



Department of Educational Leadership

Educational Administration

Principal Preparation Program

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2012-2013

*Note: This handbook is subject to change without prior notification and updates will be available in the Educational Leadership Department. This handbook does not constitute a catalog and does not carry catalog privileges. ******

Revised October 2012



Department of Educational Leadership
Texas A&M University-Commerce
P.O. Box 3011
Commerce, Texas 75429

October 2012

Future and Current Students:

The Department of Educational Leadership would like to thank you for your interest in our Educational Administration Principal Preparation Program. Whether you are pursuing our 30-hour *Master's Degree in Educational Administration with Principal Certification* or our 21-hour *Principal Certification Only* track, we strive to provide you with the necessary skills that will prepare you to become an effective school administrator within today's educational climate. Our 7-week semester subterm, which is predominantly online, emphasizes quality interaction between the instructor-and-student and tailored to the demands of today's busy professional educator and graduate student. Another unique feature of our program is the opportunity for you to obtain both Instructional Leadership Development (ILD) and Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) Certificates within the degree program.

Within this handbook, you will find pertinent information to include:

- a) admission procedures and requirements,
- b) degree plans and course listings,
- c) student orientation and advising
- d) principal certification internship requirements
- e) TExES Examination protocol
- f) principal certification application procedures

Should you have any questions regarding our Principal Preparation Program, please contact Dr. Maria Hinojosa at Maria.Hinojosa@tamuc.edu.

Once again, we appreciate your interest in the Educational Administration Principal Preparation Program at Texas A&M University-Commerce.



Department of Educational Leadership

The Principal Preparation Program located in the Department of Educational Leadership is empowered by experienced faculty dedicated to the mission and vision of the department. Each of our faculty is passionate about your education, learning, and success.

Our Mission

The Department of Educational Leadership at Texas A&M University-Commerce prepares graduates for teaching, service, and leadership roles in a variety of educational, business, government, and industry contexts.

Our Vision

The Department of Educational Leadership at Texas A&M University-Commerce envisions exemplary programs that challenge highly qualified students to excel in their respective disciplines and careers through engagement in a rigorous and transformative learning environment linking theory to practice while expanding the knowledge base of the learner, the profession, and the respective academic disciplines.



Department of Educational Leadership Principal Preparation Program Faculty

The faculty of the Principal Preparation Program are professional educators who bring their Texas public school leadership experiences to you. Our faculty have served as assistant principals, principals, coordinators, assistant superintendents, and superintendents in various school districts. These practical experiences coupled with active research agendas make for the best possible learning experiences as students seek to become educational leaders who will make a difference in schools, school districts, and local communities.

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The Principal Preparation Program at Texas A&M University-Commerce has a rich history as a college and university dedicated to the creation of educational leaders.

Though the name of our university has changed along the way, its role in creating educators of excellence has not changed. Mayo's founding creed of "**ceaseless industry, fearless investigation, unfettered thought, and unselfish service to others**" continues to this day.

Since 1996, the university has been a part of the Texas A&M University System. TAMU-C, with its unique online delivery of instruction, continues to grow throughout Texas and strives to provide students with a quality education that serves as a springboard to careers and lives that make a difference through public and private education systems.

The Principal Preparation Program is located in the Department of Educational Leadership in the College of Education and Human Services at Texas A&M University-Commerce. The Department of Educational Leadership is composed of the following programs:

- Educational Administration
- Educational Technology
- Global e-Learning
- Higher Education
- Library Science

The Department of Educational Leadership and its programs are located on the Commerce campus in the Young Education North Building, Room 113. The mailing address and other contact information are listed below.

Department of Educational Leadership
Texas A&M University-Commerce
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Commerce, TX 75429
903.886.5520
FAX: 903.886.5507

ADMISSION PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS

Students must be admitted by both the TAMU-C Graduate School **and** the TAMU-C Principal Preparation Program to be fully admitted to the program regardless of whether a candidate is pursuing the 30-hour *Masters Degree in Educational Administration with Principal Certification* or the 21-hour *Principal Certification Only* option.

TAMU-C Graduate School Requirements

The first step in entering our program is to apply for admission to the TAMU-C Graduate School. Students may apply online at the Graduate School website and initiate the admission process. Applicants must apply, pay appropriate fees, and submit required materials such as official transcripts, official GRE scores, and letters of recommendation. Other documents may be required by the Graduate School dependent upon an individual's educational background. It is advisable to stay in contact with the Graduate School until the application process is completed.

Students who apply for admission to enter the 30-hour Master's Degree in Educational Administration with Principal Certification will have one of the following three admission status categories assigned:

- (1) full admission
- (2) conditional admission
- (3) provisional admission.

Full Admission Status is granted for those students who have completed the application process, and have no further requirements for our program's admission criteria rubric.

Conditional Admission Status is granted for those students who have completed the application process, but their criteria falls below the measures described within our program's admission criteria. Students who fall under this status need to maintain a 3.00 grade point average for the first 12-hours of program coursework to be granted full admission status. Students under conditional admission status may also be asked to participate in writing tutorial services, which will serve towards improving and enhancing professional writing skills.

Provisional Admission Status is granted for those students who have an incomplete application. Under this status, a student may take no more than 6-hours of program coursework prior to **completing** the entire admissions process. This process must be completed within the first two 7-week subterms in which the applicant is taking those two courses. Failure to complete the admission process fully will result in being ineligible to take courses the next semester.

Applicants who pursue our 21-hour Principal Certification Only option will be assigned *Non-degree Complete Status*. The 21-hour Principal Certification Only option is for those students who have already earned a Master's Degree from an accredited institution.

TAMU-C Principal Preparation Program Requirements

In addition to the Graduate School's admission requirements, the TAMU-C Principal Preparation Program requires an additional review of applicant admission materials, which will be forwarded from the Graduate School. The following criteria and materials are required for consideration for full admission to the Master's Degree in Educational Administration Program:

1. Undergraduate degree from a regionally accredited institution with a minimum grade point average of 2.75 overall or 3.0 on last 60 hours.
2. **One** of the following:
 - a. Proof of a current valid Texas teacher or principal certificate
 - b. Completed master's degree from a regionally accredited institution with at least a 3.0 GPA
 - c. Undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher overall; or
 - d. GRE score
3. Two professional letters of recommendation
4. Two years teaching experience
***** Students may obtain full admission to the principal masters degree and / or certification program but cannot apply for state certification until all requirements have been met, including the requirement for two years of teaching experience.

Applicants not eligible for full admission will be considered for conditional admission.

DEGREE PLANS AND COURSE LISTINGS

Whether a student pursues the 30-hour Master's Degree in Educational Administration with Principal Certification or the 21-hour Principal Certification Only Plan, EDAD 615 must be taken during the first semester of course work. There is a recommended sequence of EDAD courses that will be distributed to each cohort of students. The courses, EDAD 554 and EDAD 614, need to be completed towards the conclusion of the program. ***EDAD 554 should be completed one 7-week semester prior to projected graduation date due to the comprehensive activity component that is incorporated within this particular course.*** While a student only needs to enroll in EDAD 614 once during one 7-week subterm prior to graduation, this practicum course will overlap across two 7-week subterm (total of 16 weeks).

The Principal Certification Only plan is for students who have already earned a Master's Degree from an accredited institution. The Master's degree need not be in Educational Administration. Students may also consider earning a second Master's degree along with their principal certification. If so, please review the requirements for Master's degrees and certification within the previous section.

TAMUC Department of Educational Leadership 7-Week Calendar

EDAD Course Calendar	University Academic Calendar
August 27, 2012 – October 12, 2012	Fall 2012 Subterm I
<i>2-Weeks Break</i>	
October 29, 2012 – December 14, 2012	Fall 2012 Subterm II
<i>4-Weeks Break</i>	
January 14, 2013 – March 1, 2013	Spring 2012 Subterm I
<i>2-Weeks Break</i>	
March 18, 2013 – May 10, 2013	Spring 2012 Subterm II
<i>3-Weeks Break</i>	
June 3, 2013 – July 3, 2013	Summer I 2012
<i>No Break</i>	
July 8, 2013 – August 8, 2013	Summer II 2012

Master's Degree in Educational Administration with Principal Certification Courses

- EdAd 615—Leading Effective Schools (*first course to enroll within program*)
- EdAd 595—Using Research for Best Practice (*second course to enroll within program*)
- EdAd 626—Using the Law in Educational Practice
- EdAd 574—Developing Quality Instructional Programs (*ILD and PDAS Optional Certification*)
- EdAd 508—Facilitating Learning for Diverse Students
- EdAd 607—Using Evaluation and Data to Improve Learning
- EdAd 619—Designing Curriculum for Effective Instruction
- EdAd 656—Building Capacity for Effective Learning
- EdAd 554—Leading the Learning Community **
- EdAd 614—Leading the Learning Community Internship **

*** Enroll in course second to last 7-week subterm prior to graduation date, along with EDAD 614.*

Principal Certification Only Courses

- EdAd 615—Leading Effective Schools (*first course to enroll within program*)
- EdAd 626—Using the Law in Educational Practice
- EdAd 619—Designing Curriculum
- EdAd 574—Developing Quality Instructional Programs (*ILD and PDAS Certification*)
- EdAd 656—Building Capacity for Effective Learning
- EdAd 554—Leading the Learning Community **
- EdAd 614—Leading the Learning Community Internship ** ##

*** Enroll in course the second to last term prior to completion of program, along with EDAD 614.*

EDAD 614 overlaps across the last two 7-week terms of program.

Transferring Courses

Students seeking a Master's degree occasionally request consideration of prior graduate coursework for the requirements of the Master's degree. Students wishing to request transfer of credit should contact Dr. Maria Hinojosa (Maria.Hinojosa@tamuc.edu) and specify the courses they are interested in transferring. Official transcripts, showing the courses requested to be transferred, will be evaluated by our Master's Degree Program Governance Committee. Each course will be considered in light of course content and conformity to existing course requirement on a case-by-case basis. A maximum of 9 semester credit hours will be allowed to be transferred to the Master's degree. All transfers of credit must be ultimately approved by the Graduate School. Please be assured that the courses in our program are focused on the roles and responsibilities of principals and are necessary to prepare our students to become a principal as well as to pass the (068) TExES certification examination. The courses EDAD 595, EDAD 554 and the EDAD 614 cannot be substituted for any transfer work.

Six-Year Timeline for Course Completion

A student has six years to complete all course work in order to earn both a Principal Certification from our program and have the approval to take the TExES Examination. Please note that no course may be older than six years at the time a student attempts to take the TExES examination. Students not completing the program within this time period will not be approved to take the Principal (068) TExES exam and may be required to complete additional coursework or satisfy other requirements to receive such approval.

STUDENT PROGRAM ORIENTATION AND ADVISING

An orientation program is embedded within the course content of EDAD 615, which students enroll in during the first semester of the program. This brief orientation includes (a) information pertaining to the history of the university; (b) Educational Administration Program Personnel; (c) requirements for completion of the Master's degree and Principal Certification Only tracks; (d) the value, benefits, and expectations of the program; scholarly writing; and (e) library access.

TExES EXAMINATION PROTOCOL

Students wishing to be approved for taking the Principal (068) TExES exam must meet all eligibility requirements specified in the TExES registration bulletin. In addition, principal certification students (whether earning certification with a Master's degree or as certification only) seeking to be eligible to take the certification exam must:

- (1) have an approved certification plan on file with appropriate signatures,
- (2) be admitted to the certification program,
- (3) have successfully completed (grades recorded on transcript) all program coursework,
- (4) have no course older than six years (from first course in the program until the time scheduled to take the TExES exam).
- (5) have successfully completed the 068 practice exam with an 80% or higher.

Students are required to take the Texas Education Agency representative or practice exam prior to taking the (068)TExES exam. In addition, students must successfully score an 80% or higher to gain (068) TExES testing clearance. This activity is embedded within EDAD 554. There is no fee for the representative practice exam and the sessions are held at the Mesquite Metroplex Center once per 7-week subterm. Please contact Dr. Maria Hinojosa, maria.hinojosa@tamuc.edu, for (068) TExES Examination requirements to include review sessions and practice examination dates.

Students who score above an 80% on the practice exam are granted clearance to take the (068) TExES exam, while students who score below 80% are given Domain and Competency review sessions to assist with student mastery of the (068) TExES exam.

State Board for Educator Certification Website

Please refer to the State Board for Educator Certification's website - <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/portals.aspx?id=2147484909> - to access general information that pertains to competencies for certificates, TExES tests, and current issues. The following website - http://texas.ets.org/assets/pdf/testprep_manuals/068_principal_82762_web.pdf - provides additional information, entitled Principal (068) Study Manual, in reference to TExES Examination preparation.

THE PRINCIPAL INTERNSHIP

The Principal Internship, required by state law, is an integral part of the educational experience of the Principal Preparation Program. Students must complete at least one full 16 week semester enrolled in EDAD 614 and incurring 160 clock hours of internship experiences. The internship is designed to bridge the gap between theory and practice by building on the student's academic foundation with in-school experiential learning.

Students planning to take the internship should complete an application packet by **July 1st** (for the Fall semester) or by **November 1st** (for the Spring semester). Application packets should be sent to the EDL departmental administrative assistant, Judy Allen, by the due date for the semester in which the student intends to begin the internship.

To complete the application packet, students should obtain an *Internship Program Handbook* from the Department of Educational Leadership website, under *Resources*, and complete the necessary internship proposal in conjunction with the approval of the campus-based administrator/mentor (that is, the administrator who will be supervising your activities at the campus where you will be serving). The internship requires some specific types of activities, which must be delineated in the application packet. The intent is that students have a well-rounded internship experience. Identifying meaningful activities before you begin will help you accomplish that goal.

The internship experiences are designed to be accrued during the semester of the internship. However, students may begin collecting hours prior to the start of the semester with approval of the University Program Director at maria.hinojosa@tamuc.edu. The principal should be directing the campus activities developed in the proposal and be interacting meaningfully with the intern concerning these experiences. Keep in mind, however, that the majority of internship hours should be accrued during the semester of the internship in order to

take advantage of the beginning of school or end of school and the duties and responsibilities associated with each event.

APPLYING FOR PRINCIPAL CERTIFICATION

The following steps are required to be taken by a student prior to filing for principal certification within the state of Texas.

1. Master's Degree and successful completion of all required coursework listed on Principal certification plan.
2. Admission to the Principal Certification Program: application submitted, fee, plan on file with the department & certification officer signatures, service record documenting two years of acceptable teaching experience at a TEA accredited school, letters of recommendation, copy of teaching certificate, [copy of other university transcripts and copy of ILD certificate, if applicable]; letter of employment from the district (if for a probationary certificate.)

Note: For those required to complete a Master's degree in pursuit of principal certification, the Master's degree must be conferred by the university **prior** to filing for your professional certificate.

So then, after completing **all** coursework **and passing** the TExES exam, students must apply for the certificate on-line at the SBEC web page located at http://www.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECOnline/educator_why.asp?width=1024&height=768

Application Procedure (these may be adjusted once SBEC office are set up with TEA):

1. Go to SBEC website listed above. Update Account Profile.
2. Follow directions on web page to apply for certificate. If you have questions or difficulties with the web page you may call the 888 number at the top of the web page.
3. Submit appropriate fee electronically to SBEC.
4. TAMUC will process your application only **AFTER** all requirements have been met.
5. Upon university recommendation, SBEC will initiate a criminal background check.
6. Please **DO NOT** call to check status. This can be checked on-line.
7. Once these activities have been successfully performed, SBEC/TEA will process the issuing of the certificate. The certificate will be issued and placed on the SBEC website under the "Official Record for Educator Certificates."

Note: Records that are not fully processed within 60 days will be deleted. If deleted, you will be required to file again with SBEC Online. If you have questions regarding the application procedure, you may contact our certification officer, Kathy Black at Kathy.Black@tamuc.edu.

Probationary Certification

A temporary Principal certification is no longer available. However, the state has created a Probationary Certification, which is good for one year for those who have secured a position for which principal certification is required by the state.

Principal Probationary Certifications are available to students in good standing, who have a degree plan on file, and who have completed at least 12 semester hours including EDAD 615, 595, 626, and 574. In addition, students must have been offered employment as an assistant principal or principal by a school district. Students requesting probationary certification must provide a letter of employment from the superintendent (or his/her designee) verifying the employment position and the offer of the position.

Probationary certificates are valid for only **one year** but are twice renewable when completing the annual progress required; that is, the student must be actively enrolled, and be working to complete the certification requirements in a timely manner in anticipation of taking the TExES exam as soon as possible. (Look for more details and the application on the department website.)

Renewal of Standard Principal Certificate

Individuals who are issued the Standard Principal Certificate on or after September 1, 1999, are subject to Certificate Renewal and Continuing Professional Education Requirements, which are elaborated in Title 19, Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 232. All individuals holding a valid Texas professional administrator certificate prior to September 1, 1999, and who are employed as principals or assistant principals must complete the assessment described in Title 19, Texas Administrative Code, § 241.35.

Provisional Principal Certificate: Initially successful certificate candidates completing all requirements are issued a Provisional Principals certificate by the TEA/SBEC. The Standard Principal certificate is issued after completing an induction period of one year in an assistant principal or principal position. Individuals seeking to enter this induction period more than 5 years after the issuance of the provisional certificate must be approved by the educator preparation program, which recommended the provisional certificate.

Credit for Experience

Beginning September 1, 2000, students who have experience and/or professional training directly related to the Standards for the Principal Certificate (Title 19, Texas Administrative Code, § 241.15) may petition the department to be awarded credit toward fulfilling certification requirements (but not for graduate credit toward degrees). Credit for experience is not awarded for all courses as some courses must be taken with the department.

Credit applications may be obtained from the departmental secretary. The application requires a portfolio be prepared illustrating the student's competencies in the specific standard(s). Once the portfolio is approved by the Governance Committee, students are required to successfully complete a knowledge exam for credit to be awarded toward the certificate requirements.

The department's Principal Certificate Governance Committee evaluates applications once each semester. Students may file credit for experience petitions once during their matriculation through the certification program.

