

# SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Education



Post-Baccalaureate Initial Certification Program (PBICP)

and

Master of Education with Alternative Certification

Program Handbook

2020

Sul Ross State University's Post-Baccalaureate Initial Certification Program (PBICP) is designed for individuals who have a bachelor's degree and wish to become certified teachers in Texas. The PBICP has been approved as an alternative route to teacher certification by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and meets the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) requirements of "highly qualified teacher."

This handbook is designed to help the teacher candidate be as successful as possible. It is also important to access the PBICP webpage at

<https://www.sulross.edu/page/1821/post-baccalaureate-initial-certification-program-pbicip> for additional helpful information and resources. Along with information

provided in this handbook, the candidate has access to university and school personnel who are eager to help. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the information presented in this handbook, please contact Teacher Education Director, Diana Rodriguez, at [drodriguez5@sulross.edu](mailto:drodriguez5@sulross.edu)

Here is a link to the university and EPP academic calendar:

<https://www.sulross.edu/page/2247/srsu-alpine-academic-calendars>

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## Education Department Contact Information

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# ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

## Requirements for Admission to the Post-Baccalaureate Initial Certification Program (PBICP)

Prerequisites to apply for the PBICP include:

- Bachelor's degree from an approved institution
- Overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 or better on a 4.0 grading scale OR 3.00 on last 60 hours of college coursework
- GPA of 3.00 or better in teaching area (C or better in all content area courses)
- Basic skills as demonstrated by the Texas Success Initiative (Texas Education Code, §51.3062)

Phase I Pre-Admission-Application:

In this phase, applicants have met all the prerequisites above, as well as items in the following in order:

1. Take P.A.C.T. exam and deliver passing score to Education Office
2. Apply to Sul Ross State University Graduate School as a non-degree seeking student or as a graduate student seeking a Master's degree in Alternative Certification
3. Submit PBICP application
4. Pay PBICP fees: \$75 for transcript evaluation and processing
5. Submit official transcripts
6. Provide department with three letters of reference
7. Phone or in-person interview with PBICP faculty
8. Sign and return Educator Code of Ethics, Criminal History, FERPA, and all other required forms and paperwork

Phase II Admission-**Full**:

In the Full Phase, applicants have met all the previous requirements as well as the following:

- Enrolled in the PBICP courses as indicated on deficiency plan or M. Ed. with Alternative Certification degree plan.
- Begin 30 hours of classroom observation with documentation.

*Students will not be granted eligibility for the Internship or Clinical Teaching until Full Admission status is reached. It is the candidate's responsibility to secure employment during the Internship period, if desired.*

Note: Students who begin coursework before taking the PACT must take the TExES content test, which requires six or more hours of practice and a practice test score of 260 or higher to be approved for testing.

# INTERNSHIP OR CLINICAL TEACHING?

The candidate is provided two options to fulfill the requirement for supervised teaching in the PBICP. This choice is a very important one and worthy of careful consideration.

## Option 1: **Internship**

The Internship is a yearlong, paid placement in a TEA approved school as the Teacher of Record. The candidate is responsible for securing employment at a school district and will be assigned a mentor teacher and a university supervisor throughout the Internship. Candidates must request to be registered for ED 5300 Internship in Teaching I and ED5301 Internship in Teaching II. Candidates must complete one full year (two semesters) as the Teacher of Record in the content area and grade level in which PACT or TExES content exam has been passed. No internships are approved without passing the content test in advance. Substitute teaching or a position as a paraprofessional DOES NOT qualify as an Internship.

Candidates in the PBICP should complete at least 6 semester credit hours of the certification coursework prior to entering the classroom on the probationary certificate.

If you are offered a position with a school district, you must notify the PBICP Coordinator at 432- 837-8170 as soon as possible. A Statement of Eligibility for Internship form will be prepared and sent to the school district to confirm enrollment in the PBICP. The Statement of Eligibility for Internship form requires the school to enter teaching assignment, campus, and start date and return the completed form to Sul Ross State University. This form MUST be completely filled out, signed, and returned in order to complete our recommendation for your internship certificate. This form must be updated every time a Internship Certificate is renewed.

Upon employment, application should be made for the internship certificate through the Texas Education Agency <http://www.tea.state.tx.us> Refer to the PBICP webpage on the Sul Ross State University website for step-by-step instructions. **If the PBICP student moves, transfers, or is terminated, the PBICP Coordinator must be notified immediately.**

**Additional Course Fees:** While enrolled in the Internship, a university supervisor assigned by Sul Ross will visit the classroom six times per year (three times a semester). If placement is within 250 miles from Alpine, the fee will be \$200 per semester to cover travel expenses for supervision. If placement is more than 250 miles from Alpine, the fee will be \$300 per semester.

**If the candidate does not complete all requirements for certification during the first year, enrollment in the Internship (along with all associated tuition and fees), along with supervision from the university, is mandatory for every semester until certification is obtained, not to exceed three years.**

## Option 2: **Clinical Teaching**

Clinical teaching is also known as Student Teaching. It is a 14-week, unpaid placement at a TEA approved school. A cooperating teacher and a university supervisor will be assigned for close monitoring, supervision, and support throughout the clinical teaching experience. The candidate opting for Clinical Teaching will need to contact the department and request an application for placement. **Candidates should not contact school districts for placements!** See Clinical Teaching Handbook on the PBICP webpage for detailed information regarding Clinical Teaching. Candidates must register for ED 5600 Clinical Teaching in the Post Baccalaureate Program the semester they wish to complete Clinical Teaching.

**Content area certification must be passed before the Clinical Teaching option can be considered.** Additionally, candidates who do not obtain employment and instead choose to complete Clinical Teaching must have all of the required coursework (18 semester credit hours) prior to the semester of Clinical Teaching.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

The following information contained in the General Information section will help answer questions about the PBICP. This is not to replace the guidance and advice provided by the program advisor. When in doubt, always contact the SRSU Department of Education faculty and staff with any questions or concerns you may have.

## **Communications**

During the course of the PBICP, it is imperative to maintain communication with your instructors, advisor, and university supervisor at Sul Ross State University. All electronic communication will be delivered via SRSU email, so check that account often for program updates, requirements, and important deadlines. Please maintain professionalism, including timeliness, in responding to all emails sent regarding the PBICP.

## **Required Paperwork and Forms**

It is critical that all required forms are returned in a timely manner. Much of the paperwork will require numerous signatures and approvals. In order to process the application in a timely manner, it is imperative to return all forms. Always keep a copy for your records. For a listing of required forms and to access, visit the PBICP webpage. Contact the PBICP Coordinator if any of the forms are not accessible. Paperwork can be returned by mail or a scanned email copy (unless an original and signature is required).

Return to:

SRSU Department of Education

Director of Teacher Education

Diana Rodriguez [drodriguez5@sulross.edu](mailto:droduiguez5@sulross.edu)

and

Dept. Secretary

Madison Owen

[madison.owen@sulross.edu](mailto:madison.owen@sulross.edu)



Candidates are **responsible for submitting three letters of reference**, and they must be submitted to the department before an interview can be scheduled.

### **Candidate Interview**

Each candidate will be required to participate in an informal interview during the early part of the application process. This will be set up with a faculty member in the PBICP and be conducted face-to-face or via ZOOM or other available modalities convenient for the student. Detailed information regarding the interview will be sent upon receipt of the application.

### **Ongoing Support**

No matter what stage of the program, the candidate can expect ongoing and continual support from the SRSU PBICP faculty and staff. One resource that candidates are encouraged to participate in is the Performance-Based Academic Coaching Teams (PACT) website (not to be confused with the PACT exam). Visit the site at <https://pact.tarleton.edu/pact/> and register for this support service.

### **Fingerprinting and Background Checks**

All candidates are required to submit authorization for a criminal background check **as part of the admission process**. It is very important for the candidate to answer all inquiries related to criminal history accurately and honestly. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the program. Full disclosure will allow the program advisor and the Director of Teacher Education to assist if any problems arise from the criminal history report.

Students are responsible for the costs associated with background checks through the PBICP. The SRSU PBICP utilizes the services of CastleBranch, and the results will be reported to Sul Ross State University. The student understands that this criminal history/background check through CastleBranch will cost the student \$36.50. The student also understands that this information may be discussed with the school district(s) in which they are involved. The student also understands that the State will conduct a criminal history inquiry through the Federal Bureau of Investigations when students apply for the actual Teacher Certificate. Please refer to the attached document in the appendix for information on how to complete a background check.

Often times a school district will want to conduct its own criminal background check in addition to the PBICP. The candidate will be responsible for completing any background checks and fingerprinting requested by a school district.

### **Field Experience for both Internship-Seeking or Student Teaching Route**

Once a student has Full Admission status in the PBICP the candidate **must complete at least 30-clock hours of observation in a classroom within the first 90 days of the initial enrolled term**. Examples of approved activities that could be applied towards the 30 hours include observations and/or electronic sources of classroom observation (not more than 15 hours, and must have departmental approval for use). The observation log is located on the PBICP website. No observation logs will be accepted dated before Full Admission, or incomplete without the initials of the classroom teacher and signature. If there are any questions regarding what are approved observations, contact the program advisor. *Observation hours must be completed in a variety of grade levels and subject areas. Do not*

complete all 30 hours with one teacher in one subject area. Falsifying or fabricating any information contained in the observation logs is grounds for dismissal from the PBICP.

Upon request, a letter will be provided by the PBICP to the candidate to take to the campus where observations will occur. The letter will outline the candidates standing in the PBICP and the requirements for observations in the public school. It is the candidate's responsibility to comply with any district's request for additional background checks, drug screening, etc.

**Candidates that have not completed the required observation hours WILL NOT be eligible for recommendation of an Internship Certificate or allowed to enroll in the Internship or Clinical Teaching courses.**

### **Late Hires Provisions**

A "late hire" is defined as a candidate who has not been accepted into an educator preparation program before June 15 and who is hired for a teaching assignment by a school after June 15 or after the school's academic year has begun. According to TAC §228.35(c), a "late hire" for a school district teaching position may begin employment under a probationary certificate before completing the 30 hour observation requirement but must fulfill the requirement within 90 school days of assignment.

### **Internship, Probationary or Standard Certificates: What is the Difference?**

An Internship Certificate requires passing the appropriate content exam and the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibility Exam (PPR). This allows the candidate to continue with an alternative certification program while remaining the Teacher of Record. A Probationary or Internship Certificate is only valid for one year while the candidate is completing certification requirements and enrolled in the Internship course. If additional time is needed, these certificates may be issued yearly for a maximum of three years total, during which time supervision by the university and campus mentor is mandatory. After three years, the candidate is no longer eligible for an Internship or Probationary Certificate and will be dismissed from the program.

A candidate is eligible for a Standard Certificate once all requirements (see Certification section below) are met. After successful completion of program coursework, satisfactory scores on PACT or TExES Content and Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) exams, and completion of Internship/Clinical Teaching, the candidate will contact the Testing and Certification Coordinator for recommendation for certification. Additional details about the certification process can be found on the PBICP website. The final authority of Standard Certificate issuance rests with the Texas Education Agency, not Sul Ross State University.

The Standard Certificate is valid for five years and will be renewed with 150-clock hours of approved professional development. Additional information can be found on the TEA website about renewal of Standard Certificates.

## Certification Process

The certification process involves three parts:

### I. *What You Teach* (Content)

- Must have a degree major OR 24 semester credit hours with 12 of those upper level (Junior, Senior, or Graduate Level) in your teaching field.
- Must pass the TExES Content examination for your teaching field (See page12 for information on the PACT).

### II. *How You Teach* (PPR)

- Must complete education coursework for Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities PPR 160, EC-12-18 semester credit hours)
- Must pass the TExES PPR. ED 5360 will serve as preparation for the exam and will be taken after the majority of coursework has been successfully completed.

### III. Experience

- One semester of Clinical Teaching Experience
- One year enrolled in an Internship

## Applying for Texas Teacher Certification

After all program requirements (all coursework complete, student teaching, and required state exams) are complete, apply online for your teaching certificate, pay the required application fee (currently \$78.00), and initiate your criminal background check through the fingerprinting process (currently has a \$40.25 fee) at [www.tea.state.tx.us](http://www.tea.state.tx.us).

## Required Courses

Instruction in the following courses will prepare you to develop lesson plans, maintain discipline in the classroom, evaluate ethical and legal implications in education, and other professional responsibilities of teaching. All of the courses below are offered in a shortened format of 8 weeks per semester.

ED 5305	Technology in the Educational Setting
ED 5310	Organization and Structure of Public School Curriculum
ED 5361	Teaching Diverse Learners
ED 5360	Professional Roles and Responsibilities
ED 5322	Behavior Management
ED 6313	Teaching Reading in the Content Areas

The PBICP student MUST enroll for ED 5300-Internship in Teaching I, and ED 5301-Internship in Teaching I for the duration in which a Probationary or Internship certificate is issued. The PBICP student will have three years to complete certification requirements but must remain in the internship (and pay all associated tuition and fees) until final Standard Certification is obtained. *It is the PBICP student's responsibility to request enrollment in the appropriate internship every semester.*

## **Attendance**

Candidates are required to attend all required classes, scheduled meetings, and program-related functions. Excessive absences could be grounds for a reduced grade and possible dismissal from the PBICP. It is equally important to adhere to the attendance policy for online courses in the PBICP. The university online attendance policy is addressed below:

You are expected to login to Blackboard several times each week. The University policy for attendance in web-delivered courses states that non participation (not logging in) for more than 3 weeks in a long session, or for 1 week during a summer session, or 3 days for a midwinter session, may result in the student being dropped from the course by the professor.

Policies in effect for on-campus, traditional classroom instruction courses also apply to students enrolled in distance education courses, including Web-based and ITV courses. The University allows a maximum of 20% absences in a course before an instructor may drop a student for excessive absences. In Web courses, this policy is interpreted as not participating for more than 3 weeks in a long semester, 1 week in a summer session, or 3 days in the midwinter session. Any student dropped for non-participation will receive an F in the course dropped. Inactivity may include the following:

- not logging on to the course
- not submitting assignments
- not participating in scheduled activities
- not communicating with the instructor by phone or email, and/or
- not following the instructor's participation guidelines stated in the syllabus

## **Master's Degree Option**

Candidates have the option of pursuing a Master's degree while enrolled in the PBICP. The Master of Education-General with Alternative Certification is available to students who have successfully met all the admission requirements to the Graduate School at Sul Ross State University. A Master's degree requires completion of 36 semester credit hours or more, a comprehensive exam, classroom observations, student teaching or Internship, and passing the PACT or TExES Content exam and the PPR exam. The certification coursework (18 hours) will count toward the graduate degree. If you choose not to continue the master's program once you are certified, you are not obligated to do so.

There are additional paperwork requirements and forms to be completed for Master's seeking students. Contact your advisor to discuss and develop a Master's degree plan.

## **Finding A Job**

Sul Ross State University hosts a job fair every fall and spring semester on the SRSU-Alpine campus. There are many representatives from school districts around Texas, and they are eager to speak with candidates. Contact the PBICP advisor for the specific date of the SRSU job fair. Admittance to the PBICP does not guarantee employment. It is the candidate's responsibility to secure employment. Periodically, job openings will be posted on the Sul Ross State University Department of Education's Facebook page. Contact the SRSU Education Department for updates on available teaching positions.

## **Dismissal from the PBICP**

It is never anticipated that a candidate will be asked to leave the PBICP. There are several levels of support provided to the candidate in order to assist them through the process of teacher certification. Please seek assistance from these resources when necessary. It is much easier to deal proactively with a potential situation than to handle it retroactively.

If a candidate finds it necessary to withdraw from the PBICP, written notification is required. It is also important to speak with the program advisor in order for the candidate to be aware of potential implications of leaving the program.

If necessary, a candidate may be placed on a growth plan, targeting areas of deficiencies and support to address and remediate these deficiencies. A committee comprised of members familiar with the candidate's situation will meet to construct a plan including goals and a specific timeline. Failure to meet the goals in the growth plan will result in dismissal from the PBICP.

## **Appeals**

Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Department Chair and the Director of Teacher Education. If appealing an admission decision, the request must be provided to the department no more than 5 days after decision.

## **Program Review Survey**

Candidates will be required to complete a survey, reflecting on their experiences in the PBICP. A survey will be completed when the student completes the program (before recommended for certification). Students will be emailed the link to each survey and will be required to complete the survey before final grades are issued. All responses will be anonymous. The results will be utilized for ongoing program improvement.

# **TESTING REQUIREMENTS**

Testing requirements for teacher certification may be confusing for candidates. It is important that the requirements are clearly understood and that the money and time needed to prepare for the examinations are properly allocated.

As previously addressed, the candidate will be required to pass two exams (some areas of certification require additional tests) for certification; 1) TExES Content (when you pass PACT prior to admission, you satisfy this requirement), and 2) TExES Professional Roles and Responsibility (PPR).

## **1) Content Requirement**

The first testing requirement is to measure the candidate's knowledge in their content area. **The TExES Content must be passed before placement is granted for Clinical Teaching.**

***Pre-Admission Content Test*** Significant changes in the Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §227.10 (a) (3) (c) were approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and State Board

for Educator Certification (TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY (TEA)) on October 10, 2008. The new rule which became effective December 14, 2008, allowed individuals with degrees who have not been enrolled in an Educator Preparation Program (EPP) to take Pre-Admissions Content Tests (PACT) to demonstrate content proficiency for possible admission into an EPP. **Taking PACT alone does not ensure admission to the PBICP.**

A candidate may take a Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) under two conditions:

- 1 The candidate has a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited institution
- 2 The candidate has never been admitted to a State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) approved Educator Preparation Program (EPP)

A candidate must take the TExES content exam if coursework has been started prior to passing the PACT.

**Students enrolled in the PBICP must pass the PACT or TExES Content exam before being allowed to enroll in the Internship or Clinical Teaching.**

## 2) PPR Requirement

Candidates must also take the TExES Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) 160 exam in order to be certified. Candidates must first pass the Content or PACT requirement. After the successful completion of ED 5360, students may be allowed to register for the PPR 160 exam. Contact the PBICP advisor for more information and visit the PBICP webpage for information specific to registering for this exam. A practice score of 260 is required to be approved for testing.

## Additional Requirements

Situations may arise where the candidate is required to complete additional testing requirements due to the certification area they seek. Contact the PBICP Coordinator for information on additional testing requirements.

## Test Preparation Requirements and Resources

The SRSU Education Department meets and exceeds the TEA requirement of providing candidates with at least 6 hours of test preparation. The candidate will have several opportunities for test preparation. It is recommended that candidates take advantage of all of the available resources available to them, as a passing score on one of the practice tests does not guarantee a passing score on the TExES.

- *Certify Teacher Test Preparation* Candidates will be required to purchase practice testing software from Certify Teacher at [Certifyteacher.com](http://Certifyteacher.com) before TExES PPR 160 test approval is granted. In order to obtain approval to register for the TExES, a satisfactory score (at least a 260) on the Certify Teacher practice exam must be obtained. **When purchasing the practice software, choose the Online option, NOT the Download or CD option. Only two attempts on the Certify Teacher practice tests (Content and PPR) will be accepted. STAY IN STUDY MODE UNTIL YOU ARE CONFIDENT TO MOVE TO EXAM MODE. Your purchase is valid until you pass the TExES! If you get notification that your Certify Teacher purchase has expired, contact a Certify Teacher representative (866-209-9986) and let them know you need it renewed, free of charge.** For specific instructions on how to register for the test, visit the PBICP webpage or contact the

program advisor or testing coordinator for more information.

- *Representative Tests* The department also has numerous representative tests for the candidate to complete. These are paper and pencil tests and are available only to students who can come to the SRSU-Alpine campus, due to strict test security regulations. The test is scored after it is administered, and the candidate will be given feedback on strengths and additional areas to target. Allow for 2-5 hours to complete the test.
- *TExES Certification Exam Review for Teachers (T-CERT)* This is a free, online practice website that contains valuable information and resources for passing the TExES. Go to <http://pact.tarleton.edu/TCERT> and complete the training and print out the certificate of completion at the end. There is a nominal fee.
- Additional study sessions are provided by SRSU faculty throughout the semester. The SRSU Education Department faculty is available to provide individual assistance to students in preparation for the examinations. Visit the Texas Educator Certification Examination Program website for additional study materials at <http://www.tx.nesinc.com/Home.aspx>

# Appendix

Appendix A  
Steps to PACT

Appendix B  
CastleBranch Background Check Directions

Appendix C  
Field Experience Log

Appendix D  
Creating Your TEAL Account

Appendix E  
Texas Administrative Code

Appendix F  
Deficiency Plan

Appendix G  
Master of Education-General with Alternative Certification degree plan  
This degree plan only pertains to students seeking a Master's Degree (General) AND  
Certification.

Appendix H  
Verification of Receipt of Handbook