

MAT

TWU

The Master of Arts in Teaching

The quality you expect, the convenience you need
at Texas Woman's University

Volume 2

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Number 2

Upcoming Events

Portfolio Presentations
April 6, 7, 8, 9

Education Career Day
Friday, April 3

Houston Information Session
Saturday, March 28

Spring Graduation
May 15 & 16
<http://www.twu.edu/registrar/graduation.asp>

Maymester
May 18 - June 3

Summer I
June 8 - July 10

Summer II
July 13 - August 14

Fall Semester
Aug. 31 - Dec. 18

For more information on TWU's MAT program
call 940-898-2211,

or write,
MAT Program
College of Professional
Education

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Denton, TX 76204-5769
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Or, visit our website
<http://www.twu.edu/mat>



News From the TWU Campus

As we approach Spring Break and the midpoint of the Spring Semester I hope that classes are going well for you. The weather has been wonderful here in North Texas the last few weeks, although it has turned cold and wet this week. If you haven't been to the TWU campus lately it is beautiful right now. The red-bud trees are beginning to bloom, in fact everything is beginning to bloom. Construction has started on a new wing of our Science Building that will provide excellent resources to students taking science classes.

If you are a new MAT student I trust you have gotten into an effective routine and adjusted well to being a graduate student. If you are finishing your program this semester I'm sure that you are excited about graduating and starting your professional career as a teacher. If you are in that second group remember that portfolio presentations are scheduled for early next month for all who plan to graduate in May. For more information on that go to the MAT website at www.twu.edu/mat and click on Professional Portfolios in the Upcoming Events column. You should be communicating with your advisor to make sure you are making satisfactory progress toward completing your professional teaching portfolio.

Speaking of portfolios, remember that MAT students who began their programs last Fall or this Spring should have purchased a subscription to TaskStream. If you are in one of these groups you should be submitting, building and maintaining your portfolio through TaskStream's electronic portfolio system. For more information on this look under Portfolios in the MAT Blackboard site.

Our nation and our own local communities are going through some tough economic times right now. But, we've been through tough times before and we will come through these, as well. Your decision to pursue an advanced degree and prepare yourself for a new career as an educator will equip you to not only survive, but to thrive during this difficult period and will position you for an even more promising future. I trust that the rest of your semester will go well. If I or the faculty and staff of TWU's MAT program can assist you in any way, please let us know.

Jerry Whitworth, Director
Master of Arts in Teaching Program

State Site Visit at TWU

On November 11-12, 2008, staff from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) conducted an onsite review of TWU's teacher preparation program. TEA staff met with faculty, administrators and staff at TWU, spoke with students, reviewed files, and visited schools where TWU student teachers and interns were working to observe and talk with students and school administrators.

Following the visit TEA wrote a report commending TWU for the quality of its teacher preparation program and concluding that the university is in compliance with all sections of the Texas Administrative Code pertaining to teacher preparation programs.

TEA issued commendations to the university in a number of areas, including collaboration among departments at the university, as well as with school districts and other constituents outside the university, for the quality of communication to student teachers and school administrators and for efforts to insure that our students are well-prepared to pass state certification exams.

Great Opportunities at Education Career Day!

Education Career Day, a joint venture between Texas Woman's University and the University of North Texas, will be Friday, April 3, at the UNT Coliseum. A map of the Coliseum can be found at <http://www.unt.edu/pais/map/campusmap.htm#>.

This year we are expecting close to 80 school districts to be represented, so if you are actively looking for a teaching position this will be a great opportunity for you. The times are 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., but you should get there early as some of the school district representatives begin leaving around noon.

Bring copies of your resume with you. TWU will have a table where you can pick up a Letter of Pending Completion which will let school district representatives know that you are on track to graduate and receive your certification by Fall. If there are school districts in which you are interested you may want to visit their websites ahead of time to complete an online application. For more information contact TWU's Professional Development Center at 940.898.2223 or e-mail MWilliamsLaing@twu.edu.

Students interested in an internship for the Fall Semester should submit a Graduate Application for Internship to the Professional Development Center to receive eligibility information prior to April 3rd. The application is at:

<http://www.twu.edu/cope/pdc.htm>

The Richardson ISD has some internships available for Fall, 2009 in both elementary and secondary fields. Applicants will need to be screened in advance and meet certain criteria. For more information contact Michelle Williams at MWilliamsLaing@twu.edu.

Succeeding as an Online Student

Challenge

Many people make the mistake of assuming that online learning is actually much easier than traditional learning. But, researchers find that online learning is actually very challenging, in particular because it requires you to find ways to motivate yourself and complete your work on your own time. In addition to this, most online students have multiple outside responsibilities, including work and family. Las Positas College in Livermore, California has developed some excellent tips on how to succeed in your online classes.

Time Management

Because there are no set classes or study times, effective time management is a key aspect of success for the online learner. Try to choose a time when you can study most effectively. Book specific slots of time to study throughout the week and aim for at least ten hours of study time each week for each course that you are taking. Have a consistent schedule for going online and working on your class and be sure to stick to that schedule.

Motivation

Studying at home or from work can be difficult, so set goals to work towards. As you complete each goal, reward yourself with something fun. You can also find motivation from your fellow students in the discussion forums of your classes. You may also be able to find students who live nearby and set up a group study session. And, remember to always keep your final goal in mind and how great it will be to be successful in all of your classes and to eventually receive that degree.

Participation

Online courses are set up to benefit from as much participation as possible. Make it your goal to participate in online chats and discussions every day. Try to ask questions, make analytical comments, or just offer support to others. Your level of participation can have a significant impact on your grade. Also, keep in mind that the more you put into your online course, the more you will get out of it.

Study Environment

The environment in which you study can have a huge effect on how much information you actually end up absorbing. Take a little time to consider your study environment and then tailor it to your needs. Make sure that you:

- sit in a supportive chair with your computer on a desk.
- have enough space for your textbooks, notebooks, and papers.
- aren't bombarded with constant interruptions.

Study Skills

As an online student you will need to have good study skills in order to synthesize and analyze all of the necessary information. In order to learn more efficiently try:

- making hard copies of all your online notes and assignments.
- making a folder on your computer for all your course-related work.
- keeping track of important dates, like midterms and project due dates.

Ask For Help

Your online course should provide you with a contact address for your instructor, so don't be afraid to speak up if you need help or have a question. Make use of the student forums to ask questions about important assignments or class content. If you are experiencing difficulties using your computer or accessing certain files, speak to technical support. Be proactive to seek help, support and resources immediately if you need them. By following these suggestions you can be a productive and successful online student.

(adapted from <http://www.laspositascollege.edu/onlinelearning/success.php>)