



Survey of FACTE Membership: Subject Area Exam of the Florida Teacher Certification Exam – Requirements and Preparation

Fall Meeting of the Florida Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (FACTE)
Bethune-Cookman University
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Elayne Colón
Research Committee Chair, FACTE

Purpose

- Survey designed to gather more specific information regarding the efforts of state-approved programs to prepare candidates for the Florida Teacher Certification Exam (FTCE)
- Questions were specifically targeted toward the Subject Area Examinations (SAE) of the FTCE

Rationale

- Recent revisions to the suite of tests of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination (FTCE) have had an impact on Florida's state-approved educator preparation programs.
- At the Spring 2016 FACTE meeting, Research Committee members expressed concerns regarding revisions to the content and rigor of many of the tests of the FTCE and the effects on admission, enrollment, and completion of state-approved educator preparation programs.
- Specifically, members described candidates' challenges in passing these exams and programs burdened with an overemphasis on test preparation.

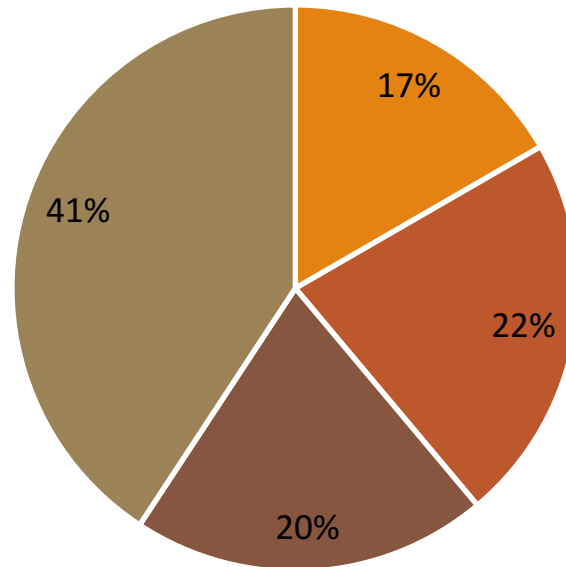
Background

Recent Test Revision Dates and Sample Pass Rates –

- May 2014 – revised Elementary Education K-6 exam with 4 subtest model
 - New passing scores effective Jan 2015
 - First time pass rates for 2015 and early 2016 test takers ranged from 34-47% for state-approved programs
- Jan 2015 – new passing scores for English 6-12 exam
 - First time pass rates for 2015 and early 2016 test takers ranged from 37-48% for state-approved programs
- Summer 2016 – new content for Preschool Birth – 4 exam and revised Competencies and Skills for ESE K-12 (test revisions now underway)

Survey Participants: Institution Type

Institution Type



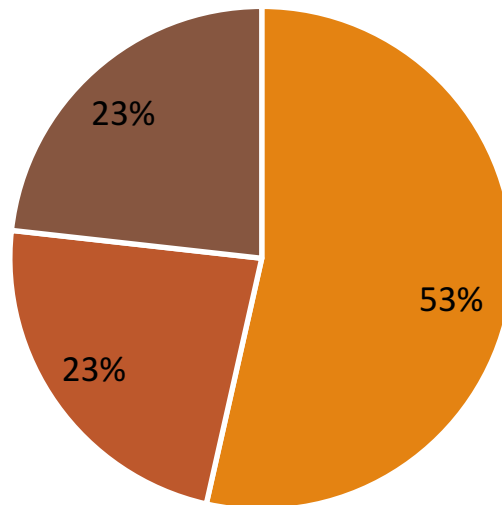
■ State University ■ Private ■ State College ■ Not Reported

Type of State-Approved Programs Offered at Your Institution (choose one):

| | % | Response (n) |
|--------------------------------------|-------|--------------|
| Initial Teacher Preparation (ITP) | 53% | 29 |
| Educator Preparation Institute (EPI) | 23% | 13 |
| Both ITPs and EPIs | 23% | 13 |
| Total | 100%* | 55 |

*percentages rounded to nearest whole number

Survey Participants: Type of Preparation Programs*



■ Initial Teacher Preparation (ITP)

■ Educator Preparation Institute (EPI)

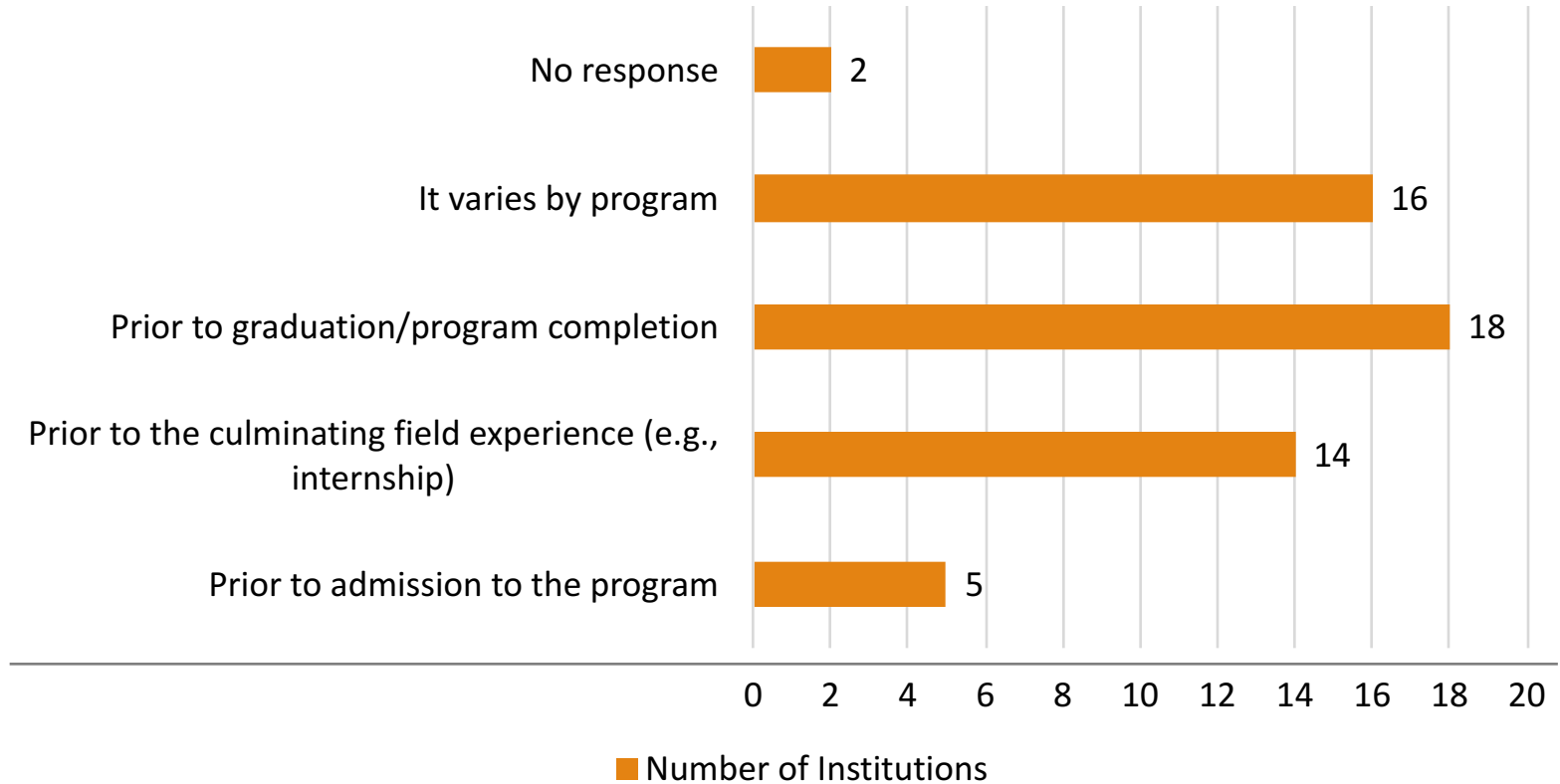
■ Both ITPs and EPIs

*percentages rounded to nearest whole number

When do you require candidates to take and pass the SAE of the FTCE (choose one)?

| Answer | % | Response (n) |
|--|------|--------------|
| Prior to admission to the program | 9% | 5 |
| Prior to the culminating field experience (e.g., internship) | 25% | 14 |
| Prior to graduation/program completion | 33% | 18 |
| It varies by program | 29% | 16 |
| No response | 4% | 2 |
| Total | 100% | 55 |

When do you require candidates to take and pass SAE?



Describe how the requirements for taking and passing the SAE vary by program...

Requirements

- Due to Statement of Status of Eligibility requirement for EPIs, these programs require the SAE to be taken and passed prior to admission.
- Many ITPs recommend SAE passage prior to culminating field experience but require prior to program completion.
- Balance having sufficient preparation prior to sitting for exam with enough time to take and pass (allowing for multiple attempts if needed)

How do you prepare candidates to take the SAE of the FTCE?

Preparation – Themes of Responses

- Coursework aligned with Subject Area Competencies and Skills (n = 17)
- Test preparation sessions, workshops, and online modules (n = 21)
- Candidates provided with resources and test preparation materials (n = 16)
- Small group and individual tutoring sessions with advisors or content area faculty (n = 13)

Do you offer specific interventions/remediation for those not passing the SAE?

Interventions

- 60% of respondents offer optional interventions
- 8% of respondents require interventions for those not passing, including...
 - Performance Improvement Plan to monitor preparation progress
 - Completion of a form indicating candidate's plan for passing with approval from advisor
 - Required meeting with individual in Office of Accreditation to review test results
 - Required participation in Teacher Education Support Strategies course
- 8% of respondents do not require interventions/remediation
- 20% no response to item on survey 😞

Please describe specific
test preparation or
remediation materials...

- Test preparation materials provided by Pearson (www.fl.nesinc.com)
- Elem K-6 Content Review Module offered by Professional Development Alternatives (<http://www.fl-pda.org/independent/>)
- Research and Education Association published test prep materials (<http://store.rea.com/tstprep-teachcert-fl.html>)
- Khan Academy (www.khanacademy.org) for specific content areas
- Learning Liaisons (<http://www.thelearningliaisons.com>) provides online workshops and video courses
- Quizlet.com for vocabulary review (including <https://quizlet.com/24807813/ftce-elementary-education-k-6-social-science-flash-cards/> for Elementary Ed K-6 Social Science vocabulary)
- Study Guide Zone (<https://www.studyguidezone.com/ftcettest.htm>) online practice test questions
- Test Prep Review (http://www.testprepreview.com/ftce_practice.htm) for practice questions and assessment modules
- Brain Pop (www.brainpop.com) for videos to review content
- Cliff Notes Study Guides
- XAM Online (http://www.xamonline.com/teacher_certification_study_guides/Florida) offers study guides for purchase
- Institution-developed materials including online modules, vocabulary review

If your candidates do not pass the SAE, how do you advise them? What are the alternatives?

Advising Candidates

- Range of responses –
 - Most respondents describe moving candidate to another degree option (e.g., Education Studies, Lifelong Learning)
 - Some respondents explain no degree can be conferred (no other degree options available)
 - A few respondents offer candidates the option to complete the degree but they do not receive state-approved stamp on transcript
 - For EPIs, this is most often not an issue as the candidate must take and pass the SAE prior to admission

Given the recent revisions to many SAEs, have you revised your coursework or program of study in any way?

Revisions to Programs

- Updated alignment of Competencies and Skills to curriculum
- Reviewed course syllabi to ensure Competencies and Skills are embedded
- Revised supplemental test preparation materials and workshop content provided by institution
- Added additional subject area content to methods coursework
- Designed new performance tasks in coursework to address content
- Increased the number of General Education courses required and working to ensure Gen Ed courses (and other lower division courses) are aligned with Comps and Skills
- Revised program requirements to include FTCE preparation course
- Revising coursework to infuse/align with Florida Standards
- Offering candidates recommended electives (e.g., Geography)

Are there specific SAEs that are most problematic for your candidates?

Specific SAEs

- Elementary K-6
 - Science and Social Science subtests
 - Math and Language Arts subtests, too
- Social Science 6-12

- Science 6-12
- English 6-12
- Exceptional Student Education K-12
- PreKindergarten-Grade 3
- Middle Grades General Science 5-9 and Social Science 5-9

What about the General Knowledge Exam?!?

- Several survey respondents expressed concerns about this exam, too.
- New passing scores began in January, 2015
- First time pass rates 2015 and early 2016 ranged from 42 to 56% for state-approved programs.
- Since many programs require this exam to be taken and passed prior to admission, some view less control over test preparation and advising
- Increased cut scores and lower pass rates continue to influence admission and decreasing enrollment in state-approved programs