EDUC 6220 ISSUES OF EDUCATIONAL LAW AND POLICY

Syllabus

Spring 2017

Class Location: Wooten Hall 114
Days & Times: Wednesdays; 5:30-8:20PM
Instructor: Dr. Mei Hoyt
Office: Matthews Hall 218C
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesdays 1-4pm or by appointment
Phone: 940-565-2986
Email: mei.hoyt@unt.edu

Course Description:

Consideration of current issues of educational law and policy that are of concern to the general public as well as to policymakers and educators. Emphasis is on such issues as educational reform and accountability, language management, and equality of educational opportunity. Attention goes to historical background of the issues and to different approaches to policy analysis.

Some Thoughts about Policy

“As politicians know only too well but social scientists too often forget, public policy is made of language. Whether in written or oral form, argument is central in all stages of the policy process.” Giandomenico Majone, Evidence, Argument, and Persuasion in the Policy Process, p. 1

“Policy is more like an endless game of Monopoly than a sewing machine repair. . . . The process of choosing and implementing the means of policy is political and continuous. The actions we commonly call ‘new policies’ are really somebody’s next move, and in politics, as in a good game, nobody’s move completely determines anybody else’s future move.” Deborah Stone, Policy Paradox and Political Reason, p. 208

“The policy-making process in the United States is an adversarial process, characterized by the clash of competing and conflicting viewpoints and interests rather than an impartial, disinterested, or ‘objective’ search for ‘correct’ solutions for policy problems.” James Anderson, Public Policy Making, p. 163

“Research, by itself, rarely leads to policy recommendations. Research has to be ‘translated’ into policy recommendations, and different actors are likely to interpret any body of research somewhat differently.” Richard Allington, “Crafting State Educational Policy,” p. 459
“Educational policies need to be viewed in more than a national context. There are global forces at work which constrain and direct the nation state, and which have profound effects upon the type and quality of education it provides for its citizens.” Mike Bottery, *Education, Policy and Ethics*, p. 215

**Learning Objectives**

For you, as a graduate student taking the course,

1. To have a fuller understanding of the educational policies guiding curriculum and pedagogy—their origins as well as their current status,
2. To learn and to apply procedures for analyzing those policies historically and rhetorically,
3. To investigate some interesting aspect of the policymaking or policy implementation process through a qualitative research approach,
4. To develop knowledge of major policies in your area of specialization that have been established by various entities (federal and state government, local school boards, and professional organizations), and
5. To make a contribution to the ongoing discussion in the literature regarding one particular policy of importance and interest to you.

**Requirements and Expectations**

1. Contributions to Weekly Discussions and Activities in Class 20%
2. Report Based on Qualitative Research (oral and written) 20%
   Either: Report of Policy Impact on Stakeholder(s) (based on interview/s)
   Or: Report on Policymaking Session (based on observation and field notes)
3. Co-authored Report Focused on an Educational Policy in Another Country 15%
4. Discussion Lead 15%
5. Final Project: Analysis of an Educational Policy 30%
   (oral and written—together count as final exam)
   The topic here is an issue or question that is of interest to you and is relevant to your professional career. I’d like to meet with you to discuss your project and help determine its focus and scope. See class policies on written assignments.

**Grading**

A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F=below 60  Three absences for any reason will lower your grade one letter.
Schedule (subject to change)

I’ve considered organizing the course in various ways, all of which would be valid. This is to organize it by starting first with the U.S. context and then moving rather briefly to policy at our state level. We’ll conclude by looking more broadly at policy in global context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Course Overview</th>
<th>Film in class: <em>School: The Story of American Education</em> I</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 18</td>
<td>Curriculum Policy in U.S., Considered Historically</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>Civil Rights Curricular Change</th>
<th>Spring, Ch. 1; Film in class: <em>School: The Story of American Education</em> II &amp; III</th>
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<td>Jan. 25</td>
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<th>Week 3</th>
<th>Policy Analysis: What Is It? Note: Articles by Cohen, Castor, and Hill report studies that employ the sorts of research approaches that will be used in the first studies you will conduct. Pay attention to method. Also, Dormer and Maguire et al.</th>
<th>Rizvi, Ch. 1, also pp. 54-56; Caster (2007); Cohen (1990); Hill (2001); Maguire.et. al. (2011)</th>
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<th>Week 4</th>
<th>Diversity, Multiculturalism, and the Curriculum Language Policy: Bilingual Education, English Only</th>
<th>Spring, Chs. 3-7; Dorner (2012);</th>
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<th>Week 5</th>
<th>Accountability and Politics Neoliberalism</th>
<th>Spring, Ch. 9; Ambrosio (2013); Larabee (2014); Williamson (2012); Film in class: <em>Rise Above the Mark</em> Lipman, Chs. 1-2</th>
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<td>Feb. 15</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Urban Issues Related to Policy</td>
<td>Lipman, Chs. 3-7; Due: Qualitative Research Report</td>
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<th>Week 7</th>
<th>School Choice</th>
<th>Condliffe et al (2015); Koven &amp; Khan (2014); Smith (2005)</th>
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<th>Week 8</th>
<th>State-level Accountability (Texas)</th>
<th>Haney (2000; 2001); Spring, Chs. 8 &amp; 9; TASA website (current and past postings) Webpages about House Bill 5 and Texas 10% policy</th>
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<td>March 8</td>
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<th>Week 9</th>
<th>SPRING BREAK NO CLASS</th>
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<td>March 15</td>
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<th>Week 11</th>
<th>Globalization and Curriculum Policy Borrowing and Diffusion</th>
<th>Rizvi, Chs. 2, 3, 4, 5 Spring, Ch. 11 Due: Group Report of an Educational Policy in Another Country</th>
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<th>Week 12</th>
<th>The Finland Example</th>
<th>Sahlberg—one or more of Sahlberg’s articles about Finnish education; <a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/finlands-schools-were-once-the-envy-of-the-world-now-theyre-slipping/2016/12/08/dcfdf0f56-bd60-11e6-91ee-1addf3e6cbe_story.html?utm_term=.3404d63c4643#comments">https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/finlands-schools-were-once-the-envy-of-the-world-now-theyre-slipping/2016/12/08/dcfdf0f56-bd60-11e6-91ee-1addf3e6cbe_story.html?utm_term=.3404d63c4643#comments</a> <a href="http://www.phenomenaleducation.info/phenomenon-based-learning.html">http://www.phenomenaleducation.info/phenomenon-based-learning.html</a></th>
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<td>April 5</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Transnational Policy</td>
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<td>April 12</td>
<td>Luke (2011)</td>
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<td>Writing workshop in class (Bring copies of draft to class)</td>
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<td>Webpages of UNESCO, Council of Europe, European Union</td>
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<th>Week 14</th>
<th>No Class Meeting</th>
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<tr>
<td>April 19</td>
<td>AAACS, April 24-27; AERA, April 27-May 1</td>
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<td>Educational Conference Week</td>
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<th>Week 16</th>
<th>Due: Final Paper Presentations Continued &amp; Final Paper</th>
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**Required Books**


**Optional Book**


**Required Articles**

*Please print these off and bring them to class the evenings that they will be discussed.*

reform. *Educational Policy*, 18, 12-44. DOI: 10.1177/0895904803260022


Films

*Finnish First: Dan Rather Reports; The Revisionaries; School: The Story of American Public Education.*

Class Policies

**Written Assignments**: For all assignments, please provide hard copies rather than electronic copies. The version you submit should accord with academic discourse conventions and should employ APA style for heading and subheadings, citations, and references. All papers must be typed, grammar-checked, and spell-checked. Each paper should have a good title, and pages should be numbered. If the final version of a paper has careless typos or mechanical problems, it will not be accepted.

**Late assignments**: All papers and projects should be submitted on the date that they are due, and thus late assignments may not be accepted. Of course, there are some events in life that may cause a delay in work products; this will be taken into consideration on an individual basis.

**Academic integrity**: Academic integrity is essential to this course, as in other work that you do in your doctoral
Academic integrity emanates from a culture that embraces the core values of trust and honesty necessary for full learning to occur. As a student-centered public research university, the University of North Texas promotes the integrity of the learning process by establishing and enforcing academic standards. Academic dishonesty breaches the mutual trust necessary in an academic environment and undermines all scholarship.

You must be sure to avoid plagiarism, which is defined in the following way in that policy: Use of another’s thoughts or words without proper attribution in any academic exercise, regardless of the student’s intent, including but not limited to:

1. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement or citation.

2. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in selling term papers or other academic materials. [http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm](http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm)

*Students’ disabilities:* UNT complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible and bring your verification form from the Office of Disability Accommodations. If you suspect that you may have a disability (e.g., physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability), please contact the ODA.

*Observation of religious holiday.* If you plan to observe a religious holiday that coincides with a class day, please notify me as soon as possible.

*Civility.* UNT is committed to equity and diversity and to a student-centered environment that is conducive to learning. Students and faculty are expected to behave in a manner that is respectful and courteous to all people regardless of their ethnic/racial origin, their sexual orientation, their religious background, or disability. Actions or words that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated. In accordance with this emphasis on respectful attention to others, you are expected to not to take messages or text on your cell phone during class unless this medium is being used for some class activity. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct).

*SPOT:* The Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is expected for all organized classes at UNT. This brief online survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider the SPOT to be an important part of your participation in this class.
Specifics on Assignments

Report on Policymaking Session

Your written report (at least 8 pages of text, not including cover page and references) should be based on your observations of a policymaking session relevant to education. Be sure to give the paper a good title.

1. Begin with background on the particular policy as well as the controversy that surrounds it. Demonstrate background reading that you’ve done, and include citations of important literature dealing with the particular issue. Explain what you were interested in learning—either the questions guiding your inquiry or your purpose in conducting the inquiry.

2. Describe the particular policymaking session that you attended. Provide information about the policymaking group—its history, its composition, its function, etc. Give particulars about the session (time, place, attendance) that you attended.

3. Describe your method. How did you go about observing the session? What role did you assume? How did you take notes? How long did you stay? Then explain how you analyzed your notes. What portion of the notes did you use for this report? What were you looking for? How did you discern patterns? (If only part of the meeting dealt with the particular policy that interests you, there is no need for you to analyze notes from the whole session.)

4. Provide findings. If possible, describe the group dynamics as well as the content of the interaction (the how as well as the what). What did you learn about the way in which policy is made or is interpreted by this particular group? This, of course, is the most important part of the report.

5. Tie everything together with a conclusion. In concluding the paper, consider the following: Did your inquiry show the same sort of controversy discussed in the literature on the issue? Were there additional facets of the controversy that emerged as important in your inquiry? What “contribution” are you making to what is known about this sort of policy.

Report on Stakeholder Interview

Your written report (at least 8 pages of text, not including cover page and references) should be based on your inquiry into the impact of a particular policy. Again, be sure to give the paper a good title.

1. Begin with background on the particular policy as well as the controversy that surrounds it. Demonstrate background reading that you’ve done, and include citations of important literature dealing with the particular issue. Explain what you were interested in learning—either the questions guiding your inquiry or your purpose
in conducting the inquiry.

2. Describe your interview method. What sort of interview/s did you conduct? What approach did you take to transcription and analysis? Did you also look at any artifacts the stakeholder may have had?

5. Provide findings. What did you learn about the way in which policy is interpreted by this individual or these individuals? This, of course, is the most important part of the report. Organize this part in some means other than simply providing the answer to one question you asked after another.

4. Tie everything together with a conclusion. In concluding the paper, consider the following: Did your inquiry show the same sort of issues that have been discussed in the literature? Were there additional facets of the matter that emerged as important in your inquiry? What “contribution” are you making to what is known about this sort of policy?

Report on Policy in Another Country

This report too (at least 8 pages of text, not including cover page and references) should be based on your reading of scholarship focused on an educational policy in another country or on a transnational policy. See if you can find a statement of the policy itself, but be sure to use several sources that provide different perspectives on the policy.

Discussion Lead

During one class session between January 25 and April 12, you will lead a class discussion for 30 minutes for part of the readings for the day. You shall use the following structure:

- Opening Statement (5 minutes): You open your lead discussion by a summary of the readings. Focus on the overarching and essential ideas, not the details. A one-page handout of major points is expected for all participants in class.
- Close Reading of a Passage (8 minutes): After opening statement, you will direct the class to a passage in the readings that you believe is particularly critical or compelling, a passage that requires careful, close reading to understand. You will then guide the class us, and explain precisely what the passages states, what the ideas in the passage mean, and what implications the passage has for our understanding of educational policy and law.
- Guided Inquiry (17 minutes): After your close reading of a passage, you will pose a discussion question to foster conversation among your classmates about the readings. Meaningful intellectual discussions require guidance, facilitation, and encouragement. Therefore, you must be prepared to support the conversation as it unfolds, and to elicit meaningful discussion if there is none.
Final Paper: Policy Analysis

Your written report (at least 12 pages of text, not including cover page and references) should be based on an analysis of an educational policy that is of interest to you. Be sure to give the paper a good title.

1. Begin with some background on the particular policy on which you have focused your attention and also address the controversy that surrounds it. Demonstrate background reading that you’ve done, and include citations of important literature dealing with the particular issue. Explain what you were interested in learning—either the questions guiding your inquiry or your purpose in conducting the inquiry.

2. Describe the particular policy on which you are focusing. Provide such information as its history, its policymakers, its stakeholders, its function.

3. Describe your method. How did you go about analyzing the policy? What were you looking for? How did you discern patterns?

For your analysis, you might want to consider one of the following: (1) the specialized (perhaps loaded) use of particular words that are prominent in the policy, (2) the intertextual connections to other policies and documents, (3) the ways in which the “carrots” and “sticks” are presented, (4) the ways in which particular people are presented, (5) unacknowledged or unrecognized contradictions or gaps, (6) use of figurative language (e.g., metaphor), or (6) the warrants or assumptions that undergird the policy.

4. Provide findings. This, of course, is the most important part of the report. Include some examples to support points you made.

5. Tie everything together with a conclusion. In concluding the paper, consider the following: What did your inquiry show that throws some light on the controversy discussed in literature on the issue? Were there additional facets of the controversy that emerged as important in your inquiry? What “contribution” are you making to what is known about this sort of policy?

6. Include a reference list, and attach a copy of the policy.

Note: This syllabus is a plan for the course and, as such, is subject to modification as the course progresses.
Improving the quality of education in Texas schools and elsewhere is the goal of programs for the education of educators at the University of North Texas. To achieve this goal, programs leading to teacher certification and advanced programs for educators at the University of North Texas 1) emphasize content, curricular, and pedagogical knowledge acquired through research and informed practice of the academic disciplines, 2) incorporate the Texas Teacher Proficiencies for learner centered education, 3) feature collaboration across the university and with schools and other agencies in the design and delivery of programs, and 4) respond to the rapid demographic, social, and technological change in the United States and the world.

The educator as agent of engaged learning summarizes the conceptual framework for UNT's basic and advanced programs. This phrase reflects the directed action that arises from simultaneous commitment to academic knowledge bases and to learner centered practice. "Engaged learning" signifies the deep interaction with worthwhile and appropriate content that occurs for each student in the classrooms of caring and competent educators. "Engaged learning" features the on-going interchange between teacher and student about knowledge and between school and community about what is worth knowing. This conceptual framework recognizes the relationship between UNT and the larger community in promoting the commitment of a diverse citizenry to life-long learning. In our work of developing educators as agents of engaged learning, we value the contributions of professional development schools and other partners and seek collaborations which advance active, meaningful, and continuous learning.

Seeing the engaged learner at the heart of a community that includes educators in various roles, we have chosen to describe each program of educator preparation at UNT with reference to the following key concepts, which are briefly defined below.

1. **Content and curricular knowledge** refer to the grounding of the educator in content knowledge and knowledge construction and in making meaningful to learners the content of the PreK-16 curriculum.
2. **Knowledge of teaching and assessment** refers to the ability of the educator to plan, implement, and assess instruction in ways that consistently engage learners or, in advanced programs, to provide leadership for development of programs that promote engagement of learners.

3. **Promotion of equity for all learners** refers to the skills and attitudes that enable the educator to advocate for all students within the framework of the school program.

4. **Encouragement of diversity** refers to the ability of the educator to appreciate and affirm formally and informally the various cultural heritages, unique endowments, learning styles, interests, and needs of learners.

5. **Professional communication** refers to effective interpersonal and professional oral and written communication that includes appropriate applications of information technology.

6. **Engaged professional learning** refers to the educator’s commitment to ethical practice and to continued learning and professional development.

Through the experiences required in each UNT program of study, we expect that basic and advanced students will acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions appropriate to the educational role for which they are preparing or in which they are developing expertise.

A broad community stands behind and accepts responsibility for every engaged learner. UNT supports the work of PreK-16 communities through basic and advanced programs for professional educators and by promoting public understanding of issues in education.

**Ethical Behavior and Code of Ethics:** The Teacher Education & Administration Department expects that its students will abide by the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators (Chapter 247 of the Texas Administrative Code www.sbec.state.tx.us) and as outlined in Domain IV: Fulfilling Professional Roles and Responsibilities of the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES); and as also addressed in codes of ethics adopted by professionals in the education field such as the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

**Submitting Work:** All assignments will be submitted via Blackboard Learn. Assignments posted after the deadline will be considered late and points will be deducted from the final grade.

**Grading and Grade Reporting:** Grading rubrics for all assignments can be found on the course Blackboard Learn website with the assignment. Students are encouraged to review the grading rubrics to guide them in successfully completing all assignments.

**Writing Policy:** Teachers are judged on the accuracy of everything they write, whether it is a letter to parents or an email to a principal or a worksheet for students. Your written products – including, but not limited to, papers, lesson plans, and emails – should include appropriate and accurate spelling, grammar, punctuation, syntax, format, and English usage. You should expect that all assignments will be evaluated on these writing skills, in addition to any other expectations of a particular assignment. The UNT Writing Lab (Sage Hall 152) offers one-on-one consultation to assist students with their writing assignments. To use this resource, call (940) 565-2563 or visit [https://ltc.unt.edu/labs/unt-writing-lab-home](https://ltc.unt.edu/labs/unt-writing-lab-home).

Teacher Education & Administration
Departmental Policy Statements

Disabilities Accommodation: “The University of North Texas complies with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The University of North Texas provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to individuals with disabilities, as defined under the law. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation, please see the instructor and/or contact the Office of Disability Accommodation at 940-565-4323 during the first week of class.” Dr. Jemimah Young is the compliance officer and contact person for the Department of Teacher Education & Administration.

Observation of Religious Holidays: If you plan to observe a religious holy day that coincides with a class day, please notify your instructor as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity: Students are encouraged to become familiar with UNT’s policy on Student Standards of Academic Integrity: http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf. Academic dishonesty, in the form of plagiarism, cheating, or fabrication, will not be tolerated in this class. Any act of academic dishonesty will be reported, and a penalty determined, which may be probation, suspension, or expulsion from the university.

Acceptable Student Behavior: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students’ opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student’s conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university’s expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Attendance: See the instructor’s attendance policy.

Eagle Connect: All official correspondence between UNT and students is conducted via Eagle Connect and it is the student's responsibility to read their Eagle Connect Email regularly.

Cell Phones and Laptop: Students should turn off cell phones when they are in class unless the phones are being used for learning activities associated with the course.

SPOT: The Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is expected for all organized classes at UNT. This brief online survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider the SPOT to be an important part of your participation in this class.

Collection of Student Work: In order to monitor students' achievement, improve instructional programs, and publish research findings, the Department of Teacher Education and Administration collects anonymous
student work samples, student demographic information, test scores, and GPAs to be analyzed by internal and external reviewers.

**TK20:** Some undergraduate and graduate education courses require assignments that must be uploaded and assessed in the UNT TK20 Assessment System. This requires a one-time purchase of TK20, and student subscriptions are effective for seven years from the date of purchase. Please go to the following link for directions on how to purchase TK20: [http://www.coe.unt.edu/tk20-campus-tools](http://www.coe.unt.edu/tk20-campus-tools). Announcements regarding TK20 will also be posted on this website.

**Comprehensive Arts Program Policy.** The Elementary Education program area supports a comprehensive arts program to assist preservice and inservice teachers to design and implement curricular and instructional activities which infuse all areas of the arts (visual, music, theater, and movement) throughout the elementary and middle school curriculum.

**Technology Integration Policy.** The Elementary, Secondary, and Curriculum & Instruction program areas support technology integration to assist preservice and inservice teachers to design and implement curricular and instruction activities which infuse technology throughout the K-12 curriculum.

**TExES Test Preparation.** To meet state requirements for providing 6 hours of test preparation for teacher certification candidates, the UNT TExES Advising Office (TAO) administers the College of Education TExES Practice Exams. Students who want to take a practice exam should contact the TAO (Matthews Hall 103). Students may take up to two exams per session that relate to their teaching track/field at UNT. Students should also plan accordingly, as they are required to stay for the entire testing period. Current students must meet the following criteria in order to sit for the TExES practice exams: Students must (1) be admitted to Teacher Education, (2) have a certification plan on file with the COE Student Advising Office, and (3) be enrolled in coursework for the current semester. For TExES practice exam information and registration, go to: [http://www.coe.unt.edu/texes-advising-office/texes-exams](http://www.coe.unt.edu/texes-advising-office/texes-exams). If you need special testing accommodations, please contact the TAO at 940-369-8601 or e-mail the TAO at coe-tao@unt.edu. The TAO website is [www.coe.unt.edu/texes](http://www.coe.unt.edu/texes). Additional test preparation materials (i.e. Study Guides for the TExES) are available at [www.texas.ets.org](http://www.texas.ets.org).

**“Ready to Test” Criteria for Teacher Certification Candidates.** Teacher certification candidates should take the TExES exams relating to their respective certification tracks/teaching fields during their early-field-experience semester (i.e. the long semester or summer session immediately prior to student teaching).

**Six Student Success Messages.** The Department of Teacher Education & Administration supports the six student success messages on how to succeed at UNT: (1) Show up; (2) Find support; (3) Get advised; (4) Be prepared; (5) Get involved; and (6) Stay focused. Students are encouraged to access the following website: [https://success.unt.edu](https://success.unt.edu). The site contains multiple student resource links and short videos with student messages.