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Information

Professional Services Committee

Implementation of the Accreditation System

Executive Summary: This item provides the draft revised Experimental Program Standards for information and includes a plan to complete a field review of the draft revised standards.

Recommended Action: For information only

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Strategic Plan Goal: 1

Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators

- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation of professional educators.
- ◆ Implement, monitor and report on the outcomes of new program initiatives.

August 2007

Implementation of the Accreditation System

Introduction

This item presents the draft revised Experimental Program Standards to the Commission for information. Following the Commission's initial review, staff will post the draft revised standards for stakeholder feedback, then collect and analyze the feedback. The Committee on Accreditation (COA) will then review the feedback at the October COA meeting and the draft revised Experimental Program Standards will be presented to the Commission at the December 2007 meeting for adoption.

Background

Since the Commission began taking action in August 2006 to adopt policies related to the revised accreditation system, many activities toward its implementation have been accomplished. This agenda item provides the draft revised Experimental Program Standards for information. Listed below is a synopsis of the Commission's activities to date in implementing its revised accreditation system.

- At the August 2006 meeting, the Commission adopted the first six recommendations related to the revised accreditation system (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2006-08/2006-08-6B.pdf>).
- Then at the September 2006 meeting, the Commission adopted seven additional recommendations (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2006-09/2006-09-5G.pdf>).
- At the December 2006 Commission meeting staff provided an update to the Commission summarizing the activities to date (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2006-11/2006-11-7F.pdf>).
- At the February 2007 Commission meeting staff presented information on the selection process for COA members (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2007-02/2007-02-6D.pdf>).
- At the March 2007 meeting staff presented the proposed revisions to the Commission's Common Standards and a plan for increased communication between the Commission and the COA (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2007-03/2007-03-6C.pdf>).
- At the April 2007 meeting the Commission interviewed the finalists for the COA and appointed 3 individuals to the COA (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2007-04/2007-04-2H.pdf>).
- In June 2007 the Commission acted to adopt the revised Common Standards and appointed a liaison to the COA (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/commission/agendas/2007-06/2007-06-6B.pdf>). In addition, the draft *Accreditation Framework* was presented for to the Commission for information and is now posted on the Commission website for stakeholder feedback (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/accred-files/Draft-Accred-Framework-Feedback.doc>).

Experimental Program Standards

Experimental Programs were designed to encourage innovation in educator preparation and add to the profession's knowledge base regarding educator preparation, while preparing educators to work in the public schools. The current Experimental Program Standards were adopted by the Commission in 1986 and since that time there have been fewer than 30 experimental programs approved.

Development of the Revised Experimental Program Standards

As the COA and the Accreditation Study Work Group (Work Group) reviewed and proposed revisions to the Commission's accreditation system, they discussed the Experimental Program option. There was interest in revising the Experimental Program Standards and encouraging institutions/program sponsors to consider planning and implementing worthwhile Experimental Programs in the future.

A subgroup of COA and Work Group members met a number of times to review and suggest revisions to the current Experimental Program Standards. The draft revised standards were discussed by the COA and the group revised the draft standards based on the COA's feedback. At the June 2007 COA meeting, the COA requested staff bring the revised draft experimental program standards to the Commission for consideration.

The COA and Work Group agreed early in the process that it is essential that candidates completing an experimental program have the same knowledge, skills and abilities as candidates who complete a program operating under the adopted program standards. The institution/program sponsor is responsible for proposing an experimental research design and program design that has a high likelihood of producing candidates with the appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities as well as contributing to the knowledge base of the education profession. The COA will only approve experimental programs that have completed the peer review process and demonstrate a high possibility of meeting both goals—qualified candidates and contributing to the knowledge base on preparing educators.

Included with the draft revised experimental standards in this agenda item are both a rationale for experimental programs in general as well as proposed procedures for submitting an experimental program. The draft revised Experimental Program Standards are presented in Appendix A along with the rationale, goals, policy principles and procedures for submitting an Experimental Program for approval. Appendix B provides an alignment matrix that displays the current Experimental Program Standards (1986) in the left hand column and the draft revised Experimental Program Standards in the right hand column.

Next Steps

Displayed below is the plan for stakeholder feedback related to the draft revised Experimental Program Standards. Once the feedback has been analyzed, the COA will review the feedback and make revisions, if necessary, in the draft revised standards. The Experimental Program Standards will then return to the Commission for action at the December 2007 meeting.

Activity	When
Draft revised Experimental Program Standards posted on the Commission website and field review begins.	August 10, 2007
Stakeholder feedback on the Draft revised Experimental Program Standards is due to the Commission.	October 9, 2007
COA reviews stakeholder feedback and revises the draft revised standards, if necessary.	October 24, 2007
Draft Experimental Program Standards presented to the Commission for adoption.	December 2007
Prospective program sponsors may begin to submit proposals for Experimental Programs.	January 2008

Appendix A

Draft Revised Experimental Program Standards



COMMISSION ON
TEACHER CREDENTIALING

Ensuring Educator Excellence

Experimental Program Standards

2007

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Experimental Programs for Educator Preparation

Rationale for Experimental Programs

The experimental program option is designed to encourage innovations in educator preparation and investigation of those innovations, with the aim of increasing the profession's understanding of professional learning and improving professional practice for the benefit of all students in California. Experimental programs were provided for in Education Code 44273(a) as a way for programs of "merit and the potential of improving the quality of service authorized by the credential" to be developed. In the past, few programs have been submitted under this option. The revised Experimental Program standards take into account this under-utilization and are designed to encourage innovation with accountability to the profession.

Experimental programs can be proposed and are encouraged in any credential area. There is a need for high quality educators who serve in leadership and support roles to promote and facilitate learning for all students, as well as, for classroom teachers.

Institutions and/or program sponsors are particularly encouraged to develop proposals for experimental programs to address the following specific needs in California: (a) the need for quality teachers in low performing schools, and/or those serving large numbers of minority students, poor students, and English language learners; (b) critical needs for teachers in specific areas, such as math and science; and (c) the need for highly qualified teachers given the expected future teacher shortage.

California's educator work force is prone to fluctuation and change. There will always be a need for highly qualified and effective educators. Institutions or program sponsors are encouraged to develop experimental programs, incorporating innovative and new ways designed to attract individuals to the profession and prepare highly qualified educators to meet the needs of California's public school students.

In general, experimental program options should be designed with the aim of improving educator preparation and professional practice for the benefit of all educators and students in California's schools. Program improvement should be an ongoing professional process whereby programs develop, implement and investigate preparation approaches informed by the latest research and literature. The results of these investigations should then be disseminated within the professional and the policy arena to encourage, as appropriate, broader use and adaptation to current practice.

Goals for Experimental Programs

The goals for experimental programs include the following:

1. As with all other Commission program completers, experimental program completers have the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities as identified by the Commission's candidate competence standards to teach and support student learning for all children in California public schools.
2. Program completers can, through their practice, meet the needs of populations that have been underserved and contribute to the success of all students (including meeting the needs of English Learners and/or helping to close the achievement gap).

3. Experimental programs contribute to the construction of new knowledge and scholarship on educator preparation to improve student learning.

Policy Principles Underlying the 2007 Redesign of Experimental Program Policies

The following principles represent Commission guidelines related to the proposal, review and evaluation of Experimental Programs.

1. The Commission encourages experimental programs that seek to resolve significant questions regarding educator preparation. Experimental programs must have a scholarly focus, and proposals must be research-based and clearly identify the issue being investigated, the intended outcomes and the evidence that will be collected, analyzed and used for program improvement.
2. Colleges, universities and school district educator preparation programs are encouraged to develop experimental programs that depart from the Commission's program standards for traditional programs if the proposed program meets the goals of the statement above. The Common Standards will apply to all proposals and submissions—both traditional and experimental.
3. The Committee on Accreditation will approve experimental programs that adhere to the experimental program standards, including indicators of candidate competence and how they will be assessed. As part of this process, the institution/program sponsor must describe how it will investigate and evaluate the experimental program. Biennial reports of research findings will be required as a part of the accreditation cycle. Experimental programs will be approved providing they have the potential to improve the quality of service authorized by the credential as required by Education Code.
4. An experimental program proposal will be determined to have merit based upon an analysis of its proposed design to address fundamental issues in schooling in California and preparing educators for those settings.
5. Experimental programs will be evaluated based upon the proposal and the data collected related to program quality and candidate competence. The potential for improving the quality of service authorized by the credential will be determined on the basis of analysis of the indicators of program effectiveness that the institution/program sponsor submits as part of its program proposal.
6. Each experimental program submits a final report to the Committee. The Committee on Accreditation hears the reports on results of Experimental Programs and innovations. The Committee may recommend to the Commission a review of Program Standards based on data and scholarship regarding educator preparation reported by Experimental Programs.

Proposed Draft Revised Experimental Program Standards

Standard 1: Program Rationale

The experimental program proposal provides a credible rationale for the program, drawing upon relevant and recent scholarly and research literature in the field. Experimental programs have a scholarly focus and proposals are research-based with a clear plan for investigating an issue of significant importance for the theory and practice of educator preparation.

Standard 2: Research Question(s)

The proposal clearly identifies the topic of investigation and submits one or more research questions, hypotheses or objectives that the experimental program is expected to address. The proposal relates to fundamentally significant issues in the selection, preparation and/or assessment of prospective professional educators.

Standard 3: Program Design

The proposal submits a complete and thorough description of the proposed program. The proposal includes details of the activities and coursework that candidates will complete as well as indicators of outcomes of candidate competence for program completion. The proposal must outline all essential elements of the research design, as appropriate to the nature of the inquiry. This includes the intended outcomes and evidence that will be collected.

Standard 4: Research Design

The proposal clearly illustrates the connection of the Program Philosophy and Goals, Research Questions and Program Design to the implementation of the experimental program and investigation of the issue(s) being investigated as well as a timeline for the investigation. Standards of scholarship will be applied as part of the peer and staff review used to approve, monitor and review proposals and reports. The length of time for the experimental program is provided and is appropriate to the focus of the inquiry.

Standard 5: Anticipated Outcomes

The proposal identifies the anticipated outcomes of implementing the experimental program and how the implementation and investigation will add to the knowledge base of educator preparation. The proposal includes details about how the efficacy of the program will be assessed and how the program will ensure that program completers have the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to work in California's diverse public schools and support students in meeting standards.

Standard 6: Contribution to Scholarship and the Profession

The proposal clearly shows that the knowledge generated by implementing the experimental program will improve the quality of preparation for service authorized by the credential. The program and the scholarship generated from the research should lead or have the potential to lead to improvements in the preparation of professionals and guide education policy.

Procedures for Submitting an Experimental Program for Commission Approval

An experimental program can be developed and submitted at any time in the seven year accreditation cycle. Once approved, the program is incorporated into the institution/program sponsor's accreditation cohort activities.

- Institution or program sponsor identifies an issue, question, or problem that can be addressed through a preparation program that varies from the Commission's adopted program standards.
- Institution or program sponsor submits a 3-5 page paper describing the issue, question, or problem to the Commission.
- Staff reviews the proposal brief and provides technical assistance to the institution or program sponsor in developing the full program proposal. Staff reports to the Committee information regarding possible proposals.
- Institution or program sponsor submits the full proposal, addressing the Standards for Experimental Programs.
- Program proposal is reviewed by a panel of educators (peer review). Reviewers may ask for additional information if the proposal does not initially meet the Experimental Program Standards.
- Program goes to the Committee on Accreditation for approval once the reviewers agree that the proposal meets the Experimental Program Standards.

Procedures for Implementing an Experimental Program

- Program begins implementation.
- Program participates in all accreditation activities in concert with the institution or program sponsors schedule.
- Program submits biennial reports focused on measures of candidate competence and an additional section focused on the evaluation, to date, of the experimental program.
- Program participates in Program Assessment according to the accreditation system.
- Candidates, graduates, faculty, and employers from the program participate in the site review activities as scheduled.
- Staff reviews biennial and evaluation reports. Recommendations for program continuance or interventions will be made to the Committee on Accreditation.
- Program submits a final evaluation of the program to the Committee on Accreditation, according to the approved Research Design.

Appendix B

Matrix Aligning the Current Experimental Program Standards with the Draft Revised Experimental Program Standards

Appendix B
Side-by-side Comparison of Standards

Current Experimental Program Standards (adopted by the Commission on November 7, 1986)	Draft Revised Experimental Program Standards
<p>Standard 1. Research Questions, Hypotheses or Objectives</p> <p>The postsecondary institution submits one or more research questions, hypotheses or objectives that relate to fundamentally significant issues in the selection, preparation or assessment of prospective professional educators.</p> <p><u>Rationale.</u> Experimental programs should address questions that are basic and important in the field of educator preparation. Programs that examine peripheral or insignificant issues may be approved on the basis of the Commission's standards for nonexperimental programs.</p> <p><u>Definitions.</u> A "research question" is an interrogative statement that is to be resolved by operation of the experimental program. A "research hypothesis" is a prediction that is to be tested by operating the program. A "research objective" is a statement of purpose that is to be achieved by operation of the program. A "fundamentally significant issue" is one whose resolution could eventually lead to structural, philosophical or methodological changes in educator preparation. "The selection, preparation or assessment of prospective professional educators" is defined to encompass all matters related to the future of professional school personnel.</p>	<p>Standard 1: Program Rationale</p> <p>The experimental program proposal provides a credible rationale for the program, one which draws upon relevant and recent scholarly and research literature in the field. Experimental programs have a scholarly focus and proposals are research-based with a clear plan for investigating an issue of significant importance for the theory and practice of educator preparation.</p> <p>Standard 2: Research Question</p> <p>The proposal clearly identifies the topic of investigation and submits one or more research questions, hypotheses or objectives that the experimental program is expected to address. The proposal relates to fundamentally significant issues in the selection, preparation and/or assessment of prospective professional educators.</p>

Current Experimental Program Standards (adopted by the Commission on November 7, 1986)	Draft Revised Experimental Program Standards
<p>Standard 2. Research Design.</p> <p>The postsecondary institution submits a research design that would clearly resolve the research questions, test the hypotheses, or attain the objectives in the course of operating the program.</p> <p><u>Rationale.</u> An experimental program could employ a variety of research designs or methodologies. Whatever the approach, the proposal must clearly show that the program, if put into operation, would resolve the research questions, test the hypotheses or achieve the objectives. Without this showing, the Commission would have little reason to expect the experiment to yield the knowledge it seeks to generate.</p> <p><u>Definition.</u> "Research design" is a statement that (a) describes all aspects of the research methodology in detail, including the selection, assignment, treatment and assessment of candidates, and (b) explains how the experiment will generate the anticipated knowledge or results. "Research design" is not restricted to "experimental designs" that employ experimental groups and control groups.</p>	<p>Standard 3: Program Design</p> <p>The proposal submits a complete and thorough description of the proposed program. The proposal includes details of the activities and coursework that candidates will complete as well as indicators of outcomes of candidate competence for program completion. The proposal must outline all essential elements of the research design, as appropriate to the nature of the inquiry. This includes the intended outcomes and evidence that will be collected.</p> <p>Standard 4: Research Design</p> <p>The proposal clearly illustrates the connection of the Program Philosophy and Goals, Research Questions and Program Design to the implementation of the experimental program and investigation of the issue(s) being investigated as well as a timeline for the investigation. Standards of scholarship will be applied as part of the peer and staff review used to approve, monitor and review proposals and reports. The length of time for the experimental program is provided and is appropriate to the focus of the inquiry.</p>

Current Experimental Program Standards (adopted by the Commission on November 7, 1986)	Draft Revised Experimental Program Standards
<p>Standard 3. Potential for Improved Service</p> <p>The postsecondary institution submits a research proposal that shows clearly that the knowledge generated by operating the experimental program could eventually and generally improve the quality of service authorized by the credential.</p> <p><u>Rationale.</u> An experimental program could show that an innovation does or does not "work", or that a novel idea is or is not "true". Any of these outcomes would characterize a "successful" experiment, because they would add to human knowledge of professional preparation. Before approving an experiment, the Commission should determine that the "payoff" from a "successful" experiment could eventually lead to improvements in the preparation of professionals generally.</p>	<p>Standard 5: Anticipated Outcomes</p> <p>The proposal identifies the anticipated outcomes of implementing the experimental program and how the implementation and investigation will add to the knowledge base of educator preparation. The proposal includes details about how the efficacy of the program will be assessed and how the program will ensure that program completers have the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to work in California's diverse public schools and support students in meeting standards.</p> <p>Standard 6: Contribution to Scholarship and the Profession</p> <p>The proposal clearly shows that the knowledge generated by implementing the experimental program will improve the quality of preparation for service authorized by the credential. The program and the scholarship generated from the research should lead or have the potential to lead to improvements in the preparation of professionals and guide education policy.</p>