



Houston
Christian
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES



EPP Student Handbook 2026-2027

Houston Christian University College of Education and Behavioral Sciences Educator Preparation Program

HCU Mission

The mission of Houston Christian University is to provide a learning experience that instills in students a passion for academic, spiritual, and professional excellence as a result of our central confession, “Jesus Christ is Lord.”

Administration and Staff

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Introduction to the Education Preparation Program

The HCU Educator Preparation Program (EPP) serves undergraduate, post-baccalaureate alternative certification (ACP), and Master of Education (M.Ed.) students seeking initial Texas State Teacher Certification(s). For educators who already hold a Texas teaching certificate, the EPP offers several professional certification programs (Educational Diagnostician, School Counselor, Principal, and Superintendent) designed to extend classroom teaching skills and develop leaders in school administration and special services.

For students seeking initial teacher certification, you can earn credit for coursework designed to prepare you for modern education settings, qualify for initial teacher certification(s), and develop the competence and confidence to become an educator who makes a positive difference in the lives and learning of students. Additionally, your EPP experience will prepare you to use technology and you will acquire skills to help others learn to use technology. Throughout the program, you will gain first-hand field experience in EC-12 schools – culminating in a clinical experience, which is a full-time apprenticeship in your chosen teaching field with a designated mentoring educator. Undergraduate teacher certification students have the opportunity to participate in a one- semester or a year-long placement. ACP and masters-level students seeking initial teacher certification will instead complete a one-year on-the-job internship. Masters-level students may choose between clinical teaching or an internship. Candidates seeking a Professional Certificate will complete a 160-hour practicum.

The EPP is collaboratively developed by professors across the university and practicing professional educators. Carefully aligned with state and national standards and accredited by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the EPP provides an opportunity for you to develop the knowledge and skills needed for effective professional practice. An Advisory Council, which consists of representatives from public and private schools, Regional IV Education Service Center, higher education, business and community interests, as well as faculty (both education and arts and sciences) provides oversight of the EPP and facilitates contacts with schools and school systems, often result in hiring advantages when you graduate. The Advisory Council meets at least twice each year and is instrumental in formulating policy, programs and curriculum. The Advisory Council plays a very active and intentional role in the continual analysis of the EPP.

For more information, please email the EPP office or contact your COEBS Advisor.

The College of Education and Behavioral Sciences (COEBS)

The Mission of COEBS

The mission of COEBS is to prepare students to be effective citizens and professional educators, administrators, counselors, diagnosticians, and researchers who reflect Christ in their work and service.

To accomplish this mission, we provide students with the following:

- the courses and mentoring necessary for a solid pedagogical grounding in their discipline;
- essential learning experiences that will provide opportunities to develop both knowledge and wisdom; and
- an understanding of their Christian mission and calling to influence individuals and the larger society.

The Organization of COEBS

COEBS is organized into two distinct schools – the School of Education (SOE) and the School of Behavioral Science. The SOE houses the Department of Teaching and Learning Sciences and the Department of Educational Leadership and Higher Education. The School of Behavioral Science houses the Department of Psychology and the Department of Counseling.

COEBS offers graduate and undergraduate degree programs in both education and psychology. In both disciplines, some programs align with preparation for credentialing by the profession: certification by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) or licensure by the Texas State Board of Examiners for Psychology or the Texas State Board of Examiners for Professional Counselors. The online university catalog, the COEBS webpage, the EPP webpage, and this handbook list the available programs and credentials/licenses as well as the policies and procedures involved in each.

The EPP, which is housed in the COEBS SOE provides a number of different functions and services for students seeking to become professional educators, including:

- Assisting students during the process of applying for acceptance into the EPP
- Coordinating field experience placements with university professors and area schools
- Providing students information regarding the Texas Examination of Educational Standards (TExES), practice materials, practice exams, and review sessions
- Facilitating approvals for students to take the TExES and to create an account with the TEA

- Providing information on how to Request a Service Record
- Assisting students during the process of applying for clinical teaching, and partnering with area schools to place clinical teachers
- Training clinical teachers' supervisors and mentor teachers
- Providing information for students who have completed the requirements for certification to apply for certification in Texas
- Assisting students who have a grievance or complaint during participation in the EPP
- Conducting surveys of employers and graduates to evaluate level of preparedness of candidates

The EPP portion of the COEBS website provides more details about these functions and services.

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EPP Programs Leading to TEA Certification

The School of Education offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs for educators and prospective educators leading to the following Standard and Professional Certifications issued the Standard Certifications.

Elementary (*Early Childhood – Grade 6*)

- Core Subjects EC-6

Secondary High School (*Grades 7-12*)

- Science (Life Science/Biology, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Physics)
- Social Studies (Economics, Geography, Government, History, Psychology)
- English, Language Arts, and Reading
- Mathematics

All Level (*Early Childhood – Grade 12*)

- Art
- Music
- Physical Education (PE)
- Spanish

Supplemental Certification (*Added to Primary Certification Area*)

- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Bilingual Education\

Professional Certification

- Educational Diagnostician
- School Counselor
- Principal
- Superintendent

Initial Certifications

Elementary Education, Core Subjects EC-6 with Supplemental Bilingual Certification. This certification permits one to teach all subjects in bilingual, dual language, and general education with ESL classrooms from early childhood through grade six. Undergraduate students seeking this certification complete the Elementary Education (EC-6) with Bilingual Certification major. Students learn to help children develop first and second language proficiency and to teach content material in a bilingual (English and Spanish) context. In order to begin this program, students must already be proficient in Spanish. They must demonstrate competency in reading, writing, speaking and listening in Spanish.

Elementary Education, Core Subjects EC-6 with Supplemental ESL. This certification permits one to teach all subjects in a “regular” education classroom from early childhood through Grade 6. Undergraduate students seeking this certification complete the Elementary Education (EC-6) with ESL.

Secondary Education, High School Grades 7-12. This leads to grade 7-12 teacher certification in a chosen teaching field (Science, Social Studies, History, ELAR, Math). In the undergraduate program, it requires completion of a teaching-field major in the specific content area. Each of these majors includes content area and professional education coursework. These majors include English as a Second Language (ESL) coursework sufficient to sit for supplemental ESL certification also.

All-Level, EC-12 Certification. This leads to early childhood through grade 12 teacher certification in a chosen teaching field (Art, Music, PE, Spanish). In the undergraduate program, it requires completion of a teaching-field major in the specific content area. Each of these majors includes content area and professional education coursework.

Supplemental Certifications

A supplemental certificate is an additional certification area that is added to another certification. It requires passage of the state's supplemental certification exam for that area. HCU offers coursework that prepares students for three different supplemental certification exams:

English as a Second Language (ESL). This supplemental certification area may be added to any teaching certificate. The coursework for this area of expertise (EDBI 4304 *Methods of Teaching ESL* and EDBI 4305 *Second Language Acquisition*) is included in all undergraduate EC-6 programs and other undergraduate programs. If the state content exam has been passed, you are eligible to add this certification through testing. Any education student may take these two courses then sit for the ESL supplemental exam. According to the Texas Education Code, the holder of an ESL supplemental certificate may teach in an ESL program at the same grade levels and in the same content area(s) of the holder's base certificate.

Bilingual Certification. This supplemental certification permits one to teach all subjects in bilingual classrooms from Early Childhood through Grade 6. Undergraduate students seeking this certification complete the Elementary Education (EC-6) with Bilingual Certification major. Students learn to help children develop first and second language proficiency and to teach content material in a bilingual (English and Spanish) context. In order to begin this program, students must already be proficient in Spanish. They must demonstrate competency in reading, writing, speaking and listening in Spanish.

Professional Certifications

For educators who already hold a Texas teaching certificate, the EPP offers several professional certification programs leading to a Masters of Education (M.Ed.) or a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.). Degree plans have been designed to extend the classroom teaching skills of teachers and to develop leaders in school administration and special services necessary to the successful operation of schools in Texas.

Professional School Counseling. The school counselor today is a vital member of the educational team on each campus. They help students in the areas of academic achievement, psychological and social development, and college/career development. For a person to be certified as a school counselor, the TEA requires the student to complete a 48-hour master's degree, be recommended by an accredited program, and successfully complete the required state certification exam. HCU requires an applicant to have two years of student interaction in a school setting. The requirements for this major include a 160-clock hour practicum which must be satisfactorily completed in an accredited, university-approved school. Students who are teaching full time may require more than one semester to complete the 160 hours of internship.

Educational Administration. The Educational Administration M.Ed. program prepares graduate students for positions as principals or assistant principals in elementary, middle, or high schools and for such district-wide administrative positions as program directorships, supervisor, or coordinator positions. To earn the Texas Principal as Instructional Leader Certificate, the student must earn a master's degree, have a valid Texas teaching certificate, have completed two years of successful teaching in an accredited school, and successfully complete the certification examinations required by the TEA.

Educational Diagnostician. The Educational Diagnostician M.Ed. program prepares students for professional certification by the state. Educational Diagnosticians administer individual standardized test batteries to determine eligibility of students for areas of exceptionality. Prior to admission to the Educational Diagnostician certification, an individual must hold: a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education that at the time of attendance was accredited or otherwise approved by an accrediting organization recognized by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, a valid classroom teaching certificate, and three years of teaching experience. To earn professional certification as an Educational Diagnostician, the student must successfully complete the thirty-six graduate hours listed in the degree plan and earn the master's degree.

Superintendent. The Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) in Executive Educational Leadership program

is a post-master's professional doctorate in education which includes an option for concentration in the Texas superintendent certification if the candidate holds a Texas Principal or Principal as Instructional Leader certificate. Candidates who are not interested in obtaining superintendent certification will not be required to take the superintendent TExES examination but will be required to successfully complete all program coursework. The doctoral degree is awarded after the successful completion of the coursework, and the completion of a major research project with a presentation and defense of a dissertation.

Deficiency Plans for Certifications After Initial Certification and/or a Master's Degree in Earned

If students already have a master's degree in Education (or Counseling), but would like to earn an additional certification, they may be eligible for a deficiency plan. This plan requires between 18 and 27 hours in the field and will be created individually for each student based on previous coursework. In order to be approved for the state certification exams, the student must be able to demonstrate 2-3 years of teaching experience in an accredited school and pass the appropriate practice exam. Approval for this exam will be given by the student's academic advisor in coordination with the EPP office.

Possible deficiency plans are as follows:

- Educational Diagnostician Certification
- Principal Certification
- Professional School Counselor Certification
- Superintendent Certification (for those enrolled in the Doctoral program only)=

EPP Programs Aligned with State and National Standards and Best Practices

The coursework content of the EPP programs has been carefully aligned with state and national standards as well as research validated best practices. The EPP has been designed to prepare students for effective, ethical professional practice as well as their TExES state certification exams corresponding to their degree/program plan. As indicated in course syllabi, students are prepared in a manner that is aligned with the certification program's standards, and experiences include opportunities for students to:

- Review and deepen their understanding of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills that they will be required to teach
- Learn to plan for and facilitate active, meaningful learning
- Develop the knowledge and skills that will be assessed on their TExES exams
- Address the standards delineated in the International Dyslexia standards (IDA)
- Explore the topics required by 19 TAC § 228.35 and 2 TEC § 21.044 including reading instruction, the code of ethics, child development, motivation, learning theories, TEKS organization and content, assessment including state assessment of students via STAAR tests, curriculum development and lesson planning, classroom assessment and diagnosing learning

needs, classroom management, special populations (LEP, dyslexia, gifted, special education), parent conferencing and communication skills, instructional technology, pedagogy/instructional strategies, differentiated instruction, certification test preparation, legal and employment issues, teacher (T-TESS) and principal (T-PSS) evaluation, and skills/expectations of educators

- Apply and extend their learnings and skills during multiple field-based experiences
- Learn to use technology and acquire skills to help others learn to use technology (Texas Technology Applications Standards)
- Develop an online portfolio that documents, summarizes, and analyzes their experiences, learning, and accomplishments

Individuals desiring to teach in accredited public and private schools in Texas must be certified through the TEA. Houston Christian University makes the recommendation for certification based on state certification guidelines and requirements in place at the time of certification approval. TEA frequently changes certification levels and requirements. In order to meet new TEA guidelines, HCU may change the requirements described in this Handbook. Students should check with the EPP office to verify current requirements.

Three Routes to Initial Texas Teacher Certification

Identify Your Route

Undergraduate	Alternative Certification Program	Master of Education
I am currently working on a bachelor's degree.	I have a bachelor's degree. Now I want to complete requirements for Texas teacher certification.	I have a bachelor's degree. Now I want to earn an M.ED. with teacher certification.

1. Prerequisites

Undergraduate	Alternative Certification Program	Master of Education
a. EDUC 2320 and EDSP 2302 b. 45 course credit hours c. 2.5 GPA overall d. 2.5 GPA in at least 12 hours of certification content (15 hours if seeking Math 7-12 or Science 7-12) e. Reading Proficiency: ENGL 2315/2325, SAT/ACT f. Math Proficiency: MATH 1305/1313, SAT/ACT g. Writing Proficiency: ENGL 1313 and ENGL 1323 h. Speech Proficiency: COMM 1323	a. Earned a bachelor's degree b. 2.5 GPA overall c. 2.5 GPA in at least 12 hours of certification content: • Core EC-6 requires at least 3 hours from each content: ELAR, Math, Science, and Social Studies • Math or Science 7-12: 15 hours of content • All other content areas require 12 hours in that subject	a. Earned a bachelor's degree b. 2.5 GPA overall c. 2.5 GPA in at least 12 hours of certification content: • Core EC-6 requires at least 3 hours from each content: ELAR, Math, Science, and Social Studies • Math or Science 7-12: 15 hours of content • All other content areas require 12 hours in that subject
EPP ADMISSION INTERVIEW	EPP ADMISSION INTERVIEW	EPP ADMISSION INTERVIEW

2. Continuing Approval

Undergraduate	Alternative Certification Program	Master of Education
Comply with all policies outlined in the EPP Handbook and the Continuing Approval Policy	Comply with all policies outlined in the EPP Handbook and the Continuing Approval Policy	Comply with all policies outlined in the EPP Handbook and the Continuing Approval Policy

3. Program Completion and State Requirements

Undergraduate	Alternative Certification Program	Master of Education
• Complete all coursework as required by your Degree Plan, including the Clinical Teaching semester. • Pass all TExES certification exams • Apply for the Standard Certificate • Complete HCU graduation application	• Complete all coursework as required by your ACP plan • Pass your content area TExES certification exams • Apply for and secure a teaching position in an area school district • Apply for the Intern Certificate • Complete the year-long Internship • Pass your PPR exam • Apply for the Standard Certificate	• Complete all coursework as required by your Degree Plan • Pass your content area TExES certification exams • Apply for and secure a teaching position in an area school district • Apply for the Intern Certificate • Complete the year-long Internship • Apply for and complete Master's Comprehensive Examination • Pass your PPR exam • Apply for the Standard Certificate • Complete HCU graduation application

Undergraduate Programs

EPP Program Phases: Undergraduate

Phase One: Pre-Ed

1. Successfully complete pre-EPP coursework
2. Demonstrate English oral proficiencies
3. Meet university proficiencies
4. Meet with adviser and select a degree plan that leads to Texas teacher certification

EPP Acceptance*

**Must be formally accepted into EPP before registering for upper-level Education courses*

1. Submit the EPP application
2. The EPP office verifies applicant qualifications
3. Complete a satisfactory EPP admission interview
4. Respond to the Acceptance Letter
5. Sign the Degree Plan and declare area of certification
(requires that all university proficiencies have been met)
6. Sign Code of Ethics and FERPA Forms
7. Set up Educator accounts with TEA and Pearson

Phase Two: Early Teacher Candidate

1. During the first semester in the EPP, enroll in the three required foundational upper-level education courses (EDUC 4301/4311, EDRE 4330, and EDBI 4314)
2. Enroll in additional courses as approved by your Advisor
3. Prepare for and take the HCU Practice Exams for the content and PPR exams
4. Apply for graduation one year prior to its occurrence
5. Apply for Clinical Teaching the semester enrolled in EDUC 4100
6. Pass the content and PPR exams prior to starting, or during, Clinical Teaching

Phase Three: Clinical Teaching

1. During the last semester, enroll in Clinical Teaching (8 credit hours) and Clinical Teaching Seminar (4 credit hours) courses
2. After passing all required TExES exams, apply for Standard certification on the TEA website
3. Notify EPP office of completed application

EPP Undergraduate Acceptance Process

Students must be formally accepted into the EPP before registering for upper-level Education courses. Undergraduate applications are submitted electronically to epp@hc.edu. Undergraduate students may begin their EPP program during either the fall or spring semester. Applications should be submitted during the semester when the student will be completing their 45th credit hour.

The EPP office reviews all undergraduate applicant qualifications. Requirements for undergraduate admittance into the EPP include:

1. An application for admittance into the EPP submitted by the posted due date
2. At least 45 hours of coursework completed before entering the program
3. Completion of EDUC 2320 and EDSP 2302 with “C” or higher.
4. Official copies of transcripts of all courses taken for college/university credit. All non-U.S. transcripts must be evaluated by Span Tran or Global Evaluators to be accepted.
5. A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.50 or higher on either all college/university coursework attempted, or the last 60 hours of coursework attempted.
6. Demonstration of written and oral proficiency
 - a. Writing proficiency must be demonstrated through the writing sample on the EPP application and completion of ENGL 1313 and ENGL 1323 with a “C” or higher
 - b. Demonstrate oral language proficiency in English via completion of COMM 1323 with “C” or higher
 - c. Out-of-country students must score at least High-Intermediate Proficiency (all sections must be completed) to demonstrate sufficient ability to speak and understand the English language and to use it easily and readily in conversation and teaching.
7. Declared Education major on file
8. Completion of all university proficiencies:
 - a. Written English – The written English proficiency may be met in several ways:
 - i. Completion of ENGL 1313 and ENGL 1323 at HCU with a grade of "C" or above
 - ii. Completion of ENGL 1313 and placement out of ENGL 1303 by Advanced Placement Exam or CLEP scores as outlined in this HCU Catalog
 - iii. Receipt of transfer credit for courses equivalent to ENGL 1313 and 1323
 - iv. Students must complete ENGL 1313 and 1323 proficiency by their third semester
 - b. Reading – The reading proficiency may be met in one of the following ways:

- i. A SAT minimum Verbal score of 480
 - ii. An ACT minimum score of 22 on the Reading portion
 - iii. Completion of ENGL 2315 or ENGL 2325 at HCU with a grade of “C” or above
- c. Mathematics – The math proficiency may be met in one of the following ways:
 - i. MATH 1305, completed with a "C" or higher
 - ii. MATH 1313, completed with a "C" or higher
 - iii. A higher-level math course, completed with a "C" or higher
 - iv. A SAT minimum Math score of 530
 - v. An ACT minimum score of 19 on the Math portion
- 9. Submission of the signed FERPA Consent to Release Form and Texas Educators’ Code of Ethics form.
- 10. Successful completion of the EPP admission interview. When the above criteria for admission to EPP is met, applicants are invited to be interviewed by members of the EPP office. Applicants must display the following qualities to be admitted into EPP:
 - a. A genuine desire to enter and follow a career in teaching
 - b. A personal and social orientation which shows promise of contributing to success in the teaching profession
 - c. A physical and mental fitness which indicates potential classroom leadership
 - d. Demonstrate attitudinal dispositions that are deemed necessary for successful teaching
- 11. Students will receive written confirmation of their EPP admission status (including an explanation of requirements that still need to be met if admission is denied). Students accepted to the EPP will be invited to:
 - a. Complete a degree plan with your Advisor and submit it to the Dean for final approval before being filed with the EPP office and Registrar. Any subsequent change of degree plan must follow this same protocol. All university proficiencies must be met prior to signing the degree plan.
 - b. Acknowledge and respond to acceptance letter.
 - c. Set up Educator account with TEA and Pearson.
- 12. Candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to clinical teaching and prior to employment as an educator (TEC §§ 22.0833 and 22.0835) that may impact employment eligibility. A candidate may request from the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) a preliminary

criminal history evaluation letter regarding their potential ineligibility for certification due to a conviction or differed adjudication for a felony or misdemeanor offense.

13. The Commissioner of Education may suspend or revoke a teaching certificate or refuse to issue a teaching certificate for a person who has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor for a crime which directly relates to the duties and responsibilities of the teaching profession. All applicants for Texas certification will be screened for a record of felony or misdemeanor conviction through the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and Homeland Security. All potential certificate applicants with a criminal felony or misdemeanor conviction(s) should contact the Certification Officer immediately to seek clarification of their certification status.

Progression Through Undergraduate EPP Phases

Phase One: Pre-EPP Coursework. Undergraduate students should take the following courses during their freshman year or during their first semesters at HCU if transferring from another institution:

- EDUC 2320 *Learning and Development*
- EDSP 2302 *Survey of Exceptional Children*

These courses are prerequisites for admission to the EPP. During this phase, candidates are also completing Liberal Arts Core Curriculum and meeting proficiencies described in the university catalog for written English, reading, mathematics, and computer literacy.

Phase Two: After Admission into the EPP Program. During the students' first semester in the program, students complete EDUC 4301 or EDUC 4311: a *Curriculum and Instruction* course (EDUC 4301 or 4311 based on certification area and degree plan). This course provides concepts and skills that will be the foundation of the remainder of the program. In EDUC 4301/4311, students learn the fundamentals of planning for learning (for example, Bloom's taxonomy, objectives, instructional design, and how to make learning active meaningful while aligning with state and national standards. A grade of "B" or better is required in EDUC 4301/4311 to move to additional education courses within the program.

Phase Two: Prior to Clinical Teaching. As students progress through phase two of the program, students complete other required coursework identified on their degree plan, including Clinical Teaching and Clinical Teaching Seminar. Coursework includes both content and pedagogy courses, students' remaining liberal arts core-curriculum courses, and field-based coursework. Students apply for graduation via HuskyNet one calendar year before their anticipated graduation. See the Registrar's webpage for information about how to apply for graduation. During the semester when students are enrolled in EDUC 4100, students apply for Clinical Teaching. While in EDUC 4100, students also review and practice test modules, complete practice certification exams, and work to successfully complete their TExES content exam(s) and pedagogy (PPR) exam after permission is assigned by the EPP office. Students are strongly encouraged to complete state certification testing prior to Clinical Teaching.

Phase Three: Clinical Teaching During the Last Semester in the EPP. In phase three of the program, students complete a clinical teaching experience in which they work interactively with an experienced EC-12 teacher(s). The experience begins with a Clinical Teacher Orientation, where students

learn expectations and meet with their assigned University Supervisor to plan campus interactions. Students co-teach with the assigned mentoring educator and gradually assume more teaching responsibilities until they are teaching full-time. In addition to the Clinical Teaching course(s) (8 credit hours), students enroll in the Clinical Teaching Seminar (4 credit hours). In the seminar class, clinical teachers explore strategies for optimal instruction and classroom management, prepare resumes, practice interview skills, present their online portfolios, and learn how to apply for state certification. Clinical teachers apply for certification on the TEA website during their last month of Clinical Teaching and after passing all required TExES exams associated with their degree plan. Students should notify the EPP office once completing the application for certification. Graduation from HCU does not guarantee TEA certification, therefore students must carefully ensure that all TEA requirements for certification are fully met.

Field-based Experiences During Program Phases

Students gain field experience in EC-12 schools as they progress through each program phase. They acquire experience in multiple grade levels and schools/school districts.

1. **Phase One – Pre-Ed:** Occurs before HCU students are formally admitted to the EPP. While taking two foundation courses – EDUC 2320 and EDSP 2302– to learn content and pedagogy, students participate in a field trip to an area partnering campus to observe daily activities as an aspiring educator.
2. **Phase Two – Early Teacher Candidate:** Begins after the HCU student is formally admitted into the EPP. HCU students begin their field experience in EC-12 schools as they learn both content and pedagogy, actively engaging in instructional roles with students under the supervision of the regular classroom teachers and the university professors. During this phase consisting of a minimum of 50 interactive observation hours, HCU students develop their pedagogical knowledge and begin to “practice” their skills as teacher candidates.

Field experience requirements prior to clinical teaching are described in detail in each course syllabi and summarized in the following table. No credit can be earned for a field experience course if all of the hours are not completed.

Elementary (EC-6) *(Additional hours if adding Special Education* or Bilingual)*

Course	Minimum Required Hours
EDUC 2320 Learning and Development	Field Trip
EDUC 4301 Curriculum and Instruction in the Elementary School	25
EDEC 4313 Early Childhood Curriculum and Instruction	15
EDRE 4350 Reading and the Language Arts	10
EDRE 4360 Developing and Teaching Literacy	10
INDC 4360 Essential Elements of Math	10
Total	70

Secondary (7-12)

Course	Minimum Required Hours
EDUC 2320 Learning and Development	Field Trip
EDUC 4311 Curriculum and Instruction in the Secondary School	25
EDUC 4320 Teaching Methods for Secondary Schools	25
Total	50

All-Level (EC-12)

Course	Minimum Required Hours
EDUC 2320 Learning and Development	Field Trip
EDUC 4301 Curriculum and Instruction in the Elementary School	25
EDUC 4320 Teaching Methods for Secondary Schools	25
Total	50

3. **Phase Three – Clinical Teaching:** Occurs during the final semesters before the HCU student graduates and/or completes the requirements for certification. During a full semester, the clinical teacher spends 15 weeks in a classroom(s) under the supervision of regular classroom

teachers and a University Supervisor. During this time, the clinical teacher begins to assume limited full-time teaching responsibilities.

Admission to Clinical Teaching

Admission to clinical teaching is not automatic upon completion of the required courses. It is contingent upon an application and acceptance based on having met the following criteria:

1. Satisfaction of all requirements for retention in the EPP
2. A completed Application for Clinical Teaching form on file in the EPP office (completed while enrolled in EDUC 4100)
3. A degree plan and application to graduate on file in the Registrar's office
4. Completion of at least 96 semester hours with
 - a. A cumulative GPA of 2.75 or higher;
 - b. At least 21 semester hours in the teaching field with no grade lower than "C" and a teaching field GPA of 2.75 or higher;
 - c. A grade of "B" or higher in EDUC 4301 or 4311 (see degree plan for requirement); and
 - d. Completion of all education courses specified on the degree with a grade of "C" or higher ("B" or higher for EDUC 4301/4311) and an education GPA of 2.75 or higher.
5. Fitness for teaching as judged by performance in the classroom and in field experiences
6. In order to clinical teach, students must have cleared a criminal background check

Undergraduate Retention in the EPP

The following conditions are necessary for undergraduate retention in the program:

1. All degree plan requirements and a 2.75 cumulative grade point average must be maintained through graduation for undergraduate students. Students must earn a "B" or better in EDUC 4301/4311 to take additional courses in the professional education course sequence or to count it as a prerequisite for other courses.
2. The attitudinal qualities that qualified the student for admission to the program must be maintained.
3. Students must maintain the standards of conduct in the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.

4. If a student fails to demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on one or more professional educator standards during any class or field experience, a conference is held in which difficulties are identified and means for improvement are explored.
5. Sometimes, specific interventions will be required. If required, a third form will result in a committee hearing to review difficulties and means for improvement and to determine conditions for continuance in the program. Professional standards include knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Alternative Certification Programs (ACP)

ACP Program Overview

The HCU Alternative Certification Program (ACP) is a post-baccalaureate, **non-degree seeking** option for attaining initial teacher certification in Texas. The program provides the opportunity for a student with a bachelor's degree and who meets all requirements for admission to the HCU ACP to be employed as a full-time teacher in an area school district while completing the required coursework for the ACP Program. As desired, ACP students who have completed 21 hours of required ACP coursework may apply those hours toward the requirements for a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction offered by HCU. The Master's degree requires a minimum of 36 hours.

Candidates admitted to the ACP program become eligible for teacher employment on an Intern certificate once they have:

- Completed at least four courses on the certification plan
- Participated in a minimum of 50 hours of field-based experience
- Passed their applicable TExES content exam(s) and submitted proof of a contract employment as a full-time teacher of record (in the approved area of certification) at a Texas accredited school district, charter school, or private school.

An ACP student becomes eligible for Texas Standard Certificate approval by the HCU Certification Officer after the student:

- Completes all required certification plan coursework
- Successfully completes a year-long Internship
- Completes all TEA requirements, including application for the Standard certificate

EPP Program Phases: ACP and MEd

EPP Acceptance*

** Must be formally accepted into EPP before registering for upper-level Education courses*

1. Submit the EPP application via the Graduate Admissions Office
2. The Graduate Admissions office verifies applicant qualifications
3. Complete a satisfactory EPP admission interview
4. Respond to the Acceptance or Conditional Admit Letter
5. Declare the area of certification concentration
6. Sign Code of Ethics and FERPA Forms
7. Set up Educator accounts with TEA and Pearson

Phase One: Early Teacher Candidate

1. Complete Education courses as defined on the certification plan, including participating in required field-based experience
2. As desired, consult with the Advisor about requirements to move from the ACP to the M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction with Certification program

Phase Two: Prior to Internship

1. Prepare for and take the HCU Practice Exam for the content and PPR exams
2. After the TExES content exam is passed, email the Score Report to the EPP office so that a letter of employability may be provided
3. Seek employment as a contract teacher by applying on the websites of school districts, and/or approved and accredited charter and private schools. The attendance of job fairs is highly encouraged
4. Upon the offer of employment as a contract teacher in the approved certification content area, email the EPP office for next steps
5. Apply on the TEA website for an Intern certificate
6. Register for the Internship course each semester of the internship. Consult your Advisor if financial aid is needed.

Phase Three: Internship

1. Pass the PPR exam prior to the end of the Internship
2. If all certification requirements have been met, apply on the TEA website for a Standard certificate. The certificate may be approved one business after the last day of the teacher duty schedule.
3. If all certification requirements are not expected to be met by the end of the internship year, notify the Advisor and EPP Office for next steps

ACP EPP Acceptance

Students must be formally accepted into the Graduate School **and** the EPP before registering for Education courses – courses with the EDBI, EDEC, EDUC, EDRE, EDSP, and INDC rubrics.

To submit an application for ACP admission:

- Complete the online forms for Graduate Admission and select the ACP option.
- Applications should be submitted based on the Application Deadlines posted on the Graduate School website. EPP admission generally occurs within the same or next semester after the application is submitted (Fall, Spring, or Summer).
- Submit official transcripts from the university where your undergraduate degree was obtained. All non-U.S. transcripts must be evaluated by Span Tran or Global Evaluators to be accepted. Transcripts are reviewed to determine for which certification area(s) the applicant qualifies based on Texas Education Agency requirements.
- After all application materials are submitted, meet with the EPP office for an admission interview. The interview is also a requirement of the state of Texas for anyone seeking initial certification.
- Once admission to HCU is confirmed, an applicant will receive a letter from Graduate Admissions. Once admission to the EPP is confirmed, an applicant will receive a letter from the EPP office.
- Meet with your Advisor to have a certification plan written. At that time, you will be advised which courses to take the next semester and will receive registration assistance. Before the following semester, contact your Advisor during priority registration periods or before each new semester for registration advising.

Requirements for ACP admittance into the EPP include:

1. Hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited university
2. A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.50 or higher on either all college/university coursework attempted, or the last 60 hours of coursework attempted

3. Demonstrate speech competency
 - a. Earn a “C” or better in any oral communication course.
 - b. International students are required to submit a TOEFL examination with a score of High-Intermediate or better on all four sections of the exam.
4. Demonstrate competency in chosen teaching field by meeting the following course requirements:
 - a. Certifications in Core Subjects EC-6 must have a minimum of 3 hours undergraduate coursework in each of the following areas: English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.
 - b. Certifications in Grades 7-12, and EC-12 are required to have 12 hours in the content area of the certification field. If the content area is Mathematics or Science, then 15 hours are required.
 - c. Certification in Spanish EC-12 requires successful completion of a Spanish language coursework and/or other prescribed learning experiences to demonstrate language mastery.
 - d. If coursework is missing, students may be advised to take leveling courses or be advised to take a Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) from the Texas Education Agency to be admitted to the EPP.
5. Successful completion of the EPP admission interview. When the above criteria for admission to EPP is met, applicants are invited to be interviewed by members of the EPP office. Applicants must display the following qualities to be admitted into EPP:
 - a. A genuine desire to enter and follow a career in teaching
 - b. A personal and social orientation which shows promise of contributing to success in the teaching profession
 - c. A physical and mental fitness which indicates potential classroom leadership
 - d. Demonstrate attitudinal dispositions that are deemed necessary for successful teaching
6. To be eligible to complete the clinical experience, candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to clinical experience and prior to employment as an educator (TEC §§ 22.0833 and 22.0835) that may impact employment eligibility. A candidate may request from the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) a preliminary criminal history evaluation letter regarding their potential ineligibility for certification due to a conviction or differed adjudication for a felony or misdemeanor offense.

7. The Commissioner of Education may suspend or revoke a teaching certificate or refuse to issue a teaching certificate for a person who has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor for a crime which directly relates to the duties and responsibilities of the teaching profession. All applicants for Texas certification will be screened for a record of felony or misdemeanor conviction through the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and Homeland Security. All potential certificate applicants with a criminal felony or misdemeanor conviction(s) should contact the Certification Officer immediately to seek clarification of their certification status.
8. Provisional admittance is sometimes possible and requires that students complete 6 or 9 semester hours prescribed coursework during their first semester with a GPA of 3.0 or higher, and satisfactory dispositions in order to obtain full EPP admission to continue taking classes.

Phase One and Two: Prior to the Internship

The ACP program is designed to enable students holding an earned bachelor's degree to attain initial teacher certification in Texas. After admission into the EPP, the student embarks on Phase One and Two. Students complete a minimum of six education courses at a reduced rate (compared to M.Ed. course rates). Students also study for and take the TExES state exams. Upon passing the state content exam, the ACP student should notify the EPP office for next steps.

Once the student has completed the 18 hours of required course work, the student may choose to apply those hours toward the requirements of an HCU Master's Degree in Curriculum & Instruction, which allows them the option of Clinical Teaching (instead of an Internship).

Phase Three: Internship During the Last Two Semesters in the EPP

During Phase Three of the ACP program, students complete two semesters of Internship while employed full-time as a Texas teacher. The year-long Internship is accompanied by the Seminar course.

The course textbook is designed to assist during the first year of teaching. You will be assigned a University Supervisor who will contact you and arrange for times to come observe and then conference with you throughout the experience. See the Internship Handbook for responsibilities of the HCU intern and HCU supervisor.

Field Experiences During Program Phases

ACP students progress through two stages of field experience. The first stage occurs during the time that the future teacher takes the foundation courses of Elementary or Secondary Curriculum and Instruction. During this stage, the student is assigned a mentor teacher in a classroom and observes interactions between pupils and teachers. The HCU student participates in designated teacher-aide, tutorial and instructional roles; which may include teaching lessons to small groups or the whole class; under the supervision of a mentor teacher. This stage consists of a minimum of 50 hours of interaction and observation and detailed in the following chart.

Elementary (EC-6) *(Additional hours if adding Special Education* or Bilingual)*

Course	Minimum Required Hours
EDUC 6302 Elementary School Curriculum and Instruction	25
EDRE 5310 Reading & Writing: Pre-Adolescents	25
Total	50

Secondary (7-12)

Course	Minimum Required Hours
EDUC 6312 Secondary School Curriculum and Instruction	25
EDUC 5320 Teaching Methodology for Secondary Teachers	25
Total	50

All-Level (EC-12)

Course	Minimum Required Hours
EDUC 6302 Elementary School Curriculum and Instruction	25
EDUC 5320 Teaching Methodology for Secondary Teachers	25
Total	50

The second stage of field experience is the ACP Internship (EDUC 5101 and EDUC 5201). Each course lasts one semester and takes place after a student has completed the 50 hours of field experience, taken a minimum of three graduate ACP courses, passed the required TExES content exam(s) for the approved certification area, and secured a job through their own efforts at a school district, charter school, or accredited private school.

To enhance the experiential opportunities of its students, the University has entered into cooperative relationships with independent school districts and Texas-accredited charter and private schools. Because of these relationships, Houston Christian University students are permitted to complete the 50 hours of required observations in the schools of the participating school systems. The Internship may be at a school where the student developed a relationship during these field experience hours and is later hired. HCU also has on-campus job fairs to assist the ACP student to secure a job.

The ACP Internship is an entry point into the teaching profession; it is a full-time teaching position complete with salary and benefits. The University recommends that the ACP Internship begin after all six required ACP courses are complete so that the Intern is equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to be an effective teacher. Completion of a minimum of four ACP courses is required to begin the Internship. The Intern is placed under the supervision of a certified Field Supervisor assigned by HCU.

Applying for Intern Certificate

Internship teachers apply for an Intern certificate on the [TEA website](#) prior to the start of the Internship. Once you have secured a teaching position with a school district, charter school, or accredited private school, there are several things needed before the Intern certificate can be approved.

1. Notify the EPP office about your acceptance of the teaching position.
2. Return the completed Internship Information form to the EPP office.
3. Email the EPP office the name and email address of the Human Resources representative processing your hire.
4. Email the EPP office a copy of the signed teacher contract.
5. Register for EDUC 5101 Internship I for the first semester, and when appropriate, register for EDUC 5201 for the second semester. Registration may be completed after a CRN is provided by the EPP Office, which usually occurs one month before the beginning of the Internship semester.
6. Apply and pay for the Intern certificate on the TEA website.

Once you have completed these steps, HCU will approve you for an Intern certificate. The certificate expires two years after the date issued.

After the completion of the Internship and after passing all required TExES exams associated with

their degree plan, the student applies for Standard certification on the TEA website. Students should notify the EPP office by emailing epp@hc.edu once completing the application for certification.

ACP Retention in the EPP

The following conditions are necessary for ACP retention in the EPP:

1. A 2.75 cumulative grade point average must be maintained throughout your ACP studies.
2. Students must earn a “B” or better in EDUC 6302/6312 to take additional courses in the professional education course sequence or to count it as a prerequisite for other courses.
3. The attitudinal qualities that qualified the student for admission to the program must be maintained.
4. Students must maintain the standards of conduct in the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.
5. If a student fails to demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on one or more professional educator standards during any class or field experience, a conference is held in which difficulties are identified and means for improvement are explored.
6. Sometimes, specific interventions will be required. If required, a third form will result in a committee hearing to review difficulties and means for improvement and to determine conditions for continuance in the program. Professional standards include knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Graduate Degree Programs

Graduate programs offered through HCU's School of Education are designed to prepare students for teaching careers in public and private schools in Texas, to extend the classroom teaching skills of teachers, and to develop leaders in school administration and special services necessary to the successful operation of schools in Texas. Programs vary by area of study. The Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction is a thirty-six-hour program that provides expertise related to curriculum content and instructional methodology. In the EPP, graduate students continue their field experience in EC-12 schools as they learn both content and pedagogy and they review for and take any required certification exams. Initial certification graduate students participate in a full-time clinical teaching experience working under the supervision of an experienced teacher(s) in an EC-12 school (students are strongly encouraged to complete state certification testing before clinical teaching). Or graduate students seeking initial teacher certification may opt for a one-year on-the-job internship after meeting additional criteria.

Consistent with more rigorous expectations for the academic performance of graduate-level students, each degree plan includes a core set of graduate courses that provide students with a foundation in research literature and the skills necessary to contribute to not only future classroom practice but how students' primary research is contextualized within a larger research base. Additionally, students must satisfactorily pass a comprehensive exam to proceed in the program and graduate.

Coursework is offered face-to-face, hybrid, and online. For graduate students seeking a 100% online experience, HCU is proud to offer a M.Ed. in Educational Administration and a M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction (without certification). The courses offered in the M.Ed. online program offer the same high-quality instruction as in our face-to-face classes. However, online courses provide flexibility for those students seeking a graduate degree but have schedules which limit their ability to take courses on the HCU campus. Graduate students in these online programs can complete the entire program without coming to the HCU campus.

EPP Graduate Acceptance Process

Graduate students seeking a certification must be formally accepted into the Graduate School **and** the EPP before registering for Education courses – courses with the EDBI, EDEC, EDUC, EDRE, EDSP, and INDC rubrics.

To submit an application for Graduate School admission:

- Complete the online forms for Graduate Admission and select the appropriate M.Ed. or D.Ed. option.
- Applications should be submitted based on the Application Deadlines posted on the Graduate School website. EPP admission generally occurs within the same or next semester after the application is submitted (Fall, Spring, or Summer).
- Submit official transcripts from the university where your undergraduate degree was obtained. All non-U.S. transcripts must be evaluated by Span Tran or Global Evaluators to be accepted. Transcripts are reviewed to determine for which certification area(s) the applicant qualifies based on Texas Education Agency requirements.
- After all application materials are submitted, you will meet with either the Director of Graduate Programs in the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences or the EPP office for an admission interview (depending on degree program). The interview is also a requirement of the state of Texas for anyone seeking initial certification.
- Once admission to HCU is confirmed, an applicant will receive a letter from Graduate Admissions. Once admission to the EPP is confirmed, an applicant will receive a letter from the EPP office.
- Meet with your Advisor to formalize your degree plan. At that time, you will be advised which courses to take the next semester and will receive registration assistance. Before the following semester, contact your Advisor during priority registration periods or before each new semester for registration advising.

Requirements for graduate admittance into the EPP include:

1. Hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited university
2. A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.50 or higher on all college/university coursework attempted is required.

3. Demonstrate speech competency
 - a. Earn a “C” or better in any oral communication course.
 - b. International students are required to submit a TOEFL examination with a score of High-Intermediate or better on all four sections of the exam.
4. For graduate students seeking initial certification, demonstrate competency in the chosen teaching field by meeting the following course requirements:
 - a. Certifications in Core Subjects EC-6 must have a minimum of 3 hours undergraduate coursework in each of the following areas: English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.
 - b. Certifications in Grades 7-12, and EC-12 are required to have 12 hours in the content area of the certification field. If the content area is Mathematics or Science, then 15 hours are required.
 - c. Certification in Spanish EC-12 requires successful completion of a Spanish language coursework and/or other prescribed learning experiences to demonstrate language mastery.
 - d. If coursework is missing, students may be advised to take leveling courses or be advised to take a Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) from the Texas Education Agency to be admitted to the EPP.
 - e. EC-12 Spanish candidates who do not meet minimum standards on this assessment must successfully complete prescribed coursework and/or other prescribed learning experiences in each area where the minimum was not achieved.
5. Successful completion of the EPP admission interview. When the above criteria for admission to EPP is met, applicants are invited to be interviewed by either the Department of Graduate Programs or members of the EPP office. Applicants must display the following qualities to be admitted into EPP:
 - a. A genuine desire to enter and follow a career in teaching.
 - b. A personal and social orientation which shows promise of contributing to success in the teaching profession.
 - c. A physical and mental fitness which indicates potential classroom leadership.

- d. Demonstrate attitudinal dispositions that are deemed necessary for successful teaching.
6. Complete a degree plan with your Advisor and submit it to the Dean for final approval before being filed with the EPP office and Registrar. Any subsequent change of degree plan must follow this same protocol.
7. To be eligible to complete field experience, which is required in multiple EPP courses, candidates must undergo a criminal history background check prior to clinical teaching and prior to employment as an educator (TEC §§ 22.0833 and 22.0835) that may impact employment eligibility. A candidate may request from the State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) a preliminary criminal history evaluation letter regarding their potential ineligibility for certification due to a conviction or differed adjudication for a felony or misdemeanor offense.
8. The Commissioner of Education may suspend or revoke a teaching certificate or refuse to issue a teaching certificate for a person who has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor for a crime which directly relates to the duties and responsibilities of the teaching profession. All applicants for Texas certification will be screened for a record of felony or misdemeanor conviction through the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and Homeland Security. All potential certificate applicants with a criminal felony or misdemeanor conviction(s) should contact the Certification Officer immediately to seek clarification of their certification status.
9. Provisional admittance is sometimes possible and requires that students complete 6 or 9 semester hours prescribed coursework during their first semester with a GPA of 3.0 or higher, and satisfactory dispositions in order to obtain full EPP admission to continue taking classes.

Field Experience: M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction with Initial Teacher Certification

Students progress through two stages of field experience. The first stage occurs during the time that the future teacher takes the foundation courses of Elementary or Secondary Curriculum and Instruction. During this stage, the student is assigned a mentor teacher in a classroom and observes interactions between pupils and teachers. The HCU student participates in designated teacher-aide, tutorial and instructional roles; which may include teaching lessons to small groups or the whole class; under the supervision of a mentor teacher. This stage consists of a minimum of 50 hours of in-classroom interaction and observation.

During the second stage of field experience, graduate students may select either Clinical Teaching or an Internship for their final field experience in the EPP. During Clinical Teaching, graduate students

are in a classroom all day for at least one semester and are responsible for planning and teaching for a minimum of ten full days. Alternatively, graduate students may enroll in Internship courses, EDUC 5101 and EDUC 5201. Each course lasts one semester, takes place during the last two semesters prior to graduation, and is contingent on the student securing a job through their own efforts at a school district, or Texas-accredited charter or private school. The Internship is an entry point into the teaching profession; it is a full-time teaching position complete with salary and benefits. Prior to being able to seek an internship, students must complete a minimum of three graduate education courses and pass the required TExES content exam(s) for the approved certification area.

Field experience requirements* prior to Clinical Teaching/Internship are described in detail in each course syllabi and summarized in the following table:

Note: No course credit can be earned for field experience courses if all the hours are not completed.

Elementary (EC-6) *(Additional hours if adding Special Education* or Bilingual)*

Course	Minimum Required Hours
EDUC 6302 Elementary School Curriculum and Instruction	25
EDRE 5310 Reading & Writing: Pre-Adolescents	25
Total	50

Secondary (7-12)

Course	Minimum Required Hours
EDUC 6312 Secondary School Curriculum and Instruction	25
EDUC 5320 Teaching Methodology for Secondary Teachers	25
Total	50

All-Level (EC-12)

Course	Minimum Required Hours
EDUC 6302 Elementary School Curriculum and Instruction	25
EDUC 5320 Teaching Methodology for Secondary Teachers	25
Total	50

The Clinical Teacher Option: M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction with Initial Teacher Certification

Clinical teaching is among the final requirements in the EPP. It must be done during the last semester prior to graduation. In addition to working in an assigned classroom(s) all semester from Monday through Friday for the entire school day, it requires attendance at EDUC 5000 Clinical Teaching Seminar each week.

Permission to clinical teach is not automatic upon completion of required courses. It is contingent upon application and acceptance based on having met the following criteria:

1. Satisfaction of all requirements for retention in the EPP.
2. A completed Application for Clinical Teaching form on file in the EPP office by the posted deadline.
3. A degree plan and application to graduate on file in the Registrar's office
4. Completion of at least 21 semester hours in the teaching field with
 - a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher
 - no grade lower than "C" and a teaching field GPA of 3.00 or higher
5. Fitness for teaching as judged by performance in the classroom and in field experiences.
6. In order to clinical teach, students must have cleared a criminal background check.

Students who opt to complete clinical teaching begin by attending a mandatory Clinical Teacher Orientation, where students learn expectation, and meet with their assigned University Supervisor to plan campus interactions. Throughout clinical teaching, students co-teach with the mentoring educator and gradually assume more and more teaching responsibilities until they are teaching full-time. During this semester, clinical teachers must be enrolled in the appropriate Clinical Teaching course and in the Clinical Teaching Seminar. In the seminar class, clinical teachers explore strategies for optimal instruction and classroom management, prepare resumes, practice interview skills, present their online portfolios, and learn how to apply for state certification. Clinical Teachers apply for certification on the [TEA website](#) during their last month of clinical teaching and after passing all required TExES exams associated with their degree plan. Students should notify the EPP office via email once they have applied for certification. Graduation from HCU does not guarantee TEA certification, therefore students must carefully ensure that all TEA requirements for certification are fully met.

The Internship Option: M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction with Initial Teacher Certification

Master's level EPP students seeking initial teacher certification have the option of completing a single semester of Clinical Teaching or working full-time as a Texas teacher while completing an Internship. The year-long Internship consists of two courses -- a one-hour course during your first semester. Each course has a textbook designed to assist during the first year of teaching. You will be assigned a University Supervisor who will contact you and arrange for times to come observe and then conference with you throughout the internship experience. See the Internship Handbook for responsibilities of the HCU intern and HCU supervisor.

If you choose to complete an Internship, you will be responsible for seeking a full-time teaching position in the area of the approved certification program. Once you have secured a teaching position with a school district, charter school, or accredited private school, there are several things needed before the Intern certificate can be approved.

1. Notify the EPP office and your Advisor about your acceptance of the teaching position
2. Return the completed Internship Information form to the EPP office.
3. Email the EPP office the name and email address of the Human Resources representative processing your hire
4. Email a copy of the signed teacher contract
5. Register for EDUC 5101 Internship I for the first semester, and when appropriate, register for EDUC 5201 for the second semester. Registration may be completed after a CRN is provided by the COEBS Office, which usually occurs one month before the beginning of the Internship semester.
6. Apply and pay for the Intern Certificate on the TEA website

Once you have completed these steps, HCU will approve you for an Intern certificate. The certificate expires two years after the date it is issued.

After the completion of the Internship and after passing all required TExES exams associated with their degree plan, the student applies for Standard certification on the TEA website. Students should notify the EPP office by emailing epp@hc.edu once completing the application for certification.

EPP Graduate Degree Program without Initial Certification (Continuing Study)

Students who already hold a Texas teaching certification may enroll in the M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction to gain increased expertise in the areas of curriculum and instruction without an additional certification or specialization. In this program, certified teachers can increase their knowledge and skills without pursuing a certification or specialization. This program is also available online.

This graduate degree offers students additional expertise in the area of education while also allowing them to take a variety of courses across many areas in education. Throughout the program, students develop knowledge and skills through working with children and teachers. Because the College of Education maintains close ties with area schools and school districts, students benefit from the practical experiences and the professional opportunities available.

These students are not admitted into the EPP unless they opt to change degree plans and seek an additional certification, which requires them to fulfill all admission requirements for the certification program of interest.

Time-Sensitive Requirements

The following guidelines apply to all professional-level certification programs:

- Candidates must complete the degree and certification program within five (5) years.
- Candidates may complete up to 12 credit hours before a Degree Plan must be filed.
- Candidates must complete at least 18 credit hours or more to apply for candidacy.
- After completing 24 credit hours, candidates may apply for comprehensive examinations and graduation.

Documents Required for Professional Certification

Service Records. A service record is a Texas-recognized document from a school district, charter school or private school that reflects years of service in an educator position, days worked, etc. Official service records must be provided directly from school districts for certifications such as Superintendent, Principal, School Counselor, Educational Diagnostician, and Reading Specialist. Service records must be provided to the EPP office directly from the school district, charter school, and/or private school via email at epp@hc.edu.

Graduation Requirements for Masters of Education

- Transfer no more than six (6) semester hours from another institution
- No grade below “C”
- Overall GPA of 3.00 or above
- Application to the Registrar for graduation two (2) semesters before the expected graduation date
- Admission to Candidacy
- Successful completion of the Written Comprehensive Examination
- Completion of the Degree Plan
- Recommendation from the School of Education

Graduate Comprehensive Examination

Each course in the graduate school program is designed to assist the student in preparation for the required comprehensive examination taken after 24 semester hours in the program. The rigor of the

comprehensive assessment demands the student evaluate, analyze, and synthesize all learning experiences. Fulfilling course goals, objectives, knowledge, and skills involved in learning experiences prepares the graduate student to be successful. This culminating assessment demonstrates the graduate student's capability to think globally regarding educational theory and practice as they become educational leaders in their chosen field of study.

It is the student's responsibility to keep up with all textbooks and curriculum within the 24+ hours of coursework so that they can prepare themselves adequately. It is advisable that all students download their syllabi from Canvas each semester in order to use the course objectives to guide their study for these exams.

To apply to take the Master's Comprehensive Exam, you must be formally granted Candidacy status. This is a formal application process that students should complete once you have completed 18 or more hours of coursework (and maintained a GPA of 3.0 or above). To be eligible to take the Comprehensive Exam a candidate must have completed a minimum of 24 hours of coursework which applies toward your degree and completed at least two of the core M.Ed. courses. You should contact the Graduate School of Education (call 281-649-3094 or email COEBS@hc.edu) for instructions on submitting the Comprehensive Exam Application and the Application for Candidacy Status for eligibility to take the Comprehensive Exam. These forms are available in the School of Education and must be returned to the Assistant to the Dean for Graduate Education.

If you have additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact your Advisor or the Administrative Assistant to the Dean, Graduate Education Programs, (281) 649-3094.

Graduate Retention in the EPP

The following conditions are necessary for graduate retention in the program:

1. A 3.0 cumulative grade point average must be maintained throughout your graduate studies.
2. Students must earn a "B" or better in EDUC 6302/6312 to take additional courses in the professional education course sequence or to count it as a prerequisite for other courses.

3. The attitudinal qualities that qualified the student for admission to the program must be maintained.
4. If a student fails to demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on one or more professional educator standards during any class or field experience, a conference is held in which difficulties are identified and means for improvement are explored.
5. Students must maintain the standards of conduct in the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.
6. Sometimes, specific interventions will be required. If required, a third form will result in a committee hearing to review difficulties and means for improvement and to determine conditions for continuance in the program. Professional standards include knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

Degree Plan Filing and Audits

All degree plans and degree plan changes are processed in the EPP and submitted to the Dean for final approval before being filed with the Registrar. Once a degree plan has been filed, a student or faculty member can access a degree audit through HCU's online student portal. This will indicate course requirements that have and have not been met. A formal degree audit is also completed by the Registrar's office when students file for graduation one full year before their projected graduation date. Students then receive an email confirming exactly which courses they still need to complete in order to graduate.

Technology and Electronic Portfolio

Instructional Technology

Technology integration is a hallmark of the EPP. Undergraduate students demonstrate basic computer proficiency during ETEC 4306. In this course, they learn to integrate the use of technology into learning and begin their electronic portfolio that includes documentation of technology integration skills and experience. Similarly, graduate students enroll in ETEC 5306. Both undergraduate and graduate students use and expand the technology capabilities developed in ETEC 4306/5306 throughout their EPP experience.

Electronic Portfolio

Students preparing for initial certification create an electronic professional portfolio. This portfolio includes artifacts from courses throughout the program demonstrating Texas Educator Standards. It also includes lesson plans and teaching evaluations from their clinical teaching/intern experience as well as artifacts from their previous coursework that demonstrate their ability to facilitate good teaching and learning. Students may also want to put together a hard copy portfolio for interviewing purposes, but only the electronic portfolio is required. The electronic portfolio includes the following items:

1. Professional Resume
2. Educational Philosophy
3. Evidence of Successful Teaching and Planning
 - Sample of Units of Study connected to Teacher Standards
 - Reflections on the success of these units or activities must accompany the lessons.
 - Sample of Student Work with Teacher Feedback: Clinical teacher will upload student work samples with the teacher feedback such as comments and grades. Please mark out students' names on their papers.
 - Sample Assessment Tool: Clinical teacher will upload a sample assessment they used during their teaching experience. This assessment can be created by the clinical teacher, or an assessment commonly used for the course.
 - Videotaped Lesson – optional Due to FERPA issues, this is not required unless the clinical teacher receives permission from the host campus/district.
4. Evidence of Technology Proficiency

5. Evidence of Professional Communication

Elements of the portfolio are developed throughout the EPP coursework and submitted in EDUC 4400/5000 *Clinical Teaching Seminar*. The course professor reviews the portfolio and offers feedback.

Completing the State Certification Exams

To receive state certification, prospective teachers must successfully complete the required state certification exams for both content and pedagogy (PPR).

HCU teacher education students explore the components assessed on their applicable certification exams throughout their coursework. Degree plans and coursework are designed to support students' learning of content aligned with state content certification tests through the Liberal Arts Core Curriculum and content courses provided by various colleges in the university. Additionally, courses in pedagogy provide students with preparation in the application of content to teaching in EC-12 schools. Intensive review for these exams is provided in EDUC 4100. During this course, students review the structure and components of the exams and complete HCU-administered Practice Tests.

The EPP coordinates all educator certification testing for students across Houston Christian University. Support services for enrolled students include: test preparation resources, diagnostic and practice tests, and test registration. Fees included within the HCU registration costs fund the first administration of the certification exam for currently enrolled students. Costs associated with subsequent testing after program completion is the responsibility of the former student.

1. To obtain approval to take a state exam, students must demonstrate readiness.
2. Review study resources provided by the EPP during enrollment.
3. Students must score 80% or better on each Practice Test and submit it to the EPP office for approval to take applicable state exams.
 - Students scoring 80% or above on a Practice Test will be approved by the EPP office to take the applicable state certification exam.
 - Students who score below 80% on a Practice Test are required to continue the preparation resources remediation activities, and to take a new practice test.
4. Students are responsible for registering for the appropriate TExES certification exam on the [Pearson website](#).
 - Read all information on the website carefully
 - The state certification exam rules are strictly enforced
 - Create an account with TEA and Pearson
 - After creating an account with TEA and Pearson, schedule and pay fees for the appropriate TExES certification exam through Pearson (HCU will provide a voucher to cover the first attempt of each required exam while a candidate is

enrolled at HCU. After program completion, vouchers are not provided)

- After successful completion of a TExES certification exam, email the exam Score Report to the EPP office at epp@hc.edu

State Certification

Initial and additional or professional state certification is issued by the State of Texas, not the University. Therefore, state certification is not automatically conferred upon graduation or completion of coursework. In order for students to receive state teacher certification, they must:

1. Successfully complete all program requirements
2. Successfully complete appropriate examination(s) required by the state of Texas for the certification of teachers in both pedagogy and content teaching field(s)
3. Not have any holds on their accounts
4. Graduate or complete ACP program
5. Apply for certification online at the [TEA website](#), and meet all state requirements for certification
6. Be formally recommended for certification by HCU

Advising, Benchmarking, and Support

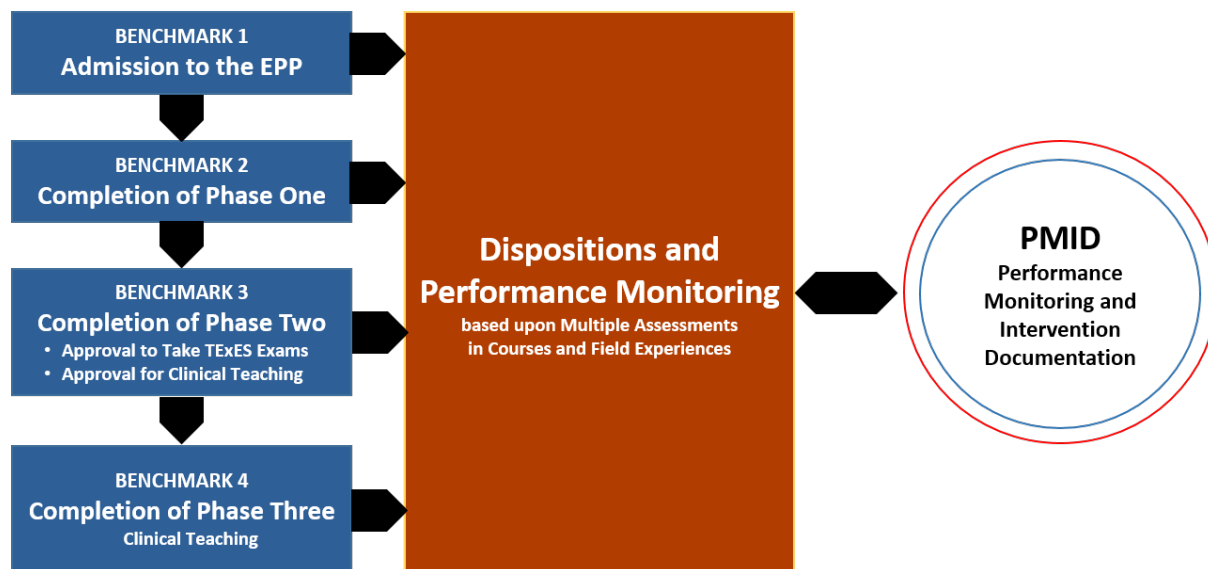
Advising

Advising is an integral part the HCU experience. Students have an assigned academic Advisor who shepherds them through their experience at HCU. Advisors are professional mentors to the students. Each semester before priority registration, students schedule an advising appointment with their Advisors. Advisors are available to meet with students during their posted office hours and at other times by appointment. Students meet with their Advisors to “map out” the coursework they will need to complete their degrees. Students also meet with their Advisors as needed to reflect on their progress in the program.

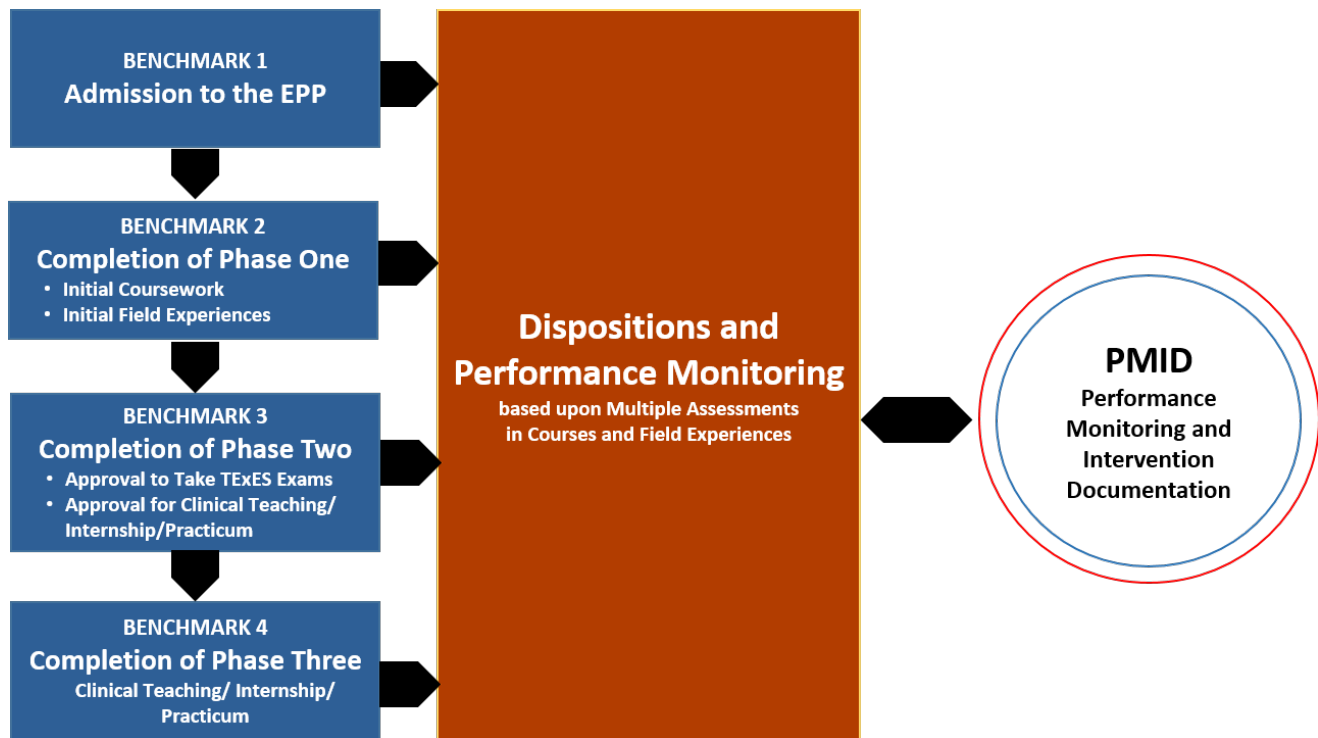
Benchmarking

As students progress through the program, faculty continually assess their performance and progress using a variety of means (tests, projects, structured assessments of actual classroom teaching, etc.). Each field experience includes a structured assessment of the candidate’s performance by an EC-12 classroom mentor teacher. As illustrated in the following diagrams, at four different places, formal benchmarking assesses preservice teachers’ readiness to progress to the next stage in the program.

Undergraduate Benchmarking



ACP and Graduate-Level Benchmarking



Because of the small size of our program and classes, much support is provided to students during each phase of the program. The exact support process is determined individually for each student. In general, the following supports are available to students:

- Tutoring through the HCU Academic Success Center for reading, writing and math
- Individual conferences with faculty Advisors (each HCU student has a faculty Advisor who shepherds them through their degree and helps point them towards additional resources when appropriate), university professors, field experience mentor teachers, university supervisors (during clinical teaching and internships), cooperating mentor teachers (during clinical teaching), and the EPP office.
- Advising and resources of the HCU Career and Calling Department
- TExES review sessions conducted by the EDUC 4100 instructor and/or HCU Testing Center
- TExES online practice materials and practice tests

COEBS Procedures

HCU provides equal access to all University educational programs to every qualified student. However, if any student requires special personal services or equipment, the student will be responsible for the expenses thereof.

Grievances and Problems

The Grievance and Complaint Procedure for HCU EPP is available on the EPP webpage. This document references the Grievance and General Student Complain Procedure in the student handbook currently in use and the Academic Grievance Policy in the catalog currently in use. The formal process is described therein and must be followed by all parties in order to resolve a dispute. No one—student or faculty member—is permitted to ignore the process, follow it out of order, or appeal to authorities such as the President or Provost.

All student grievances and problems must be processed through the appropriate chair after the student has spoken with the faculty or staff involved – *before the dean is involved (or copied on an email)*.

The student should make an appointment with the faculty member in question to discuss the matter in person, and is advised to keep their Advisor apprised of the matter. It is appropriate to try to resolve differences amicably and in person is at all possible before seeking to raise the matter to a higher level of authority than the classroom instructor.

If the student continues to dispute the grade after the face-to-face meeting, the student may bring the matter to the chair of the department in which the course is located. This step requires the student to make a written appeal to the chair. If the student is unsatisfied with the chair's recommendation, the student may bring the matter to the dean of the college in which the department resides—again, in writing.

To file a complaint with the Texas Education Agency, complete the [TEA complaint form](#).

Support Via Progress Monitoring and Intervention (PMID)

To support undergraduate, ACP, and graduate students in their development, students' progress is carefully monitored throughout each phase of the program. If a student fails to demonstrate an acceptable level of performance, a conference is held in which difficulties are identified and means for improvement are explored. Sometimes specific interventions will be required. If needed, a committee hearing to review difficulties and means for improvement and to determine conditions for continuance in the program will be scheduled.

Additional Support Services

Many additional support services are available for all HCU students including the Academic Success Center, Counseling Services, the health clinic, and Moody Library.

The Academic Success Center. The Academic Success Center, located in the library, provides tutoring, writing coaching, and workshops on academic success related to topics like preparing for exams.

The Counseling Center. The Counseling Center, located in The Bradshaw Fitness Center, is open Monday-Friday 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. Appointments can be made immediately by calling 281.649.3431. When calling in, students should express that they are interested in counseling at HCU. Appointments are highly preferred though limited walk-ins are possible if a counselor is available at that given time (call first).

The Health Clinic. Student health services are not offered at Houston Christian University. Browse information on [health services located near the campus](#).

Moody Library. The HCU library, open Monday-Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday, 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. during the spring and fall semesters, offers resources and research assistance to students. Circulation Desk: 281-649-3304 Reference Desk: 281-649-3180

Additional Resources. HCU provides additional resources to students. These are described in the [Student Handbook](#).

Annual Events

COEBS Awards Ceremony

Each spring, COEBS holds a reception and awards presentation to honor student excellence. Based on rigorous criteria, awards are presented to outstanding graduate and undergraduate students, student teachers, ACP interns and leaders in the COEBS professional organizations.

Annual Teaching and Learning Symposium

This annual event is a part of HCU's annual Celebration of Scholarship. On a Saturday morning each April, HCU students, alumni and area education professionals attend professional development sessions on researched-based teaching and learning strategies as well as other pertinent educational topics. Educators can receive continuing education hours for attending. Sessions are presented by HCU graduate students, faculty, alumni and other outstanding educational professionals.

Student Organizations

The Association of Student Educators (ASE)

ASE, a student chapter of the Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE), is a professional organization for HCU education students. It provides students with opportunities for networking, service and professional learning. At the monthly meetings, which are held the second and fourth Mondays from September through April, members eat, fellowship, plan service activities and explore a wide variety of topics such as stress management and teaching abroad opportunities. Service activities include tutoring at local schools, field trips for local elementary schools, decorating the technology room at University Place and helping with the COEBS Annual Teaching and Learning Symposium. In 2012-2013, ASE was recognized as the outstanding university ATPE chapter in the state of Texas.

Bilingual Education Student Organization (BESO)

BESO is open to all students across the university who have an interest in the purposes of the organization, which include:

- Promote bilingual education,
- Enhance the study of the Spanish language and culture as they apply to bilingual education,
- Provide the students the means by which they may acquaint themselves with the aforesaid through the participation in activities which normally fall beyond the scope of classroom endeavors, and
- Promote professional awareness in future bilingual teachers through participation in the Texas Association for Bilingual Education.

Kappa Delta Pi

Kappa Delta Pi is an International Honor Society in Education comprised of both undergraduate and graduate students who meet the GPA requirement of 3.5 or higher and are recommended for initiation by faculty. Initiation takes place in both the fall and spring semesters. As part of its service initiative, this group regularly collects books and distributes them to different charitable organizations such as the Texas Prison System, Gracewood, missionary efforts in Uganda, Bridge City ISD etc., as a part of the *Reading is Fundamental* initiative.