



EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM

A message from EPP Associate Dean Gina Anderson



Dear Educator Preparation Colleagues,

Welcome to a new academic year! I hope you and your families are all safe and healthy. I am excited to share the **inaugural issue** of the **TWU Educator Preparation Program (EPP) e-newsletter**.

Our EPP's mission is to develop teachers and leaders who are **Engaged, Prepared, and Professional**, and our continued success largely depends on partnerships with colleagues like you! In keeping with TWU's legacy of serving a richly diverse community, **the EPP offers more than thirty initial and professional certification options**. In this space, we will share updates, announcements, reminders, and celebrations arising from all these programs and students, as well as the faculty and staff members who serve them.

To say that this has been an unexpected and extraordinary year for educator preparation is, of course, an understatement. The challenges we have faced when preparing teachers and school leaders have intersected with the lived experiences of our P-12 partners, students, their families, and all our communities.

Our ecosystem has become more complex due to the life-altering events of not only a global pandemic but also increased racial tensions, economic turbulence, and political divisiveness. For TWU's EPP, **values like inclusion and caring are central to our mission and work**. This year's increased calls for extending equity and social justice, expanding digital access, and meeting basic human needs prompted us to respond with appropriate actions and speed. **Read on** to learn more about how faculty and staff developed and embraced new ways to teach, learn, communicate, collaborate, and care for each other, while also supporting future educators as they learned to adapt.

This and future editions of the e-newsletter will provide insight into the ways we uniquely prepare TWU candidates, guided by the **Texas Education Agency (TEA)** and, frequently, inspired by colleagues around the state, through organizations like **TeachersCan.org**. To stay up-to-date with TEA news, sign up for **TEA's new listserv** on educator preparation.

I trust you will appreciate how **our commitment goes beyond preparing students to complete our EPP**. The information and stories we share illustrate work that is devoted to ensuring our students are well-equipped for teaching and leading now, during these uncertain times, and for adapting to an evolving future.

Thank you for your support of our candidates and our EPP! We welcome your input anytime, and look forward to staying in touch. Until next time, be sure to check out our **TWU Educator Preparation Program Web page** and start following us on **Facebook**, **Twitter**, and **Instagram**.

Sincerely,

Fall 2020 Faculty Focus

The Why Is Our Students

It's the beginning of a new academic year, and faculty members of **TWU's Department of Teacher Education** have exhibited their customary dedication and focus, while also becoming technology gurus during this era of the online classroom. Our **Teacher Ed faculty are rock stars!** They are ready and eager to make this a fabulous year for our students, even in the context of the many changes wrought by COVID-19.

There is a key reason these **faculty members stepped up to the plate** and extended efforts well beyond any ordinary year's call of duty.

Their why? ***Students.***

The extra work, the additional learning platforms, the constantly heightened attention to shifting requirements --**all these efforts faculty members make are for the sake of our students.**

We at TWU focus everything from curriculum design to clinical experiences on the **goal of ensuring that students receive exemplary preparation to become effective professionals.** We work so they can shine as they successfully teach and lead in schools, whether those schools are across the street, the state, or the nation.



Teacher Ed Faculty

7 Years & Caring for Early Career Educators EPP's New Teacher Academy

TWU's EPP is committed to preparing candidates for entering their education careers with professional knowledge and sustainable practices. In July, we hosted our **7th annual New Teacher Academy (NTA).**

A targeted, one-day seminar, the NTA engages recent graduates embarking on their first year of teaching. Designers kept 2020's pandemic-induced changes



to educational landscapes in mind. This year's NTA offered **timely content focused on establishing and sustaining engagement with K-12 students and their families in a virtual learning setting**. This kind of induction support for new educators is a key part of our **EPP's Conceptual Framework**.

EPP Conceptual Framework

Upcoming Events

Complete the CPE Survey

Summer 2020 saw TWU's EPP offering a handful of free Continuing Professional Education (CPE) sessions on key skill sets, like **recognizing and responding to grief and trauma in school settings**. CPE offers so many benefits, from training in specific skills, to opening one's perspective to new mindsets, to gleaning from another learner's experience. **TWU's EPP can offer unique content provided by seasoned professional educators and researchers**. Help us schedule content that offers you the greatest relevance and applicability to your role: Click through to complete our **CPE Survey!**



Photo by Andrea Piacquadio

Take the CPE Survey

Student Organization Spotlight:

BESO Helps Homework Hotline

This academic year, TWU's **Bilingual and ESL Education Student Organization (BESO)** will join UNT and Denton ISD in recruiting Spanish-speaking students for the Denton ISD homework assistance hotline. **This project offers homework support for third- through eighth-grade children of Hispanic families by providing volunteer tutoring in Spanish**. We encourage BESO members, EPP candidates, and bilingual members of TWU to **support this collaborative effort** which serves children, families, and the community. The



program kicks off in September. [Volunteer now!](#)

[Learn more about BESO](#)

Responding to COVID-19

How do I reach an advisor? How will I complete my admissions? How can I take practice exams? What can I expect during my student teaching? How do I meet requirements for field hours? How do virtual job fairs work?

These questions and more accompany EPP students as they work to continue their programs in the face of the year's challenges.

So much community activity centers on schools that it is no wonder the COVID-19 pandemic's disruption has had cascading impacts on students, families, and educational professionals.

From the EPP viewpoint, challenges have centered on ensuring students can **access advising, practice taking certification tests, and meet statutory benchmarks.** [EPP's new COVID-19 FAQ](#) page helps our students find the information to navigate these changes.



[EPP COVID-19 FAQ](#)

Share Commitment to Students with a CACREP-Accredited MS School Counseling Degree & Certification Track

Schools have been at the epicenter of this past year's many challenges, from the COVID-19 pandemic, to social movements around equity and justice, to concerns about the growing needs of at-risk populations. In this climate, it is **crucial that strong school counselors offer support** that is focused on social-emotional learning and student advocacy.



Our **School Counseling track** is part of a CACREP-accredited, 61-hour **Master of Science degree in TWU's Counseling and Development program**. It prepares students for certification as a school counselor in the State of Texas. **Qualified applicants will have completed two years as a certified teacher** in a TEA-accredited public or private school. Designed to accommodate the needs of working adults, classes are held both online and face-to-face in the evenings. **The deadline for Spring 2021 applications is September 15, 2020.**

MS in School Counseling

Responding to Calls for Equity & Social Justice COPE INITIATES TASK FORCE

Across the nation and on the TWU campus, conversations have arisen around the year's themes of disruption and justice. **Events in 2020 have made starkly evident many societal inequities**, drawing educators' attention to areas where differences can --and should-- be made.

In response, **Dean Lisa Huffman** initiated the **Equity, Inclusion, Social Justice & Diversity (EISJD) Task Force**. The task force is composed of COPE faculty and staff from EPP, as well as members from **Human Development, Family Studies, & Counseling, Literacy & Learning, and the School of Library & Information Studies**.



The task force has developed criteria for establishing a standing committee in COPE to monitor issues around **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Justice (DEIJ)**. Currently, a draft charter is under review by students, staff, and faculty. In part, the proposed charge to the committee states that, at the college level, it will **recommend and monitor policies designed to establish expectations for curriculum, faculty, staff, and students**, while also ensuring recourse to fair treatment in the event of a policy breach. **Oriented towards action**, the charter envisions the committee being tasked with the **improvement of five areas**:

- Access
- Campus Culture & Climate
- Scholarship
- Institutional Strategic Initiatives
- Community Collaboration & Engagement.

TWU Campus-Wide Inclusion Efforts

Strengthening the Rural ISD Pipeline

Students & Rural ISDs Benefit from TEA Grow-Your-Own Grants
State Partners for 3rd Consecutive Year with TWU's EPP

TWU Educator Preparation Program

Partner Districts

- Era
- Gainesville
- Valley View

Congratulations!
to "Grow Your Own"
Grant Recipients 2020-21

Elisa Alderman
Katarina Bryant
Emily Hall
Mae Reiland
Shelby Smith

Sponsors

TEA TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

Benefits

- Intensive practice & support in underserved, rural ISDs
- Stipend & certification exam fee assistance
- Guaranteed job offer in the ISD after successful completion of residency

Congratulations to TWU EPP's five recipients of stipends and customized educator preparation supports designed to meet rural community needs for recruiting and retaining teacher candidates, funded by the **Texas Education Agency (TEA)**.

This is the third consecutive year that **Texas Woman's University Educator Preparation Program (EPP)** has been awarded the **TEA Grow-Your-Own (GYO) Grant**. A highly competitive process, GYO grants were awarded to only four universities for the 2020-21 academic year. TWU shares the privilege and responsibility with EPPs from **Texas A & M University, Texas A & M University-Corpus Christi, and Texas Tech University**.

TEA's \$110,000 GYO grant to TWU will support our five candidates and their field supervisor for a very full academic year of educator preparation. During the fall, they will complete 90 hours of an immersive field experience. The spring will see them participate in a full semester of clinical student teaching.

Every grant proposal and implementation involves a team. Many thanks to these essential TWU contributors to the program's success: Principal Investigator **Dr. Gina Anderson**; Co-PI **Dr. Brandon Bush**; University Field Supervisor and Grant Coordinator **Dr. Linda Moore**; Key Personnel **Drs. Joyce Armstrong, Aimee Myers, and Ilana Morgan**; and Faculty Liaisons **Drs. Karen Dunlap and Denise Potter**.

Recognition also goes to partnering superintendents, principals, and teachers in the Era, Gainesville, and Valley View independent school districts.

Era ISD

- Superintendent **Dr. Jeremy Thompson**
- Principal **Courtney Stevens**
- Cooperating Teacher **Shelby Huntington**

Gainesville ISD

- **Dr. Des Stewart**
- Principals **Brandon Whiten** and **Pablo De Santiago**
- Cooperating Teachers **Ms. Estes** and **Lisa Dieter**

Valley View

- Superintendent **William Stokes**
- Principal **Susan Smith**
- Cooperating Teachers **Belita Morris** and **Brenda Klement**

Learn More about TEA's GYO Program

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