1.1 Definition of Provisional Accreditation

Professional Standards for the Accreditation of Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education (2002) contains the following definition for provisional accreditation:

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 granted.

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

1.2 Accreditation Status of an Institution Provisionally Accredited

An institution that is granted provisional accreditation is accredited, with all the rights and responsibilities of an accredited institution as delineated by NCATE policies. Assuming payment of annual fees, the institution remains accredited at least through the academic term in which the Unit Accreditation Board renders an accreditation decision based on a focused on-site visit.

1.3 Public Notification of Provisional Accreditation Status

Institutions provisionally accredited are given approximately 15 business days from the receipt of the notice of accreditation action to file an intent to appeal that decision. If the institution declines to file an intent to appeal by the date given in the accreditation action letter, the provisional accreditation decision becomes final on that date. At that date, NCATE notifies the
Secretary of Education, the state licensing agency, institutional accrediting organizations, and the public (via its website) of the institution’s accreditation status. At that date as well, the institution’s accreditation action report is considered public information and will be disseminated by NCATE to members of the public upon request.

If an institution files an intent to appeal the accreditation decision within 15 days as specified in the accreditation action letter, the confidentiality of the decision being appealed is maintained until the appeals process has been exhausted. (See NCATE's “Policies on Dissemination of Information” and “Appeals Policies and Procedures.”)

A unit that is provisionally accredited must disclose that status whenever it discloses its NCATE accreditation to the public.

The “provisional accreditation” status of an institution will be indicated in all NCATE listings of accredited institutions, including the list of accredited institutions on its website. All lists published or disseminated by NCATE will also note the semester and year by which provisions to accreditation must be removed.

1.4 Institutional Requirement to Notify Currently Enrolled Candidates of “Provisional Accreditation” Status

Institutions are required to notify candidates currently enrolled in teacher education programs of the meaning and possible outcomes of 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 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 provisional accreditation does not affect the current accredited status of the professional education unit.

1.5 Right of Appeal

Provisional accreditation is not considered to be an adverse accreditation decision because it does not deny or remove accreditation. Therefore, appellant privilege for such institutions is limited to a written appeal of the accreditation decision, although institutions will be provided with the opportunity to make a teleconference presentation to the Review Panel of the Appeals Board hearing their case. Notification of the intent to appeal must be received by the NCATE office by the date specified in the accreditation action letter from NCATE’s President that accompanies the accreditation action report.

*18 months, beginning with site visits in fall 2007