

# Accreditation Handbook

## Professional Services Division

May 1 & 2, 2008

### Overview of this Report

This report provides an update on the work on the revision of the *Accreditation Handbook* for discussion and input.

### Staff Recommendation

This is an information item only. COA discussion and input will help guide staff on further development.

### Background

Implementation of the accreditation system has required not only new policies but new procedures as well. Staff has worked on each chapter of the *Handbook* but there is still more to be done. At this point, it is important to get input from others to ensure that the writing is clear and covers the topics important to those participating in accreditation activities.

Included in this agenda item are drafts of the first three chapters of the *Handbook* for COA review and comment. A template for feedback has been provided for the first three chapters.

- Are there topics that are missing?
- Information that is unclear?

Chapters Four, Five and Six provide detailed information about the Biennial Report, Program Assessment and Site Visits. Staff will be sending drafts of these chapters to targeted audiences who can provide insight from a number of perspectives. The chapter on Biennial Reports will be sent to the Work Group, to those who piloted the Biennial Report and to the first year participants who completed the report. Similarly, the chapter on Program Assessment will be sent to the Work Group, to those who completed Program Assessment this year and to those who were readers of Program Assessment documents. A template for feedback will be used for these chapters.

Chapter Six on Site Visits will be written in two forms. One will reflect the current practice as the visits for the next year will continue to use that format. A newer version of the chapter, as revised to reflect the changed procedures, will be sent to the Work Group. As there have been no visits conducted in the new system, additional input will be gathered as the first round of visits in the revised system are completed.

The remaining chapters, seven through nine will cover the following:

Chapter Seven: Accreditation Site Visit Team Member Information

Chapter Eight: Effective Team Leadership

Chapter Nine: Articulation Between State and National Accreditation

These chapters will be sent for review throughout the spring and summer for input.

It is expected that chapters of the *Handbook* will be posted, as completed, on the Commission website with all chapters available by the start of the next school year. Posting the chapters on the website will enable users to consult the necessary chapters readily and will allow staff and the COA to consider changes or revisions as the system is fully implemented.

## **Chapter One: Responsibilities of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the Committee on Accreditation**

### **Introduction**

The Committee on Accreditation was created as a result of Senate Bill 148 (Bergeson) and implemented pursuant to Senate Bill 655 (Bergeson). The provisions of these statutes are found in the Education Code, Sections 44370 through 44374, govern the *Accreditation Framework*, and guide this *Handbook*. The complete *Accreditation Framework* is presented in Attachment G.

Certain responsibilities related to the accreditation of educator preparation are assigned to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing and certain other responsibilities are assigned to the Committee on Accreditation. This chapter identifies the specific duties of each body that relate directly to the professional accreditation process. Institutions preparing for accreditation reviews and institutions interested in adding new credential programs under the *Accreditation Framework* should refer this chapter.

### **I. Responsibilities of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing**

- A. Adopt and Modify the *Accreditation Framework*.** The Commission has the authority and responsibility to adopt an *Accreditation Framework*, “which sets forth the policies of the Commission regarding the accreditation of educator preparation in California” (Education Code Section 44372-a). The Commission may modify the *Framework* in accordance with Section 8 of the *Framework*. The *Accreditation Framework* is found in Appendix C.
- B. Establish and Modify Standards for Educator Preparation.** Pursuant to Education Code Section 44372-b, the Commission has the authority and responsibility to establish and modify standards for educator preparation in California.
- C. Initial Approval of Institutions or Program Sponsors.** In accordance with Education Code Sections 44227-a and 44372-c and Section 4 of this *Framework*, the Commission determines the eligibility of an institution that applies for initial accreditation and that has not previously prepared educators for state certification in California. The Commission approves institutions that meet the criteria that have been adopted for that purpose by the Commission. Institutional accreditation by the Commission establishes the eligibility of an institution to submit specific program proposals to the Committee on Accreditation.
- D. Hear and Resolve Accreditation Appeals.** The Commission hears appeals of accreditation decisions, which must be based on evidence that accreditation procedures or decisions were “arbitrary, capricious, unfair, or contrary to the policies of the Commission or the procedural guidelines of the Committee on Accreditation” (Education Code Section 44374-e). The Commission resolves each appeal, and the Executive Director communicates the Commission’s decision to the Committee on Accreditation, the accreditation team, and the affected institution. The Appeal Procedures are found in Chapter Four of this *Handbook*.

- E. Appoint the Committee on Accreditation.** Pursuant to Education Code 44372-d and Section 2 of this *Framework*, the Commission appoints members and alternate members of the Committee on Accreditation for specific terms. The Commission selects the Committee members and alternate members from nominees submitted by the Nominating Panel. The Commission ensures that the Committee on Accreditation is professionally distinguished and balanced in its composition, but does not appoint members to represent particular institutions, organizations or constituencies.
- F. Address Issues and Refer Concerns Related to Accreditation.** The Commission considers issues and concerns related to accreditation that it identifies, as well as those brought to the Commission's attention by the Committee on Accreditation, postsecondary institutions, the Commission's staff, or other concerned individuals or organizations. At its discretion, the Commission may refer accreditation issues and concerns to the Committee on Accreditation for examination and response.
- G. Review Annual Reports by the Committee on Accreditation.** The Commission reviews *Annual Accreditation Reports* submitted by the Committee on Accreditation. *Annual Reports* include standard information about the dimensions and results of the accreditation process.
- H. Allocate Resources Annually for Accreditation Operations.** The Commission annually allocates resources for accreditation operations to implement the *Accreditation Framework*. Consistent with the Commission's general practice, staff assignments to accreditation operations are made by the Executive Director, in accordance with state budgets, laws and regulations.
- I. Jointly Sponsor an External Evaluation of Accreditation Policies and Practices.** The Commission shares responsibility with the Committee on Accreditation for the design and implementation of a comprehensive evaluation of accreditation policies and the selection of an external evaluator to conduct the evaluation, pursuant to Section 8 of the *Framework*.

## **II. Responsibilities of the Committee on Accreditation**

- A. Comparability of Standards.** In accordance with Section 3 of the *Framework*, the Committee determines whether National or Professional Program or Experimental Program standards, taken as a whole, provide a level of program quality comparable to standards adopted by the Commission.). If the Committee determines that the proposed standards are collectively comparable in breadth and depth, to the Commission-adopted standards, the Committee on Accreditation may approve the proposed standards as Program Standards in California.
- B. Initial Accreditation of Programs.** The Committee reviews proposals for the initial accreditation of programs submitted by institutions that have been determined eligible by the Commission. New programs of educator preparation may be submitted using Commission approved standards, National or Professional Program or Experimental Program Standards in Section 3 of the *Framework*. If the Committee determines that a program meets all applicable standards, the Committee grants initial accreditation to the program.

- C. Continuing Accreditation Decisions.** After reviewing the recommendations of accreditation teams, the Committee makes decisions about the continuing accreditation of educator preparation institutions and programs, consistent with Section 6 of the *Framework*. Pertaining to each institution, the Committee makes one of following decisions: Accreditation, Accreditation with Stipulations Accreditation with Major Stipulations, Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations or Denial of Accreditation.
- D. Accreditation Procedures.** Consistent with the terms of Section 6, the Committee recommends appropriate guidelines for self-study reports and other accreditation materials and exhibits to be prepared by institutions. The Committee also adopts guidelines for accreditation team reports, which emphasize the use of narrative, qualitative explanations of team recommendations. The Committee may provide additional guidance to institutions, teams and the Executive Director regarding accreditation visit procedures. The procedural guidelines of the Committee are published by the Commission in this *Accreditation Handbook*.
- E. Monitor the Accreditation System.** The Committee monitors the performance of accreditation teams and oversees other activities associated with the accreditation system.
- F. Annual Reports, Recommendations and Responses.** The Committee presents *Annual Accreditation Reports* to the Commission. *Annual Reports* include information about the dimensions and results of activities in the accreditation system. The Committee also advises the Commission about policy changes to improve the quality and integrity of the accreditation process.
- G. Meet in Public Sessions.** The Committee conducts its business and makes its decisions in meetings that are open to the public, except as provided by statute.
- H. Jointly Sponsor an External Evaluation of Accreditation Policies and Practices.** The Committee shares responsibility with the Commission for the design and implementation of a comprehensive evaluation of accreditation policies and to conduct the evaluation, pursuant to Section 8 of the *Framework*.

## **Chapter Two: Standards in Accreditation**

### **Introduction**

This chapter describes the role of common and program standards in the approval and continued accreditation of credential preparation programs. This chapter also describes the processes by which an institution gains initial accreditation from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to provide credential preparation programs and then gains initial accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation to offer specific credential preparation programs. The chapter also provides information about the process for withdrawing or discontinuing a program.

### **Common and Program Standards**

There are two categories of accreditation standards for institutions/program sponsors that prepare professional educators in California: 1) Common Standards and 2) Program Standards. An accredited institution/program sponsor is expected to satisfy the standards in both categories.

**Common Standards** relate to aspects of program quality that are the same for all educator preparation programs. This category includes standards relevant to the overall leadership and climate for educator preparation at a program sponsor, as well as standards pertaining to quality features that are common to all programs. A program sponsor responds to each Common Standard by providing pertinent information, including information about individual programs.

**Program Standards** address the quality of program features that are specific to a credential authorization, such as curriculum, field experiences, and knowledge and skills to be demonstrated by candidates in the specific credential area. Different standards options may be exercised by different credential programs at an institution/program sponsor. Options that are selected will be the basis for the review of specific programs and will guide the selection and orientation of program reviewers. Pertaining to each program, the program sponsor responds to each standard in the selected option by providing program-specific information for review by the program reviewers. When institutions/program sponsors prepare for initial program approval and continuing accreditation activities, they may consider the following options for program-specific standards.

- **Option 1. California Program Standards.** The Commission relies on panels of experts from colleges, universities and K-12 public schools to develop standards for specific credential programs. These panels are guided by current research findings in the field of the credential and the California K-12 academic content standards. They also consider standards developed by appropriate national and statewide professional organizations. If the national or professional standards are found to be appropriate for California, a panel may recommend that the Commission adopt them in lieu of developing new standards or revising the Commission's existing standards. After reviewing the recommendations of advisory panels and other experts, the Commission adopts California Program Standards for the initial and continuing accreditation of credential preparation programs. When revised program standards are adopted, institutions/program sponsors may be required to meet the new set of California Program Standards.

• **Option 2. National or Professional Program Standards.** California institutions may propose program standards that have been developed by national or state professional organizations. Such a proposal may be submitted to the Committee on Accreditation with a statement of the institution's reasons for requesting this option and the requested National or Professional Program Standards. If the Committee determines that the requested standards, taken as a whole, provide a level of professional quality comparable to the standards adopted by the Commission under Option 1 (California Program Standards), the Committee approves the proposed standards for use as Program Standards in the initial or continuing accreditation of credential program. If the Committee determines that the requested standards do not adequately address one or more aspects of California Standards (Common and/or Program), the Committee may approve the requested standards but also require the institution/program sponsor address the missing portions of the California Standards.

• **Option 3. Experimental Program Standards.** For initial accreditation, an institution may present a program that meets the Experimental Program Standards adopted by the Commission pursuant to *Education Code* Section 44273. Experimental programs are designed to allow for the examination of focused research questions intended to contribute to the body of knowledge around key aspects of the field of education including the identification of model strategies, delivery methods, and programs that lead to improved teaching and learning. Institutions that sponsor experimental programs must have a research component that examines how the program contributes to the development of quality teaching and specifically, the acquisition and mastery of appropriate performance expectations, such as the Teaching Performance Expectations for the Multiple and Single Subject Credentials. In addition, experimental programs are required to participate in all accreditation activities. Upon consultation with the institution and with the Committee on Accreditation, the Commission retains the authority to determine whether the findings support continuance of the program under the experimental standards

### **Initial Accreditation of Institutions**

According to the *Accreditation Framework* (Section 1-B-1) the Commission on Teacher Credentialing is responsible for determining the eligibility of an institution that applies for initial accreditation and that has not previously prepared educators for state certification in California. The following procedures apply to those institutions:

1. The institution prepares a complete program proposal, responding to all preconditions, Common Standards and appropriate Program Standards. The proposal will be considered as the application for accreditation.
2. Initial Accreditation will be considered a two-stage process:
  - a. The proposal will be reviewed for compliance with the appropriate institutional preconditions, (Western Association of Schools and Colleges [WASC] accreditation, institutional responsibility, non-discrimination procedures, completion of a needs assessment, involvement of practitioners in the design of the program, agreement to provide information to the Commission, etc.) and brought before the Commission on Teacher Credentialing for initial accreditation action. If the proposal meets the Commission's requirements, the institution will be recommended for initial accreditation.

- b. If the Commission acts favorably on the proposal, it will be forwarded to the Committee on Accreditation for program accreditation action according to adopted procedures.
3. Once granted initial accreditation, the institution will then come under the continuing accreditation procedures adopted by the Committee on Accreditation.

### **Initial Approval of Programs**

According to the *Accreditation Framework* (Section 2-A-2), the Committee on Accreditation is responsible for granting initial approval to new programs of educator preparation. If the Committee determines that a program meets all applicable standards, the Committee grants initial approval to the program. New credential program proposals by eligible institutions must fulfill preconditions established by state law and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. They must also fulfill the Common Standards and one of the Program Standards options listed in Section 3 of the *Framework*: Option 1, California Program Standards; Option 2, National or Professional Program Standards or Option 3, Experimental Program Standards.. Descriptions of new programs include evidence of involvement in program design and planning by elementary and secondary practitioners and members of diverse local communities.

Section 4-B of the *Framework* contains the Policies for Initial Accreditation of Programs. Prior to being presented to the Committee for action, new programs proposed by eligible institutions are reviewed by Commission staff members who have expertise in the credential area. If the Commission staff does not possess the necessary expertise, the program proposals are reviewed by panels of external experts selected by the Executive Director. New programs are reviewed in relation to the preconditions, Common Standards and the selected Program Standards. The Committee considers recommendations by the staff and the external review panels when deciding on the accreditation of each proposed program.

An institution that selects to use National or Professional Program Standards (Option 2) submits the standards to the Committee on Accreditation for initial approval prior to developing a program proposal. The acceptability of the standards should be assured before the institution prepares a program proposal. An institution may choose to submit a program that meets the Experimental Program Standards (Option 3) adopted by the Commission when the program is designed to investigate professional preparation issues or policy questions related to the preparation of credential candidates.

### **Basic Steps in the Accreditation of New Programs**

#### **Preliminary Staff Review.**

Before submitting program proposals for formal review and initial accreditation, institutions are encouraged to request preliminary reviews of *draft* proposals by the Commission's professional staff. The purpose of these reviews is to assist institutions in developing programs that are consistent with the intent and scope of the standards, and that will be logical and clear to the external reviewers. Program proposals may be submitted for preliminary staff review at any time. The normal "turn around time" for a preliminary staff review will be approximately one month. Preliminary review is voluntary. Its purpose is to assist institutions in preparing program proposals that can be reviewed most expeditiously in the formal review process.

## **Review of Preconditions.**

An institution's response to the preconditions is reviewed by the Commission's professional staff. The preconditions are based on state laws and regulations. Responses to Preconditions are either met or not met. They do not involve issues of program quality. At the institution's discretion, preconditions may be reviewed either during the preliminary review stage, or after the institution's formal submission of a proposal. If staff determines that the program complies with the requirements of state laws and administrative regulations, the program is eligible for a further review of the standards by the staff or a review panel. If the program does not comply with the preconditions, the proposal is returned to the institution with specific information about the lack of compliance. Such a program may be resubmitted once the compliance issues have been resolved.

## **Formal Review of Program Quality Standards for Initial Accreditation**

Unlike the preconditions, the standards address issues of program quality and effectiveness, so each institution's formal response to the standards is reviewed by Commission staff or a small review panel of experts in the field of preparation. During the program review process, there is an opportunity for institutional representatives to confer with staff consultants or the review panel (Do we want to involve review panels in answering questions?) to answer questions or clarify issues that may arise.

If staff or the review panel determine that a proposed program fulfills the standards, the program is recommended for initial accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation at one of its regular meetings. Action by the Committee is communicated to the institution in writing.

If the staff or the review panel determine that the program does not meet the standards, the proposal is returned to the institution with an explanation of the findings. Specific reasons for the decision are communicated to the institution. Representatives of the institution can obtain information and assistance from Commission staff or one or more designated members of the panel (something to consider—should we have institutions obtain information and assistance from panel members?). After changes have been made in the program, the proposal may be submitted for re-consideration.

## **Appeal of an Adverse Decision.**

If a program is not recommended to the Committee on Accreditation for approval by staff (on the basis of responses to preconditions or standards) or the review panel (on the basis of responses to standards) the institution may present a formal request to place that program on the agenda of the Committee for consideration. In so doing, the institution must provide the following information:

- The original program proposal, and the stated reasons of the Commission's staff or the review panel for not recommending initial accreditation of the program.
- A specific response by the institution to the request of the Commission's staff or the review panel for additional information, including a copy of the resubmitted proposal (if it has been resubmitted).
- A rationale for the institution's request.

The Committee on Accreditation will review the information and do one of the following:

- Grant initial accreditation to the program.
- Request a new review of the institution's response to the standards by a different Commission staff member or a different review panel.
- Deny initial accreditation to the program.

Within twenty business days of the Committee on Accreditation decision to deny initial accreditation, the institution may submit evidence to the Executive Director of the Commission that the decision made by the Committee on Accreditation was arbitrary, capricious, unfair, or contrary to the policies of the *Accreditation Framework* or the procedural guidelines of the Committee. (Information related to the quality of the program that was not previously presented to the Commission's staff or the review panel may not be considered by the Commission.) The Executive Director will determine if the evidence submitted by the institution responds to the criteria for appeal. If it does, the Executive Director will forward the appeal to the Commission. If it does not, the institution will be notified how the information does not respond to the criteria and given ten business days to re-submit the appeal to the Executive Director.

The appeal will be heard before the Preparation Standards Committee (What is this?) of the Commission. The Committee will consider the written evidence provided by the institution and a written response from the Committee on Accreditation. In resolving the appeal, the Commission will take one of the following actions:

- Sustain the decision of the Committee on Accreditation to deny initial accreditation to the program.
- Overturn the decision of the Committee on Accreditation and grant initial accreditation to the program.

The Executive Director communicates the Commission's decision to the Committee on Accreditation and the institution.

## **Program Approval for Ongoing Programs**

Once an institution and its program(s) have gained initial accreditation, the institution will be assigned to one of the seven accreditation cohorts. Participation in all activities of the accreditation system, is essential for on-going program approval. Each accreditation cohort enters the accreditation cycle in a different year of the cycle. The accreditation activities are consistent with the accreditation cycle's underlying premise that credential preparation programs engage in annual data collection and analyses to guide program improvement.

### **Withdrawal of Credential Programs (Consider in light of May COA discussion.)**

An institution may decide to withdraw a program that has been previously approved by the Commission or accredited by the Committee on Accreditation. The following procedures must be followed:

The institution notifies the Executive Director of its intention to withdraw the program when the current candidates complete the program.

The notification will include the date in which candidates will no longer be admitted to the program.

Candidates already admitted to the program are notified in writing by the institution that the program is being withdrawn. The institution determines a date by which all enrolled candidates will be able to finish the program. The institution assists enrolled candidates in planning for the completion of their program. The institution files the list of candidates and date of their program completion with the Commission.

Following the date determined by the institution, after which candidates will no longer be enrolled, the program may no longer operate and the institution may no longer recommend candidates for the credential.

A program being withdrawn will not be included in any continuing accreditation visits while candidates are finishing the program, provided that the Executive Director was notified of the institutional intent to withdraw the program at least one year before the continuing accreditation visit.

A withdrawn program may be re-accredited only when the institution submits a new proposal for initial accreditation according to the Committee on Accreditation initial accreditation policies. From the date in which candidates were no longer admitted to the program, the institution must wait at least two years before requesting re-accreditation of the program.

### **Discontinuation of Credential Programs (Consider in light of May COA discussion.)**

When an institution is required by the Committee on Accreditation to discontinue a credential program, the following procedures must be followed:

The institution, within 60 days of action by the Committee on Accreditation, files with the Executive Director its plan for program discontinuation when the current candidates complete the program.

Candidates are no longer admitted to the program, once the institution is required to discontinue the program.

Candidates already admitted to the program are notified in writing by the institution that the program is being discontinued. The institution determines a date by which all enrolled candidates will be able to finish the program. The institution assists enrolled candidates in planning for the completion of their program. The institution files the list of candidates and dates of program completion with the Commission.

Following the date determined by the institution, after which the institution will no longer enroll candidates, the program may no longer operate and the institution may not recommend candidates for the credential.

A discontinued program may be re-accredited only when the institution submits a new proposal for initial accreditation according to the Committee on Accreditation initial accreditation policies. The institution must wait at least two years after the date of discontinuation before requesting re-accreditation.

## **Chapter Three: The Accreditation Cycle**

### **Introduction**

This chapter provides detailed information on the cycle of the accreditation process. The accreditation cycle is comprised of three major types of activities. These activities and their purpose are briefly described below and in following chapters. The underlying expectation of the accreditation process is that all accredited credential programs are engaged in continuous, on-going data collection about candidate competence and program effectiveness, are analyzing the data, and are using the results to make programmatic improvements. The elements of the accreditation cycle, taken as a whole, prepare the institution and the accreditation review team to identify how an institution meets Common and Program Standards and identify any areas of strength and growth.

#### **A. Purpose**

Four primary purposes are achieved through the accreditation system. First, the process creates a mechanism by which educator preparation programs, their institutions, and the Committee on Accreditation are held accountable to the public and to the education profession. Through participation in the accreditation process, educator preparation programs document their adherence to standards and their use of data for on-going analyses of program effectiveness. Second, the cycle supports institutions' adherence to appropriate program standards, generally the Commission-adopted preparation standards. Third, by requiring institutions to use data to identify areas needing improvement, the accreditation process helps ensure high quality educator preparation programs. In addition, the site visit review team, which examines evidence of program compliance with standards and reviews documentation of candidate competence, ensures that educator preparation programs provide high quality instruction, advice, and support. Fourth, the accreditation cycle encourages institutions to create and utilize systematic and comprehensive evaluation processes to ensure their candidates are well qualified for teaching or services credentials and that their programs are providing the rigorous content and pedagogical preparation educators need to be successful.

#### **B. Overview**

The accreditation system is a seven year cycle of activities. These activities are: the Biennial Report, Program Assessment, and the Site Visit. Each teacher preparation institution has been assigned a cohort. Each cohort is on specific seven year cycle. The cohort model distributes the workload of the Commission, its staff, and members of the Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR). The BIR are trained professionals who review program assessment documents and conduct accreditation site visits. A brief overview of each activity will be provided here. For a full description and guidance on preparing for each element, please see the appropriate chapters.

### Biennial Reports

Biennial Reports are submitted to the Commission every two years. The purpose of the reports is to ensure that institutions are collecting and analyzing candidate and program data on a regular basis and that program improvement activities are being identified based on the results of the analyses. Institutions prepare the biennial reports by collecting and analyzing two years of candidate and program data. Submissions occur in years one, three, and five of the accreditation cycle. Each institution identifies one of three dates on which its submission will be due: August 15, October 15, or December 15.

When writing the report, the institution briefly describes its programs, the number of candidates in each program, the types of programs it runs, and any programmatic changes that have occurred since the last biennial report or, if appropriate, site visit. Each program reports separately on candidate and program effectiveness data by presenting and analyzing the data, identifying strengths, and any concerns. An institutional summary is prepared by a Dean, Superintendent or designee. The institutional summary provides a plan of action to be taken at the institutional level in order to address areas of need or maintain program quality. Subsequent biennial reports will give the institution an opportunity to report on whether the plan of action addressed the issues or if different measures are required.

### Program Assessment

Program assessment is a three part document produced by each credential program in year 4 of the accreditation cycle. It is designed to determine if a program is meeting the standards and gives information to help determine the size and structure of the site visit team. Program Assessment includes:

Part I—a response that indicates how the program meets each of the standards

Part II—course syllabi and faculty vitae that provide the evidence noted in Part I

Part III—a detailed description of the candidate competence measures reported in the Biennial Report. Part III also includes a description of how the program trains and calibrates assessors to ensure the validity and reliability of the assessments.

Two trained reviewers read each Program Assessment document. Feedback is provided to the institution that either a standard is met or additional information is needed. A professional dialogue then ensues in order to gain clarity and make a determination on each program standard. A Preliminary Report of Finding is shared with the institution and Committee on Accreditation.

### Site Visit

The Site Visit takes place in year 7 of the accreditation cycle. The Preliminary Report of Findings, size of the institution, type of accreditation and other factors help determine the size and structure of the accreditation team. The site visit lasts for approximately 4 days during which team members interview candidates, program completers, faculty, field supervisors, employers and advisory board members (as applicable) and review other documents to determine whether the Common Standards are met and to confirm the Preliminary Report of Findings. Based upon these findings, an accreditation recommendation is made.

A report is left with the institution and the report including accreditation recommendation are presented by both accreditation team and institutional leadership to the Committee on Accreditation. The Committee on Accreditation makes the accreditation decision.

## **Feedback on the Accreditation Handbook Chapters**

**Responsibilities of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the  
Committee on Accreditation**

<b>CHAPTER ONE Section</b>	<b>Unclear Language</b>	<b>Topics that could be removed</b>	<b>Topics that need to be covered</b>	<b>Other comments</b>
Introduction				
<b>I. Responsibilities of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing</b>				
A. Adopt and Modify the <i>Accreditation Framework</i> .				
B. Establish and Modify Standards for Educator Preparation.				
C. Initial Accreditation of Institutions.				
D. Hear and Resolve Accreditation Appeals				
E. Appoint the Committee on Accreditation.				
F. Address Issues and Refer Concerns Related to Accreditation				
G. Review Annual Reports by the Committee on Accreditation				
H. Allocate Resources Annually for Accreditation Operations				
I. Jointly Sponsor an External Evaluation of Accreditation Policies and Practices.				
<b>II. Responsibilities of the Committee on Accreditation</b>				
A. Comparability of Standards.				
B. Initial Accreditation of Programs				
C. Continuing Accreditation Decisions.				

<b>CHAPTER ONE Section</b>	<b>Unclear Language</b>	<b>Topics that could be removed</b>	<b>Topics that need to be covered</b>	<b>Other comments</b>
D. Accreditation Procedures				
E. Monitor the Accreditation System.				
F. Annual Reports, Recommendations and Responses.				
G. Meet in Public Sessions				
H. Jointly Sponsor an External Evaluation of Accreditation Policies and Practices.				

**Standards in Accreditation**

<b>CHAPTER TWO Section</b>	<b>Unclear Language</b>	<b>Topics that could be removed</b>	<b>Topics that need to be covered</b>	<b>Other comments</b>
Introduction				
Common and Program Standards				
• Option 1. California Program Standards.				
Option 2. National or Professional Program Standards.				
Option 3. Experimental Program Standards.				
Initial Accreditation of Institutions				
Initial Approval of Programs				
<u>Basic Steps in the Accreditation of New Programs</u>				
Preliminary Staff Review.				

<b>CHAPTER TWO Section</b>	<b>Unclear Language</b>	<b>Topics that could be removed</b>	<b>Topics that need to be covered</b>	<b>Other comments</b>
Review of Preconditions.				
Formal Review of Program Quality Standards for Initial Accreditation				
Appeal of an Adverse Decision.				
Program Approval for Ongoing Programs				
Withdrawal of Credential Programs				
Discontinuation of Credential Programs				

**The Accreditation Cycle**

<b>CHAPTER THREE Section</b>	<b>Unclear Language</b>	<b>Topics that could be removed</b>	<b>Topics that need to be covered</b>	<b>Other comments</b>
Introduction				
Purpose				
Overview				
Biennial Reports				
Program Assessment				
Site Visits				