

Discussion of Accreditation Activities for 2012-13

June 2012

Overview of this Report

This report continues the discussion from the May 2012 COA meeting regarding modifications to the Commission's accreditation activities for 2012-13 in light of the Commission's projected fiscal situation for the upcoming budget year.

Staff Recommendation

This is an information item. No action is required.

Background to this Report

At the May COA meeting, the Commission staff updated the members of the COA about the Commission's projected fiscal situation for 2012-13 and its plans for bringing an item to the Commission to adjust the accreditation activities for 2012-13 in light of these fiscal realities. The attached agenda item containing 14 recommendations was finalized and presented to the Commission for their discussion and approval. Comments from the COA discussion on this topic were communicated to the Commission by the Commissioner liaison at the meeting.

Members of the Commission reiterated their support for a strong accreditation system, but noted that the difficult fiscal situation requires changes to the system in 2012-13. As a result, the Commission voted unanimously to approve all 14 recommendations. Several Commissioners commented on the need to continue refining and improving the accreditation system during this period.

Commission staff will update the COA as to what it has done thus far to implement these recommendations. As of the writing of this agenda item, staff had included a brief notice in the PSD E-news issued on June 15, 2012, the day after the Commission decision. In addition, staff is currently drafting a Program Sponsor Alert as well as cohort specific correspondence. In addition, staff has begun scheduling conference calls with institutions seeking guidance as to how to prepare for accreditation activities in light of these new developments.

Next Steps

With the adoption of the 14 recommendations, the Commission staff is now working on a plan to implement each of these recommendations as well as to notify the field of the revised expectations and deadlines.

6B

Information/Action

Professional Services Committee

Implementing the Commission's Accreditation System in 2012-13

Executive Summary: This agenda item presents recommendations for the implementation of the Commission's accreditation system in 2012-13 in light of the Commission's current fiscal constraints.

Policy Question: How should the Commission's accreditation system be implemented in 2012-13 in light of the Commission's budgetary constraints?

Recommended Action: That the Commission take action to adopt the proposed recommendations and/or modified recommendations for implementing the Commission's accreditation system in 2012-13.

Presenters: Teri Clark, Director, and Cheryl Hickey, Administrator, Professional Services Division

Strategic Plan Goal: 1

Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators

- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation and performance of professional educators and for the accreditation of credential programs

June 2012

Accreditation Implementation for 2012-13

Introduction

This agenda item continues the discussion begun at the April 2012 Commission meeting by addressing the specific accreditation activities to be implemented in the 2012-13 year. Accreditation status conveys that educator preparation programs offered by institutions meet state-adopted standards of quality and effectiveness and that sufficient quality characterizes the preparation of educators. The fundamental tenet of the Commission's accreditation system is that professional educators make professional judgments about the quality of educator preparation programs.

Background

Beginning with the 2007-08 year, accreditation site visits were reinstated for approved institutions after a six year hiatus. Five of the seven cohorts have hosted an accreditation site visit since the Commission's system was restarted.

The chart below estimates the annual costs and staff time involved in the Commission's scheduled accreditation activities.

Activity	Staff Time Necessary (FTE)	\$ Costs ¹
<i>Ongoing Accreditation Activities</i>		
Biennial Reports	.80	0
Program Assessment	1.5	\$90,000
Site Visits	3.5	\$162,000
<i>Other Accreditation Activities</i>		
Initial Institutional and Program Approval	2.0	\$40,000
Standards Development, Review, and Revision <i>(per content area and within one fiscal year, does not include implementation)</i> ²	1.0	\$50,000
Technical Assistance: prospective sponsors and programs, accreditation, transitioning programs	3.5	\$10,000

¹ This includes travel, lodging and per diem for advisory panel members and members of the BIR

² This is an estimate for work related to one content area, for one year. Depending on the complexity of the work and the number of credential programs within the content area, the staff time and costs would vary

Recommended Accreditation Implementation for 2012-13

Current projections for 2012-13 indicate that the Commission's operational funding will be insufficient to implement the accreditation system as designed. Staff presented information on the accreditation system at the April 2012 Commission meeting (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2012-04/2012-04-6C.pdf>) and discussed the current fiscal constraints with the Committee on Accreditation (COA) at the April 2012 meeting. Based on the discussions with the Commission and the COA and along with a thorough analysis of the fiscal constraints, staff proposes the following 14 recommendations for the Commission's review

and discussion. The recommendations are organized by the accreditation activity-Biennial Reports, Program Assessment, Site Visits, and Initial Program Review. After each set of recommendations, staff has identified the benefits and possible risks if the Commission were to implement the recommendations.

Biennial Reports: Programs submit candidate competency and program effectiveness data after years one, three, and five of the accreditation cycle. The analysis of the data is presented as well as program modifications based on the data.

Recommendations:

1. Continue with the Biennial Report submission, review and feedback for all approved institutions as currently scheduled for 2012-13.
2. Develop and implement a pilot where program directors/leaders come to the CTC (or another central location) to review Biennial Reports, with an initial focus on one type of educator preparation program to facilitate the pilot activities. The purpose of the pilot would be to develop a process for building capacity within the preparation program to think deeply about candidate assessment data, the analysis of the data, and using data to drive program improvement.
3. Increase the consistency and comprehensiveness of the data collected, analyzed, and reported on for each type of educator preparation program. An efficient process would be to work with program sponsors to help them work with and incorporate data in future reports, possibly through a webinar. The initial focus for technical assistance efforts would be on the development, analysis, and use of teaching performance assessment data within the biennial reports, and the subsequent focus would be on the use of performance assessment data within the site visit process to help focus the visit on candidate outcomes and program quality issues.

Benefits of these recommendations:

- Institutions have developed candidate competency assessments and program effectiveness measures and are in the routine of submitting Biennial Reports. By continuing the submission of the reports, the Commission will have some assurances that programs are continuing to assess candidates and program effectiveness even though site visits would be delayed an additional year.
- Program Directors who pilot the reading process for the Biennial Reports will develop a deep understanding of the report and how candidate assessment should be used within the program.
- By working to develop consistency and comprehensiveness of the data submitted in the Biennial Reports, the Commission would have increased assurances that educators have the knowledge and skills specified in its program standards and would increase the consistency of performance assessment data use by programs to track both candidate performance and program quality improvement.

Possible risks of these recommendations:

- Staff has not identified any risks related to the recommendations for the Biennial Report.

Program Assessment: This is the ongoing program review completed by Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR) during the fourth year of the accreditation cycle and two years prior to the site visit. The findings from Program Assessment frame the accreditation site visit in year 6 of the accreditation cycle.

4. Continue with the Program Assessment process for all institutions in the Violet and Indigo cohorts. This will allow the programs sponsored by the institutions in the Violet and Indigo cohorts to complete the review, and redesign if necessary, of each approved program.
5. Postpone the beginning of Program Assessment for institutions in the other five cohorts by one year. The Blue cohort would submit in Fall 2013 rather than Fall 2012 and so on. Appendix A provides a table with the currently scheduled and proposed activities.
6. Discuss with the Commission which standards provide the most leverage in terms of program analysis and quality improvements based on data. A list of key essential standards would serve to focus programs on a smaller number of higher impact, essential standards than is presently the case.
7. Provide technical assistance for program-specific groups to discuss and build understanding of the Commission's Common and program standards and clarify the essential attributes in the adopted standards. Webinars could be a part of these activities and the webinar would be archived for later reference.

Benefits of these recommendations:

- Completing Program Assessment for institutions in the Violet and Indigo cohorts can be done in an economical manner since most programs in these cohorts have already begun the process and the initial review of the submissions has been completed. The reviews would be completed through distance and technology readings to save funds.
- Completing Program Assessment for the Violet and Indigo cohorts would prepare the institutions in these cohorts for the site visits in 13-14 and 14-15.
- Postponing the beginning of Program Assessment for the Blue and subsequent cohorts would allow staff to refine the document review process and not require expenditure of significant fiscal resources in 12-13.
- Developing common understanding of the Commission's standards and what they require would increase the efficiency and accuracy of the accreditation system.

Possible risks of these recommendations:

- Delaying Program Assessment for the Blue cohort, and all subsequent cohorts, could allow a program that is not meeting the Commission's standards to continue operating for an additional year in a manner that does not meet the standards.
- The calibration of readers can be challenging when program proposals are reviewed through distance and technology. Staff would need to work with all readers to assure a consistent and high calibration level.

Site Visits: The site visits are visits made to program sites by trained members of the BIR along with Commission accreditation staff.

8. Postpone all initial site visits scheduled for 2012-13 until 2013-14, and postpone subsequent visits by one year. Use the 2012-13 year to provide technical assistance for institutions in preparation for the site visit (i.e., developing Preconditions reports, support for developing Common Standards narratives and electronic exhibits that are streamlined but allow an institution the ability to demonstrate ways it addresses the Commission's standards. Work to help all institutions scheduled for visits in 13-14 to be efficiently prepared for the site visit programs.
9. Conduct the scheduled accreditation revisits and special site visit scheduled for 2012-13. When prudent, decrease the size of the team and/or the length of the visit to complete the visits in an economical yet rigorous manner.
10. Develop and pilot a program completer survey to collect data that can be used in the accreditation process. The survey would provide information relative to both the Common and program standards and could focus the site visit beginning with the visits in 2013-14.
11. Work with stakeholders and the Committee on Accreditation to develop a more streamlined and targeted site visit model that is cost effective, rigorous, and focuses on the essential attributes of high quality educator preparation. The revised site visit model would be piloted in the 2013-14.
12. Develop a fee recovery system for accreditation revisits and other activities that exceed the regularly scheduled accreditation activities.

Benefits of these recommendations:

- Focusing the 2012-13 year on technical assistance related to the Commission's standards and streamlining the exhibits required for accreditation would increase the understanding of the standards, support institutions in presenting evidence that the standards are being met and support the institutions in preparing for an effective site visit in 2013-14.
- Conducting the scheduled revisits and the one focused site visit will provide assurances of program quality to the Commission.
- The development and piloting of a program completer survey would provide a common set of information about approved programs to the Commission and the institutions that prepare California's educators.
- A site visit hiatus of one year would allow the staff time to work with stakeholders and the COA to develop a more streamlined site visit model for piloting in 2013-14 and be within the fiscal constraints that the Commission is under at this time.

Possible risks of these recommendations:

- The institutions in the Violet (and Indigo) cohort have not hosted a site visit in over 11 years. This would add an additional year to the interval between the site visits. By completing the Program Assessment process for programs sponsored by the institutions in the Violet and Indigo cohorts, staff hopes to minimize the impact of the delayed site visit.

Initial Program Review (IPR): *The IPR process is the review of a program proposal by members of the BIR prior to initial approval of the program by the COA.*

13. Continue to review program proposals in 12-13 through a distance reading process.
14. Develop a fee recovery system whereby new programs and new institutions would be assessed a fee to cover the cost for reviewing the new program or institutional proposal.

Benefits of these recommendations:

- If the review of initial program proposals is accomplished through distance reading in 2012-13, new programs could be reviewed and would be approved by the Committee on Accreditation to begin operating in 2012-13.
- A fee recovery system would allow the Commission to fund the review of program proposals in future years. The fee recovery system would allow the initial proposal to be reviewed by readers with dedicated time and staff facilitation.

Possible risks of these recommendations:

- The review of programs through distance and technology is a slower process than when readers come to the Commission office or another location to read with dedicated time and a staff member to respond to questions.
- The calibration of readers can be challenging when program proposals are reviewed through distance and technology. There is a risk of programs that do not fully meet the Commission's standards being approved. Staff would work with all readers to keep the calibration level high.

Fiscal Impacts of the Recommendations

The Commission would significantly reduce travel, lodging and per diem costs for both staff and BIR members by postponing the 2012-13 accreditation site visits until 13-14 and delaying the start of Program Assessment for the Blue, and subsequent cohorts, until 13-14. These actions would result in not having to expend approximately \$252,000 in 2012-13.

If Initial Program Review continues to be completed through distance and technology in 2012-13, as well as completing Program Assessment for the Violet and Indigo cohorts through distance and technology reviews, an additional \$40,000 would not need to be expended. Work with the COA and stakeholders identified in the recommendations above would only be scheduled if the Commission's funds are adequate to support funding the work.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission take action to adopt the 14 recommendations as presented in this agenda item and/or as modified through Commission discussion and direction.

Next Steps and Future Agenda Items

Based upon the Commission's action, staff will implement the accreditation system in 2012-13 as directed. Staff would immediately notify all institutions of any changes to the planned

accreditation activities because many of these activities require significant planning on the part of approved programs and the sponsoring institutions.

During 2012-13, staff would work with the COA and stakeholders to implement the recommendations to streamline and target the accreditation system as well as complete the work focusing on data collection and the Commission's standards.

Staff would report to the Commission on the success of the implementation process, including efficiencies achieved, increased use of data by programs, feedback from the field, unanticipated successes and/or problems, and additional recommendations and/or modifications if warranted.

Appendix A

Currently Scheduled Accreditation Activities

	Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Indigo	Violet
2012-13	7thYr Follow-Up	Biennial Report		Biennial Report	Program Assessment	Biennial Report	Site Visit
2013-14	Biennial Report		Biennial Report	Program Assessment	Biennial Report	Site Visit	7thYr Follow-Up
2014-15		Biennial Report	Program Assessment	Biennial Report	Site Visit	7thYr Follow-Up	Biennial Report
2015-16	Biennial Report	Program Assessment	Biennial Report	Site Visit	7thYr Follow-Up	Biennial Report	
2016-17	Program Assessment	Biennial Report	Site Visit	7thYr Follow-Up	Biennial Report		Biennial Report
2017-18	Biennial Report	Site Visit	7thYr Follow-Up	Biennial Report		Biennial Report	Program Assessment

Recommended Revised Schedule

	Red	Orange	Yellow	Green	Blue	Indigo	Violet
2012-13	7thYr Follow-Up	Biennial Report		Biennial Report		Biennial Report	
2013-14	Biennial Report		Biennial Report		Program Assessment		Site Visit
2014-15		Biennial Report		Program Assessment	Biennial Report	Site Visit	7thYr Follow-Up
2015-16	Biennial Report		Program Assessment	Biennial Report	Site Visit	7thYr Follow-Up	Biennial Report
2016-17		Program Assessment	Biennial Report	Site Visit	7thYr Follow-Up	Biennial Report	
2017-18	Program Assessment	Biennial Report	Site Visit	7thYr Follow-Up	Biennial Report		Biennial Report