TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION ONE
Teacher Preparation Program Overview
  • UTSA Mission and Vision Statements
  • Teacher Preparation Program Mission Statement

SECTION TWO
Admission Procedures
  • Criteria for Admission
  • Process for Admission
  • Restricted courses
  • Process for Retention

SECTION THREE
Teacher Certification Program Options
  • List of programs offered for certification
  • Educational Aide Program Requirements

SECTION FOUR
TExES Exams for Teacher Certification
  • Qualifying to take exams
  • When to take exams
  • How to register for exams
  • Review Sessions
  • Approval to Test

SECTION FIVE
Field Experience
  • Field experience courses
  • Field-based courses
  • Transportation for Field Assignments
  • Students Seeking Accommodations
SECTION SIX
Clinical Teaching
• Criteria for acceptance into Clinical teaching
• Applying for the Clinical teaching Semester
• Placing Candidates
• Requirements for Clinical teaching
• Post-Baccalaureate Internships

SECTION SEVEN
Process for Applying for Certification
• Applying for your Initial Certificate

SECTION EIGHT
Professional Education Program Policies
• Fitness to Teach
• Appeals
• Criminal Background Check
• Clinical teaching and Taking Courses
• GPA Recalculations
• Repeating Courses
• Field Experiences
• TExES
• Aide Exemption for Clinical teaching

SECTION NINE
General Information
• Field Experience Forms
• Clinical teaching Information
• Texas Beginning Teacher Standards
• Texas Teacher Code of Ethics
• Complaint Policy

SECTION TEN
Contact Information
Teacher Preparation Program Overview

UTSA’s Mission and Vision Statements

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 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.

Teacher Preparation Program Conceptual Framework
Admission Procedures

Criteria for Admission for Undergraduates

Undergraduates seeking elementary or middle school 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 Interdisciplinary Education Advising 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 Interdisciplinary Education Advising Center. Applicants may be either degree-seeking or special students. Please refer to page eight for information on the Post-Baccalaureate Teacher Certification Program.

Prerequisites:

1. Students must be in good standing with UTSA.
   
   a. Students seeking admission to the Undergraduate Teacher Certification Program (“Program”) who have been referred to UTSA’s Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (“SCCS”) may have those referrals and the outcomes of those referrals considered in determining whether to grant admission to the Program. Admission is at the discretion of an Associate Dean.

   b. Students requesting admission to the Program who have cases pending with the SCCS will not be admitted until the SCCS case has been fully adjudicated.

2. Clear Criminal History

   The teacher preparation program at UTSA requires fieldwork in the public schools. This requires that a student be able to pass a criminal background check conducted by area independent school districts. It is the responsibility of the students to determine if their criminal history background will present a problem before applying for admission to the teacher preparation program. Note that students with a problematic criminal history
will encounter difficulty in completing any fieldwork requirements and therefore, may not be able to complete the program. Questions about criminal history background checks can be referred to the Office of Teacher Education Services.

Specific information regarding admission requirements to the Teacher Certification undergraduate programs may be obtained in the Interdisciplinary Education Advising Center.

Requirements for Admission to the Undergraduate Teacher Preparation Program

1. View the Teacher Certification Information tutorial online.

2. Take and pass a quiz on the tutorial and complete an online application.

3. Attain junior standing (60 semester credit hours).

4. Complete all core requirements (Music Teacher candidates: See a certification advisor).

5. Have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5 or better.

6. Have completed 12-15 hours of content coursework. Math and Science certification tracks must have 15 hours completed.

7. Attain minimum passing scores on ONE of the following exams: THEA, ACCUPLACER, SAT or ACT.

8. Earn a grade of “C” or better in WRC 1023.

9. Demonstrate English Language Proficiency. Earn a “C-” or better in a public speaking course (WRC 1013, COM 1043, COM 1053, COM 2113, COM 2123. Credit for WRC 1013 through AP or CLEP will not be accepted. Teacher Candidates who did not receive an associate’s degree or high school diploma from an accredited institution in the United States will be required to take the TOEFL IBT in order to demonstrate proficiency. The required score for TOEFL IBT is a 26 on the oral language section.

10. Read and sign the Texas Educator Code of Ethics and turn in the last page of the document, signed and dated, to MB 3.214.

11. Students in EC-6 BBL, and 4-8 BBL take and pass the ALPS test.
Process for Admission

Once you have determined you meet the admission 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 using Internet Explorer.

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 websites:

EC-6, 4-8 and Special Education
EC-6 and 4-8 Bilingual
Secondary, All-Level Health, All-Level Music, All-Level Art

Once you have processed your application, an advisor in the Interdisciplinary Education Advising Center will review your application and notify you of your status regarding acceptance into the program. Students will be required to sign an Acknowledgment of Admission form which will be emailed to the student’s preferred email address. Once the IDED Advising Center receives the form, the student will be admitted to the program. Students will then be able to go online and request clearance and register for restricted courses.

Criteria for Admission for Post Baccalaureate Certification Program

UTSA is approved by the Texas Education Agency to offer teacher candidates various routes to teacher certification. The Post-Baccalaureate Certification Program is a track that allows students who have earned a Bachelor's degree or higher to obtain Texas teacher certification at the elementary and secondary level.

Requirements for Admission to the Post-Baccalaureate Certification Program:

1. Attend a Teacher Certification Information Meeting.
2. Be Admitted to UTSA.
3. Maintain your preferred email address.
4. Hold a Bachelor's degree from an accredited university.
5. Meet minimum GPA requirements of 2.5 or better in the cumulative GPA or 2.75 in the last 60 hours.
6. Pass the PACT test in the designated content area. Please see Post-Baccalaureate plans below for further information.

7. Complete 12-15 hours of content coursework. Math and Science certification certification will require 15 hours.

8. Display oral communication skills and critical thinking skills. Evidence of these skills can be demonstrated by earning a C- or better in related coursework or work experience. Teacher Candidates who did not receive a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution in the United States will be required to take the TOEFL IBT in order to demonstrate proficiency. Required score for TOEFL IBT is a 26 on the oral language section.

9. **Read and Sign the Educator Code of Ethics.**

10. Submit an application to the UTSA Post-Baccalaureate Certification Program. This is obtained at the Teacher Certification Information Meeting.

**Areas of Post-Baccalaureate Certification:**

*(Post-Baccalaureate plans can be found [here.](#))*

EC-6 Core Subjects
4-8 Core Subjects with Bilingual Supplemental
4-8 Core Subjects with ESL Supplemental
7-12 English Language Arts
7-12 Life Science
6-12 Physical Science
7-12 Science Composite
7-12 Social Studies
7-12 History
7-12 Speech
7-12 Math
EC-12 Health
EC-12 Physical Education
EC-12 Special Education
EC-12 Art
EC-12 Spanish
EC-12 German
EC-12 French
EC-12 Music
Restricted Courses

Certain courses in the teacher preparation program 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 academic 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.
Teacher Certification Program Options

UTSA offers many 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 degree program or a Master’s degree program.

Educational Aide Program Requirements

UTSA does not offer a separate teacher certification preparation program for Educational Aides. Educational Aides are no longer exempt by state rule from meeting all of the program and field requirements for completion of a teacher preparation program. A portion of the fieldwork may be fulfilled in the educational aide’s place of employment. This will be negotiated with an Associate Dean for Teacher Education.
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 state 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 the EC-12 Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) Practice Exam and attend a PPR review session.

When the PPR Practice Test and the PPR Review requirements have been met, teacher candidates may seek approval to register for the state EC-12 PPR TExES exam.

**NOTE:** In order to take the TExES exam for certification, candidates who indicate non-U.S. citizenship must provide a passport from their country of origin. Consular, diplomatic, or embassy ID’s are not sufficient.

Teacher candidates may complete the required Practice Test and required Review Sessions in either order. Bilingual and ESL Supplemental Practice Tests will be required when they are available.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CERTIFICATION</th>
<th>REQUIREMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core Subjects EC-6</strong></td>
<td>➢ Core Subjects EC-6 Practice Exam</td>
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<td></td>
<td>➢ Core Subjects EC-6 Review Session</td>
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<td>➢ Core Subjects EC-6 State Exam</td>
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<td>➢ PPR EC-12 Practice Test</td>
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<td>➢ PPR EC-12 Review Session</td>
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<td>➢ PPR EC-12 State Exam</td>
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<td>CERTIFICATION</td>
<td>REQUIREMENTS</td>
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</table>
| **Core Subjects EC-6 and Bilingual**<sup>*</sup> | ➢ Core Subjects EC-6 Practice Exam  
➢ Core Subjects EC-6 Review Session  
➢ Core Subjects EC-6 State Exam  
➢ PPR EC-12 Practice Test  
➢ PPR EC-12 Review Session  
➢ PPR EC-12 State Exam  
➢ Bilingual Supplemental Practice Test  
➢ Bilingual Supplemental State Exam |

<sup>*</sup>Core Subject EC-6 Bilingual teacher candidates may take the required Bilingual Target Language Proficiency Test (BTLPT) once they are admitted to the Teacher Certification Program.

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<th>CERTIFICATION</th>
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| **Core Subjects EC-6 and ESL** | ➢ Core Subjects EC-6 Practice Exam  
➢ Core Subjects EC-6 Review Session  
➢ Core Subjects EC-6 State Exam  
➢ PPR EC-12 Practice Test  
➢ PPR EC-12 Review Session  
➢ PPR EC-12 State Exam  
➢ ESL Supplemental State Exam |

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<th>CERTIFICATION</th>
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</table>
| **Core Subjects 4-8** | ➢ Generalist 4-8 Practice Exam  
➢ Core Subjects 4-8 State Exam  
➢ PPR EC-12 Practice Test  
➢ PPR EC-12 Review Session  
➢ PPR EC-12 State Exam |
### CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

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| **Core Subject 4-8 and Bilingual*** | - Generalist 4-8 Practice Exam  
- Core Subjects 4-8 State Exam  
- PPR EC-12 Practice Test  
- PPR EC-12 Review Session  
- PPR EC-12 State Exam  
- Bilingual Supplemental Practice Test  
- Bilingual Supplemental State Exam |

* *Bilingual Generalist 4-8 teacher candidates may take the required Bilingual Target Language Proficiency Test (BTLPT) once they are admitted to the Teacher Certification Program.*

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<th>CERTIFICATION</th>
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| **Core Subject 4-8 and ESL** | - Generalist 4-8 Practice Exam  
- Core Subjects 4-8 State Exam  
- PPR EC-12 Practice Test  
- PPR EC-12 Review Session  
- PPR EC-12 State Exam  
- ESL Supplemental State Exam |

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<th>CERTIFICATION</th>
<th>REQUIREMENTS</th>
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</table>
| **ELAR/S.S. 4-8** | - ELAR/S.S. 4-8 Practice Exam  
- ELAR/S.S. 4-8 State Exam  
- PPR EC-12 Practice Test  
- PPR EC-12 Review Session  
- PPR EC-12 State Exam |
## CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

### Math/Science 4-8

- Math/Science 4-8 Practice Exam
- Math/Science 4-8 State Exam
- PPR EC-12 Practice Test
- PPR EC-12 Review Session
- PPR EC-12 State Exam

### Content Areas 7-12*

- Mathematics 7-12
- History 7-12
- English, Language Arts, Reading 7-12
- Science 7-12
- Physical Science 6-12
- Life Science 7-12
- Social Studies 7-12

- 7-12 or 8-12 Content Area Practice Test
- 7-12 Content Area State Exam
- PPR EC-12 Practice Test
- PPR EC-12 Review Session
- PPR EC-12 State Exam

*When a 7-12 Content Area Practice Test requirement has been met, teacher candidates may seek approval to register for their 7-12 Content State TExES Exam.

### All-Level EC-12

- Special Education EC-12
- Physical Education EC-12
- Music EC-12
- Art EC-12*
- Spanish EC-12*

- EC-12 Content Area Practice Test*
- EC-12 Content Area State Exam
- PPR EC-12 Practice Test
- PPR EC-12 Review Session
- PPR EC-12 State Exam

*There is not a practice test requirement for Spanish EC-12 and Art EC-12 Content Areas.

If a Practice Test becomes available for a content area that currently does not have a Practice Test, then one will be required.
• Teacher candidates may complete the required Practice Tests and required Review Sessions in either order.

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

• Practice Exam Schedules and Review Schedules are available by semester on the UTSA TExES website.

On-line Registration Instructions for UTSA TExES Practice Exams

1. Log on to Banner ASAP.

2. Click on the tab “Student Services”.

3. “TExES Practice Exam Registration”.

4. Select “Register for TEST Session”.

5. Under Test Name choose “Practice TExES”.

6. From the drop-down menu select the practice exam you want to take.

7. On the far right under the “Select Test” column is a small radial (circle) button that must be clicked.

8. Hit the “Submit” button and you will be registered for a UTSA TExES Practice Exam.

Practice Exam scores will be available on Banner ASAP two business days after the Practice Exam Session. Scores are reported in percentiles with an overall score of 80%* being comparable to the state scaled passing score of 240/300.

*There is NOT a passing score requirement for UTSA Practice TExES Exams, but students are expected to demonstrate competence when taking a Practice Exam.
Reviews

- Check the UTSA TExES website for review schedules.
- Teacher candidates seeking certification in Core Subjects EC-6, Core Subjects EC-6 Bilingual, and Core Subjects EC-6 ESL are required to attend a Core Subjects EC-6 review session.
- 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 will be eligible to register for one state exam after the Practice Exam and Review Session requirements have been met, when applicable.
- All candidates must submit an Eligibility Form for “approval to test” every time they want to be approved to register for a state exam.
- Eligibility Forms, available for download on the UTSA TExES Website, are to be submitted to The Office of Teacher Education Services via any of the following methods:
  - Submitted in person to our office located in the Main Building, (MB) 3.310.
  - Faxed to (210)458-5794
  - Scan and emailed to cherie.weiss@utsa.edu
- The TExES Director will determine if the teacher candidate has met the UTSA requirements for “approval to test”.
- If the teacher candidate has met the UTSA requirements, they will be approved to test through the TEA online approval process.
**Five Times Rule for Taking State Exams**

*All* Teacher Certification and Professional Certification candidates may only take the same state exam for a total of five times. The five attempts include the first attempt to pass the exam and four retakes. All attempts to pass an exam taken before Sept. 1, 2015 will count as one attempt regardless of how many times the exam was taken prior to this date.

*The SBEC will determine rules for a waiver and the rules are anticipated to be in effect May of 2016.*

**Core Subjects (211 & 291) Exams**

UTSA encourages our Core Subjects candidates to be fully aware of the retest policy and that they **do not use all of their attempts by taking individual subtests (800-level tests).** Even though the ETS system will allow candidates to sign up for the 800-level subtests after they take the whole Core Subjects test, **they should NOT do so unless they are down to only one test left to pass.** Candidates may skip through the sections of the test they have already passed by clicking next, next, next, and so on until they get to the sections that they still need to pass. Candidates do not need to answer a single question in the sections that they have already passed. Again, the only time a candidate should sign up for an individual subtest is when that is the last test the candidate needs to pass. Candidates who have inadvertently registered for individual subtests may call ETS at (800) 205-2626 to reschedule those exams into the appropriate Core Subjects exam.

**Acquiring Additional Certifications**

A teacher candidate may register for additional content tests if:

- he or she has completed all UTSA course requirements.
- he or she has passed the required state exams for their initial teacher certification.
- he or she has applied for and received their initial teacher certification from TEA.

The route to additional certification then becomes “by exam”.

(See the [TEA Website](http://www.tea.texas.edu) for guidelines.)
STATE EXAM REGISTRATION

All teacher candidates seeking certification through UTSA are required to have “approval to test” before they may register for their certification exams.

Teacher candidates will request a TEAL Login account by completing the following steps on the TEA Website.

Logging onto TEAL for the First Time

1) Click on ECOS for Educators at the top of the page.
2) Click on Login to TEAL.
3) Select “Educator” as your Organization Type on the TEAL New User Registration form. TEAL will prompt you to enter your Social Security Number.
4) After you have created your TEAL User account, you will receive an email with your new user name and password. Follow the link in this email to login, using your new user name and password.
5) After changing your password and establishing your security questions, you will be redirected to the TEAL landing page, where you can access the ECOS for Educators application by clicking on the link. Directions are provided by TEA for creating a TEAL account.

Exam Approval Status

1) To check exam approval status, go to the TEA Website and login to TEAL. 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.

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

1) Visit the ETS Website to register for a TExES State Exam.

2) Follow the “Quick Start” directions to set-up a new account.

3) You will need your TEA ID Number each time you register for a TExES State Exam.

4) Print a copy of your Admission Ticket.

5) A copy of your admission ticket and a valid and acceptable identification document(s) with a name, signature and photo is required to be permitted to take a State Exam. For more details, see TExES – On The Day of The Test for more information.

Please visit the UTSA TExES Website, to answer any additional question you may have regarding TExES State Exam approval and registration.
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 8-75 hours a semester in fieldwork 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.

**Note:** Educational aides who are pursuing teacher certification at UTSA will be required to complete fieldwork related to course requirements in field based courses such as, Approaches and Reading courses, outside of their place of employment.

**Field-based courses** take field experiences one step further. During this time teacher candidates are usually placed in a school for one full day of fieldwork. 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 – clinical teaching. Field-based courses are identified in the course catalog as well as in the course schedule on ASAP.

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

**Students Seeking Accommodations**
If a student requires an accommodation during their field placement or clinical teaching, it is the student’s responsibility to request assistance as early as possible before planning to attend the field placement or clinical teaching. Because the student may not fully realize the need for accommodation and/or they may not have a sense of what the placement setting will specifically demand, Student Disability Services (SDS) recommends that the student should initiate a meeting one semester before the intended placement during which information about expectations might be shared so that once better informed, the student might be better
prepared on what they need to initiate as part of their field placement or clinical teaching needs.

Specifically, the student, the Teacher Education Services office, and SDS need to begin early discussions in order to plan for accommodations since the nature of accommodations may vary across agencies and academic units may prefer early agency involvement in identifying needed accommodations. Students are strongly encouraged to initiate these discussions one semester before the intended placement.
Clinical Teaching

Clinical 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 clinical 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.

It is expected that the clinical teaching component of the certification program will be completed through UTSA.

Note: The Education Aide Exemption provided by the state no longer exists. Therefore, educational aides seeking to complete the teacher education program will be required to complete a full semester of clinical teaching outside of their place of employment.

Criteria for acceptance into Clinical teaching

Teacher candidates are eligible to enter clinical teaching 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
- attempt TExES content test; students are not required to pass the real exam.

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

Applying for the Clinical Teaching Semester

A meeting is held early in the semester prior to the clinical teaching semester to explain the application process and procedures. Clinical teaching applications are distributed and questions are answered at the meeting. The meeting dates, times and places are announced on the Clinical Teaching Website.
Application Deadlines

<table>
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<th>To Clinical Teach in the</th>
<th>Application Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>March 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>October 15</td>
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Approximately six weeks after the deadline to apply for clinical teaching, teacher candidates may download a Registration Packet from the Clinical Teaching Website.

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

Placing Candidates

UTSA works with the Human Resources Departments of most school districts in the San Antonio area to place clinical teachers. **Placements are not available in private schools or charter schools.** At the meeting held early in the semester prior to the clinical teaching semester, clinical teacher applicants will be given a list of available school districts and will be asked to indicate school district preference.

Clinical teachers will meet with the Director of Clinical Teaching on the first day of class. At that meeting, clinical 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 Clinical Teaching Website.

In order to complete the clinical teaching semester, candidate criminal background checks are conducted by the school districts. Candidates who experience rejection by the school districts due to their criminal history may not be able to complete the program. Whether or not to attempt to place the candidate in more than one district is at the discretion of the Director of Clinical Teaching.

Requirements for Clinical Teaching

The clinical teaching semester is a full time commitment. Clinical teachers who commit themselves only to clinical teaching have a more successful semester than those who are obligated to jobs and other classes. Beginning with the first day of class, clinical teachers are expected to be available during daytime hours which correspond to those of public schools, approximately 7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Whenever possible, clinical 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.
Clinical teachers are strongly discouraged from working and/or taking additional classes during the clinical teaching semester. Under no circumstances will clinical teachers be permitted to enroll in additional coursework during the clinical teaching semester that exceeds six semester credit hours or in classes that meet during the regular instruction day.

**Conditions for Completion of Clinical Teaching/Internship**

Successful completion of clinical teaching/internship is a condition for meeting teacher certification requirements. Teacher candidates may attempt clinical teaching/internship a maximum of two times. If the teacher candidate does not successfully complete the second clinical teaching experience, the candidate will not be eligible to enroll in clinical 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 clinical teaching. The supportive environment typical of a clinical teaching placement cannot be duplicated with an internship. Therefore, UTSA teacher candidates are strongly encouraged to complete clinical 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 210-458-6287.
SECTION SEVEN

Process for Applying for Certification

APPLYING FOR YOUR INITIAL CERTIFICATION

Applications for all Texas Educator Certificates are now made online at the Texas Education Agency website.

1) At the website, click on “Educator Login/Account Set Up” and follow the directions. You must first set up an account if you have not done so previously. You are applying for a **STANDARD** certificate, and the recommending entity is University of Texas of 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 TEA 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 if ALL of the following conditions have been met:

- You are enrolled in your final course (clinical teaching).
- Your final grades have been posted.
- You have passed all required TExES State Exams.
- The required degree has been awarded and posted on your transcript (the latter occurs approximately one month after graduation).

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 call the UTSA Advising and Certification Center: 210-458-6287. Technical questions regarding problems with the TEA website should be addressed to TEA representatives at 512-936-8400.
IMPORTANT: If you did not clinical 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.

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 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 clinical 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 and Fieldwork Policy

Teacher candidates are required to undergo a criminal history background check as a requirement to be able to conduct fieldwork for their courses and to complete their clinical 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 fieldwork. 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. If a student experiences rejection from a school district for fieldwork due to criminal history, the department will attempt to place the student, if possible, in a different district. No more than two attempts for placement of a student will occur.

For fingerprinting/background check, candidates need to show a state-issued ID, which is either a driver’s license or a DPS issued state ID.

In order to take the TExES exam for certification, candidates who indicate non-U.S. citizenship have to provide a passport from their country of origin. Consular, diplomatic, or embassy ID’s are not sufficient.

**Clinical Teaching and Taking Additional Courses**

Given the strenuous and time consuming efforts needed to be successful during the clinical teaching semester, it is recommended that all courses be completed before clinical 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 clinical 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 clinical teaching semester.

**Field Experience Policy**

It is required that teacher candidates in courses with fieldwork will complete their fieldwork assignments in a timely and professional manner. The following policy applies to those teacher candidates taking courses with fieldwork 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 fieldwork 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 fieldwork 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. 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 fieldwork when they receive the approval from the Director of School Partnerships or the assigned field placement coordinator for their program.

Attendance
1. Regular, prompt attendance is expected.
2. If you know you will be absent, email your mentor teacher, field placement coordinator, and professor prior to the absence.
3. If absent, you must develop a plan to make up the hours missed and have it approved by your mentor teacher and the field placement coordinator assigned to your program.
4. Your placement will be canceled if you accumulate more than two absences.

Teacher Candidates with Two or More Absences
Teacher candidates with two or more absences need to contact the Director of School Partnerships in the Office of Teacher Education Services. Teacher candidates with two or more absences will be required to attend a conference to discuss their field placement status. 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 contact the Director of School Partnerships will have their field placement canceled.

Failure to Complete Hours as Instructed
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.

TIMELINE FOR BEING RECOMMENDED FOR TESTING AND BEING RECOMMENDED FOR YOUR TEACHING CERTIFICATE

Be advised that there is a time limit within which the UTSA Teacher Preparation Program will recommend an individual for testing and recommend an individual for a teaching certificate. Due to the frequent changes imposed by the state on preparation programs, an individual completer will have five years from the date they complete their Teacher Preparation Program to complete testing for teacher certification and be recommended for a teaching certificate. If the state makes major changes to programs, this timeline may be shortened. After
five years, individuals will be required to return and complete a new program for their certification in order to be recommended for testing for certification and be recommended for a teaching certificate.

TExES Policies

Teacher candidates may be required to complete a Remediation Activity before being approved to retake a required state exam. The Director for Certification Testing will contact candidates if they are required to complete an activity when a new Eligibility Form requesting approval to retake an exam is submitted.

Aide Exemption for Clinical Teaching

The state of Texas has repealed the educational aide exemption law due to lack of funding. This option no longer exists for teacher education candidates.
SECTION NINE

General Information

- Field Experience Forms
- Clinical Teaching Forms
- Texas Educators’ Code of Ethics
- Fitness to Teach Policy
The University of Texas at San Antonio Educator Preparation Program Formal Complaint Form

The Texas Education Agency requires that all Educator Preparation Programs have a formal complaint process in which individuals may seek redress for alleged grievances. The Complaint Policy of The University of Texas at San Antonio follows on pages 2-5.

If resolution for a complaint is not achieved through informal means, a formal complaint is filed. Use of this Formal Complaint Form is required. Completed Forms and supporting documentation should be turned into the Office of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Student Success in Main Building 3.212.

Complainant Contact Information. Please print:

Name ___________________________ Banner ID@ __________________________

Telephone Number __________________________ Email Address __________________________

Mailing Address __________________________

Describe the alleged complaint.

List the significant dates, facts, and documented evidence that support the complaint. Attach evidence relating to the complaint.

Describe the informal steps you have taken to resolve the complaint.
Complaint Policy on File with the Texas Education Agency

**COMPLAINTS**

In this policy, the terms “complaint” and “grievance” shall have the same meaning.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The University of Texas at San Antonio encourages interns to discuss their concerns and complaints through informal conferences with their program staff. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level.

**INFORMAL PROCESS**

If an informal conference regarding a complaint fails to reach the outcome requested by the candidate, he or she may initiate the formal process described below by timely filing a written complaint form.

**FORMAL PROCESS**

Even after initiating the formal complaint process, a candidate is encouraged to seek informal resolution of his or her concerns. A candidate, whose concerns are resolved, may withdraw a formal complaint at any time.

Complaint forms and appeal notices may be filed by hand-delivery, email, fax, or U.S. Mail. Hand-delivered filings shall be timely if received by the appropriate administrator or designee by the close of business on the deadline. Emails shall be timely if they are date and time marked on or before the deadline. Fax filings shall be timely if they are received on or before the deadline, as indicated by the date/time shown on the fax copy. Mail filings shall be timely if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on the deadline and received by the appropriate administrator or designated representative no more than three days after the deadline.

At Level One and Two, “response” shall mean a written communication to the candidate from the appropriate University of Texas at San Antonio staff. Responses may be hand-delivered or sent by U.S. Mail or emailed to the candidate’s email or mailing address of record. Mailed responses shall be timely if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on the deadline and received by the candidate no more than three days after the response deadline.

“Days” shall mean program business days. In calculating time lines under this policy, the day a document is filed is “day zero,” and all deadlines shall be determined by counting the following day as “day one.”

Complaints arising out of an event or series of related events shall be addressed in one complaint. Candidates shall not bring separate or serial complaints arising from any event or series of events that have been or could have been addressed in a previous complaint.

**GENERAL PROVISIONS**

When two or more complaints are sufficiently similar in nature and remedy sought to permit their resolution through one proceeding, The University of Texas at San Antonio may consolidate the complaints. All time limits shall be strictly followed unless modified by mutual written consent.

**UNTIMELY FILINGS**

If a complaint form or appeal notice is not timely filed, the complaint may be dismissed, on written notice to the candidate, at any point during the complaint process. The candidate may appeal the dismissal by seeking review in writing within ten business days, starting at the level at which the complaint was dismissed. Such appeal shall be limited to the issue of timeliness.

**COST INCURRED**

Each party shall pay its own costs incurred in the course of the complaint.

Revised 2016
 Complaints under this policy shall be submitted in writing on a form provided by The University of Texas at San Antonio. Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the complaint form. If the candidate does not have copies of these documents, they may be presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted unless the candidate did not know the documents existed before the Level One conference.

A complaint form that is incomplete in any material aspect may be dismissed, but it may be refiled with all the requested information if the refiling is within the designated time for filing a complaint. As provided by law, a candidate shall be permitted to make an audio recording of a conference under this policy at which the substance of the candidate’s complaint is discussed. The candidate shall notify all attendees present that an audio recording is taking place. Complaint forms must be filed:

1. Within fifteen days of the date the candidate first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance; and
2. With the direct supervisor.

The direct supervisor shall hold a conference with the candidate within ten days after the receipt of the written complaint.

The direct supervisor shall have ten days following the conference to provide the candidate a written response. If the candidate did not receive the relief requested at Level One or if the time for a response has expired, the candidate may appeal the decision to The University of Texas at San Antonio’s legal authority.

The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the program, within ten days after receipt of a response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the response deadline at Level One.

The University of Texas at San Antonio’s legal authority or designee shall inform the candidate of the date, time, and place of the meeting at which the complaint will be discussed.

The direct supervisor shall provide The University of Texas at San Antonio’s legal authority with copies of the complaint form, the response at Level One, the appeal notice, and all written documentation previously submitted by candidate. The University of Texas at San Antonio’s legal authority shall consider only those issues and documents presented at the preceding level and identified in the appeal notice.

The University of Texas at San Antonio’s legal authority must provide written notice of the decision to the candidate.

The University of Texas at San Antonio must retain information concerning the complaint for a minimum of three years.

After the candidate has exhausted all attempts at The University of Texas at San Antonio level to resolve a complaint that occurred within the past two years
and has not received the relief sought, information on how to file a complaint with TEA can be secured from The University of Texas at San Antonio by information posted at their physical facility, on their website or, upon request, directions in writing.

The official TEA complaint process can be found at www.tea.texas.gov in the banner located at the bottom of the page and then select “Educator Preparation Programs”.

The complaint process allows for an applicant or candidate in an educator preparation program to seek redress in areas where they feel that the program did not fulfill requirements for certification or for actions that the candidate feels are wrong. Educator preparation programs may also file a complaint about the actions of other programs when it involves a candidate transferring into a program.

Not all complaints fall under the authority of TEA. TEA has jurisdiction to investigate allegations of noncompliance regarding specific laws and rules, generally related to state and federal requirements. Complaints may address educator preparation program requirements listed in Texas Administrative Code (TAC) in Chapters 227, 228, 229, ethics (TAC 247), fingerprinting (TAC §§227, 232) and certification (TAC §§230, 231, 232, 239, 241, 242)

All complaints filed with the TEA must be in writing. We do not accept complaints by phone or complaints that are submitted anonymously. A person or entity may file a written complaint with TEA by filling out the complaint form online or by mailing or faxing a hard copy to the address on the form. You may fax your submission to (512) 463-9008 or by emailing it to generalinquiry@tea.texas.gov.

LEVEL THREE

To adequately review and address a complaint, TEA needs specific details. We must be able to identify a clear violation of TAC and determine whether the agency has authority to act upon the allegation.

Complaints submissions should include the following:

- The reasons you believe the issues raised in your complaint are valid. You should also indicate how you believe that TEA can assist you with this matter. Remember that TEA cannot assist you in understanding your contractual arrangement with the educator preparation program, arranging for a refund, obtaining a higher grade or credit for training, or seeking reinstatement to an educator preparation program.

- Documentation to support your claim when possible. For example, if you refer in your complaint to an educator preparation program policy, include a copy of the policy with your complaint. Helpful documentation might include letters or emails exchanged between parties.

Texas Education Agency staff will send confirmation of a complaint within thirty days of receiving the submission. Remember, information the public sends to TEA by email may not be secure. Do not email sensitive information to TEA. The agency will remove confidential or sensitive information when replying by email. TEA will maintain confidentiality of information to the extent the law allows.

**TEXAS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE §228.70**
SECTION TEN

Contact Information

- Teacher Education Services
  210.458.5420

- Janet Scott
  Director of Clinical Teaching

- Cherie Weiss
  Director for Certification and Program Accountability

- Allegra Castro
  Director of School Partnerships

- Teacher Certification Advising Office
  210.458.6287