

WHAT IS THE TCSA?

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) terms anyone enrolled in a teacher-education program a “candidate.” “**TCSA**” stands for “**Teacher Candidate Skills Assessment.**” For VanderCook **Undergraduates** it is the institutional assessment of competencies for moving into the upper-level (Level 3) stage of degree work. For **Master and Certification** students it is an assessment of entering skills.

WHO IS REQUIRED TO TAKE THE TCSA?

All VanderCook Undergraduate and Master and Certification students take the TCSA. Master’s students (summer graduate program) are already certified teachers and do not take the TCSA.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE TCSA?

For **Undergraduates**, the TCSA has 6 components:

1. Written Theory (a written test covering Theory I-IV). Contact Professor Krupa for specifics.
2. Aural Skills (covering Sight Singing/Ear Training I-IV). Contact Dr. Hung for specifics. (Currently, this test also serves as the final exam for SS/ET IV.)
3. Keyboard competency. Contact Professor Krupa for specifics.
4. TCSA Jury (scales and rhythm assessment). Contact Professor Lepper for specifics. A copy of the TCSA Rhythm Assessment can be downloaded from the Programs → Undergraduate → TCSA page of the VanderCook website.
5. Passing score on the ISBE Test of Academic Proficiency (see ISBE Certification Tests FAQ Sheet). Contact Dean Larson with further questions.
6. A cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.5 or higher.

****Master and Certification** students take Written Theory, Aural Skills and Keyboard tests. (See the Graduate Dean for specifics.)*

WHEN MUST I TAKE THESE TESTS?

Undergraduates take the Written Theory and Aural Skills tests at the end of the Theory-SS/ET IV (202). The Keyboard test is generally taken in the same semester as Theory and SS/ET but can be taken after Piano Techniques III (MUS215). The TCSA Jury is a separate component of the Applied 212 jury. The ISBE Test of Academic Proficiency should be taken and passed as soon as possible. (See ISBE Certification Test FAQ Sheet.) **Master and Certification** students take their TCSA components at the time they begin their VanderCook course work.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I AM NOT IN THEORY-SS/ET IV AND APPLIED 212 AT THE SAME TIME?

Students who are “off track” take the TCSA components as they complete the respective course levels for those components.

SUPPOSE I DON'T PASS PART/S OF THE TCSA?

The Undergraduate Dean may allow the candidate to move forward on a probationary basis, but all components must be passed before taking professional education coursework. Failure to clear all TCSA components will result in delay of degree completion. For Master’s and Certification students the TCSA is used for advising and placement.