



BOARD OF EXAMINERS UPDATE

Spring 2007

The BOARD OF EXAMINERS UPDATE is designed to share the actions of the Unit Accreditation Board and refinements of NCATE's review process. It is disseminated at the start of on-site visits in the fall and spring. Issues and changes reported here should be reviewed by team members during their first team meeting.

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STANDARDS UPDATE

Standards Revisions

At its November 2006 meeting, the Standards Committee of the UAB considered comments from the field and made changes to the draft of the revised unit standards. As a result of this work, the UAB adopted a second draft of the standards. This second draft is posted on the NCATE website at: http://www.ncate.org/public/1412_stdRevision.asp?ch=148

NCATE encourages BOE members and all other constituents to review the second draft and send comments to Antoinette@ncate.org. Comments will be accepted through March 19, 2007. The UAB is expected to consider comments and adopt revised unit standards at its April 2007 meeting. The revised standards will be presented to the Executive Board for ratification in May 2007 and will go into effect for all institutions in fall 2008. Institutions with visits in fall 2007 and spring 2008 have the option of being reviewed under the current or revised unit standards. BOE members will be updated on the revised standards prior to fall 2007.

Unit Assessment Systems: What Does NCATE Expect?

Institutions are more likely not to meet Standard 2 than any other standard. With the goal of making consistent decisions about whether this standard is met, let's review the components of the first element, "Assessment System." To be at the acceptable level, the unit must:

- Have an assessment system.

- Have involved the professional community in the development of the system.
- Reflect the conceptual framework in the assessment system, which means that the candidate outcomes articulated in the framework are being assessed.
- Use a comprehensive and integrated set of evaluation measures to monitor candidate performance and manage and improve unit operations and programs.
- Use multiple candidate assessments to make decisions for admission to, continuation in, and completion of programs.
- Ensure that assessments at transition points are predictive of candidate success.
- Take effective steps to eliminate sources of bias in its assessments and be working to establish fairness, accuracy, and consistency of its assessment procedures.

Of course, having a clearly defined and operational assessment system is crucial to meeting the standard. Not having in place some of the other components of the acceptable rubric may lead to the citation of areas for improvement (AFIs). Not having a number of the components could lead to the standard not being met.

As discussed in the article "Program Assessments in the Unit Assessment System," which is available at <http://www.ncate.org/documents/articles/unitandprogramreview.pdf>, the unit should manage or oversee the key assessments conducted by individual programs. Some of the assessments or assessment types may be common across programs, but seldom are all of the assessments the same. NCATE expects the unit to manage the assessment

system and be able to generate data about programs and candidates.

The acceptable level of the rubric for Standard 2 does not require that all data be aggregated across the unit. It is important that the assessment system allow data to be aggregated for all of the candidates in a program so that professors and administrators know if candidates are meeting standards and if program changes are necessary. In addition to aggregating program level data, the assessment system should make provisions for some data to be summarized across all and/or across categories of programs. For example, licensing exam data could be summarized across initial level programs and assessments of dispositions could be summarized across all programs.

The unit should determine at what level data should be summarized and/or aggregated for program review, state reports, unit-level reports, reports to central administration, and/or reports to the public.

Data for Standard 1: What Should Be Available to Teams?

Increasingly, both institutions and BOE members are perceiving NCATE accreditation as an onerous process, particularly as it relates to data for Standard 1. According to team members some institutions do not have enough data and other institutions have far too much. According to institutions, some BOE members do not ask for additional data but other BOE members ask for data far beyond what is required. So, how much data are enough? NCATE has reasonable expectations for quantitative and qualitative data. Institutions should not compile more than is needed for the NCATE review, and BOE teams should not ask for more than is

needed. Let's review NCATE's expectations.

NCATE is interested in the **key assessments** used by the unit and its programs to determine whether candidates are meeting professional, state, and institutional standards. Faculty may be conducting many more assessments than these key ones as candidates move through courses, but data from those assessments do not have to be compiled for the NCATE review. Of course, the unit is free to track data beyond what is required if it wishes.

The unit may have identified key assessments such as content test scores, GPAs, portfolios, and internship evaluations that all candidates in a program must complete. The assessments used by programs may or may not follow the same general framework across all programs in the unit. If the assessments do follow the same general framework, they will differ to some extent depending on the specific field (e.g., the ability to reason, construct, and evaluate mathematical arguments). Program faculty may set benchmarks for these assessments that differ from program to program.

What should **key assessments** be measuring? Standard 1 expects units to provide evidence that candidates meet state, professional, and institutional standards. Therefore, the assessments must be linked to those standards and provide evidence that candidates are developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions outlined in those standards. Standard 1 requires evidence that candidates (1) know the content for their field (e.g., science, special education, or leadership), (2) know and demonstrate the professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills required to work in schools, (3) know and practice professional dispositions, and

(4) can help **all** students learn. The standards of national specialty associations (SPAs) always address the first one on content, and, to some degree, the second one on professional and pedagogical knowledge and practice. Programs reviewed nationally by NCATE should also have assessments related to student learning. Some of the SPA standards include professional dispositions and some do not.

A unit's key assessments are often the same assessments required for national program review. They are:

1. State licensure exam for program area (if available—otherwise another content based assessment)
2. Content Assessment, which is often grades in the specialty area
3. Assessment of Planning (e.g., unit plan)
4. Student teaching/internship assessment
5. Assessment of candidate impact on student learning or providing a supporting learning environment

Other common measures that are reported by most institutions in Standard 1 are the results of follow-up studies of graduates and employers.

Data tables presented by institutions in their IR and exhibits may include raw scores or percentages for each level and element of a scoring guide. Data tables may also include the mean for each element. In many cases, data tables include the mean for each element as well as percentage for each level and element. All of the above formats are acceptable. NCATE does not require the data to be presented in a specific format. The goal is that the unit and its programs are collecting candidate assessment data to show that candidates meet standards.

Assessments and their related data on dispositions and institutional standards,

included in the conceptual framework, are not usually included in the national review of programs. The results of these assessments should be presented in the IR along with data on programs for which NCATE does not have standards.

If an institution has submitted its programs for national review through NCATE, BOE teams will have a number of resources from those reviews to help them make decisions about the unit standards. First, programs had to submit (1) assessments, (2) scoring guides, and (3) data tables in their program reports. They also had to discuss what they have learned from the data and changes they have made. The program reports submitted by institutions will be available electronically to BOE teams beginning with fall 2007 visits. Teams may at times need to check for information in those reports. However, the document that should be a very helpful resource to teams is the *National Recognition Report (NRR)* for each program. This concise document not only indicates whether a program is nationally recognized, but also provides information related directly to several of the unit standards.

The *NRR* includes a summary of how the program is meeting standards related to content knowledge, professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills, and student learning—all components of unit Standard 1. In addition, the *NRR* may provide insights on faculty qualifications, field experiences, clinical practice, quality of assessments, attention to diversity, and resources for specific programs that may trigger further investigation by teams during the on-site visit. Some team chairs are now assigning some *NRRs* to every team member to read so that they will have a better sense of the assessments being used, the results of assessments, and information related to unit

standards on the assessment system, field experiences and clinical practice, diversity, faculty, and resources.

If an institution is located in a state that conducts its own program approval system, teams should have access to state findings related to programs. If the state does not require performance evidence, the BOE team must look for that evidence (i.e., assessments, scoring guides, and data tables or summaries) in the IR and exhibits for Standard 1.

Citing AFIs Related to Opportunities to Work with Diverse Students

Reminder: Both Standards 3 and 4 call for opportunities for candidates to work with diverse students. In instances in which the BOE finds that candidates do not have these opportunities, BOE members should cite one AFI and cite it under the element on Experiences Working with Diverse Students in Standard 4. In Standard 3, the narrative should reflect the lack of opportunities, but the AFI should be cited under Standard 4.

Standards 3 and 5: School-based Clinical Faculty

Standards 3 and 5 both include requirements related to clinical faculty, particularly school-based clinical faculty. Standard 3 asks BOE members to verify that clinical faculty are accomplished school professionals. This refers to school-based clinical faculty. The qualifications of school-based clinical faculty should be described here to demonstrate that school-based clinical faculty are experienced, well-regarded, licensed professionals. Standard 5 states that school-based clinical faculty should be licensed in the fields that they teach or supervise. Here BOE members are asked to verify that school based clinical

faculty are licensed to teach in the content areas that they supervise.

UAB UPDATE

National Program Recognition & AFIs: Guidelines for Spring 2007 Visits

The UAB has temporarily discontinued the citation of areas for improvement (AFIs) under Standard 1 when a program is not nationally recognized. Therefore, AFIs will not be cited by BOE teams in the spring of 2007. The UAB will work with the Specialty Areas Study Board and the specialty professional associations to improve the timeliness of completing program reviews, the recognition rates, and the overall program review process. The UAB will review data on these issues at its April 2007 meeting to determine when this suspension should be lifted.

Although the BOE team can not cite AFIs for the lack of national recognition, it should discuss the current status of national program review in the findings section of Standard 1. In addition, an area for improvement should be cited for a serious problem raised about a specific program in a National Recognition Report or a pattern across programs if it is confirmed during the on-site visit.

Endorsements & Minors in the NCATE Review

Whether to include endorsement programs and minors in the NCATE review is a common question from institutions. Many state/NCATE protocols indicate that states have program approval standards for endorsements, and sometimes minors. To clarify when an endorsement program and minor are included in the NCATE review,

the UAB adopted the following policy, to be effective for spring 2008 visits:

When an institution offers an endorsement program and/or minor and recommends its completers to the state for an endorsement or similar designation that allows them to teach a subject, work with an identified group or age level of students, or provide professional services at a school, that endorsement program and/or minor must be included in the NCATE review. If an institution is located in a state that requires national program review, the eligible endorsement programs or minors must respond to standards if the specialized professional association (SPA) reviews an endorsement/minor. The unit must have assessment data for the candidates in these programs.

If a team or an institution is wondering whether an endorsement or minor should be included in the NCATE review, remember that it must be included if the institution is recommending completers to the state for a license or modification of an existing license. Please contact a staff member if you and your team members are unsure of whether to include an endorsement or minor.

For visits in 2007 institutions may include all of their endorsements and minors in the NCATE review. However, at a minimum, they should be including the endorsements for programs such as ESL and computer education for which NCATE has approved national standards. Some states may require that all of these programs be included in the state/NCATE review; check with the state consultant at your visit for clarification. Please contact a NCATE staff member if

you and your team members are unsure of whether to include an endorsement or minor.

BOE VISITS

What Programs should be Included in the Review and at What Level? A Note to BOE Chairs

Recently, some BOE teams have had difficulty identifying which programs should be included in the NCATE review. Others have struggled with identifying whether programs should be included at the initial or advanced level. The accreditation process is weakened when teams do not have clarity on these issues. The UAB requests that BOE chairs review the program chart in the beginning of the IR with the institutional representatives during their previsits. In preparation, BOE chairs should review the institution's website and/or catalogue(s) to ensure that programs that should be included in the NCATE review have not been overlooked.

Further, chairs should ensure that programs are properly identified as initial or advanced. For the purposes of unit review, initial programs prepare individuals for the first license in teaching. They can be offered at the undergraduate or graduate levels. Advanced programs commonly award graduate credit and include master's, specialist, and doctoral degree programs as well as non-degree licensure programs offered at the post-baccalaureate level. Examples of these programs include those for teachers who are preparing for a second license at the graduate level in a field different from the field in which they have their first license; programs for teachers who are seeking a master's degree in the field in which they teach; and programs not tied to licensure, such as programs in curriculum and instruction. In addition, advanced

programs include those for other school professionals. Examples of these are programs in school counseling, school psychology, educational administration, and programs for reading specialists. A chart designed to help clarify program levels is available at: <http://www.ncate.org/boe/boeresources.asp?ch=29>

If a BOE chair has questions about whether programs should be reviewed or the level at which programs should be reviewed, please email or call an accreditation staff specialist (Donna Gollnick, Antoinette Mitchell, or Patty Garvin) at the NCATE office.

Let's Simplify the Process

Many exhibit rooms include too many documents. To provide more guidance to institutions *and* to BOE members on the types and amount of documents needed for NCATE reviews, NCATE has prepared a suggested list of exhibits. The list is currently on the NCATE website at: http://www.ncate.org/institutions/hbk_page.asp?ch=42&hbkch=1&hpkpg=77#conceptualframework

BOE members are asked to review this suggested list of exhibits and send additions, deletions, and other suggestions to Antoinette Mitchell at Antoinette@ncate.org. The UAB will be asked to formalize this guidance at its April 2007 meeting and NCATE staff would like your input. Please send comments by March 16, 2007.

BOE REPORTS

To Cite Met or Not Met – That is the Question

Reminder: An important part of a BOE member's responsibility is making hard

decisions. When evidence is not convincing and team members have serious doubts about whether or not a standard is met, the team should recommend that the Standard is not met. Recommending a not met standard when warranted is best for the institution. It is best for the institution because the institution has the opportunity to rejoin and that rejoinder is read by the UAB before an accreditation decision is made. Under this scenario, the UAB has more information with which to make its decision.

When a team recommends a met standard even though evidence does not warrant this recommendation, the institution is usually pleased and not likely to rejoin strongly. After all, how strongly does one rejoin a positive recommendation? However, at the UAB-level, when members compare 50-70 BOE Reports, a standard that is recommended as met but lacks convincing evidence stands out. If, in addition to weak evidence, the rejoinder is not strong, then the UAB is likely to decide that the standard is not met. The unit feels misled by the BOE team's recommendation and the UAB questions the work of the team. For all of these reasons, you must make the hard decision when it is warranted.

Schedule Guidelines for Preparing BOE Reports

At the suggestion of the team chairs who participated in the December 2006 Chairs' Retreat, the 52-day schedule for the review and submission of BOE Reports has been broken down to assist chairs in meeting the timeline. The schedule, based on calendar days, is as follows:

The team chair leaves the institution with a complete draft of the report that has been read and edited by the entire team.

Schedule for Preparing BOE Reports

<i>Days after the visit</i>	<i>Activities</i>
Day 1 to Day 7	The team chair edits the entire report and sends it to NCATE for review. The NCATE staff contact person for BOE reports is Patty Garvin. Send reports to patty@ncate.org . Because significant changes may be made during the review, the unit should not receive a copy of this first draft.
Day 8 to Day 14	The report is assigned to an NCATE editor. The editor reviews the report and sends comments back to the chair
Day 15 to Day 21	The chair integrates the changes into the report and sends it to the entire team, including state representatives for review.
Day 22 to Day 28	The chair integrates team comments into the report and sends it to all team members for final approval.
Day 29 to Day 35	The chair makes any additional changes and sends the report to the unit for factual corrections.
Day 36 to Day 42	The unit reviews the report for factual errors and sends a list of corrections to the chair.
Day 43 to Day 52	The chair makes the factual corrections and sends the final BOE Report to NCATE (patty@ncate.org) and team members including state representatives.

NCATE sends an email to the unit informing them that the report is available in their electronic folder.

Providing Context within the BOE Report

BOE members gain an understanding of the institution and unit while preparing for the site visit and, of course, during the visit itself. UAB members, however, do not have the same opportunities to gain in-depth understanding of the units and rely on the BOE for context. While the Introduction and Conceptual Framework sections of the BOE Report provide the general context for the unit, it is also helpful to add brief introductory explanations, as appropriate, within the standards. For example, teams could begin Elements A and B of Standard 1 with a single sentence summarizing the programs that are going to be discussed. A statement in Element A such as “At the advanced level, the unit offers a second level Professional Certification program and an M Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction for

teachers” before discussing the programs will give readers a frame of reference. In Standard 3, beginning with information such as the number of placement sites, their geographic range, and the types of schools (PDSs, private schools, etc.) will set the stage for the rest of the standard. Providing a preface to what they are going to read will make the UAB’s work more efficient and help strengthen the team’s argument.

It is also important to remember that not everyone who reads the report will be familiar with the latest terminology. This is particularly important as assessment evolves. If teams come across unusual terms, include a brief explanation of what they mean and why they are important. The same is true for terms used by the unit but not necessarily teacher education in general.

Addressing Triggers in the BOE Report

In some instances, the Annual Report and Preconditions Audit (ARPA) Committee requests that BOE teams investigate certain aspects of units under review. These aspects, or triggers, include significant decreases in faculty or budget, meaningful changes in pass-rates on licensing exams, and changes in state or institutional accreditation status. NCATE will alert chairs if the team has been asked to consider a trigger identified by the ARPA Committee. The ARPA Committee usually asks teams to determine if the changes still exist, and if so, whether the changes have an adverse effect on the unit's ability to meet the Unit Standards. Chairs should inform the team of the ARPA requests during the first team meeting. The team's findings should be included in the BOE Report under the appropriate standard and element:

- 25 percent decrease in the overall unit budget – Standard 6, Unit Budget
- 25 percent decrease in full-time faculty – Standard 6, Personnel
- Title II data indicating that a unit is not meeting the required state pass rates on licensure exams – Standard 1, Content Knowledge for Teacher Candidates and/or Content Knowledge for Other School Personnel
- Change in the state-approved status of the professional education unit, as identified by the state teacher education authority – Usually Standard 1, Content Knowledge for Teacher Candidates and/or Content

Knowledge for Other School Personnel

- Change in institutional accreditation status – Standard and element appropriate to the concern cited by the accreditor.

Who Wrote What?

When chairs send the draft of the BOE report to NCATE, the standard or section each team member wrote should be listed after his or her name. For example:

NCATE Board of Examiners Team:

NCATE Member One, Chair (Introduction and Conceptual Framework)

NCATE Member Two (Standard 5)

NCATE Member Three (Standard 2)

NCATE Member Four (Standard 1)

State Board of Examiners Team:

State Member One (Standard 6)

State Member Two (Standard 3)

State Member Three (Standard 4)

This information should be deleted before sending the report to the unit for factual corrections.

Including Conceptual Framework in the Report

Teams look for evidence that the conceptual framework is a “living document” during the site visit and include its findings in the BOE Report. Teams should address how well the conceptual framework is integrated into the work of the unit in several of the unit standards. The following chart identifies where references to the conceptual framework are made in the standards.

The Conceptual Framework in the NCATE Unit Standards

STANDARD	EVIDENCE OF A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
Standard 2	<p><u>Element A. Assessment System:</u> Acceptable Level. The unit has developed an assessment system with its professional community that reflects the conceptual framework(s) and professional and state standards.</p>
Standard 3	<p><u>Element B. Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Field Experiences and Clinical Practice:</u> Acceptable Level. Both field experiences and clinical practice reflect the unit's conceptual framework(s) and help candidates continue to develop the content, professional, and pedagogical knowledge, skills, and dispositions delineated in standards.</p>
Standard 5	<p><u>Element B. Modeling Best Professional Practices in Teaching:</u> Teaching by professional education faculty reflects the unit's conceptual framework and research, theories, and current developments in their fields and teaching.</p> <p><u>Element G. Unit Facilitation of Professional Development:</u> Based upon needs identified in faculty evaluations, the unit provides opportunities for faculty to develop new knowledge and skills, especially as they relate to the conceptual framework(s), performance assessment, diversity, technology, and other emerging practices.</p>

STAFF UPDATES

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Marsha Russell, Accreditation Associate. Marsha is NCATE's new database administrator. Among her other responsibilities Marsha maintains the Annual Report database. Marsha has profit and non-profit experience including four years of IT lecturing practice. She is knowledgeable of data processing, and database design and maintenance. Marsha holds an M.A. in International Relations from City College of New York (CUNY)/Graduate Center, a B.S. in English and Legal Studies from John Jay College of Criminal Justice and Queens College (CUNY) and has done graduate work at the University of North London (UK). Her email address is mrussell@ncate.org