Chapter Fourteen
Evaluation of the Accreditation System

Introduction
This chapter provides information about the evaluation of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing's Accreditation System. The evaluation system is parallel to the work done by institutions to meet Common Standard 4: Continuous Improvement. That is, data for each activity of the accreditation system is collected and analyzed and the results are used to make ongoing improvement to the individual activity and the system as a whole. Results of the analyses are reported to the Committee on Accreditation (COA) and, in some cases, are included in the Annual Report presented to the Commission. In this way, evaluation results are available to provide input on policy issues and inform the larger educator preparation system.

For each major activity of the accreditation system, the following questions are asked:

1. How well is the component being implemented?
2. Does the activity provide useful information for other activities in the system and in making accreditation decisions?
3. Is the activity serving the objectives of the accreditation system?

This chapter describes when and how the evaluation system operates to collect, analyze, and report information pertinent to each of the questions. This information is useful to the COA as it manages the accreditation system, to the Commission as it deliberates about policy related to the accreditation system, and to Commission staff responsible for administering the accreditation cycle.

How well is the component being implemented?
Every component of the accreditation system has training activities. For program sponsors, Commission staff provides technical assistance for each accreditation activity in a variety of formats. For reviewers, there are several trainings; the initial Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR) training occurs annually, follow-up training specific to particular roles at the site visits are held in the Fall, and preparation for Program Review submissions and calibration training are provided just before the review commences.

Technical assistance for program sponsors and follow-up trainings for BIR members are often provided through webcasts. The benefit of webcasts is that they are archived and viewed as needed by program sponsors or BIR members. Following every training event, participants receive a link to an online evaluation survey and an invitation to provide feedback about the training through the survey. Individuals who access archived broadcasts of the meetings on-line also receive the link and a request to complete the survey. These surveys ask respondents to rate the effectiveness of particular aspects of the trainings, including the trainers, and always include multiple opportunities for respondents to provide written comments. These data are immediately available to consultants and the Administrator of Accreditation and have been

used to identify strengths and areas in need of improvement when developing subsequent trainings.

Feedback from program sponsors after a site visit provides a second perspective on the implementation and effectiveness of accreditation activities. Invitations to participate in brief evaluation surveys are sent to institutions following a site visit. These surveys ask several questions about the effectiveness of different activities that prepare institutions for a site visit, and about the team leads' and consultants' effectiveness and objectivity during the site visit. Each year, the COA receives summary information from the site visit surveys.

Does the activity provide useful information for other activities in the system and in making accreditation decisions?
Following completion of accreditation site visits, team members and program sponsors have the opportunity to provide feedback about the usefulness of earlier accreditation activities on the site visit. For example, site visit team members provide insight into how the Annual Data Collection and Analysis and Program Review documents and reviewers' feedback supported their work during the visit. Similarly, program sponsors are asked to describe whether completing the Annual Data Collection and Analysis and Program Review processes affected their preparation for the site visit and, if so, how the effect occurred.

Is the activity serving the objectives of the accreditation system?
Each year the COA's Annual Report to the Commission addresses the COA's Work Plan, which is structured around the objectives outlined in the Accreditation Framework. Summary information includes data about the frequency and effectiveness of:
- Activities completed by CTC staff to increase and maintain public access to the COA, including electronic newsletters, program sponsor alerts, and the website;
- Professional accreditation of institutions and their educator preparation programs, including initial program review, accreditation site visits, BIR trainings;
- Technical assistance activities, program assessment activities, the integration of additional programs into the Commission's accreditation system, and dissemination of information related to the Commission's standards; and
- Ongoing program improvement activities including annual data collection, the evaluation system for the accreditation system, and developing partnerships with national and professional accrediting organizations.

Upon completion of the full seven-year cycle, information will be collected from stakeholders who have been through all the activities, including Annual Data Collection and Analysis, Program Review, and Site Visits.