

# Educational Diagnostician Program Handbook



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Harold Clark Simmons Hall  
Department of Teaching & Learning

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[www.smu.edu/teacher](http://www.smu.edu/teacher)





Welcome to the Educational Diagnostician Program in the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development. Our goal is to grow and nurture you, our students, so that you become confident, skillful, and successful educational diagnosticians who can help identify students with special learning needs and support teachers in instruction in any district or school in which you choose to teach.

Our mission is to support your development as an educational diagnostician so that you accurately identify students, develop individualized instructional programs, prioritize equity and are rooted in collaborate with families and colleagues. Placing students at the center means that you will respond to both the academic and emotional needs of students by making instructional decisions that are grounded in the latest scholarship.

Our faculty of the Department of Teaching and Learning is comprised of scholar-practitioners who share knowledge that is valuable to real--world settings. We collaborate with schools, community service organizations, government organizations and national/international colleagues. The faculty strives for teaching excellence, academic rigor, intellectual curiosity, and accountability.

I look forward to meeting with you, working with you, and supporting your growth as developing teachers. I am always available to support your growth. Please stop by my office to say hello, ask a question, or simply to get acquainted.

Best Wishes,

Christine Woodbury, Ph. D.  
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## Table of Contents

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Introduction	Conceptual Framework	3
	Texas Education Agency	5
	Criminal History and Background Checks	6
Faculty & Facilities	Faculty and Staff	7
	Harold Simmons Hall	7
Requirements & Expectations	Disability Accommodations	8
	Religious Observance	8
	Field Experience	9
	Clinical Practicum	9
	Site Selection	11
	Candidate Responsibilities	12
	Departmental Expectations	14
	Academic Integrity	15
	Exit Policy	16
	Dismissal from the Program	16
	Withdrawal from the Program	16
	Code of Ethics	22
Personal Information	Student Identification Number	17
	Name Change	17
	Work Plan	17
	Advising for Enrollment	18
	Student Files/Records	18
Testing	TEExES	19
	Qualifying Practice Tests	
	Testing Information and Resources	
Certification	Applying for Educator Certification	20
Laws & Associations	Laws	21
	Diagnostician Associations	22
Complaint Procedure for Students		23

## Introduction

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### Conceptual Framework

#### **WHAT IS AN EDUCATIONAL DIAGNOSTICIAN**

The Educational Diagnostician certification is a state-approved Student Services certification intended prepare the highest caliber professionals that possess the knowledge and skills necessary to improve the performance of the diverse student population in Texas. The holder of the Educational Diagnostician certificate may serve as an educational diagnostician, including providing educational assessment and evaluation, as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or other applicable law, for students from Early Childhood-Grade 12 (see TAC §239.80). Educational Diagnosticians play a critical role in the identification and support of students with disabilities. Educational Diagnosticians are in high demand due to increases in the numbers of students eligible for special education in Texas, as well as a 56% increase in the number of special education evaluations completed by Texas school districts in the last few years (TEA, 2015-2016 compared to 2018-2019).

#### **PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK**

This Handbook is intended for students in the Department of Teaching and Learning in the Simmons School of Education and Human Development at Southern Methodist University (SMU) in the Educational Diagnostician program. It provides an overview of program requirements, policy, rules, and regulations. The information included is designed to facilitate students' progress toward the attainment of their program objectives.

#### **GOALS OF THE PROGRAM**

The Educational Diagnostician certification program prepares certified teachers for certification as an Educational Diagnostician in Texas. The program incorporates the professional standards of Council for Exceptional Children organization (<http://www.cec.sped.org/Standards>). Completers find abundant opportunities for challenging and rewarding careers.

The Department of Teaching and Learning includes educators and diagnosticians dedicated to ongoing, rigorous scholarship across a variety of disciplines. Our faculty is committed to educating undergraduate and graduate students to become 21<sup>st</sup> century scholars and leaders. Our teaching and research are grounded in multiple perspectives that encompass behaviorist, cognitive, social-constructivist, and sociocultural approaches to scholarship. We prepare educators who are:

1. **Scholars and Leaders in Professionalism.** Our students display intellectual curiosity, engage in critical thinking, model collaboration, and leverage new technologies in their professional interactions. Through classroom-based, field-based, and technology-rich learning experiences, undergraduate students develop and refine the positive attitudes and dispositions that characterize educational leaders. Graduate students continue the journey of lifelong learning through global awareness, reflective, and evidence-based practice and informed implementation of innovation.
2. **Educators Committed to High-Quality Practice.** Our students stay well versed in the most current and available research from quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, and multidisciplinary studies. They use the latest scholarship to guide their classroom practices and instructional design. Our courses in all the degree programs include clearly laid out competency-based requirements that emphasize creative instruction, innovative technologies, and personalized feedback.
3. **Leaders in Translating Research into Practice.** Undergraduate students implement teaching strategies that have been proven to be effective, and become leaders in the schools where they teach. Master's students become critical consumers of research and will lead their colleagues in efforts to translate research to practice. Doctoral students become active researchers as they work beside faculty in grant-funded research to expand scientific knowledge and disseminate research findings.
4. **Experts in Differentiated Instruction.** Our students are sensitive and responsive to diverse learners and understand the range of learning experiences and assessments available to help them differentiate for all students in the new digital age. Students adapt their educational methods to meet the needs of all students across sociocultural variations: linguistic, developmental, cognitive, ethnic, gender, and socio-economic status. They are

committed to creating a variety of creative learning environments to address the full range of human potential and human development.

### **Texas Education Agency**

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is headed by the Commissioner of Education and is supported by a hierarchy of deputy commissioners, associate commissioners, division directors and agency staff. The State Board of Education (SBOE) guides and monitors activities and programs related to public education in Texas. The SBOE consists of 15 elected members representing different regions of the state. One member is appointed chair by the governor.

The mission of TEA is to provide leadership, guidance, and resources to help schools meet the educational needs of all students and prepare them for success in the global economy.

The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) was created by the Texas Legislature in 1995 to recognize public school educators as professionals and grant educators the authority to govern the standards of their profession. The Board oversees all aspects of the preparation, certification, and standards of conduct of public school educators.

The Texas Education Code requires that the Governor appoint the following 11 voting members of the Board, each serving a six-year term: four classroom teachers, one counselor, two administrators, and four citizens. Three non-voting members also serve on the Board: a dean of a college of education is appointed by the Governor; a staff member of the Texas Education Agency is appointed by the Commissioner of Education; and a staff member of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is appointed by the Commissioner of Higher Education.

The Texas Education Code (TEC) is a set of the state laws governing public education in Texas. It applies to all educational institutions supported in whole or in part by state funds. The TEC directs the goals and framework of public education in Texas. It is established by the Texas Legislature.

The Texas Administrative Code (TAC) is a compilation of all state agency rules in Texas. There are 16 titles in the TAC. Each title represents a category and related agencies are assigned to the appropriate title. Texas Administrative Code Title 19 Education Part 7 State Board for Educator Certification:

[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac\\_view=3&ti=19&pt=7](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=3&ti=19&pt=7)

## **Criminal History Background Checks**

In 2007, The Texas legislature passed a law (Senate Bill 9) requiring individuals working on public school campuses to submit a criminal history check. All students are required to submit to a criminal history background check prior to going onto any EC-12 campus. The student's name will be submitted to the school district that will host him/her for the field experience during any term.

At the time of application for the Standard Texas Teaching Certificate, each applicant will submit his/her fingerprints to the Texas Education Agency for a criminal history check by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Effective fall 2011, a conduct report will be requested from Student Life by the School of Education for each student who is applying to the Educator Preparation program, and an updated report will be requested when the students apply to student teach.

The School of Education reserves the right to deny or revoke admission to the Simmons School of Education and Human Development, Department of Teaching and Learning Educator Preparation program to any individual who has been convicted, received probation, or received deferred adjudication of crimes that involve violence or crimes against children.

An educational diagnostician candidate who has ever had an arrest that resulted in deferred adjudication, probation, or a conviction should be aware of the possible consequences related to the offense. If there are questions, he/she may contact the Certification Officer to discuss the potential ramifications.

At the time of application for the Standard Texas Teaching Certificate, each applicant will submit his/her fingerprints to the Texas Education Agency for a criminal history check by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

For Frequently Asked Questions – National Criminal History Background Check please go to: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=5844>

Information about the optional Preliminary Criminal History Evaluation is given to applicants during the application process. For full information, visit <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/investigations/preliminary-criminal-history-evaluation-faqs>

## Faculty & Supporting Staff

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### Department of Teaching and Learning

Dean: Dr. Stephanie Knight

Department Chair: Dr. Lin Lin Lipsmeyer

Director of Diagnostician: Dr. Christine Woodbury

Sr. Program Specialist and Certification Officer: Ms. Jill Moore

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## Requirements & Expectations

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### Disability Accommodations

Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first be registered with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. Students may call 214-768-1470 or visit <http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS> to begin the process. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements.

### Religious Observance

Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.)

## Program Requirements

### Diagnostician program

EDU 6370 Diagnostic Assessment 1

EDU 6371 Diagnostic Assessment 2

EDU 6373 Bilingual assessment or bilingual assessment for monolingual

EDU 6323 Literacy Assessment

EDU 6372 Practicum

EDU 63576 Foundations of Special Education

EDU 6360 Behavioral Intervention

EDU 6389 Instructional interventions

EDU 6359 Collaboration with families and colleagues

EDU 6315 Diverse Learners

EDU 6304 Educational Research

EDU 6330 Survey of Dyslexia and Related Learning Disabilities

### REQUIREMENTS FOR PRACTICUM

To register and participate in the clinical practicum course EDU 6372 Diagnostician Practicum an educational diagnostician candidate must:

1. Be enrolled in or completed all other coursework;
3. Have a GPA of 3.0 in all required courses;
4. Have a valid teaching certificate;
5. Have at least three year's teaching experience (or be currently in their third year);
6. Have a Master's degree or have completed the Master's degree requirements; and
7. Submit Placement and Site Supervisor Information form to ensure approval from the school district and the provision of a site-based supervisor. Candidates may not begin accruing hours until the placement has been approved.

### PRACTICUM INFORMATION

The practicum may be perceived as an enterprise consisting of the candidate, 2) the cooperating school system or other educational enterprise (includes site supervisor), and 3) Southern Methodist University (includes field supervisor and faculty). The practicum is an investment in development as an educational diagnostician from which all three participants will derive benefit, and in which all three have definite responsibilities. Through this tri-dimensional model, the areas of accountability are identified and assigned.

- **Candidate:** The candidate is to plan and carry out the leadership activities agreed on by the candidate, the site supervisor, and the field supervisor. The candidate is also to maintain a log of the activities in which he/she is involved. In addition, the candidate participates in on- campus meetings, seminars, and on-site conferences.

- **Site supervisor (SS):** The SS is the practicing Educational Diagnostician/LSSP and mentor you have identified on campus to support your learning. Your SS works with you to structure practical experiences within the school context that enable you to meet the requirements outlined in this syllabus.
- **University Field Supervisor (FS):** The FS is the university field supervisor who oversees your practicum and provides formal and ongoing candidate support. The FS has a valid certification as an Educational Diagnostician or is a current Licensed Specialist in School Psychology and has completed the TEA approved field supervisor training. The FS is responsible for contacting the candidate within the first 3 weeks of the assignment. The FS's observations will take different forms (e. G. in person, virtual), depending on your circumstances. You should be prepared to discuss your experiences with your FS.

### **SITE SUPERVISOR QUALIFICATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

The practicum is not merely "on-the-job training." It is an organized program of training, designed to provide you with a sequence of experiences that will enhance professional attitudes, responsibility, communication skills, critical judgment, and technical skills. As a concurrent clinical experience in the preparation of educational diagnosticians, the site-based clinical experience provides candidates with the opportunity to engage in learning activities related to educational diagnostician. The field experience must be a minimum of 160 clock hours of educational diagnostician experience supervised by a certified Educational Diagnostician or Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP).

- Certified Educational Diagnosticians must have had been certified and practicing as Educational Diagnosticians for at least 3 years (i.e. have 3 years of experience). Supervising LSSPs must have at least 3 years licensed and must have competency and experience in the roles and responsibilities of Educational Diagnosticians. Site supervisors are required to provide their TEA ID or LSSP license number and a resume or curriculum vitae.
- Reports by the candidate must be co-signed by the appropriately credentialed site supervisor.
- The site supervisor must provide at least one hour of face-to-face supervision for every 40 hours of practicum.
- Each site supervisor is required to provide regular feedback to the candidate as well as a formal evaluation
- Site supervisors are required to approve the time log documenting at least 160 hours for any candidate who successfully completes the practicum program.

## SITE SELECTION

Students must complete their placement in a TEA accredited school district/public charter, or a private school accredited by the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (TEPSAC). In preparation for the placement, it is recommended that the candidate identify a possible site. The candidate is welcome to make preliminary contact with practicum sites; however, the faculty supervisor is ultimately responsible for approving the site. In selecting field experience sites, the faculty supervisor, in cooperation with the prospective candidate, places considerable importance on the availability and cooperation of a certified educational diagnostician qualified to assume the role of the cooperating educational diagnostician or LSSP, as well as the quality of the experiences offered. Students are encouraged to reach out to the special education leadership in the district in which they are employed. Students not currently employed in a school district, charter school, or accredited private school are encouraged to begin the process of securing a site early in the program. **Securing a practicum is the responsibility of the candidate.** In order to be an approved site, the site must agree to the following: e practicum program.

- Allow the candidate to observe the site supervisor (or other assigned Diagnostician or LSSP) engaged in various activities related to the Diagnostician standards, such as consent meetings, REED meetings, IEP team meetings, and testing.
- Allow the candidate to engage in activities related to all 10 Diagnostician standards, including direct assessment of students and report writing.

## FIELD SUPERVISOR QUALIFICATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Field supervisor (FS) will provide the candidate with informal and structural ongoing guidance and support. All the SMU FS meet the following qualifications:

- Have completed TEA approved observation training
- Hold current/valid certification as an Educational Diagnostician licensure or valid/current licensure as a Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP)
- Have at least three years of experience functioning as a Diagnostician or LSSP.

Initial contact with the candidate (which may be made by telephone, email, or other electronic communication) will occur within the first three weeks of the placement.

Three observations/conferences (45 min each) will be held during the practicum. For each formal observation, the FS shall participate in an individualized pre-observation conference with the candidate; provide written feedback through an individualized, synchronous and interactive post-observation conference with the candidate and provide a copy of the written feedback to the candidates site supervisor.

1st observation	2nd observation	3rd observation
0-53.33 hours	53.33-106.67	106.67-160 hours

## CANDIDATE RESPONSIBILITIES

The candidate assumes a major share of the responsibility for the success of their field experience. The purpose of the practicum program is to provide diagnostician candidates with meaningful and relevant experiences associated with becoming an educational diagnostician. The candidate is subject to the authority, rules, and regulations of the sponsoring school district. It is hoped that the participant gains valuable work-related experience that will provide a competitive advantage when applying for a position.

1. Submit Placement and Site Supervisor Information and receive approval for the placement;
2. Maintain a log of field experiences
3. Schedule three observations with the field supervisor;
4. Complete at least two Full and Individual Evaluation (FIE) reports (submit redacted reports in portfolio; a dyslexia evaluation will suffice in place of one of the FIE reports);
5. Become fully acquainted with the rules and regulations of the school district;
6. Maintain confidentiality of all records and internal matters of the school district at all times;
7. Comply with state and federal laws, district rules, policies, and regulations;
8. Schedule agreed upon activities with proper administrative personnel;
9. Read and follow the Educational Diagnostician Code of Ethics;
10. Be familiar with the Educational Diagnostician Educator Standards;
11. Attend Admission, Review, Dismissal (ARD) Committee meetings;
12. Facilitate at least one (1) ARD Committee meeting (submit a copy of the signature page with all other names and signatures redacted) if possible;
13. Review results of an evaluation with the parents of the student evaluated, if possible;
14. Maintain a portfolio and submit the portfolio at the end of the clinical experience; and
16. Earn a passing score on the TExES 253.

## SUGGESTED PRACTICUM ACTIVITIES

Ideally, the candidate shall spend 25% - 50% of her/his time in direct (face-to-face) services with students. Each activity should align with the educational diagnostician domains and standards. Candidate will identify the standard met in the practicum log. The following represents a ***small sample*** of potential activities:

- \_Assess special education initiatives, such as inclusion, and work with interested faculty in developing plans for improvement.
- \_Review the availability of evaluation instruments and report writers.
- \_Assess the school culture by collecting data on the diversity (e.g., population, language, disability, gender, race, socio-economic) of the school and community. Use that data to assist with appropriate formal testing to administer to students.
- \_Become familiar with and utilize existing data commonly available to schools.
- \_Conduct an audit of the IEP development process.

- \_ Draft ARD meeting reports for the review of IEP.
- \_ Review the CHC cognitive processing areas to assist with determining the best practices for student learning; then lead a faculty discussion of the application of the theory to improve student learning.
- \_ Communicate with related services personnel (counselor, physical therapy, occupational therapy, special transportation, school nurse).
- \_ Review PIEMS activity fund accounting procedures.
- \_ Review the coding of students enrolled in special education (ex: 45= PPCD, 40 = Inclusion).
- \_ Review technologies, including assistive technologies, available to support the needs of students enrolled in the special education program.
- \_ Prepare ARD notices for parents, school staff and related services personnel.

Domain	Domain Title	Standards Assessed
I	Students with Disabilities	V, VII
II	Assessment and Evaluation	IV, VI
III	Curriculum and Instruction	IX, X
IV	Foundations and Professional Roles and Responsibilities	I-III, VIII

#### Educational Diagnostician Standards

I.	The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of the purpose, philosophy, and legal foundations of evaluation and special education.
II.	The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of ethical and professional practices, roles, and responsibilities.
III.	The educational diagnostician develops collaborative relationships with families, educators, the school, the community, outside agencies, and related service personnel.
IV.	The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of student assessment and evaluation, program planning, and instructional decision making.
V.	The educational diagnostician knows eligibility criteria and procedures for identifying students with disabilities and determining the presence of an educational need.
VI.	The educational diagnostician selects, administers, and interprets appropriate formal and informal assessments and evaluations.
VII.	The educational diagnostician understands and applies knowledge of ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity and the significance of student diversity for evaluation, planning, and instruction.
VIII.	The educational diagnostician knows and demonstrates skills necessary for scheduling, time management, and organization.
IX.	The educational diagnostician addresses students' behavioral and social interaction skills through appropriate assessment, evaluation, planning, and instructional strategies.
X.	The educational diagnostician knows and understands appropriate curricula and instructional strategies for individuals with disabilities.

## Departmental Expectations

### The Department of Teaching and Learning grading scale for required EDU courses

94 – 100	A
90 – 93	A-
87 – 89	B+
84 – 86	B
80 – 83	B-
77 – 79	C+
74 – 76	C
70 – 73	C-
67 – 69	D+
64 – 66	D
60 – 63	D-
Below 60	F

Students must repeat a required teacher education course if a grade below C (2.00) is earned.

#### **Maintain GPA Requirements**

- Students are to maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 for all University courses leading to a degree.
- If a student's cumulative GPA falls below 2.5, she or he will be placed on departmental probation. Students will not be allowed to enroll in any Educator Preparation courses unless the course is being taken to remove a grade lower than a C.
- Students must have a 3.0 GPA in the required Educator Preparation courses in order to apply for clinical teaching. GPA's are not rounded.
- Students must earn no grade lower than a C (2.0) in their content area

## **Academic Integrity**

Students are to adhere to SMU's Honor Code.

<https://www.smu.edu/StudentAffairs/OfficeoftheDeanofStudents/StudentHandbook>

## **Attendance**

- Students are to attend all classes.
- Students are to arrive for class on time and remain for the entire class.
- Attendance is part of the class grade.
- The instructor determines in all instances the extent to which absences and tardiness affect each student's grade.
- It is the responsibility of the students to make arrangements with the instructor **prior** to any University extracurricular activities' absences concerning any class notes, missed tests or assignments.
- It is the responsibility of the students to contact their Field Experience instructor if they are going to be absent due to illness before class begins. All other absences from Field Experience classes must have prior approval.

## **Student Work**

- Students should complete all assignments in a professional manner.
- Students should meet all timelines for assigned work.

## **Communication Skills**

- Students are expected to demonstrate effective communication skills.
- Students are expected to use Standard English in all communications both written (including emails and text messages) and oral.

## **Etiquette**

- Students are expected to dress appropriately for the activities and classes.
- Students should not use cell phones while in class. Computers can be used for taking notes or doing instructor-directed tasks.
- Students should be aware of the instructor's office hours and make appointments when in need of assistance or with a concern.
- Students should be considerate of classmates and demonstrate a professional attitude at all times.



**Exit Policy**

The state requires all educator preparation programs to have an exit policy for the dismissal of candidates that is published, reviewed and signed by candidates. The requirement is found in 19 TAC §228.20(h).

**Dismissal from the Educator Preparation Program**

Failure to meet established minimum acceptable standards of academic or disciplinary performance might result in probation, suspension, or dismissal. Dismissal from the program may be based on grounds including but not limited to:

1. Failure to meet coursework requirements.
2. Failure to abide by policies and/or procedures established by the Southern Methodist University Educator Preparation Program and/or program requirements established by the State Board for Educator Certification as published in the Texas Administrative Code.
3. Any action deemed a violation of the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators, and/or;
4. Any action deemed a violation of the Southern Methodist University Student Code of Conduct; and/or;
5. Any action deemed a violation of school district and/or campus policy during field-based experiences or clinical teaching or internship.

**Withdrawal from the Educator Preparation Program**

A candidate who voluntarily decides to withdraw from the Educator Preparation Program must send a written notice of that intent to the Department of Teaching and Learning Academic Adviser. The candidate also needs to submit a signed form provided by the program. Withdrawal from Southern Methodist University translates to withdrawal from the Educator Preparation Program.

## Personal Information

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The information presented in this handbook is accurate at the time of printing; however, policies are subject to change based on University, Simmons School and state guidelines. Check with an adviser before making a major decision based on the contents of this handbook.

### Student Identification Number

The University assigns each student an eight--digit SMU identification number. Students should use this number whenever contacting their adviser or instructors. This is the primary means the Teaching and Learning Department has to identify the students' academic record and transactions related to the records.

### Name Change

A student who has a change in name must provide the University Registrar's Office his or her Social Security card or the form issued by the Social Security Administration. All grade reports, transcripts and diplomas are issued only under a person's legal name as recorded by the University Registrar's office.

This is also the name the Teaching and Learning Department will submit to the Texas Education Agency.

### Work Plan

It is the student's responsibility to keep the work plan up-to-date. Students will need to keep in touch with their adviser. The most efficient way to communicate will be via emails.

Christine Woodbury: [cwoodbury@smu.edu](mailto:cwoodbury@smu.edu)

The university assigned email address is the official address for university electronic correspondence, including related communications with advisers, faculty members and academic units. The adviser will periodically send important information to Educational Studies students. It is expected that all students will monitor their SMU emails at least weekly.

It is the student's responsibility to be aware of all pertinent dates listed on the Academic Calendar out of the Registrar's office. [http://smu.edu/registrar/academic\\_calendar.asp](http://smu.edu/registrar/academic_calendar.asp) The deadline for adding courses, dropping courses without grade record and changing sections for each term is listed in the Official University Calendar. Students may drop a course with a grade of W (Withdraw) through approximately midterm by using the student my.SMU. The specific deadline is listed in the Official University Calendar.

### **Advising for Enrollment**

All students admitted to the Educational Diagnostician program are expected to meet with their advisers each term. Students may make an appointment to visit with their adviser anytime during the academic year.

Schedules for each term are posted and updated on the Department of Teaching and Learning's website according to the University schedule. This schedule will always have the most current information.

Before the enrollment date, advisers will give permission to students based on their current work plan. If students need to alter their work plan, they must see their adviser.

Students enrolling in their Practicum will receive permission from their adviser. Permission will be granted after all criteria, including testing and coursework, for the practicum has been fulfilled.

### **Withdrawal from Program**

It is the student's responsibility to notify the adviser if it becomes necessary to withdraw from the program and complete an exit form. If the student does not enroll in any education courses for three consecutive terms, his/her file will become inactive.

### **Student Files/Records**

It is the policy of Simmons School of Education and Human Development, Department of Teaching and Learning to retain all student files for five years as per the Texas Administrative Code Rule §228.40.

## Testing

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### Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES)

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.

#### **State Examinations Required for Diagnostician:**

TExES #253 – Educational Diagnostician

#### **Official information concerning testing for Diagnostician Certification**

Pearson Education is the administrator of TExES exams.

<http://www.tx.nesinc.com/Home.aspx>

Specific Exam Information

[http://www.tx.nesinc.com/PageView.aspx?f=GEN\\_Tests.html](http://www.tx.nesinc.com/PageView.aspx?f=GEN_Tests.html)

Exam Registration

[http://www.tx.nesinc.com/PageView.aspx?f=GEN\\_Register.html](http://www.tx.nesinc.com/PageView.aspx?f=GEN_Register.html)

Exam Preparation Materials

[http://www.tx.nesinc.com/PageView.aspx?f=GEN\\_PreparationMaterials.html](http://www.tx.nesinc.com/PageView.aspx?f=GEN_PreparationMaterials.html)

Alternative Testing Arrangements

<http://www.tx.nesinc.com/Contacts.aspx>

Policies

[http://www.tx.nesinc.com/PageView.aspx?f=GEN\\_Policies.html](http://www.tx.nesinc.com/PageView.aspx?f=GEN_Policies.html)

## Texas Diagnostician Certification

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### Applying for Educator Certification from the Texas Education Agency

1. Demonstrate content and professional knowledge through the completion of education course work (content and professional education) with satisfactory GPA and graduate
2. Demonstrate content and professional skills and dispositions through the completion of Practicum
3. Demonstrate content and professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions through passing state certification exams

After all the above requirements have been completed, degrees conferred (this could take up to 4 weeks), and the students are in good standing with the University, SMU will recommend them for standard certification.

Prior to applying to take the TExES Educational Diagnostician (253), students are expected to complete all pre-requisite courses and benchmark requirements for the certification. Information about the TExES #253 link was provided earlier in document. The faculty advisor/Program Director will notify the Certification Office when you are approved to take the TExES 253.

Students will need to follow the procedures for fingerprinting as required by the state. Once the student has been notified that the recommendation has been sent, student will be able to apply for a five-year standard certificate (fee required) and initiate the criminal background check through the fingerprinting process (fee required). Once the student applies for the standard certification from the Texas Education Agency and initiates the criminal background check, SMU will recommend the student. Follow the instructions on the SBEC website for fingerprinting. (<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/certification>). Diagnostician Certification is not complete without the application, fees, and the fingerprinting being processed.

Students can download a copy of their Standard Educator Certificate from their TEA ECOS profile or go to <https://secure.sbec.state.tx.us/SBECONLINE/virtcert.asp>.

## Laws & Associations

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Important public laws that pre-service and professional educators must know:

### Texas Laws

**Education Code Title 2. Public Education Subtitle D. Chapter 21. Educators**

<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/ED/htm/ED.21.htm>

**TAC Title 19 Education, Part 8, State Board for Educator Certification, Chapter 247  
Educators' Code of Ethics**

§247.1 Purpose and Scope: Definitions

§247.2 Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators

<https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/investigations/educators-code-of-ethics>

**Family Code Title 5. The Parent-Child Relationship and the suit affecting the Parent-Child Relationship Subtitle E. Protection of the Child Chapter 261. Investigation of Report of Child Abuse or Neglect**

<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/SOTWDocs/FA/htm/FA.261.htm>

**TAC, Title 19 Chapter 38 §38.005 Protective Eye Devices in Public Schools** Teachers and students must wear industrial-quality eye-protective devices in appropriate situations as determined by school district policy.

**Civil Practice and Remedies Code, Title 5 Code 101.001**

School district employees may be held liable in circumstances involving: use of excessive force in the discipline of students; negligence resulting in bodily injury to students; or the operation, use, or maintenance of any motor vehicle. It is important for pre-service and professional educators to know district policies and procedures as written in board policies and handbooks.

<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/CP/htm/CP.101.htm>

**Texas Penal Code § 21.12. Improper Relationship between Educator and Student** The age of the student is not a factor.

<http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/docs/pe/htm/pe.21.htm>

### Federal Law

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Public Law 105.17 (IDEA 2004)**

All teachers must follow the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) developed for any student in special education in any/all classrooms. Teachers can call an Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD) meeting to change the IEP, but they cannot ignore the IEP. Teachers can be sued as an individual for ignoring an IEP.

### **Diagnostician Associations in Texas**

It is important Educational Diagnosticians are aware of the following professional groups:

[Council for Exceptional Children \(CEC\)](#)

[Council for Educational Diagnostics Services \(CEDS\)](#)

[National Certification of Educational Diagnosticians \(NCED\)](#)

[Texas Educational Diagnostician Association \(TXEDA\)](#)

[Statewide Evaluation Personnel \(SWEP\)](#)

## Complaint Procedures for Students

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The Texas Education Agency (TEA) governs several boards and operates under the rules and regulations called the Texas Administrative Code (TAC). In order to file a complaint, one must be in accordance with TAC Chapter 228.70 Complaints and Investigations (b) (4).

No matter what the nature of the complaint, step 1 is to contact the Program Director of the Educator Preparation Program (EPP) in Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development and if requested, to submit the complaint in writing.

### **Types of Complaints:**

#### **Diagnostician Program**

If the complaint is in regard to any aspect of the program or anyone associated with the program, once the Diagnostician program director has heard and received the written submission describing the complaint, the Diagnostician program director will review it and respond within two weeks with a resolution.

#### **Pearson Testing Service**

If the complaint is in regard to any aspect of TExES test registration, administration, scoring, etc., once the EPP committee has heard and received the written submission, the committee will review it and respond within two weeks with a resolution or instructions for contacting the testing service.

#### **State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) / TEA**

If the complaint is in regard to any aspect of state certification requirements or anyone associated with SBEC/TEA, once the EPP committee has heard and received the written submission, the committee will review it and respond within two weeks with a resolution or instructions for directing the complaint to the appropriate department/persons.