

Recommendations Regarding the Language of the Commission's Common Standards and Preconditions

April 2012

Overview of this Report

This report continues the discussion begun in March 2012 (http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/coa-agendas/2012-03/16_Common_Standards.pdf) regarding language in the Commission's Common Standards and Preconditions that have been challenging for teams to work with during accreditation activities.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the COA discuss the issues identified in this item and if appropriate take action to make recommendations to the Commission regarding the identified issues.

Background

The Commission is charged with adopting standards and preconditions that govern educator preparation in California. The Committee on Accreditation is charged to implement the Commission's accreditation system and as it works with reports from site visits, there are times that issues are identified related to the Commission's standards and/or preconditions.

This item presents information on three issues for the COA to discuss:

1. Precondition 1: Regional accreditation and the importance of notifying the Commission if the institution's regional accreditation changes
2. Precondition 1: Clear language about an institutional grievance process
3. Common Standard 4 and a requirement that the faculty and instructional personnel "...are reflective of a diverse society...."

Precondition 1: Regional Accreditation

Based on the discussion at the March 2012 COA meeting, staff provides the following proposed revised Precondition language for the COA's discussion. The proposed language is denoted in italics.

(1) Accreditation and Academic Credit.

- (a) *Institutions of higher education:*** To be granted initial institutional accreditation by the Commission to become eligible to submit programs or to be granted initial program accreditation or continuing accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program(s) must be proposed and operated by a college or university that (a) is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or another of the six regional accrediting associations, and (b) grants baccalaureate academic credit or post baccalaureate academic credit, or both. (c) *An institution approved to offer educator preparation in California must notify the Commission within 30 days if its regional*

accreditation status changes. (This provision does not apply to professional preparation programs offered by school districts.)

(b) *School districts or other entities that are not institutions of higher education:*

To be granted initial institutional accreditation by the Commission to become eligible to submit programs or to be granted initial program accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program(s) must be proposed and operated by a school district or other entity and the Superintendent or CEO of the district or entity shall submit verification of the governing board's approval of sponsorship of the program. The agreement to sponsor a program must include verification of the following:

Once an educator preparation program is approved and accepts a candidate, the sponsor must offer the approved program, meeting the adopted standards, until the candidate:

- i) completes the program,
- ii) withdraws from the program,
- iii) is dropped from the program based on established criteria, or
- iv) is admitted to another approved program to complete the requirements, with minimal disruption, for the authorization in the event the program closes. In this event, an individual transition plan would need to be developed with each candidate.

At the March COA meeting, the COA had discussed the wisdom of adding language that would require an institution to notify the Commission when it was contemplating terminating or adding regional accreditation. In staff discussions, it was determined that this could be provided in guidance to institutions and that it was not necessary to include this in the preconditions.

Precondition 1: Clear Grievance Process

The Commission's Common Standards and Preconditions do not explicitly require an institution to have developed or implemented a grievance process. All institutions of higher education that are regionally accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) are required to have a grievance process as part of the regional accreditation. But over half the entities approved by the Commission are not institutions of higher education and are the Commission are not regionally accredited. Therefore school districts, county offices of education or other entities that are approved to offer education preparation by the Commission may or may not have clearly detailed grievance processes.

Staff proposes that an additional section could be added to Precondition #1 stating that a clear grievance process must be in place at each entity approved to offer educator preparation in California.

- (c) *Grievance Process:*** All entities approved to offer educator preparation programs in California must have a clearly delineated grievance process for candidates and applicants. The grievance process information must be available to all candidates and

applicants and the institution must be prepared to provide documentation that the grievance process has been followed.

Common Standard 4: Faculty and Instructional Personnel

Common Standard 4 addresses issues related to an accredited institution's faculty and instructional personnel. Standard 4 is presented here with the proposed revised language in *italics*:

Standard 4: Faculty and Instructional Personnel

Qualified persons are employed and assigned to teach all courses, to provide professional development, and to supervise field-based and/or clinical experiences in each credential and certificate program. Instructional personnel and faculty have current knowledge in the content they teach, understand the context of public schooling, and model best professional practices in teaching and learning, scholarship, and service. *The recruiting and hiring processes support and promote maximizing diversity. Faculty and instructional personnel are knowledgeable about diverse abilities, cultural, language, ethnic and gender diversity. They have a thorough grasp of the academic standards, frameworks, and accountability systems that drive the curriculum of public schools. They collaborate regularly and systematically with colleagues in P-12 settings/college/university units and members of the broader, professional community to improve teaching, candidate learning, and educator preparation. The institution provides support for faculty development. The unit regularly evaluates the performance of course instructors and field supervisors, recognizes excellence, and retains only those who are consistently effective.*

Next Steps

Based on the COA's discussion and possible action, staff could prepare an agenda item for the Commission regarding the language.