

EDTPA PODCAST NARRATIVE

There are lots of tests that you can cram for in life. Unfortunately, the edTPA is not one of them. It takes a ton of preparation, organization, and hard work just to complete, let alone pass.

Completing the edTPA is about careful planning and hard work, but it's also psychological. As difficult as the edTPA can be at times, the requirements are widely considered best teaching practices. You can do thisas a matter fact you are ready presenting, planning and assessing many of the requirements and strategies within the edTPA portfolio.

The difference is that you will be reflecting on your practice through commentaries and videotaping.

Working with teachers who submitted failed submissions, wasted time, and dealt with unexpected challenges, I learned a few tips to make the process easier and helpful to make sure that you pass.

Before presenting a general overview of the process I cannot emphasize enough the following

Read the handbook and then read it again and then read it again with highlights

Read making good choices before you register

Have a copy of behind the rubrics and follow it as you go through the tasks

Review the class website for resources and additional information to help you through the process

To start

“Know what a passing submission looks like.”

When you are beginning an important task or project, it's crucial to know what the end result will look like.

There are many sample portfolio submissions and links available on the class website for your review

“Know how long the edTPA preparation and submission process takes to complete.”

With the edTPA, it's important to know that the process is incredibly time-consuming and takes months to complete. So, start by selecting the date you want to receive your score, and then plan backwards. Be aware of the timelines and allow at least a few months to complete all sections of the test.

1. Print and spread out the entire manual. Read all sections thoroughly, including all parts of the rubric.
2. “Backwards plan” with student goals in mind.

3. During the process, make it a habit to review rubrics, guides, and the questions in all sections to confirm you are addressing everything. This way, you won't have to go back and make changes to your plans, which can be a frustrating setback.

Filming your submission is one of the biggest challenges."

1. Film students many times as it takes to get the best possible video that demonstrates what you plan to teach as stated in your lesson plan. You want students to be comfortable being filmed, and you want to work through any technology issues that may arise. One of the most common errors is students being inaudible (their responses are critical for the evaluation).
2. Pay very close attention to the rubric before filming the video and use it to help you plan. After filming and before doing your reflection, watch the video several times and circle back to the rubric again to ensure you are covering all of your bases.

More common mistakes to avoid

Don't be vague be precise.....

As educators we tend to fill in the blanks for our students, and when we do this we often give them the benefit of the doubt because we know them. EdTPA graders will not give you the benefit of the doubt. They don't know you, they only know what is on the page. If you lack details, the evaluator will make their own assumptions about your planning. You do not want this. Remember, there is no opportunity for clarifying questions, and if there is a lack of details, your score will reflect this.

avoid A Lesson Topic You Are Unclear About

You are going to spend a lot of time on the topic you choose for your lesson. You will be asked to explain your thinking and planning in great detail, and you will be expected to know how to scaffold and anticipate student misconceptions. If you aren't familiar with the lesson content, this can make things very difficult.

I Would recommend teaching the lesson prior to the filming and then teach the same lesson again explaining to the students what you were doing regarding the requirements for edTPA .

you're going to need your students help through this whole process

Don't teach the tasks And Task Parts Out Of Order

Plan your lesson first. Complete this task thoroughly before attempting other tasks.

- *The quality of the video is only as good as the lesson planning.* If you don't take the time to plan your lesson before you teach it, you will be stuck trying to make the video fit. This creates additional work, and can also lower your score for this task.
- *Making changes to your lesson plan after the fact often results in inconsistencies.* Often times, teachers make changes after the fact, and they are not reflected in all of the tasks. For example, a teacher might discuss how they assess using Socratic seminar in Task 1,

but then they don't include it in their lesson plans. Some edTPA graders pay close attention to these details. It's important that all tasks are aligned and consistent.

Pitfall #4: Not Managing Time

Task 1 is often the most difficult and time-consuming component, and many teachers get overwhelmed. Allow time for it

if you take the time to complete Task 1 properly, Task 2 will be much easier and of higher quality.

Recommendations for tackling the tasks in stages:

- Begin by setting a timer for 10-15 minutes (or a duration that feels doable) for each question. This can serve as a first draft and a starting point for revisions.
- Write all of your ideas out in free form, focusing on the content rather than the quality of the writing.
- Once you have your ideas down, you will likely feel less overwhelmed. At this point, use the timer strategy again, adding details and editing for writing quality.

For Task 2 film thoughtfully

You are only required to upload 10-20 minutes of video (depending on your subject area). As a result, some teachers only film 10-20 minutes of content. This is a mistake—you need to account for tech fails, or problems such as inaudibility.

film at least two entire lessons so you have a selection and can choose the best footage. You are teaching the lessons anyway, you might as well film all of them.

Another video-related error that teachers make is that they either 1) have the camera only on the teacher or 2) only on the students. You will need to show both, and all parties need to be audible. This material will be critical to you when you are writing your commentary, and also to the scorer.

Don't make the mistake of teaching to one type of learner.

Differentiated instruction is key. Be clear about all of the various ways you will accommodate all learning types. Some examples of this include conferencing, vocabulary cards, graphic organizers, as well as homogeneous or heterogeneous pairings for small group work.

In addition, the struggling learners mentioned in the Context for Learning should be mentioned in your lesson plans and commentary. There should be a clear plan for these students, and the differentiation should seem very intentional across all tasks, *especially in the lesson plan*. Most graders will notice if this is incomplete, and it will be reflected in your score.

Once you are ready to download the portfolio be reminded that every prompt must be responded to as indicated in behind the rubrics document. There is a tremendous amount of minutia and specific requirements that must be followed to achieve a good score.

So pick a date register for the portfolio and follow the edTPA checklist document available on the class website and reach out to me for any questions or concerns.

I'm sure you're going to be just fine in passing this one final hurdle for your certification.