

# Sam Houston State University

*A Member of The Texas State University System*

M.Ed. in Special Education  
(Educational Diagnostician)

and

Post-Master  
(Educational Diagnostician)

Program Handbook 2022-23

College of Education

School of Teaching and Learning

Sam Houston State University

Huntsville, Texas 77341

936.294.1108

*Note: It is a student's responsibility to read this handbook, be knowledgeable of its contents, and comply with the standards set forth herein.*

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## **M.Ed. in Special Education Program Handbook Certification Program**

### **Program Overview**

The general goal of the M.Ed. in Special Education Program with Educational Diagnostician Certification is to prepare professional educators as evaluation specialists with advanced competencies related to the field of special education. Candidates are prepared to practice in accordance with the Code of Ethics of the Texas State Board for Educator Certification and the Code of Ethics and Standards adopted by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). The M.Ed. in Special Education Program with emphasis on assessment prepares educators with the knowledge and skill base to assume the role of Educational Diagnostician.

The M.Ed. in Special Education with Educational Diagnostician Certification utilizes an online delivery model, both synchronous and asynchronous. The following courses are delivered in a synchronous format: SPED 5302 (6322), 5305 (6319), 6310, 6308, and 6312. In the online synchronous courses, students are required to attend class at the designated day and time. Additionally, students are required to enable their video and audio for the entirety of the course, to facilitate participation in course content. Thus, students must have access to the bandwidth that allows for enabling video and audio in Zoom. SPED 5302/6322, 5305/6319, and 6310 require that students attend (approximately) three Saturday test kit demonstration sessions at The Woodlands Center (8:30am-3:30pm). Test kits will be checked-out and checked-in, at that time.

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## **Sam Houston State University**

Sam Houston State University, located in Huntsville, Texas, serves one of the most diverse populations of any educational institution in the state. The university is committed to the development of its creative resources so that it can adapt to the changing educational needs of its constituency while maintaining the highest quality in the traditional curricula. Created by the Texas legislature in 1879 as Sam Houston Normal Institute, its purpose was to educate teachers for the public schools of Texas. During the following four decades, instruction was offered in the natural sciences, agriculture, home economics, manual training, geography, sociology, and foreign languages. The baccalaureate degree was first awarded in 1919.

The next twenty years witnessed rapid and dramatic changes, including a name change to Sam Houston State Teachers College in 1923. Two years later, the college was admitted to membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) as an accredited institution of higher learning. The institution began to expand its programs, and a graduate degree was authorized in 1936, a development which expanded the curriculum from its sole emphasis on teacher training to emphases on preparation in a variety of fields.

Following World War II, an increase in students and faculty as well as a wide range of faculty-research activities provided impetus for the emergence of a multipurpose institution. By 1960, about 25 percent of the graduating seniors were receiving degrees in fields other than teaching. Degrees were offered in the social and communication sciences; the biological, physical, and soil sciences; business administration; the fine arts; the humanities; and education. A growing emphasis on research allowed faculty to make significant contributions in their fields beyond the classroom, and these activities were accompanied by an increasing diversity in the student body as more out-of-state and foreign students began seeking degrees at Sam Houston. In recognition of these developments, the institution's name was changed by the Texas legislature to Sam Houston State College in 1965, and in that year the Texas legislature established as an integral part of the institution The Institute of Contemporary Corrections and the Behavioral Sciences.

During the following years, there was a rapid increase in the enrollment of students with diversified backgrounds, interests, and aspirations, which necessitated continuous examination of programs, faculty, and facilities. The number of graduate degrees conferred increased significantly in the late 1960's, and the Texas legislature, recognizing the changes that had taken place during the course of the institution's history, changed the name of the institution to Sam Houston State University in 1969.

In the decades of the 1970s and 80s, the university continued to expand its offerings to keep pace with its dynamic environment by adding degree programs in such fields as computer science and environmental science. New graduate degrees, such as the Master of Library Science, the Master of Fine Arts, the Doctor of Philosophy in Criminal Justice, and the Doctor of Education Degree in Educational Leadership were added. Significant improvement in faculty credentials and growth in faculty research activities accompanied these additions. With over 90 bachelor's degree programs, 55 master's degree programs and 10 doctoral programs, including the nation's first PhD in Forensic Science, SHSU offers an exceptional college experience. SHSU continually strives to meet the needs of contemporary students, both traditional and online.

## Master of Special Education Degree

### Program Mission, Goals, and Objectives

The [COE Conceptual Framework](#) establishes the shared vision of the college in preparing educators to work with PK-12 students through programs dedicated to collaboration in instruction, field experience, and research, the candidates in Sam Houston State University's Educator Preparation Programs acquire the knowledge, dispositions, and skills necessary to create a positive learning environment preparing educators to work with PK-12 students. Employing a variety of technologies, candidates learn to plan, implement, assess, and modify instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners.

The Conceptual Framework incorporates five (5) indicators throughout the framework that serve to identify areas tied to coursework where there is evidence of Conceptual Framework and goals assessment. The five indicators include the following: Knowledge Base, Technological Learning Environment, Communication, Assessment, and Effective Field Experience with Diverse Learners.

### Mission

Our program's mission is to develop reflective practitioners with depth and breadth of knowledge in the theories, research, methods, evaluation practices, and intervention techniques leading to effective instruction in the least restrictive environment for learners with disabilities.

### Goals

Our goals are to develop:

- **Learner-centered knowledge** where the practitioner possesses and draws on a rich knowledge base of content, pedagogy, and technology to provide relevant and meaningful programs and services for all students.
- **Learner-centered assessment and instruction** where the practitioner collaboratively uses non-discriminatory assessment results to plan and assess instruction to create a learner-centered community in the least restrictive environment.
- **Equity in excellence for all learners** where the practitioner collaborates with other professionals to plan and recommend programs and instructional methods for diverse groups of learners.
- **Learner-centered communication.** While acting as an advocate for all students and the school, the teacher demonstrates effective professional and interpersonal communication skills.
- **Learner-centered professional development.** The practitioner is dedicated to all students' success and demonstrates a commitment to learn, to improve the profession, and to maintain professional ethics and personal integrity.

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## **Objectives**

The SHSU M.Ed. in Special Education graduate will demonstrate strengths in three strategic teaching competencies: knowing the concepts, principles, research, and discourse of the special education profession; applying this knowledge to improve inclusive teaching practice; and possessing a disposition that reflects an appropriate ethical stance and professionalism. Specifically, we want our graduates to:

- Apply the theories and research of the field of special education and implement them to improve instruction for learners with special needs;
- Apply scientifically based instructional practices;
- Demonstrate knowledge of test theory and use appropriate assessment tools with individuals and apply the results to develop appropriate instructional strategies with diverse learners, preschool through adult;
- Use technology to manage professional responsibilities and to support learning and teaching;
- Work collaboratively with children, parents, administrators, and colleagues;
- Advocate for the rights of children and adults with disabilities;
- Serve as change agents through professional involvement and advocacy;
- Be reflective practitioners; and,
- Demonstrate a high level of professionalism and a commitment to the Council for Exceptional Children's Code of Ethics.

## **SHSU Dispositions Proficiencies**

- Demonstrates behaviors consistent with cultural social justice, advocacy and conflict resolution, and other culturally supportive behaviors.
- Demonstrates the ability to apply and adhere to ethical and legal standards of the profession.
- Demonstrates appropriate behavior inside or outside of class in situations associated with the program.

## **Program Professional Dispositions**

The School of Teaching and Learning always expects students to adhere to the highest standards for professional comportment throughout their enrollment in this program. It is the professional responsibility of the School of Teaching and Learning faculty to ensure that students not only exhibit the knowledge and skills required of a professional educator, but also have the disposition and relationship capacities to utilize those skills.

*Ethical Behavior:* The student demonstrates the ability to apply and adhere to ethical and legal standards of the profession.

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*Openness to Diversity:* The student displays behaviors consistent with cultural social justice, advocacy and conflict resolution, and other culturally supportive behaviors.

The School of Teaching and Learning faculty meets regularly and discusses individual students' progress at various times throughout the semester. Additionally, students are required to engage in "exemplary behavior in the classroom," each student should review the Student Guidelines at: <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/dean-of-students/guidelines/student-guidelines>

## College of Education Conceptual Framework

**KNOWLEDGE** (Develop a comprehensive knowledge base, professional dispositions, and the skills that enable them to be an effective instructional leader) aligns to:

- Know the theories and research of our field and apply them to improve instruction for students with exceptional learning needs.
- Be reflective practitioners

**TECHNOLOGY** (Use technology to create an authentic learning environment that promotes problem-solving and decision making) aligns to:

- Use technology to support learning and teaching of students with exceptional learning needs.

**COMMUNICATION** (Use effective communication skills with a diverse group of stakeholders) aligns to:

- Know and use the discourse of our profession
- Work collaboratively with students, parents, administrators, and colleagues
- Advocate for the rights for all children
- Demonstrate a high level of professionalism, a commitment to academic honesty, and a joyful enthusiasm for learning

**ASSESSMENT** (Demonstrate an understanding of assessment as an on-going process to become effective evaluators of children, programs, and themselves) aligns to:

- Know and use appropriate assessment tools with individuals, groups, and for identification and program effectiveness
- Demonstrate the ability to assess, evaluate, and design school and district level special education programs

**FIELD EXPERIENCE WITH DIVERSE LEARNERS** (Demonstrate an ability to teach and/or mentor a variety of learners and/or peers in diverse settings using culturally responsive and learner sensitive instruction) aligns to:

- Know and use appropriate instructional strategies with diverse learners, preschool through adult
- Know and develop effective individualized education plans for students with exceptional learning needs. Serve as change agents through professional involvement

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:** Through programs dedicated to collaboration in instruction, field experience, and research, the candidates in Sam Houston State University's Educator Preparation Programs acquire the knowledge, dispositions, and skills necessary to create a positive learning environment. Employing a variety of technologies, these candidates learn to plan, implement, assess, and modify instruction to meet the needs of communities' diverse learners.

The Educational Diagnostician Program at Sam Houston State University consists of a 36-hour course of study leading to a Master of Education Degree in Special Education and certification as an Educational Diagnostician.



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The Bilingual Educational Diagnostician Program at Sam Houston State University is a parallel program consisting of a 36-hour course of study leading to a Master of Education Degree in Special Education and certification as an Educational Diagnostician. Additionally, a Bilingual Educational Diagnostician Graduate Certificate is offered to candidates who complete this program. Students must apply for their graduate certificate from SHSU during their last semester.

The Post-Master Educational Diagnostician Program at Sam Houston State University is a non-degree program consisting of 15 graduate credit hours. This is for candidates who already have a relevant master's degree and are seeking the Educational Diagnostician certification only option.

## Admission Criteria (2020-21)

To be regularly admitted to the graduate school and educational diagnostician certification program, applicants must submit the following to the Office of Graduate Admissions:

1. [Graduate Application](#)
2. [Application fee](#)
3. Pay the \$35 [Texas Education Accountability System for Educator Preparation Programs Fee](#) (paid to the TEA as required by TAC 229.9.7)
4. Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended, both undergraduate and graduate, that reflect a 2.75 GPA overall or in the last 60 hours.
5. Contact information for two references.
6. [Writing Sample](#)
7. Copy of applicant's Teaching Certificate
8. Official [GRE](#) scores, if GPA in last 60 hours is below a 2.75 (see table below)
9. Teacher Service Record with at least 1 year of creditable service as a teacher of record
10. Interview with program faculty

GRE revised General Test Score Bands to be used for Admission to an Educator Preparation Program under the 10% Exception Rule in 19 TAC §227.10(a)(3)(B)

Self-reported Undergraduate GPA	GRE Verbal Reasoning <sup>1</sup>	GRE Quantitative Reasoning <sup>1</sup>	GRE Analytical Writing <sup>2</sup>
B-(2.7 GPA)	143-157	140-155	3.0-4.5
GRE			

<sup>1</sup> GRE Verbal and Quantitative scores are reported on a 130 to 170 scale.

<sup>2</sup> GRE Analytical Writing scores are reported on a 0 to 6 scale in half-point increments.

## Advising Procedures

Upon receipt of your application by Graduate Studies in the School of Teaching and Learning, an advisor will be assigned to your case. Your letter of acceptance will provide the name and contact information for your advisor. Communicate with your advisor regularly to assure that no surprises occur in your program scheduling. It is a requirement that all students utilize their SHSU email when corresponding with faculty and/or staff. If you do not check your SHSU email account regularly, you need to have your account forwarded to the address you check most frequently - call the Help Desk at 936.294.1150 for assistance. Each graduate student is responsible for becoming familiar with the rules and regulations pertaining to graduate study and the requirements for advanced degrees.

## Progress in Graduate Studies

- Work toward your Master of Education in Special Education Degree following the course sequence for Educational Diagnostician found in Appendix C. Students are assigned to cohorts and will take the courses in a specific sequence. Be sure to contact your advisor regarding courses for each semester.
- It is very important that you collaborate with your school educational diagnostician from the beginning of your program. You must submit a letter of support from the school district administration. The activities that you will engage in during your program include attending staffings, consulting with teachers and parents, attending ARD/IEP meetings, presenting and attending staff development sessions, assisting with paperwork, and administering standardized tests on which you have been trained. You will need to find your own Educational Diagnostician Practicum site and work under a Site Supervisor (Mentor Educational Diagnostician). You will need to learn to always and present yourself professionally. Candidates may be employed as educational diagnosticians while accruing their practicum hours. **Candidates typically complete the Practicum in their school, and they are responsible for locating their Practicum site.**
- It is very important to register during early registration. Otherwise, classes may be cancelled due to low enrollment. Please register for the correct CRN (section) of the courses offered. Your advisor will let you know which sections are assigned to your cohort!
- Note that some courses have strict prerequisites, and there is a specific sequence for ALL COURSES.
- **Candidates will be assigned a Tk20 account during their first semester of coursework.** This computer account is our primary accountability system for program accreditation. You will submit artifacts to Tk20 electronically during your coursework at SHSU, and these items are evaluated and used in our reporting system to our accrediting agencies: the Texas State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC), the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).
- For online courses, be sure to check your SHSU mail and Blackboard the week prior to classes for instructions.

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- Check the university website for graduation application deadlines.
- Before graduating, you need to pass the comprehensive exam. The comprehensive exam for the M.Ed. in Special Education (Educational Diagnostician) includes the TExES 253. **You must be enrolled at SHSU during the semester when you take your comprehensive exam.**
- Candidates must successfully pass ( $\geq 85\%$ ) the TExES 253 Representative Exam and pass the state certification TExES 253 exam by the end of their 2<sup>nd</sup> Practicum Course (SPED 6308 or 6312) in order to obtain a passing grade in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Practicum Course and complete the program.
- The TExES 253 (Educational Diagnostician) is a rigorous examination. Reviews for the TExES 253 (Educational Diagnostician) are scheduled throughout the program.
- You apply for certification as an Educational Diagnostician after completing the program and passing the TExES 253 (Educational Diagnostician) through the Texas State Board for Educator Certification.
- For candidates in the Bilingual Diagnostician program, you must apply for the Bilingual Educational Diagnostician Graduate Certificate during your last semester.

## Educational Diagnostician Cohorts

Sam Houston State University has instituted a cohort model for the Educational Diagnostician Program. This model enables candidates and faculty to work together cohesively with a focus on mastery of the knowledge and skills required for Educational Diagnosticians. Appendix B represents the cohort class schedule.

## Educational Diagnostician Portfolio

During your Educational Diagnostician Program at Sam Houston State University, you will have several projects that are relevant to your role as an educational diagnostician. Therefore, you will need to keep electronic copies of these documents so that you will have them when you submit assignments during your Practicum SPED 6312 for your Educational Diagnostician Portfolio. To learn how to do this, there is an online document that tells you the steps, and there are videos under “Help for Students” that details the information at the Tk20 website. Here is the list of the required documents that you will need to place in the portfolio file on Tk20 so that you can use them later for your Educational Diagnostician Portfolio during your Practicum.

Course	Items
Throughout the program	ARD/IEP Meetings
SPED 5302 Assessment in Special Education SPED 6322 Bilingual Special Education Assessment	Scanned scored protocols Interpretive Reports

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SPED 5305 Individual Assessment of Cognitive Functioning SPED 6319 Bilingual Cognitive Assessment	Scanned scored protocols Interpretive Reports
SPED 6308 Practicum for Educational Diagnostician I	Intervention Case Study
SPED 6310 Assessment of Young Children and Low Incidence Disabilities	Scanned scored protocols Interpretive Reports
SPED 6311 Seminar in Special Education	Legal Issue or Policy Issue Analysis
SPED 6311 Seminar in Special Education	Court Case Reviews
SPED 6312 Practicum for Educational Diagnosticians II	Field Experience Reflection, including Collaboration Documentation
SPED 6312 Practicum for Educational Diagnosticians II	Program Review Report and In-Service Presentation
SPED 6312 Practicum for Educational Diagnosticians II	Personal Essay
SPED 6312 Practicum for Educational Diagnosticians II	Educational Diagnostician Internship Evaluation – Site Supervisor

Additional Tk20 Assignments, including (but not limited to):

Course	Item
SPED 5303 Study of Cog. & Low-Incidence Disabilities	Literature Review
SPED 5304 Teaching Methods for Mild/Mod Disabilities	Case Study
SPED 6304 In-Home Training and Family Issues	Family Support Plan
SPED 6321 Outcomes in Behavior Interventions	Functional Behavioral Assessment

## Educational Diagnostician Practicum Experience

SPED 6308 and 6312 Educational Diagnostician Practicum requirements are uniquely designed to prepare personnel for the challenging role of the educational diagnostician. Each practicum requires a combination of assessment and in-class experiences including actual testing experience, in-class activities, and assignments. **Students are responsible for securing their own Practicum experience site and Educational Diagnostician Mentor. Candidates typically complete the Practicum in their school.**

- Practicum assignments are based on SBEC and CEC guidelines (Appendix C).
- In-class and out-of-class assignments constitute a minimum of 160 hours of preparation, testing, and analysis of assessment data.
- All experiences and internship requirements must be approved by a Field Supervisor (Professor).

- The Practicum experience requires the candidate to attend ARD/IEP meetings, review folders, conduct testing, write reports, present professional development to school faculty and staff, collaborate and consult with teachers and parents, write a program review, and submit their Educational Diagnostician Portfolio. The Educational Diagnostician Portfolio includes artifacts developed during the Educational Diagnostician Practicum, as well materials from other courses.
- General criteria for satisfactory performance in the Practicum are provided in the individual course syllabi.

## **Remediation Protocol**

The faculty makes every reasonable effort to facilitate a student's progress toward degree completion. It is anticipated that students will develop the skills necessary for successful completion of the program requirements. However, if the Faculty Advisor or other faculty identify limitations regarding a student, and it is the professional judgment of the full-time faculty that the student is not capable or does not have the potential for successfully completing the program requirements, two alternatives will be available to the student: (a) repetition of coursework and/or other remediation to be satisfactorily completed before graduation, or (b) denial of further enrollment until the student remediates the weaknesses or problems to the satisfaction of the faculty.

The following protocol will be followed, with the potential for additions depending on the individual needs of the student, for any student who has been identified as having a concern or non-support from one or more faculty members during the completion of the program's courses. Issues of concern or non-support must include a full description regarding the student's performance prior to remediation. For all remediation plans, the initial step will include a meeting between the student's advisor and the program coordinator to discuss and develop a possible plan that addresses the student's individual issues and then both faculty will meet with the student to develop and sign a finalized plan. The following areas for concern were developed to specifically address requirements outlined in the master's program handbook in that: **It is the professional responsibility of the M.Ed. in Special Education faculty to ensure that students not only exhibit the knowledge and skills required, but also have the disposition and relationship capacities to utilize those skills.**

**1. Knowledge Deficit:** the student struggles with retaining or understanding content knowledge associated with core program courses relevant to her/his respective track. This must be evidenced by lowered grades in courses (at least one C or three or more B's).

- a. Students with two C's or one F are automatically removed from the program at the time they receive the second "C" or first "F" and will be required to reapply for admission to the program. They will also be required to complete a remediation plan and will have the option of requesting that a committee be formed to review the fairness of the plan developed with their advisor and the program coordinator as well as to review the completion of their plan

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- b. Remediation plans may include the completion of a written assignment associated with the topic area(s) where a deficit exists to be reviewed, at minimum, by her/his advisor and the program coordinator. The written assignment must address all areas of knowledge/content deficit therefore, if multiple deficits exist then a topic must be proposed that integrates multiple areas, or multiple papers must be written.
- c. The student will not be allowed to enroll in SPED 6308 or 6312 until the remediation plan is complete.
- d. If a faculty member or members expresses concern regarding this area, but the student has excellent or acceptable grades, a preponderance of evidence must be gathered to justify remediation (i.e., multiple assignments, discussion postings, etc., in the problem areas identified).
- e. Academic Probation, Suspension, Dismissal, and Termination – [Academic Policy Statement 910312](#) for the Appeals Process for Termination and Dismissal for Graduate Students.

**2. Skill Deficit:** a concern is present that indicates the student struggles with application of content knowledge in special education situations as evidenced by administration of test kits, case study assignments, or other application-oriented activities and written work.

- a. Remediation plans may include a case study application and reflection of work with a test kit administration appearing on a practice skill tape. The specific nature of the skill demonstrated will be determined by the student and her/his advisor.
- b. The student may also be required to receive individual supervision during SPED 6308 and 6312 with a full-time faculty member.
- c. Academic Probation, Suspension, Dismissal, and Termination - See [Academic Policy Statement 910312](#) for the Appeals Process for Termination and Dismissal for Graduate Students.

**3. Professionalism/Behavioral Issue:** concerns have been voiced regarding the student's behavior inside or outside of class in situations associated with their program. Behavioral issues may include one or more of the following: *frequent tardiness and/or absences; frequent texting and/or talking in class; unethical actions; lack of involvement in reflection; introspection and personal growth regarding bias/possibly discriminatory beliefs that would interfere with her/his role as a counselor; disrespectful behavior towards faculty, supervisors, practice examinees, and/or colleagues, that does not improve following direct intervention.* It is the responsibility of faculty and instructors to address behavioral issues as they are identified so that students can make corrections prior to the completion of the course and before applying for candidacy.

- a. Remediation plans may include a reflection that sufficiently addresses how the student has improved the behavioral/professional issue identified.
- b. The student in writing must address thoughts, feelings, and actions the student took to develop as a professional in the area(s) delineated in the plan.
- c. The student may be asked to attend individual supervision with a full-time faculty member during SPED 6308 and 6312.
- d. Academic Probation, Suspension, Dismissal, and Termination – [Academic Policy Statement 910312](#) for the Appeals Process for Termination and Dismissal for Graduate Students.

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During breaks between semesters, faculty from the student's core classes will be solicited for additional comments regarding the identified student prior to beginning any remediation procedure. Faculty will have two weeks to respond to any request. Students with knowledge deficits will not be permitted to enroll in SPED 6308 and SPED 6312 until the remediation plan is complete, and students with skill deficits must receive individual supervision with a full-time faculty member if they are permitted to proceed to SPED 6308 and SPED 6312.

If a student has an issue in more than one of the areas listed above, they must complete the basic remediation outlined in each category. The student will have one semester to complete the plan unless otherwise agreed upon by those involved in the development of the initial plan. It will be suggested that students with skill or knowledge deficits take no more than one class (if any) in the semester of their remediation. If he or she does not complete his or her plan in one semester, or by the agreed upon date of completion, he/she will not be able to register for classes until the plan is complete.

This protocol is designed to work in congruence with requirements outlined in the master's program handbook. Updates regarding student progress will be presented regularly during faculty meetings where plan alterations may be discussed if growth is not satisfactory.



## Dismissal of Students

One or more of the following conditions below are cause for academic termination in the Educational Diagnostician program:

- The student's GPA fell below the 3.0 graduate level grade point average for a 2<sup>nd</sup> term consecutively
- The student earned two grades of C in a graduate level course (repeated or distinct course) in the mentioned term (A grade of NC is regarded as a grade equivalent to a C)
- The student earned a grade of F in the mentioned term

## Expectation for Ethical and Professional Behavior

Students are expected to demonstrate exemplary behavior in the classroom and field settings. To understand the university's definition of "exemplary behavior in the classroom and field settings," each student should review the *Code of Student Conduct and Discipline*, specifically Section 5.2, examples 3, 4, 10, and 19, and Section 5.3 at: <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/dean-of-students/guidelines/student-conduct>.

## Program Standards

Each course syllabus includes a standards matrix with the specific state and national standards addressed in that course. Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Knowledge and Skill Base for all Beginning Educational Diagnosticians Standards, State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) Standards for Educational Diagnostician Certificate and Special Education Standards are included as an attachment to this handbook. Candidates should become familiar with these sets of standards found in Appendix C.

## Students with Disabilities Policy

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the University. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs, nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered, and helpful procedures developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the [Services for Students with Disabilities](#). All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the [Service for Students with Disabilities](#) office.



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## **Academic Honesty Policy**

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any part of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. For university policy, see: <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/dean-of-students/guidelines/student-conduct>

## **Academic Grievance Policy**

As a student, you have a right to grieve an academic decision. The Sam Houston State University policies containing the circumstances and procedures therefore are: [Academic Policy 900823](#) – Academic Grievance Procedures for Students, and [Academic Policy 810213](#) – Procedures in Cases of Academic Dishonesty.

APPROVED BY:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael T. Stephenson, Ph.D.  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix A

### Cohort Models for the Educational Diagnostician Programs

Cohorts will start in the spring and summer semesters. All courses must be taken in the order as directed by the faculty.

<b>M.Ed. (Educational Diagnostician) Cohort</b>	
Course	Course Title
SPED 5301	Education of Individuals with Disabilities
SPED 5302	Assessment in Special Education
SPED 5303	Study of Cognitive and Low Incidence Disabilities
SPED 5304	Teaching Methods for Learners with Mild to Moderate Disabilities
SPED 5305	Individual Assessment of Cognitive Functioning
SPED 6304	In-Home Training and Family Issues
SPED 6308	Practicum I
SPED 6310	Assessment of Young Children and Low-Incidence Populations
SPED 6311	Seminar in Special Education
SPED 6312	Practicum for Educational Diagnosticians II
SPED 6313	Seminar in Learning and Learning Disabilities
SPED 6321	Outcomes in Behavior Interventions

<b>M.Ed. (Bilingual Educational Diagnostician) Cohort</b>	
Course	Course Title
BESL 5314	Second Language Acquisition for Bilingual Diagnosticians
SPED 5301	Education of Individuals with Disabilities
SPED 5303	Study of Cognitive and Low Incidence Disabilities
SPED 5304	Teaching Methods for Learners with Mild to Moderate Disabilities
SPED 6304	In-Home Training and Family Issues
SPED 6308	Practicum I
SPED 6310	Assessment of Young Children and Low-Incidence Populations

SPED 6311	Seminar in Special Education
SPED 6312	Practicum for Educational Diagnosticians II
SPED 6319	Bilingual Cognitive Assessment
SPED 6321	Outcomes in Behavior Interventions
SPED 6322	Bilingual Special Education Assessment

<b>Post-Master Educational Diagnostician Cohort</b>	
Course	Course Title
SPED 5301	Education of Individuals with Disabilities
SPED 5302	Assessment in Special Education
SPED 5305	Individual Assessment of Cognitive Functioning
SPED 6308	Practicum I
SPED 6312	Practicum for Educational Diagnosticians II

<b>Post-Master Bilingual Educational Diagnostician Cohort</b>	
Course	Course Title
BESL 5314	Second Language Acquisition for Bilingual Diagnosticians
SPED 5301	Education of Individuals with Disabilities
SPED 6308	Practicum I
SPED 6312	Practicum for Educational Diagnosticians II
SPED 6319	Bilingual Cognitive Assessment
SPED 6322	Bilingual Special Education Assessment

## **Appendix B**

The following documents include:

- SHSU Practicum/Internship Guidelines
- SHSU School-University Agreement
- Ethical Practices for Educational Diagnostician Candidates
- Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Advanced Preparation Standards (Advanced Specialty Set: Special Education Diagnostician Specialist)
- Texas Education Code (TEC) Chapter 239. Student Services Certificates; Subchapter C. Educational Diagnostician Certificate
- Site-Supervisor Credential Verification

## **Educational Diagnostician Practicum/Internship Guidelines**

### **DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES OF THE PRACTICUM / INTERNSHIP**

The Sam Houston State University Educational Diagnostician Program regards the Practicum/Internship as a way of providing its Candidates the opportunity of integrating prior experiences and coursework and allowing increasing autonomy by providing supervised comprehensive diagnostic opportunities. The primary purpose is assuring breadth and quality of training designed to help Candidates develop those competencies necessary for professional functioning in the schools. To complete program requisites and to partially meet the state of Texas' requirements for certification as Educational Diagnosticians, Candidates must complete a total of 160 hours supervised by the Site Supervisor (Mentor Diagnostician) and the Field Supervisor (Professor) in a public/charter school setting before completing the program.

### **PRACTICUM INFORMATION**

The Practicum is an initiative consisting of three major parties: 1) the Candidate, 2) the cooperating school system or other educational enterprise, and 3) Sam Houston State University. The Practicum is an investment in the development of Educational Diagnosticians from which all three participants will derive benefit, and in which all three participants have specific responsibilities.

#### **Roles of the three participants:**

- **Candidate:** The Candidate must plan and carry out the activities agreed by the Candidate, the Site Supervisor (Mentor Diagnostician), and the Field Supervisor (Professor). The Candidate must maintain a log of activities including on-campus meetings, seminars, on-site conferences, etc.
- **Site Supervisor (Mentor Diagnostician):** The Site Supervisor (Mentor Diagnostician) is the practicing Educational Diagnostician and mentor assigned to the Candidate. The Site Supervisor (Mentor Diagnostician) works with the Candidate to structure experiences within the school context that enable the Candidate to meet the requirements outlined below.
- **Field Supervisor (Professor):** The Field Supervisor (Professor) is the university professor who visits the Candidate at the site. The Field Supervisor (Professor) oversees the Candidate and determines final grades. The Candidate should be prepared to discuss experiences with Field Supervisor (Professor).

### **SITE SUPERVISOR (MENTOR DIAGNOSTICIAN) QUALIFICATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Practicum is not merely "on-the-job training." It is an opportunity for Candidates to receive training designed to provide them with a sequence of experiences that will enhance professional attitudes, responsibility, communication skills, critical judgment, and technical skills. As a concurrent experience in the preparation of Educational Diagnosticians, the site-based experience provides Candidates with the opportunity to engage in learning activities related to the Educational Diagnostician position. The Practicum experience must

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encompass a minimum of 160 clock hours of Educational Diagnostician field experience supervised by a certified Educational Diagnostician with a minimum of 3 years working experience. The certified Site Supervisor (Mentor Diagnostician) must co-sign the reports written by the Candidate. Each Site Supervisor (Mentor Diagnostician) must provide regular feedback to the Candidate and complete the “Educational Diagnostician Internship Evaluation–Mentor and University Supervisor Feedback” (see attached) for Candidates who successfully complete the Practicum program and return it to the Field Supervisor (Professor).

Per 19 TAC §228.2(12), §228.2(24), §228.2(31) Campus Supervision: Training Mentors, Cooperating Teachers, and Site Supervisors (33) Site supervisor--For a practicum candidate, an educator who has at least three years of experience in the aspect(s) of the certification class being pursued by the candidate; who is collaboratively assigned by the campus or district administrator and the educator preparation program (EPP); who is currently certified in the certification class in which the practicum candidate is seeking certification; who has completed training by the EPP, including training in how to coach and mentor candidates, within three weeks of being assigned to a practicum candidate; who is an accomplished educator as shown by student learning; who guides, assists, and supports the candidate during the practicum; and who reports the candidate's progress to the candidate's field supervisor.

## **APPROVAL OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Candidates must have written approval from the following school district personnel: Campus Administrator, Special Education Supervisor or Director, and Site Supervisor (Mentor Diagnostician). Candidates should contact the director of special education and request information on the steps necessary to obtain district approval to complete the Practicum in the district.

## **CANDIDATE RESPONSIBILITIES**

Candidates assume a major share of the responsibility for their success in the field experience. The purpose of the Practicum experience is to provide Candidates with meaningful and relevant experiences associated with becoming Educational Diagnosticians. Candidates are subject to the authority, rules, and regulations of the sponsoring school district. Participants will gain valuable work-related experience that will provide a competitive advantage when applying for a position. Specific responsibilities of the Candidates include:

- Submit signed School-University Agreement.
- Submit summaries of field experiences to Tk20 for approval from Site Supervisor (Mentor Diagnostician) or Field Supervisor (Professor).
- Complete oral language, achievement, cognitive, and adaptive behavior testing
- Complete at least three Full and Individual Evaluation (FIE) reports (submit redacted reports in portfolio).
- Become fully acquainted with the rules and regulations of the school district.
- Maintain confidentiality of all records of the school district at all times.
- Comply with state and federal laws, district rules, policies, and regulations.
- Schedule agreed upon activities with proper administrative personnel.
- Read and follow the Educational Diagnostician Code of Ethics.
- Be familiar with the Educational Diagnostician Educator Standards.

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- Attend three (3) Admission, Review, Dismissal (ARD) Committee meetings (initial and re-evaluations).
- Facilitate at least one (1) ARD Committee meeting (if LEA allows)
- Review results of an evaluation with the parents of the student evaluated.
- Review the state audit folder for five (5) students with the following disability conditions: SLD, ID, ED, AU, and OHI.
- Attend at least one (1) relevant in-service (district or regional).
- Maintain a portfolio and submit the portfolio at the conclusion of the Practicum experience.

## **SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL PRACTICUM ACTIVITIES**

Ideally, Candidates shall spend most of their Practicum hours in direct (face-to-face) services with students, parents, and the Site Supervisor (Mentor Diagnostician). The following represents a small sample of additional potential activities:

- Assess special education initiatives, such as inclusion, and work with interested faculty in developing plans for improvement.
- Review the availability of evaluation instruments and report writers.
- Assess the school culture by collecting data on the diversity (e.g., population, language, disability, gender, race, socio-economic) of the school and community. Use that data to assist with appropriate formal testing to administer to students.
- Become familiar with and utilize existing data commonly available to schools.
- Conduct an audit of the IEP development process.
- Draft ARD meeting reports for the review of IEP.
- Review the CHC cognitive processing areas to assist with determining the best practices for student learning; then lead a faculty discussion of the application of the theory to improved student learning.
- Communicate with related services personnel (counselor, physical therapy, occupational therapy, special transportation, school nurse).
- Review PIEMS activity fund accounting procedures.
- Review the coding of students enrolled in special education- (e.g., 45= PPCD, 40 =Inclusion).
- Review technologies, including assistive technologies, available to support the needs of students enrolled in the special education program.
- Prepare ARD notices for parents, school staff, and related services personnel.



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## School-University Agreement for Educational Diagnosticians

### SHSU Candidate Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

District \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

School Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Mentor Educational Diagnostician

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

District \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

School Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, the Educational Diagnostician Candidate, the Site Supervisor (Mentor Diagnostician), the School District Administrator, and the Sam Houston State University Faculty Field Supervisor (Professor) agree to the goals, content, expectations, and quantity and quality of the work expected from the intern and internship outlined in the Educational Diagnostician Internship Handbook. Per 19 TAC §228.2(12), §228.2(24), §228.2(31) Campus Supervision: Training Mentors, Cooperating Teachers, and Site Supervisors (33) Site supervisor--For a practicum candidate, an educator who has at least three years of experience in the aspect(s) of the certification class being pursued by the candidate; who is collaboratively assigned by the campus or district administrator and the educator preparation program (EPP); who is currently certified in the certification class in which the practicum candidate is seeking certification; who has completed training by the EPP, including training in how to coach and mentor candidates, within three weeks of being assigned to a practicum candidate; who is an accomplished educator as shown by student learning; who guides, assists, and supports the candidate during the practicum; and who reports the candidate's progress to the candidate's field supervisor.

\_\_\_\_\_  
School District Special Education Director Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
School District Campus Administrator Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Site Supervisor (Mentor Diagnostician) Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Field Supervisor (Professor) Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
SHSU Candidate Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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## **Ethical Practices for Educational Diagnostician Candidates**

### **Texas Educator's Code of Ethics for Educators**

#### **(1) Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performance.**

- A. Standard 1.1. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.
- B. Standard 1.2. The educator shall not knowingly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.
- C. Standard 1.3. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests or reimbursement, expenses, or pay.
- D. Standard 1.4. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.
- E. Standard 1.5. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents of students, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.
- F. Standard 1.6. The educator shall not falsify records or direct or coerce others to do so.
- G. Standard 1.7. The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other state and federal laws.
- H. Standard 1.8. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.
- I. Standard 1.9. The educator shall not make threats of violence against school district employees, school board members, students, or parents of students.
- J. Standard 1.10. The educator shall be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.
- K. Standard 1.11. The educator shall not intentionally or knowingly misrepresent his or her employment history, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.
- L. Standard 1.12. The educator shall refrain from the illegal use or distribution of controlled substances and/or abuse of prescription drugs and toxic inhalants.
- M. Standard 1.13. The educator shall not consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

#### **(2) Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues.**

- A. Standard 2.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- B. Standard 2.2. The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.
- C. Standard 2.3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.

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- D. Standard 2.4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.
- E. Standard 2.5. The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.
- F. Standard 2.6. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.
- G. Standard 2.7. The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or who provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.

### **(3) Ethical Conduct Toward Students.**

- A. Standard 3.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- B. Standard 3.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health, or safety of the student or minor.
- C. Standard 3.3. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.
- D. Standard 3.4. The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status, or sexual orientation.
- E. Standard 3.5. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student or minor.
- F. Standard 3.6. The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor.
- G. Standard 3.7. The educator shall not furnish alcohol or unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age.
- H. Standard 3.8. The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.
- I. Standard 3.9. The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:
  - i. the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
  - ii. the subject matter of the communication;
  - iii. whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;
  - iv. whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
  - v. whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
  - vi. whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

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As a graduate student in the Special Education Program at Sam Houston State University and a candidate for certification as an Educational Diagnostician in the State of Texas, I certify that I do and will adhere to the following requirements (initial below):

I affirm that I will comply with the standard practices and ethical conduct towards students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom, as set forth by the Texas Administrative Code 247.2. As a Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the professional, I shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate integrity, and exemplify honesty. In exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, I shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession.

I hereby affirm that I have read and thoroughly understand the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics TAC 247.2 and shall abide by all enforceable standards of this rule.

I understand that plagiarism consists of the following actions and will not plagiarize in any project that I undertake at Sam Houston State University or in my work as an educational diagnostician: turning in someone else's work as my own, copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit, failing to put a quotation in quotation marks, giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation, changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit, copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of my work, whether I give credit or not.

I will maintain confidentiality with all students that I work with as part of my Educational Diagnostician Program and in the school setting.

I will handle all test material, clients, and information obtained from the clients in accordance with the Nationally Certified Educational Diagnostician (NCED) Code of Ethics <https://www.ncedonline.org/about/>

I read the above requirements, understand them, and will abide by these ethical principles. I understand that any violation of the above ethical requirements may result in failure of the course in which I am enrolled and possible dismissal from the program.

Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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As a graduate student in the Special Education Program at Sam Houston State University and a candidate for certification as an Educational Diagnostician in the State of Texas, I certify that:

I read the M.Ed. in Special Education and Post-Master (Educational Diagnostician) Handbook

\_\_\_\_\_

I understand the M.Ed. in Special Education and Post-Master (Educational Diagnostician) Handbook's contents.

\_\_\_\_\_

Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_