

Experimental Program Standards

Professional Services Division

June 6 & 7, 2007

Overview of this Report

This report brings the Experimental Program Standards to the COA for action so that they might be taken to the June Commission meeting.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the COA forward the Experimental Program Standards to the Commission for the June meeting.

Background

The Experimental Program Standards were discussed by the COA in October. The Experimental Program Standards work group held a phone conference to review the standards and the COA's comments. Revisions have been made based upon this input.

If the Experimental Program Standards are forwarded to the Commission in June, the proposed standards would undergo a field review in July and August. The COA would review the stakeholder feedback at the August meeting and then Commission approval would be requested at the October meeting. The timeline is depicted graphically as follows:

June	July-August	August	October
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• COA approval to forward proposed Experimental Program Standards to Commission for information.• Proposed standards go to Commission.	Experimental Program Standards undergo field review and stakeholder input.	Feedback is returned to the COA for review and possible revisions.	Experimental Program Standards go to the Commission for adoption.

Two appendices follow. The first is the proposed Experimental Program Standards. The second is a chart with a side-by-side comparison of the old and the proposed standards.

Appendix 1

Experimental Programs for Educator Preparation

Rationale for Experimental Programs

The experimental program option is designed to encourage innovation 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 Ed 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 in account this underutilization 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 who promote and facilitate learning for all students as well as classroom teachers.

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

Un- and under prepared teachers are found in disproportionate numbers in low-performing California schools and in schools serving large numbers of minority students, poor students, and English language learners. Also, little is known about how to prepare teachers to teach science to English learners and how to use the opportunities science and other academic areas offer to develop academic literacy. Institutions or program sponsors are encouraged to develop programs aimed at preparing teachers for these areas of great need.

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. 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, contribute to the success of English Learners, closing the achievement gap and/or meet the needs of other populations that have been underserved.
3. Experimental programs contribute to the scholarship on educator preparation to improve student learning so that all students meet the state-adopted content standards.

Policy Principles Underlying the 2007 Redesign of Experimental Program Policies by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

The principles are 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.
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 be a part of all proposals and submissions—both traditional and experimental.
3. Experimental programs will be approved providing their proposal has the potential to improve the quality of service authorized by the credential as required by Education Code.
4. 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 must describe how it will investigate and evaluate the program. Biennial reports of research findings will be required as a part of the accreditation cycle.
5. 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.
6. 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 submits as part of their program proposal.
7. The Committee on Accreditation will hear reports on results of Experimental Programs and innovations that have yielded success. The Committee may recommend to the Commission a review of Program Standards based on data and scholarship regarding educator preparation reported by Experimental Programs.

Experimental Program Standards

Standard 1: Program Rationale

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 education preparation.

Standard 2: Research Question

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 and relate to fundamentally significant issues in the selection, preparation 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). The proposal includes details of how the institution plans to collect evidence in relation to the issue(s) being investigated as well as a timeline for the investigation. Standards of scholarship in the social sciences should be applied as part of the peer and staff review used to approve, monitor and review proposals and reports.

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 the *state*-adopted student 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 the 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'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.
- 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). Panel 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 panel of educators agrees that the proposal meets the Experimental Program Standards.
- 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.
- Program participates in the program assessment by submitting the approved program proposal and any biennial reports completed to date.
- Candidates, graduates, faculty, and employers from the program participate in the site review activities as scheduled.
- Program submits an evaluation of the program according to the approved Research Design.
- Staff reviews biennial and evaluation reports. Recommendations for program continuance or interventions will be made to the Committee on Accreditation.

Appendix 2
Side-by-side comparison of standards

Current Experimental Program Standards (adopted by the Commission on November 7, 1986)	Proposed 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 education 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 that the experimental program is expected to address and relate to fundamentally significant issues in the selection, preparation or assessment of prospective professional educators.</p>

Current Experimental Program Standards (adopted by the Commission on November 7, 1986)	Proposed 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). The proposal includes details of how the institution plans to collect evidence in relation to the issue(s) being investigated as well as a timeline for the investigation. Standards of scholarship in the social sciences should be applied as part of the peer and staff review used to approve, monitor and review proposals and reports.</p>

Current Experimental Program Standards (adopted by the Commission on November 7, 1986)	Proposed 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 the <i>state</i>-adopted student 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 the 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>