

The Governor's Academy for Teaching Excellence

*A Texas Governor's School
Sponsored by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
At Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
July 12 – August 1, 2009*

The State of Texas needs elementary and secondary educators who can meet the challenges of teaching the subjects of science and math in an age of knowledge explosion, educators who are caring and respected professionals who exercise leadership as learner advocates. The Governor's Academy for Teaching Excellence (GATE) is designed to meet this need by offering a planned, residential, educational enrichment experience that will help participants learn how to build and use knowledge, to make informed decisions in students' best interests, and to match appropriate teaching methods to subject matter and students' styles of learning.

Who May Apply

Academically talented high school students who are current sophomores or juniors only at the time of the application deadline may apply to the Governor's Academy for Teaching Excellence. Applicants will be asked to demonstrate academic achievement, an interest in educational processes and a record of leadership and service activities. **The 2009 application postmark deadline is May 6, 2009.**

The Selection Process

The application has four parts. The applicant completes the Personal Data Form, attaching essays. Two teachers complete reference forms. The applicant's guidance counselor completes a recommendation form and attaches the transcript, attendance record and, if available, test scores and class standing.

An advisory board committee comprised of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi faculty and master educators reads the applications and selects 100 students from across the state. The committee places emphasis on:

- The applicant's essays are reviewed for excellence in expression, originality, self awareness and the ability to contribute to a living/learning community. The essay indicates the student's interest for the integration of science and math into the field of teaching. The proposed leadership activity is read for creative vision, problem-solving and practicality.
- The extracurricular resume is reviewed for evidence of leadership, self-motivation and interest in public service.
- The references, transcript and other information are reviewed for evidence of academic achievement and maturity.

Costs and Commitment

GATE provides tuition, room, board, instructional materials and program activities for all participants. GATE will also provide transportation to and from the program (air fare or mileage based on the Texas Mileage Guide) to students who come from beyond 100 miles of Corpus Christi. Families are responsible for pocket money, a residential life deposit that is refunded if all conditions are met and for damages not covered by the deposit. Students must remain in residence for the full 19-day program, including weekends. They are expected to arrive promptly for all classes and activities. There is some unscheduled time nearly every day for personal use, but the Texas Governor's School cannot provide special facilities or alter schedules for formal athletic training, intensive music study or other commitments unrelated to the program.

A Typical Schedule

7:00 a.m. Breakfast (*except Sundays*)
8:00 a.m. - noon Science/ Math investigations (*Weekdays*)
12:00 Lunch
1:00 p.m. Debriefing, journaling
2:00 - 4:00 p.m. Class activities (*Weekdays*)
Academic sessions and field trips,
(*Saturdays and Sundays*)
4:00 p.m. Team meetings and projects
5:00 p.m. Dinner
7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Class activities, films and cultural activities
9:30 p.m. All students in dormitory
Recreational activities and some personal time are included in the schedule

The Governor's Academy for Teaching Excellence

PROGRAM OF LEARNING

Faculty

GATE offers a strong faculty comprised of master educators who provide models for teaching practice and mentorship for all activities. A small group of Texas Governor's School students is assigned to one teacher/mentor and one resident assistant for the duration of the program. Each group meets daily for debriefing, critiques, reflections and updates. The program also features guest presenters who range from college professors to advisers from a breadth of professions, including scientists, mathematicians, educators, naval aviators, and community leaders.

University Course Work

Students will complete a full 3 credit hour university course, EDCI 2307: Schooling In a Democracy. This course may count towards completion of an undergraduate university degree.

Facilities

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi offers access to the media and facilities that help educators face the challenges of the coming decades. These facilities, including the full service library, and recreational facilities, are available to students. Students live in supervised, gender-separate quarters in campus residential halls and dine together. Field trips include science, mathematics and educational centers of excellence, and historic, cultural and environmental sites.

Tools of the Trade

Students attend films, seminars and lectures on math and science education, theory and practice of education, current issues in education, educational psychology, learning disabilities, and other educational topics. Students are expected to apply these studies in their teaching practice at the Texas Governor's School. Students also learn how to operate and apply current educational media and technology.

Professional Development

GATE students attend workshops to enhance their communication skills. Furthermore, students write daily in reflective journals and learn how to use personal writing to facilitate dialogues and projects.

Leadership

Working with GATE faculty mentors, students refine the leadership service projects proposed in their applications. The expectation is that they will return to their local schools and communities and implement the projects. Upon acceptance to GATE, students will be asked to identify local administrators or educators to support them in their endeavors when they return home.

Team Lesson Planning

Small teams comprised of GATE students research and plan interdisciplinary lessons using current educational philosophy and technology, including library services and a variety of media and computer laboratories. Each team teaches its lesson to a "classroom" of other GATE students, faculty and visiting educators and officials.

Kids' College

During one week, GATE students apply instructional strategies and learning theory hands-on in an educational program serving children from communities surrounding Corpus Christi. Students prepare and present math and science oriented lessons and manage school activities under the supervision of GATE faculty mentors.

Future Schools

Teams of students develop model schools for the future, creating visionary documents that include an educational philosophy, mission statement, school goals, a description of the community being served and a profile of a graduate. Excellence, worldview, 21st century needs and the means by which these goals will be addressed are major considerations in this project.

Portfolio Assessment

Students maintain achievement portfolios that include samples of the work they complete at GATE. Students are encouraged to incorporate their portfolios into their permanent academic record and to use them for college admissions.

Information: (361)825-3368, weekdays, except holidays.

Website: <http://gate.tamucc.edu>

E-Mail: joann.mcdonald@tamucc.edu