Intern Handbook

[www.wtamu.edu/pace](http://www.wtamu.edu/pace)

2025-2026

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**Contact Information**

Congratulations on securing an internship through the Panhandle Alternative Certification for Educators (PACE) program. ***Please ask immediately*** if you have questions regarding internship or other program requirements. We are available to answer your questions and help you have a successful internship.

You may contact our office by phone or email.

 Panhandle Alternative Certification For Educators (PACE)

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##### Please note:

Please keep the University, the PACE program, and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) informed of your current email and postal mail addresses and telephone number(s). Email is our primary form of communication, so **please provide our office with the email address(es) that you check daily**. Once each semester you may receive file updates, reminders, and other critical information by postal mail. Please attend to communication and correspondence from PACE as soon as it is received.

All correspondence from WT’s Admissions, Registrar, and Business Offices will be sent only through your WT student email account, so please check that account frequently.

## Initial Hire Procedures and Documents

#### Intern/Probationary Certification Process

1. **Prior to internship training**, apply for an intern or probationary certificate with the Texas Education Agency and submit the two documents below to your district:
	* ***Internship Fee Agreement*** authorizes payroll deduction of the internship fee; any other payment arrangements must be made with the director of the PACE program.
	* ***Statement of Eligibility for Internship*** verifies that you are teaching at the grade level and in the content area required for your certification.

#### We will not recommend the certificate until these forms are on file.

1. **The PACE** staff will recommend you for your intern or probationary certificate when all paperwork and eligibility requirements have been completed.
2. **The Texas Education Agency** staff will initiate a criminal background review (from the fingerprinting process) and issue you an intern or probationary certificate (if the criminal background review is satisfactory). TEA will not initiate the fingerprinting process until the fees have been paid; a delay in submission of the fees will postpone issuance of your certificate.

#### Other Required Documents

Complete these documents *during internship training*:

* + Complete the ***Change of Student Information*** with your current information.
	+ ***FERPA Consent to Release Educational Records and Information*** permits our program to disclose educational records and information to specific individuals or entities.
	+ ***Statement of Understanding and Agreement*** acknowledges your understanding and agreement with program requirements.

Complete/submit to the PACE program as soon as possible *or within 7 business days*:

* + ***Intern Teacher Information Form*** provides contact and district/campus information and is also used to confirm that your teaching assignment matches your target certificate. This form is available in the Intern/Mentor folder under “Links” on the PACE home page, [wtamu.edu/pace.](http://www.wtamu.edu/pace) **Please submit this form within 7 business days and submit an updated form if your assignment or information changes during the internship year.**

Please note:

Failure to submit documents will delay your intern/probationary certificate recommendation. An extended delay will initiate notification to your superintendent and may result in action from your school district.

# Supervision and Documentation

Internship procedures provide supervision and support and contribute to your success as a first-year teacher; they also meet statutory requirements as outlined in U.S. Code related to education and the Texas Administrative Code, which governs educator preparation programs. A support team including our campus mentor, campus administrator, and university supervisor will provide supervision and support throughout the year and provide input on your progress as a first- year teacher. Descriptions of these activities are included so you are aware of the support and supervision provided as well as how your progress is evaluated and reported to our program throughout the internship year.

### 1A. WT Field Supervisor Observations

Your university supervisor plays a central role in your support and supervision as a liaison between you, the district, and PACE staff. **The supervisor will complete 5 formal visits to your classroom** during the year along with an **additional 6 informal observations [3 per semester – *First informal observation must be face to face and remaining can be virtual*]**.

**For the 5 formal observations**, your field supervisor will observe your teaching for at least 45 minutes, provide written feedback on your performance including strategies to address concerns, and conduct an interactive conference with you both before and after the observation to discuss the lesson. *Please inform PACE if your supervisor has not contacted you by phone or email before the end of your first three weeks of teaching or if he/she has not visited you by the end of the first six weeks*

### 1B. Observations Submission Process

You will be observed a minimum of 5 times by your WT Field Supervisor (FS) over the course of your internship on a valid certificate. Please communicate with the PACE Coordinator to ensure you are aware of your certificate and requirements for the year.

* Each time you are observed, you will receive coaching notes on the observation tool.
* Your WT Field Supervisor will email you a copy of the observation report immediately after your observation but no later than 24-48 hours after your observation.
* **You as the candidate then have 5 business days to get the rest of the required signatures and submi**t to WTClass [EDPD 6398/6399] under the Assignments Tab.
* Use Example Email Subject line: [Your Name] -Observation Report #
	+ Ex: J.Smith-Observation Report 1
	+ You will receive a confirmation receipt that your submission was successfully received; you will receive a grade in the gradebook for a successful submission
		- Observation reports are a vital part of completing the PACE program successfully. Lack of submissions will affect your certification recommendation.

### Observation Timeline

Intern certificate – 5 observations Probationary certificate – 5 observations

Window of Observation Reports: *Fall to Spring semester*

1st: September 1—October 1 2nd: October 2— Nov. 1

3rd: November – Dec. 1

4th: January 2– March 1

5th: March 2 – May 1

**Important:** The window of observations may be modified by your WT Field Supervisor based on when your actual Texas certificate gets posted and started. Please check with *PACE coordinator, Mr. Pyxa Sovilay*, on your certificate timeline.

Again, it is your responsibility as the candidate to submit your observation report no later than 5 days after your observation.

You must submit **ALL** observation reports to complete internship requirements for certification.

### Unexpected Events

If something occurs that is unexpected and you or the Field Supervisor are not able to complete a supervision within one of the windows, please contact the PACE Coordinator, Director of Field Placements and/or Director of Teacher Preparation to discuss options and an extension.

Extensions will be granted for extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis and should not be expected for every observation.

### Mentor collaboration and feedback

As a part of required professional development and support, you will meet with your campus mentor teacher (15-minute minimum) **twice each semester** to review your WT field supervision, observation reports.  *Your mentor will provide feedback based on your observation reports, focusing on both strengths and growth. Your mentor teacher will also do 3 formative evaluations of you (****twice in the first semester*** *and* ***one in the last semester****).*

Following each meeting, your mentor will then sign off on your observation report and formative evaluation, which will then require you to submit to WTClass [EDPD 6398/6399] under the Assignments Tab

#### Formative evaluation submission timeline: October through December, February through April.

### End-of-Year Administrator Evaluation

PACE will ask your campus administrator to complete an evaluation near the end of your second semester of internship which provides our office with information regarding your performance as compared to other beginning teachers on your campus.

This is used for ongoing program evaluation and improvement and is taken into consideration when making certificate recommendation decisions. If the district does not support recommendation for the standard certificate, you will need to appeal to continue with the program.

*We will send this form directly to your principal to be returned before you can be recommended for your standard certificate.*

# Certification Test Information

#### PPR Test Approval

Approval for the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR), TExES #160, will be granted upon completion of the following requirements:

* 1. Complete PPR section in PACE training or substitution credit received from PPR training [EPSY 3341] through WT’s EPP [Educator Preparation Program]
	2. **For PPR approval 1st attempt** - Complete full length practice exam of 80% on each domain through Pearson, 240tutoring or Certifyteacher.

#### Practice Exams [optional]

You may choose to take a practice exam to gain test approval for official exam. Practice exams are offered several times each semester through WT’s Office of Educational Services, 806.651.2341, or <https://apps.wtamu.edu/forms/texes_practice.php.>

##### Please note:

It is important to prepare for each exam because state law limits testing to five attempts. **If you are unsuccessful after five tests attempts, you will be required to request an appeal through TEA for another official attempt**. It is also important that you complete testing requirements as early as possible because your testing status will weigh heavily in your district’s decisions regarding contract renewal.

# Standard Certificate Application Process

You will apply for the **Standard Texas Educator Certificate** when you are eligible for certificate recommendation. Eligibility includes successful completion of all the “Three T’s”: Training (course work), Testing (certification exams), and Teaching (internship).

You may apply for the standard certificate during the final week of internship when **all**

program and certification requirements have been met:

* Completion of certification course work and training
* Pass all required certification exams;
* Full payment of the internship fee; and
* Successful completion of both internship semesters and submission of required documentation:
	+ ***Submit Mentor Teacher Formative evaluation forms***
	+ ***Submit ALL WT Field Supervisor observation reports***
	+ ***Recommendation form by WT Field Supervisor***
	+ ***WT PACE Exit Survey -*** [*https://forms.office.com/r/ijtEYtaEPP*](https://forms.office.com/r/ijtEYtaEPP)
	+ ***End-of-Year Administrator Evaluation***.

If all requirements are complete, apply for the standard certificate with the Texas Education Agency, [tea.texas.gov,](http://www.tea.state.tx.us/) *during your final week of internship*:

* Log in to your TEAL/ECOS account and verify/update your Educator Profile;
* Select “Standard Certificate Texas Program” from the “Applications” menu;
* Follow the instructions to apply and identify the recommending entity, **West Texas A&M University (Alternative)**;
* Complete the TEA *Candidate Exit Survey*;
* Submit the appropriate fee to TEA; and
* Forward the confirmation email to PACE advisor

Once the PACE staff verifies that you have met all requirements, you will be recommended for certification. If your file is incomplete, we will notify you of requirements that have not been completed and/or documents that have not been submitted.

##### Please note:

If you have not completed all requirements by the time your probationary/intern certificate expires, you may request a one-year extension with *evidence of progress toward certification*. Please contact PACE Coordinator for information regarding the extension process **at least one month prior to the expiration date** of your certificate. **A fee will be charged to cover required ongoing supervision expenses during the extension year.**

I understand I must have all my tests passed (content, PPR, and supplemental exams) to be eligible for an extension for a Texas probationary certificate and receive required supervision.

**Certification Checklist**

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| 1. Review certification plan. Contact PACE Coordinator for registration into PACE training courses. |
| 1. For 1st attempt, candidate will need to pass a full-length practice exam of an 80% on each domain through 240tutoring [must subscribe] prior to gaining approval for official TEXES content exam.
	* **If pursuing certification in EC-6 core subjects, 4-8 core subjects, 4-8 ELAR, or 4-8 ELAR/SS**, a passing score of 80% and minimum score of 3 on CRQ submitted for grading to Dr. Coneway on the Science of Reading practice exam must be completed on 240tutoring along with completing STR training in module prior to gaining test approval for official TEXES STR exam.
 |
| 3. Contact PACE Coordinator for placement of classroom observation hours [paraprofessional experience may substitute]. ***Completion of training, testing, and observations may be completed concurrently.*** |
| 4. **If unsuccessful in passing official TEXES exams**, remediation must be completed with program testing coordinator prior to gaining approval for another attempt. TEA requires a minimum of 30 days prior to retesting for same exam. |
| 5. Upon passing TEXES content exam (including STR if required), completing pre-internship training courses, and completing observation hours, contact PACE Coordinator for letter of eligibility to seek internship or SOE to begin internship. |
| 6. **During internship year or before** – Pass PPR [Completion highly suggested prior to internship but not required] and submit required documents in steps 8-10. |
| 7. **For PPR approval 1st attempt** - Complete full-length practice exam of 80% on each domain through Pearson, 240tutoring, or Certifyteacher. Upon completion, submit certificate to PACE Coordinator requesting PPR test approval. |
| 8. **During internship** - Submit mentor formative evaluation forms to WTClass [EDPD 6398/6399] under the Assignments Tab **[Total 3] – October through December, February through April.** |
| 1. Submit **required internship documentation – see Intern Handbook**
	* Submit ALL WT Field Supervisor observation reports
	* WT PACE Exit Survey - <https://forms.office.com/r/ijtEYtaEPP>
 |
| 1. Apply for the ***Standard Educator Certificate*** if all requirements are complete Just go to <https://tea.texas.gov/>
	* Log in to your TEAL/ECOS account and verify/update your Educator Profile;
	* Select “Standard Certificate Texas Program” from the “Applications” menu;
	* Follow the instructions to apply and identify the recommending entity, **West Texas A&M University (Alternative)**;
	* Submit the application fee
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