

The background features a large, faded seal of Southern University. The seal is circular with a blue outer ring containing the text "SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY" at the top and "NEW ORLEANS, LA." at the bottom. Inside the ring is a yellow eagle with its wings spread, perched on a globe. The text "THE SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY" is visible in a smaller font within the seal.

# Student Guide to Passing Praxis Assessments

Southern University at New Orleans is a regionally accredited institution of higher learning. Therefore, the College of Education and Human Development adheres to state and federal guidelines for its three teacher preparation programs: Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education (will be Birth-K in 2016) and Certification Only Program (for degreed individuals).

These programs require students to pass a series of Praxis assessments.

### **What are Praxis Assessments?**

The Louisiana State Department of Education requires all prospective teachers to attain certification in order to teach in a K-12 classroom. They use a series of standardized tests, Praxis, to assess content knowledge, skills and the predictive ability of prospective teachers to use effective instructional strategies for diverse learners.

### **What type of content is on the Praxis I CASE Assessments?**

Praxis I Core Academic Skills for Educators (CASE) consists of three different assessments: reading, writing and math. Each assessment measures specific content knowledge. For example, the reading section determines how well a prospective teacher can comprehend overall ideas, an author's purpose, tone, attitude, fact versus opinion, and supporting details.

The math section measures if a prospective knows how to compute and solve problems concerning number and quantity, algebra and functions, geometry, and data and probability.

The writing part of Praxis assesses if you know how to synthesize (source base essay) and convince someone of your argument (argumentative essay) Prospective teachers must demonstrate their skill in writing both types of essays in addition to knowing how to identify a range of grammatical errors.

Praxis I assessments are similar to ACT assessments. Both tests asses many of the same skills. Generally, though, Praxis I Core is a test of basic skills.

Praxis II consists of Principles of Learning Teaching (PLT), the assessment that determines the effectiveness of your instructional delivery to students, and your content area assessment, such as elementary education, early childhood education

for undergraduate students and Art, English, health & physical education, social studies, math, etc. for Certification-Only students.

### **What does the Praxis Tests Measure?**

The *Praxis* tests measure specific content and pedagogical knowledge for beginning teaching practice. The tests do not measure skills related to an individual's disposition toward teaching or potential for success. The assessments are designed to be comprehensive and inclusive, but are limited to what can be covered in a finite number of questions and question types.

### **What resources should I use to study for my content area exam?**

A study guide is always helpful. Also, materials and books from high school and college courses may be helpful. If you have a background in a content area such as history, math or English, or science, you may have to refresh but you should have a solid foundation for passing your content area exam.

### **What score do I need to make to pass Praxis?**

Each Praxis assessment has a different score required for passing. The Louisiana State Department of Education determines passing scores for our State. They are as follows:

<b>Praxis I: CASE</b>	<b>Praxis Test Number</b>	<b>Required Score</b>
Reading	5712	156
Writing	5722	162
Math	5732	150

### **Praxis II**

Principles of Learning & Teaching 1-5	5622	160
Principles of Learning & Teaching Early Childhood	5621	157
Principles of Learning & Teaching 6-12 (Alternative certification)	5624	157

### **Praxis II Content Areas**

Elementary Education Multiple Subjects consist of four different tests and each test has a passing score requirement. They are as follows:

Reading/Language Arts	5002	157
Mathematics	5003	157
Social Studies	5004	155
Science	5005	159

Elementary Education Multiple Subjects Tests can be taken at one time during one sitting. If you are interested in this test, the test number is (5001). Remember that each test will be scored separately. There is no composite score for the tests.

**Praxis II Secondary Areas  
(Alternative certification)**

Art	5134	159
Biology	5235	150
English	5039	168
Math	5161	160
Social Studies	5086	160
Health & P.E.	5857	160

Art and Health & Physical Education content areas are K-12 certifications and require passing the specific content area in addition to any PLT area assessment.

**Which Praxis tests do I need to pass?**

Unless you have a Master's degree from a regionally accredited college or university or a composite score of 22 on the ACT, you must pass all three Praxis I CASE assessments, reading, writing and math, your content area assessment and Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) for your grade level.

**What do I need to do to pass Praxis?**

The most important activity a student can do to pass Praxis is to study for it. The Praxis test is not rocket science. It is a comprehensive standardized test that many students can pass. Studying for Praxis is a strategic process that should lead to a successful outcome.

Consider the following recommendations:

(1) Learn more about Praxis assessments by visiting [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org). It is helpful to know the types of questions you will be asked, the number of questions per category, and the weighted percentage each category has on the overall test.

(2) Discover more about the format of the test. Praxis assessments are given via computer, and they are timed.

(3) Participate in the Praxis workshops and simulations given throughout the semester. Students are notified by email about time and place of the workshops and simulations.

(4) Take a Praxis I Core diagnostic assessment using PLATO, and then formulate a study plan that targets your academic weaknesses. This is one of the most important steps you can take because taking time to learn new knowledge or refresh on what you already know is one of keys to passing Praxis.

(5) Invest in a study guide. Independent study is one of the best ways to prepare for Praxis.

(6) Review English and math coursework from prior or current classes.

### **How does the college help students to pass Praxis?**

The College of Education and Human Development prides itself on its Praxis preparation program. SUNO students have a plethora of resources at their disposal to aid them with passing Praxis. Some of them are:

- Teacher Test Prep Courses. These courses specifically focus on Praxis content and strategies. The Praxis I course is EDUC 200, the Elementary Content area course is ELED 226, and the Principles of Learning & Teaching course is ELED 227.
- PLATO. This software simulates Praxis in rigor and content. PLATO has assessment features such as pre and post-tests so you can track your progress and tutorials. If used correctly, PLATO alone can help some students pass Praxis.
- Praxis Workshops. These are intensive sessions that focus on academic content and test-taking strategies.

- One-on-One tutoring. SUNO’s Comprehensive Lab has tutors for students who need assistance in reading, writing and math.

The above resources are for currently enrolled SUNO students. However, workshops are available to non-SUNO students for a nominal fee.

### **How much are Praxis assessments?**

Each Praxis I CASE assessment is \$90.00 each. PLT assessments are \$146.00. Fees for secondary content areas are as follows:

Elementary Education	\$60.00 per test <u>or</u> \$170.00 for combined tests
Art	\$120.00
Biology	\$150.00
English	\$146.00
Math	\$120.00
Social Studies	\$146.00
Health & P.E.	\$120.00

### **How can I get help with paying for Praxis tests?**

Educational Testing Series (ETS) offers fee waivers to eligible students on a first come/first serve basis. Students must mail fee waivers directly to ETS. The address is located at the bottom of the fee waiver.

### **What if I don’t pass Praxis the first time I take it?**

If at first you do not succeed, reflect on the skills you need to learn, make a plan to learn them, and then try again. It is not uncommon for students to fall a little short of the passing scores the first time they take Praxis assessments. It is important not to give up.

### **Everybody I speak with about Praxis says it is hard to pass. Is that true?**

Praxis I is a standardized test of *basic* skills. Praxis II is requires students to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities as it concerns what prospective teachers should know. In high school, you are taught to comprehend, to write well and to compute problems. Praxis tests measure how well you can do that. Some students pass Praxis without studying at all; some students study only a little bit and others study a lot—either way, many students have been successful with passing Praxis

using various study techniques or none at all. Students have different academic strengths and weaknesses, have different experiences with taking standardized tests, and prepare more extensively or not at all than others—comparing Praxis experiences is not the standard students should use to determine the rigor of the test.

### **What tips can you offer me for beating the clock since Praxis is timed?**

- Read the questions first. Survey or skim the passages as you look for the answers. Review the question and your answer choice, revise if necessary and then move on to the next question.
- Practice timing yourself when you study. PLATO is a great tool to use for timing yourself on questions.
- Know how to analyze quickly and assuredly. SOAPSTone is a good strategy to use; it is an acronym that can be used to analyze primary and secondary sources (including letters, journal entries, articles, charts, etc.).

**S**ubject-what is the document about? (What is the main idea?).

**O**ccasion-when and where was the document written?

**A**udience-for whom was the document written?

**P**-why was the document written, what is its purpose?

**S**peaker-Who produced the document? What is his/her point of view?

**T**one-what is the overall tone (attitude/emotion) inherent to the document?

### **Certification-Only Praxis Requirements**

Per Louisiana State Department of Education, degreed students seeking to enroll into an alternative education program must have passed all parts of Praxis I CASE assessments and the appropriate content area Praxis II assessment.

In some cases, students may enroll into two courses that will count toward program completion in the Certification-Only Program if they have met Praxis I requirements either by passing the actual tests, presenting a composite ACT score of 22 or by showing evidence of an earned Master's degree from a regionally accredited college or university.

**If you are exempt from Praxis I** and would like to inquire about enrolling into courses in the Certification-Only Program, follow these simple steps:



- Submit an application to Southern University at New Orleans and pay application fee.
- Complete a program application and submit required documents by the appropriate deadline.
- A representative from the Certification-Only program will contact you for an interview. You will be notified of your acceptance status before the semester begins.

### **Can I get financial aid if I already have a degree?**

Degreed students are not eligible for Pell Grants. However, other types of financial assistance may be available. Inquire in the Financial Aid Office for specifics. Call (504) 286-5263

### **Helpful websites**

[www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org) (for all you need to know about Praxis)

[www.suno.edu](http://www.suno.edu) (to apply to the college and to learn about tuition)

[www.louisianabelieves.com](http://www.louisianabelieves.com) (to discover more about teaching certifications)

[www.kahnacademy.com](http://www.kahnacademy.com) (for assistance with math content and concepts)

Praxis study guides may be purchased from Barnes & Noble or Amazon.com. Other websites that sell textbooks may have them as well.

For assistance with study plans, PLATO tutorials, and/or Praxis workshop schedules, contact Dr. Tanisca M. Wilson, Teacher Candidacy Coordinator, at [twilson@suno.edu](mailto:twilson@suno.edu) or (504) 286-5087.

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