

H A N D B O O K



Student Handbook



Welcome to The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley's UTeach program where we are focused on quality education for the advancement of STEM teachers in the Rio Grande Valley. The official program web site can be found online at <http://www.utrgv.edu/uteach/>

This UTRGV UTeach Handbook is meant to provide information that will help students understand the design, scope, and requirements of the UTRGV UTeach program. Students have the responsibility to read and fully understand all information and to abide by all policies and procedures described. (See Handbook Agreement Form.)

This publication of the UTRGV UTeach Handbook will serve as a guide to program policies and requirements. The Handbook may be modified as Texas Administrative Code, the Texas Education Agency (TEA), or State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) rules dictate, or as program changes are mandated. You will be notified of substantive modifications through the UTRGV UTeach web page and email announcements.

Students have the responsibility to read and fully understand all information in this Handbook and to abide by all policies and procedures.

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The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

**UTRGV UTeach Program
2026-2027**

HANDBOOK AGREEMENT FORM

This form must be acknowledged and submitted to your current UTeach course instructor via an online Qualtrics survey by the second class meeting. Survey details will be provided.

By submitting my acknowledgment through the online Qualtrics survey, I certify that I have read my UTRGV UTeach Handbook, including the Code of Ethics, and I will be held accountable for information herein. I understand that if I have any questions about the information in this handbook, I will contact my advisor or the appropriate contact.

I further certify that I will refer to my UTRGV UTeach Handbook for the duration of my degree program and/or certification program and will stay abreast of modifications provided by the UTRGV UTeach Program.

I understand that during my program, I will be governed by the *Texas Administrative Code's Educators' Code of Ethics* which can be found at: <https://tea.texas.gov/educators/investigations/educators-code-ethics>

I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to check my UTRGV email account and the [UTRGV UTeach web page](#) on a frequent basis. Updates, deadlines, and UTRGV UTeach alerts will be given to students through these networks as well as UTRGV UTeach social media sites.

In the event I do not take any UTeach related course for two semesters or more, I understand that it is my responsibility to remain in contact with the UTRGV UTeach Program and stay abreast of any information, application deadlines, program changes, etc., that may pertain to my degree and my teacher certification program. I also understand that policies that change during my time away may alter my program of study upon return.

Your acknowledgement will be submitted via an online Qualtrics survey.

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

UTRGV UTEACH PROGRAM

Vision Statement:

To lead the transformation of mathematics and science education in the Rio Grande Valley and beyond
Adopted January 25, 2019

Mission Statement:

UTRGV UTeach is a middle and high school mathematics and science teacher preparation and certification program that promotes inquiry-based learning and instruction. We prepare highly skilled, inspiring educators with deep subject expertise through integrated and cohesive coursework with early and consistent community-based teaching experiences.

Adopted May 17, 2018

Goals:

Recruit, prepare, retain, and graduate students interested in becoming highly-qualified secondary science and/or math educators that will:

- Acquire deep subject-matter content matter.
- Demonstrate use of technology, pedagogical content knowledge, and field-practice skills of secondary school STEM teaching disciplines.
- Develop research skills and informational data-gathering techniques.
- Design, implement, and assess inquiry-based and project-based curriculum and instruction for all students.
- Demonstrate ethical and professional standards of conduct and ethics expected in an educator preparation program.

UTRGV UTEACH PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The UTRGV UTeach program is a collaborative effort of the College of Sciences and the College of Education and P-16 Integration at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. The UTRGV UTeach program is modeled after the highly successful UTeach program at the University of Texas at Austin (<https://uteach.utexas.edu/>), which has dramatically increased the number of secondary science and math teaching graduates by attracting science and mathematics majors into the teaching profession.

UTeach integrates rigorous science or mathematics courses, research experience, acquisition of effective teaching techniques, field teaching experience, and teacher certification within a four-year program. It has proven so successful at the University of Texas at Austin that the program is being replicated at 53 universities across the nation.

UTRGV UTeach works to meet the need for qualified and skilled teaching professionals in the secondary science and mathematics classrooms by preparing excellent students to become effective science and mathematics teachers who are knowledgeable of and successful with implementation of inquiry-based lessons.

UTRGV UTeach students begin field experiences their very first year during the first two courses: Step 1 and Step 2. During these courses, students use research-based science and mathematics lessons to teach inquiry-based lessons to elementary and middle school students. UTeach students continue to prepare and teach inquiry-based lessons throughout subsequent field courses.

The UTRGV UTeach program allows students to graduate with a bachelor's degree and their secondary teaching certificate. A secondary teaching certificate can be obtained for grades 4-8 or 7-12, depending on the field of study.

UTRGV UTeach provides ongoing guidance and support to students throughout not only their college career but also beyond graduation through an induction program.

UTRGV UTeach expected outcomes are for its graduates to be well-prepared:

- In their teaching content area and pedagogy.
- To practice research-based pedagogical techniques for science or mathematics teaching.
- To meet the challenges of the modern secondary school environment.
- To become reflective science or mathematics teaching practitioners who engage in extensive, lifelong professional development and who will view ongoing content and pedagogical development as an integral part of their profession.
- To understand and involve their students in inquiry in their content discipline.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS, DISPOSITIONS, and ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

UTRGV UTeach acknowledges the importance in teacher preparation of academic rigor resulting in candidates who are knowledgeable in the content they are preparing to teach. However, in addition to content knowledge, UTRGV UTeach recognizes that content knowledge is not enough to make a candidate worthy of recommendation for teacher certification. Candidates should also demonstrate their understanding and practice of the dispositions identified by UTRGV UTeach.

UTRGV UTeach knows that effective teachers must have content knowledge and demonstrate the characteristics and behaviors embodied in the identified dispositions. UTRGV UTeach and/or the UTRGV Office of Educator Preparation and Accountability reserves the right to recommend or not recommend teacher candidates for certification. If all criteria are not met satisfactorily, teacher candidates may be denied admission into the UTRGV Educator Preparation Program and/or denied the opportunity to student-teach. Without admission into the UTRGV Educator Preparation Program, successful completion of all coursework, and clinical experiences, including student teaching or its equivalent, the university cannot recommend teacher candidates for Texas teacher certification.

Throughout the UTeach program the importance of ethical and professional behaviors along with academic expectations will be emphasized.

Academic Expectations

Maintain GPA requirements

To be accepted to the UTRGV Educator Preparation Program, students must meet GPA requirements set by the UTRGV Office of Educator Preparation and Accountability. Requirements include: A 2.75 GPA overall on your degree plan; and a grade of C or better in all education courses (UTCH courses). In addition, GPA could be verified every academic year in accordance with College of Education policy. Different degree plans may have additional GPA requirements, and your degree plan may have additional requirements for graduation. It is your responsibility to be aware of your degree plan requirements and seek advising from a UTeach Advisor.

Acceptance to the Educator Preparation Program and to the Student Teaching Program also requires Junior status (60 hours toward degree plan with teacher certification). Sixty hours of coursework includes core completion; electives and language proficiency courses are not included in the 60 hours. UTeach students seeking 7-12 certification must have 15 semester credit hours completed in the major.

Academic Integrity

The teacher candidate demonstrates honesty and integrity by being truthful about background, experiences, and qualifications; doing one's own work; giving credit for ideas of others; providing proper citation of source materials; not supporting and reporting academic dishonesty by others; and adhering to the profession's Code of Ethics. Academic integrity is expected in all learning environments (face-to-face, online, and in clinical field experiences).

Attendance and Engagement

- Attendance is expected at every class meeting for each course.

- Attendance is a reflection of one's professionalism. Readiness for class and punctuality are expected at all times. Be proactive in your preparation for class.
- Attendance and active engagement are critical for success in the program.
- Active engagement and participation are expected of all students throughout each class session.
- Students are expected to arrive for class on time and remain for the full class.
- When in clinical experiences, the same consideration for professors, campus teachers, students, and colleagues is expected.

Course Assignments

Complete course assignments in a professional manner and within timelines designated by the instructor.

Communication

The teacher candidate demonstrates effective written and oral communication skills expected of an education professional.

1. *Written Skill:* Candidate must have the ability to write clearly using correct grammar and spelling and be able to present program content in a professional and understandable format. All written assignments requested by faculty must be submitted in a complete and timely manner.

2. *Oral Skill:* Candidate must be able to communicate effectively by expressing ideas and thoughts clearly and coherently when working with students, faculty, staff, and other professionals. The ability to present program content using effective and professional language is essential. Effective listening skills to properly comprehend the needs being expressed are vital. All objectives outlined in field placement experiences must be completed as assigned.

Professional Behaviors

Protocols

Protocols provide guidance on how to interact and communicate with each other. The following provides an insight into the culture of acceptable behavior and proper etiquette within all UTRGV UTeach courses and school environments.

Academic administrators (deans, department chairs, etc.) and most of your instructors have a doctorate in their fields of study. It is appropriate to address them as "Dr. ____". Some of your instructors have master's degrees. They may be addressed as "Mr. ____" or "Ms. ____". It is never appropriate to address a professor or instructor by his/her first name.

Equally important is the way staff members (administrative assistants, coordinators, etc.) are addressed. They, too, should be addressed with the appropriate respectful title ("Mr. ____" or "Ms. ____") rather than by his/her first name.

With the advent of technology, we find that we are always in touch with our social network; however, all cell phones and other communication devices should be silenced while in class. To do otherwise is discourteous to your instructor and your fellow classmates. Computers in the classroom should only be

used to take notes or to do instructor-directed tasks. Surfing the web, communicating with others, or playing games are all discourteous activities and may result in a negative consequence.

Each student should recognize his/her transition into a profession and reflect on professional behaviors at all times.

Dispositions

Dispositions are the professional behaviors educators are expected to demonstrate in their interactions with students, families, colleagues and communities. Such behaviors support student learning and development and are consistent with ideas of fairness and the belief that all students can learn.

Demonstrate professional responsibility

- Being present, punctual and prepared for professional and academic activities.
- Maintaining confidentiality of student records and private communications.
- Being involved in professional development activities.
- Committing to being a lifelong learner and reflective practitioner.
- Maintaining professional competence.
- Meeting obligations to employer, students, and parents.
- Using self-reflection to improve performance.

Foster collegiality

- Responding constructively to evaluations by supervisors and others, making appropriate corrections to address legitimate concerns.
- Using positive conflict resolution techniques.
- Maintaining positive working relationships with fellow candidates.
- Collaborating with colleagues to improve student achievement.
- Showing respect for fellow students, faculty and staff.
- Actively participating in meetings and conferences.
- Assisting others when necessary.

Embrace diversity

- Adapting instruction to individual differences.
- Demonstrating that diversity in the classroom and society is a strength.
- Instructing with lessons that counteract negative stereotypes and bigotry.
- Providing students with access to varying points of view.
- Using language that meets professional standards and is not demeaning or harmful to any individual or group.

Demonstrate commitment to learning

- Creating a learning environment that enables students to fulfill their potential.
- Being an advocate for all learners.
- Adapting instruction to “best practices.”
- Displaying creativity to enhance the instructional process.

Maintain professional and personal integrity

- Adhering to the UTRGV honesty code.
- Maintaining ethical and legal behaviors in interactions with others.
- Adhering to the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.
[http://tea.texas.gov/Texas Educators/Investigations/Educators Code of Ethics/](http://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Educators/Investigations/Educators_Code_of_Ethics/)
- Maintaining professional relationships.

FITNESS TO TEACH (DISPOSITIONS) CRITERIA

All teacher candidates in the UTeach 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, successful field experiences, and the demonstration of required professional dispositions that all teachers should possess.

Criteria

1. Completed Criminal History Review as required by the Office of Educator Preparation and Accountability
2. Academic Requirements
 - A. Scholastic honesty as defined by the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
 - B. Communication Skills - The teacher candidate must demonstrate sufficient written and oral skills to comprehend information and communicate ideas and feelings. (1) Written: Writes clearly, uses correct grammar and spelling. Demonstrates sufficient skills in written English to understand content presented in the program and to complete all written assignments as specified by faculty. (2) Oral: Communicates effectively with other students, faculty, staff, and professionals. Expresses ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrates willingness and an ability to listen to others.
 - C. Demonstrates sufficient skills in spoken English to understand content presented in the program, to complete adequately all oral assignments, and to meet the objectives of field placement experiences, as specified by faculty.
3. Required Professional Dispositions
 - A. A teacher candidate must not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
 - B. Teacher candidates must demonstrate interpersonal skills that are required for successful professional teaching. These skills include:
 1. an openness to accepting and considering unfamiliar ways of teaching;
 2. the ability to accept and act upon constructive criticism, enthusiasm for working collegially;
 3. the ability to understand others' perspectives about teaching, and the ability to separate personal and professional issues;
 4. the display of professional attitudes toward faculty colleagues and students; and the disposition to act always for the benefit of all students.
 - C. The teacher candidate must not sexually harass others; make verbal or physical threats; become involved in sexual relationships with their students, supervisors, or faculty; abuse others in physical emotional, verbal, or sexual ways.
 - D. Teacher candidates must attend class and all field experiences as expected. Punctuality is expected at all times.
 - E. Teacher candidates must demonstrate positive personal hygiene habits.
 - F. Teacher candidates must dress appropriately for their professional context.
 - G. Teacher candidates must adhere to the requirements of HOP 5.5.1. and HOP 5.5.2 Student Conduct Code.
4. Cultural and Social Attitudes and Behavior
 - A. Teacher candidates must exhibit respect for superiors, peers, children and youth.

- B. Teacher candidates should appreciate the value of diversity and look beyond self in interactions with others; respect differences of race, ethnicity, religion, and social class, national allegiance, and cultural heritage. Teachers must not impose personal, religious, sexual and or cultural values on others.
 - C. Teacher candidates must exhibit acceptance of and provide accommodations for exceptional learners.
 - D. Teacher candidates must be able to work productively with their peers.
 - E. Teacher candidates must be able to speak in a manner appropriate to the context of the classroom.
 - F. Teacher candidates must demonstrate positive social skills in professional and social interactions with faculty, colleagues, parents, and students.
5. Emotional and Mental Abilities
- A. Stress Management The teacher must demonstrate the ability to deal with current life stressors through the use of appropriate coping mechanisms. He or she must handle stress effectively by using appropriate self-care and developing supportive relationships with colleagues, peers, and others.
 - B. Emotional and Mental Capabilities The teacher must use sound judgment. He or she must seek and effectively use help for medical or emotional problems that interfere with scholastic and professional performance.
 - C. Cognitive Disposition
 - 1. Teachers must think analytically about educational issues.
 - 2. Teachers must be reflective about their practice.
 - 3. Teachers must be flexible, open to new ideas, and willing and able to modify their beliefs and practices.
 - 4. Throughout their teacher training, pre-service teachers are encouraged to question and test their assumptions about teaching and schooling.

UTEACH CHECKLISTS AND GENERAL TIMELINES

The following checklist and timeline is meant only to serve as a guide as you continue through the UTeach program. The order of items on this checklist and timeline is subject to change. Always verify exact deadlines with the UTeach advisor.

One-Time Tasks at the Beginning of Your Program:

- Ensure that you have a current, valid driver's license, Texas ID card, or passport. An official ID is required for field experiences.
- Familiarize yourself with the location of the UTeach Office (Edinburg campus EDUC 3.240; Brownsville campus LHSB 2.818) and student workroom (Edinburg campus EDUC 3.234; Brownsville campus LHSB)

Each Semester:

- Maintain at least a 2.75 GPA overall and in each area: major, minor/specialization, and education courses. Maintain at least a 2.5 GPA in the content area.
- Meet with the UTeach advisor.
 - Edinburg Campus: Mrs. Yates
 - monica.yates@utrgv.edu
 - 956-665-3834
 - EDUC 3.240
 - Brownsville Campus: Ms. Balladares
 - merari.balladares01@utrgv.edu
 - 956-882-5867
 - LHSB 2.220

During Field Experience Courses (UTCH 1101, UTCH 1102, UTCH 3302, UTCH 3303, UTCH 4101/4601):

- Ensure you have a current, valid driver's license, Texas ID card, or passport. An official ID is required for field experiences. Your UTRGV student ID is not an official ID and cannot be used.
- Complete a Criminal Background Check (CBC) and TB questionnaire/test as needed. This is completed during the first class period.
- Review the UTRGV UTeach Student Handbook. Submit your acknowledgement of the Student Handbook Agreement Form via an online Qualtrics survey. Information will be given during the first class period.

UTEACH FIELD EXPERIENCES

UTRGV UTeach students participate in a variety of field experiences. Five of the UTeach courses, beginning with Step 1, have a field component. Field experiences are supervised by UTRGV UTeach Faculty and Master Teachers. Students must meet local school district requirements in order to complete their field experiences. Successful completion of the field experiences is a requirement for each field-based course. Failure to complete all field experiences required in a course can result in receiving a failing grade for the course even if all other assignments have been completed.

UTRGV UTeach students are assigned to their field placements by the Master Teachers. Field placements are in local public-school districts. Criminal background checks and TB testing are commonly required by the school districts; but the actual requirements can differ from district to district. All school district requirements must be met for a student to continue in the UTeach courses. The Criminal Background Check requires the student to submit a copy of a legal picture ID such as a driver's license from the United States, a Texas Identification Card, or a passport. School districts will not accept birth certificates or UTRGV school identification cards. If a student is unable to conduct their required field experiences due to TB testing or criminal background check results, the student will be unable to continue in the program until the issues are resolved.

The chart below lists the UTeach courses and their typical number of field experience hours:

UTeach Course	Hours
Step 1: Inquiry Approaches to Teaching	5 In-Person
Step 2: Inquiry Based Lesson Planning	5 In-Person
Knowing and Learning	5 Virtual Hours
Classroom Interactions	19 (10 in-person and 9 virtual)
Project Based Instruction	21 (10 in-person and 11 virtual)
Apprentice Teaching	Minimum of 15 weeks, full day clinical teaching

At all times during the field experiences, the UTeach student is expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. This includes professional dress, behavior, and communication.

Dress Code and Grooming for Students During Field Experiences

(Additional guidelines may be given as per school district policy. Case-by-case exceptions may be made due to religious or other extenuating circumstances.)

- ❖ Dresses and all outer garments shall fit properly and be of an acceptable length. Hemlines for skirts and dresses should be no shorter than 1 inch above the knee.
- ❖ Tight-fitting clothing is not allowed.
- ❖ Male students must have all shirts tucked in. Belts must be worn with pants designed to be worn with one.
- ❖ If shirttails are made to be worn tucked in, they must be tucked in.

- ❖ The following are not acceptable: Halters, tank tops, see-through garments, clothing with revealing/provocative necklines, bare backs, bare midriff, spaghetti straps, tight fitted clothing, clothing that reveals undergarments, denim jeans (all colors), shorts, leggings, warm-ups, spandex or similar tight pants, or exercise/athletic clothes. No part of the torso should be visible, even with bending and stretching.
- ❖ All clothing must be clean and pressed.
- ❖ No hats, caps, or other head coverings shall be worn inside the building.
- ❖ Jewelry shall not be worn in a visible pierced area other than the ear. Male students are not allowed to wear earrings.
- ❖ Hair shall be clean, neatly trimmed, well-groomed and may not be dyed an unnatural color.
- ❖ Nails shall be clean and well-groomed. Male's nails may not extend more than ¼ inch beyond the nail bed. Female nails may be longer and they may be painted but not in a way that is distracting.
- ❖ Tattoos need to be covered and not visible.
- ❖ Beards and mustaches shall be allowed if they are neatly trimmed.
- ❖ Closed toe footwear is recommended. If wearing heels, low heels are recommended. Footwear shall exclude flip flops and slippers and athletic-type footwear.

Additional dress code information for Apprentice Teachers can be found in the [CEP Clinical Teaching Handbook](#) (if the link doesn't open in Chrome, use another browser).

Professional Communication and Behavior During Field Experiences

During all field experiences, the UTeach student shall conduct themselves in a professional manner. The UTeach student is expected to address all staff members as Mr., Mrs., or Ms. and speak to all staff members in a professional and courteous manner. All policies and procedures of the partner campus shall be followed.

Social Media

Do not take pictures of the students or the school. Do not post information or statements about your field experiences or your assigned school on any social media. Public school students will try to find your social media accounts, so all social media accounts are recommended to be set to private. All photos in your social media accounts are also recommended to be set to private.

FERPA

The students at your assigned campus in your assigned classroom are protected under FERPA, The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. You are obligated to protect student information. Do not discuss specific students with anyone. You can share events but do not use student names. Your mentor teacher may provide you with information regarding a student's health or disability. Do not share this information about students with anyone. This information is protected by FERPA. When writing reflections or other assignments about your field experience, do not use the students' names in your assignments. You can refer to the student as "student 1" or "student A".

UTEACH COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Below are the courses that comprise the 30 hours of UTeach coursework.

UTeach Pedagogy Courses

UTCH 1101 - Inquiry Approaches to Teaching

This one-hour field-based course explores teaching as a career by introducing, modeling, and practicing inquiry-based mathematics and science instruction. Field experiences will be completed in an elementary public school at an upper grade level and will consist of a minimum of two observations as well as preparing, teaching, and assessing three inquiry-based mathematics or science lessons. Students will be introduced to the UTeach pedagogy and technology standards. Alignment to state curriculum and pedagogy standards will be emphasized. A criminal background check will be required, and a tuberculosis test may be required before the first field experience. Prerequisite: Must be in a College of Sciences major or BS Integrated Health Sciences majors.

UTCH 1102 - Inquiry-Based Lesson Design

This one-hour field-based course focuses on the basic principles of designing, implementing and assessing inquiry-based mathematics and science instruction for the middle school curricula. Field experiences will be completed in a public middle school and will consist of preparing, teaching, and assessing three inquiry-based mathematics or science lessons. Alignment to state curriculum and pedagogy standards will be emphasized. May be taken concurrently with UTCH 3301. Prerequisites: UTCH 1101 with a grade of 'C' or better or concurrent enrollment with UTCH 3301 and College of Sciences major.

UTCH 3301 - Knowing and Learning in Mathematics and Science

This three-hour course introduces the cognitive, psychological and pedagogical principles of learning for effective science and mathematics instruction for all learners. Course emphasis will be on the use of current technology for classroom learning; novice-expert transfer and understanding of subject matter; equity, diverse and exceptional learners, summative, formative, and authentic assessment; and high stakes testing. Students will develop a model of knowing and learning that will guide their future classroom practice. Alignment to state curriculum and pedagogy standards will be emphasized. Prerequisites: UTCH 1101 and UTCH 1102 with a grade of 'C' or better or concurrent enrollment with UTCH 1102.

UTCH 3302 - Classroom Interactions

This three-hour field-based course focuses on how the interactions between curriculum, technology, and learning are used to produce a safe and productive learning environment for all students. The review of major instructional models and the delivery of effective instruction will be emphasized. Factors that affect instruction and learning (gender, socio-economic, language acquisition, disabilities, culture, and policy) in mathematics and science education will be discussed. This course has a field component that consists of a minimum of fifteen hours of field experience which includes observations and two co-teaching events, including a multiple-day connected lesson, in secondary school settings. Alignment to state curriculum, pedagogy, and content standards will be emphasized. Prerequisite: (a) An institutional grade point average of at least 2.75, (b) UTCH 1102 with a grade of 'C' or better, (c) UTCH 3301 with a grade of 'C' or better, and (d) admission to the Teacher Education Program.

UTCH 3303 - Project-Based Instruction

This three-hour field-based capstone course focuses on the principles of design, instruction, classroom management, and assessment of project-based and case-based curriculum projects in mathematics and science education. Students are expected to explore authentic and meaningful questions and develop through teamwork an interdisciplinary project-based unit of instruction connecting curriculum, pedagogical content, and technology standards. This course has a field component that consists of a minimum of fifteen hours of field experience which includes observations, a two-day connected lesson, and a Saturday challenge, in secondary school settings. Alignment to state curriculum, pedagogy, and content standards will be emphasized. Prerequisite: UTCH 3302 with a grade of 'C' or better. Must be officially admitted to the Educator Preparation Program.

UTCH 4101 - Apprentice Teaching Seminar

This one-credit-hour weekly seminar facilitates the students' integration of the supervised apprentice teaching experiences and the programs' professional curriculum. Topics include classroom management and time management, instructional planning and assessment, parent-teacher communication, school culture and dynamics, and legal and logistical issues affecting teaching. The student must provide evidence that state standards for teacher certification have been met. Co-requisite: UTCH 4601. Prerequisites: UTCH 3303 with a grade of 'C' or better.

UTCH 4601 - Apprentice Teaching

This six-credit-hour course is designed for students majoring in mathematics or science who are seeking middle school or high school teacher certification. Apprentice Teaching students will be placed in a state-accredited middle or secondary school for fourteen weeks under the guidance of an experienced mathematics or science classroom teacher (mentor) and a university supervisor. This course meets state requirements under 19 TAC §228. Participation is mandatory. Clinical teaching dates must follow your assigned school district's calendar, which may not align with the UTRGV academic calendar. Participation in all required components of this course is mandatory. Prerequisite: UTCH 3303 with a grade of 'C' or better.

UTeach Content Courses**PHIL 3317 - Perspectives on Science and Mathematics**

This course examines a selection of notable episodes and topics in the history and philosophy of science and mathematics. This inter-disciplinary course engages STEM, education, history, and natural philosophy. In addition to providing an overview of the history and philosophy of science and mathematics, this course requires students to produce a formal research project and a 5E STEM lesson plan which integrates the history or philosophy of science or mathematics. This is a required UTeach content course. Effective Fall 2024, PHIL 3317 and MATE 3317 are no longer equivalent. Prerequisite: Credit of "C" or better or registration in UTCH 3302.

MATE 3317 - Perspectives in Mathematics and Science

This upper-division course explores a selection of topics and episodes in the history of mathematics and science. It provides an overview of the history of mathematics and science, and puts these historical perspectives to work in pedagogy. Also, it promotes intellectual curiosity and enhances students' critical thinking skills, and improves their presentation and writing skills. Students will design and prepare two 5E lessons plans of 1200 words each and make a presentation of one lesson

plan to a group of peers and critique presentations of others. Effective Fall 2024, MATE 3317 and PHIL 3317 are no longer equivalent. Prerequisite: Grade of "C" or better in MATE 3321.

BIO 4315 - Inquiry-Based Science and Laboratory Techniques

Designed for students interested in teaching secondary life sciences to provide additional preparation and skills to become an effective high school or middle school life science teacher. The course will emphasize and apply inquiry-based approaches to the learning, instruction, and assessment of life sciences involving laboratory and field investigations. Prerequisite: Grade of "C" or better in BIOL 1406, BIOL 1407, and UTCH 3301 or consent of instructor.

MATE 3321 - Functions and Modeling

This course focuses on enhancing students' mathematics content knowledge, with an emphasis on concepts needed to teach secondary mathematics at various levels. The course consists of four instructional units: 1) Functions, 2) Modeling, 3) Overlooked Topics and Explorations, and 4) Geometry of Complex Numbers. Specific topics of investigation include function properties and patterns, complex numbers, parametric equations, polar equations, vectors, and exponential growth and decay. Explorations involve the use of multiple representations, transformations, data analysis techniques (such as curve fitting) and interconnections among topics in algebra, analytic geometry, statistics, trigonometry, and calculus. The lab investigations include use of various technologies including computers, calculators, and computer graphing software. Prerequisites: MATH 2413 (or MATH 2487) and UTCH 1102, each with a grade of 'C' or better.

MATE 4392 - Research Methods in Middle and Secondary School Math

This course is intended for middle and secondary school mathematics teacher certification students. In this course, students will design and carry out a set of independent inquiries, through which they learn to combine skills from mathematics, statistics and science in order to solve research problems. In these inquiries, students will learn to design a research project, write and review papers, and use quantitative reasoning. The inquiries will enable students to learn how researchers develop and communicate new knowledge and insights and to develop critical thinking skills in conducting research projects. Prerequisites: One of the following: MATE 3305, STAT 3337, STAT 2334, or STAT 3301.

BIOL 4392 - Research Methods in the Science and Mathematics Classroom (UTeach)

A course intended for students in the UTeach program. Students will design research projects, perform independent inquiries, and learn to combine skills from mathematics and science in order to solve research problems. Coursework will include inquiry, writing, and quantitative reasoning. Prerequisites: Grade of 'C' or better in the following: BIOL 1406 (or BIOL 1487), BIOL 1407 (or BIOL 1487); or CHEM 1111, 1112, 1311, 1312; or MATH 1314 or 1414; or PHYS 1401, 1402 or PHYS 2425, 2426 or PHYS 2411, 2412; and UTCH 1101, 1102 or consent of instructor.

READ 4305 - Disciplinary Literacy in the Classroom

This course focuses on the role of literacy in learning content particularly on the use of explicit strategy instruction in teaching disciplinary literacy, technology integration, vocabulary development, and study skills for all learners. Dyslexia and other literacy-related challenges of diverse learners will be addressed.

FLEXIBLE ENTRY POINTS

The UTRGV UTeach Program allows flexible entry to the program. Students should follow the suggested sequence of courses based on the semester of entry. A UTeach Advisor may recommend an alternate course sequence and approval from a UTeach Co-Director may be required.

	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Semester 4	Semester 5	Semester 6	Semester 7	Semester 8
8-Semester Pathway <i>well-suited for freshmen</i>	Step 1	Step 2	Knowing & Learning Functions & Modeling	Research Methods	Perspectives	Classroom Interactions Reading	Project-Based Instruction	Apprentice Teaching
			Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Semester 4	Semester 5	Semester 6
		6- Semester Pathway <i>well-suited for sophomores</i>	Step 1	Step 2 Functions & Modeling	Knowing & Learning Perspectives	Classroom Interactions Research Methods	Project-Based Instruction Reading	Apprentice Teaching
				Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Semester 4	Semester 5
			5- Semester Pathway <i>well-suited for juniors & seniors</i>	Step 1 Reading	Step 2 Knowing & Learning Functions & Modeling	Classroom Interactions Perspectives	Project-Based Instruction Research Methods	Apprentice Teaching

UTEACH COURSE CHECKPOINTS

Course Title	Comments
UTCH 1101 Step 1	-
UTCH 1102 Step 2	- Upload the required SLO Assessment(s) into Watermark - At the end of Step 2, consider applying for a UTeach Internship (2 UTeach credits required)
UTCH 3301 Knowing & Learning	- Apply to the UTRGV Teacher Education Program through the Office of Educator Preparation & Accountability - Consider applying for a UTeach Internship (2 UTeach credit hours required)
	After acceptance into the Teacher Education Program, the PPR and Content TExES exams can be taken. Review requirements must be met prior to being allowed to take the official TExES exams. Both exams must be passed prior to Apprentice Teaching. See TExES section for further information.
UTCH 3302 Classroom Interactions	- Upload the required SLO Assessment(s) into Watermark - Begin TExES exam preparation - Consider applying for a UTeach Internship (2 UTeach credit hours required)
MATE 3321 Functions and Modeling	- Consider applying for a UTeach Internship (2 UTeach credit hours required)
BIOL 4392 MATE 4392 Research Methods	- Consider applying for a UTeach Internship (2 UTeach credit hours required)
PHIL 3317 MATE 3317 Perspectives on Science and Mathematics	- Consider applying for a UTeach Internship (2 UTeach credit hours required)
READ 4305 Content Area Literacy	- Consider applying for a UTeach Internship (2 UTeach credit hours required)
UTCH 3303 Project-Based Instruction	- Upload the required SLO Assessment(s) into Watermark - Apply to the UTRGV Clinical Teaching Program through the Office of Field Experiences - Consider applying for a UTeach Internship (2 UTeach credit hours required)
UTCH 4601 Apprentice Teaching with UTCH 4101 Apprentice Teaching Seminar	- Upload the required SLO Assessment(s) into Watermark - Apply for graduation - Apply for teacher certification

UTEACH ADVISING

The UTRGV UTeach program's structure has two advisors, one on the Edinburg campus and one on the Brownsville campus, to assist you with your courses' schedules. The goal of the UTeach advising team is to help each student follow an individualized path through the curriculum, allowing that student to meet his or her personal, professional, and academic goals.

Within a friendly, helpful, and professional atmosphere, through the relationship established between advisor and student, a student has the opportunity to learn about educational options, degree requirements, and academic policies and procedures; to clarify educational objectives; to plan and pursue programs consistent with abilities, interests, and life goals; and to use all resources of the University to their best advantage.

Students should always inform their UTeach Advisor if they are experiencing particular problems in class, suffering health issues that interfere with their studies, or are encountering other unforeseen events that pose a challenge to their academic success. UTeach Advisers work with their students to resolve the issues, often seeking assistance from administrators or partner offices or referring students to special university services, as needed.

It is important that you meet with your respective advisor each semester. Mandatory advisement is during September-November for spring advisement and during February - April for summer and fall advisement.

During peak advising periods, advising will be **primarily by appointment**. Walk-in appointments are welcome as availability allows. To schedule your advising appointment, complete the **Advisement Appointment Request** form (available in the UTeach Office) and leave it with the front desk or advisor. It is important to be on time to your advising appointment. Being more than 10 minutes late to or unprepared for your scheduled advising appointment can result in being rescheduled. Reschedule wait times can be up to 2 weeks during peak advising periods. If you will be unable to make it to your scheduled advising, notify your advisor that you must cancel your appointment.

What to bring to your advising appointment:

- ✎ Degree Plan
- ✎ Graduation Timeline from Previous Advising
- ✎ List of Questions or Concerns

UTEACH INTERNSHIPS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

UTeach Internships

UTRGV UTeach offers paid math/science/education internships to students. UTeach internships provide students with the opportunity to not only earn money but to also gain valuable STEM-related experience. These internships are in settings that allow students to build on their formal course experiences. Each semester there are internships available on campus and off campus. In the past, students have held internships in places such as local schools to tutor; the UTRGV Center of Excellence in STEM Education to develop and lead STEM events for local students; the Frontera Audubon to develop nature center curriculum and activities; the Texas Plant and Soil Lab to conduct locally-relevant research; and on-campus summer STEM programs to develop lessons and conduct research with local students.

Requirements for UTeach internships:

- Must be a full-time student.
- A minimum overall GPA of 2.75 is required for UTeach internships.
- Have completed Step 1 and Step 2 with a minimum grade of B in each course. (Some internships may require more than 2 UTeach credits.)
- You must be a student in the UTeach program (on a UTeach degree plan) and must be considered "active" (you have not had more than 1 semester pass without being in a UTeach course). If you become inactive or change your degree plan to a non-UTeach degree plan, you will not qualify for a UTeach internship and a current internship will be terminated.
- Internship partner sites may have additional requirements.
- Sign the Internship Agreement Form. This form will be given to you upon your placement.
- Note: Students enrolled in Apprentice Teaching are not eligible for a UTeach Internship.

How to Apply for an Internship

Please follow these steps when applying for an internship:

1. Apply for an internship by completing the UTeach Internship Application. Applications are distributed via email.
2. Edinburg campus students must email their application and transcript to Mrs. Lizette Ingle at lizette.ingle@utrgv.edu. Brownsville campus students must email their application and transcript to Mrs. Liliana Trevino at liliana.trevino@utrgv.edu.

Internship applications will be accepted until internship positions are filled and as long as internship funding is available. Internships are typically available during the fall, spring, and summer semesters. The number of internships available may vary from one semester to the next. The UTeach Internship Committee will make selections and determine placements based on applicants' preferred choices and internship site needs.

UTeach Scholarships

The UTeach Program frequently offers scholarships to UTeach students. No student may receive more than one scholarship award from UTeach per semester.

Scholarship requirements:

Requirements change depending on the type of scholarship available. Each semester different scholarships may become available. Depending on the type of scholarship, the qualifications for each scholarship will be different. Students will be notified of available scholarships each semester. The process of applying for UTeach scholarships will be outlined during the scholarship announcements. Scholarships are based on available funding and may not be offered annually.

FORMAL ADMISSION TO UTRGV TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

UTeach students must apply and be accepted to UTRGV Teacher Education Program to continue on the UTeach pathway. UTeach students are eligible to formally apply to the Teacher Education Program (TEP) after completion of Knowing and Learning with a 'C' or better. Students are to apply through Watermark to the Office of Educator Preparation and Accountability. All admission requirements are in accordance with [Texas Administrative Code rules §227.10](#) and the HEA Title II accountability requirements. All applicants must meet the current certification requirements in effect at the time of application, regardless of the catalog year of degree plan.

Applying for admission to the UTRGV Teacher Education Program

Complete the application once the submission period begins and submit via Watermark. For additional questions, contact the Office of Educator Preparation and Accountability at oepea@utrgv.edu (956) 665-7952 or (956) 882-4139.

The application process, including a detailed description of the requirements for admission to TEP, can be found [here](#).

The Teacher Education application is a professional document. You must prepare this application with care. It reflects upon you and your UTeach program. Follow all directions and ensure that your application is complete. The faculty and staff of UTeach are available to assist you, if needed.

Approval of an applicant for admission into the Teacher Education Program does not grant permission to enroll in Apprentice Teaching/Seminar, does not indicate that all requirements have been met for graduation, and does not constitute a recommendation for a teaching certificate.

After Admission to the Teacher Education Program

After admission to the Teacher Education Program, the Texas Teacher Certification Examinations must be passed prior to admission to Apprentice Teaching and Seminar. Review requirements must be met prior to being allowed to take the official TExES exams.

Successful completion of both the PPR and appropriate content TExES exams is necessary prior for placement in Apprentice Teaching. Information regarding deadlines can be found [here](#).

Texas Teacher Certification Examination

The TExES is a series of tests (content and pedagogy) required by Texas law for college students planning to become teachers. Through these tests, the student will demonstrate mastery of basic skills, professional knowledge, and content area of specialization. Information about the TExES can be found [here](#).

The TExES tests are criterion-referenced examinations designed to measure a candidate's knowledge in relation to an established criterion rather than to the performance of other candidates. All the tests in the TExES program contain multiple-choice questions. Some tests also have additional types of

questions (e.g., open-ended written or oral responses). For more information about individual tests and test composition, see the <http://www.tx.nesinc.com> for each test.

TESTING REQUIREMENTS AND PROCEDURES FOR THE TExES PPR AND TExES CONTENT EXAMS

STUDENTS WHO TOOK CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS (UTCH 3302) PRIOR TO FALL 2024:

Certify Teacher is no longer valid to meet the requirements for approval to register for the TExES exams. All students need to complete the requirements in 240 Tutoring. Students who took Classroom Interactions (UTCH 3302) prior to Fall 2024 will need to reach out to a UTeach master teacher for information and guidance.

STUDENTS WHO TAKE CLASSROOM INTERACTIONS (UTCH 3302) IN FALL 2024 OR AFTER:

Prior to the first attempt at taking an official TExES PPR exam or TExES content exam

1. TExES Exam Preparation Program for UTeach Students

Students will begin their exam preparation during the UTCH 3302 laboratory section. Students will use 240 Tutoring, an online program, during the laboratory section of UTCH 3302 to prepare for their TExES content exam. UTRGV UTeach Master Teachers will be responsible for proctoring laboratory sessions and for creating, updating, and disseminating documents related to the laboratory section, including the laboratory syllabus. After completing their diagnostic exam, students will be given their TExES Exam Log Sheet. Students will also take their PPR diagnostic exam during UTCH 3302 Laboratory. Students will be required to acknowledge their acceptance of TExES PPR and content exam testing procedures and requirements via an online Qualtrics survey.

2. Preparation Program Requirements

TExES Content Exam:

Eligible UTRGV UTeach students (who have enrolled in UTCH 3302 Classroom Interactions and who have been formally accepted into the UTRGV Teacher Education Program) will be required to purchase the 240 Tutoring online TExES content exam preparation program. Participation in the 240 Tutoring preparation program is mandatory.

Students will complete the 240 Tutoring content program during the semester as the requirement for the Classroom Interaction Laboratory. This preparation will include taking a diagnostic exam, completing all program materials, and taking Practice Test #1.

TExES PPR Exam:

Students will use 240 Tutoring as the program to prepare for their TExES PPR exam. Eligible UTRGV UTeach students (who have enrolled in UTCH 3302 Classroom Interactions and who have been formally accepted into the UTRGV Teacher Education Program) will be required to take a 240 Tutoring PPR diagnostic exam during the semester. Students are responsible for the costs of 240 Tutoring.

3. Requirements for Approval

TExES Content Exam

UTRGV UTeach students must complete 100% of the 240 Tutoring content program. After completing 100% of the program, they will take Practice Test #1. Students who score 75% or higher on Practice Test #1 will be eligible to take the official TExES content exam. Students who score less than 75% on Practice Test #1 will continue using the 240 Tutoring program and taking additional practice tests until they attain the required minimum score of 75%. At the point that the required 75% score is met, students will email their completed Log Sheet and Eligibility form along with the PDF of the Practice Tests report to one of the UTRGV UTeach Co-Directors to receive approval to register for their first attempt to pass the official TExES content exam. [See step 4 below.]

TExES PPR Exam

UTRGV UTeach students must complete 100% of the 240 Tutoring PPR program. After completing 100% of the program, they will take Practice Test #1. Students who score 75% or higher on Practice Test #1 will be eligible to take the official TExES PPR exam. Students who score less than 75% on Practice Test #1 will continue using the 240 Tutoring program and taking additional practice tests until they attain the required minimum score of 75%. At the point that the required 75% score is met, students will email their completed Log Sheet and Eligibility form along with the PDF of the Practice Tests report to one of the UTRGV UTeach Co-Directors to receive approval to register for their first attempt to pass the official TExES PPR exam. [See step 4 below.]

4. After approval by a UTRGV UTeach Co-Director to take an official TExES exam

The UTRGV UTeach Co-Directors must approve ALL Log Sheets before permission is given to take any official TExES PPR or content exam. Please note that the Co-Directors will not consider valid any 240 Tutoring scores submitted more than sixty days after the score is obtained. Once approved, students will, within thirty days, complete the TExES Testing Request Application (Step 2) on the Office of Education Preparation and Accountability (OEPA) website [here](#). Online registration is granted by OEPA. UTRGV UTeach students may then register for their official TExES PPR and/or content exam (first attempt).

ALL UTEACH STUDENTS:

Prior to UTRGV UTeach students' additional attempt(s) to pass the official TExES content exams

UTRGV UTeach students need Co-Director approval before ALL exam attempts. If UTRGV UTeach students do not pass their first official TExES content exam, they will be required to complete an intervention plan using 240 Tutoring and/or alternative programs and assignments provided by an assigned UTRGV UTeach Master Teacher. Alternative programs can include Right Start, Learning Liaisons, or any additional programs the UTeach Master Teacher assigns.

Intervention plan students can be given 2 months' free access to 240 Tutoring. If 240 Tutoring is used for the intervention plan, students will first be required to take the 240 Tutoring Diagnostic Exam and then complete at least 90% of the material in 240 Tutoring. When at least 90% of the material has been

completed, the student will take a 240 Tutoring practice exam. A score of at least 80% is required on the practice exam. There are 3 practice exams available. After the first practice exam, if the score is less than 80%, the master teacher will assign additional material (from 240 Tutoring or other resources). After completion of the additional material, the master teacher will approve the student to take the 2nd 240 Tutoring practice exam. If the student does not score at least 80%, the above process will be repeated. If the student does not score at least 80% on the 3rd exam, the master teacher will create new requirements.

After the student has scored at least 80% on a 240 Tutoring practice exam, they may then be required to take the OEPA representative exam and score a minimum of 70%. If the student scores 70% or higher, they will be approved by the master teacher and a co-director to take the official TExES exam. If the student does not score at least 70% on the OEPA representative exam, the master teacher will create new study material and testing requirements. Whether or not a student must retake the OEPA representative exam will be left to the discretion of the master teacher. If a student still has 240 Tutoring practice exams remaining, the master teacher could require the student to take another 240 Tutoring practice exam after a period of utilizing other study materials.

If a student does not take a 240 Tutoring practice exam by the end of the 2-month free access, they will be required to purchase 240 Tutoring to continue with the requirements. If they have taken a practice exam but did not score at least 80% within the 2-month free access period, then the master teacher will extend the free access for one more 2-month period. Free access will not be given for more than a total of 4 months.

Once a student has completed all intervention plan requirements, they may then email their Log Sheet with their Diagnostic Exam Report, all Practice Exams Reports, their first official TExES exam attempt date and score, and the score report of the OEPA Content Representative Exam to one of the UTRGV UTeach Co-Directors to receive approval to take any additional official TExES content exams.

Once approved, students will complete the TExES Testing Request Application (Step 2) on the Office of Education Preparation and Accountability (OEPA) website [here](#). Online registration is granted by OEPA. UTRGV UTeach students may then register for their official TExES content exam (additional attempt).

Prior to UTRGV UTeach students' additional attempt(s) to pass the official TExES PPR exams

UTRGV UTeach students need Co-Director approval before ALL exam attempts, except the second attempt. If UTRGV UTeach students do not pass their first official TExES PPR EC-12 exam, they will be required to complete an intervention plan. Students will be referred to the UTRGV Certification Exam Support Hub and must meet all requirements.

For their second official TExES PPR EC-12 exam attempt, once a student has completed all the Certification Exam Support Hub requirements, they will receive approval documentation from the Certification Exam Support Hub. Once approved, students will complete the TExES Testing Request Application (Step 2) on the Office of Education Preparation and Accountability (OEPA) website [here](#). Online registration is granted by OEPA. UTRGV UTeach students may then register for their official TExES PPR exam (second attempt).

For subsequent official TExES PPR EC-12 exam attempts, students will be required to complete an intervention plan provided by an assigned UTRGV UTeach Master Teacher. Once a student has completed all intervention plan requirements, they may then email their intervention plan documentation and their prior official TExES exam attempt dates and scores to one of the UTRGV UTeach Co-Directors to receive approval to take any subsequent official TExES PPR exams.

Once approved, students will complete the TExES Testing Request Application (Step 2) on the Office of Education Preparation and Accountability (OEPA) website [here](#). Online registration is granted by OEPA. UTRGV UTeach students may then register for their official TExES PPR exam (subsequent attempt).

Official TExES PPR and content exam deadlines

1. UTRGV UTeach students who intend to enroll in UTCH 4101/UTCH 4601 Apprentice Teaching the following semester but have not passed one or both official TExES exams must retake the official TExES PPR and/or content exam by the OFE (Office of Field Experience) [deadline](#). This timeline will allow a student to meet TExES testing requirements and register for UTCH 4101/UTCH 4601 Apprentice Teaching in the subsequent semester. If the student has not taken or passed the TExES PPR exam, they will be required to complete edTPA.

2. UTRGV UTeach students **who intend to enroll in UTCH 4101/UTCH 4601 Apprentice Teaching the following semester but have not made the first attempt to pass an official TExES exam**, are under advisement that they must make the first attempt to pass the official TExES content exam no later than the end of the second week during the fall semester and no later than the end of the ninth week during the spring semester in order to allow enough time for a re-test after the State's 30-day waiting period. Students are required by OFE to have passed their official TExES content exams by the OFE deadline and prior to admission to UTCH 4101/UTCH 4601 Apprentice Teaching. Students who have not passed their official TExES PPR exam by the deadline will be required to agree to complete edTPA to be admitted to clinical teaching.

Frequently Asked Questions for UTRGV UTeach Testing Requirements and Procedures for the TExES PPR and Content Exams for Students taking Classroom Interactions (UTCH 3302) in or after Fall 2024

1. *Q: Do I have to register for the 240 Tutoring exam preparation programs?*

A: Yes. All UTRGV UTeach students must register for the 240 Tutoring content exam preparation program. This program will be used to help prepare you for the official TExES content exam.

2. *Q: How much does the 240 Tutoring exam preparation program cost? Am I responsible for the cost?*

A: The cost for the 240 Tutoring exam preparation program when purchased for the Classroom Interactions (UTCH 3302) Laboratory course is \$60 for 120 day access. You are responsible for the cost and will receive purchasing information prior to the first day of class.

3. *Q: Once I purchase the 240 Tutoring exam preparation program, what do I do?*

A: **Do not start the program.** You will begin the program on the first day of the Classroom Interactions Laboratory class.

4. *Q: Who are the UTeach Co-Directors and how do I contact them?*

A: The Co-Directors and their emails are listed below. Please only email one Co-Director (either is fine) your documents for approval to take the official TExES exams.

Dr. Angela Chapman at angela.chapman@utrgv.edu

Dr. Chris Smith at Kenneth.smith@utrgv.edu

5. *Q: How long will it take before I can register for the official TExES exam once I email my completed Log Sheet?*

A: You will need to get Co-Director approval to take an official TExES exam. This can take up to a week or more. Then you will need to submit the Test Request Form on the OEPA website and upload all necessary documents to Watermark for OEPA approval before your electronic bars can be removed. This may take additional time. Please keep this in mind if you are trying to make OFE testing deadlines.

6. *Q: Do I have to get Co-Director approval before each official TExES exam attempt?*

A: Yes. You will need to submit your completed Log Sheet or intervention plan and Log Sheet and receive Co-Director approval before any official TExES exam attempt, except the 2nd official TExES PPR exam attempt. This includes the 1st, 3rd, 4th, and 5th attempts for the official TExES PPR exam, and the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th attempts for the official TExES content exam.

7. *Q: I failed my official TExES exam, what do I do now?*

A: If you fail your official TExES PPR or content exam you will be given an individualized intervention plan provided by your UTRGV UTeach Master Teacher mentor. To find out who this person is, see the question below. The intervention plan can include additional 240 Tutoring testing and study modules as well as supplementary material. Students who failed their official TExES PPR exam will be referred to the UTRGV Certification Exam Support Hub. The master teacher assigned to PPR intervention plans will provide all information about signing up with the Support Hub.

When you have completed your intervention plan, including obtaining required scores on assigned practice and/or representative exams, you will then email your completed intervention plan and log with all supporting documentation to one of the UTeach Co-Directors for approval before you will be allowed to make a second or subsequent attempt at an official TExES exam.

8. *Q: How do I find out who my UTRGV UTeach Master Teacher mentor is for my intervention plan?*

A: Depending on which official TExES exam you failed, please contact the following individual for your intervention plan:

Brownsville:

Mathematics/PPR – Lily Trevino at Liliana.trevino@utrgv.edu or Gus Valencia at Gustavo.valencia@utrgv.edu.

All Sciences/PPR – Pamela Groves at pamela.groves01@utrgv.edu.

Edinburg:

Mathematics 4-8 – Anna Gonzalez at anna.gonzalez@utrgv.edu

Mathematics 7-12 – Carly Vollet at carly.vollet@utrgv.edu

Science 4-8 – Omar Elizondo at omar.elizondo@utrgv.edu

Life Science 7-12 – Tim Sears at tim.sears@utrgv.edu

Chemistry 7-12 – Tim Sears at tim.sears@utrgv.edu

Physics/Math 7-12 – Omar Elizondo at omar.elizondo@utrgv.edu
PPR – Omar Elizondo at omar.elizondo@utrgv.edu

9. *Q: I failed my official TExES exam for the second, third or fourth time, what do I do?*

A: If you fail your official TExES exam for the second, third or fourth time you will need to complete an individualized intervention plan provided by your UTRGV UTeach Master Teacher mentor for each failed attempt. Please see the question above for more information.

10. *Q: Who should I contact for more information about UTRGV UTeach testing requirements and procedures for the TExES PPR and content exams?*

A: Contact the UTeach Co-Directors for more information.

Your acknowledgement of the TExES content and TExES PPR exam testing procedures and protocols will be submitted via an online Qualtrics survey.

FORMAL ADMISSION TO APPRENTICE TEACHING (Clinical Teaching)

Apprentice Teaching is a 15-week, full-day teaching experience. You will be placed with a mentor teacher at a local public school. During Apprentice Teaching you will be under the guidelines of the UTeach program, in the College of Sciences, and the Office of Educator Preparation and Accountability (OEPA) and Office of Field Experiences (OFE), in the College of Education and P-16 Integration. The Office of Educator Preparation and Accountability on the Edinburg campus is in EDUC 2.510 and on the Brownsville campus in MAIN 2.200. The Office of Field Experiences is in EEDUC 2.202.

At the beginning of the Apprentice Teaching experience, you will be observing your cooperating teacher. As the semester progresses, you will begin to assume responsibility for teaching classes. You will be responsible for planning your lessons, grading papers, discipline in the classroom, etc. You will be required to attend applicable campus meetings including department meetings, school-wide teacher meetings, parent conferences, etc. You will follow the teacher's schedule including, but not limited to, duty and tutoring.

Currently, there are three pathways to completing clinical teaching: traditional clinical teaching, STEP UP, or Yearlong Teacher Residency.

Admission to Apprentice Teaching (Clinical Teaching) Requirements – Traditional Pathway

GPA and Academic Coursework Grades

- 2.5 GPA in each area of degree plan (i.e., major, minor/specialization, professional education);
- 2.5 GPA overall on degree plan;
- Grade of "C" or better in all education courses.

TExES Passing Scores

- Respective Content Exam
- Professional and Pedagogy Responsibilities exam #160 or
- Designation of EdTPA in lieu of PPR #160

Early Field Experiences

- Complete all early field hours required by program.

Degree Plan Completion

- Within 12 hours of completing degree plan (graduation); these 12 hours include 7 UTeach hours of student teaching coursework; and
- Complete all education courses.

Other Program Requirements

- For other specific program requirements consult with your UTeach advisor or faculty.

Apprentice Teaching Application Process

After all admission requirements have been met, students will complete the student teaching application which can be found [here](#).

The Apprentice Teaching application is a professional document. You must prepare this application with care. It reflects you and your UTeach program. Follow all directions and ensure that your application is complete. The faculty and staff of UTeach are available to assist you, if needed.

Apprentice Teaching placements are subject to availability and district and school acceptance of interns; therefore, placements are not guaranteed.

Apply for Teacher Certification

Upon successful completion of Apprentice Teaching and graduation, apply for teacher certification. Program finishers who have passed the certification exams should pursue certification immediately. If TEA certification standards change between the time you complete the program and the time you apply for certification, you will be required to meet the new standards before being certified. This may mean taking additional courses or completing additional requirements.

More information about applying for Teacher Certification can be found [here](#).

The UTRGV Clinical Teaching Handbook found [here](#).

TEACHER WORK SAMPLE (TWS) FOR APPRENTICE TEACHERS

Background

The Teacher Work Sample (TWS) is a teacher work tool for instruction and performance assessment of teacher candidates. It is a tool used for the promotion and development of a work sample is to provide evidence of a teacher candidate fully understanding the requirements of his/her role in the classroom, as well as analytical understanding of the teacher's learning environment for student success.

More information about the Teacher Work Sample can be found [here](#). Instructions for uploading sections of the Teacher Work Sample, including the final Teacher Work Sample product, are provided during Apprentice Teaching (Clinical Teaching).

Note: Clinical teachers completing the edTPA will submit that portfolio-based assessment in lieu of the Teacher Work Sample (subject to change by UTRGV; refer to the current requirements of the UTRGV OEPA and OFE).

The Assignment

The TWS contains seven different components which have been identified by research as best practices to improve student learning. Each Teaching Process is followed by a Task and a Prompt.

You are required to teach a comprehensive thematic unit of at least five instructional days.

Before you teach: You will describe contextual factors, identify learning goals based on standards, including state standards (both concept and process standards of the TEKS), create an assessment plan designed to measure student performance before (pre-assessment), during (formative assessment) and after (post-assessment) instruction, and plan for your delivery of instruction.

Before you begin teaching, you must administer the pre-assessment to establish baseline data. **(Note: You may not begin teaching your unit until these preliminary processes have been approved by your university field supervisor).** After you teach the unit, you will analyze your students' learning and then reflect upon and evaluate your teaching as it relates to student learning.

Format

- *Charts, graphs and attachments.* Charts, graphs, and assessment instruments are required in the TWS. You may also want to provide other attachments, such as student work. However, you should be very selective and make sure your attachments provide clear, concise evidence of performance related to TWS standards and your students' learning progress.
- *Narrative length.* A suggested page length for your narrative is provided for each of the seven components. You have some flexibility regarding length across components, but the total length of your written narrative (excluding charts, graphs, attachments, and references) should not exceed the equivalent of twenty (20) word-processed pages, double-spaced in 12-point font with 1-inch margins.
- *References and Credits* (not included in total page length). If you referred to another person's ideas or material in your narrative, you should cite these in a separate section at the end of your narrative under References and Credits. You may use any standard form for references; however, the American

Psychological Association (APA) style is a recommended format (explained in the manual entitled *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*).

- **Anonymity.** To ensure the anonymity of students in your class, do not include any student names or identification in any part of your TWS. You may refer to specific students as Student A or Student 1, for example.

Teacher Work Sample (TWS) Contents

The following is required for a complete TWS. A video explaining instructions for each component is provided in the Clinical Teaching course in the university's learning management system Brightspace to provide support.

1. Cover Page
2. Contextual Factors
3. Learning Goals
4. Assessment Plan
5. Design for Instruction
6. Instructional Decision-Making
7. Analysis of Student Learning
8. Reflection and Self-Evaluation

These are instructions to submit your Final TWS, according to the Office of Field Experiences:

1. Please ensure that you submit your complete TWS in a single PDF document.
2. Make sure to remove your name, student ID, and any identifiable information (school name, cooperating teacher name, district, city, etc.) You can blackout identifiable information or use pseudonyms. For example, you can replace specific names with fictitious placeholders such as "ABC School", "XYZ District", "123 City" or "Cooperating Teacher X".

How to redact in PDF: Video

How to redact in Word: Article

Failure to comply with these instructions will result in the rejection of your TWS until these issues are fixed. It is important to note that successful completion of a TWS is a requirement for graduation. Please ensure that all necessary adjustments are made accordingly to avoid any delays in the evaluation process.

Contextual Factors

Task:

In a narrative, discuss relevant factors and how they may affect the teaching-learning process. Include any supports and challenges that affect instruction and student learning.

Prompt:

In your discussion, include:

- Community, district, and school factors. Address geographic location, community and school population, socio-economic profile and race/ethnicity. You might also address such things as stability of community, political climate, community support for education, and other environmental factors.
- Classroom factors. Address physical features, availability of technology equipment and resources, and the extent of parental involvement. You might also discuss other relevant factors such as classroom rules and routines, grouping patterns, scheduling, and classroom arrangement.
- Student characteristics. Address student characteristics you must consider as you design instruction and assess learning. Include factors such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, special needs, achievement/developmental levels, culture, language, interests, learning styles/modalities or students' skill levels. In your narrative, make sure you address students' skills and prior learning that may influence the development of your learning goals, instruction, and assessment.
- Instructional implications. Address how contextual characteristics of the community, classroom, and students have implications for instructional planning and assessment. Include specific instructional implications for at least two characteristics and any other factors that will influence how you plan and implement your unit.

Learning Goals**Task:**

Provide and justify the learning goals for the unit.

Prompt:

- List the learning goals (not the activities) that will guide the planning, delivery, and assessment of your unit. These goals should define what you expect students to know and be able to do at the end of the unit. The goals should be significant (reflect the big ideas or structure of the discipline), challenging, varied, and appropriate. Number or code each learning goal so you can reference it later.
- Show how the goals are aligned with the Texas standards (TEKS). You may want to use a table or chart to show the alignment.
- Describe the types and levels of your learning goals.
- Discuss why your learning goals are appropriate for your students (refer to the Contextual Factors that you identified in the previous section) in terms of development; pre-requisite knowledge, skills; and other student needs.

Assessment Plan

Task:

Design an assessment plan to monitor student progress toward learning goal(s). Use multiple assessment modes and approaches aligned with learning goals to assess student learning before, during, and after instruction. These assessments should authentically measure student learning and may include performance-based tasks, paper-and-pencil tasks, or personal communication. Describe why your assessments are appropriate for measuring learning.

Prompt:

- Provide an overview of the assessment plan. For each learning goal that you listed in the previous section, you should include: assessments used to judge student performance, the format of each assessment, and adaptations of the assessments for the individual needs of students based on pre-assessment data and contextual factors. The purpose of this overview is to depict the alignment between learning goals and assessments and to show adaptations to meet the individual needs of students or contextual factors. You may use a visual organizer such as a table, outline or other means to make your plan clear.
- Describe the pre- and post-assessments that are aligned with your learning goals. Clearly explain how you will evaluate or score pre- and post-assessments, including criteria you will use to determine if the students' performance meets the learning goals. Include copies of assessments, prompts, and/or student directions and criteria for judging student performance (e.g., scoring rubrics, observation checklists, rating scales, item weights, test blueprints, or answer keys). (Note: You must have your university supervisor approve the pre-assessment plan before you begin teaching your unit.)
- Discuss your plan for formative assessments that will help you determine student progress during the unit. Describe the assessments you plan to use to check on student progress and comment on the importance of collecting that particular evidence. Although formative assessment may change as you are teaching the unit, your task here is to predict at which points in your teaching it will be important to assess students' progress toward learning goals.

Design for Instruction

Task:

Describe how you will design your unit instruction related to unit goals, students' characteristics and needs, and the specific learning context.

Prompt:

- *Results of pre-assessment.* After administering the pre-assessment, analyze student performance relative to the learning goals. Depict the results of the pre-assessment in a format that allows you to find patterns of student performance relative to each learning goal. You may use a table, graph, or chart. Describe the pattern you find that will guide your instruction or modification of the learning goals.

- *Unit overview.* Provide an overview of your unit. Use a visual organizer such as a block plan or outline to make your unit plan clear. Include the topic or activity you are planning for each day/period. Also indicate the goal or goals (coded from your Learning Goals section) that you are addressing in each activity. Make sure that every goal is addressed by at least one activity and that every activity relates to at least one learning goal.

- *Activities.* Describe at least three unit activities that reflect a variety of instructional strategies/techniques and explain why you are planning those specific activities. In your explanation for each activity, include:

- how the content relates to your instructional goal(s);
- how the activity stems from your pre-assessment information and contextual factors;
- what materials/technology you will need to implement the activity; and
- how you plan to assess student learning during and/or following the activity (i.e., formative assessment).

- *Technology.* Describe how you will use technology in your planning and/or instruction. If you do not plan to use any form of technology, provide a clear rationale for its omission.

Instructional Decision-Making

Task:

Provide two examples of instructional decision-making based on students' learning or responses.

Prompt:

- Think of a time during your unit when a student's learning or response caused you to modify your original design for instruction. (The resulting modification may affect other students as well.) Cite specific evidence to support your answers to the following:

- Describe the student's learning or response that caused you to rethink your plans. The student's learning or response may come from a planned formative assessment or another source (not the pre-assessment).

- Describe what you did next and explain why you thought this would improve student progress toward the learning goal.

- Now, think of at least one time during your unit when another student's learning or response caused you to modify a different portion of your original design for instruction. (The resulting modification may affect other students as well.) Cite specific evidence to support your answers to the following:

- Describe the student's learning or response that caused you to rethink your plans. The student's learning or response may come from a planned formative assessment or another source (not the pre-assessment).

- Describe what you did next and explain why you thought this would improve student progress toward the learning goal.

Analysis of Student Learning

Task:

Analyze your assessment data, including pre/post assessments and formative assessments to determine students' progress related to the unit learning goals. Use visual representations and narrative to communicate the performance of the whole class, subgroups, and two individual students. Conclusions drawn from this analysis should be provided in the "Reflection and Self-Evaluation" section.

Prompt:

In this section, you will analyze data to explain progress and achievement toward learning goals demonstrated by your whole class, subgroups of students, and individual students.

- *Whole class.* To analyze the progress of your whole class, create a table that shows pre- and post-assessment data on every student on every learning goal. Students' names should not be included. Then, create a graphic summary that shows the extent to which your students made progress (from their pre- to post-assessment) toward the learning criterion that you identified for each learning goal (identified in your Assessment Plan section). Summarize what the graph tells you about your students' learning in this unit (i.e., the number of students that met the criterion).

- *Subgroups.* Select a group characteristic (e.g., gender, performance level, socioeconomic status, or language proficiency) to analyze in terms of one learning goal. Provide a rationale for your selection of this characteristic to form subgroups (e.g., females vs. males high- vs. middle- vs. low-performers).

Create a graphic representation that compares pre- and post-assessment results for the subgroups on this learning goal. Summarize what these data indicate about student learning.

- *Individuals.* Select two specific students that demonstrated different levels of performance, but do not include their names. Explain why it is important to understand the learning of these particular students. Use pre-, formative, and post-assessment data with examples of the students' work to draw conclusions about the extent to which these students attained the two learning goals. Graphic representations are not necessary for this subsection.

You will provide possible reasons for why your students learned (or did not learn) in the next section "Reflection and Self-Evaluation."

Reflection and Self-Evaluation

Task:

Reflect on your performance as a teacher and link your performance to student learning results. Evaluate your performance and identify future actions for improved practice and professional growth.

Prompt:

- Select the learning goal where your students were most successful. Provide two or more possible reasons for this success. Consider your goals, instruction, and assessment along with student characteristics and other contextual factors under your control.
- Select the learning goal where your students were least successful. Provide two or more possible reasons for this lack of success. Consider your goals, instruction, and assessment along with student characteristics and other contextual factors under your control. Discuss what you could do differently or better in the future to improve your students' performance.
- Reflection on possibilities for professional development. Describe at least two professional learning goals that emerged from your insights and experiences with the TWS and your instructional unit. Identify two specific steps you will take to improve your performance in the critical area(s) you identified.

Useful Website Links

UTRGV UTeach Program
<u>UTRGV UTeach Homepage</u>
UTRGV Websites
<u>UTRGV Student Services</u>
<u>UTRGV U Central</u>
<u>UTRGV Parking and Transportation Services</u>
<u>UTRGV Library</u>
<u>UTRGV Student Code of Conduct</u>
UTRGV Departmental Websites
<u>UTRGV College of Sciences</u>
<u>School of Integrated Biological and Chemical Sciences</u>
<u>Department of Physics and Astronomy</u>
<u>School of Mathematical and Statistical Sciences</u>
UTRGV College of Education and P-16 Integration Websites
<u>College of Education and P-16 Integration</u>
<u>Office of Educator Preparation and Accountability Home Page</u>
<u>Admission into the Teacher Preparation Program</u>
<u>Teacher Education Program Admission Requirements</u>

Certification Exam Hub
Teacher Certification Information
TExES
Texas Education Agency (TEA) Websites
Texas Education Agency Homepage
TEKS
Texas Educator Code of Ethics
Texas Educators Certification Information
Student Loan Forgiveness for Teachers
UTeach Institute/National Center for STEM Education
UTeach Institute Homepage National Center for STEM Education Homepage

UTeach Directory

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