Procedures for Teacher Certification at the Graduate Level

An applicant who desires to work on teacher certification in BBL EC–6 Generalist or ESL EC–6 Generalist and who holds a bachelor’s degree should apply as a graduate degree-seeking student to the Graduate Program Committee for the M.A. in Bicultural-Bilingual studies or the M.A. in Teaching English as a Second Language for teacher certification. A student who is simultaneously seeking a master’s degree should apply for admission to the master’s degree program.

Students interested in graduate teacher certification programs in BBL EC–6 Generalist and ESL EC–6 Generalist must complete an application to the Graduate School in the College of Education and Human Development, and an application packet for admission to the Teacher Certification Program. Admission to graduate school does not automatically admit a candidate to Teacher Certification, nor does the completion of degree requirements guarantee completion of Texas certification requirements. However, students must be accepted to graduate school before they can be accepted to the Teacher Certification Program. Students must meet the requirements for graduation for the M.A. in Bicultural-Bilingual Studies or the M.A. in Teaching English as a Second Language, and also meet the TExES state requirements for certification to complete their program.

Information and application materials for graduate teacher certification in the two certification areas identified above are located on the COEHD website (http://education.utsa.edu) and are submitted to the Department of Bicultural-Bilingual Studies. Upon review of the application for teacher certification by the department Coordinator, potential candidates will be notified of their status with regard to admission to the Teacher Certification Program.

Criminal History Checks

UTSA students must submit to a criminal history background check every semester they interact directly with any minor(s) or legal adult(s) of diminished capacity as a requirement for course completion. Students who are unable to meet the criminal background check standards for the school districts may not be able to complete a course or the Teacher Certification Program. An Independent School District (ISD) or other school field-based entity may deny placement of students with a criminal background. If a student is rejected twice by districts in one semester because of criminal history, students will not be able to continue in the program until such time as the criminal background check is cleared. If the offense is one that will preclude field work altogether, the student will be dismissed from the Teacher Certification Program. In accordance with Sec. 53.021, Texas Occupation Code, the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) may suspend or revoke a teacher certificate or refuse to issue a teacher certificate for a person who has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor for a crime that directly relates to the duties and responsibilities of the teaching profession. A legal ID is required to be certified as a teacher in the state of Texas.

Fitness to Teach Policy

The College of Education and Human Development (COEHD) has a responsibility to the educational community to ensure that individuals whom the University recommends to the State of Texas for teaching certification are fit to join the teaching profession. All teacher candidates in the UTSA Teacher Certification Program are expected to demonstrate that they are prepared to teach children and youth. This preparation results from the combination of successful completion of University coursework and the demonstration of important human characteristics and dispositions all teachers should possess. The UTSA Fitness to Teach policy addresses these important aspects of teacher preparation. The Fitness to Teach policy (http://education.utsa.edu/certification_program/fitness_to_teach_policy) can be accessed from the COEHD website.

Recommendations for teacher certification (to the Texas Education Agency) are made by the College of Education and Human Development Certification Officer only after all requirements have been met and the student has officially requested such recommendation.

Information summarizing education certificate and endorsement requirements is available from the College of Education and Human Development Advising and Certification Center and online at the COEHD website under Certification Programs (http://education.utsa.edu/certification_program). Programs are subject to change without notice due to changes in the state’s certification and/or program approval requirements.