

The Unit Assessment System

Angelo State University has developed an assessment system for the continuous improvement of its candidates and its Educator Preparation Program. This commitment to continuous improvement of knowledge and skills is demonstrated through a variety of formative and summative assessments during a candidate's program of study. Stakeholders provide continuous guidance, mediation, and intervention for candidates by measuring knowledge, skills, and dispositions during the course of their programs.

Individual program areas employ uniform assessments to augment the data available for the continuous improvement of the Educator Preparation Program. Examples of these data are performance in capstone courses, employer surveys, and graduate follow-up surveys. Multiple measures ensure a comprehensive assessment of what candidates know and how the program contributes to their performance in the classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2006).

The Educator Preparation Program has five basic steps toward certification with different assessments and data collection at each point in the system. Progress toward graduation and recommendation for certification are monitored at each step. Angelo State has the following certification paths: initial certification, post baccalaureate initial certification, certification for other school personnel, and post-master's specialized certification. In this section, the steps leading toward recommendation for initial certification are delineated. A chart representing the steps and assessments leading to initial certification recommendation is at the end of this section. The steps for other program categories are also contained in the narrative explanation.

University faculty and Educator Preparation Program Candidates use the ASU Teacher Certification Procedure Manual and the University Student Handbook as references for information, policy, and procedures, especially related to assistance, support, and appeals.

Certification: Initial and Advanced Preparation

Step 1: Admission to the Educator Preparation Program

Students at Angelo State University who wish to pursue teacher certification may begin the process with a minimum of 60 undergraduate semester credit hours. The first step to certification is meeting preadmission requirements, completing the application to enter the Educator Preparation Program,

and being admitted as a candidate. Students become candidates once they have completed these requirements.

To be admitted to any Educator Preparation Program, Texas requires an assessment of basic skills. Candidates must meet the score requirements on state approved tests of basic skills. Admitted candidates have an overall and content grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale on all college level course work. In addition, Angelo State students demonstrate reading, writing, mathematical, and oral communication skills by earning a C or better in prescribed course work. During the admission process, candidates affirm that they agree to practice the Unit's dispositions and the Texas Code of Ethics for Teachers. Once candidates meet these requirements they are admitted into the Educator Preparation Program and become eligible to enroll in upper division professional education course work.

Step 2: Program Requirements

The next step in the assessment system is monitoring the candidates' progress throughout the preparation program. Continued development of competencies in knowledge, skills, and dispositions is assessed through candidates' experiences and achievement in their areas of preparation. Candidates are assessed in the area of planning and instruction through examination of artifacts and skills. Faculty, university supervisors, classroom teachers, and candidates measure dispositions. All faculty and public school teacher mentors who work in the pedagogy area assist candidates so that they can perform successfully in the areas of skills and dispositions. Candidates' artifacts are submitted, reviewed, and modified using an electronic submission support system with the final submission being archived in the electronic system. These evaluated artifacts provide data for program improvement.

Step 3: Pre-Student Teaching Requirements

The Educator Preparation Program requires candidates to perform satisfactorily in a number of field-based experiences where knowledge, skills, dispositions, instructional decisions, student centered learning, reflection, and culturally responsive teaching are demonstrated, practiced, and evaluated. The candidate must continue to maintain the educator preparation program admission standards. Field placement is monitored so that candidates are placed in a variety of diverse settings, in different schools, and at various grade levels. During two of these public school placements, the public school teacher is asked to evaluate candidates' dispositions and candidates' interaction with other school professionals.

Planning, organization, and teaching are emphasized and evaluated along with dimensions of instructional decisions, student-centered learning, and culturally responsive teaching.

Step 4: Student Teaching

Another level in unit assessment is the application process for student teaching. Successful ongoing attention to requirements in steps 1, 2, and 3 prepare candidates to apply for student teaching, usually during the last semester of their program. Candidates must receive two positive references from faculty members. Student teaching engages the candidates for 14 weeks in an Early Childhood to grade 12 accredited school setting following the same time requirements as the school teaching staff. Four different formal evaluations are conducted during student teaching. Candidates are formally evaluated twice before the mid-point in the semester and twice thereafter, using rubrics aligned with the Texas Beginning Teacher Educator Support System (TxBESS). The TxBESS evaluation provides a systematic way to reflect upon and analyze the candidates' professional competencies and behaviors as these behaviors affect student learning. Candidates are assessed in areas addressing the implementation of appropriate content, instructional planning, preparation, delivery, and assessment, including instructional decision-making. Monitoring, mentoring, and support are evident at this step.

Step 5: Recommendation for Certification

After completion of appropriate coursework, candidates complete two state external examinations, one in content knowledge and one in pedagogical skills. The Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES) are aligned with content standards for each level of schooling and with the state public school curriculum, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Candidates are also examined in the area of pedagogy in a separate TExES examination. Candidates who successfully complete these examinations and graduate from Angelo State University are eligible for recommendation to the state of Texas for a standard teaching certificate.

Denial, Remediation, and Appeal Procedure

Failure to meet minimum standards at any point of assessment results in the candidate being referred to the Teacher Education Council's Admission, Retention, and Dismissal sub-committee. Reasons for denied admission may include, but are not limited to, not meeting minimum grade point requirements, not completing prerequisite coursework, failure to commit to and demonstrate candidate dispositions, or a

criminal history. The committee may impose a variety of interventions or sanctions including dismissal from the program. The Educator Preparation Information Center (EPI Center) serves as a clearing house for numerous programs on the university campus for candidates experiencing difficulties and needing assistance in improving performance in basic skills areas, academic achievement, content area course work, advising, counseling, and financial aid. Candidates who fail to meet requirements at any step may seek assistance and advisement from program faculty, department heads of disciplines, the Dean of the College of Education, or the Educator Preparation Information Center (EPI Center). Candidates may appeal any decision to the Teacher Education Council's Appeals Subcommittee.

Initial Certification for Advanced Programs

Post-baccalaureate individuals follow the same sequence of events as others seeking initial certification. These individuals have completed the content area required courses and take the appropriate TExES Pre-Admission Content Test. If the individual passes that examination, no further preparation is required in the content area. If the individual fails the examination, then the content department analyzes the transcript, score report, and the age of the course work, and recommends additional preparation. An individual certification plan is prepared with appropriate content and pedagogy requirements listed. Pedagogy requirements for certification may be completed at either the undergraduate or graduate level. Candidates who fulfill these requirements, pass the appropriate examinations, and complete the educator preparation program are recommended to the state for a standard teaching certificate.

Certification for Other School Personnel

Master's degree level certifications programs are offered for specialization as School Counselors, Principals, Reading Specialists, Superintendents, and Educational Diagnosticians. Each of these programs has standards of preparation that lead to professional certification for public school personnel. The following steps describe the general procedure that applies to each of the programs:

Step 1: Admission

The candidates' first step is to make application and be admitted to the College of Graduate Studies at Angelo State. The standards for admission may be found in the university catalog. Once admitted the candidate is directed to a graduate program advisor who prepares a degree plan.

Step 2: Compilation of evidence demonstrating standards competence

Candidates demonstrate competence in meeting specialized state and national standards through evidence-based assessment experiences for professional school personnel. Candidates prepare, submit, and reflect upon assignments and outcomes appropriate to the certification sought including assessment of dispositions related to the area of preparation. Completed elements are assessed and materials demonstrating competence are electronically stored.

Step 3: Application for a site-based practicum

At the conclusion of the candidates' programs, a one or two semester practicum experience is required. Once candidates have been accepted for and placed in a practicum they are supervised by school personnel and a university representative. Candidates are assessed on their ability to create positive environments for student learning; on their understanding of the developmental levels of students; on their ability to accommodate the diversity of students, families, and communities; and on the policy contexts of their work. Candidates are further assessed on the application of professional dispositions delineated in professional, state, and institutional standards. Candidates are expected to demonstrate interactions that are consistent with the ideal of fairness and the belief that all students can learn.

Step 4: Comprehensive review

At the completion of their programs and practicums, candidates complete a Comprehensive Program Review (CPR) of their experiences in the graduate program. Artifacts are aligned with standards demonstrating competency. A graduate advisory committee reviews the final submission and the candidate completes an oral comprehensive experience. Advisory committee signatures attest to the candidates' completion of the requirements.

Step 5: Certification examinations

Candidates must pass the appropriate external state examinations. Once completed and the candidates have completed the appropriate coursework, they are recommended to the state for the appropriate certification.

Post-master's level certification

Candidates who have completed an appropriate Master's degree may apply for a professional certification plan leading to specialized certification. The steps outlined above are required for certification but foundation coursework will have already been completed at the master's level. The candidates then

complete the specialized content area coursework and experiences. When candidates have completed the appropriate preparation and passed the required external examinations, they are eligible for recommendation to the state for certification as a school counselor, a school principal or superintendent, a reading specialist, or an educational diagnostician.

Unit Assessment

The Unit is held accountable by a variety of different entities. Program reports are submitted to NCATE, AACTE, Title II, SBEC, and SACS.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)

Both the undergraduate and graduate programs are aligned with the undergraduate learning goals and the graduate learning goals of the university. Data are collected by program, analyzed, and used for program improvement. Each of the evaluated items in the rubric for student teaching is aligned with the undergraduate learning goals. Reports showing goal performance are sent to stakeholders for their review, analysis, and application to program improvement.

Texas Education Association/State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC)

All certification programs are accountable to the Texas Education Agency's State Board for Educator Certification. The SBEC reviews programs every five years. Angelo State's latest review may be seen on the College of Education Data page. The Unit was found to be in compliance with all statutes and rules for the preparation of individuals certified to work in the public schools. Annually, The SBEC certifies that the university is accredited. Four factors are addressed in the annual audit: performance on state licensing examinations, evaluations of first year teachers, effects on student learning of teachers in years 1, 2, 3, and the quality of supervision of candidates during student teaching. Minimum performance on the Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) is set at 80% for categories: all test takers, all males, all females, all white test takers, all Hispanic test takers, all African American test takers, all other test takers, and the pass rate for each aggregated annual test. Data is provided to all program managers after each administration of the examinations. Principals evaluate all first year teachers, and the results are provided to each educator preparation program for program improvement. First, second, and third year teachers students' test scores will be used to determine the value added by each preparation program. Candidates assess the quality of their supervision at the time of application for the initial teaching

certificate. All information available can be found on the College of Education data website. The information about the preparation programs is posted on the Texas Education's Consumer Website for public review. The review cycle is from September to August with the accreditation decision being made by the next April.

Data are also collected and used for program improvement for annual reports required by AACTE, NCATE, and Title II. These data are available to stakeholders.

The College of Education holds an annual data review day each December. College faculty reviews the data available from different sources, and decisions about steps toward program improvement are made. The individual data reports can be viewed on the College of Education data pages.

The following chart explains the Assessment Points and Types of Assessment aligned to each of the six candidate outcomes/proficiencies for our unit.

**Assessment
Points and
Types of
Assessment**

Candidate Outcomes and Proficiencies

Steps to Assessment	Candidate Knowledge	Proficiencies and Skills	Dispositions	Instructional Decisions	Student Centered Learning	Culturally Responsive Teaching
Step 1. Admission to the Educator Preparation Program						
Basic Skills Test	State approved process for admission to university	Basic Reading, Math, and Writing				
Reading Competency		Complete two lower level history and government classes with a grade of C or better.				
Mathematics Competency		Complete a college level mathematics course with a grade of C or better.				
Oral Communication		Complete a college level public speaking course with a grade of C or better.				
Written Communication		Complete college level English courses that emphasize writing with a grade of C or better.				

Grade Point Average >2.50 out of 4.00		Course level skills				
Dispositions			Read and sign agreement over Unit Dispositions.			
Texas Teacher Code of Ethics			Read and sign agreement over Code of Ethics.			
Actions if Candidate fails to meet criteria, student receives assistance from	Referred to Educator Preparation Information Center: Advisor or Faculty Advisor	Referred to Educator Preparation Information Center: Advisor or Faculty Advisor	Referred to Educator Preparation Information Center: Advisor or Faculty Advisor			
Steps to Assessment	Candidate Knowledge	Proficiencies and Skills	Dispositions	Instructional Decisions	Student Centered Learning	Culturally Responsive Teaching
Step 2. Program Requirements						
Content Coursework	GPA>2.50	A grade of C or better in course work				
Pedagogy Coursework	GPA>2.50	A grade of C or better in course work				
All other coursework	GPA>2.50	A grade of C or better in course work				
Candidate Behavior			Disposition Incident Report			
Planning				Course specific rubric or checklist. Grade of C or better.	Course specific rubric or checklist. Grade of C or better.	Course specific rubric or checklist. Grade of C or better.

Actions if Candidate fails to meet criteria, student receives assistance from:	Referred to Educator Preparation Information Center: Advisor or Faculty Advisor	Referred to Educator Preparation Information Center: Advisor or Faculty Advisor	Unit Review Process	Faculty - remediation or repeat course	Faculty - remediation or repeat course	Faculty - remediation or repeat course
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Steps to Assessment	Candidate Knowledge	Proficiencies and Skills	Dispositions	Instructional Decisions	Student Centered Learning	Culturally Responsive Teaching
Step 3. Pre-student Teaching Requirements						
Content Coursework	GPA>2.50	A grade of C or better in course work				
Pedagogy Coursework	GPA>2.50	A grade of C or better in course work				
Other Coursework	GPA>2.50	A grade of C or better in course work				
Planning and Teaching				Course specific rubric or checklist. Grade of C or better.	Course specific rubric or checklist. Grade of C or better.	Course specific rubric or checklist. Grade of C or better.
Field Work in Diverse Settings			Placement Tracked by Educator Preparation Information Center	Course specific rubric or checklist. Grade of C or better.	Course specific rubric or checklist. Grade of C or better.	Course specific rubric or checklist. Grade of C or better.
Actions if Candidate fails to meet criteria, student receives assistance from:	Referred to Educator Preparation Information Center: Advisor or Faculty Advisor	Referred to Educator Preparation Information Center: Advisor or Faculty Advisor	Unit Review Process	Faculty - remediation or repeat course	Faculty - remediation or repeat course	Faculty - remediation or repeat course

Steps to Assessment	Candidate Knowledge	Proficiencies and Skills	Dispositions	Instructional Decisions	Student Centered Learning	Culturally Responsive Teaching
Step 4. Student Teaching						
Admission Requirements						
Content Coursework	GPA>2.50	A grade of C or better in course work				
Pedagogy Coursework	GPA>2.50	A grade of C or better in course work				
Other Coursework	GPA>2.50	A grade of C or better in course work				
Letters of Reference			Two Letters of Reverence- Both Positive			
Orientation			Must Attend			
Effects on Student Learning				Rubric	Rubric	Rubric
Professional Dispositions			Supervisor and Candidate Forms			
Actions if Candidate fails to meet criteria, student receives assistance from	Referred to Educator Preparation Information Center: Advisor or Faculty Advisor	Referred to Educator Preparation Information Center: Advisor or Faculty Advisor	Unit Review Process	University Supervisor, and Field Advisor	University Supervisor, and Field Advisor	University Supervisor, and Field Advisor
Steps to Assessment	Candidate Knowledge	Proficiencies and Skills	Dispositions	Instructional Decisions	Student Centered Learning	Culturally Responsive Teaching
Step 5. Certification						
Content Knowledge	TEXES					
	MFAT or other department assessment					
Pedagogy	TEXES					

Graduated	Met all degree requirements					
Actions if Candidate fails to meet criteria, student receives assistance from:	Remediation by departments	Supplementary Test Materials				
Unit Assessment						
ASEP-SBEC	Review TExES results after each test administration	Review TExES results after each test administration				
DATA Analysis Annual Conference	Annual Review for Program Improvement	Annual Review for Program Improvement	Annual Review for Program Improvement			
SBEC Program Review	Local Review Annually and 5-year review by TEA	Local Review Annually and 5-year review by TEA	Local Review Annually and 5-year review by TEA	Local Review Annually and 5-year review by TEA	Local Review Annually and 5-year review by TEA	Local Review Annually and 5-year review by TEA
Stakeholders Information	Data Book	Data Book	Data Book	Data Book	Data Book	Data Book
Surveys	Candidate survey	Candidate survey	Candidate survey	Candidate survey	Candidate survey	Candidate survey
Principal Survey	SBEC 1st Year Teacher					
Supervisor Survey	SBEC Surveys Candidates					
Effects on Student Learning by SBEC	In development					