

Discussion of Common Standard Descriptors and Explanations

Professional Services Division

August 2008

Overview of this Report

This agenda item provides a draft of a three level descriptor and explanation for *Common Standard 2: Unit and Program Assessment System* for the COA's review and discussion. Based on the Committee's discussion, staff can develop additional descriptors and explanations for a future COA meeting discussion.

Staff Recommendation

This is an information item.

Background

During the review and redesign of the Commission's accreditation system, discussions took place about the NCATE Unit Standards (<http://www.ncate.org/documents/standards/NCATE%20Standards%202008.pdf>) and the three level descriptors that NCATE has developed: Unacceptable, Acceptable, and Target. It was suggested that a similar set of descriptors focusing on the Commission's revised Common Standards would be an effective tool for institutions, members of the Board of Institutional Reviewers, and the Committee on Accreditation.

In addition to the three level rubric, NCATE also provides supporting explanations for each of the six Unit Standards. The description of the rubrics and explanations provided by NCATE is

Rubrics that accompany each standard address the critical elements of the standard and describe different levels of performance required to meet the standard. The supporting explanations include a rationale for the standard and additional explanation of each standard's meaning. Professional Standards, Accreditation of Teacher Preparation Institutions. NCATE (2008). [Online] July 15, 2008

Staff consulted the NCATE standards and used the NCATE rubric language and supporting explanation as a starting point for the draft Common Standard 2 descriptors and explanation provided below.

Based on the Committee's discussion of the concept of descriptors or a rubric for the Commission's Common Standards, staff will bring an additional item to the October COA meeting.

Common Standard 2: Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation *

The education unit implements an assessment and evaluation system for ongoing program and unit evaluation and improvement. The system collects, analyzes and utilizes data on candidate and program completer performance and unit operations. Assessment in all programs includes ongoing and comprehensive data collection related to candidate qualifications, proficiencies, and competence, as well as program effectiveness, and are used for improvement purposes.

*For discussion purposes, the language used is the DRAFT Common Standard language developed by the COA at its June 2008 meeting.

2a. The education unit implements an assessment and evaluation system for ongoing program and unit evaluation and improvement.

Not Met	Met	Exceeds
<p>The institution has not involved its professional community in the development of its assessment system. The institution’s assessment system is limited in its capacity to monitor candidate performance, institution operations, and programs. The assessment system does not reflect professional, state, and institutional standards. Decisions about continuation in and completion of programs are based on a single or few assessments. The institution has not examined bias in its assessments, nor made an effort to establish fairness, accuracy, and consistency of its assessment procedures and institution operations.</p>	<p>The institution has an assessment system that reflects the vision, professional and state standards and is regularly evaluated by its professional community. The institution’s system includes comprehensive and integrated assessment and evaluation measures to monitor candidate performance and manage and improve the institution’s operations and programs. Decisions about candidate performance are based on multiple assessments at admission into programs, appropriate transition points, and program completion. The institution has taken effective steps to eliminate bias in assessments and is working to establish the fairness, accuracy, and consistency of its assessment procedures and institution operations.</p>	<p>The institution, with the involvement of its professional community, is regularly evaluating the capacity and effectiveness of its assessment system, which reflects the conceptual framework and incorporates candidate proficiencies outlined in professional and state standards. The institution regularly examines the validity and utility of the data produced through assessments and makes modifications to keep abreast of changes in assessment technology and in professional standards. Decisions about candidate performance are based on multiple assessments made at multiple points before program completion and in practice after completion of programs. Data show a strong relationship of performance assessments to candidate success throughout their programs and later in classrooms or schools. The institution conducts thorough studies to establish fairness, accuracy, and consistency of its assessment procedures and institution operations. It also makes changes in its practices consistent with the results of these studies.</p>

Adapted from the NCATE Unit Standard 2 Rubric

2b. The system collects, analyzes and utilizes data on candidate and program completer performance and unit operations.

Not Met	Met	Exceeds
<p>The institution does not regularly and comprehensively gather, aggregate, summarize, and analyze assessment and evaluation information on the institution's operations, its programs, or candidates. The institution cannot disaggregate candidate assessment data when candidates are in alternate route, off-campus, and distance learning programs. The institution does not maintain a record of formal candidate complaints or document the resolution of complaints. The institution does not use appropriate information technologies to maintain its assessment system. The institution does not use multiple assessments from internal and external sources to collect data on applicant qualifications, candidate proficiencies, graduates, institution operations, and program quality.</p>	<p>The institution maintains an assessment system that provides regular and comprehensive information on applicant qualifications, candidate proficiencies, competence of graduates, institution operations, and program quality. Using multiple assessments from internal and external sources, the institution collects data from applicants, candidates, recent graduates, faculty, and other members of the professional community. Candidate assessment data are regularly and systematically collected, compiled, aggregated, summarized, and analyzed to improve candidate performance, program quality, and institution operations. The institution disaggregates candidate assessment data when candidates are in alternate route, off-campus, and distance learning programs. The institution maintains records of formal candidate complaints and documentation of their resolution. The institution maintains its assessment system through the use of information technologies appropriate to the size of the institution and institution.</p>	<p>The institution's assessment system provides regular and comprehensive data on program quality, institution operations, and candidate performance at each stage of its programs, extending into the first years of completers' practice. Assessment data from candidates, graduates, faculty, and other members of the professional community are based on multiple assessments from both internal and external sources that are systematically collected as candidates progress through programs. These data are disaggregated by program when candidates are in alternate route, off-campus, and distance learning programs. These data are regularly and systematically compiled, aggregated, summarized, analyzed, and reported publicly for the purpose of improving candidate performance, program quality, and institution operations. The institution has a system for effectively maintaining records of formal candidate complaints and their resolution. The institution is developing and testing different information technologies to improve its assessment system.</p>

Adapted from the NCATE Unit Standard 2 Rubric

2c. Assessment in all programs includes ongoing and comprehensive data collection related to candidate qualifications, proficiencies, and competence, as well as program effectiveness, and are used for improvement purposes.

Not Met	Met	Exceeds
<p>The institution makes limited or no use of data collected, including candidate and program completer performance information, to evaluate the efficacy of its courses, programs, and clinical experiences. The institution fails to make changes in its courses, programs, and clinical experiences when evaluations indicate that modifications would strengthen candidate preparation to meet professional, state, and institutional standards. Faculty do not have access to candidate assessment data and/or data systems. Candidates and faculty are not regularly provided formative feedback based on the institution’s performance assessments.</p>	<p>The institution regularly and systematically uses data, including candidate and program completer performance information, to evaluate the efficacy of its courses, programs, and clinical experiences. The institution analyzes program evaluation and performance assessment data to initiate changes in programs and institution operations. Faculty have access to candidate assessment data and/or data systems. Candidate assessment data are regularly shared with candidates and faculty to help them reflect on and improve their performance and programs.</p>	<p>The institution has fully developed evaluations and continuously searches for stronger relationships in the evaluations, revising both the underlying data systems and analytic techniques as necessary. The institution not only makes changes based on the data, but also systematically studies the effects of any changes to assure that programs are strengthened without adverse consequences. Candidates and faculty review data on their performance regularly and develop plans for improvement based on the data.</p>

Adapted from the NCATE Unit Standard 2 Rubric

Supporting Explanation:

Provided below is a draft Supporting Explanation (as adapted from NCATE’s Supporting Explanation) for the Commission’s ***Common Standard 2: Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation***.

Common Standard 2: Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation

Adapted from the NCATE Unit Standard 2 Explanation

The institution has a professional responsibility to ensure that its programs and program completers are of high quality. The institution manages its assessment system, which includes both program and institution data. Institutions conduct assessments at the institution or program level or both. Meeting this standard requires the systematic gathering, summarizing, and evaluation of data and using the data to strengthen candidate performance, the institution, and its programs. Institutions are expected to use information technologies to assist in data management. The institution’s assessment system should examine the (1) alignment of instruction and curriculum with state and institutional standards; (2) efficacy of

courses, field experiences, and programs, and (3) candidates' attainment of content knowledge and demonstration of teaching that leads to student learning or other work that supports student learning. It should include the assessment of candidates' content knowledge, pedagogical and/or professional knowledge and skills, and their effects on student learning as outlined in state and institutional standards and identified in the institution's vision. The assessment system should be based on the assessments and scoring guides that are the foundation for California's program assessment process (i.e., assessments of pedagogical knowledge, planning, clinical practice, and student learning).

Preparation of professional school personnel is a dynamic and complex enterprise, and one that requires institutions to plan and evaluate on a continuing basis. Program review and modification are needed, over time, to ensure quality. Candidate assessments and institution evaluations must be purposeful, evolving from the institution's vision and program goals. They must be comprehensive, including measures related to faculty, the curriculum, and instruction, as well as what candidates know and can do. The measures themselves must be of a quality that can actually inform the important aspects of faculty, curriculum, instruction, and candidate performance.

Fairness, consistency, accuracy, and avoidance of bias in the assessment system must be considered, especially when the assessments are used to determine whether candidates continue in or complete programs. Attention must be paid to the potential adverse impact of the assessments on a diverse pool of teacher candidates. In addition, the institutional assessments and evaluations must consider how to provide and use information constructively from various sources—the institution, field experiences, clinical sites, courses, faculty, candidates, program completers, and employers. Technology should play an increasingly important role in data gathering and analysis, as well as more broadly in institution planning and evaluation. Assessment systems include plans and timelines for data collection and analysis related to candidates and institution operations. Assessment systems usually have the following features:

- Institution faculty collaborate with members of the professional community to implement and evaluate the assessment system.
- State and institutional standards are key reference points for candidate assessments. The institution embeds assessments in programs, conducts them on a continuing basis for both formative and summative purposes, and provides candidates with ongoing feedback.
- The institution uses multiple indicators (e.g., 3.0 GPA, general education knowledge, content mastery, and life and work experiences) to identify candidates with potential to become successful teachers or assume other professional roles in schools at the point of entry into programs.
- The institution has multiple decision points, (e.g., at entry, prior to clinical practice, and at program completion).
- The institution administers multiple assessments in a variety of forms and aligns them with candidate proficiencies. These may come from end-of-course evaluations, written essays, or performance assessments, as well as from tasks used for instructional

purposes (such as projects, journals, observations by faculty, comments by cooperating teachers, or videotapes) and from activities associated with teaching (such as lesson planning, identifying student readiness for instruction, creating appropriate assessments, reflecting on results of instruction with students, or communicating with parents, families, and school communities).

- The institution uses information available from external sources such as state licensing exams, evaluations during an induction or mentoring year, employer reports, follow-up studies, and state program reviews as is appropriate.
- The institution has procedures to ensure credibility of assessments: fairness, consistency, accuracy, and avoidance of bias. The institution establishes scoring guides, which may be rubrics, for determining levels of candidate accomplishment and completion of their programs.
- The institution uses results from candidate assessments to evaluate and make improvements in the institution, and its programs, courses, teaching, and field and clinical experiences.
- In the evaluation of institution operations and programs, the institution collects, analyzes, and uses a broad array of information and data from course evaluations and evaluations of clinical practice, faculty, admissions process, advising system, school partnerships, program quality, institution governance, etc.