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ATCP makes teachers out of all

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The Alternative Teachers Certification Program will be holding its new intern orientation for students registered for the program next Monday, March 24. The program is designed to allow Prairie View students who do not necessarily have degrees in education, but wish to pursue a career in teaching to become certified.

The State of Texas created the program in 1984 as a response to the shortage of teachers in Texas classrooms, particularly in the areas of mathematics, science, and special education. Prairie View's certification program has been operating since 1990.

The program's requirements include holding a bachelor's degree or higher from any accredited institution of higher learning, with an overall 2.5 or greater grade point average, providing an official transcript from all course work, and a passing score on all areas of the THEA exam. An individual interview is also a part of the selection process.

"This program offers unemployed students, or students who are employed in their fields but want to change an opportunity to earn a good salary, good future opportunities, and advance their education," said Johnie Walker, the program coordinator for Prairie View's certification program.

The program offered by the Prairie View University Graduate school allows students to obtain certification within a year, and requires interested students to enroll in the Prairie View graduate program.

The application fee for the program is \$50, but students are also required to take on the costs of enrolling in graduate school.

The program is not designed simply for students who wish to seek careers in teaching, as anyone with a bachelor's degree can apply. However, students who are graduating in the spring of 2008 are allowed fee waivers for the application.

"Students will not be required to do student teaching as part of the program, but the ATCP will provide assistance for up to a year for new teachers who receive certification through the program," said Clem Mathis, a university supervisor who works very closely with the program.

Since its inception, the program has provided opportunities for students and people going through mid-career changes for a variety of reasons, including those who become bored with their career choices and those whose careers are in jeopardy.

To apply, students can visit the ATCP Web site, which is accessed through PVAMU's College of Education located at <http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/159.asp>.

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