

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM HANDBOOK



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P. O. Box 519, MS 2800
Prairie View, Texas 77446
Phone: 936-261-3500/FAX 936-261-3529
Dr. William H. Parker, Director
Mrs. Irma Kendrick, Coordinator

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PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY
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(ATCP)

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DEFINITIONS

Alternative Certification Program (ACP) – A program designed for college graduates who meet certain minimum criteria to obtain teacher certification outside the traditional university program setting.

Internship – A one year concentrated program of intense supervision, which consists of coursework, training, assignments, field experiences, teaching, assessment, evaluation, TExES testing and other educational experiences. Upon completion of all program requirements and favorable evaluations from immediate supervisors, the intern will be recommended for certification.

THEA – Texas Higher Education Assessment – Basic Academic Skills Examination. It is designed to provide information about the reading, mathematics, and writing skills of students entering public colleges. It is a new name for the old TASP Test.

TExES Exam – Texas Examination of Educator Standards – Content-area examination required for interns seeking Probationary Certification in Art (all levels), Business Administration, and Computer Info. Systems, Dance, French, German, Health Education, History 8-12, Journalism, Latin, Life Science 8-12, Mathematics 8-12, Music (All levels) Physical Education (All levels), Physical Science 8-12, Speech Communication, Spanish and Theater Arts.

PPR EC-12 – Pedagogy and Responsibilities Test.

PPR 8-12 – Pedagogy and Responsibilities Test.

Special Education EC-12 & EC-4 Generalist – Required examination for interns seeking certification in Special Education.

Field Experience – Documented completion of 30 clock hours of observations in a public classroom setting, using the Field Experience Workbook.

NCLB – No Child Left Behind – Education Act signed in 2002 to ensure that every child has a high quality education, and has highly qualified teachers who use proven teaching methods.

PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the Prairie View A&M University Alternative Teacher Certification Program. Our program assists talented individuals in filling teaching vacancies in the state of Texas. Through our program, individuals may acquire certification in the following secondary content areas, must have completed at least 24 semester hours, (12 hours must be upper division course work):

Art (All Levels)	Mathematics
Bilingual Generalist	Music EC-12
Chemistry 8-12	Physical Education EC-12
Computer Science	Physical Science 8-12
English Language Arts and Reading 6-12	Science 8-12
French	Social Studies 8-12
German	Spanish
Health EC-12	Special Education EC-12
Health Science Technology Education 8-12	Speech 8-12
History	Technology Applications EC-12
Journalism	Technology Education 6-12
Life Science 8-12	Theater EC-12

Special Education applicants are required to have at least 24 semester hours with a minimum of 6 semester hours per course, in the following areas:

English	Social Studies
Mathematics	Science

The staff of Prairie View A&M University's Alternative Teacher Certification Program thanks you for your interest and anticipated participation in serving the youth of Texas. Teaching is an excellent opportunity to see growth in our youth, to give back to society, and to participate in a rewarding professional field. We look forward to serving you.

The staff of Prairie View A&M University's Alternative Teaching Certification Program thanks you for your interest and anticipated participation in serving the youth of Texas. Teaching is an excellent opportunity to see growth in our youth, to give back to society, and to participate in a rewarding professional field. We look forward to serving you.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. William Parker, Director
Alternative Teacher Certification Program

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Alternative Teacher Certification was established in 1984 by the 68th Legislature in House Bill 72. In this Bill, the State Board of Education was directed to provide for certification of individuals who met specific requirements, and who completed an internship in a public school.

The Prairie View A&M Alternative Teacher Certification Program was implemented in 1990 to prepare degreed, but non-certified individuals to fill teaching positions in critical shortage areas such as Mathematics, Science, and Special Education.

Most recently the *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2001 (NCLB) signed by President George Bush on January 8, 2003. reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) – the principal federal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school. The new law includes provisions stating that all teachers in core academic areas must be highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school years. It also requires that newly hired teachers in Title I programs or schools be highly qualified immediately. (Note: All teachers hired after the first day of the 2002-2003 school years in Title I school wide programs must be highly qualified).

As part of the accountability provisions set forth in the law, *No Child Left Behind* has set the goal of having every child making the grade on state-defined education standards, states must include in their plans annual, measurable objectives that each local school district must meet in moving toward the goal.

No Child Left Behind gives states and districts the flexibility to find innovative ways to improve teacher quality including alternative certification, merit pay for master teachers and bonuses for people who teach in high-need schools and subject areas like Special Education, Math and Science.

In general, under No Child Left Behind, a highly qualified teacher must have:

- A Bachelor's Degree.
- Full state certification and licensure as defined by the state.
- Demonstrated competency, as defined by the state, in each core academic subject he or she teaches.

Therefore, teachers in alternative route programs are not considered highly qualified before they demonstrate competency in each core academic subject they will be teaching. They must comply with the NCLB criterion.

Choosing the ATCP route to certification enables professionals from diverse fields to merge new and varied life experiences with research-based best practices to enhance instruction in Texas classrooms.

Applicants must complete pre-service field experience observations and six (6) semester hours of summer course work. Prior to becoming eligible to apply for probationary certification, applicants must also pass the TExES exam in their content area.

Applicants enter the internship year as "teacher of record" once a position is secured in an accredited public school.

On-going training and support is provided through university course work, state certification test reviews, University Supervisor visits, collaboration with a mentor teacher, and school administrative support.

PROGRAM ENTRY REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL AREAS OF CERTIFICATION

All Applicants Must:

- Hold a Bachelor's Degree or higher from an accredited institution of higher learning, with an overall 2.5 or greater grade point average (GPA) on a 4.0 system (Foreign transcripts must be professionally evaluated for U.S. equivalency).
- Provide official transcripts (2) of university course work from all universities or colleges attended.
- Have passed all three sections of the state mandated basic skills test (THEA) with the following minimum scores: Math 230, Writing 220, and Reading 260.
- Be recommended by a screening committee for admission to the program.
- Show proof of admittance to Prairie View A&M University Graduate School.
- Provide a writing sample (included within the application packet).
- Field-based Experience: 30 clock hours prior to Internship – The candidate can meet this requirement through the following activities: classroom observation, substitute teaching or tutoring students.

Applicants seeking certification in Spanish or French must pass an oral and written proficiency examination (TOPT).

Certification Areas for Grades 8-12 Secondary Content Subjects

Chemistry
Computer Science
English/Language Arts/Reading
French
German
Health Science Technology
History
Journalism
Life Science 8-12

Mathematics
Math/Physics/Science/Engineering
Physical Science
Science
Social Studies
Spanish
Speech
Technology Applications
Technology Education
Theatre

All-Level

Art
Health
Music

Physical Education
Special Education

Special Education Certification Grades EC-12

An applicant must:

- Hold at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher learning, with a grade point average of 2.50 or higher on a 4.0 system or a 2.75 on the last 60 hours of coursework.
- Have completed 24 hours in a combination of subjects taught in Elementary/secondary School, which must include English, Mathematics, a Natural Science and Social Studies, with a grade point average of 2.50 or higher on a 4.0 system.
- Pass the Math, Reading and Writing sections of the state-mandated test of Basic Skills (THEA) with the following minimum scores: Math 230, Writing 220, and Reading 260.
- Provide a writing sample (included within the application packet).
- Pass oral and written proficiency exams on Spanish TOPT and demonstrate oral English and Spanish proficiency (only for Bilingual applicants).

BILINGUAL GENERALIST EC-4

Applicant must:

- Hold at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution of higher learning with a grade point average of 2.50 or higher on a 4.0 system or a 2.75 on the last 60 hours of coursework.
- Have completed 30 semester hours in the following subjects with a minimum of 6 semester hours in each area:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Pass the Mathematics, Reading and Writing sections of the state mandated test of Basic Skills (THEA) with the following minimum scores: Math (23), Writing (220), and Reading (260).
- Field-based Experience: 30 clock hours prior to Internship. (The prospective candidate can meet this requirement through the following activities: classroom observation, substitute teaching or tutoring students).

During the one-year ATCP internship, the applicant must:

- Complete the required coursework for certification.
- Attend all university-required classes needed for certification. (In accordance with PVAMU Attendance Policy)
- Pay fees for all university coursework, tuition, books and required exams.
- Complete all required ATCP training sessions and activities.
- Meet full appraisal requirements of the state and local school district.
- Be recommended for certification by the building principal and ATCP office.
- Pass the TExES (Texas Examination of Educator Standards) applicable to their area of specialization [i.e. Pedagogy and Professional Development TExES, the Content TExES exam and TOPT for Language (Spanish and French} certification].
- Meet the full appraisal requirements of the state and local district.
- Fulfill all of the requirements of a full-time teacher as required by the state, the local district, superintendent and principal.
- Attend all TExES preparation study sessions held after school and/or on Saturdays.
- Fulfill any and all other program requirements determined by the ATCP.



Prairie View
A&M University

Are you currently employed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, where? _____

<p style="text-align: center;">ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION APPLICATION</p>

ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
P. O. Box 519, MS 2800 Prairie View, TX 77446-2800
Phone: 936-261-3500/FAX: 936-261-3529

Soc. Sec. # : _____ Email: _____

Home Phone # _____ Cell Phone # _____

Last Name _____ Birthdate _____

First Name _____ Middle _____

Gender: Male Female

Ethnic Origin:

Amer Ind/Alaskan

European

Asian/Pacific

Hispanic

African

Other

American Black

Are you a veteran
of any U.S. Forces?

Yes

No

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ [H] _____ [M] _____ [WK]

How many different colleges/universities have you attended even part
time? _____

Most Bachelor Major _____

Recent Master's Minor _____

Degree Doctorate Grad Date _____ GPA _____

Did you include your resume with at least three references: Yes No

Requested Areas of Certification:

Place a 1, 2 or 3 to indicate your specific preference for your area of teacher certification:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art (All Levels) | <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bilingual Generalist | <input type="checkbox"/> Music EC-12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry 8-12 | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Education EC-12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Science | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Science 8-12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> English Language Arts and Reading 6-12 | <input type="checkbox"/> Science 8-12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> French | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies 8-12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> German | <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health EC-12 | <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education EC-12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Science Technology Education 8-12 | <input type="checkbox"/> Speech 8-12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology Applications EC-12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Journalism | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology Education 6-12 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Science 8-12 | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater EC-12 |

A Basic Academic Skills Test is a program pre-requisite and requirement. The scores must be submitted with your application. Please check off the test that you have taken and then indicate your scores in each area below:

THEA TASP

Reading_____ Math_____ Writing_____ Other_____

Are you a graduate of a teacher education program?

Yes No

Have you been on a university deficiency plan for certification?

Yes No

Have you ever held a Texas teaching certificate? Yes No

If yes, beginning what year_____ How long did you teach?_____

ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM APPLICATION ESSAY

Please prepare a one page typewritten, double-spaced essay to include the following questions/statement:

1. Why have you decided to pursue a career in teaching?
2. What talents or contributions will you bring to the teaching profession?
3. Describe your philosophy of learning and/or education.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the fees associated with the program?

- **Application Fee - \$50;** non-refundable; required to establish eligibility for program entrance into the ATCP.
- **Graduate Application Fee - \$50;** non-refundable; payable to Prairie View A&M University Graduate School to establish entry into the Graduate School.
- **THEA Test Fee - \$29.** An application can be obtained at PVAMU.
- **University Course Fees – Pre-Assignment Training:** For three (3) credit hours of Summer I and three (3) credit hours of Summer II course work. See current *Schedule of classes Catalog* for exact fees.
- **On-Going Training:** For three (3) credit hours of fall and three (3) credit hours of spring semester course work. See current *Schedule of Classes Catalog* for exact fees.
- **Books and Supplies – Approximately \$200.**
- **Program Fees –** Apply only to applicants who successfully obtain employment for the current school year. Cost: **\$3200.** This amount is normally deducted from the intern's salary by the employing school district during the internship year.
- **Probationary Certificate Fee –** A one-year teaching certificate is required upon employment with any school district in Texas. The cost is **\$52** and is the responsibility of the applicant.
- **Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES) Test Fees –** Each intern must take two tests. Cost per test: **\$82.**
- **Full Certification Fees –** Applicants who successfully meet all program requirements may apply for full certification. This fee is the responsibility of the intern. Cost: **\$77.**
- **Fingerprinting Fee - \$47.**
- **Rollover Fee –** Students who do not successfully meet the requirements will be assessed a rollover fee of **\$200 per semester.**

Are any of the above fees refundable if I do not qualify?

No. All of the services for these fees are conducted prior to your consideration and/or acceptance into the program.

According to your literature, I have to apply to the graduate school to join your program. Why? Will I have to take the GRE?

Because you already have your four-year degree, you must apply to the graduate school in order to be eligible to take the required coursework at the University. For those individuals entering the graduate school for certification only, as you would be doing our program, it is neither necessary nor required that you take the GRE.

When will I need to pay university tuition and fees?

The university designates the date.

Will I be required to register for courses I've successfully completed?

Possibly. The content and syllabi of these courses may be different or have changed since you had taken the course. In either case, exemptions for courses taken over five (5) years ago will not be accepted.

What happens if I mail in an incomplete application?

The entire packet will be returned to you within 10 working days for completion.

What happens after my application is submitted to the Alternative Certification Program?

- Evaluation of your transcripts
- Interview (Personal)
- Essay & Evaluation
- Reference Checks
- Criminal Records Check and Review
- English Proficiency exam (all selected candidates)
- Notification of selected candidates – Letter of Acceptance
- Candidates are eligible to seek employment
- Orientation/Coursework Begins
- Field Experience Observation
- Required to attend Intern Orientation

Will the ATCP place me in a teaching position?

It is the responsibility of each intern to find their own position teaching in a public school district. The ATCP will attempt to assist each intern through notification of job fairs and other assistance on an individual basis. This offers each intern the opportunity to select the district and school he/she would feel most comfortable in. Note: acceptance into the ATCP does not guarantee you a position with a school district.

Once I complete my internship year, do I automatically receive my teaching certificate?

No, For your certification application to be filed by the university, you must complete all of the following requirement:

- Pass the Certification Area TExES
- Pass the Pedagogy of Professional Responsibilities TExES
- Achieve at least “Meets Expectations” on supervisor and district appraisals
- Satisfactorily complete all required observations
- Turn in all required documentation
- Satisfactorily complete all required university course work, with no grade less than C

- Have no outstanding fees due to the university
- Be recommended for certification by the ATCP Intern Review Team
- Pay the Application for Certificate fee

During the internship, am I paid a salary?

Yes! Once you are accepted into the PVAMU ATCP, and officially hired by a school district, you are eligible to receive first-year teacher’s salary – less the \$3200 program fee. The cost of university courses is a separate fee. As the salaried teacher of record and district employee, you are subject to all rules and responsibilities as outlined in district and school board policy. Once the internship year is completed satisfactorily, the year counts as your first year of service.

Is it too late for me to apply?

Please contact the ATCP Office at: 936-857-2257 Phone or FAX 936-857-4521. For the latest application requirements and deadlines, ask for Mrs. Edna Butler, Program Assistant.

Once I find a position, how can I legally teach in a classroom since I’m not certified?

Once you have secured employment with a school district and completed the District Employment Package, the ATCP will recommend you for Probationary Certification. The Probationary Certificate is a temporary teaching certificate, good for one year. This legally allows you to teach in a Texas public school and to be considered a teacher of record in the state.

I’ve never taught before, how will I know what to do on the first day of school?

The ATCP does not believe in placing interns into the classroom to “sink or swim.” You will receive extensive training during the summer to prepare you to enter the classroom. Your principal will assign a mentor teacher from your school to show you the ropes and assist you throughout the year. The ATCP also provides University Supervisors who will monitor your progress and act as liaisons between the university and the school district. And of course, you’ll be in a class with other first year teachers sharing their experiences.

I have plans to travel this summer; can I still be a part of the program?

The A in ATCP stands for many things to include: alternative, aspiring, accelerated, assertive, agitated, angst, and anxious. Participation in ATCP requires personal, financial and time management commitments. Because the program and ultimately the University is held accountable for the TExES pass rates, the ATCP Advisory Board instituted an attendance policy that allows for only 2 absences per program year.

How can I prepare for the TExES examinations?

All university courses required for the program are aligned to the Texas Standards for New Teachers and the Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities EC-12 and 8-12, and

the Special Education EC-12 TExES examinations). The ATCP pass rate for P&PR test has surpassed state averages in previous years. Attendance and full participation in class activities will prepare you for the P&PR test. When you are accepted into the program with 24 or 48 in your content area, it is expected that you have the knowledge base required to pass the TExES exam in your area. In the beginning of the summer, ATCP suggests that you acquire a study guide for your specific content area. When possible, ATCP will provide study workshops.

What happens if I start the summer classes but I do not get a job?

Advising you on this question depends mostly on your area of certification and your interview skills. For those individuals who have certification in core classes (Math, English, History, Sciences) I advise that you continue to seek employment. You must continue enrollment in the fall class and continue to seek employment and receive a probationary certificate.

What happens if I fail one of my TExES exams?

Interns will have the opportunity to take the TExES in June. Should the intern not meet the program requirements after one year the intern can be considered for rollover status only if they exhausted every opportunity to complete the process in one year. Rollover status allows the intern one more year to teach under extension of the probationary certificate. During this year the intern must meet the program requirements and pay a **\$200 administrative fee each time an extension is requested.**

TEXAS EXAMINATION OF EDUCATOR STANDARDS TE_xES

Texas Administrative Code Tac 230.5 requires every person seeking certification in Texas to perform satisfactorily on comprehensive examinations. The purpose of these examinations is to ensure that each educator has the prerequisite content and professional knowledge necessary for an entry level position in Texas public schools. The Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TE_xES) and Examination for the Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCET) program were developed for this purpose.

The Texas Educator Standards, based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) form the foundation for the TE_xES Tests. Developing the test was a collaborative process involving classroom teachers and other educators from public and charter schools, university and Educator Preparation Programs (EPP) faculty, representatives from professional educator organizations, content experts and members of the community.

Both the TE_xES and ExCET tests are criterion-referenced examinations designed to measure a candidate's knowledge in relation to an established criterion rather than to the performance of other candidates. All of the tests in the TE_xES and ExCET programs contain multiple-choice questions. Some tests also have additional assessment modes (e.g., open-ended written responses.) For more information about individual tests and test composition, and testing dates, see the website below.

[Please go to www.texas.ets.org]

**PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY
ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

Instructions for Reference Forms

- Complete the top portion of the three attached reference forms.
- Sign the release statement on the bottom of the form.
- Send the forms to former employers of someone you wish to use as a reference (other than a relative).
- Request that they mail these forms to:

Dr. William H. Parker
Prairie View A&M University
Alternative Teacher Certification Program
P. O. Box 519, MS 2800
Prairie View, Texas 77446-2800

Note: Your appointment for screening will not be scheduled until all three references have been received.

ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION REFERENCE FORM INTERN REFERENCE FORM

_____ has submitted an application as a prospective intern in the Prairie View A & M University Alternative Teacher Certification Program. Please give me your confidential opinion of this applicant by checking the appropriate column below. Be assured that this information will be considered strictly confidential. Mail the completed form to: Prairie View A&M University – (ATCP), P. O. Box 519, MS 2800 Prairie View, Texas 77446-2800, Attn. Dr. William H. Parker.

	Clearly outstanding	Exceeds Expectations	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement	Unsatisfactory
Moral Character					
Personal Appearance					
Mature Judgment					
Ability to do Academic Work					
Adaptability					
Experience & Success in Teaching					
Professional Growth & Interest					
Daily Preparation & Ability to Plan Work					
Classroom Control (If applicable)					
Cooperation & Loyalty					
Tactfulness					
Communication Skills					
Accuracy, Punctuality & Dependability					
Social Disposition/Temperament					
Poise & Self Control					
Energy & Enthusiasm					
Attitude Toward & Interest in Children					
Attitude to Secure & Hold Confidence of Employer					
General Rating as an Employed Person					

Comments: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____ Company/School: _____

I hereby give you permission to complete this form furnished by Prairie View A&M University Alternative Teacher Certification Program (ATCP) and to release the form with recommendations.

Applicant Signature	Date
---------------------	------

**ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION REFERENCE FORM
INTERN REFERENCE FORM**

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Social Disposition/Temperament					
Poise & Self Control					
Energy & Enthusiasm					
Attitude Toward & Interest in Children					
Attitude to Secure & Hold Confidence of Employer					
General Rating as an Employed Person					

Comments: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Date: _____
 Title: _____ Company/School: _____

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--

Applicant Signature

Date

ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION REFERENCE FORM INTERN REFERENCE FORM

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Classroom Control (If applicable)					
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Communication Skills					
Accuracy, Punctuality & Dependability					
Social Disposition/Temperament					
Poise & Self Control					
Energy & Enthusiasm					
Attitude Toward & Interest in Children					
Attitude to Secure & Hold Confidence of Employer					
General Rating as an Employed Person					

Comments: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____ Company/School: _____

I hereby give you permission to complete this form furnished by Prairie View A&M University Alternative Teacher Certification Program (ATCP) and to release the form with recommendations.

Applicant Signature

Date