Title III
ACTIVITY 13
October 2002 – September 2007

EDUCATOR
PREPARATION, COUNSELING AND DIAGNOSTIC (TESTING)
LABORATORY
Edward Mason, Director

FINAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

Overview

In 1981, the Texas State Legislature mandated the Examination for the Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCET), - later changed to Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES) - as a legal requirement for educator certification. Many students (especially minorities) have not been successful in passing the ExCET/TExES tests. Funds were requested for the establishment of an Educator Preparation, Counseling and Diagnostic (Testing) Laboratory to assist students preparing for these tests.

The lab was designed so that students may be observed and monitored as they: (1) administer tests, (2) interpret test results, (3) counsel clients on test results, (4) serve as consultants to others on the proper use and interpretations of tests, and (5) use tests in research and evaluation. The purpose of the lab was to familiarize examinees with the educator standards, domains and competencies related to each test, test formats, and provide pertinent study resources in all content areas. Additionally, software programs were installed to enable prospective test takers to utilize practice tests as well as to study test taking strategies. The lab was designed to create the ideal ambiance for students and faculty use to prepare for the ExCET/TExES tests.
The lab was officially opened on October 10 and 11, 2002. Operations were supervised by a Director – Dr. William Parker, (Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling), who was later succeeded by Dr. Edward Mason – Head of Department of Curriculum and Instruction. A Laboratory Director – Ms Vivian Neal-Clark and three student assistants saw to the daily operations.

A questionnaire was created so that users of the lab could give feedback to rate the operations. They were administered toward the end of each semester and the results were used to upgrade the services. From feedback obtained, the number of computers was increased from six to ten and the lab hours of operation were extended from 42 hours to as many as 55 hours weekly.

Goal 1

To maintain accreditation status for the College of Education

The Educator Preparation, Counseling and Diagnostic (Testing) Laboratory was implemented to maintain accreditation for the College of Education. Therefore, it provides available services and resources for all teaching content areas taught at Prairie View A&M University for faculty and students. The lab began operation in October of 2002. A committee comprising faculty from the various colleges and departments of the university was organized. This committee which met quarterly was briefed of the lab resources as they became available as well as share information they have found useful in assisting students to pass the tests. Test taking strategies and test preparation have been the main focus to prepare the students to be successful thus improving the overall performance on the tests in the different content areas. As the students improve their test
scores, the College of Education will maintain its accreditation status. In order to achieve this goal, the following performance goals were set:

**Goal 1.1 (2001)** To renovate the laboratory
1.2 To select a faculty member from each unit preparing students for the ExCET Exam to ensure that each department is sufficiently preparing students for the exam
1.3 To provide students with experiences in administering diagnostic instruments and interpreting test results

**Goal 1.1 (2002)** To identify instructional strategies to enhance deficiencies in Program completers (first-time test takers)
1.2 To continue redesigning the curriculum to meet State of Texas Certification requirements
1.3 To enhance through laboratory experiences the testing and assessment skills for students seeking certification in school counseling

**Goal 1.1 (2003)** To identify instructional strategies to enhance deficiencies in low-performing sub groups.
1.2 To identify ELC instructional components of courses that can be scheduled in the lab

A number of activities were undertaken to realize the above listed general and performance goals. These include:

1. Test data for each ExCET/TExES testing period was disaggregated to determine the domains/competencies that should be strengthened to enhance student performance

2. A curriculum matrix was developed for each content area that aligns the ExCET/TExES domains/competencies with course requirements

3. Seminars/Workshops were conducted for students preparing to take tests in the ExCET/TExES content areas.

4. Computer-based practice-test software was procured

**Objective**

1. To improve the pass rate of program completers on the ExCET/TExES by 5%.

From this objective, sets of performance objectives were derived for each year in
the initial stages of development of the lab. The performance objectives are as listed:

Objectives 1.1 (2001) To increase the number of students passing the ExCET

1.2 To provide students seeking certification in counseling with laboratory experiences in testing

Objectives 1.1 (2002) To increase the number of students passing the ExCET by 2%

1.2 To continue to provide experiences for counseling students in testing and assessment

Objectives 1.1 (2003) To increase the number of first time test takers that pass the ExCET

1.2 To enhance utilization and/or accessibility to the Educator Preparation, Counseling and Diagnostic (Testing) Laboratory

1.3 To provide ExCET laboratory experiences for pre service teachers and administrators.

1.4 To provide laboratory experiences for pre-service counseling students in assessment, testing and diagnosis

Baseline

Since there was no disaggregating of test scores for program completers in the initial stages of establishing the lab, the extent to which the university meets to state requirement for all program completers was used as the baseline. In year 2001/2002, the university met the initial requirement of 70% but fell short of the 80% final requirement.

Accomplishments

1. To improve the pass rate of program completers on the ExCET/TExES by 5%.

- Instructional strategies that have been identified and implemented to eliminate deficiencies for test completers include:
  
  ➢ Provide TExES review sessions in all teaching content areas
  ➢ Organize study groups that focus on test taking strategies using materials available in the lab.
Students are required to use diagnostic (testing) instruments with clients, interpret data collected, and report their findings to their peers and instructor.

Students are required to do TExES research in the lab

Multiple copies of the TExES Preparation Manuals developed by the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) have been assembled in booklet form, placed in the lab and processed to be checked out by faculty members and students.

The following graph shows the trend in the rate of success since the inception of the lab:

Fig. 1: TExES/ExCET Pass rate for the 6 years under review

According to the data, the results have fluctuated over the years. However, there has been a 7% increase between years 1 and 6. Since the inception of the lab, the University has met the minimum initial state requirement of 70% and the final state requirement of 80% on the TExES test. Candidates are tested in the content areas of Administration, Counseling, and Teaching Certification.

The following table gives an overview of the performance based on state requirements:
Yearly Pass rate for TExES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Met Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>Partially</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data show that in the first year the university failed to meet the final state requirement by 1%, but surpassed both requirements for subsequent years.

In order to further increase the rate of success of program completers on the ExCET/TExES tests, the following objective was considered:

1.1a **To conduct at least one review session in each of the following content areas:**
Principal, Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities, Generalist, Superintendent, Counseling, and Special Education.

Professional consultants present review sessions before each scheduled TExES test in a variety of content areas to prepare students on test-taking strategies and techniques for the TExES domains and competencies.

The following table shows the number of review sessions conducted each year for the period under review:
Table 1: Number of Review Sessions per Content Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogy &amp; Professional Responsibilities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalist</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Data reflects two quarters: January – June 2007.

According to the data, no review sessions were conducted in 2002 and there were reviews covering the content areas of Science, Social Studies and Physical Education.

1.1b  **Increase student utilization of the laboratory by 25%.**

In October 2003 a tracking system was instituted to keep a record of those students who use the lab. A sign in log was created to record lab attendance. Efforts were made to advertise the facilities initially by using flyers posted at strategic locations. These were routinely updated as the necessity arose. A Committee was organized to ensure that the students are informed of the type of preparation program and the resources offered by the lab. The Educator Preparation Committee met quarterly and consisted of faculty members from each department with teaching areas and junior or senior students from a variety of teaching areas. The purpose of the meeting was to update members on new materials and new activities generated, and to encourage students to attend the lab to prepare for the tests they will take. Students who have passed their tests were encouraged to share their ideas as to why they were successful. The following graph shows the result of lab attendance for each federal year beginning 2002 and ending 2007.
The data which has been compiled indicate that there was a consistent increase over time. There was no record of attendance for year one, and year two statistics only reflect the period July to December 2003. As is indicated, there was a 19% increase between years 3 and 4; 26% increase between years 4 and 5; and a 38% increase between years 3 and 5. Year 6 is not compared since it is only partially completed (October 2006-June 2007). However, it does show an increasing trend with an attendance of 1436 lab attendees in just three quarters of the year.

The lab has been equipped with over three hundred and twenty-five cataloged study guides, manuals and workbooks (including software), in all forty six content areas. Additionally, there are over four hundred cataloged titles of books, periodicals, videos,
journals and diagnostic (testing) instruments relating to the educational and professional growth of students and faculty.

Fifteen computers with relevant software have been installed, televisions with built in video, cassette recorders, overhead projectors, laptops, and a smart board are also available.

The lab is opened to the public from 8 am to 5 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Saturdays during regular semesters and regular university office hours during Summer. A part time Laboratory Director and three students (2 graduates and 1 undergraduate) have been hired to manage the daily operations of the Lab.

All the faculty in the Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling have received a 25” TV/VCR combination, portable overhead projector and a stand to store both items.

A Lab Survey is done towards the end of each semester so that students can rate the effectiveness of the lab as a resource center. The results of the survey are used to enhance the lab operations.

The lab continues to be a viable entity, providing valuable resources to both students and faculty members who are engaged in preparing for the ExCET/TExES tests. It would incur a great loss to students and especially those of the College of Education if the facility was to cease operation. Every effort should be made to maintain it and improve the offerings as requirements change and more resources become available.

................................................................. 8/1/07
Lab Director  ............................................... Date

................................................................. 08/01/07
Lab Supervisor ............................................... Date