2260
 Webpage.....<http://www.utpa.edu/dept/dos>

Texas Educator Websites:

State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC).....<http://www.sbec.state.tx.us/>
 Texas Education Agency (TEA).....<http://www.tea.state.tx.us/>
 TExES (Texas Education of Educator Standards).....<http://texas.ets.org/>
 PDAS Scoring Criteria Guide.....<http://www.esc13.net/statewide/pdas/Framework.pdf>

Texas Administrative Code

TITLE 19

EDUCATION

CHAPTER 228REQUIREMENTS FOR EDUCATOR
PREPARATION PROGRAMSPART 7STATE BOARD FOR EDUCATOR
CERTIFICATION

RULE §228.30

Educator Preparation Curriculum

(a) The educator standards adopted by the board shall be the curricular basis for all educator preparation and, for each certificate, address the relevant knowledge and skills adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to the Texas Education Code (TEC) §28.002(c)-(d). In addition, the preparation of all candidates for certification must include the specified requirements for reading instruction adopted by the Board for each certificate. Entities shall ensure that all preparation, including field-based experiences, comply with this subsection.

(b) Educator preparation entities shall provide evidence of on-going and relevant field-based experiences throughout the program, as determined by the collaborative, in a variety of educational settings with diverse student populations, including observation, modeling, and demonstration of promising practices to improve student learning.

(c) Prior to issuance of the Standard Certificate under Chapter 232, Subchapter A of this title (relating to the Types and Classes of Certificates Issued), the preparation program shall require all candidates for certification to complete a field-based practicum in the area and at the level for which the certificate is sought.

(1) Undergraduate teacher certification candidates, shall complete a minimum of 12 weeks of full-day teaching practicum. Supervision shall be conducted with the structured guidance and regular ongoing support of an experienced educator who has been trained as a mentor.

(2) Alternative routes to teacher certification shall provide a field-based practicum or internship that allows the candidate either to serve as teacher of record on a probationary certificate, in accordance with the conditions and requirements stipulated in §232.4 of this title for at least one school year, or to complete a teaching practicum comparable to that required in an undergraduate teacher certification program as described in this section. The internship shall include high quality professional development that is sustained, intensive, and classroom focused. Supervision shall be conducted with the structured guidance and regular ongoing support of an experienced educator who has been trained as a mentor.

(3) Programs preparing candidates for classes of certificates other than classroom teacher shall provide either a supervised field-based practicum or an internship that allows the candidate to serve as an educator on a probationary certificate in accordance with the conditions and requirements stipulated in §232.4 of this title, for candidates to develop and to demonstrate the knowledge and skills related to the certificate sought.

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<u>TITLE 19</u>	EDUCATION
<u>PART 7</u>	STATE BOARD FOR EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION
<u>CHAPTER 228</u>	REQUIREMENTS FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS
RULE §228.30	Educator Preparation Curriculum

(a) The educator standards adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) shall be the curricular basis for all educator preparation and, for each certificate, address the relevant Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).

(b) The curriculum for each educator preparation program shall rely on scientifically-based research to ensure teacher effectiveness and align to the TEKS. The following subject matter shall be included in the curriculum for candidates seeking initial certification:

- (1) the specified requirements for reading instruction adopted by the SBEC for each certificate;
- (2) the code of ethics and standard practices for Texas educators, pursuant to Chapter 247 of this title (relating to Educators' Code of Ethics);
- (3) child development;
- (4) motivation;
- (5) learning theories;
- (6) TEKS organization, structure, and skills;
- (7) TEKS in the content areas;
- (8) state assessment of students;
- (9) curriculum development and lesson planning;
- (10) classroom assessment for instruction/diagnosing learning needs;
- (11) classroom management/developing a positive learning environment;
- (12) special populations;
- (13) parent conferences/communication skills;
- (14) instructional technology;
- (15) pedagogy/instructional strategies;
- (16) differentiated instruction; and
- (17) certification test preparation.

Source Note: The provisions of this §228.30 adopted to be effective July 11, 1999, 24 TexReg 5011; amended to be effective October 12, 2003, 28 TexReg 8608; amended to be effective December 14, 2008, 33 TexReg 10016

Texas Administrative Code

TITLE 19 EDUCATION
PART 7 STATE BOARD FOR EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION
CHAPTER 228 REQUIREMENTS FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS
RULE §228.35 **Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training**

(a) Coursework and/or Training for Candidates Seeking Initial Certification.

(1) An educator preparation program shall provide coursework and/or training to ensure the educator is effective in the classroom.

(2) Professional development should be sustained, intensive, and classroom focused.

(3) An educator preparation program shall provide each candidate with a minimum of 300 clock-hours of coursework and/or training that includes the following:

(A) 30 clock-hours of field-based experience to be completed prior to student teaching, clinical teaching, or internship. Up to 15 clock-hours of field-based experience may be provided by use of electronic transmission, or other video or technology-based method. Use of technology must integrate the following:

(i) authentic classrooms in a public school accredited by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) or TEA-recognized private school;

(ii) instruction by content certified teachers;

(iii) actual students in classrooms with identity proof provisions;

(iv) content or grade level specific classrooms;

(v) variable time length of observation; and

(vi) reflection of the observation;

(B) 80 clock-hours of training prior to student teaching, clinical teaching, or internship; and

(C) six clock-hours of test preparation.

(4) All coursework and training shall be completed prior to educator preparation program completion and standard certification.

(5) With appropriate documentation, 50 clock-hours of training may be provided by a school district and/or campus that is an approved TEA continuing professional education provider.

(6) Each educator preparation program must develop and implement specific criteria and procedures that allow candidates to substitute experience and/or professional training directly related to the certificate being sought for part of the educator preparation requirements.

(b) Coursework and/or Training for Professional Certification (i.e. superintendent, principal, school counselor, school librarian, educational diagnostician, reading specialist, and/or master teacher). An educator preparation program shall provide coursework and/or training to ensure that the educator is effective in the professional assignment. An educator preparation program shall provide a candidate with a minimum of 200 clock-hours of coursework and/or training that is directly aligned to the state standards for the applicable certification field.

(c) Late Hires. A late hire for a teaching position shall complete 30 clock-hours of field-based experience as well as 80 clock-hours of initial training within 90 school days of assignment. Up to 15 clock-hours of field-based experience may be provided by use of electronic transmission, or other video or technology-based method. Use of technology must integrate the following:

(1) authentic classrooms in a public school accredited by the TEA or TEA-recognized private school;

(2) instruction by content certified teachers;

(3) actual students in classrooms with identity proof provisions;

(4) content or grade level specific classrooms;

(5) variable time length of observation; and

(6) reflection of the observation.

(d) Educator Preparation Program Delivery. An educator preparation entity shall provide evidence of on-going and relevant field-based experiences throughout the educator preparation program, as determined by the advisory committee as specified in §228.20 of this title (relating to Governance of Educator Preparation Programs), in a variety of educational settings with diverse student populations, including observation, modeling, and demonstration of effective practices to improve student learning.

Texas Administrative Code**TITLE 19****EDUCATION****PART 7****STATE BOARD FOR EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION****CHAPTER 228****REQUIREMENTS FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS****RULE §228.35****Preparation Program Coursework and/or Training**(2)
For

- (1) For initial certification, each educator preparation program shall also provide one of the following:
- (A) student teaching, as defined in §228.2 of this title, for a minimum of 12 weeks;
 - (B) clinical teaching, as defined in §228.2 of this title, for a minimum of 12 weeks; or
 - (C) internship, as defined in §228.2 of this title, for a minimum of one academic year (or 180 school days) for the assignment that matches the certification field for which the individual is accepted into the educator preparation program. The individual would hold a probationary certificate and be classified as a "teacher" as reported on the campus Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data. An educator preparation program may permit an internship of up to 30 school days less than the minimum if due to maternity leave, military leave, illness, or late hire date.
 - (i) An internship, student teaching, or clinical teaching for an Early Childhood-Grade 4 and Early Childhood-Grade 6 candidate may be completed at a Head Start Program with the following stipulations:
 - (I) the Head Start program is participating in either the School Readiness Integration (SRI) or the Texas Early Education Model (TEEM);
 - (II) a certified teacher is available as a trained mentor;
 - (III) the Head Start program is affiliated with a public school accredited by the TEA;
 - (IV) the Head Start program teaches three and four-year-old students; and
 - (V) the state's pre-kindergarten curriculum guidelines are being implemented.
 - (ii) An internship, student teaching, or clinical teaching experience may not be held in a distance learning lab setting.
- (3) For candidates seeking professional certification as a superintendent, principal, school counselor, school librarian, or an educational diagnostician, each educator preparation program shall provide a practicum, as defined in §228.2 of this title, for a minimum of 160 clock-hours.
- (e) Campus Mentors and Cooperating Teachers. In order to support a new educator and to increase teacher retention, an educator preparation program shall collaborate with the campus administrator to assign each candidate a campus mentor during his or her internship or assign a cooperating teacher during the candidate's student teaching or clinical teaching experience. The educator preparation program is responsible for providing mentor and/or cooperating teacher training that relies on scientifically-based research, but the program may allow the training to be provided by a school district, if properly documented.
- (f) On-Going Educator Preparation Program Support. 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. The initial contact with the assigned candidate must occur within the first three weeks of assignment. The program must provide a minimum of two formal observations during the first semester and one formal observation during the second semester. Each observation must be at least 45 minutes in duration and must be conducted by the field supervisor. The first observation must occur within the first six weeks of assignment. The field supervisor shall document instructional practices observed, provide written feedback through an interactive conference with the candidate, and provide a copy of the written feedback to the candidate's campus administrator. Informal observations and coaching shall be provided by the field supervisor as appropriate.

TITLE 19 EDUCATION
PART 7 STATE BOARD FOR EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION
CHAPTER 228 REQUIREMENTS FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION
PROGRAMS

RULE §228.60

Implementation Date

- (a) This chapter applies to an educator preparation program candidate who is admitted to an educator preparation program on or after January 1, 2009.
- (b) All provisions in this chapter shall apply to §232.5 of this title (relating to Temporary Teacher Certificates) upon the effective date of the rule actions adopted in this chapter, except that a certificate issued under §232.5 of this title shall require 380 total clock-hours of training.

Source Note: The provisions of this §228.60 adopted to be effective July 11, 1999, 24 TexReg 5011; amended to be effective December 14, 2008, 33 TexReg 10016

State Board of Educator Certification

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY (HOP Section 2.24)

TITLE 19 EDUCATION
PART 7 STATE BOARD FOR EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION
CHAPTER 247 EDUCATORS' CODE OF ETHICS
RULE §247.2 Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators

(a) Statement of Purpose. The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community.

(b) Enforceable Standards.

(1) Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performance.

(A) Standard 1.1. The educator shall not knowingly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district or educational institution.

(B) Standard 1.2. The educator shall not knowingly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

(C) Standard 1.3. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.

(D) Standard 1.4. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

(E) Standard 1.5. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.

(F) Standard 1.6. The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.

(G) Standard 1.7. The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other applicable state and federal laws.

(H) Standard 1.8. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.

State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC)

(2) Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues.

- (A) Standard 2.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- (B) Standard 2.2. The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.
- (C) Standard 2.3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.
- (D) Standard 2.4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.
- (E) Standard 2.5. The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability, or family status.
- (F) Standard 2.6. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.
- (G) Standard 2.7. The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC under this chapter.

(3) Ethical Conduct Toward Students.

- (A) Standard 3.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- (B) Standard 3.2. The educator shall not knowingly treat a student in a manner that adversely affects the student's learning, physical health, mental health, or safety.
- (C) Standard 3.3. The educator shall not deliberately or knowingly misrepresent facts regarding a student.
- (D) Standard 3.4. The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, sex, disability, national origin, religion, or family status.
- (E) Standard 3.5. The educator shall not engage in physical mistreatment of a student.
- (F) Standard 3.6. The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student.
- (G) Standard 3.7. The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized **drugs to any student or knowingly allow any student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.**

Source Note: The provisions of this §247.2 adopted to be effective March 1, 1998, 23 TexReg 1022; amended to be effective August 22, 2002, 27 TexReg 7530

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) Rules

“The rules adopted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) are part of a larger body of state agency rules that are collected and published by the Office of the Secretary of State as the Texas Administrative Code (TAC). THECB's rules are codified under Title 19, Part I, of the TAC. Title 19 is Education, and Part I is the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The THECB may adopt new rules or amendments to existing rules,” according to Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Available at <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/Rules/default.cfm>).

Chapter 21 Educational Aide Exemption Program

§21.1088 Exemption from Student Teaching

- (a) An individual who receives a bachelor's degree required for a teaching certificate on the basis of higher education coursework completed while receiving an award through this subchapter shall not be required by his or her institution to participate in any field experience or internship consisting of student teaching as a requirement to receive a teaching certificate.
- (b) An individual who receives a bachelor's degree prior to receiving his or her first award under this subchapter is not eligible for a student teaching exemption under subsection (a) of this section.
- (c) A person who receives a bachelor's degree required for a teaching certificate on the basis of higher education coursework completed while receiving an exemption from tuition and fees under this subchapter may not be required to participate in any field experience or internship consisting of student teaching to receive a teaching certificate.

Source Note: *The provisions of this §21.1088 adopted to be effective August 16, 2004, 29 TexReg 7980; amended to be effective November 19, 2006, 31 TexReg 9291; amended to be effective May 21, 2008, 33 TexReg 3943*

Learner-Centered Schools for Texas: Proficiencies for Teachers

Adopted by the State Board of Education in February 1994. These proficiencies guide pre-service preparation, professional development, and teacher appraisal practices for teachers in Texas. *The Learner-Centered Proficiencies for Texas Teachers* articulate a vision of a learning community in which success for students is paramount. These proficiencies reflect the desire of educators to work together to build learner-centered schools in which all educators and students are focused on learning (TAC RULE §150.1002).

PROFICIENCY #1 Learner Centered Knowledge

The teacher possesses and draws on a rich knowledge base of content, pedagogy, and technology to provide relevant and meaningful learning experiences for all students.

PROFICIENCY #2 Learner Centered Instruction

To create a learner-centered community, the teacher collaboratively identifies needs; and plans, implements, and assesses instruction using technology and other resources.

PROFICIENCY #3 Equity in Excellence for all Learners

The teacher responds appropriately to diverse groups of learners.

PROFICIENCY #4 Learner Centered Communication

While acting as an advocate for all students and the school, the teacher demonstrates effective professional and interpersonal communication skills.

PROFICIENCY #5 Learner Centered Professional Development

The teacher, as a reflective practitioner dedicated to all students' success demonstrates a commitment to learn, to improve the profession, and to maintain professional ethics and personal integrity



The University of Texas Pan American COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

STUDENT FITNESS TO TEACH POLICY

(Approved August 2008)

The College of Education offers a field-based curriculum in teacher preparation programs designed to academically prepare individuals for the teaching profession. However, satisfying the program requirements alone do not make a candidate eligible for the University of Texas – Pan American (UTPA) to recommend the candidate for Texas teacher certification. All teacher candidates in UTPA teacher preparation programs are expected to demonstrate that they are prepared to teach children and youth. This preparation results from the combination of successful completion of University coursework, successful field experiences, and the demonstration of required professional dispositions that all teachers should possess.

A. Required Documentation

Prior to admission to the Teacher Preparation Program (TPP), all teacher candidates will receive a copy of the student Fitness to Teach Policy (FTP) and other related forms. The policy and forms may be obtained in the COE Office of Teacher Certification and Admissions Services or online. The applicant subsequently schedules an initial meeting with an academic advisor. The FTP will be explained during students' Teacher Induction and Orientation. This policy applies to students upon enrollment in coursework and remains until successful completion of all program requirements and student teaching.

1. In October and March, a reminder will be sent to faculty to use the recommendation forms for *Identification of Outstanding TPP Students* or the *Probationary Status Process Form*. Faculty may submit either form at any time prior to or during the professional level courses.
2. The completion of these forms will allow the College of Education to identify teacher candidates who display outstanding knowledge and/or skills that deserve recognition. Forms will also identify students who may have some difficulties that raise concerns about the candidate's chances of successfully finishing the program. All forms completed will be sent to the Program Coordinator or Department Chair.

B. Fitness To Teach Criteria

In addition to curriculum and testing requirements addressed in the UTPA catalog and other program information provided, all TPP teacher candidates will be screened throughout their program according to the criteria addressed in this policy. If all criteria are not met satisfactorily, teach candidates may be denied full acceptance into the Teacher Education Program and/or denied the opportunity to student teach. Without unconditional acceptance into the TPP and successful completion of student teaching or its equivalent, the University will not recommend teacher candidates for Texas Teacher Certification. All teacher candidates referred for review are expected to participate in the process. Refusal to participate will not terminate the process.

1. Completed Criminal History Review

An examination of each teacher candidate's criminal history will be conducted by UTPA pursuant to HOP 6.7.6. In addition, an ISD's or other field-based entity may require a student to undergo a criminal background check and may deny placement of students with a criminal background. The student's clearance for fieldwork is the prerogative of the ISD or participating entity and not UTPA. If a student is unable to obtain a field-based placement, he/she will not meet UTPA's program requirements.

2. Academic Requirements

A. Scholastic Integrity

The teacher candidate must demonstrate honesty and integrity by being truthful about background, experiences, and qualifications; doing one's own work; giving credit for the ideas of others; and providing proper citation of source materials. (See HOP policy 5.2.1)

B. Communication Skills

The teacher candidate must demonstrate sufficient written and oral skills to comprehend information and communicate ideas and feelings.

(1) *Written*: Writes clearly, uses correct grammar and spelling. Demonstrates sufficient skills in written English to understand content presented in the program and to complete all written assignments as specified by faculty.

(2) *Oral*: Communicates effectively with other students, faculty, staff, and professionals. Expresses ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrate willingness and an ability to listen to others. Demonstrates sufficient skills in spoken English to understand content presented in the program, to complete adequately all oral assignments, and to meet the objectives of field placement experiences, as specified by faculty.

C. Admission criteria are found in *UTPA's Undergraduate Catalog or online*.

3. Required Professional Dispositions

A. A teacher candidate must not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

B. Teacher candidates must demonstrate interpersonal skills that are required for successful professional teaching. These skills include:

(1) an openness to accepting and considering unfamiliar ways of teaching;

(2) the ability to accept and act upon constructive criticism, enthusiasm for working collegially;

- (3) the ability to understand others' perspectives about teaching, and the ability to separate personal and professional issues;
 - (4) the display of professional attitudes toward faculty colleagues and students; and
 - (5) the disposition to act always for the benefit of all students.
- C. The teacher candidate must not sexually harass others; make verbal or physical threats; become involved in sexual relationships with their students, supervisors, or faculty; abuse others in physical emotional, verbal, or sexual ways.
- D. Teacher candidates must attend class and all field experiences as expected. Punctuality is expected at all times.
- E. Teacher candidates must demonstrate positive personal hygiene habits.
- F. Teacher candidates must dress appropriately for their professional context.
- G. Teacher candidates must adhere to the requirements of HOP 5.5.1. and HOP 5.5.2 Student Conduct Code.

4. Cultural and Social Attitudes and Behavior

- A. Teacher candidates must exhibit respect for superiors, peers, children and youth.
- B. Teacher candidates should appreciate the value of diversity and look beyond self in interactions with others; respect differences of race, ethnicity, religion, and social class, national allegiance, and cultural heritage. Teachers must not impose personal, religious, sexual and or cultural values on others.
- C. Teacher candidates must exhibit acceptance of and provide accommodations for exceptional learners.
- D. Teacher candidates must be able to work productively with their peers.
- E. Teacher candidates must be able to speak in a manner appropriate to the context of the classroom.
- F. Teacher candidates must demonstrate positive social skills in professional and social interactions with faculty, colleagues, parents, and students.

5. Emotional and Mental Abilities

A. Stress Management

The teacher must demonstrate the ability to deal with current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms. He or she must handle stress effectively

by using appropriate self-care and developing supportive relationships with colleagues, peers, and others.

B. Emotional and Mental Capabilities

The teacher must use sound judgment. He or she must seek and effectively use help for medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance.

C. Cognitive Disposition

(1) Teachers must think analytically about educational issues.

(2) Teachers must be reflective about their practice.

(3) Teachers must be flexible, open to new ideas, and willing and able to modify their beliefs and practices.

(4) Throughout their teacher training, pre-service teachers are encouraged to question and test their assumptions about teaching and schooling.

6. Accommodations

A. The teacher candidate must exhibit motor and sensory abilities to attend and participate in class and practicum placements, and will observe all accommodations as recommended by the Office of Services for Persons with Disabilities (OSPD) in accordance with HOP 2.2.3 Policy Concerning Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities.

B. No otherwise qualified teacher candidate shall, on the basis of disability, be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation in the TPP. A teacher candidate with a disability may be protected by Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and be eligible for a reasonable accommodation that will provide an equal opportunity to meet the academic criteria related to professional behavior and scholastic performance.

C. Any otherwise qualified teacher candidate with a qualified disability who requests a reasonable accommodation must notify the OSPD and provide documentation as needed. The OSPD makes final decisions regarding accommodations. In accordance with HOP 2.2.3. Section F.2. appeal through the Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services is final.

An initial assessment, subsequent plans, use of outside experts (including the OSPD), and periodic checks between the committee and the teacher candidate are appropriate courses of action in making accommodations.

C. The Fitness to Teach Process at UTPA

All teacher candidates at UTPA will be provisionally admitted to the Teacher Preparation Program upon application and meeting all admission criteria. Each department or division has the right to establish higher requirements provided that the higher requirement is published in the catalog or online. Throughout the program, a student may either continue on provisional status or be placed on probationary status. Refer to the Fitness to Teach Flowchart.

(1) Continue on Provisional Status

Student Teacher Interns successfully meeting all program requirements will continue on Provisional Status until they successfully complete Internship II.

(2) Probationary Status at UTPA

Teacher candidates in the Teacher Preparation Program will be placed on probationary status if there is an outstanding negative outcome Fitness to Teach review (Level 1 or 2 Formal Review) that a candidate has not successfully remedied and/or the teacher candidate has failed to earned a grade of “C” or better in any block courses. The grade of “C” represents a minimum standard.

D. Teacher Candidate Review Process

All teacher candidates referred for review are expected to participate in the process. Refusal to participate will not terminate the process. The level of review will depend on factors such as the nature, severity, frequency of the incident or concern. For example, repeated violations may result in immediate Formal Level 2 review. Violations of the UTPA or host school district’s student code of conduct will result in immediate Level 2 Formal Review.

(1) Initial Review

An informal review involves a faculty member and a teacher candidate. When a faculty member has concerns about a teacher candidate meeting any of the fitness to teach criteria, the faculty member will

- A. discuss the concerns directly with the teacher candidate and seek to work with the candidate to resolve the difficulties;
- B. advise the appropriate Program Coordinator, Department Chair, and/or Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies of the concern(s) in order to identify potential patterns and issues related to the teacher candidate;
- C. document dates and content of meetings with teacher candidates; and
- D. if a problem arises in the field, the cooperating teacher of the host school district may discuss concerns directly with the UTPA faculty member. The teacher candidate may also be included in this meeting.

When a faculty member is sufficiently concerned about a teacher candidate's fitness to teach, he or she will fill out the *Probationary Status Process Form*. This form is to be turned in to the Program Coordinator, Department Chair, and/or Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

A conference will then be scheduled with the instructor, the teacher candidate, and the Program Coordinator, Department Chair, and/or Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies. During the conference, a plan for remediation will be developed. The nature and content of the plan will depend on the specific situation. However, all remediation plans will be stated in measurable, objective terms, include a reasonable timeline, and be signed by all parties involved. If the candidate fails the remediation plan(s) he/she will be placed on Level 2 Formal Review. If the candidate successfully completes the remediation plan, probationary status will be removed. The remediation plan may continue for more than one semester, depending on individual circumstances.

(3) Formal Review: Level 2

If a second incident or concern is reported on the same teacher candidate, or if the candidate has failed a remediation plan during the Level 1 Review or the seriousness of the incident or concern warrants it, the student may then pursue his or her appeal from an academic responsibility issue in accordance with HOP 5.2.1 or an appeal from any other decision pursuant to Regents' Rules 50101.

E. Conditions for Enrollment in Internship II/Student Teaching

The Office of Field Experiences (OFE) will review all teacher candidates for admission into Internship II/Student Teaching Program. In accordance with Texas Education Code 22.083, an examination of each teacher candidate's criminal history will be conducted before student teaching. Criminal history record information, which includes both conviction and arrest records, are obtained. An ISD may deny placement of students with a criminal background. The student's clearance for field work is the prerogative of the ISD and not UTPA. *It is solely at the discretion of the ISD to accept a student teacher with a criminal background.* If a student is unable to obtain a field-based placement, he/she will not meet UTPA's requirements for recommendation for teacher certification. A current negative TB test must be provided with application. Internship II/Student Teaching applications will be evaluated for all teacher candidates using the following requirements:

- (1) Successfully complete all respective program requirements (including field experience hours, portfolio, etc);
- (2) Be within 12 hours of graduation (may be missing six hours on degree plus student teaching coursework 4399 and 4398);
- (3) Pass respective TExES content exams (*for elementary program students only*);
- (4) Complete all education coursework (interdisciplinary area/academic major **and** minor/academic specialization) with a minimum of 2.50 GPA in respective major **and** minor; and
- (5) Have a cumulative 2.50 GPA on an official degree plan.

F. Conditions for Completion of Student Teaching/Internship II

Upon acceptance to Internship II, the student successfully meeting all program requirements, as stated in *Internship II/Student Teaching Handbook*, will continue on Provisional Status as a Student Teacher

Intern. During Internship II, a student not successfully meeting all program requirements may be placed on Probationary Status by the Director of the Office of Field Experiences in consultation with the university supervisor. If placed on Probationary status, the student will be placed on a Growth Intervention Plan. This affords the student an opportunity to clear his or her status. While on Probationary Status, if the student does not demonstrate progress, he or she may be dropped from the program. However, in cases of serious legal and ethical violations, the Office of Field Experiences in consultation with the OFE Advisory Council reserves the right to remove a student from a classroom and drop a student from Internship II. The student has the right to appeal at any phase of this process.

Completion of Internship II (student teaching) is a condition for meeting Texas teacher certification requirements. Students may attempt Internship II a maximum of two times. If a student does not successfully complete the second Internship II experience, he or she will not be eligible to enroll a third time. The student has the right to appeal in accordance with HOP 5.2.1

