

Adoption of the 2006-2007 Workplan

Professional Services Division

August 24, 2006

Overview of this Report

The Committee on Accreditation adopts its annual workplan at its first meeting of the new fiscal year. This item contains a review of the procedures for displaying and reporting on the workplan. In addition, the proposed workplan for the 2006-2007 year is presented for discussion and adoption by the Committee.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the COA review the proposed workplan, suggest modifications, and adopt the workplan for 2006-2007.

Background

Shortly after its organizational meeting in April of 1995, the COA developed a comprehensive workplan for its first twenty-four months of operation. The workplan was based upon the analysis of the *Accreditation Framework* done by the Committee at its May, 1995 meeting. Eight tasks were identified as priority work for the COA and staff developed projected time frames for the completion of each of the identified tasks. Staff was asked to provide an update on the workplan at each of its scheduled meetings

In subsequent years, the Committee on Accreditation adopted its workplan derived from the responsibilities described in the *Accreditation Framework*. Annually, the Committee deleted completed tasks, added new tasks, or continued unfinished or delayed tasks from earlier workplans. The workplan was adopted at the July or August meeting each fiscal year. The identified tasks were originally presented in a table that included columns indicating proposed completion dates and how much of the task was completed as of each meeting date. As directed by the Committee, revised completion dates were inserted, when appropriate.

As the Committee moved from its planning phase and assumed its full accreditation responsibility, there was a gradual shift in the nature of the items included as a part of the workplan. In the first years of Committee operation, there were a number of tasks that needed to be completed as the Committee made preparations for the full assumption of its responsibilities. Initially, the tasks tended to be those that could be identified with a start date and a completion date. The items could be displayed showing those dates and what percentage of the task had been completed. Over time, the tasks of the Committee have more often been identified as part of its continuing responsibilities, rather than as discrete “stand alone” tasks. Within each task, there are “sub-tasks” that do become identified with the plan for a particular year, or that become identified during the course of the year. However, the tasks do not lend themselves to the same type of display as in the past. Because of that, the Committee felt that it could dispense with the chart for reporting on the workplan, since it did not seem to serve the purpose it once did. Further, the Committee decided that it did not need to have a formal report in the annual workplan at every meeting. Instead, the reports would be presented on an “as needed” basis.

According to past COA practice, staff has prepared a draft workplan for the 2006-2007 year for discussion at the August COA meeting and for inclusion in the *Eleventh Annual Accreditation Report* to the Commission. On the basis of a review of the accomplishments of the 2005-2006 year and a review of the workplan for that year, the items were selected for inclusion in the proposed 2006-2007 workplan. The workplan can be adopted as it is, with the understanding that amendments can be made in the future, or the workplan can be amended at this meeting.

Proposed Workplan for the Committee in 2006-2007

The items that follow represent the key elements of the 2006-2007 workplan for the Committee on Accreditation. Because the COA anticipates being fully involved in the implementation phase of a revised accreditation system, the major tasks before the COA during the next year will likely be focused on transition to a revised system and development of implementation procedures based upon new Commission policies on accreditation.

Task 1 Complete the Evaluation of the Accreditation Framework and Begin Implementation of a Revised Accreditation System

The *Accreditation Framework* called for an outside evaluator to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the *Framework* over a four-year period beginning with the first official accreditation visits. The contractor was selected in December 1999 and the contract was subsequently approved by the Commission. The contractor (American Institutes for Research) was fully involved in gathering data, attending COA meetings, observing accreditation visits, and interviewing participants in the accreditation process. The final report was presented to the Executive Director in April 2003 and initially reviewed at the May 2003 meeting of the COA and was the subject of discussion at subsequent COA meetings. An analysis of the findings of the AIR Report was included in the larger review of the *Accreditation Framework* initiated by the Commission at its May 2004 meeting when it appointed the Accreditation Study Work Group to work with the COA in the review. During the 2004-2005 year, the Committee on Accreditation worked closely with the Accreditation Study Work Group in conducting a complete review of the Commission's accreditation process. Early in the 2005-2006 year, the findings of the review were presented for Commission consideration. Once the Commission acts, the major activities of the COA during the remainder of the year will be to begin transition to the revised system and develop implementation procedures for the revised Accreditation Framework.

Task 2 Monitor the Implementation of and Evaluate the Effectiveness of Accreditation Agreements with Selected National Organizations (including NCATE)

The Partnership Agreement in effect with the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) was renewed in October 2001. The COA has continued monitoring the agreement in the same manner as during previous years to make certain that the implementation of the partnership results in assuring that state issues are appropriately addressed in each visit and that the process reduces duplication. The COA will begin work on a review of the

Partnership Agreement, in light of a revised *Accreditation Framework*. Work will also begin on the next renewal of the Partnership Agreement.

As part of the implementation of the *Accreditation Framework*, the Committee has negotiated formal memoranda of understanding with some national professional education organizations. These memoranda govern the portion of the *Accreditation Framework* that permits national accreditation of credential programs to substitute for state accreditation. The Committee also delayed further efforts to negotiate formal memoranda of understanding with some national professional education organizations while the accreditation review was being completed. Once the Commission acts on the revised *Framework*, the COA will resume its efforts to work with national professional education organizations in the context of the revised accreditation system.

Task 3 Review and Initial Accreditation of New Credential Programs

This is one of the major ongoing tasks of the Committee on Accreditation. The Committee has developed procedures for handling the submission of proposed credential programs. Some of the decisions are made on the basis of expert review panel recommendations and some are made on the basis of staff recommendations. In all cases, programs will not be given initial accreditation until the reviewers have determined that all of the Commission's program standards are met. The COA will review the review procedures in the light of the revised *Accreditation Framework* and make appropriate changes.

Task 4 Professional Accreditation of Institutions of Postsecondary Education and Their Credential Preparation Programs

This is the principal ongoing task of the Committee on Accreditation. Effective September 1, 1997, the Committee on Accreditation assumed full responsibility for making the legal decisions regarding the continuing professional education accreditation of postsecondary education institutions and their credential programs. In December 2002 the Commission took action to postpone accreditation visits for Spring 2003 and for all of the 2003-2004 accreditation cycle, with the exception of merged COA/NCATE visits. In March 2004 the Commission took further action to postpone accreditation visits originally scheduled for the 2004-2005 accreditation cycle. The Committee on Accreditation will develop a new schedule for evaluation activities to implement a revised accreditation system.

During the 2006-2007 year, there will be six accreditation site visits to California Institutions of Higher Education. These will be merged COA/NCATE visits.

Task 5 Revise the *Accreditation Handbook* and Team Training Curriculum

Activities related to the *Accreditation Handbook* and team training will become a major focus of the COA once the Commission adopts a revised *Accreditation Framework* and makes decisions about future accreditation policies and procedures. The COA will need to develop a new team training curriculum and begin training activities. The *Accreditation Handbook* will need to be revised to be consistent with the revised accreditation system.

Task 6 Maintain Public Access to the Committee on Accreditation

The Committee will make formal presentations upon request. All meetings of the COA are held in public. Regular information about the Committee and its deliberations is posted on the COA webpage at the Commission's website. The COA will be scheduling technical assistance meetings to provide information about the revised accreditation system to program sponsors.

Task 7 Receive Regular Updates on Commission Activities Related to Accreditation

The Committee will be receiving information about Commission activities and actions that are related to accreditation issues. The COA will also solicit information about Commission suggestions and concerns about its accreditation system.

Task 8 Preparation and Presentation of COA Reports to the Commission

The Committee on Accreditation will present its annual report to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing in the fall. Additional updates and reports to the Commission will be provided throughout the year.

Task 9 Other Required Elements of the Accreditation Framework - Election of Co-Chairs, Adopt Meeting Schedule, Orient New Members, On-Going Review of Accreditation Process and Procedures, etc.

Each year, the Committee elects Co-Chairs, adopts a meeting schedule, orients new members, and modifies its own procedures manual. Through numerous planned activities and in the process of the ongoing accreditation reports and discussions, the Committee conducts an on-going review of the accreditation process. As a result of those discussions, the Committee considers and adopts modifications in accreditation procedures, as needed.