

## NCATE PROGRAM REVIEW UPDATE – FALL 2006

***Welcome to the Program Review newsletter. In this issue:***

- *Read about the new and improved program review software*
- *Hear some advice from a lead program reviewer*
- *Find some answers to your questions about evaluating a student learning assessment*
- *Learn about how you can sign up for NCATE Program Reviewer web conferences*
- *Make sure you have the correct information about timelines for this semester*
- *Solve a brain teaser and win a prize!*

### **NCATE TO INTRODUCE NEW PROGRAM REVIEW ONLINE SYSTEM Frank Huang, NCATE**



NCATE is developing a new state-of-the-art online program review system that is currently being tested in-house and will be used for a limited number of reports in spring 2007. At least one third of spring 2007 programs will use the new system for review processes. The new system will be implemented for all program reports in fall 07.

Designed and implemented by NCATE System Development Associate Frank Huang, this Web-based application will streamline the NCATE program review business and help reviewers complete their work more efficiently. This system is specifically designed to address all of the challenges Frank heard about when he served as the NCATE program review technical support staff in fall 2005 and spring 2006. Training will be provided to SPA reviewers, audit teams, and Coordinators early next year, again prior to the fall 2007 semester, and as needed in the future. The system's improvements include:

#### Conversion of Multiple Program Report Files Into a Single Document

The new system will automatically convert the files an institution submits as its program report into a single PDF document. Reviewers will receive the institution report as one single PDF file that contains text, charts and attachment. The report can easily be printed out as one document or the reviewer can print out selected sections of the report. Reviewers will also be able to view the report on-line and be able to move easily around in the document from one section to another.

#### Enhanced Team Communication

An automated component will monitor program status and notify team members when status changes occur. Reviewers will be notified immediately when a program has been assigned or when peer reviewers submit reports. SPA Coordinators will automatically be notified when a lead reviewer submits the team's final report.

Just one click from a team member's workspace will provide complete team contact information and allow e-mail communication with the team.

#### Personal Work Space for Each Team Member

Everyone who plays a role in the program review has their own customized workspace that is optimized for that role. Individuals with multiple roles can switch between views while staying in the system. In addition, they can hop between different semesters without logging out of the system.

### Complete Review Work Online

Reviewers will no longer need to find and download recognition report templates. There will be a direct link they can click on which automatically provides the correct form. Upon completion, another click submits reports and converts reports to PDF files.

Reviewers can save and close their work at any time and come back later. The system will re-open and take reviewers to the place where they left off.

### Sophisticated Report Function

The system generates status reports for SPA coordinators with a graphic view that clearly identifies each program's status. One more click on the program name shows details of the program that includes critical dates such as date submitted and the date last edited.

The system also generates statistical data such as the national recognition rate for each SPA over each semester, which eliminates the need for hand calculation.

Comments and feedback are always welcome. To express concerns or to request a design review, contact Frank by sending an email to [frank@ncate.org](mailto:frank@ncate.org).

## **TIPS FROM A LEAD REVIEWER**

**Joseph Pacha**

**Assistant Professor, Educational Administration and Foundations**

**Illinois State University**

**Lead Program Reviewer, ELCC**

I can remember when I got the email from Deidre at NCATE announcing my first leadership assignment as a lead reviewer. My mind suddenly reverted to its primitive beginnings and went into retrenchment and survival mode. "What the heck did I get myself into?" I asked myself. After the initial shock, through the collaborative help of my team members plus some additional planning and use of resources, we were able to accomplish the first review and survive the experience. So in retrospect, here are a couple of things to remember and to ponder as you enter an assignment as lead reviewer.

1. You can do this! It didn't take too long before I realized that I could do it and that it wasn't a "mission impossible" task. Each time you do a program review you learn more about the process and find it easier to accomplish and do.
2. Work collaboratively with your team or partner! Remember this is a collaborative effort and isn't done alone. Use your team or partner if it is a two person team. Contact your team members immediately and set up a schedule. I have worked with some of the same partners on several reviews and we have a great working relationship; we have never met face to face, but we really know each other over the phone and by email. Having someone else's input is

great and many times my partners have seen things that I didn't and vice-versa; that is why this isn't a one-person review process. Plus, when there is a potential question, two or three heads can figure it out.

3. Remember what the mission is! Remember what our job is as reviewers – we are the quality review team setting the standard for preparation programs across the country. Our students need our work to be fair, reliable, and unbiased. We can't look at programs under review as if they must be like ours. We must review programs to assure they are preparing leaders that will provide the quality educational programs our students deserve.
4. Have a system and use it! I use the following method:
  - a. I review the NCATE National Recognition Report form to remind myself of all the issues and items that must be addressed. I download it to my computer for easy use and access.
  - b. I make sure I have all the documents and that I can access them easily – this usually means that I print them all out for easy access and for use to match things up if I need to do that.
  - c. I carefully read all the material from the review institution and make sure that I am familiar with the process that the institution has used to communicate their use of the standards, elements, and sub-elements; this includes the assessments, the scoring guides, and the data tables.
  - d. Using my own scoring guide that I created to help me in this process, I list the assessments that the institution has designated. I begin the process by evaluating each of the assessments to see that they meet the three critical criteria: (1) assessment quality and alignment with the standard; (2) scoring guide quality and alignment with the assessment and the standard and standard elements; and (3) data table quality and alignment with the scoring guide, assessment and the standard element. [Note: there is a problem that reviewers should be aware of – the problem is the clash of two systems. The “clash” is between the university's or college's grading system (A, B, C, D, and F) and the NCATE standards assessment system. They are different and they need to be addressed differently; so beware of this as you are working through the data management system of each program, their rubrics, and their reporting systems.]
  - e. After completing my scoring guide, I make notes to myself about the strengths and weaknesses of the program under review.
  - f. Now I am ready to contact my team members or partner for the second time. In our second conference call, we review our notes together, highlighting the various factors that we have found in our individual reviews of the program. (Many times the team members email their notes to me for use in the next step.) Using all the information from my team, I am now ready to write the first draft of the NCATE National Recognition Report.
  - g. I fill out the first draft of the report form – as the lead reviewer. After completing it, I email the first draft to the other members of the team and ask them to review it and to make comments.
  - h. In a third conference call, we review the entire document together and I gather each team member's input or comments for final changes to the final report.
  - i. I update the document and then finalize it in preparation for submitting as a final completed review. I submit the final review and send a final copy to the other members of the team.

5. Don't be afraid to ask for help! There are wonderful people at NCATE and ELCC that are willing to help – call or email them – they will get back to you and they are very willing to help!

I hope that some of these items will help you as you begin your process as a lead reviewer so that when Deidre or Jaye sends you the email inviting you to be a part of the review process, you won't have that mind altering experience as I did, but rather, an approach that says, "I am ready to get this done." Best wishes with your next review.

## **EVALUATING ASSESSMENT #5: CANDIDATE IMPACT ON STUDENT LEARNING**

### **Margie Crutchfield, NCATE**



Assessment #5 is an evaluation of the candidates' ability to impact student learning (for initial teacher education programs) or candidates' ability to provide a supportive learning environment (for other school personnel programs). How should a reviewer evaluate this assessment?

As you know, one of the primary purposes of the program review is to determine whether or not programs have six to eight key comprehensive assessments required of all candidates that are adequate to demonstrate candidate mastery of the SPA standards. Therefore the first question to answer is whether or not Assessment #5 adequately contributes to meeting the SPA standards that it is cited for in the Section III chart.

Of course, it is also important to determine if the assessment is of adequate quality. There are general criteria for evaluating assessments on pages 4-6 in the *Guidelines for Program Reviewers*, on the NCATE web site on the Program Reviewers home page. These would apply as appropriate to Assessment #5, but there are also some specific issues that should be considered when evaluating this assessment.

One of the elements of NCATE Unit Standard 1 is candidate impact on student learning. The acceptable rubrics for teachers and other school personnel are cited below:

#### **ACCEPTABLE**

Teacher candidates focus on student learning as shown in their assessment of student learning, use of assessments in instruction, and development of meaningful learning experiences for students based on their developmental levels and prior experience.

#### **ACCEPTABLE**

Candidates for other professional school roles are able to create positive environments for student learning. They understand and build upon the developmental levels of students with whom they work; the diversity of students, families, and communities; and the policy contexts within which they work.

Using these rubrics as a guide, it follows that an adequate Assessment #5, for beginning teachers, would include measurements of a candidate's ability to effectively assess student learning, plan instruction based on assessment data, and develop appropriate learning experiences. An

appropriate Assessment #5 for other school personnel would include measurements of the elements in the second sentence of the acceptable rubric above.

For beginning teachers, the majority of the assessments submitted for #5 in the past few years have included the elements cited above but have also included other components that are aligned with the components described by Emerson Elliot in several documents and presentations on the NCATE web site. These 6 components include:

- Candidate ability to assess students' current knowledge level
- Candidate ability to plan instruction based on this knowledge
- Candidate ability to implement instruction
- Candidate ability to assess students' knowledge after instruction
- Candidate ability to analyze the outcome of the instruction
- Candidate ability to substantively reflect on the experience

The components are found in the Teacher Work Sample Methodology but also in many other faculty-developed assessments.

As a reviewer, how should you handle a situation in which the assessment submitted for #5 is appropriately rigorous and adequately addresses the SPA standards--but does not meet the minimal criteria included in the rubric cited above from Unit Standard #1? In this case, the reviewer should accept the assessment as appropriate evidence for meeting the specific standards it is assigned to, but the reviewer should make a direct comment in Part E and Part F.2 that points out concerns with the assessment. For example, the following comment might be used:

The program has submitted an assessment titled "XX" for Assessment #5. Although this assessment does adequately address the standards it is cited for in Section III, the assessment does not meet the minimal NCATE criteria for an assessment of candidate impact on student learning outlined in the rubrics for Unit Standard #1.

Although these concerns should not have an impact on the final decision (since they are not related to SPA standards and the assessment is basically adequate), if the final decision is Nationally Recognized with Conditions, the reviewer could add to the list of conditions in Part G of the report such wording as "an Assessment #5 must be developed that meets the minimal NCATE criteria for an assessment of candidate impact on student learning outlined in the rubrics for Unit Standard #1."

## **UPDATE ON RESOURCES: NCATE TO PILOT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WEB CONFERENCE SERIES**

### **Deidre Alves, NCATE**



This summer Program Review piloted a new professional development training series using the *Eliminate* web conferencing product. The web-conference, which makes use of both interactive audio and video capabilities, was designed to provide information to university faculty planning to submit for the fall 2006 review cycle using the on-line program review submission process. The sessions were held on August 10th and 11th with a total of approximately 40 registrants in attendance from across the nation. During the first segment of the conference, participants were instructed on how to upload appropriate documents

through an applications sharing feature available on *Eluminate*. The second half of the session provided participants with the opportunity to practice uploading mock files to their institutional sites. The class session ended with a question and answer segment where participants were able to pose a question and address the group at large. Results from a post-conference feedback survey indicated that more than 95% of participants thought that this web-conference was an extremely helpful training resource that enabled them to feel well prepared to submit their electronic program submission at their respective institutions.

This semester, NCATE is expanding the series to include program reviewers as well. We will be hosting several web conferences as a forum to dialog, provide training, implement new systems, and support SPA-wide consistency initiatives. Upcoming workshops in the series will address topics pertaining to veteran as well as new program reviewers, team leaders, and SPA coordinators.

On October 10, 2006, NCATE held a session for SPA coordinators. It featured an update on the fall 2006 program review cycle as well as an overview of the NCATE/SPA process. There also was a question and answer period for participants.

The next scheduled web conference is October 24, 2006, for new program reviewers. On October 27, 2006, NCATE will host a web conference for lead reviewers. More information is forthcoming.

We are excited to offer this series to you as a means of nurturing partnerships and collaborative best practices. If you have any ideas regarding topics that you would be interested in having presented as part of our professional development web-conferencing series, please contact me at [deidre@ncate.org](mailto:deidre@ncate.org). We look forward to seeing you on-line!

## **NCATE WELCOME'S A NEW STAFF MEMBER**



Please welcome Monique Thomason to NCATE. Monique is Accreditation Assistant for Program Review. Prior to joining NCATE in July of this year, Monique was a development assistant at Georgetown University's office of Alumni and University Relations. Monique currently works with the Program Review team in receiving, processing and tracking program reports, compiling program data, preparing internal reports and various other responsibilities. Monique attended Elizabeth City State University in North Carolina where she majored in psychology. She resides in Oxon Hill, Maryland.

## **PROGRAM REVIEW TIMELINE**

### Fall 2006

October 15-November 30 – Program reviewers are notified of program review assignments; program review teams complete individual reports; lead reviewers complete final team reports

December 1-January 15 – SPA audit teams review and finalize reports.

January 16-February 15 – NCATE staff finalizes reports and posts reports to website

February 15 – NCATE notifies institutions that final reports are available

## Congratulations...

**SUE BROWN** (NCTM Program Reviewer)  
**SUE ROSE** (IRA Program Reviewer)

For winning the **Spring Program Review Brain Teaser** (see below) from our spring 2006 Newsletter:

**Hypothetical situation:** It is November 2006 and you are reviewing a program report. The report details 8 assessments and provides rubrics for each of the assessments. The assessments and rubrics are adequately aligned with your SPA's standards. How many semesters of data would the program be required to submit in order to receive full national recognition? Recognition with conditions? ~~~ The first 3 correct email responses that we receive will **WIN** a **FREE** copy of NCATE's latest publication: **Spotlight on Schools of Education–Institutional Responses to NCATE Standards 1 and 2** by Antoinette Mitchell, Sheila Allen, and Pamela Ehrenberg.

The **correct** answer was:

The program would be required to submit 1 semester worth of data in order to receive full national recognition.

Here is another **BRAIN TEASER** for you to try! The first 3 people to email Deidre ([deidre@ncate.org](mailto:deidre@ncate.org)) the correct answer will receive a copy of **Spotlight on Schools of Education–Institutional Responses to NCATE Standards 1 and 2** by Antoinette Mitchell, Sheila Allen, and Pamela Ehrenberg. **Good Luck!**

**Hypothetical situation:** You find yourself up very late working feverishly at your computer as you review your program report assignment. You see that the program has only two program completers. All assessments and scoring guides are adequately aligned with your SPA's standards. This is a relatively new program and they only submit one semester of data for each of the assessments. The data are not good. The two candidates have scored at unacceptable levels on more than half of the assessments. Faculty have discussed their concerns about the data in Section V and have outlined appropriate steps to deal with the issue. What would your final decision be?

- A Not Nationally Recognized
- B Nationally Recognized with Conditions
- C Nationally Recognized

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