



Department of Educational Leadership

Educational Administration

Principal Preparation Program

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2011-2012

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 August 2011



Department of Educational Leadership

Texas A&M University-Commerce

P.O. Box 3011

Commerce, Texas 75429

August 2011

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 36-hour *Master's Degree in Educational Administration with Principal Certification* or our 24-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 8-week semester (5-week summer semester) online format that emphasizes quality interaction between the instructor-and-student tailors to the demands of today's busy professional educator and graduate student.

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, and f) principal certification application procedures. Should you have any questions regarding our Principal Preparation Program, please contact Dr. Wade Fish at Wade.Fish@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 an educational leader who will make a difference in schools, school districts, and local communities.

Arthur Borgemenke, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor
University of Texas at El Paso

Chuck Holt, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor
Lamar University

Casey G. Brown, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Doctoral Program Coordinator
Program Internship Liaison
University of Oklahoma

Madeline Justice, Ed. D.
Professor
Chair, Educational Leadership
East Texas State University

Amy Burkman, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor
Texas Christian University

Sam Roberson, Ed. D.
Assistant Professor
Baylor University

Wade W. Fish, Ph. D.
Associate Professor
Master's Program Coordinator
University of North Texas

David P. Stanfield, Ed. D.
Ad Interim Assistant Professor
East Texas State University

Maria Hinojosa, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor
Program TExES Examination Liaison
Meadows Principal Improvement Coordinator
Texas A & M University-Kingsville

James A. Vornberg, Ph. D.
Professor
University of Arizona

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. Established by William Mayo, East Texas Normal College began educating future teachers in 1889.

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 continues to grow throughout the north Texas area 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
PO Box 3011
Commerce, TX 75429
903.886.5520 or 903.886.5607
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 36-hour *Masters Degree in Educational Administration with Principal Certification* or the 24-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 36-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, or (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 rubric that is posted within the following section of this handbook. Students who fall under this status need to maintain a 3.50 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 one 15-week traditional university semester, or 5-week summer semester, 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. All graduate school applicants are required to take the GRE prior to or within the first semester of coursework with the exception of *Principal Certification Only* students.

Applicants who pursue our 24-hour Principal Certification Only option will be assigned *Nondegree Complete Status*. The 24-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: (a) 2 years teaching experience, (b) Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores from the verbal, quantitative, and written portions of the exam, (c) an official academic transcript showing

the completion of a Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution with cumulative undergraduate GPA, (d) three letters of recommendation, preferably from principals or assistant principals though recommendations by others will be accepted, (e) a professional resume, and (f) a written essay highlighting educational philosophy and professional aspirations,. The following rubric will be used to evaluate a candidate's application for full admissions status.

EdAd Master's Program Admission Criteria Rubric

DIMENSIONS	1	2	3	RATING
Undergraduate Degrees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor's degree in field outside of education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor's degree in education or related field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor's degree in related field and post-graduate hours 	
State Certifications/ Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not state certified but has a minimum of two years teaching experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher certified with no teaching experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher certified and has classroom experience 	
Review of Academic Performance GPA (last 60 hours) + GRE (GPA x 200 + GRE) ***	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1300-1499 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1500-1599 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1600 + 	
Writing Sample: Educational Philosophy/Role of School Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited understanding of key assumptions and concepts related to student learning and the educational process, adequate writing skills and no errors that detract from the message of the writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant understanding of key assumptions and concepts related to student learning and the educational process, minimal errors in grammar and graduate level writing skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depth and breadth of understanding of key assumptions and concepts related to student learning and the educational process, few (if any) grammatical errors and excellent writing skills 	
Writing Sample: Statement of Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited understanding of the role of school leaders and effective school leadership practices in the educational process, adequate writing skills and no errors that detract from the message of the writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address an interest in and potential for educational leadership and advocacy related work, minimal errors in grammar and graduate level writing skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depth and breadth of understanding of the role of school leaders and effective school leadership practices in the educational process, few (if any) grammatical errors and excellent writing skills 	
Letters of Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three letters giving average reference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three letters of reference: two giving average reference and at least one giving above-average reference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three letters giving above-average reference 	
Interview** **Done at the discretion of the committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication skills below average, little understanding of educational issues/language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication skills average, average understanding of educational issues/language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication skills above average, little understanding of educational issues/language 	
Total Points	11< (No Admission)	11-13 (Conditional Admission)	13> (Full Admission)	

DEGREE PLANS AND COURSE LISTINGS

Within the first semester of being enrolled in the Educational Administration Principal Preparation Program under *Full Admission Status*, a student will be assigned a program faculty advisor who will mail the student a signed copy of either a 36-hour Master's Degree in Educational Administration or a 24-hour Principal Certification Only Plan within the first semester of program course work. Whether a student pursues the 36-hour Master's Degree in Educational Administration with Principal Certification or the 24-hour Principal Certification Only Plan, EDAD 615 must be taken during the first semester of course work. All other course work can be completed in any order with the exception of EDAD 554 and EDAD 614, which needs to be completed towards the conclusion of the program. EDAD 554 should be completed one 8-week semester (or one 5-week summer semester) prior to projected graduation date due to the comprehensive activity component that is incorporated within this particular course.

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.

Master's Degree in Educational Administration with Principal Certification Courses

- EdAd 615—Leading Effective Schools (enroll first semester of program)
 - EdAd 626—Using the Law in Educational Practice
 - EdAd 595—Using Research for Best Practice
 - EdAd 574—Developing Quality Instructional Programs
 - EdAd 508—Facilitating Learning for Diverse Students
 - EdAd 607—Using Evaluation and Data to Improve Learning
 - EdAd 619—Designing Curriculum for Effective Instruction
 - EdAd 623—Allocating Resources for Effective Learning
 - EdAd 656—Building Capacity for Effective Learning
 - EdAd 554—Leading the Learning Community (enroll one semester prior to graduation **)
 - EdAd 614—Leading the Learning Community Internship (enroll at conclusion of program)
- ** or one 5-week summer semester prior if projected to graduate the following August

One **Elective** Course from the following:

- EdAd 597—Designing Instruction for Effective Learning
- EdAd 597—The Assistant Principalship
- EdAd 612—Examining Issues and Trends in School Leadership
- EdAd 618—Exploring Educational Issues Colloquium (the Meadows Program)
- EdAd 622—Leading and Managing Organizational Change
- EdAd 658—School Crisis Leadership

Principal Certification Only Courses

- EdAd 615—Leading Effective Schools (enroll first semester of program)

EdAd 626—Using the Law in Educational Practice
EdAd 508—Facilitating Learning for Diverse Students
EdAd 619—Designing Curriculum
EdAd 697—Allocating Resources for Effective Learning
EdAd 554—Leading the Learning Community (enroll one semester prior to graduation **)
EdAd 614—Leading the Learning Community Internship (enroll at conclusion of program)
** or one 5-week summer semester prior if projected to graduate the following August

One **Elective** Course from the following:

EdAd 597—Designing Instruction for Effective Learning
EdAd 597—The Assistant Principalship
EdAd 612—Examining Issues and Trends in School Leadership
EdAd 618—Exploring Educational Issues Colloquium (the Meadows Program)
EdAd 622—Leading and Managing Organizational Change
EdAd 658—School Crisis Leadership

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. Wade Fish (wade_fish@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 12 credit hours will be allowed to be transferred to the Master's degree. All transfer 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.

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. Within the first semester of the program, a student will be assigned a program faculty advisor who will mail them a signed copy of either a 36-hour Master's Degree in

Educational Administration with Principal Certification or a 24-hour Principal Certification Only Plan.

TE_xES EXAMINATION PROTOCOL

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

- (1) have an approved certification plan on file with appropriate signatures,
- (2) be enrolled in the certification program,
- (3) have successfully completed (grades recorded) all program coursework,
- (4) have no course older than six years (from first course in the program until the time scheduled to take the TE_xES 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) TE_xES exam. In addition, students must successfully score an 80% or higher to gain (068) TE_xES testing clearance. There is no fee for the representative practice exam and the sessions are held at the Mesquite Metroplex Center every semester. Please contact Dr. Maria Hinojosa, maria_hinojosa@tamu-commerce.edu, for (068) TE_xES 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) TE_xES exam, while students who score below 80% are given Domain and Competency review sessions to assist with student mastery of the (068) TE_xES 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 pertain to competencies for certificates, TE_xES tests, and current issues. The following website - http://texes.ets.org/assets/pdf/testprep_manuals/068_principal_82762_web.pdf - provides additional information, entitled Principal (068) Study Manual, in reference to TE_xES 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 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 15** (for the Fall semester) or by **November 15** (for the Spring semester). Application packets should be sent to the departmental administrative assistant, Martha Moore, 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 and 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-based supervisor (that is, the course instructor). 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.

1. Admission to certificate program (certification plan on file with the department and certification officer)
2. All required paperwork filed with the department: 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. If you do not have one already, create an account to access the site.
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. Send appropriate fee to SBEC.
4. A&M-Commerce will process your application only **AFTER** the state has received your fee.
5. You will receive an email confirmation from SBEC after the university has completed its recommendation.
6. Upon university recommendation, SBEC will initiate a criminal background check.

7. Please DO NOT call to check status. This can be checked on-line.
8. Once these activities have successfully been 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,” and a paper certificate will be printed and mailed to the student at the address provided.

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@tamu-commerce.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, 626, 574, & 595. 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.

