

COMMISSION FOR TEACHER PREPARATION AND LICENSING

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OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

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79-8035

To: Deans and Directors of Professional Preparation Programs

From: Peter L. LoPresti

SUBJECT: Plans for Program Approval and Evaluation

Enclosed is a copy of the Commission for Teacher Preparation and Licensing "Plan for Program Approval and Evaluation". This document was adopted by the Commission in November, 1979 and describes the basic process that will be followed in approving programs initially, and evaluating them after they have been implemented. The program evaluation process described in this document replaces the external assessment procedures previously used by the Commission.

During the month of January, 1980, regional workshops will be scheduled to explain in detail all aspects of this plan and related changes in Commission policies and procedures. Time will also be provided to assist institutions in preparing to respond to revised requirements and to make preparations for evaluation team visits. If you have any questions about the plan prior to those meetings, please contact Dr. Cedric Busette, Chief of Programs, (916) 445-8097.

PLAN FOR PROGRAM APPROVAL
AND EVALUATION

COMMISSION FOR TEACHER PREPARATION
AND LICENSING

5 November 1979

INTRODUCTION

This plan is designed in response to two initiatives: (1) legislative requirement that the Commission develop a plan to evaluate programs it has approved; and (2) the felt need by the Commission itself that its program approval and evaluation procedures, which had been evolving over the past seven years, deserved a thorough examination and updating.

The Legislative requirement is stated in Item 344 of Chapter 259, Statutes of 1979 (SB 190), which updates an earlier concern by the Legislature. This bill enjoins the Commission to submit to the Director of Finance and the Legislative Analyst, by November 15, 1979, a plan for the evaluation of (1) programs approved by the Commission for Teacher Preparation and Licensing, and (2) the performance of persons credentialed by the Commission.

The Commission has attempted to satisfy both requirements through a redesigned program approval and evaluation plan. The plan has three major components: (1) a program evaluation plan, which will be carried out jointly by small teams of external constituents and Commission staff, and which will be based on compliance with Commission requirements considered to be absolutely necessary for the preparation of competent credentialed personnel for the public schools; (2) the evaluation of the preparation of graduates of programs and their performance, required of all preparation institutions and monitored by the Commission; and (3) a program document, reduced to those requirements considered to be absolutely necessary for the preparation of competent certificated personnel for the public schools of California.

The Commission believes that this new plan, which preserves some of the strongest elements of its former process, and which reflects expert and constituent input on an intensive and extensive basis, will be more efficient and effective and will result in the following benefits: (1) The Commission, the profession, and the Legislature and other legitimate constituents will have reliable information on the status of preparation programs and the graduates of those programs; (2) the team visits for program verification will be shorter, involve about fifty percent less people, and concentrate on only those requirements that are crucial to the adequate preparation of certificated personnel; (3) the documentation required for an institution to prepare for a verification visit and the documentation required for initial program approval will be drastically reduced, perhaps by as much as seventy-five percent, since the notion of strict discrepancy evaluation is being abandoned for compliance.

Because of the above beneficial results, the per program cost for a team visit, as well as initial documentation, will be less this year as compared to last year.

I. PROGRAM AND GRADUATE EVALUATION

A. Program Evaluation

Program evaluation, after initial Commission approval, will have two components: (1) the monitoring by staff of those requirements that are specific enough to be easily verified by the use of a checklist; (2) team visits by external constituents for those requirements that necessitate judgment. In both components of program evaluation, discrepancy from program plans will not be used. Compliance with Commission requirements will be the basis of evaluation.

1. Staff Monitoring

Monitoring will occur on a periodic basis.

Staff will use a uniform list of questions or checklist to verify compliance with specific requirements. This type of monitoring could be by visit or other means; e.g., mailed questionnaire, or could be done during a team visit. Staff will also monitor programs which received either standard or conditional approval in the past. The need for monitoring of these programs will be determined first on the basis of an analysis of conditions placed on these programs and a comparison of those conditions with the new reduced set of priority requirements for program approval. Where conditions fall into non-priority areas, they will be recommended for immediate removal. The conditions that remain, those falling into new priority areas, will be monitored by staff for compliance.

a. Commission Studies

The Commission may, at its discretion, select certain credential areas and components of programs for monitoring. This activity could be to verify compliance or to gather information.

2. Team Visits

The team will consist of three members, with the composite for all team visits in a given year representative of all constituencies. The visit will be for three days. The team will be principally concerned with verifying compliance with those priority requirements; e.g., professional competencies, program evaluation and graduate follow-up, and other areas that require judgment. The team will, on the basis of information gathered during its visit, write a profile report of the program it evaluated, based on the requirements included in the evaluation, and make recommendations for one of three types of program status: standard, probationary, or withdrawal of approval.

There will be a fixed term of approval for programs getting standard approval of not less than five years. Programs receiving probationary approval will be revisited within twelve months of the first visit. If after the second visit, the

2. Team Visits (continued)

probationary status is not upgraded, the program will be recommended for withdrawal of approval at the end of the academic year in which the revisit takes place. Programs which have been, following an initial team visit, recommended for withdrawal of approval, could on appeal to the Commission, be granted a second visit if the evidence warrants it.

There will be no conditions attached to standard approval. Programs showing non-compliance with requirements will be recommended for other than standard approval. Team recommendations will go directly to the Commission, and a panel or appeals board will be convened to handle appeals. The recommendations of this board will go to the Commission. It is conceivable that a team could be directed to verify compliance with specific requirements as part of its responsibilities. Where this is the case, the team visit will completely replace staff monitoring. All programs undergoing initial evaluation and those which received probationary status as a result of earlier evaluations will have a team visit, as indicated above.

a. Team Selection and Training

Teams will be selected on the basis of outstanding performance of those who previously served as assessors, during External Assessment. There will be provision for continuous renewing of the assessor pool so that people who have never served as evaluation team members will have the opportunity to serve. However, at least two-thirds of the team will be experienced. A great deal more effort will be devoted to the training of team members. Team leaders will be used for orientation and training of the team on site.

b. Payment for Team Visits

(1) The institution will pay for the operating cost (all expenses except Commission staff costs) of each visit, as was the practice prior to the Commission's assuming this responsibility from the State Board of Education effective with the 1981-82 fiscal year.

(2) The Commission will be reimbursed by the institution for the operating cost of a revisit to the institution, occasioned by an appeal or probationary status. This provision will go into effect immediately.

c. Appeals

Appeals of a recommendation for probationary status will go to the appeals board, which will collect all of the pertinent information and have adequate time to study it before meeting to take testimony and make a decision. The appeals board will have the responsibility of sustaining or not sustaining the

c. Appeals (Continued)

team recommendation for probationary status. The appeals board will then make its recommendation to the Commission for final action. If the decision is not to sustain, the program reverts to its former standard approval status.

Appeals of a withdrawal-of-approval recommendation will not go to the appeals board, but will be sent directly to the Commission. The Commission could either uphold the recommendation or upgrade it to probationary, on the request of the institution, based on evidence, with the stipulation that the program be revisited within six months after the first visit. A second recommendation for either withdrawal of approval or probation will result in withdrawal of approval.

d. Arrangements With Other Accrediting Bodies

The Commission will not preclude the possibility of working out mutually beneficial arrangements with other accrediting bodies as these relate to evaluation and other matters.

B. Graduate Evaluation

All approved programs will be required to conduct a follow-up survey of their graduates. The survey will consist of at least three parts: (1) one part that seeks to find out the extent to which program objectives have been achieved for each graduate; (2) a part that seeks to find out from the employers of graduates how well the program prepares persons to perform their required responsibilities in the first year of employment; and (3) a part that is designed to gather basic institutional data.

The Commission will require periodic evaluation reports from institutions. These reports will respond to the three requirements above and will also include such basic data as the number of students entering the program, number of students dropping out, number of students recommended for credentials, number of students finding employment, etc., as well as statements explaining those factors that impact upon the basic data results.

1. Commission Studies

The Commission could, as appropriate, also conduct studies to accomplish tasks such as the following:

- a. Collection of information on program graduates or persons who receive credentials through direct application.
- b. Comparison of the subject-matter preparation of individuals who have completed programs with those who have added authorization by examination.
- c. These studies could also be specifically focused on certain "basic" information about programs (number of graduates, number of graduates employed, etc.), or on broader issues such as changing needs of the field or emerging trends in professional preparation.

II. PROGRAM APPROVAL

A. Initial Approval

Institutions submitting documents for initial approval will be required to submit a drastically reduced document based on priority requirements. The major categories of information required for approval are listed below:

- Category A - Institutional and Community Resources

Information provided will refer to the institutional facilities and staff to be utilized in the development and implementation of the total program. In addition, community based resources involved in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the program will be included under this heading. A rationale as to the need for this program will also be provided.

- Category B - Professional Competencies and Field Experiences

Information provided will include an explanation of how the institutional professional preparation program meets each of the state professional education requirements.

- Category C - Program Evaluation

Information provided will describe the institutional plan for evaluating the program in terms of its implementation and its development of the specified skills and knowledge of its candidates.

The description of the institutional evaluation process will be stated in response to specific requirements established by the Commission.

The document will be reviewed either directly by staff or by an external team. The document will be considered to meet the requirements for approval or not meet them. There will be no conditions attached to the approval. Documents not completely satisfying the requirements will be returned to the institution for revision. Approval will be for a period of not less than five years.

B. Documents Previously Approved

Eventually, within a five-year period, program documents approved under earlier procedures will have to be revised to meet the new documentation requirements.