

Report on a Technical Assistance Visit

March 2011

Overview of this Report

A summary of the Technical Assistance visit to Hebrew Union College is provided.

Staff Recommendation

This is an information item.

Background

New institutions, upon approval of their initial educator preparation programs, are assigned to one of the seven accreditation cohorts. In order to provide feedback to the new sponsors on their program implementation to date, and to report to the COA on the progress of the programs, Technical Assistance visits are provided two years prior to the scheduled accreditation site visit. Technical Assistance visits are scheduled for 2010-2011 to the following institutions: Hebrew Union College and Boston Reed College..

In April, 2008 the Commission granted Hebrew Union College initial institutional approval and the Committee on Accreditation approved Hebrew Union College's Multiple Subject Teaching Credential in May, 2008, followed by approval for their Induction program in June 2010. The Hebrew Union College was well prepared for the Technical Assistance Visit. Their program coordinators sent the review team (one CTC staff member and one volunteer BIR member) narratives addressing the Common Standards and the two sets of program standards well before the visit. A schedule for interviews was developed and a document room with hard copy evidence and access to their website of evidence was provided. The CTC staff and volunteer followed many of the procedures that are utilized in a traditional accreditation site visit. The major differences were that no standard findings were decided by the team and no accreditation recommendation was considered or mentioned. Instead, the review team provided formative feedback to the institution about the adequacy of evidence provided to demonstrate that all standards were being addressed by the program.

The reviewer and consultant interviewed the leadership team at the institution, as well as instructors, candidates, program completers, employers, and field supervisors. Across all persons interviewed, there is a strong commitment to the teacher credentialing programs offered by the institution.

At the conclusion of the visit, the team prepared a technical assistance report that was presented to the institution. This report included the professional comments of the reviewers for each of the Common and Program standards, and additional evidence for the institution to consider as they prepare for their accreditation visit in 2012-2013. A brief summary of the recommendations to the institution regarding the adequacy of documentation on program activities, candidate competencies, and program effectiveness is provided below.

The team reviewed evidence for the Multiple Subject Preliminary Teacher Preparation program and the General Education Teacher Induction Program. Much of the formative feedback provided to Hebrew Union College was related to the development of a narrative that adequately addresses all parts of the standards and the importance of establishing and monitoring the processes and procedures involved in sponsoring credential programs and recommending candidates for teaching credentials.

The reviewers also discussed the various types of evidence that should be available during a site review. While portions of portfolios were provided, no one candidate's evidence was provided in totality; while the institution participates in robust collaborative activities, evidence of these activities was lacking; and training/professional development details were unavailable for review. The reviewers pointed out the value of sharing these artifacts with the site visit team.

Feedback was well received by program personnel. The leadership team stated they were grateful for the opportunity to see their program through "outside eyes" and be better informed about the Accreditation site review so they could be better prepared for a review visit two years hence.