

Initial Program Approval for New Program Sponsors

June 2020

Overview

This report consists of a recommendation made for the initial approval of a professional preparation program for an institution that recently received Provisional Approval as a new program sponsor in California. Alder Graduate School of Education (Alder GSE), an institution of higher education (IHE), received Provisional Approval by the Commission at its [January 2020](#) meeting. Additionally, Alder GSE's Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject programs received program approval by the Committee on Accreditation (COA) at its [May 2020](#) meeting. Alder GSE now seeks approval from the COA to offer a Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate program.

Staff Recommendation

That after discussion with the program sponsor, review of the Board of Institutional Review (BIR) members' feedback, and review of the of the proposed program proposal documentation, the COA grant initial program approval to the Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate program.

Background

The Commission requires that an institution seeking to offer new educator preparation program(s) must first be approved for initial accreditation as a new program sponsor and must do so by completing the Commission's Initial Institution Approval (IIA) process. At the [December 2015](#) meeting, the Commission approved a new IIA process requiring the satisfactory completion of five approval stages as part of the Strengthening and Streamlining Accreditation project – updates to the IIA process were subsequently approved during the [February 2016](#) meeting. A graphic detailing the five stages of the IIA process is provided on the following page.

Initial Institutional Approval

IIA Process	Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	IV	V
Action	Prerequisites	Eligibility Requirements	Preconditions & Common Standards	Program Standards	Site Visit
Purpose	Ensures legal eligibility of institution in California Ensures institution understands requirements of Commission's accreditation system	Ensures that institution has capacity to sponsor effective programs	Ensures institution meets all relevant preconditions Ensures institution meets all Common Standards	Ensures all proposed programs meet all relevant program standards	Program operates for 2-3 years and hosts a focused accreditation site visit
Requirements	Institution must: 1. Have legal eligibility 2. Attend Accreditation 101 with institutional team	Submit responses to: • 12 Eligibility Criteria	Submit responses to: • Preconditions • Common Standards	Submit responses to: • Program Standards	Institution must: • Collect data • Host focused site visit
Reviewed By	Staff	Staff	Preconditions: Staff Common Standards: BIR	BIR	Site Visit Team
Authority	Staff	Commission	Commission	COA	Commission
Decision	Determine Eligibility for Stage II	Eligibility: 1. Grant 2. Deny	Provisional Approval: 1. Grant 2. Deny	Program(s): 1. Approve 2. Deny	1. Grant Full approval 2. Retain Provisional Approval with Additional Requirements 3. Deny Approval
IIA Status*	Not Approved	Not Approved	Provisional Approval**	Provisional Approval***	Full Approval

At conclusion of stage **Institutionally-approved but cannot offer programs *May begin offering approved programs*

Alder Graduate School of Education

Alder Graduate School of Education (GSE) has completed the first three stages of the Initial Institutional Approval process as follows:

Stage	Date
Stage I: Prerequisites	December 2018 – Accreditation 101
Stage II: Eligibility Requirements	August 2019 – Granted Eligibility
Stage III: Preconditions & Common Standards	January 2020 – Granted Provisional Approval

As previously discussed, Alder GSE appeared before the Commission at its January 2020 meeting and its proposal for Provisional Approval was approved. Alder GSE’s responses to the Preliminary Education Specialist: Mild/Moderate program standards were reviewed by a team of BIR members. Reviewers collaborated on the feedback and found all standards to be **Met**. Below is a summary of Alder GSE’s responses to the preliminary multiple and single subject program standards. The following hyperlink provides access to [Alder GSE’s complete submission and the reviewers’ Report of Findings](#). (This website contains information for all of the proposed programs for Alder including the ones approved by the COA at a previous meeting. Please only reference those specific to the Education Specialist: Mild Moderate program for this agenda item.)

Institution Summary

Alder Graduate School of Education was accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges in 2019. Since 2010, Alder GSE has partnered with the University of the Pacific to prepare teachers using a teacher residency model refined over the last decade. Alder GSE’s mission is “to create opportunity and cultivate success for every student by recruiting and educating excellent teachers, including education specialist teachers, who reflect our schools’ communities.”

To do so, Alder GSE will immerse residents (teacher candidates) in theory through graduate-level courses while also providing them with the opportunity to apply that theory in practice via an apprenticeship with a highly-effective teacher. Alder GSE Education Specialist residents will earn a master’s degree and a teaching credential, embodying California’s Teaching Performance Expectations. By deeply examining core theory and beliefs that are foundational to the field, engaging in deliberate practice around teaching skills, and passing rigorous performance assessments, Alder GSE endeavors to ensure that its graduates will be prepared to be effective on their first day in the classroom and throughout their teaching careers. Alder GSE noted that it aims to “become a member of the California academy of teacher preparation institutions, preparing aspiring educators to enter the worthiest of professions -- teaching.”