

## Austin Teacher Program Expectations for Graduate Program

*Dear ATP Student,*

*I am delighted that you have chosen to embark on a career in education. Part of that journey is completion of the ATP, Austin Teacher Program. Consider yourself to be one of the elite. This is a selective program that represents a cohesive and coherent approach to preparing you to be a teacher who makes a positive difference for your students. I am hopeful that you find the courses to be meaningful and growth producing as you move from a pre-service teacher to a full-fledged, certified teacher in the state of Texas. We are here to support you in your professional growth and want you to be among the finest prepared teachers in the state. Best wishes as you complete this phase of your education. May your time with us serve you well as you prepare for a career that has a powerful capacity to change lives. You can be the difference you want to see in this world through the gift of education. Julia Shahid*

This handbook is designed to provide helpful information as you transition into graduate level coursework and teaching. This handbook includes descriptions of:

- Goals
- Academic Expectations
- Financial Support for ATP
- Testing Requirements for Certification
- TExES Test Prep & Career Prep
- Graduate Teaching
- Certification Steps & Procedures
- Graduation

**The Austin Teacher Program prepares teachers through a rigorous five-year experiential program combining an undergraduate liberal arts degree with a Master of Arts in Teaching degree culminating in initial certification to teach in Texas. The Austin Teacher Program prepares empowered professional decision makers through course work and field experiences that require collaboration, critique, inquiry, and reflection.**

### **Goals for graduates of the Austin Teacher Program:**

- 1. The Austin Teacher draws from a substantial beginning and professional knowledge base of content, pedagogy, and assessment skills to provide relevant, meaningful and data driven activities and experiences for all learners.**
- 2. The Austin Teacher effectively uses a variety of resources including technology to plan, implement, and assess instruction.**

- 3. The Austin Teacher acknowledges, appreciates, and appropriately responds to the diversity that learners bring to the classroom.**
- 4. The Austin Teacher demonstrates effective professional and interpersonal communication.**
- 5. The Austin Teacher demonstrates knowledge of the purposes and values of education and the often conflicting viewpoints regarding these.**
- 6. The Austin Teacher demonstrates a commitment to continue learning and improving, to contribute to the profession, and to maintain professional ethics and personal integrity.**

The Austin College Educator Prep Program (ATP) is under both the guidelines and requirements of both Austin College and the State of Texas, Texas Education Agency (TEA). The Texas Education Agency is the state agency that oversees primary and secondary public education. It is headed by the commissioner of education. The mission of TEA is to provide leadership, guidance and resources to help schools meet the educational needs of all students. The work of TEA and the entire public school system is driven by laws created by the Texas Legislature and the U.S. Congress and administrative rules adopted by the commissioner of education, the State Board of Education, and the State Board for Educator Certification.

### **ATP Academic Expectations**

#### **Course requirements for each certification field:**

<http://www.austincollege.edu/academics/atp/atp-certification-levels/>

**Undergraduate Enrollment in Graduate Courses:** Students must petition to take graduate courses prior to formal admission to the graduate program. A maximum of three courses during the senior year is possible. These courses may count as dual undergraduate and graduate credit if necessary to meet the 34 credits required for the BA degree. Completion of Education 475 with a B- or better is a prerequisite to all graduate courses or instructor permission must be sought. Students must be in good academic and social standing, and their requests must be approved by their ATP advisor as well as the program chair.

Enrollment in and satisfactory completion of graduate courses do not guarantee admission to the graduate program. You must maintain GPA and teaching requirements for admission to the program as formal admission is granted by the ATP Admissions Committee. This committee makes an official decision after final senior grades are posted. The GPA requirement is a cumulative GPA of 2.75 and 2.75 in content certification field. Successful teaching in undergraduate field placement is required.

**Minimum Grade Point Average:** The required minimum grade point average in the graduate program is 3.00. The minimum passing grade in the graduate program is C. The grade of D is not used. Grades lower than a C are counted as an F. Students receive letter grades in all graduate courses except Education 570/571, 580/81, or 590/91, which are evaluated as Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U). The grade of S in these courses signifies achievement equivalent to an A or B.

**Academic Probation and Termination for Graduate Students:** Any graduate student whose graduate cumulative grade point average is below 3.00 will be placed on academic probation through the following term. If the grade point average is not raised to at least 3.00 by the end of the one-semester probationary period, the student will be dropped from the program unless an extension of probation is granted by the Academic Standing Committee. Students on academic probation may not register for the Graduate Clinical Teaching Experience (Education 571, 581, or 591).

**Time Limit for Completion of Graduate Program:** All work that may be counted as credit toward the MAT degree must be completed within a period of two years from the time the student has completed the first graduate course. This time limit may be extended under some circumstances.

**Academic Integrity-** The ATP follows the same academic integrity policy as the College. See the “Environment”. Violations will be treated in accordance with this policy.

**Professional Expectations** –Graduate students are expected to project professionalism in all aspects of graduate requirements. Notification is expected if they are unable to attend class, or teaching assignments. Teaching commitment and quality is expected.

**Course Load:** The maximum course load for a graduate student is three course credit units during the fall, spring, and summer terms. To be considered a full-time graduate student, one must enroll for a minimum of two course credit units during the fall and spring terms and one course credit unit during the summer term.

**Field Placements:** All graduate courses require a field placement with the exception of these three: Education 520, Education 549, and Education 598. A release to check criminal history is mandatory in any course with field placement and when you apply to the Texas Education Agency for either a Probationary or Standard Teaching Certificate.

### **Financial Support for ATP**

**Summer School Schedule:** students can take up to three graduate courses during the ATP summer sessions. Missing one class period during the summer session is equivalent of missing 1 week of class during summer school. The first class session usually begins one week after

graduation.

**Scholarships:** limited number of merit and need based scholarships for ATP students are available. Students having completed Education 475, and about to enter full time graduate coursework will be considered for a limited number of ATP scholarships. These decisions will be based on academic performance, quality of teaching in field experiences, and demonstrated commitment to the profession. Performance in Educ 475 and the information provided on the ATP application form will be considered in scholarship decisions.

**Financial Aid:** Laurie Coulter, Assistant Vice President and Executive Director of Financial Aid is your best resource for loans with forgiveness clauses and/grants for graduate students.

**Graduate Assistantships:** available for full time graduate students up to two semesters. The amount awarded is determined by the Financial Aid office based on student need. Graduate Assistants are assigned in various departments on campus and sign a contract of agreement to working the number of hours awarded. Payment is based upon \$10.00 per hour.

*Note: If you want to have testing/certificate/fingerprinting/supervisory travel fees as part of your financial aid package, you should let Laurie Coulter in financial aid know.*

### **Testing Requirements for Certification:**

To obtain an initial teaching certificate, students must pass two TExES tests.

- 1. Content TExES test: ATP graduate students must pass their content/TExES certification exam in order to qualify for graduate teaching. Students planning to intern in the fall, should plan to take the test the spring of their senior year. Approval for scheduling the test should be discussed with the methods course professor and/or ATP advisor. Some of the content area tests are limited administrations, so students should discuss the best option with their ATP advisor. There is a 45 day waiting period to retake a test in the event that a student does not pass.**
- 2. Pedagogy & Professional Responsibilities TExES test – this test is to be taken and passed before students can be issued their Standard Certificate.**

Note: TEA reserves the right to change the fee structure. Currently TExES tests are \$134.20 each, except for EC-6 individual tests which are \$66.72. Probationary Certificate is \$52.00 + fingerprinting costs - \$47.45. Standard Certificate is \$77.00 + fingerprinting if it has not been done previously.

## **TExES Test Prep & Career Prep**

Beginning January 2016 the ATP is requiring that students who will be completing their graduate teaching in the fall or spring of the cohort year should plan to participate in the Jan Term TExES test prep and career prep.

**TExES Test Prep:** *Note – some students may have completed content test prep before January depending upon when they took their methods course.*

Steps are:

- Schedule a 3 hour appointment with the Education Administrative Assistant to take and grade the practice content test.
- Schedule a time to meet with your ATP advisor to discuss a study plan and test date. Once you have studied and your ATP advisor thinks you are ready to register for the test, they will sign Career Prep Contract (or notify the Education Administrative Assistant) that you are ready to be approved for the test with the testing company.
- Registration for test process:
  - Step 1) The Administrative Assistant will create a new educator account on the TEA website for the ATP student. \*(After completion of EDUC 475)
  - Step 2) TEA will send an email to ATP student with educator info through a NON AC email. This email will also have the \*ETS (Testing site) link attached.
  - Step 3) The Administrative Assistant will send the ATP student email notification that their name and information has been uploaded, including their TEA #.
  - Step 4) The ATP student will log in to TEA and update profile with all information. (Do NOT register for certification at this time.)
  - Step 5) The ATP student will email the Administrative Assistant with the updated username and password.
  - Step 6) The ATP student will do test prep for exams, using the correct Career Prep contract form.
  - Step 7) After the ATP student gets professor approval for content test(s), the student will turn in signed Career Prep contract to administrative assistant.
  - Step 8) The Administrative Assistant will approve student for correct test on TEA/ETS website.
  - Step 9) The ATP student will log into ETS and register for test and let administrative assistant know the testing date.
- **Career Prep:**
  - Workshop with Career Services (WCC263): students will be expected to participate in a career prep workshop during January. (Possible dates TBA.) Students should plan to take the following materials to the workshop:
    - Draft of resume
    - Draft of cover letter

- Mock Interviews – The ATP will set up an interview schedule with various administrators to give you input on the types of questions, tips for interviewing, and general interview protocol. (Date TBA for mock interviews.)
- If unable to complete the career prep workshop, you will need to schedule a meeting with ATP advisor and Career Services.

## **Graduate Teaching**

**Graduate Teaching Application:** The semester before a student is to do their graduate teaching, they need to complete a “Graduate Teaching Application”. This form states whether the student wishes to apply for clinical teaching or for an internship for their graduate teaching experience. Forms are given to the administrative assistant and reviewed by faculty at scheduled staff meeting.

The ATP faculty makes the decision for each individual as to which type of teaching experience based upon the individual’s academic performance and their evaluation of the student’s teaching preferences. Decisions are often not made until the supervising faculty member has had opportunities to observe student’s teaching. A formal letter is sent to the student informing them of the decision. Students are told to make an appointment with the faculty member who will be supervising their graduate teaching.

Graduate Teaching is generally completed during the last semester. There are two choices for the graduate teaching experience: clinical teaching or internship.

Students register for 3 credits their last semester depending on certification level.

Two of the credits are graduate teaching experience, which gives extended opportunities to increase competence through actual teaching experience as graduate student teachers or interns in public or approved private schools. During the practicum, students are observed and coached by ATP faculty members and school personnel. Students engage in reflection about their own teaching.

### **Graduate Teaching Experience**

What are the differences between clinical teaching and internship?

<b><u>Clinical Teaching:</u></b>	<b><u>Internship:</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Available both fall and spring</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Only available for students starting graduate teaching in the fall semester</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The ATP sets up the field placement for the student teaching experience, based on your meeting with the Chair of the Austin Teacher Program where you discuss the school district/and grade level or subject you prefer</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>You</u> are responsible for applying and securing a teaching position with TEA Approved school district. If the applicant wishes, a letter, which states they are qualified, and an “Intern Explanation Letter” can be provided for them to enclose in application materials. When the student is offered a teaching position, they are to verify that the teaching position is an acceptable assignment with their ATP assigned supervisor before signing a contract.</li></ul>

<b><u>Clinical Teaching:</u></b>	<b><u>Internship:</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Districts are sent a “Clinical Teacher Assignment Form” to complete and return to the Education office to make the assignment official. The student teacher and the supervising teacher should receive an e-mail before the assignment begins with information on the expectations for all parties involved with the assignment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The administrative assistant sends the school district a “Statement of Eligibility” form. This serves as our confirmation that the student is indeed eligible for the assignment. Once the form is completed by the district and sent back to the ATP, the certification officer goes into the TEA website to make the recommendation for Probationary Certificate.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach for 13/14 weeks (60 days WITHOUT pay) You will have a mentor teacher –experience which includes observation of your cooperating teacher, and gradual responsibilities in the classroom until you are teaching all day.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You will be required to teach for a full school year, with pay. Teacher candidate will follow the district calendar and policy.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students register for 3 credits their last semester depending on certification level. The clinical teaching counts for two credits and the seminar class counts for one credit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elementary Certification – EDUC 571 (Clinical)/572 (Seminar)</li> <li>Grades 4-8 Certifications –choice of Elementary OR Secondary courses</li> <li>Secondary Certification – EDUC 581 (Clinical)/ 582 (Seminar)</li> <li>All Level Certification – EDUC 591 (Clinical)/ 592 (Seminar)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students register for 2 credits in the fall of their internship (1 credit for internship teaching and 1 credit for seminar) and 1 credit during the spring of their internship for the teaching experience. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elementary Certification – EDUC 570 (Intern)/ 572 (Seminar)</li> <li>Grades 4-8 Certifications –choice of Elementary OR Secondary courses</li> <li>Secondary Certification – EDUC 580 (Intern)/ 582 (Seminar)</li> <li>All Level Certification – EDUC 590 (Intern)/ 592 (Seminar)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The field supervisor will come 5 times for observation/evaluation. The first visit is an informal one to visit your classroom and meet your teacher. They will visit a minimum of 3 more times for formal evaluation. The cooperating teacher will do a total of 5 evaluations – 3 individual lesson observations and 2 overall evaluations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will be evaluated by your AC field supervisor at least 5 times across two semesters.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students apply for their Standard Certificate at the end of their clinical teaching experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must apply for and be recommended for a one year Probationary Certificate for their internship year. <i>After their contract is completed</i>, students may apply for a Standard Certificate.</li> </ul>

**Both:**

- Must take the content TExES test and pass prior to graduate teaching.
- Students will be charged a supervision fee by the College determined by how far the school is from Sherman. See the AC Bulletin for exact costs.
- The Pedagogy and Professional Responsibility TExES test is generally taken during the semester in which the graduate seminar is taken.

**Graduate Teacher Seminars – on campus**

The seminar class is taken concurrently with your teaching experience and is 1 credit. Sessions will be held on campus and in some instances will also be held through electronic meetings. The class meets one night a week during the semester and three all day sessions. The graduate teachers are expected to come back to campus for three all day sessions. Usually the faculty member who is your ATP Field supervisor for graduate teaching will be the one who teaches the seminar course. The professor should be in contact with you to let you know the seminar dates before the semester starts. Seminar focuses on instructional methods and strategies, and the development of an understanding of the educational system, including legal and ethical aspects of teaching with emphasis upon the state and local structures. **Students are expected to attend all on-campus seminars.**

## State Board for Educator Certification/ETS (TExES Tests)

The State Board for Educator Certification (TEA) website is instrumental in the process of becoming a certified teacher. The website ([www.tea.state.tx.us](http://www.tea.state.tx.us)) is set up for two entry points.

- ❖ The educator side - Every student who completes the graduate program with the intention to be certified as a teacher for the State of Texas, will need to establish an educator account with TEA and an account with ETS.
  - The TEA site will be used throughout the educator's career. This site contains information on becoming a teacher, as well as up to date news from the State. This is where all contact information is kept on the educator, and it is the responsibility for the educator to make sure information is current. The site can also be used by school districts or anyone having a social security number to see if a person has a teaching certificate. The TEA screen is blue for the educator.
  - The ETS site is used for registering for test(s) needed for initial certification and for adding certification areas once certified.

### 1. How You Get into the TEA Database:

- The Education office establishes your educator record with the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Timing for this is usually when you are ready to take your content TExES test. (See Jan Term for test prep) You must have the approval of your content methods faculty to be entered into the TEA.
- Once your name is entered into the TEA system by the ATP, the student/candidate will receive an e-mail from TEA with their user name (Last Name.First Name) and a temporary password. The student/candidate should use instructions to update all contact information as well as driver's license number and ethnicity. Note your TEA number and new password (we suggest you write the password information on your education file in the ATP office. **Your TEA # is very important because you will access your TEA/TEAL account to apply for certificates, and keeping your contact information current.**

### 2. Eligibility for Certification:

Students completing the MAT degree with a successful graduate teaching experience are eligible for certification in Texas upon passing the appropriate TExES exams and completing the application for certification. Certification candidates also must submit to a fingerprinting/criminal history check.

- Standard Certificate –
  - i. 5 year teaching certificate after all certification requirements met
  - ii. cost \$77.00
  - iii. within 5 years must have 150 CPE hours - You should make a folder to

keep track of all of your professional development hours (school in-service, courses, certificates, etc.). Only those CPE activities from approved registered providers will be recognized for certificate renewal purposes.

- iv. Additional Certificates – Once you have your initial certificate through the Austin Teacher Program, you qualify to take additional subject test to be certified in more than one subject. Procedure is the same - register with ETS as additional test. Once you pass, you will need to apply with TEA for the additional certificate.

### **Steps for applying for Certification**

- Complete Educator Profile at SBEC online site - (See “Creating Your Educator Account With Texas State Board for Educator Certification” handout).
- Registration for required TExES tests
  - Establish Account with testing service (ETS) (See “Steps to Registering for TExES Test” handout)
    - Register for Content test with ETS
    - Register for Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities Test for certification level with ETS
- Apply for certificate(s) - probationary and/or standard. Note: internships in Texas public schools require a Probationary Certificate.
  - Fingerprinting
  - Payment for fingerprinting and certificate
- When Student Completes Program: Apply for Standard Certificate

### **Austin College Graduation Process**

Students must formally apply for graduation with the Registrar’s office at the following link:  
<http://www.austincollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/ApplicationGraduation-v11-2014.pdf>

Once this is done, you will receive notice from Austin College regarding caps & gowns for graduation ceremonies. If you desire, the gown can be sent to the ATP office for pickup.