

**Loyola Marymount University
School of Education**

**The California Teaching Performance Assessment
(CalTPA)**

Frequently Asked Questions

The information presented in this guide is meant to serve as introductory information. After reading this document, candidates should have a good overview of the CA TPA. Much of the information presented in this guide is taken from materials provided by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

- **What is the California Teaching Performance Assessment?**

The CA TPA is a new assessment requirement for all teacher candidates studying for a SB 2042 teaching credential. The assessment is designed to give candidates the opportunity to develop, refine, and demonstrate teaching knowledge, skills, and abilities during the teacher preparation program. The assessment is designed to be both formative and summative.

The CA TPA was developed over a two-year period. Staff and consultants from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) and Educational Testing Service (ETS) led the development of the CA TPA. Educators (both K-12 and Teacher Education faculty) served on various teams that informed the development of the CA TPA.

- **What is the CA TPA designed to measure?**

The CA TPA is designed to measure aspects of the Teaching Performance Expectations (TPE). The TPEs are set of standards that clearly outline what beginning teachers should know and be able to do before receiving a preliminary credential. Each task on the CA TPA measures aspects of a number of TPEs and many TPEs are measured in more than one task. The TPEs are measured holistically within each TPA.

- **Is the CA TPA the only way I can provide evidence for my competency in the TPEs?**

No, it is only one component. While the CA TPA is an important assessment instrument, candidates and faculty members in Teacher Education programs must keep in mind that the CA TPA is only ONE way of demonstrating a candidate's knowledge and skills related to the TPEs.

- **Can I be recommended for a CA preliminary credential if I demonstrate competence in the TPEs in other ways other than passing the CA TPA?**

No. A candidate must pass all four tasks of the CA TPA in order to be recommended for a preliminary teaching credential even if he/she can produce other evidence from their coursework that they have competence in the TPE's. Passing is considered earning a score level "3" or score level "4" on each task.

- **How many tasks must a candidate complete for the CA TPA?**
Candidates must complete and pass 4 tasks. These tasks are separate but are inter-related. Each task was designed with a specific sequence in mind. As the tasks increase in complexity, candidates are asked to make more choices and decisions in response to the prompt, as well as provide more detailed evidence to support those choices and decisions.
- **At LMU, how do I take the CA TPA?**
Candidates must enroll in 4 zero unit classes: EDUC 461.462.463.464 for Undergraduate candidates, EDUC 5950, 5951, 5952, 5953 for Graduate candidate. Candidates must enroll in these classes in a prescribed sequence. For the most part, candidates must pass the previous task in order to register for the next task. Candidates normally register for Task 3 (EDUC 463 or EDUC 5952) and Task 4 (EDUC 464 or EDUC 5953) during the same semester. It is possible to take Task 2 before Task 1; this depends on the coursework previously taken.
- **Is there a fee for taking the CA at LMU?**
Yes. Candidates will be assessed a fee of \$100 per task (a total of \$400).
- **Do I have to attend a “class” for the CA TPA?**
No. Information for the TPA will be given by your academic advisor. During the advising session, the academic advisor will give you the link to the web site that contains all the information on the TPAs including templates for the tasks and sample responses. Candidates must pay special attention to deadlines and submission guidelines. A TPA candidate handbook is also available on the web site.

When a candidate registers for TPA, it is presumed that the candidate has read and understood all the information on the web site.

TPA 1 and TPA 2 are to be completed outside of your regular coursework. TPA 3 and TPA 4 are incorporated into the final credential coursework in your program.

- **What kind of support should I expect to receive when I complete the CA TPA?**
The CA TPA is an example of an “open assessment system”. This means that candidates can ask assistance from any faculty member in the School of Education. The CA TPA Coordinator and other faculty members will give the primary support for the TPA. In addition to assistance from faculty members, candidates may also seek assistance from their colleagues and practitioners in the field.

Dana Coleman, TPA Coordinator will hold informal TPA meetings throughout the year to give you tips on each task.

Despite all the assistance, however, candidates will be asked to sign a statement certifying that the responses to the CA TPA task are a product of their own effort. In other words, while candidates may seek assistance from others, it is presumed that the actual writing of the response is being done by the candidate.

- **How can I prepare for the CA TPA?**

The coursework within your credential program will prepare you for the TPAs. Candidates should become very familiar with the different CA TPA tasks by reading all the materials that are made available. Furthermore, faculty members in the Teacher Education program in the School Education are familiar with the CA TPA tasks. In many cases, faculty members will prepare candidates for the TPA tasks by giving assignments and activities in their classes that serve as practice exercises for the CA TPA.

- **What materials will I have to complete the TPA?**

Candidates will have a wealth of materials available to them. Each Candidate will download a copy of the handbook produced by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The handbook provides an overview of the CA TPA tasks, guidelines, and directions.

Candidates will also have access to BENCHMARK responses. These benchmark papers will give candidates examples of responses that received a score of “4”.

All TPA’s will be completed using LiveText.

Most of the TPA materials can be found on the LMU TPA web site:

soe.lmu.edu/tpas

- **How do I submit my TPA responses? When are they due?**

The TPA web site contains SUBMISSION GUIDELINES. Download the guidelines and refer to them when you are preparing your response. There are additional submission guidelines for the video component of TPA 4.

Responses to the TPAs are due on a specific date, most often by 5:00 PM. Please consult the calendar posted on the web site for important submission deadlines.

- **What are the 4 CA TPA tasks all about?**

More information about each CA TPA task is available by contacting the TPA Coordinator, Dana Coleman at dadams11@lmu.edu. The following is brief description of each task.

CA TPA TASK 1: Candidates will be asked to demonstrate their knowledge of principles of content-specific pedagogy and developmentally appropriate pedagogy. Candidates will be given scenarios and will be asked to respond to questions related to assessment, developmentally appropriate pedagogy, adaptation of content for English Language Learners, and adaptation of content for students with special needs.

CA TPA TASK 2: Candidates will be asked to show that they are able to collect information about students and use that information for instructional planning.

CA TPA TASK 3: In this task, candidates demonstrate their ability to select a unit of study and learning goal(s) and to plan standard-based, developmentally appropriate student assessment activities for a group of students. Candidates will also be asked to make assessment adaptations for students with specific learning needs.

CA TPA TASK 4: Candidates will be asked to design a lesson, assess student learning, implement the lesson, and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the lesson. Task 4 requires both a written response a videotape of the implementation of the lesson.

- **How will the responses to the CA TPA be assessed?**
Trained assessors will score candidate responses. Assessors must participate in intensive training before they can score candidate responses.
- **What score must I get to pass the CA TPA?**
Each CA TPA task is scored on a 4-point scale. Thus, candidates can receive a score of 1, 2, 3, or 4.

The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing has determined the passing score for the CA TPA. At the time, the passing score for the entire assessment is 12 points. However, each institution may set a passing score. The institution's passing score may be the same as the score set by the CCTC. Each institution can also set a passing score that is lower or higher than the recommended passing score of the CCTC.

At Loyola Marymount University, only a score of "3" or higher is considered a passing score. Additionally, a total score of 12 points is necessary.

- **Is my score on the CA TPA recorded on my official LMU transcript?**
No. However, since candidate are enrolled in a course (even though it is 0 units), we are required to report a grade. Candidates will receive a grade CREDIT or NO CREDIT. A score of 3 or 4 receives CREDIT and a score of 1 or 2 receives NO CREDIT.

Each Candidate, however, will have a separate CA TPA transcript that will be kept internally in the School of Education at LMU. Candidates will have access to this transcript. This transcript contains the actual scores for the candidate for each task of the CA TPA. A copy of the TPA transcript can be given to candidates when requested in writing. The request needs to be made through the TPA Coordinator.

- **Is it possible to retake a CA TPA task if I do not pass it the first time?**
Yes. Candidates can retake the CA TPA task up to three times. However, candidates cannot receive a grade of INCOMPLETE on any CA TPA task. If a candidate does not pass the CA TPA during the semester that he/she enrolls in the task, by the designated re-submission date, he/she will receive a grade of NO CREDIT and the candidate will need to enroll in the TPA task again during the next semester. Thus, if a candidate

feels that the tasks cannot be completed in the semester in which the task is to be completed, he/she should drop the TPA before the last day for dropping classes.

- **Additionally, a candidate must receive a score level “2” with all sections of the CA TPA task being completed, in order to be eligible to resubmit their CA TPA for a higher score.** A candidate may not submit a blank or incomplete CA TPA task and be given the opportunity to resubmit. All CA TPA tasks that are turned in incomplete, have sections missing, or do not earn a score level “2” will be issued a grade of **No Credit**. If a grade of **No Credit** is assigned, the candidate will have to enroll in the CA TPA course the following semester and pay all fees.
- **What if I do not agree with the score I received for the CA TPA task? Can I appeal?**
Yes. Candidates who do not pass a CA TPA task can appeal their scores. Appeals follow the same procedure used in the School of Education for grade appeals. Appeals for the CA TPA task should be directed to the TPA Coordinator. The response may be scored again by two additional assessors.
- **What happens if I still do not pass a CA TPA task after my third attempt?**
If at any point a candidate does not pass a CA TPA task, he/she will receive feedback from the task TPA Coordinator. After the third attempt, a candidate must meet with his/her program Director to come up with a remediation plan. This plan may include repeating courses. Candidates who still do not pass the CA TPA task after a fourth attempt may be counseled out of the program.
- **When should I register for the CA TPA?**
Candidates should consult with their advisor to discuss whether or not they are ready to register for the CA TPA tasks. Remember, a candidate cannot receive a grade of INCOMPLETE on any CA TPA tasks so candidate should be able to make the necessary time commitment to complete the tasks.
- **May I complete tasks 1 and 2 during the same semester?**
Candidates are strongly advised AGAINST registering for TPA 1 and TPA 2 during the same semester, especially during the summer semester. Before registering for TPA 1 and TPA 2, the candidate must make sure that time commitments will not prevent him/her meeting the submission deadlines.
- **Why are responses to the TPAs in the summer due early when the course is listed as a SECOND summer session course?**
Responses are due early because they must be assessed and in some cases resubmitted, prior to the time that grades are due. Remember, candidates cannot receive a grade of INCOMPLETE for the TPAs, so the candidate must pass the TPA by the time grades have to be submitted. Thus, so the candidates DO NOT have the entire summer to complete the TPAs. For this reason, candidates are strongly advised against registering for 2 tasks during the summer unless the tasks are part of a class (e.g. “Student Teaching, portfolio and Assessment”).

- **Task 3 and Task 4 are assignments in my final class. If I do not complete these tasks, how is my grade affected?**

Candidates who cannot complete task 3 and task 4 during the prescribed semester must DROP these classes or they will receive a grade of NO CREDIT for the TPAs. Candidate who drops the TPAs in time may still continue to attend and complete the requirements for the final class but the candidate will receive a grade of IMCOMPLETE in the class. Candidates should then register for task 3 and task 4 during the following semester. Once the candidate has received passing scores on task 3 and task 4, the TPA Coordinator will communicate with the faculty member of the final class.

- **How will I use Livetext with the TPAs?**

All TPA's are completed using LiveText. Please contact livetexthelp@lmu.edu for assistance with LiveText.

- **How do I receive my score for my TPA?**

Scores are posted to your LiveText account. If you received a score of "2", you are advised to see Dana Coleman, TPA Coordinator, for feedback prior to resubmitting your response.

- **All correspondence regarding your CA TPA is sent to your lion.lmu.edu account. Please check this account regularly.**

- **If I have any more questions, who can I contact?**

Questions related to the submission guidelines and the tasks themselves should be directed to:

Dana Coleman, M.S.
TPA Coordinator
dadams11@lmu.edu
310.568.6228

Questions related to registration should be directed to the Program Advisor.