TExES Preparation Guidelines for Undergraduate Students

The Colleges of Education and Arts & Sciences are committed to your success. However, the onus of readiness is your responsibility. Many of you prepared and studied for the S.A.T. /A.C.T. exam, and like that exam, we expect you to do likewise for the state certification exams. Our goal is that you sit for the TExES exam once and pass the exam on your first attempt. Over time, we learned that our processes work, especially by having you focus on one exam at a time. Our candidates are passing their exams more often on the first attempt and with much higher scores than needed.

Preparing for TExES Exams
Remember, you need to demonstrate readiness. We expect that you will demonstrate readiness on multiple assessments, many of which are highlighted below before sitting for the TExES exam. While this is your responsibility, know that we are here to help and support you. If you feel you need assistance or direction, please contact our Office of Certification [(956) 326-2425] to make an appointment with our student support liaison.

Things to Do to Demonstrate Readiness:

Use the Data Sheet created so that you can monitor your strengths and areas needing attention. The sheet allows you to note which competencies you missed while studying and completing various assessments. In documenting areas needing strengthening, patterns will more than likely begin to develop to show you which areas need more preparation than others. When you obtain permission for either the representative test or the TExES exam, you will need to bring your completed Data Sheet. The Data Sheet is available at http://www.tamiu.edu/coedu/documents/PreparingforTExESExamswDatasheet.pdf.

Begin working through on-line review materials suggested below. The following on-line materials will be helpful to demonstrate preparedness. Some of the resources noted below are for preparing for the content exam; others are for the Professional Practices and Responsibilities (PPR).

A. The best place to begin is with the preparation manual for your content area. This invaluable manual, from Educational Testing Services (ETS) is located at http://texes.ets.org/prepmaterials. ETS has a wealth of other information and resources on its TExES website (http://cms.texes-ets.org/) including general videos on “What to Expect When You Take a TExES CAT (Computer Assisted Test) Test” located at http://cms.texes-ets.org/cat/ and “Preparing for the TExES Educator Certification Tests” (http://cms.texes-ets.org/).

B. Praxis II for all subject areas. These are short practice exams linked to national standards that also will help you identify areas of content related strengths and those areas needing more preparation. The website is http://www.ets.org/praxis/prepare/materials/. This site has nationally related practice questions that you can use to assess your knowledge of the content.

C. CertifyTeacher is a valuable source to help you study. This software has flashcards, practice exams, and randomized tests that guide understanding of the correct/incorrect answers to questions. CertifyTeacher software for the content area should be purchased as soon as possible, preferably once admitted to the College of Education. A randomized test score of 90% demonstrates one avenue of preparedness. The cost of this software is $25 if purchased through the College of Education (COE). Obtaining a log-in takes about two weeks, so plan accordingly.

1 In some cases there is more than one assessment that will help you in your preparation. For example, there are two useful materials to help EC-6 (elementary) candidates prepare for their content exam.
Presently, CertifyTeacher software is available for all certification areas except BTLPT (coming this summer) and LOTE (Spanish) (coming fall 2013). Please check our College website for updates or contact our Certification Office.

CertifyTeacher software for the PPR should be purchased as soon as the TExES content exam has been successfully passed.

D. T-CERT.² The Texas Education Agency through Tarleton University has several exams to assist with your preparation. Currently these include: Mathematics, Science, Special Education, Generalist EC-6, ESL, and the PPR. These assessments are located at http://pact.tarleton.edu/tcert/. You will need to obtain a login ID from the Office of Educator Preparation and Certification. Please call (956) 326-2425 or (956) 326-2423. When you complete T-CERT, note the areas of strengths and weaknesses on your Data Sheet and print out your certificate.

E. There are two Angel community groups that have a plethora of materials to help you. Both the College of Education and the College of Arts & Sciences have materials to use. There are several sets of flashcards that are located on the COE Community Group. Access these community groups by logging into Angel and following the steps below:

² The address for T-CERT is also located at the top of the Data Sheet.
F. ETS has a video on the BTLPT TExES exam. The video is located at: http://cms.texas-ets.org/assets/rsc/btlpt_webinar/index.html or at http://cms.texas-ets.org/cat/. Also on the ETS TExES website there is an alternate Spanish toolbar for you to use, located at http://cms.texas-ets.org/texes/acttutorial/. Use the toolbar/s to practice writing in Spanish, especially accents and unique Spanish characters. Writing correctly with accents and special characters in Spanish is a component of the BTLPT exam. Supplemental guides for the BTLPT are also located on the ETS TExES website at http://cms.texas-ets.org/texes/prepmaterials/supplemental-guides/.

G. For the TExES LOTE-Spanish exam, ETS also has supplemental guides available located on the ETS TExES website at http://cms.texas-ets.org/texes/prepmaterials/supplemental-guides/.

H. Music majors can access the following websites to review for the test:
   http://www.tmea.org/divisions-regions/college/texas-review and
   http://www.ets.org/mft/about/sample_questions/
   (Additional materials are available through our student support liaison, such as flashcards.) Further, the TAMIU library has a repertoire of recordings to use to identify composers and music genres.

   **Testing Process**

   *When candidates demonstrate suitable preparation*, they will complete a representative test at the TAMIU Testing Center, which is used to emulate the TExES exam and further determine diagnostic readiness, if needed, before sitting for the state exam. Upon successful demonstrated readiness on various assessments, permission will be given to sit for the same TExES exam.

   Should the representative exam, the TExES exam, and/or other documents result in demonstrated difficulties, student support mechanisms will be essential to strengthen inadequate areas, so that you are successful on your first/next attempt. Next steps include setting up an appointment with our student support liaison through the Office of Educator Preparation and Certification.

   **Passing the TExES Exam/s**

   *All candidates must pass the TExES content exam as a pre-requisite to enroll in Student Teaching.* For candidates with a major/specialization in Bilingual Education, the EC-6 Generalist TExES exam must be passed to enroll in student teaching.

   Most content exams will be taken during the semester just prior to the capstone Student Teaching semester. However, candidates who have at least a 3.6 TAMIU GPA and have completed 75% of their coursework may sit for the exam sooner, once demonstrated diagnostic readiness is confirmed, through multiple means.

   The Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) EC-12 will be completed last, usually during Student Teaching.

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3 Another toolbar is suggested at the top of the Data Sheet.
4 Students will sit for a representative exam once in order to simulate the real TExES exam.
5 Please note that the Texas Education Agency (TEA) has changed its Bilingual EC-6 Generalist to the following separate exams: EC-6 Generalist and the Bilingual Supplemental exams. Candidates desiring Bilingual certification will sit for the EC-6 Generalist the Bilingual Supplement, and the BTLPT exams. The Bilingual EC-6 Generalist exam is discontinued.
Other state exams may follow after these are completed. Once you successfully complete these exams you are eligible to apply for a standard certificate. Applying to TEA and paying for your standard certificate is your responsibility. After obtaining a standard certificate, you may challenge some other certification areas.

Please note: The COE may graduate candidates, but not recommend candidates for certification who do not meet qualifying criteria.

Upcoming Changes to the TExES Exams

As per the Texas Education Agency (TEA), beginning September 1, 2014 the following changes will be in place, immediately:

1. The EC-6 Generalist TExES exam will have increased its questions from 140 to 200 questions across three domains: Reading (41% of the exam), Math (26%); and the remaining questions on Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts, Health and Physical Education (33%). Each of the three areas will have an individual passing score that needs to be met. If one area is not passed, the whole exam will have to be retaken.

2. The 4-8 Generalist TExES exam will have 200 questions across four domains. Each of the areas will have an individual passing score that needs to be met. If one area is not passed, the whole exam will have to be retaken.

3. All 8-12 content TExES exams will become 7-12 exams.

Please log-in frequently to the COE webpage to note updates and changes.