

University of Dallas

Dallas, Texas

Department of Education



2010 OVERALL TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM DESIGN

The integrity of the design of this institution's teacher preparation program is compromised by a weak curriculum used to prepare elementary teacher candidates how to teach reading and mathematics, as well as an inadequate design in the subject area preparation of secondary teacher candidates. Because some of the data that we collect is drawn from public sources, we always ask the institution to verify the accuracy and currency of what we have collected. The University of Dallas declined to review and comment.

Admission Standards

1. Admits teacher candidates with strong academic records ●

+ Rationale + Methodology + State findings

The standards for admission either into the institution or its teacher preparation program should select teacher candidates from only the top half of the college population.

The University of Dallas' high rating for this standard is based on its classification by U.S. News and World Report as a "more selective" institution in its admissions, ensuring that teacher candidates have sufficiently strong academic credentials.

Elementary Teacher Program

2. Prepares teacher candidates to teach reading

a. Extent to which the science of reading is covered ○

+ Rationale + Methodology + State findings

The research-based content proven to be necessary for teaching all children to read should be clearly evident in course materials such as lecture topics, assignments and textbooks.

The institution fails to meet the standard. Although syllabi were not available for review, the textbooks required for the program's reading courses were poor, indicating that preparation in the science of reading is not provided. We identified two required textbooks that did not support reading science.

b. Adherence to science of reading throughout coursework NA

+ Rationale + Methodology + State findings

All of an institution's required reading courses — not just some courses — should impart the research-based content that is necessary for teaching all children to read.

Because we could discern no evidence of the science of reading being taught in either a single comprehensive course or in a combination of multiple courses (see standard #2a), any further rating on this standard is irrelevant.

3. Prepares teacher candidates to teach mathematics ○

+ Rationale + Methodology + State findings

Teacher candidates, even those who excel in math, generally require three semesters of coursework in order to progress from a procedural to a conceptual understanding of the essential mathematics topics taught in the elementary grades.

The institution does not meet this standard because it does not require its teacher candidates to take any coursework that is designed to develop their conceptual understanding of elementary mathematics topics.


Ratings: ● Meets standard ● Nearly meets standard ● Partly meets standard ● Meets a small part of standard ○ Fails to meet standard
 ? Data insufficient for a final rating ⊘ Data withheld despite request NA Not applicable 2011 Evaluation pending NR Not rated

4. Educates teacher candidates in the broad content areas relevant to elementary teaching


[+ Rationale](#) [+ Methodology](#) [+ State findings](#)

Because they cannot teach what they do not know, teacher candidates need to have a solid grasp of literature and composition; American history, world history, art history and music history; geography; and science.

The institution does not fully meet this standard because neither the institution nor its teacher preparation program appears to ensure sufficient coverage in the world geography and music history content elementary teachers need. We note course requirements in other essential content areas, including literature, composition, American history, world history, art history and science.

5. Requires an area of concentration so that teacher candidates develop content expertise and have a second career option


[+ Rationale](#) [+ Methodology](#) [+ State findings](#)

Teacher candidates should develop some expertise outside of their professional studies, not only to enrich their own academic experience, but also to serve as a fallback major in the event that the student teaching experience goes poorly.

The institution does not fully meet this standard because we could find no evidence of any sort of subject matter concentration, save four English courses. Should a teacher candidate fail student teaching, she would face well more than an additional semester's work to be able to graduate under a non-education major.

6. Offers all required courses at least once a year


[+ Rationale](#) [+ Methodology](#) [+ State findings](#)

It must be possible to complete the requisite program in a timely manner.

The institution fully meets this standard because it offers all required courses each year.

7. Prepares teacher candidates for the profession


[+ Rationale](#) [+ Methodology](#) [+ State findings](#)

The well-documented ineffectiveness of first year teachers may be mitigated by professional preparation that includes coursework on classroom management, methods for teaching specific content and diverse learners, child development, assessment and data driven instruction, and how education policy challenges affect practice.

Because we could only gain access to course descriptions for this standard rather than syllabi, we did not rate this standard. However, our limited examination of course requirements and descriptions suggests that the institution potentially appears to give inadequate attention to a number of essential professional topics, most notably teaching diverse learners.

8. Student teaching effectively prepares teacher candidates for the challenges of the classroom


[+ Rationale](#) [+ Methodology](#) [+ State findings](#)

Although there are a number of characteristics that define a high quality student teaching program, at a minimum a full-time, full-semester clinical experience is necessary.

The institution does not meet this minimal standard as it does not offer a full semester of full-time student teaching.



Secondary Teacher Program

- | | |
|---|------|
| 9. Prepares high school teacher candidates to teach their subject area(s) | ○ |
| + Rationale + Methodology + State findings | |
| <p>All children deserve to have teachers who are well versed in each and every one of the subjects they teach, regardless of teacher shortages.</p> <p><i>The institution does not meet this standard because secondary teacher candidates need to complete fewer semester hours in their subject area than the 30 credit hours that is the norm for a college major.</i></p> | |
| 10. Prepares middle school teacher candidates to teach their subject area(s) | ○ |
| + Rationale + Methodology + State findings | |
| <p>All children deserve to have teachers who are well versed in each and every one of the subjects they teach, regardless of teacher shortages.</p> <p><i>While course requirements in other certification areas for middle school teachers appear to be slightly more adequate, the institution does not meet the standard because of a flawed program design for the "middle school subject specialist." The institution should not qualify a middle school teacher to teach science without requiring either a major in a science discipline or a combination of courses equivalent to a major that would include at least a minor in one discipline.</i></p> | |
| 11. Offers all required courses (high school certification) at least once a year | ● |
| + Rationale + Methodology + State findings | |
| <p>It must be possible to complete the requisite program in a timely manner.</p> <p><i>The institution meets this standard because it offers all required courses each year.</i></p> | |
| 12. Prepares high school teacher candidates for the profession | ? |
| + Rationale + Methodology + State findings | |
| <p>The well-documented ineffectiveness of first year teachers may be mitigated by professional preparation that includes coursework on classroom management, methods for teaching specific content and diverse learners, adolescent development, assessment and data driven instruction, and how education policy challenges affect practice.</p> <p><i>Because we could only gain access to course descriptions for this standard rather than syllabi, we did not rate this standard. However, our limited examination of course requirements and descriptions suggests that the institution potentially appears to give inadequate attention to a number of essential professional topics for the secondary teacher, most notably</i></p> <p><i>1) subject-specific methods and 2) teaching diverse learners.</i></p> | |
| 13. Student teaching effectively prepares high school teacher candidates for the challenges of the classroom | 2011 |
| + Rationale + Methodology + State findings | |
| <p>Although there are a number of characteristics that define a high quality student teaching program, at a minimum a full-time, full-semester clinical experience is necessary.</p> <p><i>The institution does not meet this minimal standard as it does not require a full semester of full-time student teaching.</i></p> | |

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Special Education Teacher Program

Because the University of Dallas does not offer a program for special education certification, Standards #14-16 are not included.

Outcomes

17. Systematically seeks and uses feedback on graduates from school districts ?

18. Utilizes available data systems to monitor performance of graduates ?

[+ Rationale](#) [+ Methodology](#) [+ State findings](#)

Mirroring a similar commitment now found in K-12 education, higher education institutions must embrace data driven decision making and accountability in preparing teachers.

The ratings for these standards are unclear. The Duncanville Independent School District did not respond to our survey regarding the institution's commitment to looking at data on its graduates.

Institutional Features

19. Assigns faculty to teach in their area of expertise ●

[+ Rationale](#) [+ Methodology](#) [+ State findings](#)

Only the most extreme examples of unsuitable assignments are noted, such as an instructor teaching both reading and mathematics methods.

The institution meets this standard as we could find no evidence of faculty being inappropriately assigned.

20. Offers grade-span specific coursework as appropriate ●

[+ Rationale](#) [+ Methodology](#) [+ State findings](#)

A single class with curriculum addressing students from preschoolers to high school seniors cannot adequately prepare both elementary and secondary teacher candidates in areas such as classroom management or instructing students with disabilities.

The institution meets this standard as it appears that it designs separate classes for elementary and secondary candidates on topics benefiting from age-specific approaches.

21. Ensures that teacher candidates are prepared to teach in a global society NR

[+ Rationale](#) [+ Methodology](#) [+ State findings](#)

The world has shrunk. Recognition of that fact should pervade the campus.

Because this standard is still in a developmental phase, we do not provide an institutional rating and our findings should only be viewed as exploratory. We note that foreign language and world religion coursework is required and teacher candidates are encouraged to spend a semester at the institution's Rome campus, but we did not find coursework requirements regarding world geography, nor do foreign students comprise a significant proportion of the institution's student body.



Exit Standards

Either state licensure standards are adequate or the institution sets a higher standard for program completion than licensure requires

If the state fails to establish rigorous licensure requirements, institutions are still obligated to ensure that their graduates meet high standards. For example, if the state does not require a licensure test that measures candidates' knowledge of every subject taught, institutions must fill this vacuum.

22. Elementary (EC-4/EC-6) ○

[+ Rationale](#) [+ Methodology](#) [+ State findings](#)

The institution does not meet this standard because it relies only on the state's licensing test, the TExES elementary generalist test, to determine if its elementary teacher candidates possess adequate knowledge of reading instruction, as well as content knowledge in four subject areas. This test is wholly inadequate—both because of its low level of rigor and the lack of separate cut-scores for each subject. Recognizing that action on the part of the state to remedy these deficiencies is needed, the institution could require a more meaningful test of reading instruction and insist that its teacher candidates pass assessments in each of four subject areas.

23. Middle School (Grades 4-8) ●

[+ Rationale](#) [+ Methodology](#) [+ State findings](#)

Acknowledging that flawed state regulation is the primary reason so many Texas institutions do not meet this standard, this institution does not fully meet this standard because it qualifies middle school teacher candidates for certification in multiple subject areas (e.g., mathematics and science certification) with only a single licensing test upon completion. Because high scores on one portion of the test can make up for low scores on another, this test is inadequate. Recognizing that action on the part of the state to remedy these deficiencies is needed, the institution could insist that its teacher candidates independently pass assessments in each subject area.

24. Secondary (Grades 8-12) ●

[+ Rationale](#) [+ Methodology](#) [+ State findings](#)

The institution does not fully meet this standard. Acknowledging that flawed state regulation is the principal culprit for the prevalence of poor design of some secondary programs across the state, the institution should not qualify secondary teacher candidates to teach multiple subjects by means of a "composite subjects" certification (e.g., preparing a teacher to teach "science" instead of chemistry, biology, physics and/or earth science). The institution could remedy the state's regulatory deficiency by requiring candidates to pass content assessments in each subject for exit.

25. Special Education (EC-12) NA

[+ Rationale](#) [+ Methodology](#) [+ State findings](#)

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