Education Certification Program Information

Alternative Certification Program (ACP)

The ACP program is designed for individuals who have earned a B.S. or B.A. degree in a field outside of education and want to enter the teaching profession. The program is designed to prepare teachers for certification in elementary and secondary content areas. It is our goal to prepare individuals for certification in the State of Texas. All courses are completed online, with in-person requirements for field-based experience and clinical teaching.

The State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) establishes the teacher certification standards and grants the certification after students have passed the Texas teacher certification exams. The Alternative Certification Program (ACP) prepares and recommends students for certification when they have completed all requirements as stipulated by the Education Department at Southwestern Adventist University and Texas Education Agency.

Admission Requirements

General admission requirements for all applicants and other requirements that are specific to your level and area of certification are outlined below. General admission requirements for all applicants are as follows:

Bachelor's degree from an accredited university. Applicants need an official transcript to verify the successful completion of a bachelor's degree from an accredited university. Applicants who are currently completing degree requirements will not be admitted to (ACP) until the degree is confirmed.

- All applicants with degrees outside of the United States must have these degrees evaluated by an accredited evaluation service and admission to the alternative certification program will be determined by the results of the evaluation. An approved list of accredited evaluators may be obtained from the university registrar. Additional information may be obtained from Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc., P O Box 514070, Milwaukee, WI. 53203-3470. Tel: 414-289-3400. If you have already completed this evaluation process, please submit your transcripts and evaluation to The Office of Admissions for further evaluation.

GPA Requirement. A GPA of 2.50 from all post-secondary coursework from accredited institutions will be taken into consideration (i.e., community college and college/university). Students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75 in all courses in the ACP at Southwestern.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) requires a Pre-Admission Content Exam (PACT) in the following circumstances.

- If the applicant has a GPA below a 2.5 or

- If the applicant has not completed at least 12 semester credit hours in the subject area in the desired certification area (15 credit hours if seeking certification in math or science above 7th Grade). See the TEA website for more details (https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/certification/educator-testing/pre-admission-content-test).

The prospective student is responsible for the following.

- Complete an application for admittance to the ACP (contact online@swau.edu)

- Write a statement of purpose - one page, typed, professional essay describing reasons for desiring a profession in the teaching field.

- Provide contact information for two individuals who can provide letters of recommendation (no relatives). Preferably, these recommendations should come from work experience supervisors or former professors who can speak to your potential as a future educator.

- Provide a criminal background check (fee required). Info available through the department.

- Obtain faculty approval following an admission interview with a faculty committee (in person or via zoom).

1. **Cost of Program.**

   - Application: $75
   - Consult the Education Department or Online Education office for program costs. Additional department fees may be added to cover clinical supervision. Students are responsible for purchasing textbooks and paying for certification exam review materials.
   - Financial aid will be available to qualifying students. All fees related to TExES exam fees and SBEC certification fees are not included as part of the program costs. Students are responsible for the cost of probationary and standard certifications.
   -

2. **Length of Program.** 12 - 18 months (to include 14 consecutive weeks of full-day clinical teaching in Texas, options for a year-long internship may be available through a school district)

   1. All coursework must be completed within 30 months of beginning the Alternative Certification program or students will be required to re-apply and possibly repeat coursework due to any program changes required by TEA.

   2. In order to support student success, ACP students are required to complete Texas teacher certification testing within 12 months of completing all coursework. Students who fail to meet this deadline must complete an approved remediation program prior to testing approval. Remediation costs are the responsibility of the graduate.

3. **To maintain Program status students must:**

   - Demonstrate professional dispositions necessary for successful teaching
   - Meet the technical standards as outlined in the program information
   - Actively engage in coursework and communicate regularly with professors
   - Show promising development during the clincial teaching/internship period
   - Demonstrate behaviors that are ethically and morally responsible and in accordance with the Texas Educator's Code of Ethics (https://tea.texas.gov/texas-educators/investigations/educators-code-of-ethics)

See the current *Bulletin* under the Education section for additional information regarding clinical teaching and recommendation to SBEC for certification.

Options for Texas Teacher Certification

Elementary Certification - Early Childhood - 6th grade

- Core Subjects EC-6

Secondary Certification Areas

- English Language Arts and Reading
- Life Science (may require in-person lab science courses)
- Mathematics
- Social Studies Composite

All Level Areas

- Music Education
- Physical Education

All classes are online.