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Teacher Preparation Program

From the Desk of…….

The Associate Dean for Teacher Education

Welcome to the UTSA Teacher Preparation Program!

Preparing teachers and education professionals for successful careers in a wide range of specialties is a major goal of the UTSA teacher preparation program. The certificate programs build teacher candidates’ professional competence, develop a global educational perspective, create cultural competence for classroom teaching in a diverse society, and foster a love of learning that lasts a lifetime.

UTSA’s teacher preparation program is distinguished by rigorous course work, reflective engagement with public school teachers and students, experienced and knowledgeable faculty and staff, and a commitment to fashioning teacher leaders who will make a difference in the world.

This Teacher Preparation Program Handbook is intended as an overview of the policies and procedures that inform our program for those who are interested in pursuing a career as a teacher. Choosing a career in education should not be a decision made lightly. The Handbook is designed to help you understand what is involved in following a path to teacher certification. There is much involved in this process that will demand a total commitment on your part if you want to achieve your goal of becoming a teacher. This Handbook is intended to help you navigate through the academic and certification requirements for your chosen profession.

The UTSA Teacher Preparation Program faculty and staff wish you much success as you complete your program for teacher certification.

With every best wish,
Dr. Blanche Desjean-Perrotta
**Mission Statement**
The University of Texas at San Antonio is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge through research and discovery, teaching and learning, community engagement, and public service. As an institution of access and excellence, UTSA embraces multicultural traditions, serving as a center for intellectual and creative resources as well as a catalyst for socioeconomic development – for Texas, the nation and the world.

**Vision Statement**
To be a premier public research university, providing access to educational excellence and preparing citizen leaders for the global environment.

**Teacher Preparation Program Mission Statement**
Within the context of the University’s mission, the mission of the COEHD Teacher Preparation Program is to prepare teacher leaders who are knowledgeable and creative thinkers, are pedagogically competent, who value diversity, are reflective decision-makers, and who are committed to working for a just and equitable world for all children.

Faculty, staff, university supervisors, cooperating teachers, and teacher candidates endeavor to accomplish this in an environment where the values of the mission statement are modeled, practiced, and developed through authentic experiences in the classroom and beyond, and where the integration of these values in both personal and professional life is solidified through a lifelong commitment to the teaching profession.
Admission Procedures

Criteria for Admission for Undergraduates

Undergraduates seeking elementary teacher certification must complete the Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies degree as outlined in the UTSA Undergraduate Catalog. Individuals seeking secondary certification should complete the bachelor’s degree requirements in their academic specialization while coordinating with the COEHD Advising and Certification Center to fulfill certification requirements.

UTSA is approved by the State Board for Educator Certification to recommend teacher candidates for teaching certificates in various baccalaureate degree areas. Teacher candidates seeking a standard teaching certificate or seeking certification endorsements should apply for admission to the certification program through the College of Education and Human Development (COEHD) Advising and Certification Center. Applicants may be either degree-seeking or special students.

Specific information regarding admission requirements to the Teacher Certification undergraduate certification programs may be obtained in the COEHD Advising and Certification Center. Requirements for admission to the undergraduate Teacher Preparation Program include:

a. attaining junior standing (60 semester credit hours) with at least nine hours completed at UTSA;

b. completing all core requirements with a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or better (Music Teacher candidates: See a certification advisor);

c. having a Cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5 or better;

d. submitting authorization for a Texas Department of Public Safety criminal background report. UTSA teacher candidates must submit to a criminal history check every semester they interact directly with any minor(s) or legal adult(s) of diminished capacity. Teacher candidates who are unable to provide a clear criminal background check may not be able to complete the Teacher Certification Program. In accordance with Article 6252-13c, Texas Civil Statutes, the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) may suspend or revoke a teacher certificate or refuse to issue a teacher certificate for 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 profession.
e. achieving minimum passing scores designated by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board on one of these assessments: Texas Higher Education Assessment (THEA); ASSET; COMPASS; or ACCUPLACER.

f. earning a grade of "C" or better in WRC 1013 and 1023.

**Process for Admission**

Once you have determined you meet the admissions criteria for the Teacher Certification Preparation Program, the next step is to apply for admission to the program. The admissions process begins with viewing the Teacher Certification Information Tutorial online and then taking a quick quiz. For instructions on how to apply please visit the following link:

http://coehd.utsa.edu/Students/Advising/forms/ASAP_Online_Instructions.pdf

Once you have completed the tutorial successfully, you will be directed to fill out an online application to the program. The tutorials can be accessed at the following website:

EC-6, 4-8 and Special Education view:
http://coehd.utsa.edu/Students/advising/March%20Online%20tutorials/undergradIDS/undergradIDS/undergradIDS.html

Secondary, All Level Health, All Level PE, All Level Music, All Level Art view:
http://coehd.utsa.edu/Students/advising/March%20Online%20tutorials/Undergrad_SEC/undergradSEC/undergradSEC.html

Once you have processed your application, an advisor in the COEHD advising office will review your application and notify you of your status regarding acceptance into the program. Once you have been accepted into the program, you will then be able to register for program courses restricted to teacher education candidates.

**Restricted Courses**

Certain courses in the teacher preparation programs are labeled “restricted”. This means that once you have been accepted into the Teacher Preparation Program, these course restrictions will be lifted and you will be able to register for these courses and complete your program. Please speak with an advisor about these restricted courses and refer to the UTSA undergraduate catalog for further information regarding restricted courses for your particular certification program.

**Process for Retention**

Once admitted, teacher candidates must maintain a 2.5 GPA and above throughout the program. Teacher candidates are also carefully assessed throughout the teacher preparation program for teaching dispositions as well as teaching skills and successful course completion. Candidates who fall below the 2.5 GPA requirement will be put on probation for one semester. If a candidate’s
GPA continues to fall below the required GPA or other issues arise concerning a candidate’s fitness to teach, the teacher candidate may be dismissed from the program. (See Fitness to Teach Policy under Policies below).

**Teacher Certification Program Options**

UTSA offers 39 different teacher certifications and a variety of avenues for certification. Teacher candidates can receive teacher certification as an undergraduate through a traditional four-year degree program. Graduate students have the option of certifying through a post-baccalaureate program or a Master’s degree program.

A complete listing of undergraduate degree programs with certification can be found at the following link:
http://coehd.utsa.edu/certification_program

A complete listing of the post-baccalaureate certifications can be found at the following link:
http://coehd.utsa.edu/certification_program/Post_Baccalaureate_Certification_Plans/

**Educational Aide Program Requirements**

UTSA does not offer a separate teacher certification preparation program for Educational Aides. However, the UTSA Policies for Educational Aides has made some accommodations for Educational Aides who work full time to help them complete their program requirements for courses with a field work component. Please visit the following link and read the information carefully about the policies related to Educational Aides in the teacher preparation program.
http://coehd.utsa.edu/certification_program/educational_aide_policy/

**TExES Exams for Teacher Certification**

**Practice Exam and Review Requirements for all content areas**

Teacher candidates are required to take the practice exam in their certification area before they will be approved to sit for the certification exams. Teacher candidates usually take two exams, the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) exam, and a content area exam. Following is information regarding the specific exams related to each certification area. All teacher candidates seeking Teacher Certification will be required to take a Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) Practice Exam that matches their certification grade level.
When the PPR Practice Test and the PPR Review requirements have been met, teacher candidates may register for the state PPR TExES exam.

Teacher candidates who are designated as “program completers”, that is, they have completed all coursework and teacher candidate teaching requirements, may register for more than one state exam per test date.

Teacher candidates may complete the required Practice Tests and required Review Sessions in either order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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| EC-6 Generalist and EC-6 Bilingual Generalist Also includes: | ➢ One Practice Test for Generalist content and attendance at one Generalist content Review Session
➢ One Practice Test for Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities and attendance at one PPR Review Session
➢ Recommended -EC-6 PPR or EC-12 PPR may be taken in place of the EC-6 PPR |
➢ EC-6 Generalist with Bilingual Supplemental
➢ EC-6 Generalist with ESL Supplemental |

**Note:** EC-6 Bilingual Generalist teacher candidates may take the required Texas Oral Proficiency Test (TOPT) once they are admitted to the Teacher Certification Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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| 4-8 Generalist, 4-8 Bilingual Generalist; 4-8 ELAR/S.S.; 4-8 Math/Science Also includes: | ➢ One Practice Test for 4-8 Generalist
➢ One Practice Test for Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities and attendance at one PPR Review Session
➢ Recommended Practice Test: 4-8 PPR or EC-12 PPR may be taken in place of the 4-8 PPR |
➢ 4-8 Generalist with ESL Supplemental,
➢ 4-8 Generalist with Bilingual Supplemental |

**Note:** 4-8 Bilingual Generalist teacher candidates may take the required Texas Oral Proficiency Test (TOPT) once they are admitted to the Teacher Certification Program.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6-12 ExCET and 8-12 TExES</td>
<td>➢ One content area Practice Test if being certified in one of the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mathematics 8-12</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• History 8-12</td>
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<tr>
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<td>• English,</td>
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<td>• Language Arts,</td>
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<td>• Reading 8-12</td>
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<td>• Science 8-12</td>
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<td>• Physical Science 8-12</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Life Science 8-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Social Studies 8-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ One Practice Test for Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities and attendance at one PPR Review Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Recommended: 8-12 PPR or EC-12 PPR may be taken in place of the 8-12 PPR</td>
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</table>

When a content area Practice Test requirement has been met, teacher candidates may register for the state TExES exam.

Teacher candidates are not required to take a content area Practice Test if they are being certified in one of the following: Spanish, French, Speech, German, or Technology Applications.

Teacher candidates who are not required to take a content area Practice Test may register for the state content ExCET/TExES exam once all content coursework has been completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Education &amp; Generalist/Special Education</td>
<td>➢ One Practice Test for EC-12 Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Also includes:</td>
<td>➢ One Practice Test for EC-12 Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities and attendance at one PPR Review Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ EC-12 Special Education;</td>
<td>➢ State Exams – EC-12 Special Education and EC-12 PPR</td>
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<tr>
<td>➢ EC-6 Generalist and EC-12 Special Education;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ 4-8 Generalist and EC-12 Special Education</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Certification Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **EC-6 Generalist /EC-12 Special Education** | ➢ One Practice Test for EC-6 Generalist  
➤ One Practice Test for EC-12 Special Education  
➤ One Practice Test for EC-12 Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities and attendance at one PPR Review Session  
➤ State Exams – EC-6 Generalist, EC-12 Special Education and EC-12 PPR |
| **4-8 Generalist /EC-12 Special Education** | ➢ One Practice Test for 4-8 Generalist  
➤ One Practice Test for EC-12 Special Education  
➤ One Practice Test for EC-12 Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities and attendance at one PPR Review Session  
➤ State Exams-4-8 Generalist, EC-12 Special Education and EC-12 PPR |
| **EC-12 (All-level) Content**        | ➢ One Practice Test for EC-12 Special Education  
➤ One Practice Test for Physical Education EC-12  
➤ One Practice Test for Music EC-12  
➤ One Practice Test for Health EC-12  
➤ One Practice Test for Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities EC-12 and attendance at one PPR Review Session |

If a Practice Test becomes available for a content area that currently does not have a Practice Test, then it will be required.

Teacher candidates may register for the state content TExES exam once they have completed the Review Session and Practice Test requirements.
*Note*: Teacher candidates may complete the required Practice Tests and required Review Session in either order.

When the PPR Practice Test and the PPR Review requirements have been met, teacher candidates may register for the state TExES exam.

**How to register for Practice exams:**

**On-line Registration Instructions For TExES Practice Exams**

STEP 1: Go to UTSA’s homepage: [www.utsa.edu](http://www.utsa.edu)
STEP 2: Log on to Banner ASAP
STEP 3: Click on the “Student Services and Financial Aid” icon
STEP 4: Click on the “TExES Practice Exams Registration” icon
STEP 5: Click on the “Register for Pre-Orientation TEST Session” icon.
STEP 6: Click on the “TExES Practice Exam” icon.
STEP 7: Choose the exam you want to take, click on the circle in the “Select Test” column, and click on the “Submit” button.

**Practice Exam and Review Schedules:**
Schedules are available by semester from the TExES Office, MB 0.500 or the UTSA TExES website:
[http://coehd.utsa.edu/texes](http://coehd.utsa.edu/texes)

**Practice Exams**
It is recommended that all Teacher Certification teacher candidates begin taking TExES Practice Exams once they have been admitted to the UTSA Certification Program.

- Teacher candidates with an area of certification listed under “ExCET” will not be required to take a content Practice Exam.
- Teacher candidates with an area of certification listed under “TExES” will be required to take a content Practice Exam, if one is available.

**Reviews**
New review sessions are being developed for various content areas and levels. Check the TExES website and Student Services Newsletter for availability.
[http://coehd.utsa.edu/texes](http://coehd.utsa.edu/texes)

- Teacher candidates seeking certification in EC-6 Generalist and EC-6 Bilingual Generalist are required to attend the Generalist review.
- All teacher candidates are required to attend one PPR Review Session.
Approval to Test (take the state exam)
Teacher candidates may only register for exams that correspond to their area of certification through UTSA.

- Teacher candidates may attend a review and take a Practice Exam in either order.
- Teacher candidates will be eligible to register for one state exam after the Practice Exam and Review Session requirements have been met, when applicable.
- All Eligibility Forms for “approval to test” must be submitted to the TExES Office no later than 3 days prior to an ETS scheduled registration deadline.
- The TExES Director will determine if the teacher candidate has met the UTSA requirements for “approval to test”. The teacher candidate will be approved through the SBEC online approval process.

Acquiring Additional Certificates
A teacher candidate may register for additional teaching certificates if:

- they have completed all UTSA course requirements,
- passed the required state exams for their initial certification,
- and applied for and received certification with SBEC,

The route to additional certification then becomes “by exam”.
See the SBEC website for guidelines: [www.sbec.state.tx.us](http://www.sbec.state.tx.us)

TEA ID NUMBER & STATE EXAM REGISTRATION
All teacher candidates seeking certification through UTSA are required to have “approval to test” before they may register for their certification exam(s).

Teacher candidates must submit an Eligibility Form to the TExES Office, MB 0.500 or fax to 458-5794, before they will be approved to take an exam in the SBEC system.

TEA ID Number: Teacher candidates will create an Educator Profile with SBEC for a TEA ID Number or make corrections to an existing profile by going to: [www.sbec.state.tx.us](http://www.sbec.state.tx.us)

1) To login, click on “SBEC Online for Educators” at the top of the page
2) Teacher candidates who need to create an Educator Profile, click on “New User, Create a New Account”

3) Provide all information requested and print a copy for your records. Write down your TEA ID Number.

**Exam Approval Status**

1) To check exam approval status, go to: [www.sbec.state.tx.us](http://www.sbec.state.tx.us) and click on “SBEC Online for Educators”. Login and click on “View Examinations”

2) “Approval to test” will only be granted to teacher candidates that have successfully completed UTSA eligibility requirements prior to submitting the Eligibility Form. Only “program completers” may register for more than one exam per test date.

3) Allow 3 business days for your request to be processed by SBEC.

   **PLEASE NOTE THAT UTSA DOES NOT NOTIFY TEACHER CANDIDATES WHEN THEY HAVE BEEN APPROVED.**

**State Exam Registration:** Register for all paper-based tests (PBT) and computer administered tests (CAT) online with ETS: [www.texas.ets.org](http://www.texas.ets.org)

1) Teacher candidates must always submit an Eligibility Form to the TExES Director to request “approval to test” for a state exam.

2) Once approved, follow the “Quick Start” directions for setting up an ETS account or registering for an exam. It is helpful to print the directions.

3) Use the same TEA ID Number each time you register for a state exam.

4) It is recommended that teacher candidates register for exams early in order to reserve a seat in a preferred location. Print a copy of your Admission Ticket.

Go to the UTSA TExES website to find answers to your questions~ [http://coehd.utsa.edu/texes](http://coehd.utsa.edu/texes)

 **ETS contact for teacher candidates with questions~ 1-866-902-5922**

**TExES/ExCET Eligibility Form**

- Forms are available in the TExES Office MB 0.500 or from the UTSA TExES website.
Teacher candidates seeking “approval to test” must submit an Eligibility Form to the TExES Office MB 0.500 or by fax 210-458-5794 for processing at least 3 days prior to the ETS printed deadline*

An Eligibility Form must be submitted each time a teacher candidate requests “approval to test”.

Teacher candidates will enroll for only one exam per administration.

*Social Security numbers are required for state reporting purposes only. All Eligibility Forms are secured and will be destroyed after each test administration.

Or

Mail-in registration bulletins are available online at ETS- www.texas.ets.org

Field Experiences

Field experience courses provide the teacher candidate with the opportunity to observe in public school classrooms and to begin developing teaching skills through course assignments. Teacher candidates in field experience courses spend anywhere from 10-45 hours a semester in field work in assigned schools. Courses with required field experience assignments are listed in the course catalog as well as in the course schedule on ASAP. It is important that teacher candidates note courses with a field experience assignment as this may impact scheduling of other courses in a semester.

Field-based courses take field experiences one step further. Field-based courses are taught on site at public schools. During this time teacher candidates are usually placed in a school for one full day of field work and course work. Teacher candidates prepare and teach lessons, tutor students one-on-one, develop classroom management skills, and participate in the school activities as much as possible. Field-based courses are intended to prepare teacher candidates for the next phase of their professional development – student teaching. Field-based courses are identified in the course catalog as well as in the course schedule on ASAP.

Student teaching is the capstone experience of the teacher preparation program. It is a semester-long opportunity to practice teaching skills under the supervision of a mentor teacher and a university supervisor. Teacher candidates are placed in a classroom for a full semester, five days a week, where they gradually assume the duties and responsibilities of a classroom teacher. The student teaching semester is a unique opportunity to develop and strengthen
teaching skills and dispositions and to become familiar with all facets of the teaching profession.

**Transportation for Field Assignments**
Candidates are responsible for their own transportation to field placements, including student teaching. An attempt is made to cluster field assignments whenever possible to facilitate car pooling and minimize fuel expenses.

**Student Teaching**
It is expected and required by the State Board of Educator Certification that the student teaching component of the certification program will be completed through UTSA in the state of Texas.

**Criteria for acceptance into Student Teaching**
Teacher candidates are eligible to student teach when the following requirements are met:
- admission to the Teacher Certification program
- completion of all prerequisite courses, including completion of the Professional Education coursework
- a 2.5 cumulative grade point average on all college work applied to the degree plan

Student teaching applicants should consult their advisor and their catalog for specific details regarding their eligibility.

**Applying for the Student Teaching Semester**
A meeting is held early in the semester prior to the student teaching semester to explain the application process and procedures. Student teaching applications are distributed and questions are answered at the meeting. The meeting dates, times and places are announced on the “Latest News-Future Student Teachers” link on the student teaching website, [http://coehd.utsa.edu/student_teaching](http://coehd.utsa.edu/student_teaching)

**Application Deadlines**

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<tr>
<th>To Student Teach in the</th>
<th>Application Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>February 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>October 1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Approximately six weeks after the deadline to apply for student teaching, teacher candidates may pick up a Student Teaching Packet from the Student Teaching office, MB 0.500, or the Packet may be downloaded from the Student Teaching
website. The Packet contains important information about the student teaching semester.

If an applicant does not meet the criteria for acceptance to the student teaching program, he or she will receive a letter denying the application to student teach. Denial letters will be mailed after the close of the semester prior to the student teaching semester. The letter will explain the reason why an applicant has been denied for student teaching.

**Placing Candidates**
UTSA works with the Human Resources Departments of most school districts in the San Antonio area to place student teachers. **Placements are not available in private schools or charter schools.** Student teacher applicants will be given a list of available school districts and will be asked to indicate school district preference.

Student teachers will meet with the Director of Student Teaching on the first day of class. At that meeting, student teaching placement information, including the name of the assigned school and cooperating teacher, will be provided. An announcement of the time and place of the meeting will be on the Student Teaching website.

**Requirements for Student Teaching**
The student teaching semester is a full time commitment. Student teachers who commit themselves only to student teaching have a more successful semester than those who are obligated to jobs or other classes. Beginning with the first day of class, student teachers are expected to be available during daytime hours which correspond to those of the public schools, approximately 7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Whenever possible, student teachers are also expected to be in attendance at evening events such as PTA meetings and at school sponsored weekend activities such as fairs and athletic events.

Student teachers are strongly discouraged from working and/or taking additional classes during the student teaching semester. Under no circumstances will student teachers be permitted to enroll in additional coursework during the student teaching semester that exceeds six semester credit hours or in classes that meet during the regular instruction day.

**Conditions for Completion of Student Teaching/Internship**
Successful completion of student teaching/internship is a condition for meeting teacher certification requirements. Teacher candidates may attempt student teaching/internship a maximum of two times. If the teacher candidate does not successfully complete the second student teaching experience, they will not be eligible to enroll in student teaching a third time. The teacher candidate may appeal to the Fitness to Teach Council to be reinstated only in the case of documented extenuating circumstances.
Post-Baccalaureate Internships
The UTSA College of Education and Human Development offers the internship as an option to teacher certification students who have extensive experience in a public or private school setting as instructional aides or as substitute teachers in permanent, long-term positions. The COEHD faculty, however, feels strongly that the best preparation for prospective teachers is student teaching. The supportive environment typical of a student teaching placement cannot be duplicated with an internship. Therefore, UTSA teacher candidates are strongly encouraged to complete student teaching, since it is the better option for the majority of students.

Contact a COEHD certification advisor for information about the internship semester and the requirements for eligibility at 458-4424.

Process for Applying for Certification

APPLYING FOR YOUR INITIAL CERTIFICATE
Applications for all Texas Educator Certificates are now made online at the State Board for Educator Certification website.

1. Go to the SBEC website [www.sbec.state.tx.us] and click on the link to apply for teacher certification. You are applying for a STANDARD certificate, and the recommending entity is University of Texas at San Antonio – UNIVERSITY BASED (not Master Teacher).

2. When you have completed the process, UTSA will receive notification that you have applied for your certificate. If you are eligible, UTSA will complete the recommendation and you will be notified by email that you have been recommended.

Please note, however, that you will not be officially certified until SBEC has
   1. received and applied the required fee,
   2. received your fingerprint card (if applicable) and
   3. completed a criminal history background check.

Eligibility for Recommendation for Certification

IMPORTANT! Please do not begin the application process until you are eligible to be recommended. You are eligible when ALL of the following conditions have been met:
➢ The required degree has been awarded and posted on your transcript (the latter occurs approximately one month after graduation date),
➢ Your final grades have been posted; and
➢ You have passed all required TExES exams.

**Student Teachers:** If you are enrolled in your final course (student teaching) and all required exams have been passed, you may begin the application process at any time after April 1\(^{st}\) or November 1\(^{st}\) of your student teaching semester.

Teacher candidates who apply without meeting eligibility requirements will be removed from the UTSA list of candidates and required to reapply at a later date.

If you have questions, please contact a certification officer at 210-458-6287. Technical questions regarding problems with the SBEC website should be addressed to SBEC representatives at 1-888-863-5880.

**IMPORTANT:** If you did not student teach and are substituting experience based on a Probationary or Emergency certificate, you must supply evidence of that experience. You must ask your school district personnel office to fax either a copy of your service record or a letter detailing your experience (grade level taught and dates of employment) to 210-458-5410, attention Certification Officer.

### Professional Education Program Policies

#### Fitness to Teach Policy

UTSA utilizes a candidate screening policy called Fitness to Teach. This policy is available to all personnel who work with the teacher candidates throughout the program. The Fitness to Teach policy recognizes outstanding teacher candidates in the program. It is also invoked when there is a question about a candidate’s suitability for the teaching profession. All teacher candidates must review and become familiar with the Fitness to Teach Policy. The Fitness to Teach policy can be viewed at the following website:

http://coehd.utsa.edu/certification_program/fitness_to_teach_policy/

#### Appeals Policy

Due to extreme circumstances, teacher candidates may need to alter their Teacher Preparation Program with regard to coursework. When this occurs, teacher candidates may appeal to alter or change their required coursework by submitting an appeals form through their COEHD advisor. Appeals forms are submitted to the COEHD Appeals Committee for consideration. The Appeals Committee convenes for this purpose once every semester. Teacher candidates do not appear before the committee. The Appeals Committee decisions are final and will not be overturned. The following conditions will not be considered for
appeal because they are an integral component of the teacher certification program:

- Waivers for student teaching
- Waivers for taking both EC-6 Approaches Blocks together
- Waivers for the required 2.5 GPA’s
- Waivers for course required field experiences
- Waivers for taking restricted courses before being accepted into the program

**Criminal Background Check Policy**
Teacher candidates are required to undergo a criminal history background check as a requirement to be able to conduct field work for their courses and to complete their student teaching semester. UTSA does not conduct these background checks. Rather, each school district is responsible for conducting these background checks and clearing UTSA teacher candidates for field experience. Teacher candidates who do not have a clear criminal history may not be allowed to complete courses that require field work. This may impact a teacher candidate’s ability to complete the program. Depending on the severity of the offense discovered through the criminal background check, teacher candidates may be dismissed from the Teacher Preparation Program.

**Student Teaching and Taking Additional Courses**
Given the strenuous and time consuming efforts needed to be successful during the student teaching semester, it is recommended that all courses be completed before student teaching. If a candidate still has courses left to take, no teacher candidate will be allowed to take more than 6 additional hours of course work during the student teaching semester. If the teacher candidate needs to take additional courses, they must be courses offered in the evening. The teacher candidate will not be allowed to take courses during the day during the student teaching semester.

**Field Experience Policy**
It is required that teacher candidates in courses with field work will complete their field work assignments in a timely and professional manner. The following policy applies to those teacher candidates taking courses with field work assignments.

The purpose of the field placement/field experience is to provide an opportunity for teacher candidates to grow professionally and to apply their knowledge of pedagogy, content area instruction, instructional strategies and professionalism in diverse school settings. The teacher candidate is expected to demonstrate proficiency in all of these areas as evidenced by assessment instrument(s) used in evaluation of the teacher candidate in the assigned placement.
All teacher candidates enrolled in a course that includes a field placement will be responsible for meeting the same course requirements for field work regardless of their employment status. Teacher candidates who work in an area school district or another educational environment will be required to complete their coursework outside of their place of employment.

The completion of the minimum number of hours of field work as required by the individual courses is required for a passing grade. Teacher candidates who do not meet the minimum requirement of field hours as required by the course will automatically receive an “F” for that course. Incompletes are not given for courses with field work requirements. Missed field placement hours cannot be made up without special permission from the instructor, the Director of School Partnerships, and the cooperating teacher. Teacher candidates must remain in the assigned placement throughout the semester or as required by the instructor. This means that teacher candidates must complete their required hours weekly for the duration of the semester or for the duration of the placement as described by the instructor. Teacher candidates may not alter their assigned schedule or placement in any way.

Teacher candidates may not choose their own field placements. All field placements are assigned by the Director of School Partnerships. Teacher candidates begin field work when they receive the approval from the Director of School Partnerships.

**Absences**
1. Regular, prompt attendance is expected.
2. If you know will be absent, email your mentor teacher, campus coordinator, and professor prior to the absence.
3. If absent, you must obtain approval for a make-up plan from your professor.
4. Your placement will be cancelled if you accumulate more than two absences.

**Failure to complete hours by deadlines/more than two absences:** The placement will be cancelled. The placement may be reinstated if the absences were due to special circumstances, such as an extended illness. Permission from the mentor teacher, campus administrator, professor, and Director of School Partnerships will be required for reinstatement. Teacher candidates who do not complete the required field experience hours will receive an “F” for the course. No partial credit will be given for completing less than the required hours.

**Teacher candidates with Two or More Absences**
Teacher candidates with two or more absences need to contact the Director of School Partnerships. Teacher candidates with two or more absences will have their field placement put on hold pending a conference to discuss their field placement status. Teacher candidates who do not contact the Director will have their field placement cancelled.
TExES Policies
Tutoring is available for teacher candidates up to one year after completing the Teacher Certification Program at UTSA if a teacher candidate fails any PPR state exam, EC-6 Generalist, and EC-6 Bilingual Generalist state exam.

Teacher candidates that are currently enrolled in the Teacher Certification Program at UTSA and fail any PPR, EC-6 Generalist or EC-6 Bilingual Generalist state exam must attend a small group or individual tutoring session before approval to test will be granted for the same state exam.

Student Teachers that do not complete Practice exam and Review session requirements, when applicable, will receive an incomplete in Student Teaching. Teacher candidates will be required to attend a regularly scheduled Practice exam and Review session before the incomplete will be removed from their record. There will not be make-up sessions available for any teacher candidate.

Aide Exemption from Student Teaching
Teacher candidates who are in the UTSA Teacher Preparation program and apply for acceptance into the state Educational Aide Exemption Program and who are not approved by the state for that exemption, will be required to complete student teaching. No exceptions will be made. UTSA College of Education complies with state regulations and does not have the authority to override the state’s ruling in this regard.

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