

Teach for America

Oxford, Mississippi

Secondary Preparation Program



Secondary preparation program structure:

Clinical practice:

Five weeks of training that includes 20 hours of lead teaching and 20 hours of small-group or one-on-one tutoring.

Instructional coaches observe and provide written feedback to corps members a minimum of 1 time per week

Coaches must have quantifiable success as a classroom teacher and the following mentoring skills: 1) demonstrated ability to connect with adult learners quickly and to build strong working relationships while offering direct feedback, 2) and ability to influence, coach and motivate adult leaders to reach big goals

Notable features of internship:

Program supervisor conducts at least four formal observations. Candidates have their first observation within the first 5 weeks of internship

Program supervisors have a minimum of two years of experience achieving ambitious outcomes as a classroom teacher in a low-income community. Experience as a Teach For America corps member preferred

Mentor may or may not be assigned, depending upon the school district to which the intern is assigned

Teacher candidate enrollment: **193** (2010-2011)

Teacher production: **180** (2011-2012)

(2013 Title II Reports)

Secondary Preparation Program Grade

C

Score Breakdown

Alt Cert Std A: Selection Criteria



By employing sufficiently high but pragmatic admissions standards, the program is designed to attract talented individuals who otherwise would not choose to teach.

Selection criteria for admission into the program satisfy this standard. The mean grade point average of candidates is sufficiently high to demonstrate that candidates have the requisite academic talent, and the program requires an audition that assesses non-academic talents also important for teaching.

Alt Cert Std B: Subject Area Expertise



Before teacher candidates have full-fledged teaching responsibilities, the program ensures their content mastery in every subject for which they could be responsible for instruction.

Without a thorough grasp of the subject they will teach—typically acquired by majoring in an academic discipline—secondary school teachers will be unable to provide the sophisticated level of instruction

that their students need to progress. All children deserve to have teachers who are well versed in each and every one of the subjects they teach, regardless of teacher shortages that may be used to justify preparation shortcuts. Alternative certification programs should make sure, by either reviewing transcripts or requiring that candidates pass rigorous assessments, that before secondary candidates enter the classroom as the teachers of record they know the subjects they will teach.

We have evaluated programs on this standard with an eye toward regulations in each state regarding the nature of multiple-subject certification and required content licensing tests. Because our evaluation parallels the evaluation conducted for secondary preparation in traditional teacher preparation programs, more information can be found in the scoring methodology for the comparable standard applied to such programs, Standard 8: High School Content.

The program does not meet this standard because although it reviews transcripts or requires content testing, it offers two or more multiple-subject certifications for which its review of the content preparation of candidates is not adequate to ensure that all teacher candidates have sufficient content knowledge in every subject they will be qualified to teach. The multiple-subject certifications are in the areas of:

- Science
- Social science

The program's review of the content preparation of candidates in one of more of these single-subject certifications is adequate:

- English
- Mathematics
- Specific sciences (such as Biology or Chemistry)
- Specific social sciences (such as History or Government)

Alt Cert Std C: Supervised Practice



The program provides adequate supervised classroom instruction practice opportunities.

If a program relies on a combination of clinical practice prior to having the candidate enter the classroom as the teacher of record and continued training during the time the candidate is engaged in full-time, independent teaching, both should fulfill minimal requirements: The clinical practice should allow at least three weeks of full time instruction, several formal observations, and mentoring by a teacher who has been selected due to mentoring skills and demonstrated effectiveness as measured by student performance. After the candidate begins independent teaching, the program should provide additional frequent observations and mentor support.

The program nearly satisfies the standard because while the program does not provide co-teaching, the combination of clinical practice before entering the classroom and support after entering the classroom provides

- a total of nine observations with written feedback by supervisors under the auspices of the program as well as by mentor teachers, five during only one week of full time instruction before entering the classroom and four afterwards; and
- the support during clinical practice of a teacher-colleague who is a capable mentor (or has had mentorship training) and who is also required to be an effective instructor.

**Alt Cert Std D: Evidence of Effectiveness****NA**

The program's graduates have a positive impact on student learning.

A score on this standard is not applicable because evaluation depends on reports on the relative effectiveness of the program's graduates from a teacher preparation student performance data model; either 1) the program's state does not publish any such report, 2) the state publishes such a report, but the results do not pertain specifically to only this secondary program, or 3) the state publishes such a report, but the results for this program are not consistent for two consecutive years.