

*California  
Commission on Teacher Credentialing  
Meeting of  
August 13-14, 2003*

**AGENDA ITEM NUMBER:** PREP - 3  
**COMMITTEE:** Preparation Standards Committee  
**TITLE:** Request for Initial Institutional Accreditation for  
Three Prospective Program Sponsors

**Action**  
 **Information**  
 **Report**

**Strategic Plan Goal(s):**

- Goal 1: Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators**
- Sustain high quality standards for the preparation of professional educators

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# **Request for Initial Institutional Accreditation for Three Prospective Program Sponsors**

## **Professional Services Division**

**August 13-14, 2003**

### **Executive Summary**

This agenda report reviews the adopted procedures to be used for initial accreditation of institutions and other program sponsors under the provisions of the *Accreditation Framework (1995)*. The report contains a request for initial institutional accreditation, according to the Commission's procedures, for three prospective program sponsors: Western Governors University, High Tech High, and California College of Arts and Crafts.

### **Fiscal Impact Summary**

The Professional Services Division is responsible for reviewing proposed preparation programs, consulting with external reviewers, as needed and communicating with institutions and local education agencies about their program proposals. The Commission budget supports the costs of these activities. The Commission's base budget also includes resources to support review of institutional proposals for initial accreditation. No augmentation of the budget is needed for continuation of the program review and approval activities.

### **Policy Question**

Should the Commission grant initial institutional accreditation to the prospective program sponsors described?

### **Recommendation**

That the Commission grant initial institutional accreditation to Western Governors University, High Tech High, and California College of Arts and Crafts.



# Request for Initial Institutional Accreditation for Three Prospective Program Sponsors

## Professional Services Division

August 13-14, 2003

### Background

Prior to 1995, institutions not previously approved to offer programs of professional preparation would submit a program proposal responding to the preconditions and standards of the California Teacher Credentialing Commission. If the institution was accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) or another regional accrediting body and if the response to the preconditions and standards was judged to be satisfactory, the Commission voted to give approval to the institution to begin offering one or more programs.

With the adoption of the *Accreditation Framework* in 1995, a distinction was made between “initial accreditation of institutions” and “initial accreditation of programs,” as described below.

### Initial Accreditation of Institutions

Under the authority of the Education Code, the Commission is given the responsibility to determine the eligibility of institutions (this would also apply to other program sponsors, such as school districts) to offer preparation programs and to recommend issuance of credentials to candidates completing programs of preparation.

**Education Code Section 44227 (a)** – The Commission may approve any institution of higher education whose teacher education program meets the standards prescribed by the Commission, to recommend to the Commission the issuance of credentials to persons who have successfully completed those programs.

**Education Code Section 44372** – The powers and duties of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing regarding the accreditation system shall include the following:

- (c) Rule on the eligibility of an applicant for accreditation when the applying institution has not previously prepared educators for state certification in California, pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 44227.

**Accreditation Framework Section 4 A 1 - Initial Accreditation of Institutions.** A post-secondary education institution that has not previously been declared eligible to offer credential preparation programs must submit an application to the Commission for initial professional accreditation. Institutional accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) or another regional accrediting body is required for initial professional accreditation by the Commission. The Commission may establish additional procedures and criteria for the initial professional accreditation of institutions to prepare and recommend candidates for state credentials in education.

Under the above provisions, the only specific criterion for initial accreditation is regional accreditation. However, the Commission is given authority by the *Accreditation Framework* to establish additional procedures and criteria. In October 1998, the Commission adopted procedures and additional requirements for initial accreditation.

### **Adopted Procedures for Initial Accreditation**

The procedures adopted by the Commission apply to institutions and other program sponsors, such as districts, who have not previously prepared educators for state certification in California:

1. The institution (program sponsor) prepares a complete program proposal that responds to all preconditions, Common Standards and appropriate Program Standards. The proposal is considered to be the application for accreditation.
2. Initial Accreditation is a two-stage process:
  - a. The proposal is reviewed for compliance with the appropriate preconditions (regional accreditation, institutional responsibility, non-discrimination procedures, completion of a needs assessment, involvement of practitioners in the design of the program, agreement to provide information to the Commission, etc.) and brought before the Commission for initial accreditation action. If the proposal meets the Commission's requirements, the institution (program sponsor) will be recommended for initial accreditation.
  - b. If the Commission acts favorably on the proposal, it will be forwarded to the Committee on Accreditation for further action. The program sponsor's responses to the credential program standards for each program the institution wishes to offer are reviewed by Commission staff or panels of expert advisors to determine the sufficiency of the responses. Once it is determined that the program proposal meets the Commission's standards, it is recommended to the Committee on Accreditation for initial program accreditation.
3. Once granted initial accreditation, the institution (program sponsor) will then come under the continuing accreditation procedures and will participate in the regular cycle for on-site reviews.

### **Request for Initial Institutional Accreditation from Western Governors University**

Western Governors University offers a new way of looking at higher education. The idea for a western virtual university was born at a meeting of the Western Governors' Association (WGA) in 1995. The members of the WGA, an organization consisting of the governors of 18 western states, two Pacific-flag territories and one commonwealth, were discussing ways that they could encourage states to use information technologies to collaborate in education, industry and government.

While reaffirming their commitment to their traditional colleges and universities, the governors saw the need for a new cooperative approach to meet the emerging challenge and to leverage their

investment in these existing institutions. The governors appointed a team to create a design plan for a western virtual university and an implementation plan through which such an entity could be established and financed. The first three degree and certificate programs were opened to students in 1998. WGU is now a consortium of 19 Western states and approximately 40 universities. WGU Teachers College provides teacher certification and advanced degrees in elementary education, reading, mathematics, science, technology and English as a Second Language.

In February 2003, Western Governors University became the first and only university to receive regional accreditation from four regional accrediting commissions at the same time. WGU's accreditation has been approved by the following four commissions:

- The Commission on Colleges and Universities of the Northwest Association of Schools and of Colleges and Universities
- The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
- The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges
- The Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges

A team of national evaluators representing each association made on-site visits to the university to review WGU's operations. Based on the reviews and the team's report to the accrediting commissions, WGU was granted regional accreditation, thus allowing WGU students to transfer more easily to other universities.

The university provides a creative path to teaching certification. Its approach to education is based on competency in critical knowledge and skills measured by assessments, not the number of hours spent in a college classroom. Rather than developing its own courses, the university collaborated with colleges, universities, corporations and training organizations across the United States to make the best use of distance learning materials available to students through the Internet.

The WGU online catalog contains about 1,200 courses from 45 partnering institutions. Programs are tailored to teachers' aides or paraprofessionals transitioning to teaching. Others are intended for career-changers or second-career professionals. Online courses also provide learning opportunities to teachers and other professionals in rural and remote areas of the country who might not have access to traditional on-campus learning.

Western Governors University requests initial institutional accreditation in order to be eligible to submit programs for review.

### **Review of Institutional Proposal**

Western Governors University has submitted a complete response to all preconditions, the Commission's Common Standards, and the Multiple and Single Subject program standards. The responses to the preconditions and standards are appropriate for this action. Based on the review of responses to preconditions and standards, staff recommends Western Governors University for

initial institutional accreditation. If the Commission acts to grant initial accreditation, the program proposal will be forwarded to the Committee on Accreditation for further consideration.

### **Request for Initial Institutional Accreditation from High Tech High**

High Tech High (HTH) is a charter school in the San Diego Unified School District. The school is a small, diverse learning community with a current enrollment of 400 students, located at the former Naval Training Center in San Diego. HTH is founded on three design principles: personalization, adult-world connection, and a common intellectual mission.

High Tech High innovative features include performance-based assessment, daily shared planning for staff, state-of-the-art technical facilities for project-based learning, internships for all students, and close links to the high tech workplace. The primary goals of High Tech High are to:

- To integrate technical and academic education in a school that prepares students for post-secondary education and for leadership in the high technology industry.
- To increase the number of educationally disadvantaged students in math and engineering who succeed in high school and post-secondary education and who become productive members and leaders in San Diego's high technology industry.
- To provide all HTH students with an extraordinary education, and to graduate students who will be thoughtful, engaged citizens prepared to take on the difficult leadership challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

High Tech High was created because of the market demand for technologically savvy and scientifically trained individuals from diverse backgrounds to enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace. As such, educators who teach at High Tech High School must be able to instruct their students in a like manner. Educators who teach in high tech charter schools need concentrated professional development in subject matter, project-based learning, performance and compatibility of systems, applications, infrastructure, and equipment.

In addition to preparing new college graduates, the program will help already skilled and knowledgeable science and technology industry experts who are lacking in teaching skills such as pedagogy and curriculum design to achieve the necessary preparation and credentials that will enable them to teach in California's public schools. High Tech High plans to create more than 20 small schools within the San Diego Unified School District over the next five years. This program will provide an opportunity for qualified charter school operators to provide on-site teacher certification programs.

High Tech High requests initial institutional accreditation in order to be eligible to submit programs for review.



## **Review of Institutional Proposal**

High Tech High has submitted a complete response to all preconditions, the Commission's Common Standards, and the Multiple and Single Subject program standards. The responses to the preconditions and standards are appropriate for this action. Based on the review of responses to preconditions and standards, staff recommends High Tech High for initial institutional accreditation. If the Commission acts to grant initial accreditation, the program proposal will be forwarded to the Committee on Accreditation for further consideration.

## **Request for Initial Institutional Accreditation from California College of Arts and Crafts**

The California College of Arts and Crafts (CCAC) was founded in 1907 as the California Guild of Arts and Crafts. Frederick Meyer founded the school in Berkeley with \$45 in cash, 43 students, three classrooms, and three teachers. The purpose was to provide an education for artists and designers that would integrate both theory and practice in the arts.

Today CCAC is assuming a leadership position in arts education regionally, nationally and internationally. California College of Arts and Crafts' faculty of 375 distinguished practitioners and scholars teach 1,400 students working toward undergraduate and graduate degrees. CCAC's historic Oakland campus and the new San Francisco campus support 17 majors, including fine art, design, architecture, creative writing and visual criticism.

Throughout much of its 95-year history, CCAC has offered courses geared toward teacher preparation, however with the decline in art education in the public schools during the 1980s, the program was eliminated. With the recent change in entrance requirements to the University of California and the California State University to add a year of visual and performing arts instruction at the high school level, there will be a corresponding increase in the need for art teachers.

California College of Arts and Crafts has long-standing art education partnerships with Oakland and San Francisco Schools. These partnership activities include mentorship classes and artist-residency workshops, as well as professional development seminars and coaching sessions. Daily interaction with K-12 educators and students through the partnerships has made the institution aware of a need to re-establish its teacher preparation efforts. The institution plans to develop an art education degree and a teacher education program over the next five years. The first phase of development is the subject matter program in art.

California College of Arts and Crafts requests initial institutional accreditation in order to be eligible to submit programs for review.

## **Review of Institutional Proposal**

California College of Arts and Crafts has submitted a complete response to the preconditions and the Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Subject Matter Programs in Art. The responses to the preconditions and standards are appropriate for this action. Based on the review of responses to preconditions and standards, staff recommends California College of Arts and Crafts for initial institutional accreditation.

The proposed subject matter program has already been submitted for review to the appropriate review panel. If the Commission acts to grant initial accreditation, the results of the subject matter program review will be brought to the Commission for action in another Commission agenda item before the Preparation Standards Committee.

### **Summary of Recommendations**

Staff recommends initial institutional accreditation for:

1. Western Governors University
2. High Tech High
3. California College of Arts and Crafts