



AUSTIN  
COLLEGE *teach*

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*Austin College*  
*Teacher Program Expectations*  
*Handbook*

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## Purpose

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

**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.**

*We are delighted that you have chosen to embark on a career in education. Part of that journey is completion of the ATP, or the Austin Teacher Program. Consider yourself to be one of the elites. 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.*

## ATP Program Fees

**Austin College Required FEES:** When a student enters Austin College as an undergraduate they pay \$350 general deposit. \$150 of that is non-refundable (registration fee) and the remaining \$200 is kept on account until your B.A. graduation, minus any unpaid fees. \$100 of this fee is kept for ATP students, (\$50 non-refundable) and the remaining \$50 is kept on account until you graduate from the MAT. Any remaining balance after graduation will be refunded then.

**ATP TESTING FEE:** Beginning Fall of 2023, a non-refundable ATP Testing Fee of \$400 (\$200/semester) will be charged to every ATP candidate as they begin graduate course work. Additionally, candidates who must take the Science of Teaching Reading exam will be charged an additional \$136 (\$68/semester). These fees cover the cost of test preparation programs and inperson trainings, as well as the first-attempt cost of all state tests.

## **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 oft-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 Policies Related to Teacher Certification**

### **Licensure and Testing**

Students seeking teacher certification in Texas are required to successfully complete several licensure examinations. Your specific exam requirements will vary based on your designated degree and certification plan.

**Licensure Examinations:** [Texas Examinations of Educator Standards \(TExES\)](#) tests measure the content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge required of an entry-level educator in a particular field in Texas public schools.

**Test Preparation:** Effective study includes coursework, specific practice modules, and taking practice tests to measure readiness for examination. Our program uses a combination of 240Tutoring.com, TEA-released tests, TExES practice tests, and professor evaluation to help prepare and assess readiness for state tests.

## Technology Standards

Pursuant to Texas Education Code 21.0452(b)(5), all students who are enrolled in the educator preparation program at Austin College must demonstrate the ability to use technology. The ATP has incorporated both the (1) [TEA Technology Standards](#) for All Teachers and (2) the [ISTE Standards for Educators](#) into the curriculum. Elements of technology are present in both the undergraduate and graduate educator preparation courses of the Austin Teacher Program.

## Background Check Requirement/Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation

Pursuant to 19 TAC §227.1(b)(1), candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to employment as an educator. If you were convicted of an offense that is not considered appropriate for an educator, you could be ineligible to earn certification in Texas (19 TAC §227.1(d)(1)). For more information, visit [TEA National Criminal History Checks--FAQs](#). Even when a certificate is granted, a district may choose not to hire an individual with a criminal history.

Additionally, pursuant to 19 TAC §227.1(b)(2), candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to an internship or clinical teaching. If you were convicted of an offense that is not considered appropriate for an educator, you could be ineligible to earn certification in Texas.

Prior to admittance into the ATP and the completion of an internship or clinical teaching, education students will spend 100+ hours gaining classroom experience. Each district requires any individual working with students to pass a background check for their district. Any teacher candidate who fails to pass these checks will be unable to complete their placement hours, and thus will not meet programmatic requirements. Therefore, candidates who have a criminal history and continue in the ATP do so at their own risk. Austin College and the Austin Teacher Program are not at fault if a candidate is unable to meet program requirements, denied a teaching certificate, or is unable to find a teaching job because they have a criminal record.

The Texas Education Agency provides candidates with an opportunity to conduct a preliminary Criminal History Evaluation. This evaluation is a non-mandatory, non-binding evaluation of an individual's self-reported criminal history. In addition, the agency obtains your name-based Texas criminal history information. The service is provided to the requestor for a non-refundable fee. The requestor will receive an evaluation letter by email from agency staff advising of potential ineligibility for educator certification. Learn more about the [Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation](#). (19 TAC §227.1(d)(3)).

## Credit for Military Experience

In accordance with 19 TAC §228.35(a)(5)(A), military service members or military veterans may be given credit for certain verified military service, training, or education toward the training, education, work experience or related requirements (other than certification examinations) for educator certification requirements, provided that the military service, training, or education is directly related to the certificate being sought.

## Complaints Process

In accordance with 19 TAC §228.70(b)(2), COMPLAINTS REGARDING EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS. (a) (a) The board shall propose rules necessary to establish a process for a candidate for teacher certification to direct a complaint against an educator preparation program to the agency.

Austin College expects all individuals to act with honesty and integrity in personal, social, and academic relationships. We are committed to a climate of civility and respect, fostering an environment that encourages resolution of concerns in an expeditious, fair, and amicable manner. Information about complaint procedures, including a Formal Student Complaint Form, can be accessed [here](#).

Complaints against the Austin Teacher Program to the Texas Education Agency can be initiated through the process [outlined here](#). All complaints filed with the TEA must be in writing. This can be done through the online [general complaint form](#), or can be mailed to:

**Texas Education Agency Complaints Management 1701**  
N. Congress Ave.  
Austin, TX 78701-1494 Tel  
(512) 463-3544  
[complaintsmanagement@tea.texas.gov](mailto:complaintsmanagement@tea.texas.gov)

## Supply and Demand of Texas Teachers

Per 19 TAC §227.1(c)(3A), the EPP shall inform all applicants, in writing, of the effect of supply and demand forces on the educator workforce in this state. A significant number of our Austin Teacher Program graduates find jobs in the DFW metroplex and surrounding areas. This North Central Texas area currently has a predicted growth rate that is double the state average for [EC-6 Generalists](#) and [Secondary School Teachers](#) (not including Special Education or CTE). Even in other metropolitan areas, such as Austin, San Antonio, and Houston, the ATP has a consistently high rate of employment for interns and standard-certified teachers. For more information about certification needs and other hiring trends in Texas schools, go to TEA's [Teacher Shortage Areas](#) and [Educator Reports and Data](#), as well as the [Texas Workforce Commission Career Check](#) website.

## Teacher Reciprocity

Our teacher preparation program is approved by the Texas Education Agency as an Educator Preparation Provider (EPP). Teacher candidates who intend to teach in standard EC-12 settings and who complete all requirements for graduation, pass appropriate TExES exams, meet other requirements for official teacher certification, apply for and are granted State of Texas Teaching Certification may be eligible to teach in other states across the United States. Use [this link](#) to learn more about states that have an agreement of reciprocity with Texas teachers.

## EPP Performance and Program Accountability

Per 19 TAC §227.1(c)(3)(B), The Austin College Teacher Program is designed to foster the intellectual and professional development of future teachers. Through the guided application of content knowledge, effective pedagogical models, varied field experiences, hands on learning opportunities, and reflective

practice, pre-service teacher candidates develop their instructional expertise and acquire professional skills.

The pass rates as reported in the ASEP Report for the last five academic years:

### *PPR Certification Exam Pass Rate for ATP candidates*

<b>Rates from 2017/18-2021/22</b>	2018-2019 - 100%	2020-2021 - 94%
2017-2018 - 100%	2019-2020 - 100%	2021-2022 - 100%

More information about the Austin College Teacher Program performance can be found [here](#) and [here](#) on the TEA website.

## **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 also a 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.

**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 initial class session usually begins one week after graduation.

**Field Placements:** Many graduate courses require a field placement. 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 an *Intern Certificate* or *Standard Teaching Certificate*.

## **Financial Support for Completion of ATP**

**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 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 intern 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 30-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 most TExES exams are \$116.00 each (this includes the ESL Supplemental). EC-6 individual tests are \$58. The STR Exam (Science of Teaching Reading) and ELAR 4-8 exam are \$136. Intern Certificate is \$78.00 and fingerprinting cost is \$50.25. A Standard 5 Year Certificate/fingerprinting is the same cost as the Intern Certificate.

## **TExES Test Preparation & Career Preparation**

Beginning Fall 2023, the ATP requires that all students begin test preparation when they enroll in their first graduate class. This is in anticipation of state testing the following term. Students will also complete several steps towards career preparation.

### **TExES Test Prep:**

Steps are:

- The ATP Certification Officer/Admin will set up a study account for your content exam through either *Certify Teacher* or *240Tutoring*
- After you have practiced and made at least a 90% on your entire composite/practice exam, share with your ATP faculty advisor, who will notify the certification officer that you are ready to be approved for your TExES exam.
- **Registration for test process:** (NOTE: You must be admitted to TEA before any test registration can take place) ○ Step 1) As part of your contingency admission, the Certification Officer will create a new educator account on the TEA website for the ATP student using your PROFESSIONAL EMAIL (a NON-AC email address).

- Step 2) TEA will send an email to ATP student with educator info through your professional email.
- Step 3) The Certification Officer/Admin 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 candidate will register with the Texas Educator Certification Exam Program (TECEP). Have your TEA ID handy when you register.
- Step 6) The ATP student will complete test prep for exams, using the Career Prep contract form.
- Step 7) The Certification Officer/Admin will approve student for correct test on TEA/Pearson website.
- Step 8) The ATP student will log into TECEP and register for the test and let Certification Officer/Admin know the testing date.

• **Career Prep:**

- Students will be expected to meet with Career Services (WCC263) to revise and polish their professional résumé. A draft of the résumé should be brought to the meeting. All résumés will be loaded into Handshake and submitted to the certification officer through the google classroom.
- Mock Interviews – The ATP will be offering a mock panel interview with various teachers and administrators to give you experience with response to questions, professional affect, and general interview protocol. (Generally, this is during Jan-Term on MLK Day).
- ATP students will participate in a “How to Job Search in ISDs” 1-2 hour asynchronous workshop to be finished before Spring Term begins.
- ATP Students will meet with an advisor to practice writing a compelling introductory email to principals. (Typically during the February mandatory meeting).
- If unable to complete the career prep mock interview and job search workshop, you will need to schedule a meeting with ATP advisor and Career Services.

## Graduate Teaching Application

**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 Certification Officer/Admin 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 register for 3 credits for their graduate teaching experience.

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 Seminars

The seminar class is taken concurrently with your teaching experience and is 1 credit. Sessions will be held either on campus or held through electronic meetings. The class will meet several times/dates during your first semester. Dates will be given out by the professor. Normally, the faculty member who is your ATP Field supervisor for graduate teaching will be the one who teaches the seminar course, but this is NOT always the case. The professor should be in contact with you to let you know the seminar dates before the semester begins. 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 seminars.**

## Graduate Teaching Experience

What are the differences between clinical teaching and an internship?

<b><u>BOTH Clinical Teaching and Internship</u></b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must take and pass the content TExES test, STR (elementary only), and ESL Supplementary prior to graduate teaching.</li> <li>• Students will be charged a supervision fee by the College determined by how far the school is from Sherman. <b>Required Travel Fee For Placements: 0-25 miles = \$0; 26-60 miles = \$400; 61-80 miles = \$500; 81-90 miles = \$600.</b> See the Austin College Bulletin.</li> <li>• The Pedagogy and Professional Responsibility TExES test is generally taken during the semester in which the graduate seminar is taken.</li> </ul>	
<b>Clinical Teaching:</b>	<b>Internship:</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>• Field placement for the clinical teaching experience will be assigned based on your preferred school district and grade level/subject. Every effort will be made by the ATP to accommodate; however, not all preferred placements are guaranteed.</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 needed, Letter of Assurance can be included in the 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 <b>before</b> signing a contract.</li> </ul>
<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 school district is sent 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 returned to the ATP, the student will <u>apply and pay for an intern certificate</u>. Then the certification officer will make the recommendation/approve said candidate for an <u>Intern Certificate</u>.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach for 14-15 weeks (a minimum of 70 full days) <u>WITHOUT pay</u>. This experience 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 are required to teach for a full school year, with pay. Teacher candidate will follow the district calendar, district policies, and campus protocols without exception.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students register for 3 credits their last term depending on certification level. The clinical teaching counts for two credits, while seminar class counts for one credit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Elementary Certification:</b> EDUC 571 (Clinical)/572 (Seminar) ○ <b>Grades 4-8 Certifications:</b> choice of Elementary OR Secondary courses ○</li> <li>○ <b>Secondary Certification:</b> EDUC 581 (Clinical)/ 582 (Seminar) ○ <b>All Level Certification:</b> 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.</li> <li>○ <b>Elementary Certification:</b> EDUC 570 (Intern)/ 572 (Seminar)</li> <li>○ <b>Grades 4-8 Certifications:</b> choice of Elementary OR Secondary courses</li> <li>○ <b>Secondary Certification:</b> EDUC 580 (Intern)/ 582 (Seminar)</li> <li>○ <b>All Level Certification:</b> EDUC 590 (Intern)/ 592 (Seminar)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The field supervisor will come 4 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 several evaluations – generally, 3 individual lesson observations and 2 overall evaluations.</li> <li>• <b><i>Near the completion of your time, your cooperating teacher and field supervisor will make a recommendation for your certification based on your performance</i></b></li> <li>• When their clinical time is completed, <i>and as long as the candidates have received positive recommendations</i>, they will then apply for a Standard Certificate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will be evaluated by your ATP field supervisor at least 5 times across two semesters. (Three times in the fall and two times in the spring).</li> <li>• Your MENTOR TEACHER will provide additional observations/evaluations to the program.</li> <li>• <b><i>Near the completion of your contract, your principal and field supervisor will make a recommendation for your certification based on your performance</i></b></li> <li>• When their internship contract is completed, <i>and as long as the candidates have received positive recommendations</i>, they will then apply for a Standard Certificate.</li> </ul> <p>PLEASE NOTE: Your principal or T-TESS administrator will conduct walk-ins and evaluations for the district; however, these are not part of your ATP files.</p>

## Eligibility for Placement and Certification

The state of Texas requires all applicants for a teaching certificate to be fingerprinted and TEA conducts a national criminal history check on all applicants for certification. Texas Education Code (TEC) §22.0831 states "The board shall review the national criminal history record information of a person who has not previously submitted fingerprints to the department or been subject to a national criminal history record information review." The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) can deny a teaching certificate to an applicant who has a criminal record. Additionally, even if SBEC agrees to grant a teaching certificate to a person with a criminal record, a school district will conduct its own criminal background check and can decline to hire an applicant because of his or her record.

Candidates who have a criminal history and continue in the ATP do so at their own risk. Austin College and the Austin Teacher Program are not at fault if a candidate is denied a teaching certificate or is unable to find a teaching job because they have a criminal record. Please read §249.16 below.

For more information, visit [TEA National Criminal History Checks--FAQs](#). If you have a criminal history, consider applying for a [Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation](#) from TEA before seeking certification.

**§249.16. Eligibility of Persons with Criminal History for a Certificate under Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 53, and Texas Education Code, Chapter 21.**

- (a) Pursuant to the Texas Occupations Code (TOC), Chapter 53, and the Texas Education Code (TEC), Chapter 21, Subchapter B, the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) may suspend or revoke an existing valid certificate, deny an applicant a certificate, bar a person from being assessed or examined for a certificate, or take other disciplinary action because of a person's conviction of a felony or misdemeanor or certain other criminal history.
- (b) Disciplinary action under the TOC, §53.021, does not apply to a person convicted only of an offense punishable as a Class C misdemeanor unless the person is an applicant for or the holder of a license that authorizes the person to possess a firearm and the person was convicted of the misdemeanor offense of domestic violence as defined by 18 United States Code, §921.
- (c) When statute or SBEC rule codified in the Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 7, requires an offense to directly relate to the duties and responsibilities of the education profession, an offense is considered to directly relate if the offense indicates a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of a student or minor, parent of a student, fellow employee, or professional colleague; interferes with the orderly, efficient, or safe operation of a school district, campus, or activity; or indicates impaired ability or misrepresentation of qualifications to perform the functions of an educator. Offenses considered to relate directly to the duties and responsibilities of the education profession include, but are not limited to:
  - (1) offenses involving moral turpitude;
  - (2) offenses involving any form of sexual or physical abuse or neglect of a student or minor or other illegal conduct with a student or minor;
  - (3) offenses involving any felony possession or conspiracy to possess, or any misdemeanor or felony transfer, sale, distribution, or conspiracy to transfer, sell, or distribute any controlled substance defined in the Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 481;
  - (4) offenses involving school property or funds;
  - (5) offenses involving any attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle any person to hold or obtain a position as an educator;
  - (6) offenses occurring wholly or in part on school property or at a school-sponsored activity; or
  - (7) felony offenses involving driving while intoxicated (DWI).
- (d) Except as provided in subsection (f) of this section, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) staff, pursuant to the TOC, Chapter 53, and the requirements of this chapter, shall notify the applicant or certificate holder in writing of the TEA staff's intent to seek disciplinary action, including denial or revocation, and the reasons for the proposed action. The applicant or certificate holder shall have the opportunity to be heard according to the procedures set forth in this chapter.
- (e) The grounds for revoking or suspending a certificate provided by this section and the TOC, Chapter 53, are cumulative of the other grounds and remedies provided by the TEC, §21.060, and this chapter.
- (f) The TEC, §21.058, shall control actions pursued under that section.

*Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §249.16 issued under the Texas Education Code, §§21.041(b)(1), (7), and (8), 21.058(a) and (b), and 21.060; and Texas Occupations Code, §53.021 and §53.025.*

*Source: The provisions of this §249.16 adopted to be effective March 31, 1999, 24 TexReg 2304; amended to be effective June 21, 2009, 34 TexReg 3944; amended to be effective May 18, 2014, 39 TexReg 3710 ; amended to be effective December 28, 2014, 39 TexReg 10010.*

## TEA Certification/TECEP Registration

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 Pearson's **Texas Educator Certification Examination Program (TECEP)** ○ 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 TECEP site is used for registering for test(s) needed for initial certification and for adding certification areas once certified. [HERE](#) are instructions about how to create an account, registration for exams, and scheduling of exams.

### **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.**

### **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.

- Intern Certificate (for candidates seeking a paid internship)
  - i. 1 year teaching certificate for students who have passed the subject matter requirements as a part of an approved EPP program
  - ii. Cost is \$78 plus \$50.25 for fingerprinting
- Standard Certificate –
  - i. 5 year teaching certificate after all certification requirements met
  - ii. Cost is \$78 plus \$50.25 for fingerprinting
  - iii. Within 5 years you must have 150 CPE hours - You should make a folder to keep track of all of your professional development hours (school inservice, 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 Pearson 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 TEA 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 (Pearson’s TECEP) (See “Steps to Registering for TExES Test” handout)
  - Register for Content test with Pearson’s TECEP
  - Register for Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities Test for certification level with Pearson’s TECEP
- Apply for certificate(s) - intern and/or standard. Note: internships in Texas public schools require an Intern Certificate.
  - Fingerprinting ○ Payment for fingerprinting and certificate
- When Student Completes Program: Apply for Standard Certificate

## Applying for the Intern Certificate

**STOP:** Set up TEAL account if you have not already done so.

**Log into TEAL - <http://tea.texas.gov/>**

1. In TEAL, click blue text “Educator” (right above your TEA ID#)
2. The next screen is a blue screen “Educator Certification Online System” (ECOS)
3. Click Applications button on the left
4. Click 4<sup>th</sup> title down which is “**Intern Certificate Texas Program**” The cost of the certification fee is \$78 per the ECOS window, and \$50.25 for fingerprinting fee. The fee must be paid with 48 hours or the certificate application will be deleted.
5. Click “Apply” button and answer questions.
6. At the section where it says “I request to be recommended by this Entity” Be sure to select the ENTITY: Austin College (Austin Teacher Program) # 091502.
7. Be sure to check the boxes for all the questions and click “apply”.
8. The TEA system will take you into payment and fingerprint payment web pages.
9. **Be sure to pay the fees as appropriate.** Your certificate will not post if the fee is not paid.

***Fingerprint Process:*** When you pay the fingerprint fee at TEA, you will receive the FAST PASS by email with additional information for the fingerprint process. If you do not pay the fee, you will NOT receive the email. Be sure your email in your profile is current and be sure to check your SPAM or JUNK mail just in case the TEA email is filtered by your browser.

If you already have completed fingerprint information in the TEA system which was uploaded by a district or entity, you will NOT be prompted to complete the fingerprint process again. Any questions regarding Fingerprinting should be directed to TEA at this link to the TEA Help Desk: [http://tea.texas.gov/Texas\\_Educators/Certification/Fingerprinting/](http://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Educators/Certification/Fingerprinting/) - Fingerprint phone is 512936-8404

***Please note that the TEA HELP DESK has a much quicker response time.***

## Austin College Graduation Process

Students must formally apply for graduation through WebHopper, which is linked to the Registrar’s Office.

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.

# Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators

TEXAS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE: Title 19, Part 7, Chapter 247, Rule §247.2

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## Enforceable Standards

### **(1) Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performance.**

- (A) Standard 1.1. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.
- (B) Standard 1.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.
- (C) Standard 1.3. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.
- (D) Standard 1.4. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.
- (E) Standard 1.5. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or that are used to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents of students, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.
- (F) Standard 1.6. The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.
- (G) Standard 1.7. The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other state and federal laws.
- (H) Standard 1.8. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.
- (I) Standard 1.9. The educator shall not make threats of violence against school district employees, school board members, students, or parents of students.
- (J) Standard 1.10. The educator shall be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.
- (K) Standard 1.11. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent his or her employment history, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.
- (L) Standard 1.12. The educator shall refrain from the illegal use, abuse, or distribution of controlled substances, prescription drugs, and toxic inhalants.
- (M) Standard 1.13. The educator shall not be under the influence of alcohol or consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

### **(2) Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues.**

- (A) Standard 2.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- (B) Standard 2.2. The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.
- (C) Standard 2.3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.
- (D) Standard 2.4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.
- (E) Standard 2.5. The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.

- (F) Standard 2.6. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.
- (G) Standard 2.7. The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or who provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.
- (H) Standard 2.8. The educator shall not intentionally or knowingly subject a colleague to sexual harassment.

### **(3) Ethical Conduct Toward Students.**

- (A) Standard 3.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- (B) Standard 3.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health, or safety of the student or minor.
- (C) Standard 3.3. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.
- (D) Standard 3.4. The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status, or sexual orientation.
- (E) Standard 3.5. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student or minor.
- (F) Standard 3.6. The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor.
- (G) Standard 3.7. The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child or knowingly allow any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.
- (H) Standard 3.8. The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.
- (I) Standard 3.9. The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:
  - (i) the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
  - (ii) the subject matter of the communication;
  - (iii) whether the communication was made openly, or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;
  - (iv) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
  - (v) whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
  - (vi) whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

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SOURCE NOTE: The provisions of this §247.2 adopted to be effective March 1, 1998, 23 TexReg 1022; amended to be effective August 2, 2002, 27 TexReg 7530; amended to be effective December 26, 2010, 35 TexReg 11242; amended to be effective December 27, 2016, 41 TexReg 10329; amended to be effective October 21, 2018, 43TexReg 6839

# Austin College Teacher Program Exit/Retention Policy

## EXIT POLICY FOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS:

The Texas Administrative Code requires all educator preparation programs to publish an exit policy and provide it to candidates for review and signature upon program admission. 19 TAC §228.20(h)

## PROGRAM DISMISSAL:

The mission of the Austin College Teacher Program (ATP) is to prepare candidates for classroom leadership based on the expectations of the Texas Education Agency and best practice. Once a candidate has accepted contingency admission into the ATP, their retention in the program is based on progress and effectiveness as a learner and a teacher. The faculty considers not only academic abilities and skill performance, but also continued growth in the competencies of collaboration, honesty/integrity, respect, reverence for learning, emotional maturity, reflection, flexibility, responsibility, professionalism, and communication. Retention in the program requires the following:

1. Academic Standards: The candidate must continue to meet the academic standards of the program in order to continue, both in terms of grades and the originality/integrity of submitted coursework. (2.75 cumulative GPA and 2.75 GPA in major/certification field for BA, and a 3.0 cumulative GPA in all graduate coursework).
2. Certification Standards: The candidate will adhere to expectations regarding testing timelines and certification protocols. The student will actively prepare for testing through their coursework, preparation materials, and cohort meetings. Students must demonstrate the necessary proficiencies by the set times to receive permission to take their state tests.
3. Professional-Ethical Standards: The candidate must demonstrate professional standards of behavior that align with the ATP's competencies, and with TEA's Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.

Students assessed as having difficulty with coursework, placement, testing, or competencies will receive feedback concerning their progress from the appropriate faculty and/or program lead. In the vast majority of cases, a candidate who is struggling will be given a plan for improvement with a timeline and various supports. Supports could include, but are not limited to: extra observations, check-in meetings, additional reflection, additional materials, and mandatory timelines. Candidates who continually fail to meet the requirements listed above may be dismissed from the program at the discretion of the review committee.

If a student withdraws from the ATP of their own accord, based on their own needs, they will be deemed leaving in "Good Standing." If a student is withdrawn from our program for failure to meet academic requirements (low GPA) or certification requirements (failure to take/pass tests in a timely fashion), they will be deemed leaving in "Good Standing." If a student is exited from the program for violations to the Code of Ethics, or due to a termination of their teaching position, they will be deemed as leaving "Not in Good Standing." **Candidates dismissed from Austin College will be automatically dismissed from the ATP.** Any candidate leaving the ATP in "Good Standing" can reapply for program admission, so long as they are within their two-year window and meet any necessary requirements.

**NOTE: If a candidate wishes to transfer to another EPP, their withdrawal status must be reported to that EPP.**