

Update on the Accreditation Handbook August 2009

Overview of this Report

This report provides an update on the work to revise the *Accreditation Handbook* for discussion and input. The item contains three chapters that were updated by staff to reflect implementation of the revised accreditation system during the 2009-10 year and thereafter.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the COA discuss and adopt the proposed changes to Chapter 3: Institutional Approval, Chapter 8: Accreditation Decision Options, and Chapter 9: Follow Up. Staff, furthermore, recommends that the COA direct staff to post the adopted Chapters 3, 8, and 9 and bring additional updated chapters of the Handbook to the October 2009 COA meeting for approval.

Proposed Changes to Three Chapters of the Accreditation Handbook

During the May 2009 COA meeting, members and staff discussed the need to update the *Accreditation Handbook* to reflect the revised accreditation system. The COA directed staff to prepare one or more chapters for COA review and adoption at each subsequent meeting until the entire Handbook was updated and adopted. Edits for chapters 3, 8, and 9 were identified that conform the chapters to current accreditation practices so that the chapter will be useful for institutions considering initial approval (chapter 3), for accreditation review teams as they consider accreditation decision options (chapter 8), and for institutions as they prepare to respond to a COA accreditation decision (chapter 9), beginning in the Fall of 2009-10.

The revised Chapters 3, 8, and 9 are attached to the item. Staff considered showing the proposed edits as track changes, but realized that including the track changes made the documents very hard to read. Members are referred to Item 18 from the May 2009 agenda if they wish to see the original versions of the chapters.

Staff identified some significant changes or unclear phrases for which COA guidance is requested.

1. On the first page of Chapter 3, first paragraph, last line, the original copy included “discontinued” as a program status option. After discussion, staff agreed that the COA no longer has the authority to discontinue programs and that the revised accreditation system focuses on whole institutions. As a consequence, the term was dropped from the sentence and a section dealing with discontinued programs was deleted.
2. On page 8 of Chapter 3, the fourth bullet describes what happens at the institution following the date after which no new candidates will be enrolled. The original item stated that the program would stop providing all services. Staff suggests that, to be consistent with the third bullet, the institutions should be permitted to continue to operate in a very limited fashion, consistent with their plans for helping current candidates complete their program. If this modification is satisfactory to the COA, what time limit, if any, should the institution be given?

3. On page 1 of Chapter 8, full paragraph before the subheading Accreditation; staff added text to introduce the concepts of standards findings and stipulations and to distinguish between the two types of deficiencies that would be found in accreditation team reports. Is this discussion clear? Are the differences between standards findings and stipulations clearly defined and meaningful?
4. On page 2 of Chapter 9, the sixth row of the table begins with the statement “**Report** on the stipulation(s) through the next accreditation cycle’s activities.” This activity is not discussed in Chapter 8, but appears to be a required activity for institutions receiving particular accreditation decisions. What does this statement mean in the context of biennial reports or program assessment? Should this activity be added to Chapter 8?

Next Steps

Consistent with directions provided to staff at the May 2009 COA meeting, staff will continue to revise chapters in the *Accreditation Handbook* and will bring proposed revised chapters to the COA for its approval at future COA meetings.

Chapter Three Institutional and Program Approval

Introduction

This chapter describes the processes by which an institution gains initial institutional approval from the CTC that allows the institution to propose specific credential preparation programs for approval by the COA. This chapter also provides information about the different status options that a program might have which include being approved, inactive, or withdrawn.

I. Initial Institutional Approval

According to the *Accreditation Framework* (Section 1-B-1), the CTC 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:

- A. The institution prepares a complete program proposal, responding to all preconditions, Common Standards and appropriate program standards. The proposal will be considered the application for accreditation as well as the application for credential preparation program approval.

- B. Initial Accreditation will be considered a two-stage process:
 - 1. The proposal will be reviewed for compliance with the appropriate institutional preconditions. If the proposal meets the CTC's eligibility requirements as judged by CTC staff, the institution will be recommended for initial institutional approval to the CTC which will consider the recommendation and take action.
 - 2. If the CTC acts favorably on the proposal, the proposal will be forwarded to the COA for program accreditation action according to adopted procedures.

- C. Once granted initial accreditation, the institution will then come under the continuing accreditation procedures adopted by the COA.

II. Initial Accreditation of Programs

According to the *Accreditation Framework* (Section 2-A-2), the COA is responsible for granting initial accreditation to new programs of educator preparation. If the COA determines that a program meets all applicable standards, the COA grants initial accreditation to the program. New credential program proposals by eligible institutions must fulfill preconditions established by state law and the CTC. 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.

Section 4-B of the *Framework* contains the Policies for Initial Accreditation of Programs. Prior to being presented to the COA for action, new programs proposed by eligible institutions are reviewed by trained reviewers who have expertise in the credential area. New programs are

reviewed in relation to the preconditions, Common Standards and the selected program standards. The COA considers recommendations by the staff and the external review panels when deciding on the accreditation of each proposed program.

An institution that selects National or Professional Program Standards (Option 2) should consult the chapter on National or Professional Standards for appropriate procedures. 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 CTC when the program is designed to investigate professional preparation issues or policy questions related to the preparation of credential candidates.

Program Submission and Implementation: Basic Steps in the Accreditation of New Programs

There are several steps that must be followed by the CTC, its staff, and the COA during the process of reviewing proposals from institutions and agencies wishing to sponsor educator preparation 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 CTC'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. Institutions are encouraged to discuss the potential timeframe for such a review with CTC staff. Preliminary review is voluntary.

Review of Preconditions

Preconditions are requirements necessary to operate a program leading to an educator preparation license in California. They are based on state laws and regulations and do not involve issues of program quality. An institution's response to the preconditions is reviewed by the CTC's professional staff. 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 preconditions), the program is eligible for a further review of the standards by 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. Consequently, each institution's formal response to the standards is reviewed by CTC staff or a review panel of experts in the field of preparation. During the program review process, there is opportunity for institutional representatives to confer with staff consultants to answer questions or clarify issues that may arise.

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

If staff or the review panel determines 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 the CTC's staff. After changes have been made in the program, the proposal may be submitted for re-consideration.

Appeal of an Adverse Decision

There are two levels of appeal of an adverse decision. The first is an appeal of a decision by CTC staff, or its review panel, that the preconditions or relevant program standards were not satisfied and that the proposal should not be forwarded to the COA for action. This appeal is directed to the COA.

The second is an appeal of an adverse decision by the COA. This appeal is directed to the Executive Director of the CTC.

If a program is not recommended to the COA for approval by staff or the review panel, the institution may submit a formal request to place that program on the agenda of the COA for consideration. In so doing, the institution must provide the following information:

- The original program proposal and the rationale for the adverse decision provided by the CTC's staff or review panel.
- Copies of any responses by the institution to requests for additional information from CTC's staff or review panel, including a copy of any resubmitted proposal (if it was resubmitted).
- A rationale for the institution's request.

The COA will review the information and do one of the following:

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

Within twenty business days of the COA's decision to deny initial accreditation, the institution may submit evidence to the Executive Director of the CTC that the decision made by the COA was arbitrary, capricious, unfair, or contrary to the policies of the *Accreditation Framework* or the procedural guidelines of the COA. (Information related to the quality of the program that was not previously presented to the CTC's staff or the review panel may not be considered by the

CTC.) The Executive Director will determine whether the evidence submitted by the institution responds to the criteria for appeal. If it does, the Executive Director will forward the appeal to the CTC. If it does not, the institution will be notified of the decision and provided with information describing how the information does not respond to the criteria. The institution will be given ten business days to re-submit the appeal to the Executive Director.

The appeal, if forwarded to the CTC by the Executive Director, will be heard before the Professional Services Committee (PSC) of the CTC. The PSC will consider the written evidence provided by the institution and a written response from the COA. In resolving the appeal, the CTC will take one of the following actions:

- Sustain the decision of the COA to deny initial accreditation to the program.
- Overturn the decision of the COA and grant initial accreditation to the program.

The Executive Director communicates the CTC's decision to the COA and the institution.

III. Program Status for Approved Programs

Once a program has been accredited by the COA, it will be considered an approved program. As conditions change, however, it is sometimes necessary for programs to be granted either the inactive status or to be withdrawn by the institution. Institutions are responsible to initiate either of these actions.

The chart below illustrates the operational differences in the three possible status options followed by more specific information on each.

Institution/Program Sponsor	Program Approval Status		
	Withdrawn	Inactive	Active
May Accept New Candidates	No	No	Yes
May Recommend Candidates for a Credential	Only those already in the program	Only those already in the program	Yes
Participates in Biennial Reports	No	Modified	Yes
Participates in Program Assessment	No	Modified	Yes
Participates in Site Visit	No	Modified	Yes
How to Request Reinstatement	New Program Document Submitted and reviewed by panel members	Letter to the COA*	NA

* If the CTC adopted revised program standards while the program was in inactive status, a new program document will be required to re-activate a program.

Approved Program

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 in the accreditation cycle, which takes seven years to complete, is essential for on-going accreditation. Each accreditation cohort enters year one of the accreditation cycle in a different academic year and every institution is performing accreditation-related activities every year. The annual cycle of activities is consistent with the accreditation cycles' underlying premise that credential preparation programs engage in annual data collection and analyses to guide program improvement.

An approved educator preparation program will be identified as such on the CTC's web page and may be identified as approved on the sponsor's web page, if applicable.

- All approved programs will participate in the CTC's accreditation system, in the assigned cohort.
- Following the first, third, and fifth years of the accreditation cycle, the programs will submit Biennial Reports.
- In the fourth year of the accreditation cycle, the programs will submit Program Assessment documents.
- In the sixth year of the accreditation cycle, the programs will participate in the Site Visit activities.
- In the seventh year of the accreditation cycle, the programs will participate, as needed, in the 7th Year Follow-up Report.

Inactive Program

An institution or program sponsor may decide to declare a program that has been previously approved by the CTC or accredited by the COA as 'inactive.' The following procedures must be followed:

- The institution or program sponsor notifies the Executive Director of its intention to declare the program inactive. The program can only be deemed inactive when the current candidates have completed the program. The notification to the CTC's Executive Director must include the anticipated date that the inactive status will begin.
- The notification must include the date from which candidates will no longer be admitted to the program.
- Candidates already admitted to the program are notified in writing by the institution or program sponsor that the program will be declared inactive. The institution or program sponsor 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 CTC.
- Following the date after which candidates will no longer be enrolled, as determined by the institution, the program may only operate in a restricted fashion to enable candidates already enrolled in the program to complete their programs and be recommended for a

credential. The program will be listed on the CTC's web page as 'Approved but inactive.'

- An inactive program will be included in accreditation activities in a modified manner as determined by the COA.
- An inactive program may be re-activated only when the institution submits a request to the COA and the COA has taken action to reactive the program. If the program standards under which the program was approved have been modified, the institution or program sponsor must submit a response to the updated standards before the program may be re-activated.
- An inactive program may stay on inactive status for no longer than 5 years. After five years on inactive status, the program sponsor should determine whether the program should be withdrawn permanently or reactivated.

Withdrawal of Credential Programs

An institution may decide to withdraw a program that has been previously approved by the CTC or accredited by the COA. The withdrawal of a program formalizes that it is no longer part of the institution's accredited program offerings and, from the CTC's perspective, no longer part of the accreditation system. In order to withdraw a program, 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 must include the date from 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 CTC.
- Following the date after which candidates will no longer be enrolled (as determined by the institution), the program may only operate in a restricted fashion to enable candidates already enrolled in the program to complete their programs and be recommended for a credential.
- A program being withdrawn will not be included in any continuing accreditation visits, even though candidates may still be 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 Site Visit.

A withdrawn program may be re-accredited only when the institution submits a new proposal for initial accreditation according to the COA 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.

Chapter Eight

Accreditation Decisions: Options and Implications

Introduction

This chapter presents the accreditation decision options that are available for accreditation teams to recommend to the COA and for the COA to render. In addition, this chapter explains the implications of each of the possible accreditation decision. This chapter is intended for use by institutions, team members, team leads, and the COA.

I. Accreditation Decision Options

At the conclusion of the site visit, the accreditation review team makes a recommendation about the accreditation status of the institution. This recommendation is included in the team report and must be supported by the team's findings on standards. The COA, after reviewing the team report, hearing from the team lead, consultant, and institutional representatives, adopts the team report and renders an accreditation decision. The possible options for accreditation decisions are as follows:

- Accreditation
- Accreditation with Stipulations
- Accreditation with Major Stipulations
- Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations
- Denial of Accreditation (available only after a revisit).

Below are definitions for each of the accreditation decisions followed by the operational implications of each of the options. When the COA reviews a team's accreditation report, they will consider two types of deficiencies identified by the team. The first will be shown as common or program standards that are "not met" or that are "met with concerns." Stipulations are statements that describe what an institution must do to satisfy a standard that is wholly, or significantly "not met." The stipulations are conditions that must be satisfied before the COA can grant an accreditation decision of *Accreditation*.

Accreditation

The recommendation of *Accreditation* means that the accreditation team verified that the institution and its programs, when judged as a whole, met or exceeded the CTC's adopted Common Standards and the program standards applicable to the institution. The institution (including its credential programs) is judged to be effective in preparing educators and is demonstrating overall quality in its programs and general operations. The status of *Accreditation* can be achieved even if one or two common standards were identified as "met with concerns" or one or more areas of concern were identified within its credential programs.

Operational Implications

An institution that receives the status of *Accreditation* **must**:

- Participate in the accreditation activities required of its assigned cohort, which are Biennial Reports, Program Assessment, and Site Visits.

- Respond to all concerns identified in the adopted accreditation team report or specified in the COA action. This follow up may take place in the Biennial Report or in a seventh year follow up report, as determined by the COA.
- Abide by all CTC and state regulations.

An institution that receives the status of *Accreditation may*:

- Continue all accredited credential programs and propose new credential programs to the COA at any time.
- Indicate in all publications and documents that it is accredited by the CTC.

The COA will note the accreditation status in the Committee’s annual report to the CTC on Teacher Credentialing. The report of the accreditation team and the action taken by the COA will be posted on the CTC’s website.

Accreditation: Accreditation with Stipulations

The recommendation of *Accreditation with Stipulations* means that the accreditation team verified that the institution and some of its programs have “not met” or “met with concerns” some common standards and/or program standards applicable to the institution, and that action is required to address these deficiencies. The institution is judged to be generally effective in preparing educators and in its general operations apart from the identified areas of concern. The concerns or problems identified are confined to specific issues that minimally impact the quality of the program received by candidates or completers.

Operational Implications

An institution that receives the status of *Accreditation with Stipulations must*:

- Participate in the accreditation activities required of its assigned cohort, which are Biennial Reports, Program Assessment, and Site Visits.
- Respond to all concerns identified in the adopted accreditation team report or specified in the COA action and submit, within one year, a written seventh year report that documents how all concerns and stipulations have been addressed.
- Abide by all CTC and state regulations.

An institution that receives the accreditation status of *Accreditation with Stipulations may*:

- Continue all accredited credential programs and propose new credential programs to the COA at any time.
- Indicate in all publications and documents that it is accredited by the CTC.

The COA will note the accreditation status in the Committee’s annual report to the CTC on Teacher Credentialing. The report of the accreditation team and the action taken by the COA will be posted on the CTC’s website.

Removal of Stipulations

The institution must respond to all concerns identified in the adopted team report and all stipulations placed on it by the COA. This is done by preparing a written seventh year report for submission to the CTC Consultant within one calendar year of the visit. The seventh year report must contain documentation demonstrating that all concerns and stipulations have been

addressed. Typically, the CTC consultant, in consultation with the team lead assigned to the original visit, will review the report, verify the accuracy and completeness of the institution's response, analyze progress made by the institution in meeting the standards, and make a recommendation to the COA regarding the removal of the stipulations. In rare instances, the COA may require a revisit by the CTC consultant or the team lead.

The COA may act to remove the stipulations and change the status of the institution from *Accreditation with Stipulations* to *Accreditation*.

The COA will note the change in accreditation status in the Committee's annual report to the CTC. The report and the action taken by the COA will be posted on the CTC's website.

Accreditation with Major Stipulations

The recommendation of *Accreditation with Major Stipulations* means that the accreditation team concluded that the institution and some of its programs have "not met" or "met with concerns" multiple standards in the common standards, and/or program standards applicable to the institution, or that the team found areas of concern (such as matters of curriculum, field experience, or candidate competence) that impact, or are likely to impact, the preparation of credential program candidates. The team identified issues that impinge on the ability of the institution to deliver high quality, effective programs. The review team may have found that some of the institution's credential programs are high quality and effective in preparing educators or that the general operations of the institution are adequate, but the team concluded that these areas of quality do not outweigh the identified areas of concern.

Operational Implications

An institution receiving a recommendation of *Accreditation with Major Stipulations* **must**:

- Participate in the accreditation activities as required of its assigned cohort, which are Biennial Reports, Program Assessment, and Site Visits.
- Respond to all concerns contained in the adopted report and all stipulations identified in the COA action by preparing a written seventh year report with appropriate documentation demonstrating that the concerns and stipulations have been addressed and by preparing for a focused revisit by the team lead and consultant and, as required, members of the accreditation team.
- Work with the CTC consultant to plan the revisit that will address the concerns contained in the adopted team report and the stipulations placed upon it by the COA action.
- Abide by all CTC and state regulations.

An institution receiving a recommendation of *Accreditation with Major Stipulations* **may**:

- Continue to offer all approved credential programs.
- Indicate in all publications and documents that it is accredited by the CTC.
- Be required to notify students of its accreditation status. The COA will determine whether student notification is required, and if so, whether all students or only students in particular credential programs are to be notified.

Removal of Stipulations

The institution must respond to all stipulations placed on it by the COA and all concerns identified in the adopted team report. The institution will do this by preparing a written seventh year report with appropriate documentation demonstrating that all concerns and stipulations have been addressed and by preparing for a focused revisit by an accreditation team. The institution will work with its CTC consultant to plan the revisit that will address the concerns identified in the adopted accreditation report and the stipulations placed upon the institution by the COA. The report of the revisit team will be submitted to, and acted upon by, the COA within one calendar year of the original visit.

The COA may act to remove the stipulations and change the status of the institution from *Accreditation with Major Stipulations* to *Accreditation* or *Accreditation with Stipulations*. If all stipulations and concerns are removed within the year, the institution will be granted accreditation and will be permitted to continue all accredited credential programs and to propose new credential programs to the COA at any time. The revisit report of the team, the action of the COA to remove the stipulations, and the new accreditation decision will be posted on the CTC's website. The institution may then notify its constituency of its change of accreditation status as appropriate.

On some occasions, significant progress may have been made, but additional time beyond one calendar year is needed to remedy the identified deficiencies. If this is the case, the COA may continue stipulations or adopt revised stipulations. The COA would also specify the amount of additional time the institution has to address the remaining stipulations. If the COA believes that sufficient progress has been made towards meeting standards but believes some stipulations should be maintained, the COA may adopt an accreditation decision of *Accreditation with Stipulations*. In such cases, the COA may determine appropriate follow up by the institution and a timeline for COA action to remove the remaining stipulations and concerns.

In the event that the institution does not respond appropriately to the stipulations according to the timeline set by the COA, the institution will be brought back to the COA for consideration of *Denial of Accreditation*.

Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations

The recommendation of *Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations* indicates that an accreditation team identified serious and pervasive deficiencies in the institution's implementation of the common standards and the program standards applicable to the institution, or that the team found areas of concern (such as matters of curriculum, field experience, or candidate competence) that substantially impact the preparation of credential program candidates. The team identified issues that prevent the institution from delivering high quality, effective programs. The review team may have found that some of the institution's credential programs are effective in preparing educators and/or that its general operations are adequate, but the team determined that these areas of quality clearly do not outweigh the identified areas of concern.

Operational Implications

An institution receiving a recommendation of *Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations* is permitted to continue all accredited credential programs for a period of one calendar year. The institution **may not**:

- Propose new programs of professional preparation or expand existing programs.

An institution receiving a recommendation of *Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations* **must**:

- Participate in the accreditation activities as required of its assigned cohort, which are Biennial Reports, Program Assessment, and Site Visits.
- Respond to all concerns contained in the adopted report and all stipulations identified in the COA action by preparing a written seventh year report with appropriate documentation demonstrating that all stipulations have been addressed and by preparing for a focused revisit by an accreditation team.
- Abide by all CTC and state regulations.
- Notify all students in all credential programs in writing of its accreditation status.
- Submit an action plan describing the institution's plan to address the stipulations and concerns.
- Provide updates at specified intervals, as determined by the COA.
- Work with the CTC consultant to plan the revisit that will address the stipulations and concerns identified by the original accreditation team and adopted by the COA. .

An institution receiving a recommendation of *Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations* **may**:

- Continue all accredited credential programs for a period of one calendar year, although the COA may place limitations on particular programs.
- Be required to demonstrate to the COA satisfactory progress in addressing particular areas of interest, whether identified as stipulations or concerns, prior to one calendar year. This will be determined by the COA in its accreditation action.

The COA will note the accreditation status of the institution in the Committee's annual report to the CTC and the accreditation team report will be posted on the CTC's website as will the action taken by the COA.

Removal of Stipulations

The institution must respond to all stipulations placed on it by the COA and all concerns identified in the adopted team report. The institution will do this by preparing a written seventh year report within one year with appropriate documentation demonstrating that all concerns and stipulations have been addressed and by preparing for a focused revisit by an accreditation team. The institution will work with its CTC consultant to plan the revisit that will address the concerns identified by the original accreditation team and adopted by the COA, and the stipulations placed upon the institution by the COA. The report of the revisit team will be submitted to and acted upon by the COA within one calendar year of the original visit.

The COA may act to remove the stipulations and change the status of the institution from *Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations* to *Accreditation* or *Accreditation with Stipulations*. If all stipulations are removed within the year, the institution will be granted accreditation and

will be permitted to continue all accredited credential programs and to propose new credential programs to the COA at any time. The revisit report of the team, the action of the COA to remove the stipulations, and the new accreditation decision will be posted on the CTC's website.

On some occasions, significant progress may have been made, but additional time beyond one calendar year is needed to remedy the identified deficiencies. If this is the case, the COA may continue stipulations or adopt revised stipulations. The COA would also specify the amount of additional time the institution has to address the remaining stipulations. If the COA believes that sufficient progress has been made towards meeting standards but believes some stipulations should be maintained, the COA may adopt an accreditation decision of *Accreditation with Stipulations*. In such cases, the COA may determine appropriate follow up by the institution and a timeline for COA action to remove the remaining stipulations and concerns.

In the event that the revisit team determines that the institution has not made significant progress in addressing the stipulations according to the timeline set by the COA, a recommendation of *Denial of Accreditation* will be made to the COA.

Denial of Accreditation

The COA would deny accreditation only if an accreditation team, upon conducting a revisit to an institution that received major or probationary stipulations, finds that the stipulations have not been adequately addressed or remediated, or determines that significant and sufficient progress has not been made towards addressing the stipulations. If an accreditation team finds that: (a) sufficient progress has been made, and/or (b) special circumstances described by the institution justify a delay, the COA may, if requested by the institution, permit an additional period of time for the institution to remedy its severe deficiencies. If the COA votes to deny accreditation, all credential programs must close at the end of the semester or quarter in which the decision has taken place. In addition, the institution's institutional approval ceases to be valid at that time and the institution will no longer be a CTC approved program sponsor.

Operational Implications

An institution receiving *Denial of Accreditation* **must**:

- Take immediate steps to close all credential programs at the end of the semester or quarter in which the COA decision occurs.
- Announce that it has had its accreditation for educator preparation denied. All students enrolled in all credential programs must be notified that accreditation has been denied and that all programs will end at the end of the semester or quarter in which the COA decision occurs.
- File a plan of discontinuation within 90 days of the COA's decision. The plan must give information and assurances regarding the institution's efforts to place currently enrolled students in other programs or to provide adequate assistance to permit students to complete their particular programs.
- Upon the effective date of the closure of credential programs, as determined by the COA, remove from all institutional materials and website any statements that indicate that its programs are accredited by the CTC.

The revisit report of the team, the action of the COA, and the new accreditation decision will be posted on the CTC’s website.

Furthermore, an institution receiving a *Denial of Accreditation* would be enjoined from re-applying for institutional approval for a minimum of two years.

Process of Re-applying for Initial Institutional Accreditation

If the institution were to wish to provide educator preparation programs at a future date, it would be required to make a formal application to the CTC for initial institutional approval. This would include the submission of a complete self study report including responses to the preconditions, common standards, and program standards. The self-study must show clearly how the institution attended to all problems noted in the accreditation team revisit report that resulted in *Denial of Accreditation*. The CTC would make a decision on the status of the institution and would be made aware of the previous action of Denial of Accreditation by the COA. If the CTC grants initial institutional approval to the institution, the COA would review, and if appropriate, approve its programs. An accreditation site visit would be scheduled within two years to ensure the newly approved programs adhere to the Common and Program Standards.

II. Guidance for the Team Recommendation

The site visit team must use its collective professional judgment to reach an accreditation recommendation for an institution. The site visit team’s recommendation for an accreditation decision is a holistic decision based on the common standard findings, and on the number and severity of “Met with Concerns” or “Not Met” findings for the specific programs offered at the institution.

The COA makes one accreditation decision for the institution and all of its approved educator preparation programs. This accreditation decision reflects, to a great degree, the team’s findings on the common standards. However, if one or more programs are found to have significant issues, it is likely that one or more related common standards will reflect findings of ‘Met with Concerns’ or ‘Not Met.’

The table below provides general guidance to site visit teams as they discuss which accreditation recommendation is appropriate for the institution.

General Guidance for Initial Site Visit Team Recommendations*

Common Standards Less than Fully Met		Range of Accreditation Recommendations				Denial of Accreditation
# Met with Concerns	# Not Met	Accreditation	with Stipulations	with Major Stipulations	with Probationary Stipulations	
0	0					Not a recommendation for an initial site visit. The
1-2	0	●	●			
1-2	1-2		●	●		
1-2	3-4			●	●	
3-4	0		●	●		

Common Standards Less than Fully Met		Range of Accreditation Recommendations				Denial of Accreditation	
# Met with Concerns	# Not Met	Accreditation	with Stipulations	with Major Stipulations	with Probationary Stipulations		
3-4	1-2		●	—	—	●	recommendation of 'Denial of Accreditation' is considered only after a Revisit.
3-4	3-4			●	—	●	
3-4	5+						
5+	0-2			●	—	●	
5+	3+						

* Findings on program standards must be considered by the team in making the accreditation recommendation, and those findings play an integral role in helping the team reach consensus on its recommendation

When teams are deliberating about the accreditation recommendation, they must consider the findings on the common standards, as well as the number and severity of standard findings for the programs. The table identifies the range of likely accreditation recommendations for an institution based on the number of common standards that are “Met with Concerns” or “Not Met.” If an institution has only a couple of common standards found to be ‘Met with Concerns’ or ‘Not Met,’ then the accreditation recommendation would likely be *Accreditation* or *Accreditation with Stipulations* which are on the left side of the range shown on the table. If on the other hand, there are a number of common standards found to be ‘Met with Concerns’ or ‘Not Met,’ then the team’s accreditation recommendation would likely be in the middle or towards the right side of the range identified above.

In its determination of an appropriate accreditation recommendation, the accreditation team must also take into consideration the number of educator preparation programs an institution offers. If an institution offers a small number of programs, then a small number of program standards found to be less than fully met becomes significant. On the other hand, if an institution offers a large number of programs, then a few program standards found to be less than fully met might not be as significant a factor in the accreditation recommendation.

The information provided in the table is only a general reference tool for teams as they consider the impact of the findings on all common and program standards to determine an accreditation recommendation. It does not replace the critically important professional judgment that team members bring to discussions about the *degree* to which an institution and its programs align with the adopted standards. Similarly, it does not replace the team’s assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of an institution and its programs, nor of the team’s judgment about the impact of the institution on candidates or the quality of the institution’s offerings. By the end of the site visit, team members have a great deal of information about an institution, its unique characteristics, and the quality of its programs. That knowledge, as supported by evidence, is used by the team to generate and justify an accreditation recommendation.

In like fashion, the table serves as a reference tool for the COA which must consider information from the accreditation report, the team lead, and the institution to render a single accreditation decision. The table is not a substitute for the professional judgment and experience of the COA members nor is it a substitute for the deliberations that take place at the COA meeting where the accreditation report is presented.

Chapter Nine

Activities during the Seventh Year of the Accreditation Cycle

Introduction

Once an accreditation decision has been made by the COA, institutions still have an on-going responsibility to attend to accreditation matters in the 7th year of the accreditation cycle. Depending on the accreditation decision, these activities can range from simply continuing routine accreditation activities, such as collection and analysis of candidate data, to major revisions of programs to bring them into alignment with state-adopted standards. The specific activities will depend upon the issues identified by the review team and the accreditation decision rendered by the COA. Many, but not all, institutions will be required to submit a seventh year report. This chapter clarifies the expectations for the seventh year of the cycle and the seventh year reporting requirement.

I. Accreditation Decisions and Consequent Institution Activities

As described in the previous chapter, the COA can make one of five accreditation decisions. These include the following:

- Accreditation
- Accreditation with Stipulations
- Accreditation with Major Stipulations
- Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations
- Denial of Accreditation (available only after a revisit)

The previous chapter delineated the operational implications for each of the possible accreditation decision. The table below summarizes some, but not all, of the required activities for each of the various accreditation decisions. The previous chapter should be consulted for specific information about the definition and operational implications of each accreditation decision. Ultimately, the specific actions required of any given institution in the seventh year will be set forth in the action taken by the COA.

Expectations for All Institutions in the Seventh Year of the Cycle

Underlying the various major components of the current accreditation system is the expectation that all institutions will be vigilant in addressing issues of program quality on an on-going basis. In the current system, this expectation does not cease with the completion of the site visit in the sixth year. On the contrary, the seventh year of the cycle is critical to the achievement of the purposes of accreditation (ensuring accountability, ensuring quality programs, adherence to standards, and fostering program improvement). Not only does the current system require that the institution act in a timely manner to address issues identified during the accreditation review, it assumes that all institutions will engage in on-going program improvement supported by the cycle of accreditation activities.

For institutions for which stipulations were determined, action must be taken to address the stipulations in one calendar year. For this reason, the activities undertaken in the seventh year are particularly critical. Institutions with *Major Stipulations* or *Probationary Stipulations* that do not sufficiently address the stipulations could be faced with *Denial of Accreditation*.

The table below summarizes the expectations related to the seventh year of the accreditation cycle. More detailed information follows.

Table 1: Accreditation Decisions and Consequent Institution Activities

Institution Actions Following an Accreditation Site Visit	Accreditation			
	Accreditation	with Stipulations	with Major Stipulations	with Probationary Stipulations
No required follow-up beyond the routine accreditation activities, i.e. Biennial Reports and Program Assessment.				
Submit <i>Seventh Year Follow-up Report</i> addressing all identified area(s) of concern and/or questions.				
Submit <i>Seventh Year Follow-up Report</i> addressing all stipulation(s), identified area(s) of concern and/or questions.				
Submit periodic Follow-up Reports (30 days, 90 days, as determined by the COA) to ensure that appropriate action is being taken in a timely manner.				
Report on the stipulation(s) through the next accreditation cycle's activities.				
Re-visit by CTC staff and team leader.				
Re-visit by CTC staff, team lead, and 1 or more team members.				
Institution notifies all current and prospective candidates of the institution's accreditation status.				
Institution is prohibited from accepting new candidates in one or more programs until the stipulations have been				

Institution Actions Following an Accreditation Site Visit	Accreditation			
	Accreditation	with Stipulations	with Major Stipulations	with Probationary Stipulations
removed.				
Institution is prohibited from proposing new programs until the stipulations have been removed.				

Possible follow-up activity

All Institutions in the Seventh Year

Institutional follow-up is required of all approved institutions in the seventh year of the cycle, although a follow-up *report* is not necessarily required of all institutions. In the seventh year of the cycle, all institutions are expected to address issues raised during the accreditation process by the review teams and the COA. This means taking action within the policies and procedures of the institution to rectify and/or address issues related to CTC adopted standards. If an institution has no specific issues identified by the review teams and all standards were found to be met, it is expected that institutional personnel will continue to review candidate assessment data and available program effectiveness data with the objective of program improvement.

Accreditation

The revised *Accreditation Framework* provides the COA with the flexibility to require follow-up regardless of the accreditation decision, including *Accreditation*. The COA may require institutions with *Accreditation* to provide a follow-up report that addresses how the institution is addressing standards “not met” or “met with concerns,” and the progress being made to address any other issues raised in the report or raised during the presentation to COA. The COA has broad flexibility to request a follow-up report on any topic or issue identified in the accreditation report. The COA may require that the information requested be provided either in the form of a seventh year report, or be included as part of the institution’s next biennial report if the type of information desired is consistent with the purpose of biennial reports and if the COA determines the timing to be sufficient. If follow-up reporting is required, the COA must specify this in the action taken at the time of the accreditation decision.

If the COA does not specify the need for a seventh year report from the institution receiving a decision of *Accreditation*, then the institution, at a minimum, should participate in routine accreditation activities such as collection, analysis, and program improvement activities related to candidate assessment data and program effectiveness.

Accreditation with Stipulations

Any institution granted *Accreditation with Stipulations* must complete a seventh year report as part of the accreditation review process. This report should address the action taken by the institution to address any stipulations as well as concerns identified with standards “not met” or “met with concerns.” In addition, the COA may require that the seventh year report address any other issue identified in the team report or raised during COA deliberations. All institutions with *Accreditation with Stipulations* must continue to work with the CTC consultant during the

seventh year. In cases where the determination of *Accreditation with Stipulations* has been rendered, the COA will indicate whether the process for removal of stipulations must include a revisit to the institution.

No Revisit Required

In the cases where a revisit was not deemed necessary by the COA, the consultant, and in some cases the team lead, will review the responses provided in the seventh year report by the institution. These responses will be summarized in an agenda item for the COA to consider in making its determination as to whether or not sufficient progress has been made to remove the stipulations. The COA will consider, at a regularly scheduled meeting, the recommendation of the CTC consultant and, if appropriate, the team lead in determining whether to remove stipulations. Institutional representatives should attend the meeting to ensure all questions and concerns of the COA are addressed as the members consider the removal of stipulations.

Required Revisit

If a site visit has been deemed necessary by the COA, it will occur approximately one year after the original site visit. The institution should continue working with its CTC consultant to plan for the revisit and to ensure common understanding of what is expected at the revisit. If the COA has determined that a revisit or a focused site visit is necessary, the seventh year report will be provided to the review team in advance of the visit to help the team's assessment of the progress being made in addressing the findings of the review. The CTC consultant will work with the institution to determine the specific revisit needs as directed by the COA action and help guide the institution in determining the type of evidence and progress expected at the time of the site visit.

Upon the conclusion of the revisit, the revisit team will determine whether the stipulations and standards deemed "not met" or "met with concerns" are now found to be met. A report of the revisit team will be provided to the COA and the COA, at one of its regularly scheduled public meetings, will discuss with the CTC consultant, team lead, and institutional representatives the institution's progress made in addressing the stipulations and concerns identified in the adopted accreditation report. If it is determined that sufficient progress has been made in meeting the standards, then the COA will remove the stipulations. If sufficient progress has not been made, the COA may change the accreditation decision and/or may impose additional stipulations with new timelines and expectations for compliance with the state adopted educator preparation standards.

Accreditation with Major Stipulations

Any institution granted *Accreditation with Major Stipulations* must complete a seventh year report as part of the accreditation review process. This report should address the action taken by the institution to address any stipulations as well as concerns associated with standards found to be "not met" or "met with concerns". In addition, the COA may require that the seventh year report address any other issues identified in the team report or raised during COA deliberations. This report will be used by the revisit team, along with any information collected during the revisit, to determine the progress being made in meeting the standards.

Required Revisit

In nearly all cases of *Accreditation with Major Stipulations*, a revisit to the institution will be required. This revisit should take place approximately one year after the original site visit. The COA will indicate in its action whether the revisit will be conducted by the staff consultant and team lead, or with a team. The size of the revisit team will largely depend on the number and type of stipulations and the number and type of programs with areas of concern identified.

During the seventh year, the institution should continue working with its CTC staff consultant to plan for the revisit and to ensure common understanding of what is expected at the revisit. A seventh year report must be provided by the institution which will, in turn, be provided to the review team to help the team's assessment of the progress being made in addressing the findings of the review. The CTC consultant will work with the institution to determine the specific revisit needs as directed by the COA decision and help guide the institution in determining the type of evidence and progress expected at the time of the site visit.

Upon the conclusion of the revisit, the revisit team will determine whether the stipulations and those standards deemed "not met" or "met with concerns" are now fully met. A report of the revisit team will be provided to the COA and the COA, at one of its regularly scheduled public meetings, will discuss with the staff consultant, team lead, and institutional representatives the progress made in addressing the standards. If it is determined that sufficient progress has been made in meeting the standards, then the COA may remove the stipulations. If sufficient progress has not been made, the COA may adopt a decision of *Denial of Accreditation*. If, in some cases, it determines that some progress has been made and it is appropriate to allow additional time for the institution to address the remaining stipulations, the COA could change the accreditation decision and/or may impose additional stipulations with new timelines and expectations for compliance with the state adopted educator preparation standards.

Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations

Like *Accreditation with Stipulations* and *Accreditation with Major Stipulations*, an institution given *Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations* is required to submit a seventh year report to document how it has addressed all stipulations and concerns. However, numerous additional requirements are imposed on an institution with *Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations* during that seventh year of the cycle.

Plan to Address Stipulations

A determination of *Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations* requires that the institution submit an action plan describing the steps the institution will take to address the stipulations and concerns and that it will provide updates at intervals determined by the COA. The COA determines the timeline for submitting the plan, but typically the plan must be submitted either 60 or 90 days after the COA meeting in which the COA has made the determination of *Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations*. The CTC consultant and the Administrator of Accreditation will determine the sufficiency of the plan and provide updates to the COA as appropriate.

Revisit

A revisit is required for any institution with *Accreditation with Probationary Stipulations*. This revisit should take place approximately one year after the original site visit. During the seventh year, the institution should continue working with its CTC consultant to plan for the revisit and to ensure a common understanding of what is expected at the revisit. A seventh year report must be provided by the institution which will, in turn, be provided to the review team to help the team’s assessment of the progress being made in addressing the findings of the review. The CTC consultant will work with the institution to determine the specific revisit needs as directed by the COA action and to help guide the institution in determining the types of evidence and progress expected at the time of the site visit.

The team lead, team members, and CTC consultant will participate in the revisit and provide a report to the COA about the progress that has been made in addressing standards. The report will include an updated decision on standards findings. The COA will make a determination whether sufficient progress has been made to remove the stipulations and change the accreditation decision. If the COA determines that sufficient progress has not been made, it could act to *Deny Accreditation*.

If, in some cases, it determines that some progress has been made and it is appropriate to allow additional time for the institution to address the remaining stipulations, the COA could change the accreditation decision and/or impose additional stipulations with new timelines and expectations for compliance with the state adopted educator preparation standards.

Institutional Requirement for the Seventh Year Report

The following chart clarifies which institutions are required to submit a seventh year report to the COA. Please note that the chart below only addresses the seventh year report, it does not list the numerous other possible requirements and limitations placed upon an institution as a result of a particular accreditation decision.

Accreditation Decision and Requirements for Submitting Seventh Year Report

Activity	Accreditation	Accreditation with Stipulations	Accreditation with Major and Probationary Stipulations
Report Submitted to CTC	COA discretion	Yes	Yes
Type of Report	One of three options as determined by COA: 1) No report 2) Seventh Year Report 3) Biennial Report	Seventh Year Report	Seventh Year Report
To be addressed in Report	(If required by COA) ! Standards Not Met (if applicable) ! Standards Met with Concerns	! All Stipulations ! Standards Not Met (if applicable) ! Standards Met with Concerns	! All Stipulations ! Standards Not Met (if applicable) ! Standards Met with Concerns

Activity	Accreditation	Accreditation with Stipulations	Accreditation with Major and Probationary Stipulations
	(if applicable) Any other areas included in COA action at the time the accreditation decision is made.	(if applicable) Any other areas included in COA action at the time the accreditation decision is made.	(if applicable) Any other areas included in COA action at the time the accreditation decision is made.
Review Process	CTC staff reviews the Report and reports to the COA that areas to be addressed were adequately addressed by the institution. .	If no revisit is required, CTC staff reviews Report and reports progress made to the COA. If revisit is required, revisit review team reviews report, along with information collected during the revisit to determine whether progress has been made in meeting standards. In both cases, progress is reported to the COA to determine whether to remove stipulations and change accreditation decision.	Revisit team reviews Report along with information collected during the revisit to determine whether progress has been made in meeting standards. Revisit team makes findings on standards in light of this new information and the COA determines whether to remove stipulations and change accreditation decision.