


NCATE Policies

Accreditation Decisions After the First Visit:

After an institution's first accreditation visit, the UAB will render one of the following accreditation decisions:

Accreditation. This accreditation decision indicates that the unit meets each of the six NCATE standards for unit accreditation. Areas for improvement may be cited, indicating problems warranting the institution's attention. In its subsequent annual reports, the unit may describe progress made in addressing the areas for improvement cited in NCATE's action report. The next on-site visit is scheduled for five years following the semester of the accreditation visit. First accreditation is retroactive to the semester or quarter in which the on-site visit occurred

 **Provisional Accreditation.** This accreditation decision indicates that the unit has not met one or more of the standards. When the UAB renders this decision, the unit has accredited status, but must satisfy provisions by meeting previously unmet standard(s).

If provisional accreditation is granted, the UAB will require (1) submission of documentation that addresses the unmet standard(s) within six months of the accreditation decision or (2) a focused visit on the unmet standard(s) within two years* of the semester that the provisional accreditation decision was granted. When a decision is made by the UAB to require submission of documentation, the institution may choose to waive that option in favor of a focused visit within two years* of the semester that the provisional accreditation decision was made.

If documentation is submitted under the terms specified in the above paragraph, the UAB will decide to (1) grant accreditation or (2) require a focused visit within one year of the semester in which the documentation was submitted. If a focused visit occurs, within the timeframes as specified above, the UAB will decide to (1) grant accreditation or (2) revoke accreditation.

If accreditation is granted, the next on-site visit is scheduled for five years following the semester in which the first accreditation visit occurred.

In cases where the UAB grants provisional accreditation solely because of concerns with test scores, the UAB will require submission of documentation that addresses the unmet standard within two years* of the semester that the provisional accreditation decision was granted. If documentation is submitted under these terms, the UAB will decide to (1) continue accreditation or (2) revoke accreditation. If accreditation is continued, the next on-site visit is scheduled for five years following the semester in which the accreditation visit occurred.

Denial of Accreditation. This accreditation decision indicates that the unit does not meet one or more of the NCATE standards, and has pervasive problems that limit its capacity to offer quality programs that adequately prepare candidates.

Revocation of Accreditation.^[1] Following a focused visit that occurs as a result of a provisional accreditation decision, this accreditation decision indicates that the unit has not sufficiently addressed the unmet standard(s).

rev. 10/04

*18 months, beginning with site visits in fall 2007.

1. For additional circumstances under which accreditation can be revoked , please see NCATE's [Revocation Policy](#).

Continuing Accreditation Decisions:

After a continuing accreditation visit, the UAB will render one of the following decisions:

Continuing Accreditation:

This accreditation decision indicates that the unit meets each of the six NCATE standards for unit accreditation. Areas for improvement may be cited, indicating problems warranting the institution's attention. In its subsequent annual reports, the unit is encouraged to describe progress made in addressing the areas for improvement cited in NCATE's action report. The next on-site visit is scheduled for five or seven years following the semester of the continuing accreditation visit, depending on the state in which the institution is located.

When one level of the unit receives continuing accreditation and a new level is accredited for the first time, the next accreditation visit will be in seven years if the state agency has agreed to a seven-year cycle of reviews.



Accreditation with Conditions:

This accreditation decision indicates that the unit has not met one or more of the NCATE standards. When the UAB renders this decision, the unit maintains its accredited status but must satisfy conditions by meeting the previously unmet standard(s).

If accreditation with conditions is granted, the UAB will require (1) submission of documentation that addresses the unmet standard(s) within six months of the accreditation decision or (2) a focused visit on the unmet standard(s) within two years* of the semester that the accreditation with conditions was granted. When a decision is made by the UAB to require submission of documentation, the institution may choose to waive that option in favor of a focused visit within two years* of the semester that the accreditation with conditions decision was made.

If documentation is submitted under the terms specified in the above paragraph, the UAB will

decide to (1) continue accreditation or (2) require a focused visit within one year of the semester in which the documentation was submitted. If a focused visit occurs, within the timeframes as specified above, the UAB will decide to (1) continue accreditation or (2) revoke accreditation.

If continuing accreditation is granted, the next on-site visit is scheduled for seven years (in some states, five years) following the semester in which the continuing accreditation visit occurred. This scheduling maintains the unit's original accreditation cycle.

In cases where the UAB grants accreditation with conditions solely because of concerns with test scores, the UAB will require submission of documentation that addresses the unmet standard within two years* of the semester that the accreditation with conditions decision was granted. If documentation is submitted under these terms, the UAB will decide to (1) continue accreditation or (2) revoke accreditation. If continuing accreditation is granted, the next on-site visit is scheduled for seven years (in some states, five years) following the semester in which the accreditation visit occurred.

*18 months, beginning with site visits in fall 2007.



Accreditation with Probation:

This accreditation decision indicates that the unit does not meet one or more of the NCATE standards, and has pervasive problems that limit its capacity to offer quality programs that adequately prepare candidates.

If accreditation with probation is granted, the unit must schedule an on-site visit within two years of the semester in which the probationary decision was rendered. The unit as part of this visit must address all NCATE standards in effect at the time of the probationary review at the two-year point.

Following the on-site review, the UAB will decide to (1) continue accreditation or (2) revoke accreditation. If accreditation is continued, the next on-site visit is scheduled for five years after the semester of the probationary visit.

Revocation of Accreditation:

[1] Following a comprehensive site visit that occurs as a result of a UAB decision to accredit with probation, this accreditation decision indicates that the unit does not meet one or more of the NCATE standards, and has pervasive problems that limit its capacity to offer quality programs that adequately prepare candidates.

Following a focused visit that occurs as a result of a UAB decision to accredit with conditions, this accreditation decision indicates that the unit has not sufficiently addressed the unmet standard(s).

1. For additional circumstances under which accreditation can be revoked , please see NCATE's [Revocation Policy](#).

Revocation Of Accreditation:

Revocation of accreditation terminates the accreditation of a professional education unit. A Unit Accreditation Board motion to revoke accreditation may be triggered by one of the following circumstances:

1. Following a probationary review, the unit does not meet one or more standards, and has weaknesses that limit its capacity to offer quality programs that adequately prepare candidates
2. Following a focused visit that occurs as a result of a provisional or a conditional accreditation decision, the unit has not sufficiently addressed the unmet standards that were the focus of the provisional or conditional review.
3. Following an on-site visit initiated by the Complaint Review Committee of the Executive Board, an accredited unit is found not to meet NCATE standard(s) or conditions for accreditation.
4. Following an on-site visit initiated by the Unit Accreditation Board at the recommendation of the Annual Report and Preconditions Audit Committee, an accredited unit has not sufficiently addressed the concerns identified by that committee (see "Policies on Submission and Review of Annual Reports.").
5. As outlined in the paragraph below, the President of NCATE can make a motion to revoke accreditation on grounds that an accredited unit (1) no longer meets preconditions to accreditation, including but not limited to the decision of the state or institutional accreditor to put the institution on probation, or its equivalent; (2) refuses to pay the fees that it has been assessed; (3) misrepresents its accreditation status to the public; (4) has falsely reported data and/or plagiarized information submitted for accreditation purposes; or (5) fails to submit annual reports or other documents required for accreditation.

The president can make a motion to revoke accreditation under any one of these five conditions, only after providing at least four months notice to the chief executive officer of the institution. The notice will contain sufficient information to allow the institution to understand the alleged violation, and will invite the institution to correct the violation, or demonstrate that it is not in violation of the condition(s), within no more than four months from the date of notice.

The president's notice, and the response from the institution, if any, will be submitted to an audit committee of the UAB at the first meeting following the four-month period of notice. The audit committee will make a recommendation to the full board to either (1) maintain accreditation; (2) revoke accreditation; or (3) take other appropriate action.

The president of NCATE shall notify an institution that it has lost its NCATE accreditation if the institution has lost state approval and/or institutional accreditation. This policy will apply after all appeals have been completed.

Termination Date for Revocation of Accreditation

Revocation of accreditation terminates accreditation at the end of the semester or quarter in which a final decision is made.

Alternate Route Programs

Alternate route programs [5] administered by the unit and leading to the unit's recommendation for a state license must meet NCATE standards. If a campus is preparing education candidates through one or more alternate routes, the program(s) must be included in the NCATE review. Alternate route programs must respond to state and professional standards through a review by either the state or specialized professional associations as described in the State/NCATE protocol, which is available on NCATE's website. Alternate route programs will be reviewed in the same manner as other programs. The BOE team will interview program administrators, P–12 partners, candidates in the program, and faculty. The BOE team will also expect to see assessment data, completion rates, and other performance data for candidates in alternate route programs as part of the unit's exhibits. The BOE team may cite areas for improvement related to specific programs, including alternate route programs.

Annual Reports

The annual Professional Education Data System (PEDS) (formerly known as the AACTE/NCATE Joint Data Collection System) is coordinated jointly by NCATE and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), and currently consists of the following components:

- PEDS Form A— Institutional Data
- Form B — Enrollment, Productivity, Faculty Resources
- NCATE Part C— [Annual Report form](#)

The PEDS package also includes an introduction and directions for completing the process, as well as a glossary and answer guide. The package may also include a survey on a particular topic or topics (e.g., educational technology, performance assessment).

AACTE collects and processes the data portion of the report (Parts A and B), while NCATE collects the narrative responses to standards and/or areas for improvement (Part C). Annual report forms should be completed and submitted electronically; Part C of the report can be accessed electronically from NCATE's website using an NCATE issued ID and password.

Form A requests basic institutional and unit information. Once this information is submitted, in subsequent years, it is pre-printed on the form. Institutions are asked to check the information for accuracy. Form B requests data on enrollment, number of graduates by program area, candidate and faculty characteristics, and resources of the unit. Form C of the annual report gives units the opportunity to write a narrative response summarizing major changes that have occurred over the past year and progress made on correcting previously cited weaknesses or areas for improvement. It also asks units to report evaluations that may have been conducted and plans for

future changes in the unit. Finally, Form C asks for updated contact information. Because the annual report data play a role in the NCATE accreditation process, it is important that institutions follow directions carefully in preparing their reports. Institutions should retain a copy of each report submitted and ensure that information reported is accurate, current, and consistent with data contained in the institutional report.

The AACTE/NCATE annual reports and the institutional report are the primary documents for the BOE team at the continuing accreditation visit. Annual reports provide a history of activities and changes between visits and can trace the progress toward correcting areas for improvement cited in the previous on-site review. From an institution's perspective, detailed and descriptive annual reports are also an invaluable tool for the completion of the unit's institutional report.

Submission of Annual Reports

Annual report forms are normally sent to institutions in June/July and must be completed by October 1. However, the due date for the 2004 Annual Report Part C is March 4, 2005. Submission of the annual report is required of all NCATE-accredited institutions. Precandidates and candidates are only required to complete Forms A and B; after they are accredited, they must respond to Form C as well. Completing Part C of the report is optional for the year of a continuing accreditation review. Failure to submit reports can result in revocation of accreditation.

Special Reviews of Annual Reports

NCATE has adopted a policy for screening annual reports—on an annual basis—to identify concerns that might require further examination by the Annual Report and Preconditions Audit (ARPA) Committee. The following characteristics will trigger a special review of annual reports:

- a 25 percent decrease in the overall unit budget from the previous reporting year;
- a 25 percent decrease in full-time faculty from the previous reporting year;
- information that a unit may no longer be meeting preconditions, including:
 - Title II data indicating that a unit is not meeting the required state pass rates on licensure exams;
 - a change in the state-approved status of the professional education unit, as identified by the state licensing agency; and
 - a change in institutional accreditation status.

Any annual reports identified by these triggers will be submitted to the ARPA Committee for further examination at its spring meeting. After reviewing the identified reports, the ARPA committee will make recommendations to the UAB regarding subsequent actions. The ARPA committee will recommend that the institution submit additional information, that a focused visit take place, or that the investigation be closed. Institutions are automatically asked to submit a report to the ARPA committee when an adverse change occurs in the state-approved status of the professional education unit or in the institutional accreditation status.

Institutions that have experienced a 25 percent decrease in faculty size or budget should use Part C of the annual report to explain the circumstances under which these changes have occurred and the institutional response. Reporting on significant changes and institutional responses in

annual reports will decrease the possibility that the institution will be asked to submit a special report to the ARPA Committee.

In cases when the institution is scheduled for a visit during the spring semester in which ARPA will meet, or during the following fall semester, the Board of Examiners team will review the situation as part of its regular accreditation review. In cases when the institution hosted a visit during the fall semester prior to ARPA's meeting, the Unit Accreditation Board audit committee will review the situation as part of its regular accreditation review.

*adopted 10/97; rev. 4/98; 10/00; 10/03; 3/04

Appeals of Accreditation Decisions [\[9\]](#)

Any institution, state, or association that is the object of an adverse decision, as made by one of NCATE's governance boards, may appeal that decision. An adverse decision as defined by NCATE's boards includes: the denial of an application for, or the revocation of, a state partnership; the denial or revocation of constituent membership; the denial of application for, or the revocation of, program standards; and the denial or revocation of institutional accreditation.

An institution may also appeal, in writing, a probationary accreditation decision or a decision to grant provisional accreditation or accreditation with conditions.

An adverse decision and decisions to accredit with probation, with provisions, or with conditions may be appealed only on the grounds that:

1. NCATE standards were disregarded,
2. stated procedures were not followed,
3. (for institutions) evidence favorable to the institution and provided to the Board of Examiners was not considered, or
4. (for institutions) evidence favorable to the institution and provided to the UAB was not considered.

If a college or university believes that one or more of these four conditions was a factor in the denial, revocation, or probation of its accreditation, or a factor in the decision to grant provisional or conditional accreditation, the only available means of redress is through the appeals process.

Although an institution may appeal an adverse, provisional, conditional, or probation decision in which there was a lack of a full number of team members due to last-minute emergencies, that factor alone is not sufficient to uphold an appeal. The institution must convincingly demonstrate that this fact made a difference in the accreditation decision. The institution would have to show two things: (1) actual prejudice to it; and (2) that the prejudice changed the accreditation decision. The fact that the institution did not recommend canceling the visit would be evidence that it, at least before the visit, believed that the assembled team would be sufficient to conduct a fair and complete visit.

An appeal is heard by a Review Panel, consisting of five members selected from the Appeals Board. Responsibility for acting on the findings and recommendations of the Review Panel rests

with the governance board whose decision is being appealed. The findings of the Review Panel are communicated to the institution in a written report that conveys the basis of the action taken by the Panel. The findings and recommendations of the Review Panel are received by the Executive Board at its first meeting following the hearing. In the case of accreditation decisions remanded to the UAB by a Review Panel, subsequent action will be based on the grounds for appeal that were upheld by the Review Panel and can include, but are not limited to, (1) assigning another BOE team to revisit an institution or (2) reviewing the case again and rendering a second accreditation decision, which may be the same as or different from the original decision. The status of the appellant at the time of the visit remains unchanged until the appeals process has been exhausted.

1. For additional information on Revocation of accreditation, please see [NCATE Policies on Revocation of accreditation](#).

Process of Appeal

The following provisions govern the appellate process:

1. Within 15 days of receiving notice of an appealable decision, an institution, state, or association electing to appeal that decision must present the president of NCATE written notification of its intention to appeal.
2. No later than 30 days from the date that it submits its notification, the institution, state, or association must submit a brief to the president of NCATE that sets forth the specifics of its appeal and includes full documentation.
3. The president of NCATE will appoint a Review Panel, drawn from the Appeals Board, to hear the appeal. One of the appointees will be designated as chair of the Review Panel.
4. No later than 30 days after submission of the appellant's brief, the Review Panel is convened to hear and act on the appeal. Prior to the hearing itself, the Panel is trained by NCATE staff on the process and procedures for hearing an appeal, including the decisions that must be made by the Panel.
5. The Panel prepares a written report that conveys the basis of its findings and action taken on the appeal, and submits that report to the institution within two days of action taken by the Panel. If the appeal is not upheld by the Review Panel, the decision of the Unit Accreditation Board becomes final at this point and is subject to disclosure and notification procedures as described in NCATE's Policies on Dissemination of Information.
6. If the decision is to deny or revoke accreditation, the appellant shall have the right to appear before the Review Panel to present a 30 minute oral argument on its brief. The appellant shall also have the right to representation by counsel during the appeal, but may not call witnesses or introduce new evidence on its own behalf.
7. If the decision appealed is provisional, conditional, or probationary accreditation, the appellant's right to appeal is limited to the submission of written documentation and the opportunity to make a teleconference presentation to the Review Panel during the half-hour period that precedes the panel's deliberations on its appeal. The chair of the BOE team and the chair of the appropriate Unit Accreditation Board audit committee also participate in the teleconference that precedes the panel's deliberations.
8. Whether the institution is presenting information in person or via teleconference, individuals designated as "institutional representatives" must be

employees of the institution or must have been employed by the institution at the time of the site visit.

9. In the case of an accreditation decision review, all evidence presented in the appellant's brief and considered by the Review Panel must be confined to conditions existing at the time of the Board of Examiners team visit as cited in the action report from NCATE.

*18 months, beginning with site visits in fall 2007.

Costs of Review

If the appeal leads to an affirmation of NCATE's original decision, the appellant will be liable for a set fee (currently, \$4,000.00) to cover the expenses of the Review Panel. If the panel finds in favor of the institution, the fee will not be assessed.

Access to Documents

In cases of accreditation decision reviews, team chairs and audit committee chairs serving as witnesses to hearings of the NCATE Review Panel will be provided copies of pertinent action letters and reports. Appellant petitions of appeals are provided to all witnesses.

Revised 10/04.

Branch Campuses

An institution with dependent [1] branch campuses [2] within the same state may choose to seek accreditation as (1) a single multi-campus professional education unit or (2) separate education units if the appropriate state agency recognized the units as autonomous for program approval. In all instances the declaration of intent to apply as a single or as multiple education units must be made when the institution submits the Intent form two years before the on-site review.

If an institution and branch campuses are evaluated as a single professional education unit, the accreditation decision and any cited areas for improvement or unmet standards will apply to the entire unit, even if cited deficiencies are specific to a particular campus. If an institution and branch campuses are evaluated as separate units, separate accreditation decisions will be made for each campus. If a multiple-campus institution seeks separate accreditation for one of its campuses, it has no obligation to seek or retain accreditation for other campuses.

Off-Campus Sites

Institutions may offer programs on sites other than the main campus or branch campus seeking accreditation. Off-campus programs [3] may be offered in the same state, in other states, or in countries other than the United States. The NCATE staff, in consultation with the institution and

appropriate state agencies, will determine the off-campus programs to be included in a unit's accreditation review, using the following guidelines:

Off-campus programs in the same state must be included in the unit's review.

Off-campus programs offered at sites outside of the state or in another country may be included in the unit's review if the (1) programs are limited in number and size, or (2) programs are located in close proximity to the parent campus, or (3) program completers are eligible for state licensure in the state of the parent institution.

Off-campus programs in multiple states and/or countries cannot be included in the unit's accreditation of the main campus. An institution with off-campus programs in multiple states and/or countries may only seek accreditation for those programs state by state or country by country.

The inclusion of additional off-campus sites in the single review of the unit will, in most cases, require the addition of BOE members to permit adequate data collection for each location.


Beginning in fall 2007, professional education units will be asked to disaggregate candidate assessment data by campus programs, off-campus programs, and distance learning programs for the national review process and unit accreditation to help determine similarities and differences in the quality of candidates that complete these programs.

See also [Status of Units and Programs Seeking Accreditation Separately from the Main Campus or as a New Institution](#).

1. A dependent branch campus is defined by NCATE as "a campus that does not have its own separate institutional accreditation."
2. NCATE defines a branch campus on its Intent to Seek Accreditation forms as "a campus with full student and administrative services as well as a chief executive officer, who may report to a system head." The designation of a campus as a branch campus is made by the Board of the parent institution or university system.
- 3 NCATE defines an off-campus program as a program administered by the institution with instruction provided at sites other than the main campus (e.g., program taught on weekend and/or nights in another state or in a school in another city). NCATE defines program as "a planned sequence of courses and experiences leading to a degree or recommendation for a state license."

Candidacy

Application for Candidacy

To apply for candidacy, the professional education unit completes an  [Intent to Seek First NCATE Accreditation](#) form that requests basic information about the institution and its professional education unit. The form is available upon request from the NCATE office. To apply for candidacy, the professional education unit completes an "Intent to Seek NCATE Accreditation" form that requests basic information about the institution and its professional education unit. The form is available upon request from the NCATE office.

Once the “Intent to Seek NCATE Accreditation” form has been submitted, the unit becomes a precandidate for accreditation and is forwarded an invoice for annual fees and all appropriate information for the preparation and conduct of a visit. As a precandidate, the education unit is eligible to receive all regular NCATE services, including newsletters and appropriate staff support. A precandidate is expected to submit the AACTE/NCATE annual report.

Preconditions for Accreditation

[The preconditions for accreditation](#) were developed to assure that any education unit undergoing NCATE review has met fundamental requirements that undergird NCATE’s standards for accreditation.). The preconditions, and the documentation that must be submitted to show that the preconditions are met, are outlined in table format.

Once an education unit has established itself as a precandidate, it should submit its preconditions report to the NCATE office three semesters prior to its planned BOE visit (by September 15 of the previous academic year for spring visits and by February 1 of the previous calendar year for fall visits. Documentation for Precondition #4, the conceptual framework, is reviewed by members of the Annual Report and Preconditions Audit (ARPA) Committee at its next scheduled meeting, and other documentation is reviewed by NCATE staff. After reviewing the preconditions documentation, the committee and staff may find that (1) all of the preconditions have been met or (2) not all of the preconditions have been met. In the first case, staff will recommend candidacy to the Unit Accreditation Board; in the second case, the institution will be asked to submit additional or revised documentation.

Institutions may be invited to resubmit their conceptual framework to the ARPA Committee twice, for a total of three submissions. If the third attempt does not meet the requirements, the institution is asked to wait a year before submitting its conceptual framework for consideration.

After an institution's preconditions documents have been reviewed, NCATE sends the institution a preconditions report indicating whether preconditions have been met. Precondition #8 is considered met after all required program reports have been submitted. If some preconditions are not met, the report will request additional information.

All education units are expected to become candidates at least one semester before the scheduled visit.

Rights and Responsibilities of NCATE Candidates for Accreditation

The designation of candidacy authorizes the education unit to advise its constituents that it has met the preconditions for and is actively seeking NCATE accreditation within two years. During this time, the institution must be making a good-faith effort to meet NCATE’s standards and must host an on-site visit.

Notification of Candidacy

NCATE notifies the Secretary of Education, the appropriate state agencies, the regional accrediting agencies, and the public of Unit Accreditation Board decisions to accept institutions as

candidates for accreditation, as well as the semester and year of the scheduled accreditation review.

Withdrawal or Lapse of Candidacy

Candidates for accreditation must (1) have an accreditation visit within five years of the semester in which candidacy is granted by the Unit Accreditation Board and must maintain other requirements for candidacy, which include (2) filing of parts A and B of the annual report and (3) payment of the annual candidacy fee. (Institutions that delay their accreditation by more than two years beyond inception of candidacy may be required to resubmit preconditions and/or program reports if major revisions in preconditions or program standards have occurred.)

A candidate institution that does not maintain the requirements as noted above will be notified by NCATE staff that candidacy has lapsed. Candidates may also withdraw from candidacy by sending written notice to NCATE's president. Within 30 days of lapse of candidacy or receipt of notice of the withdrawal of candidacy, NCATE will so notify the Secretary of Education, the appropriate state agencies, the regional accrediting agencies, and the public via NCATE's website.

Return to Candidacy after a Denial of Accreditation

If an institution is denied accreditation, the institution may revert to candidacy status if its next accreditation visit (i.e., its second attempt to seek accreditation) is scheduled within two years of the UAB's decision to deny accreditation. The institution is not required to resubmit preconditions; however, it is expected to continue meeting all current preconditions in order for the visit to take place.

Revised October 2003.

Complaint Review Policy

The Executive Board's Complaint Review Committee reviews all complaints regarding NCATE's policies and procedures and, as complaints relate to the mission, policies and procedures of NCATE, all complaints regarding the policies, procedures and conduct of institutions that NCATE accredits. Complaints may fall within one of two general categories: complaints relating to an institution or education unit and complaints relating to NCATE itself. Because NCATE's mission is accreditation, complaints in either category must pertain to one or both of the following: (i) noncompliance by an accredited institution with NCATE's policies, procedures and standards or (ii) NCATE's own actions. NCATE's complaint procedure does not exist to resolve grievances against an institution not related to NCATE's accreditation process or not related to the application of or adherence to NCATE's policies, procedures and standards. Nor is the complaint procedure a substitute for or alternative to appeals for institutions that are denied accreditation or that have their accreditation conditioned or revoked, or internal review procedures by member organizations and other parties. Institutions contesting accreditation procedures and decisions may seek review only through the appeal process set forth in [NCATE's Appeals Policies and](#)

Procedures.

When a complaint raises an issue relating to an accredited institution or education unit that is within the subject areas, and not excluded, as described above, the Complaint Review Committee may recommend to the Unit Accreditation Board that the Board conduct an investigation. The Unit Accreditation Board may determine that grounds exist for reexamining the accreditation of an institution's professional education unit.

Procedure for Filing a Complaint in general

With respect to complaints relating to an institution, NCATE will acknowledge and review all information NCATE receives alleging noncompliance by an accredited institution with NCATE's policies, procedures and standards. NCATE will give particular consideration to allegations that an accredited professional education unit is not in compliance with NCATE standards if the alleged violations appear to jeopardize the quality of the institution's professional education programs or the general welfare of the professional education unit. With respect to complaints relating to NCATE itself, NCATE similarly will acknowledge and review all information but will give particular attention to allegations that NCATE's policies, procedures, standards or actions are contrary to NCATE's mission as an accrediting agency.

NCATE will process both types of complaints in accordance with the procedures that follow.

1. Complaints relating to a particular Institution

A. Establishing a Complaint Relating to a Particular Institution

Complaints must be in writing addressed to the NCATE office. NCATE staff will acknowledge receipt of a complaint within 10 days and will accompany the acknowledgment with a copy of NCATE's complaint review policy. The written complaint must contain, or must be supplemented with, the following:

1. A statement of facts and circumstances showing, with reasonable particularity, (i) noncompliance by an accredited institution with NCATE's policies, procedures or standards or (ii) actions or inactions by an accredited institution otherwise jeopardizing its accreditation;
2. A reference to the particular policies, procedures or standards at issue in the complaint;
3. Identity of the complaining party and relationship to the education unit in question;
4. Facts and circumstances showing that the complaint is not an individual grievance unrelated to NCATE's mission as an accrediting agency;
5. A statement of the actions, if any, of the unit or institution to address the matters giving rise to the complaint.

If the President of NCATE determines that the complaint satisfies these five criteria, the complaint is deemed established for further consideration. If the President determines that the complaint

does not satisfy these criteria, the complaint is deemed dismissed. NCATE will notify the complainant of the President's decision to proceed with or to dismiss the complaint within 15 days of NCATE's receipt of a complete complaint. If the complaint is deemed established, the President will refer the complaint to the Executive Board's Complaint Review Committee and will provide the subject institution and/or unit the particulars of the complaint and a copy of the complaint review procedure.

B. Investigation of a Complaint Against an Institution or Education Unit

Following the determination that a complaint against an institution or education unit is established, the Complaint Review Committee will investigate the complaint in the following manner:

1. The Complaint Review Committee will require the institution against which the complaint is directed to provide a detailed response, with such supporting material as the institution deems warranted, within a time limit that the Complaint Review Committee sets.
2. Based on the institution's response, the Complaint Review Committee may seek additional information or a reply from the complaining party, as the Complaint Review Committee deems warranted.
3. Based on the institution's response and any reply or further information from the complaining party, the Complaint Review Committee may seek additional information from the institution or from other sources, may conduct further investigation and/or may authorize a Board of Examiners visit, all as and when the Complaint Review Committee deems warranted.
4. If the Complaint Review Committee determines that a Board of Examiners visit is warranted, the Complaint Review Committee will inform the staff of the matters that the Complaint Review Committee deems necessary for investigation and will direct staff to send a team of visitors to the institution to undertake such investigation. The staff shall report the results of its investigation to the Complaint Review Committee and to the Unit Accreditation Board at the next meeting of each.
5. Based on the foregoing, the Complaint Review Committee shall make a final determination on the complaint and, promptly following such determination, shall notify both the complainant and the institution of such determination.
6. In the event that the Complaint Review Committee authorizes an investigation and the staff reports the results of the investigation to the Unit Accreditation Board, the Unit Accreditation Board may take such actions as it deems appropriate notwithstanding anything in this Complaint Review Policy to the contrary. In the event that, as a result of the investigation, the Unit Accreditation Board revokes accreditation, places the institution on probation or otherwise conditions accreditation, the subject institution shall have the rights set forth in NCATE's APPEALS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES found at http://www.ncate.org/accred/initial_decisions.htm#appeals, which shall govern further proceedings following the Unit Accreditation Board's decision.

C. Ordinary Complaint Timetable for a Complaint Against an Institution

Day 1: NCATE receives a formal complaint.

By Day 15: President determines whether or not a complaint is established. If deemed established, President forwards complaint to the Complaint Review Committee and notifies the subject institution and the complainant of such action.

By Day 75: NCATE has requested and received a response from the institution.

By Day 105: The Complaint Review Committee has determined that (i) the complaint is without merit or has been resolved, or (ii) the complaint warrants further investigation, which may consist of requests for additional information from the institution and other sources and authorization of a Board of Examiners visit. The Complaint Review Committee shall notify the institution of the Complaint Review Committee's action. As promptly as is reasonable thereafter, the Complaint Review Committee will conclude its consideration of the complaint and make a final determination.

By Day 365: If the matter is investigated by a team visit, the Unit Accreditation Board will conclude its consideration of the matter and take final action. Also by Day 365, the Complaint Review Committee will complete its consideration and take final action.

NCATE will use its best efforts to meet this timetable, but NCATE may extend or otherwise alter this timetable should circumstances require NCATE to do so.

2. Complaints against NCATE

A. Establishing a Complaint Against NCATE

Complaints must be in writing addressed to the NCATE office. NCATE staff will acknowledge receipt of a complaint within 10 days and will accompany the acknowledgment with a copy of NCATE's complaint review policy. The written complaint must contain, or must be supplemented with, the following:

1. A statement of facts and circumstances showing, with reasonable particularity, (i) the inappropriate or wrongful content or application of NCATE's policies, procedures or standards or (ii) inappropriate or wrongful action or inaction by NCATE, provided that neither of these grounds shall be a substitute for or alternative to the appeal procedures with respect to decisions affecting accreditation, in which instances the appeal procedures shall be exclusive;
2. A reference to the particular policies, procedures or standards at issue in the complaint;
3. Identity of the complaining party and relationship to NCATE or to an institution within NCATE's accrediting jurisdiction;
4. Facts and circumstances showing that the complaint is not an individual grievance unrelated to

NCATE's mission as an accrediting agency;

5. A statement of the actions, if any, of NCATE to address the matters giving rise to the complaint.

If the President of NCATE determines that the complaint satisfies these five criteria, the complaint is deemed established for further consideration. If the President determines that the complaint does not satisfy these criteria, the complaint is deemed dismissed. NCATE will notify the complainant of the President's decision to proceed with or to dismiss the complaint within 15 days of NCATE's receipt of a complete complaint. If the complaint is deemed established, the President will refer the complaint to the Executive Board's Complaint Review Committee. In the event that the President is the subject of or a material witness with respect to the matters contained in the complaint, the Executive Board shall appoint a person to perform the President's responsibilities under this paragraph. No person who is the subject of or a material witness with respect to the matters contained in the complaint shall perform the responsibilities of the President under this paragraph.

B. Investigation of a Complaint Against NCATE

Following the determination that a complaint against NCATE itself is established, the Complaint Review Committee will investigate the complaint in the following manner:

1. The Complaint Review Committee will require such NCATE officers, board and board members, committees and committee members and employees, as the Committee determines, to provide a detailed response, with such supporting material as the responding party and/or the Complaint Review Committee deems warranted, within a time limit that the Complaint Review Committee sets.
2. Based on the responses, the Complaint Review Committee may seek additional information or a reply from the complaining party, as the Complaint Review Committee deems warranted.
3. Based on the responses and any reply or further information, if any is requested, from the complaining party, the Complaint Review Committee may seek additional information from NCATE or from other sources and may conduct further investigation, all as and when the Complaint Review Committee deems warranted.
4. Based on the foregoing, the Complaint Review Committee shall make a final determination on the complaint and, promptly following such determination, shall notify both the complainant and the NCATE Executive Board of such determination. The Executive Board shall direct such remedial action as the Executive Board, in its discretion, may determine.

C. Ordinary Complaint Timetable For a Complaint Against NCATE

Day 1: NCATE receives a formal complaint.

By Day 15: President determines whether or not a complaint is established. If deemed established, President forwards complaint to the Complaint Review Committee and notifies the

subject institution and the complainant of such action.

By Day 75: The Complaint Review Committee has requested and received responses from such NCATE officers, board and board members, committees and committee members and employees, as the Committee determines.

By Day 105: The Complaint Review Committee will conclude its consideration of the complaint and make a final determination.

NCATE will use its best efforts to meet this timetable, but NCATE may extend or otherwise alter this timetable should circumstances require NCATE to do so.

Other Important Considerations

The institution and/or education unit that is the subject of the complaint must provide the Complaint Review Committee, the Board of Examiners investigation team and the Unit Accreditation Board access to all information that they deem pertinent to the complaint. An institution's or unit's failure to provide information deemed necessary by the Complaint Review Committee, the Board of Examiners investigation team or the Unit Accreditation Board, or an institution's or unit's failure to provide information required for accreditation, may be grounds for immediate revocation of accreditation or other adverse action affecting accreditation.

Complaints found to have validity shall become part of the institution's accreditation file. Complaints dismissed as lacking merit shall not be part of the institution's accreditation file.

Regardless of the presence or establishment of a complaint, NCATE always maintains the right to request that an institution be reevaluated whenever NCATE deems that there is good cause to warrant such reevaluation. NCATE also takes very seriously its complaint-review responsibilities where a complaint is lodged against NCATE. All NCATE-affiliated persons must provide the Complaint Review Committee access to all information that the Committee deems pertinent to the complaint. NCATE-affiliated persons failing to respond to or otherwise improperly resisting Committee requests may be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal.

[See the Complaint Review Committee](#)

Revised October 2004.

Experimentation and Innovation

Responsible experimentation and innovation are essential to the improvement of professional education. A deliberate attempt has been made in the NCATE standards to encourage diversity, imagination, and innovation in institutional planning. New programs and structures to prepare professional educators to meet pressing social needs are encouraged. Of course, a unit must assume responsibility for the quality of each of its programs. NCATE recognizes that units and programs undergo regular change. Changes are necessary and expected as the teaching profession evolves. Units should not suspend change because an NCATE visit is scheduled. In fact, the current standards require serious self-study that should lead to changes for improving

the preparation of school personnel.

However, an institution may decide that specific standards do not provide the best vehicle for assessing a unit that is experimenting and/or undergoing extensive changes. In these cases, the unit may include the rationale for experimentation and explain any deviation from the NCATE standards in its institutional report. The unit is expected to document its systematic efforts to evaluate the graduates of these programs.

If certain indicators are perceived as barriers to innovation, the institution should not feel constrained by those indicators. It is possible for a unit to be judged to meet a standard without addressing each indicator.

Fees for July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007

(1) Institutions accredited by NCATE, including Pre-Candidate and Candidate Institutions, are required to pay an annual Accreditation Fee according to the following schedule:

Number of Graduates	Fiscal Year 2007 Base and Graduated Fee
1-50	\$1,930
51-150	\$2,145
151-300	\$2,440
301-500	\$2,805
501-1,000	\$3,695
Over 1000	\$4,300

(2) Institutions accredited by NCATE, including Pre-Candidate and Candidate Institutions, that are not affiliated with the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education must pay an additional annual Sustaining Fee according to the following schedule:

Number of Graduates	Fiscal Year 2007 Sustaining Fee
1-50	\$950
51-150	\$1,030
151-300	\$1,155
301-500	\$1,335
Over 500	\$1,570

(3) Institutions are required to pay a [Periodic Evaluation Fee](#) of \$3,600 – \$9,600, during the semester of their review by the Board of Examiners. The Periodic Evaluation Fee will be assessed dependent on institution size, number of programs, and state protocols.

Lapse of Accreditation

An institution that does not host a site visit within the required semester, or fails to provide written documentation in response to a provisional or conditional accreditation decision within the stated timeframe, will be considered to have allowed its accreditation to lapse. Within 30 days of the date the institution receives written notice from NCATE that its accreditation has ended due to failure to comply with one of the requirements stated above, NCATE will notify the Secretary of Education, the appropriate state agency and regional accrediting agency, and the public of the lapse of accreditation. Termination of accreditation will be retroactive to the end of the semester prior to the semester in which the visit was to have occurred.

In rare cases, NCATE staff may allow an accredited institution to revert to candidacy for a period not to exceed two years, if the institution is unable to host an accreditation review within its scheduled semester but is ineligible for a delay. (See "Postponement of the On-Site Review.") In such cases, the institution will be required to notify candidates currently enrolled in teacher education programs of the change in accreditation status. Institutions will be required to address the standards, including program standards (if applicable), that are in effect for the semester in which they choose to host their next review. NCATE will notify the Secretary of Education, the appropriate state agency and regional accrediting agency, and the public, of the institution's return to candidacy and the date of its accreditation review.



[NCATE Strategic Goals and Objectives](#)



[NCATE Visit to Online Institutions](#)

Participation of State Authorities with NCATE on In-State Visiting Teams

Realizing the value of an in-state perspective, NCATE has made provisions for the assignment of adjunct, in-state representatives on each BOE team: one from the state agency with program approval authority (the state department of education or an independent professional standards board) and one from the state affiliates of both NEA and AFT. The following policy governs this representation.

The state NEA/AFT affiliate and the state agency shall each have the option of assigning a representative to each NCATE visiting team appearing on campuses within their respective states. The following conditions shall apply:

1. the state NEA/AFT affiliate and the state agency shall be responsible for the costs of their respective representatives;
2. the state agency shall name its consultants;
3. the state NEA/AFT affiliate shall present names to NCATE; as with BOE members,

institutions are allowed to veto members nominated to serve on teams only if it can be demonstrated, in writing, that a potential conflict of interest exists;

4. the state NEA\AFT affiliate representative shall be a professional who is actively engaged in school activities at the pre-collegiate level (e.g., elementary or secondary teacher, or administrator);
5. these persons must meet all appropriate qualifications for services as set forth in the NCATE Guidelines for Ethical and Professional Participation in Various NCATE Activities; and
6. these persons shall be full participants in discussions and data gathering for the team.

Team chairs attempt to ensure that state agency consultants and NEA\AFT affiliate members are actively involved and that optimum use is made of their knowledge and skills. Although they are not voting members, state representatives otherwise participate as full members of the team. They usually can identify the unique circumstances of a state and clarify terms and policies that distinguish one state from another.

Postponement of the On-Site Review

Because the public expects accreditation visits to be conducted on a regular review cycle, all accredited institutions are assigned a semester and year for their next on-site review. A request for a delay of a scheduled review may be made in writing to both NCATE's Vice President of Institutional Relations and the appropriate state agency. Permission to postpone the visit for a period of one semester or one year may be granted for good cause, if both NCATE staff and, in states with partnerships with NCATE, the state agree to the postponement. Good cause may include: desired concurrent NCATE/State review; new state standards or legislation that require significant programmatic change; difficulties related to facilities; and other extenuating circumstances. Changes in personnel, including deans, and restructuring of programs do not necessarily indicate good cause.

Permission to postpone the visit for a period longer than one year in a given review cycle may be granted for good cause but must be approved by the state, in states that have partnerships with NCATE, and by the Unit Accreditation Board. Requests for permission to postpone the visit for a period longer than one year within a review cycle must be submitted in writing to NCATE one year before the scheduled visit.

Although requests for a visit postponement may be made as outlined above, delays are granted infrequently. If a requested delay is not granted, an institution may choose to lapse into a period of candidacy until such time as an on-site review is viable for the institution. (See "Lapse of Accreditation" policy.)

For institutions that initiate and are granted delays in states that have moved to the seven-year cycle, the next visit will be scheduled for seven years from the semester that the visit was originally scheduled rather than seven years from the actual on-site visit. For institutions that initiate and are granted delays in states that remain on the five-year cycle, the next visit will be





scheduled for five years from the semester that the visit was originally scheduled rather than five years from the actual on-site visit.

NCATE also reserves the right to postpone accreditation visits. On occasion a large number of institutions scheduled for review within a semester makes it necessary to postpone some visits to the following semester.

In states with which NCATE maintains a partnership that specifies joint or concurrent visits with a state team, the state may also request postponement of an accreditation visit. In the instances in which the state initiates the request for a postponement of an accreditation visit to balance its schedule of state visits and NCATE concurs based on good cause, then the next visit will be scheduled seven years from the date of the actual visit in states that are on the seven-year cycle and five years from the actual visit in states that remain on the five-year cycle.

Revised 10/04.

Preconditions

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- [Format for Submission](#)
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- [Sample Conceptual Frameworks](#)
-  [Checklist for Submission of Conceptual Frameworks](#) (January 2006)
-  [A Roadmap for Meeting the NCATE Preconditions](#) (April 2005)
-  [A Roadmap to Conceptual Frameworks](#) (April 2005)
- [Frequently Cited Concerns About Precondition #4](#)
-  [Sample Preconditions](#)

List of Preconditions and Documentation

Precondition #1. The institution recognizes and identifies a professional education unit that has responsibility and authority for the preparation of teachers and other professional education personnel.

1.1 A letter from the institution's chief executive officer that designates the unit as having primary authority and responsibility for teacher education programs.

1.2 A chart or narrative that lists all professional education programs offered by the institution (including any nontraditional/alternative programs). The chart or narrative report should depict (a)

the degree or award levels for each program; (b) the administrative location for each program—for example, School of Education, Department of Music; and (c) the structure or structures through which the unit implements its oversight of all programs. If the unit's offerings include off-campus programs, a separate chart or narrative as described above should be prepared for each location at which off-campus programs are geographically located.

1.3 An organizational chart of the institution that depicts the professional education unit and indicates the unit's relationship to other administrative units within the college or university.

Precondition #2. A dean, director, or chair is officially designated as head of the unit and is assigned the authority and responsibility for its overall administration and operation.

2.1 The job description for the head of the professional education unit.

Precondition #3. Written policies and procedures guide the operations of the unit.

3.1 The cover page and table of contents for the documents that contain codified policies and procedures for the unit's operations, including policies and procedures pertaining to its candidates. [If policies and procedures are located on the Internet, photocopies of appropriate web page(s) that indicate links to applicable policies and procedures may be submitted as documentation for this precondition.]

Precondition #4. The unit has a well developed conceptual framework that establishes the shared vision for a unit's efforts in preparing educators to work in P–12 schools and provides direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance, scholarship, service, and unit accountability.

4.1 The vision and mission of the institution and unit.

4.2 The unit's philosophy, purposes, and goals.

4.3 Knowledge bases, including theories, research, the wisdom of practice, and education policies, that inform the unit's conceptual framework.

4.4 Candidate proficiencies aligned with the expectations in professional, state, and institutional standards.

4.5 A description of the system by which the candidate proficiencies described in 4.4 are regularly assessed..

Precondition #5. The unit regularly monitors and evaluates its operations, the quality of its offerings, the performance of candidates, and the effectiveness of its graduates.

5.1 A description of the unit's system for evaluating its operations, the quality of its offerings, the performance of candidates, and the effectiveness of its graduates.

Precondition #6. The unit has published criteria for admission to and exit from all initial teacher preparation and advanced programs and can provide summary reports of

candidate performance at exit.


6.1 A photocopy of published documentation (e.g., from a catalog, student teaching handbook, application form, or web page) listing the basic requirements for entry to, retention in, and completion of professional education programs offered by the institution, including any nontraditional/alternative and off-campus programs.

6.2 A brief summary of candidate performance on assessments conducted for admission into programs and exit from them. This summary should include (a) the portion of Title II documentation related to candidate admission and completion that was prepared for the state and (b) compilation of results on the unit's own assessments.

Precondition #7. The unit's programs are approved by the appropriate state agency or agencies, and, in states with educator licensing examinations and required pass rates, the unit's summary pass rate meets or exceeds the required state pass rate.

7.1 The most recent state approval letters, including or appended by a list of approved programs. If any program is not approved, the unit must provide a statement that it is not currently accepting new applicants into the non-approved program(s). For programs that are approved with qualifications or are pending approval, the unit must describe how it will bring the program(s) into compliance.

7.2 Documentation submitted to the state for Title II, indicating that the unit's summary pass rate on state licensure examinations meets or exceeds the required state pass rate. If the required state pass rate is not evident on this documentation, it should be provided on a separate page. (This provision does not apply to units in states without examination requirements or required pass rates for licensure.)

 [This list](#) indicates the required state pass rates in those states to which precondition 7.2 applies.

Precondition #8. If the institution is located in a non-partner state or in a partner state that requires the submission of program reports for national review through NCATE, the unit has committed to submitting program reports for each program for which NCATE has approved program standards one year prior to the visit.

8.1 A list of program reports that will be submitted to NCATE one year prior to the visit. For additional information, see the handbook section, "Responding to Program Standards" and the program review section of this website.

Precondition #9. The institution is accredited, without probation or an equivalent status, by the appropriate institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

9.1 Current accreditation letter and/or report that indicates institutional accreditation status.

For additional information on Precondition #4, the conceptual framework, see p.10 of the  [NCATE unit](#)

[standards.](#)

Format for Preconditions Submissions

Preconditions may be submitted to NCATE in either electronic or paper format. The guidelines below should assist an institution in preparing its preconditions submission.

General Guidelines for All Submissions:

The suggestions below should be followed for both electronic and hard copy submissions.

- Number all pages consecutively, including appendices, attachments, etc.
- Use a consistent font size throughout the entire document.
- Include a table of contents indicating where documentation for each precondition can be found.
- Label each supporting document to match the documentation outlined in the preconditions table (e.g., 1.2, 4.3, or 7.1).
- Submit relevant pages of source documents rather than the full document; do not submit entire catalogs or other extraneous documents.
- Indicate on source documents (1) the name of the source document (e.g., *Faculty Handbook*) and (2) the date of the source document.
- Ensure that documentation for each precondition, especially Precondition #4, can stand on its own without the documentation for other preconditions.
- Include a list of the program reports that are being submitted for Precondition #8. The program reports, if submitted, must be submitted as separate documents. If the institution is located in a state that does not require the submission of program review documents, the response to Precondition #8 should indicate the terms of the state partnership agreement regarding program report submission.
- The institution should have one copy of the preconditions submission in the exhibit room during the on-site visit.

Guidelines for E-mail Submissions

The preconditions may be submitted as an e-mail message with attachments, using the following guidelines:

- Precondition #4, the conceptual framework, should be attached as one file, and the other preconditions should be attached as a separate file or files. If the file sizes are large, it might be necessary to send each attachment as a separate e-mail message.
- Prepare the attachments in a format that can be read in Microsoft Word when received at the NCATE office.

- Scanned letters are acceptable for the documentation requiring copies of letters.
- E-mail the submission to ncate@ncate.org, and use "[Name of Institution] Preconditions" as the subject heading.

Guidelines for Web-based Submissions:

NCATE can also open the preconditions submission on the institution's own website. This option can accommodate file sizes that are large due to charts, tables, and/or the use of color. Please follow the guidelines below when submitting preconditions as web-based documents:

- Notify NCATE of the URL for the preconditions submission.
- Ensure ease of navigation.
- Embed links to additional information in the text, as needed.
- Ensure that all links in the document are operational.
- Ensure that links to web documents are to specific pages in a document, not to the beginning of a document in which the reader must scroll through to find the documentation that supports the preconditions response.
- Scanned letters are acceptable for the documentation requiring copies of letters.
- See the handbook section on web-based exhibit rooms for confidentiality and other considerations.

Guidelines for Paper Submissions:

- Submit one copy of the entire preconditions response in a three-ring binder and seven additional copies (stapled or bound) of the response to Precondition #4.
- Separate each of the nine preconditions with a divider page or tab labeled with the precondition number.

Deadlines

If your visit is in...	Your preconditions are due...
Spring 2008	September 15, 2006
Fall 2008	February 1, 2007
Spring 2009	September 15, 2007
Fall 2009	February 1, 2008
Spring 2010	September 15, 2008
Fall 2010	February 1, 2009

Frequently Asked Questions about Preconditions

- [My institution is already accredited and is coming up for its next visit. Do I need to submit preconditions?](#)
- [Who reviews the preconditions?](#)
- [How will I know whether my preconditions have been met?](#)
- [What happens after the preconditions are met?](#)
- [How long should the conceptual framework be?](#)
- [What if I can't have my preconditions in by the deadline?](#)
- [What if I still have questions about preconditions?](#)

My institution is already accredited and is coming up for its next visit. Do I need to submit preconditions?

No, preconditions are required only of institutions seeking NCATE accreditation for the first time. However, your conceptual framework should be evident in the exhibit room. Also, depending on your state's partnership agreement with NCATE, you may be required to submit [program reviews](#) approximately one year before the visit.

Who reviews the preconditions?

The Annual Report and Preconditions Audit Committee, comprised of representatives from NCATE constituent organizations, reviews Precondition #4, the conceptual framework. NCATE staff review the others.

How will I know whether my preconditions have been met?

After an institution's preconditions documents are reviewed, NCATE sends the institution a report indicating whether the preconditions have been satisfied. If some preconditions are not met, the institution is asked to submit additional information. Precondition #8 is considered met once the institution has submitted the required program reports.

What happens after the preconditions are met?

Once all preconditions are met, the institution is nominated as a formal candidate for NCATE accreditation by NCATE's Unit Accreditation Board at its next meeting (March/April or October). The institution is then eligible for an on-site visit, and the dates of that visit are officially confirmed. In addition, the institution is authorized to advise its constituents that it has met its preconditions and is actively seeking NCATE accreditation. *The Unit Accreditation Board must establish formal candidacy before an on-site visit may take place.*

On-site visits normally occur one to two years after formal candidacy has been granted. Postponement beyond that period must be requested in writing and cannot extend beyond a five-year period. After five years, the institution must reinstate the process of establishing candidacy.

How long should the conceptual framework be?

The Unit Accreditation Board recommends that the conceptual framework be no longer than 40 pages, including tables and appendices.






What if I can't have my preconditions in by the deadline?

If you miss the [deadline](#), your documents will not be reviewed by the Annual Report and Preconditions Audit Committee at its next meeting. This will delay your institution's advancement to candidacy and could ultimately postpone your visit.

What if I still have questions about preconditions?

Please contact Patty Garvin, Accreditation Associate, at (202) 416-6135 or [Patty Garvin](#).

Sample Conceptual Frameworks

-  [Our Lady of Holy Cross \(LA\)](#)
-  [University of Arkansas-Fort Smith](#)
-  [Montana State University—Northern \(MT\)](#)
-  [New York City College of Technology](#)
-  [Virginia State University \(VA\)](#)

Frequently Cited Concerns About Precondition #4

1. Alignment. Sometimes, a document contains all of the necessary "pieces," but it does not read as a cohesive narrative written in one voice.

2. Alignment. Sometimes it is not clear how

- the proficiencies in [4.4](#) align with the goals in [4.2](#).
- the proficiencies in [4.4](#) align with state standards. (Alignment with professional standards can be mentioned in a sentence and verified through state or national program reviews.)
- the assessments in [4.5](#) align with the proficiencies in [4.4](#).

3. Organization. The document should be easily understood by individuals outside the institution. It might help to have someone outside the institution read a draft to check for this. Regardless of how you choose to organize the document, it should be clear which sections relate to which element of the conceptual framework ([4.1-4.5](#)).

Common problems with specific elements:

4. The unit's mission and vision are provided, but not the institution's, or vice versa ([4.1](#)).

5. The unit's philosophy is not described. (In other words, [4.2](#) sometimes includes goals/outcomes/institutional standards without describing their philosophical basis.)

6. Some of the references cited in the narrative of [4.3](#) are not included in the reference list. Or, some of the works in the reference list are not mentioned in the narrative. (Less frequently, a concern is cited because a reference list was not provided at all.)

7. The unit has not identified specific proficiencies indicating what candidates should know and be able to do ([4.4](#)). The proficiencies should be more specific than the institutional goals/standards in [4.2](#).

8. Some of the information needed to understand [4.5](#) is provided in [precondition #5](#). The conceptual framework ([precondition #4](#)) should be a self-contained document that can be understood on its own.

Relationship with Other Nationally Recognized Accrediting Bodies

Regard for Decisions of States and Other Recognized Accrediting Agencies

All institutions applying for accreditation or currently accredited by NCATE must be accredited, without probation or the equivalent, by an institutional accrediting agency that is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Furthermore, NCATE will not grant first or continued accreditation to a professional education unit if it knows that the institution in question is the subject of (1) pending or final action brought by a State agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's legal authority to provide postsecondary education in the state; (2) a decision by a recognized institutional accreditation agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's accreditation; or (3) probation, or an equivalent status, imposed by a recognized institutional accrediting agency.

If NCATE learns that a candidate for accreditation or an accredited institution is the subject of an adverse action [1] by a state agency or a recognized institutional accrediting agency, it will initiate a review of the institution's NCATE accreditation status at the first Unit Accreditation Board meeting following receipt of such information. (See "Policies on Revocation of Accreditation" for action that may be taken at that time.)

Accreditation by Other National Specialized and Professional Associations

NCATE reduces the amount of evidence needed from programs accredited by other specialized accreditors for inclusion in NCATE's review of the education unit (school, college or department of education).

NCATE recognizes the following specialized accrediting organizations:

- [AACSB International - The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business](#)
- [American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences \(AACCS\)](#)
- [American Library Association \(ALA\)](#)
- [American Psychological Association \(APA\)](#)
- [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association \(ASHA\)](#)
- [Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs \(CACREP\)](#)
- [National Association of Schools of Art and Design \(NASAD\)](#)
- [National Association of Schools of Dance \(NASD\)](#)
- [National Association of Schools of Music \(NASM\)](#)
- [National Association of Schools of Theatre \(NAST\)](#)

For programs accredited by one of these organizations, NCATE requires, at a minimum, units to present (1) the official notice of accreditation from the other specialized accrediting organization; and (2) data demonstrating that candidates in these programs meet professional and state standards as expected in NCATE's Unit Standard 1. The unit head is still expected to manage and/or coordinate these programs as they are still considered part of the unit. To reduce the reporting load for these accredited programs, NCATE will not require the unit to include these programs in its reporting and evidence gathered for NCATE Unit Standards 2, 3, 4, and 5. Furthermore, BOE teams will **not** consider the degree of compliance of these already accredited programs with Unit Standards 2, 3, 4, and 5 when making unit recommendations regarding these

four standards .

Candidates and faculty members from these nationally accredited programs may be included in BOE interviews during the on-site visit.

Programs in nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and social work are not included in the NCATE review.

The following criteria will be used in recognizing an accrediting organization not already in the system. The accrediting agency must:

- Be recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as an accrediting agency with the authority to accredit programs in a specified field related to education and/or are recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditors to accredit programs in a specified field related to education.
- Have an established set of standards that identify the knowledge, skills, and dispositions in a specific field that candidates must meet in order to complete a professional education program. The standards must include requirements for (a) a conceptual framework or mission that clearly defines the vision for the program; (b) field experiences that are sufficiently intensive and extensive; (c) curriculum and/or experiences that prepare candidates to work with diverse P-12 students; and (d) the qualifications, performance, and evaluation of faculty.

If an accrediting organization seeks to be recognized by NCATE, it must submit a letter from its chief executive officer attesting to that fact and a copy of its current standards to NCATE's president. Staff will conduct a preliminary review to determine the organization's degree of alignment with the criteria above and prepare a memo for the Standards Committee of the UAB. Based on substantive alignment with the criteria, the Standards Committee can recommend that UAB to recognize or not recognize the organization. Recognition should be reevaluated every seven years.

Accrediting organizations currently recognized by NCATE need not submit a letter from the CEO and the organization's standards, as they are grandfathered into the system because of long-standing relationships with NCATE. However, these organizations should be reviewed every seven years, beginning in 2011.

NCATE will require units with programs accredited by NCATE recognized organizations to submit the information identified in the policy above for the purposes of unit review.

This policy becomes effective in October 2004.

Representation of NCATE Accreditation to the Public

NCATE requires institutions to include the following statement in all institutional publications in which it discloses that the professional education unit is NCATE-accredited:

The [name of the professional accreditation unit] at [name of institution] is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), www.ncate.org. This accreditation covers [initial teacher preparation programs and/or advanced educator preparation programs] at [name of off campus sites included in the accreditation].

Examples of publications in which this statement should appear include catalogs, handbooks, and the institution's website. It is not necessary to include this statement in advertisements or in informal reports or presentations; in these cases, the NCATE logo or the phrase "NCATE accredited" or "an NCATE-accredited institution" is sufficient. Questions about the applicability of this statement to a particular document should be addressed to NCATE staff.

A unit that is accredited with qualifications to its accreditation status (i.e., accredited with probation, conditions, or provisions) must disclose that status whenever it makes public reference to its NCATE accreditation. This disclosure must occur in institutional publications mentioned above and in all other cases (including advertisements) where a unit makes public reference to its NCATE accreditation.

In addition, institutions are required to notify candidates currently enrolled in teacher education programs of the meaning and possible outcomes of accreditation with probation. Candidates should also be notified of the meaning and possible outcomes of accreditation with conditions or provisional accreditation in cases when: (1) a focused visit is required, or (2) the accreditation with conditions or provisional accreditation decision was issued in response to test score concerns and the unit will take more than one semester to submit documentation demonstrating compliance. In any of these circumstances, candidates must be informed of the semester and year in which the UAB will take action, including the possibility and consequences of revocation of accreditation that could occur as a result of the UAB's action at that point. Candidates should also be informed that accreditation with probation, accreditation with conditions, or provisional accreditation does not affect the current accredited status of the professional education unit.

Institutions must ensure the adequacy and accuracy of information they make available to the public. All information released by an NCATE-accredited institution regarding its accreditation status and the availability and quality of its programs must be accurate and not misleading to prospective candidates or the public. If an accredited unit or candidate for accreditation misrepresents its accreditation status to the public, the President of NCATE can make a recommendation to the UAB to reconsider an institution's accreditation status.

Revised 10/04.

Review of Consortia in the NCATE Review

A consortium is two or more institutions collaborating in the design, administration, and delivery of one or more programs in professional education. All consortium programs for the preparation of school personnel must be included in the on-site review of each institution in the consortium. When a consortium is the professional education unit for two or more institutions, those institutions should seek joint accreditation as a single unit.

Consortium programs must respond to state and professional standards through a review by

either the state or specialized professional associations as described in the state/NCATE protocol, which is available on NCATE's website. Consortium programs will be reviewed in the same manner as other programs. The BOE team will interview program administrators, P-12 partners, candidates in the programs, and faculty. The BOE team will also expect to review assessment data, completion rates, and other performance data for all candidates in consortium programs. The consortium programs may share exhibits related to the programs. The BOE team may cite areas for improvement related to consortium programs within the reports of the individual consortium members.

Status of Units and Programs Seeking Accreditation Separately from the Main Campus or as a New Institution

Institutions within a university system may seek accreditation (1) jointly with the main campus as a single unit or (2) separately from the main campus as an autonomous unit. An institution that was previously included as part of the main campus' accreditation may seek accreditation as an autonomous unit when it is ready to do so. The accreditation of an institution that is jointly accredited with another institution within the same university system can be extended for up to two years to prepare for its first autonomous accreditation visit if it decides to separate from the accredited parent campus, pending approval of the state partner. The institution seeking accreditation on its own will be a precandidate for accreditation and must meet preconditions, establish candidacy, and host an on-site visit during this two-year period. The on-site visit will be considered a first accreditation visit. If accreditation is granted, the next visit will be held in five years.

When two NCATE-accredited institutions merge, the next NCATE visit will be scheduled to coincide with the institution whose accreditation cycle expires first, pending approval of the state partner.

If an NCATE-accredited institution assumes control of programs that were previously operated by another institution, the programs will be included in the institution's next regular accreditation review, as if the institution had developed a new program, regardless of whether the institution previously operating the program was NCATE accredited.

If an NCATE-accredited institution assumes control of programs that were within a unit accredited by NCATE, but the institution had previously offered programs only at one level (initial or advanced) and the new program will expand its offerings to the other level, the situation is analogous to an accredited institution with a newly developed program at the other level. The next accreditation visit will be a combination visit: a continuing visit at the previously accredited level and a first visit at the level of the newly assumed program. If the institution that previously operated the program is also NCATE accredited, then, pending approval of the state partner, accreditation of the program may be extended for up to two years, until the time of the institution's combination visit.

If a non-accredited institution assumes control of programs that were previously within a unit accredited by NCATE, accreditation for the programs can continue to be included in the accreditation of the accredited unit for up to two years, at the discretion of the accredited unit and pending approval of the state partner. Therefore, if the institution that previously operated the

program allows graduates of the newly transferred program to receive their diplomas from that institution, those individuals remain graduates of an NCATE-accredited program. The institution newly in control of the program is considered a precandidate for accreditation, must meet preconditions to establish candidacy, and must successfully host an on-site visit to achieve accreditation.

Current status of the institution	Change proposed by the institution	What happens (pending approval of state partner)	Repercussions for candidates
Accredited jointly with another institution within the same university system	Separation from the parent campus to pursue its own accreditation	Accreditation can be extended for up to two years. During this time, the institution will be a precandidate for accreditation and must meet preconditions, establish candidacy, and host an on-site visit. The on-site visit will be considered a first accreditation visit. If accreditation is granted, the next visit will be held in five years.	Candidates who graduate within the two-year time frame graduate from an NCATE-accredited institution, since accreditation is still covered by the parent campus.
NCATE-accredited institution	Merger with another NCATE-accredited institution	The next NCATE visit will be scheduled to coincide with the institution whose accreditation cycle expires first.	N/A
NCATE-accredited institution	Assuming control of programs that were previously operated by another institution	The programs will be included in the institution's next regular accreditation review, as if the institution had	N/A

	(regardless of whether the other institution is NCATE-accredited)	developed a new program.	
NCATE-accredited at initial or advanced level only	Assuming control of programs at the other level (advanced or initial) that were previously operated by another institution	The next accreditation visit will be a combination visit: a continuing visit at the previously accredited level and a first visit at the level of the newly assumed program. If the institution that previously operated the program is also NCATE accredited, accreditation of the program may be extended for up to two years, until the time of the institution's combination visit.	<p>If the institution that previously operated the program is NCATE-accredited: candidates who graduate from the program before the combination visit will graduate from an NCATE-accredited program.(as long as the combination visit takes place within two years)</p> <p>If the institution that previously operated the program is not NCATE-accredited, candidates who graduate from the program before the combination visit will not graduate from an NCATE-accredited program, since the unit is accredited only at the other preparation level.</p>
Not accredited by NCATE	Assuming control of programs previously operated by an NCATE-	Accreditation for the programs can continue to be included in the accreditation of the accredited unit for	As long as the institution that previously operated the program allows graduates of the newly transferred

	accredited institution	up to two years, at the discretion of the accredited unit. The institution newly in control of the program is considered a precandidate for accreditation, must meet preconditions to establish candidacy, and must successfully host an on-site visit to achieve accreditation.	<p>program to receive their diplomas from that institution (or for two years, whichever comes first), those individuals remain graduates of an NCATE-accredited program.</p> <p>If the institution newly operating the program does not host a successful accreditation visit within two years, graduates of that institution will not graduate from an NCATE-accredited program.</p>
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Adopted March 2003

 [Use of Pass Rates in NCATE Accreditation](#)

Withdrawal from Accreditation

An accredited institution that chooses to withdraw from accreditation must submit a letter, signed by the chief executive officer and the head of the professional education unit, to NCATE's president. Unless the institution stipulates an earlier date of withdrawal, the unit may retain its status as an accredited institution through the end of the academic year if it (1) currently meets requirements for accreditation, and (2) is not scheduled for an accreditation review within the academic year in which notification takes place. If notification of withdrawal is received by NCATE within the academic year during which an accreditation review is scheduled, withdrawal of accreditation is effective at the end of the semester in which notification by the institution occurs. Within 30 days of receiving notice, NCATE will notify the Secretary of Education, the appropriate state agency and regional accrediting agency, and the public, of the institution's withdrawal of accreditation.

The next section is an external link outside of NCATE's web site:

<http://www.aspa-usa.org/codeofethics/code.html>

Citing AFIs on National Recognition in States where National Reviews are not required

BOE teams will be directed not to cite an area for improvement (AFI) for a program that is not nationally recognized in a state that does not require their institutions to submit programs for national review through NCATE. BOE teams will continue to cite AFIs for programs that are not nationally recognized in states that require their institutions to submit programs for national review through NCATE.

Adopted 10/05

Board of Examiners

Team members who review an institution on behalf of NCATE are drawn from NCATE's Board of Examiners (BOE). The board is composed of an equal number of representatives from three constituency groups: teacher educators, teachers, and state and local policymakers/specialty groups. Constituent organizations nominate board members on the basis of demonstrated expertise in professional education, teaching, research and/or evaluation. Members are skilled in evaluation techniques such as the interpretation of quantified data, the use of rating scales and questionnaires, interviewing and observation techniques, reading and analyzing narrative information, writing observations and evaluations, and, foremost, making sound judgments about professional education units.

All BOE members are initially appointed to three-year terms. They undergo intensive training in the application of NCATE standards and in the conduct of an accreditation review. The performance of team members and the chair is evaluated by the institution and by other team members following an on-site review. In addition, the Unit Accreditation Board evaluates the quality of BOE team reports. This information is included in the record of each member of the BOE. BOE members may be reappointed for a second three-year term and reappointed for additional terms after participation in another training session. NCATE will ask a constituent group to replace a BOE member if he or she fails to fill out an availability form two semesters in a row without good cause (e.g., illness or a sabbatical outside the U.S.).

Each BOE team assigned to visit an institution includes at least one representative from (a) teacher education, (b) teachers, and (c) other constituencies. Each team should include at least one representative who is a faculty member or administrator in an institution similar in size and type to the institution being visited. Over a calendar year, the total number of assignments from each constituency will be equivalent and teams will reflect a balanced representation of males, females, and persons of color.

Institutions are allowed to veto members nominated to serve on teams only if it can be demonstrated in writing that a potential conflict of interest exists.

Revised 1/04.

Bias

Board members, program reviewers and staff shall:

1. not advance either personal agendas or non-NCATE-approved agendas in the conduct of accreditation reviews by attempting to apply personal or partisan interpretations of standards.
2. examine the facts as they exist and not be influenced by past reputation, media accounts, etc., about institutions or programs being reviewed
3. exclude themselves from participating in NCATE activities if, to their knowledge, there is some predisposing factor that could prejudice them with respect to the accreditation of institutions, partnerships with states, or approval of a professional organization's guidelines.
4. exclude themselves from NCATE activities if "they are philosophically opposed to or are on record as having made generic criticism about a specific type of institution or program allowable under the standards." ("Principles, Protocols and Etiquette for the NASM Accrediting Commission." Reston, Virginia: National Association of Schools of Music, September 1998, p.7.)

Compensation/Gifts

1. Board of Examiners (BOE) members shall not request or accept any compensation whatsoever or any gifts of substance from the institution being reviewed or anyone affiliated with the institution. (Gifts of substance would include briefcases, tickets to athletic or entertainment events. . .)

- If the giving of small tokens is important to an institution's culture, BOE members may accept these tokens from the institution. (Tokens might include, for example, coffee mugs, key chains, tee shirts . . .)
- If unsure, the BOE member should err on the side of declining gifts of any kind.

2. BOE members shall not expect elaborate hospitality during previsits or visits.

- Institutions are not expected to arrange for dinner for teams, except for the Sunday night dinner with institutional representatives. It is appropriate for institutions to provide snacks and non-alcoholic beverages for teams as they conduct their work on campus and at their hotel. Where options for meals are limited, the BOE team chair shall make arrangements in advance with the institution for team meals.

3. BOE members shall use restraint in any expenditures charged to the campus being visited, and shall abide by the guidelines set forth in NCATE's Travel Reimbursement Policy.

4. Under no circumstance shall staff accept any personal compensation whatsoever or any gifts of substance from an institution, though institutions may pay for staff travel when they invite staff to their institutions, consistent with the guidelines set forth in NCATE's travel reimbursement policy. If the institution wishes to compensate for a visit by a staff member, payment should be made to NCATE.

Conflict of Interest

1. Board members, program reviewers, and staff shall not participate in any decision-making capacity if they have a close, active association with an institution, state, or professional organization that is being considered for official action.

- A "decision-making capacity" includes serving on a BOE team, or Audit Committees of the Unit Accreditation Board, State Partnership Board, Specialty Area Studies Board, or Executive Board considering the accreditation of a professional education unit, the acceptance or renewal of a state partnership, acceptance of specialty area standards, or a relationship with another entity.

- A "close active association" includes:

- serving on or have served within the last five years on a statewide decision-making board or committee related to professional educator preparation;

- having been a member of the faculty or staff or a student at the institution within the past ten years ("student" includes persons having been enrolled in a significant course of study or degree program, or being a graduate of the institution);

- participating (on an individual basis) in a common consortium or special research relationship;

- having jointly authored research or literature with a faculty member at that institution

- having an immediate family member attending or employed by the institution, professional organization, or state;

- being employed or having been employed by the state in a function related to educator preparation within the last five years;

- having former graduate advisees or advisors employed by the institution. When supervision of dissertations is involved, personal prejudice is especially difficult to avoid and bias is often assumed.

- having applied for a position at the institution, professional organization, or state;

- having been a consultant at the institution within 10 years;

- having served as a commencement speaker, received an honorary degree from the institution, or otherwise profited or appeared to benefit from service to the institution, professional organization, or state.

2. BOE members are not eligible to participate on a team at a given institution if they previously served on an evaluation team for accreditation or state program approval review.

3. Board members shall leave board meetings when the institution, state or professional

organization that employs them is being discussed and when a vote is taken.

4. NCATE board members shall not serve concurrently on other national teacher education accrediting agencies' boards or committees. Persons serving on boards or committees of other national teacher education accrediting agencies shall be ineligible to serve on NCATE boards or committees.

5. Board members shall not serve concurrently on the Board of Examiners and an NCATE policy board.

6. Appeals Board members shall not serve on any NCATE board or in any other capacity be connected with NCATE during their tenure on the Appeals Board.

7. Program reviewers for specialty organizations shall not review programs from institutions located in their state. Reviewers who are also members of the BOE shall declare themselves ineligible to serve on a BOE team to an institution whose programs they have reviewed.

Consulting

When considering or accepting a personal consulting or similar arrangement with an institution, board members, program reviewers, and staff shall:

1. be clear that they are not serving as NCATE's agent, but are providing their own professional expertise for consulting purposes.
2. inform the institution that their advice and recommendations do not guarantee accreditation outcomes.
3. restrict consulting fees, if otherwise allowable, to reimbursement of expenses and/or other reasonable and commonly accepted limits.
4. not solicit consultation arrangements with institutions preparing for accreditation visits.
5. not advertise their status as board members for the purpose of building a consulting clientele.
6. not accept a consulting arrangement at an institution for which the member served on the BOE team or on the UAB for at least two years following the accreditation decision.
7. refrain from voicing an opinion about the institution to other board members.
8. Under no circumstance shall staff accept fees from an institution, though institutions may pay for staff travel when they invite staff to their institutions. If the institution wishes to compensate for a visit by a staff member, payment should be made to NCATE.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an integral part of the accreditation process. The boards, program reviewers,

and staff must have access to much sensitive information in order to conduct reviews of professional education units, program standards, and state partnership agreements. Board members and on-site review teams must protect the confidentiality of this information.

Confidentiality has no expiration date—it lasts forever.

1. Board members, program reviewers, and staff shall treat as confidential all elements of the NCATE accreditation process and information gathered as part of the process—documents, interviews, discussions, interpretations, and analyses—related to the review of professional education units, specialty organization standards, national program reviews and state partnership applications.

2. Board members, program reviewers, and staff shall not discuss in public places the particulars of an on-site accreditation visit or the specifics of any case.

3. BOE members, program reviewers, and staff shall not discuss details about an institution related to an accreditation visit with anyone other than BOE team members before, during, or after the visit. Policy board members shall refrain from discussing the specifics of individual cases and decisions regarding programs and states with individuals who are not NCATE board members.

NCATE Policies on Dissemination of Information

General Information on Accreditation Processes, Standards, and Accredited Institutions

NCATE's standards, policies, types of accreditation and accreditation decisions, and processes for applying for accreditation are published on its website (www.ncate.org) and in printed documents that may be ordered through the website or by calling the NCATE office. In addition, NCATE publishes on its website a list of accredited institutions and institutions that are candidates for accreditation, along with their accreditation status (i.e., candidate for accreditation, accredited, accredited with conditions, provisionally accredited, or accredited with probation) and the semester and year in which NCATE will conduct its next accreditation review of the institution. NCATE's website also identifies its staff members and their responsibilities, as well as the names and affiliations of its board members.

Institutions' representation of accreditation information is discussed in the policy "Representation of Information to the Public."

Solicitation of Third-Party Comment on Institutions with Upcoming Reviews

On its website, NCATE separately publishes a [list of institutions](#) with an accreditation review scheduled in the upcoming semester, and provides the opportunity for interested parties to submit letters of testimony to the quality of the institution's professional education programs.

Information that Is Available Upon Request

Accreditation action reports are generated for institutions that receive one of the following accreditation decisions: denial, revocation, accreditation with probation, accreditation with conditions, and provisional accreditation. Accreditation action reports are considered to be public information and will be released upon request (see “Notice of Accreditation Decisions” below for terms of release). Also upon request, NCATE will release the academic and professional qualifications, relevant employment, and organizational affiliations of its current governing board members and its principal staff. (Note: addresses, phone numbers, or e-mail addresses of board members or staff are not releasable.)

Notice of Accreditation Decisions

Within 30 days of an accreditation decision, NCATE provides written notice of the accreditation decision to the chief executive officer of the institution. No later than 30 days of the date of all final accreditation decisions and all decisions to accept institutions as candidates for accreditation, NCATE provides written notice of those decisions to the Secretary of Education, the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency, all institutional accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, and the public (via its website). Thirty days after an accreditation decision, NCATE also provides a list of the Unit Accreditation Board actions with any applicable accreditation action reports to the applicable chief state school officer, the executive director of the state National Education Association affiliate, and the executive director of the American Federation of Teachers state organization. In addition, NCATE provides a list of the Unit Accreditation Board actions to the state organizations affiliated with the National School Boards Association.

Within 24 hours of a final decision to deny or revoke accreditation, or grant accreditation with probation, accreditation with conditions, or provisional accreditation, NCATE will provide notice to the public of that decision, via its website. NCATE will provide written notice of final accrediting decisions to the Secretary of Education, the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency, and all institutional accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, at the same time that it notifies the institution of its decision, but no later than 30 days after it reaches the decision.

No later than 60 days after an accreditation decision to deny or revoke accreditation, NCATE will provide the Secretary of Education, the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency, and the public (upon request) with the accreditation action report that summarizes the reason for the accreditation decision, along with comments, if any, that the institution has made with regard to the accreditation decision.

Notice of Withdrawal or Lapse of Accreditation

Within 30 days of receiving notification from an institution that it is withdrawing voluntarily from accreditation or candidacy for accreditation, or within 30 days of the date on which an institution lets its accreditation or candidacy for accreditation lapse, NCATE will so notify the Secretary of Education, the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency, and the public.

Notice of State Change in Status for an NCATE-Accredited Institution

NCATE will notify the public, via its website, when provided with notice from the appropriate state licensing or authorizing agency that a state has changed the status of an NCATE-accredited institution . (adopted by Executive Board, fall 1999)

Confidential Information

All information that is provided to NCATE in preparation for accreditation review or an appeal of an accreditation decision is considered to be the property of the institution and is not made available to the public by NCATE. These materials include preconditions and institutional reports, program review documentation, BOE reports in draft and final form, third-party letters, rejoinders to BOE reports, and appeals briefs. NCATE may use some of these documents for training purposes, but not without permission from the institution. However, samples of these materials are made available to the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as part of NCATE's periodic review by these agencies.

Aggregate Data and Scholarly Research

NCATE reserves the right to compile and issue data derived from accreditation documents in such a way that the identity of source institutions is not revealed. For the purposes of scholarly research, permission may be granted by the NCATE president for researchers to have access to NCATE activities, files, and institutional materials. Researchers will be bound by the rules of confidentiality as stated in this document, and may not reveal information listed as confidential without written consent from the institution.

Information that Is Provided to the Secretary of Education

In addition to the information as described in preceding paragraphs, NCATE must submit the following to the Secretary of Education: a copy of any annual report that it prepares; a summary of the agency's major accrediting activities during the previous year, if requested by the Secretary; and any proposed change in the agency's policies, procedures, or accreditation standards that might alter its scope of recognition or compliance with the criteria for recognition. In addition, within 30 days of its decision, NCATE provides written explanation consistent with its standards to the Secretary of Education in instances in which NCATE continues the accreditation of a unit in an institution that has been placed on probation or an equivalent status by another recognized agency. NCATE will notify the Secretary semi-annually that its list of accredited institutions and institutions that are candidates for accreditation has been updated and is available on the website. NCATE will also supply the Secretary with the name of any accredited or candidate institution it accredits that NCATE has reason to believe is failing to meet its Title IV, HEA responsibilities or is engaged in fraud or abuse, along with the agency's reasons for concern about the institution, and if the Secretary requests, will provide information that may bear upon an accredited or candidate institution's compliance with its Title IV, HEA program responsibilities, including the eligibility of the institution to participate in Title IV, HEA programs.

rev. 10/98; 11/99; 10/00 (replaces Public Disclosure Policy); 3/01; 8/02; 10/03; 10/05

Notes

1. All accrediting decisions that are not subject to appeal are considered *final* on the date the decision is rendered by the Unit Accreditation Board. Accrediting decisions that are subject to appeal are considered to be final when (1) an institution that has received an appealable accreditation decision has not notified NCATE that it intends to appeal that decision by the date specified in the accreditation action letter; or (2) an institution has exhausted the appeals process.

 [Distance Learning Programs](#)

Maintenance of Accreditation Records

NCATE staff maintain accreditation documentation for all institutions that have applied for and/or received accreditation. Most documentation—including institutional reports, BOE reports and rejoinders, appeals briefs, and complaints filed against institutions—is archived once action has been completed. However, all records of accreditation action, correspondence, members of BOE teams, and program reports that have been prepared by the specialized professional associations in conjunction with NCATE accreditation review, are maintained in-house.

 [NCATE Self Evaluation](#)

Notification to the Institution of Accreditation Action

An institution is notified in writing of its accreditation status within two weeks of the Unit Accreditation Board meeting during which its case was reviewed. The Unit Accreditation Board communicates its actions by a letter (and, if the decision was to deny or revoke accreditation or to accredit with probation, conditions, or provisions, an action report) from NCATE's president to the institution's chief executive officer. This correspondence conveys NCATE's decision and the basis for its decision, regarding accreditation of the initial teacher preparation and advanced levels of the unit, including the terms, conditions, rights, and responsibilities conveyed by the accreditation decision that has been rendered. If the accreditation decision is appealable, institutions are informed of their right to appeal and the procedures for filing an appeal.

 [Participation of State Authorities on In-State Visiting Teams](#)

Public Representatives to NCATE Policy Boards

Definition of Public Representative

An NCATE public representative is defined as a person whose primary interest, occupation, relationship and/or membership association is outside the field of teacher education accreditation and entities involved in the accreditation system such as colleges and universities. The public representative may not accept remuneration from the accrediting agency for goods or service

currently or in the past. Nor shall the public representative be related by blood or marriage to someone affiliated with the teacher education accreditation system - including colleges and universities accredited by the agency (or considering accreditation by the agency), constituent organizations that are members of the agency, or members of the agency's governing boards.

Purpose of Public Representative

The public representative will apply his/her expertise, experience and knowledge to extend the perspective and insights of the work of NCATE specifically and quality of teacher education generally.

Expectation of Public Representative

Public representatives to NCATE policy boards will be full and active voting members of the policy boards, expected to attend all regular meetings of the board and participate in the work of the board. Terms will be three years, with the option for reappointment to one additional term.

Requirements of Public Representative

Prior to consideration for appointment as a public representative to an NCATE policy board, the candidate must submit a letter of consent for consideration as a public representative and a current resume.

Timeline and Process by which Public Representatives are Considered for Appointment.

March 1: Call for candidates sent to NCATE stakeholders: present policy board members, executive directors of NCATE's constituent organizations, deans of NCATE-accredited schools of education and NCATE state partnership contacts.

June 1: Letter of nomination from NCATE stakeholder, candidate's letter of consent and resume due to NCATE.

July 1–30: Consideration and appointment of public representatives by the Finance, Membership and Personnel Committee of the NCATE Executive Board.

July 30: Announcement of public representatives' appointments to NCATE policy boards.

Criteria for Selection of Public Representative

- Candidates must meet NCATE's definition of "representative of the public."
- Completed documentation submitted to NCATE (letter of recommendation from NCATE stakeholder, candidate letter of consent, and resume).
- Candidate meets NCATE conflict of interest policy.
- Candidate possesses specialized expertise, experience, and knowledge in areas outside the field of education.

Adopted by Executive Board 10/01

NCATE Policies on Standards Revision

Through the Standards Committee of the Unit Accreditation Board, NCATE engages in a systematic program of review that demonstrates that its standards are adequate to evaluate the quality of the preparation provided by the institutions it accredits and is relevant to the professional needs of its candidates. The UAB Standards Committee is charged with determining that the standards are adequate and relevant.

- a. If either the Executive Board or Unit Accreditation Board determines, at any point during its systematic program of review, that changes to the standards are needed, action will be initiated within 12 months to make the changes. Action for revising the standards must be complete within a reasonable period of time. All accredited institutions, candidates for accreditation, state agencies, and constituent members (including candidates in the units) will be notified of the proposed changes and encouraged to comment on the changes. The Standards Committee will consider the comments received before finalizing the changes and presenting them to the Unit Accreditation Board and Executive Board for adoption.
- b. The Standards Committee may rewrite, eliminate, or add rubrics and/or explanations for clarification or reflection of current and future practice, as appropriate, between standards revision cycles. NCATE staff will distribute proposed changes to accredited institutions, BOE members, and others for comment during the period between UAB meetings. Any revision of standards themselves requires approval by the UAB and ratification by the Executive Board. The President shall communicate the changes to accredited institutions, BOE members, and others. The revised rubrics and/or explanations shall be effective in the semester after approval by the Executive Board.

(See also NCATE's Constitution, Article IX)
rev. 3/01; 10/05

Training and Qualifications of NCATE Governing Board Members

The professional associations that comprise NCATE appoint representatives to NCATE's boards who are qualified, by education and experience, in their fields; affiliations and professional qualifications of board members are available to the public upon request, under terms described in NCATE's policies on dissemination of information. All governing board members are trained by the agency on its standards, policies, and procedures, including the processes for revision and establishment of policies, and the policies for making—as applicable—accreditation and preaccreditation decisions; decisions on state partnership applications; and decisions on applications for the recognition of program standards. Required, formal training for new members on each board takes place on an annual basis, for a half day or a full day before the fall board meetings. Additional training sessions may be held for board members on an as-needed basis.