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**SPRING 2009**

**Standard 2: Accuracy, Fairness, and Consistency**

The first element of Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation requires that the unit “takes effective steps to eliminate bias in assessments and is working to establish the fairness, accuracy and consistency of its assessment procedures and unit operations.” To address this aspect of the standards, BOE members should look for evidence such as when and how the unit develops and reviews assessments, how faculty and school partners are trained to use assessments, the use of multiple assessors, the degree of alignment between curricula and assessments, candidate knowledge about how assessments are scored, avoidance of cultural insensitivities, etc. A brief paper on this topic that is often shared with institutions is available on the NCATE website at: [http://www.ncate.org/documents/articles/FairnessAccuracyConsistency.doc](http://www.ncate.org/documents/articles/FairnessAccuracyConsistency.doc)

**FALL 2008**

**National Program Review: Key Evidence for All Standards**

BOE members now have access to program reports and resulting National Recognition Reports (NRRs), if the institutions they are visiting had programs reviewed using NCATE’s national program review process. The program reports and NRRs are posted in AIMS. Because the reports are available to BOE members in AIMS, institutions are no longer required to include data related to nationally reviewed programs in their Institutional Reports as they address Standard 1. Instead, for Standard 1, institutions are only expected to summarize data in their IRs for programs that were not nationally reviewed. To access the program and National Recognition Reports, BOE members should go to their AIMs workspace and click on “Programs” under “Accreditation Information” on the menu.

The reports for each program include the key assessments, scoring guides, and data used in a specific program. In the contextual section of the report the program describes the relationship of the conceptual framework to the program, the field experiences, and relationship of program assessments to the unit assessment system. The final section of the program report includes a description of how the program has used the assessment data to change and improve the program. This information should provide resources to help the team know that standards are being met.

The National Recognition Reports are written by experts in the respective fields and based on the expert review of assessments, scoring guides, and assessment data provided by the institution in program reports. The NRRs provide valuable information for BOE teams. The NRRs are divided into several parts; they include recognition decisions and information about how the programs address several elements in Standard 1.

Team members are expected to review the National Recognition Reports as primary evidence for meeting Standard 1, which requires candidates to meet national standards. If negative patterns emerge across NRRs, then BOE members should cite an area for improvement, e.g., National Recognition Reports for English, Science, Math and Social Studies indicate that the unit’s assessments are not sufficiently aligned with the program standards.
We encourage teams to read the National Recognition Reports and to review a sample of the program reports. Together, these reports include information on Standard 1 as well as information that teams will find valuable for other standards, as indicated below:

**Standard 1**
- The assessments, scoring, guides, and assessment data for each program indicate the degree to which candidates are meeting national standards.
- The recognition decision, which is shown on the AIMS screen, should help the team know which programs need further exploration during the on-site visit. Concerns expressed by reviewers should help determine the faculty to be interviewed and the questions to be asked to know that candidates are meeting national standards.
- Part C (Evaluation of Program Report Evidence) of the National Recognition Report provides a summary of evidence on (1) the candidates’ knowledge of content (Standard 1 Elements a & e); (2) candidates’ ability to understand and apply pedagogical and professional content knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions (Elements b, c, & e); and (3) candidate effects on P-12 student learning (Elements d & f).

**Standard 2**
- The assessments, scoring, guides, and assessment data for each program indicate the quality of assessments used in the unit assessment system.
- Contextual information submitted at the beginning of the program report provides information about criteria at different transition points.
- Contextual information includes a description of the relationship of the program’s assessments to the unit’s assessment system.
- The section of the program report that describes how faculty have used the assessment data to evaluate and improve the program should provide evidence that faculty are using data for decision making.

**Standard 3**
- The description for the field experiences and clinical practice in the context section of each program report provide more detail than may be available in the institutional report (IR).
- The assessment instrument, scoring guide, and assessment data for the field experiences and clinical practice are one of the key assessments required for each program. You will have an opportunity to review this part of the assessment system before arriving on campus.

**Standard 4**
- The National Recognition Report may include feedback on the development of proficiencies related to diversity if the program standards include such expectations.

**Standard 5**
- The summary of the qualifications of program faculty duplicates the table of faculty attached to the IR, but groups faculty by the programs in which they work.
- Part F.2 (Concerns for possible follow-up by the BOE) of the National Recognition Report may indicate strengths or concerns about the qualifications of faculty to teach in a specific program.

**Standard 6**
• Contextual information submitted at the beginning of the program report provides information on admission and retention in a program.
• Contextual information includes a description of the relationship of the program to the unit’s conceptual framework, which may be helpful in understanding the unit’s coordination of its programs.

What if the state reviews the programs?
A number of states conduct their own review of programs rather than requiring a national review through NCATE. When the state’s review is similar to NCATE’s program review, the BOE team can depend on the state’s findings to assist them in knowing whether candidates meet state and national standards for Standard 1 and whether the unit is addressing parts of other standards as indicated above.

A state review of programs is considered similar to the national NCATE review if the state agency requires assessments, scoring guides, and assessment data for its review. In these cases, the unit response in the Institutional Report to prompt 1a4 should briefly explain the state review system. In other prompts requesting assessment data, the institution can refer the reader to the explanation in 1a4. If they are available before the visit, the state report(s) on programs should be uploaded at the end of each relevant standard element. The assessment data for programs not reviewed by the state, such as master’s programs in curriculum and instruction, should be discussed in the appropriate prompts. In some states, the state team will be reviewing programs during the on-site visit, which will require the state and BOE teams to share findings throughout the visit.

If the state program review system is not similar to the national NCATE review as described above, the unit must describe the assessments and summarize related data that show that candidates meet national standards in the prompts in the Institutional Report requesting assessment data for Standard 1.

SPRING 2008

The Revised Unit Standards: Here they come!

The revised unit standards will go into effect for all visits beginning in fall 2008. This semester (spring 2008), institutions have been given the choice of being reviewed under the current (2000) or revised (2008) standards. Half of the institutions being visited this spring have chosen to be reviewed using the revised standards. This means that BOE chairs and members require training on the revised standards.

NCATE is providing this training using Elluminate, an interactive software package used to conduct web seminars. Participants can access the web seminars via any high-speed connection, using a computer with a microphone. The web seminars on the revised standards will be held on:

March 12, 2008
May 1, 2008
June 17, 2008
The seminars will be recorded and posted on the NCATE website. One seminar, recorded November 6, 2007, is currently posted at [http://www.ncate.org/public/archivedWebSeminars.asp#IA](http://www.ncate.org/public/archivedWebSeminars.asp#IA).

All BOE members are encouraged to attend one of the seminars or review an archived version. BOE members must register in advance to attend one of the web seminars, which are generally 90 minutes in length. To register, send an email expressing your interest and the date you would like to attend to Monica Siengo at msiengo@ncate.org

**Endorsements: What’s a Team to Do?**

Whether to include an endorsement in the NCATE review is a question that has beguiled institutions and BOE members for many years. In fall 2006, the UAB adopted a policy that required the inclusion of endorsements in the NCATE program and unit review processes, if the institution offering the endorsement recommends completers to the state for a license or for the modification of an existing license. The policy was to be implemented in spring 2008. However, at its fall 2007 meeting, the UAB voted to postpone implementation of the policy because of concerns raised about the varied forms that endorsements take in different states and the implications for units of reporting data and other evidence for all endorsements. The policy will be revisited again at the UAB’s October board meeting.

Consequently, for visits in fall 2008, if the endorsement is substantially like a program, is similar in length to other programs, and leads to recommendation for licensure or modification of existing licensure, the endorsement should be included in the NCATE review. At a minimum, ESL and computer education programs should be included in the NCATE review because NCATE has national standards for these endorsements. Endorsements that require only a few courses and short-term professional development programs should not be included in the NCATE review. Team chairs should contact an NCATE staff member if unsure as to whether to include an endorsement in the review.

**NCATE’s Relationship with Other Nationally Recognized Accrediting Bodies**

NCATE has a policy to streamline and clarify what is required when a program within the unit is already accredited by another specialized accrediting organization. The Unit Accreditation Board (UAB) will be streamlining this policy further at its April 2008 meeting. The current policy, entitled “Relationship with other Nationally Recognized Accrediting Bodies,” can be found at [http://www.ncate.org/governance/policies_contents.asp](http://www.ncate.org/governance/policies_contents.asp).

The current policy states that NCATE recognizes the following specialized accrediting organizations:

- American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)
- American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AACS)
- 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), and
• 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. These programs should be collecting performance data for their own accrediting agencies, which may be in a different format than used by the education unit. 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. During the previsit, team chairs should discuss this policy with the unit to ensure that appropriate evidence will be available to the team.

At the request of the UAB, staff will review the policies of the listed accrediting agencies to determine the extent to which these agencies continue to meet expectations for performance data, particularly data related to clinical practice in education. Stay tuned!

FALL 2007

Disaggregated Data: Campus Programs, Off-Campus Programs, and Distance Learning Programs

Beginning this semester, institutions are expected to disaggregate candidate assessment data by campus programs, off-campus programs, and distance learning programs for the national program review process and for unit accreditation. The UAB adopted this policy several semesters ago (fall 2005) to help determine similarities and differences in the quality of candidates that complete these programs. If institutions cannot disaggregate assessment data by programs, BOE members should note this in the findings section of the BOE Report. Because this expectation is not in the current standards, BOE members should not cite an area for improvement. This expectation has been included in the rubric on Data Collection, Analysis, and Evaluation in Standard 2 of the revised Unit Standards which will go into effect in fall 2008. This rubric also requires that data be disaggregated for alternate route programs.

Standards 5 and 6: Citing AFIs for Heavy Faculty Loads

Standard 5, in part, looks at faculty productivity and service. Faculty are expected to engage scholarship as appropriate for the institution type. They provide service to, and collaborate with the institution, P-12 schools, and the community. The personnel element of Standard 6 looks at faculty workloads. At the Acceptable level, this element states that “Workload policies, including on-line course delivery, allow faculty members to be effectively engaged in teaching, scholarship,
assessment, advisement, collaborative work in P–12 schools, and service.” Policies that may seem heavy and faculty complaints about being are overloaded, might lead a team to consider an area for improvement (AFI) for heavy faculty loads which impede scholarship and other activities. Appropriate AFIs for Standard 6 would be: “Faculty workloads impact unit faculty’s ability to maintain a scholarly record” or “Faculty with field supervision assignments have workloads that impact research and scholarship.” If the team decides to cite an AFI in Standard 6 indicating that heavy faculty loads negatively impact faculty ability to engage in other professional activities, there should be evidence presented in Standard 5 to support this. Evidence could be vitae showing that only few faculty members are engaged in scholarship or that service and collaboration rarely extends beyond the institution. In other words, triangulate the data. If the team finds that faculty are engaged in the depth and breadth of professional activities that are expected at the institution in Standard 5, heavy workloads impeding scholarship, service, etc should not be cited as an AFI in Standard 6.

Making a Unit-Wide Recommendation When Only Some Programs Meet a Standard

Sometimes teams wonder what to do when programs at the same level vary in the extent to which a standard is met. For example, imagine that the advanced programs for other school personnel at XYZ School of Education meet the requirements of Standard 2 but the advanced programs for teachers lack an assessment system. Is Standard 2 met or not met at the advanced level? NCATE staff offer the following guidance: the team should consider the number of programs and the number of candidates in the programs to determine whether to recommend met or not met. For example, if one or two programs out of seven seem not to be of sufficient quality, then the recommendation would be met (with an area for improvement), unless those programs enroll a significantly large proportion of the candidates at that level. In instances in which the programs that have serious problems are programs with the greatest enrollment, then usually the recommendation should be “not met.” NCATE relies on the professional judgment of teams to make these calls.

If the situation is not clear-cut—for instance, if the team finds other concerns related to the standard and is not certain how serious they are, or if enrollment data do not allow a clear determination of how many candidates are enrolled in various programs—teams are reminded of NCATE’s general guidance regarding questionable situations. When in doubt, it is preferable to recommend “not met” and give the unit a chance to write a rejoinder that might encourage the UAB to overturn the recommendation. A “met” recommendation might lead the unit to write a less strong rejoinder, which could lead the UAB to a final determination of “not met.” Teams recommending that the standard is not met in this situation should feel free to advise units of the importance of the rejoinder in the UAB’s decision-making.

SPRING 2007

Unit Assessment Systems: What Does NCATE Expect?

Institutions are more likely not to meet Standard 2 than any other standard. With the goal of making consistent decisions about whether this standard is met, let’s review the components of the first element, “Assessment System.” To be at the acceptable level, the unit must:
• Have an assessment system.
• Have involved the professional community in the development of the system.
• Reflect the conceptual framework in the assessment system, which means that the candidate outcomes articulated in the framework are being assessed.
• Use a comprehensive and integrated set of evaluation measures to monitor candidate performance and manage and improve unit operations and programs.
• Use multiple candidate assessments to make decisions for admission to, continuation in, and completion of programs.
• Ensure that assessments at transition points are predictive of candidate success.
• Take effective steps to eliminate sources of bias in its assessments and be working to establish fairness, accuracy, and consistency of its assessment procedures.

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

As discussed in the article “Program Assessments in the Unit Assessment System,” which is available at [http://www.ncate.org/documents/articles/unitandprogramreview.pdf](http://www.ncate.org/documents/articles/unitandprogramreview.pdf), the unit should manage or oversee the key assessments conducted by individual programs. Some of the assessments or assessment types may be common across programs, but seldom are all of the assessments the same. NCATE expects the unit to manage the assessment system and be able to generate data about programs and candidates.

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

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

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

Increasingly, both institutions and BOE members are perceiving NCATE accreditation as an onerous process, particularly as it relates to data for Standard 1. According to team members some institutions do not have enough data and other institutions have far too much. According to institutions, some BOE members do not ask for additional data but other BOE members ask for data far beyond what is required. So, how much data are enough? NCATE has reasonable expectations for quantitative and qualitative data. Institutions should not compile more than is needed for the NCATE review, and BOE teams should not ask for more than is needed. Let’s review NCATE’s expectations.
NCATE is interested in the **key assessments** used by the unit and its programs to determine whether candidates are meeting professional, state, and institutional standards. Faculty may be conducting many more assessments than these key ones as candidates move through courses, but data from those assessments do not have to be compiled for the NCATE review. Of course, the unit is free to track data beyond what is required if it wishes.

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

What should **key assessments** be measuring? Standard 1 expects units to provide evidence that candidates meet state, professional, and institutional standards. Therefore, the assessments must be linked to those standards and provide evidence that candidates are developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions outlined in those standards. Standard 1 requires evidence that candidates (1) know the content for their field (e.g., science, special education, or leadership), (2) know and demonstrate the professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills required to work in schools, (3) know and practice professional dispositions, and (4) can help **all** students learn. The standards of national specialty associations (SPAs) always address the first one on content, and, to some degree, the second one on professional and pedagogical knowledge and practice. Programs reviewed nationally by NCATE should also have assessments related to student learning. Some of the SPA standards include professional dispositions and some do not.

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

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

Data tables presented by institutions in their IR and exhibits may include raw scores or percentages for each level and element of a scoring guide. Data tables may also include the mean for each element. In many cases, data tables include the mean for each element as well as percentage for each level and element. All of the above formats are acceptable. NCATE does not require the data to be presented in a specific format. The goal is that the unit and its programs are collecting candidate assessment data to show that candidates meet standards.
Assessments and their related data on dispositions and institutional standards, included in the conceptual framework, are not usually included in the national review of programs. The results of these assessments should be presented in the IR along with data on programs for which NCATE does not have standards.

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

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

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

Citing AFIs Related to Opportunities to Work with Diverse Students

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

Standards 3 and 5: School-based Clinical Faculty

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

National Program Recognition & AFIs: Guidelines for Spring 2007 Visits

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

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

To Cite Met or Not Met – That is the Question

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

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

Including Conceptual Framework in the Report

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

The Conceptual Framework in the NCATE Unit Standards

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

FALL 2006

Amount of Data Expected for Standard 1 on Site Visits

How much data are enough? At a minimum, institutions visited now through spring 2008 should have at least one year (two semesters) of data for Standard 1 and other standards as appropriate. Institutions should be collecting data throughout the accreditation cycle, but given that many institutions altered their assessments to meet requirements of NCATE’s new program review process, expectations for unit review have been scaled back. The goal is that units regularly collect and analyze data. Institutions that do not meet this minimum requirement should receive an area for improvement (AFI) under Standard 2 such as, “the unit does not regularly collect and aggregate assessment data.” Tables with NCATE’s expectations can be accessed in the institutional section of the website at:  
http://www.ncate.org/documents/accreditation/AmountDataRequired.pdf

Institutions Seeking Continuing Accreditation or Accreditation for the First Time
Advanced-level Programs

Some institutions and BOE teams have difficulty identifying advanced level programs and other programs that should be a part of the NCATE review. To address this problem, the Unit Accreditation Board recommends that during the pre-visit, team chairs conduct a thorough review of the programs being offered by the unit and included in the NCATE review. In addition, team chairs should also review the level (initial or advanced) of the programs being reviewed. A few rules of thumb:

- Initial teacher preparation programs are those programs for individuals pursuing their first license in teaching; all other programs are advanced level programs;

- Initial teacher preparation programs can be offered at the undergraduate and graduate levels;

- Programs for teachers who already have their first license to teach are advanced level programs; and

- Programs for other professional school personnel are advanced level programs.

If you have questions about advanced level programs, an informative PowerPoint presentation is currently on the website under “resources” and “presentations.”

AFIs for the Lack of National Recognition

During fall 2006 visits, BOE members must continue to cite areas for improvement (AFIs) when programs that have been nationally reviewed are not recognized. At its October 2006 meeting, the Unit Accreditation Board (UAB) will consider a proposal to remove this requirement until such time that national recognition rates are more like accreditation rates of 70-80 percent.

SPRING 2006

Using National Recognition Reports in Standard 1

Beginning with visits this spring (2006), BOE teams should indicate in their reports whether programs are nationally recognized if the institutions are located in states that require NCATE program review. In addition, BOE teams must cite a separate area for improvement (AFI) for each program that is not nationally recognized. Programs that are recognized with conditions are considered recognized; an AFI should not be cited for these programs. If a program receives national recognition after the BOE visit, but before the next Unit Accreditation Board (UAB) meeting, the UAB will remove the AFI cited by the team. All programs nationally recognized and
nationally recognized with conditions are now listed on the NCATE website at:

Data in the program reports submitted for national review are now a primary source of assessment data for Standard 1. Based on these reports, program reviewers write National Recognition Reports (NRRs), which indicate the recognition decision and include a summary of how well a program meets the content, professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills, and student learning elements of Standard 1. The NRR is a must read for BOE members working on Standard 1. In addition to indicating whether the program is meeting several elements of the standard, the NRR includes a section in which program reviewers can make recommendations to BOE teams for follow-up during the on-site visit. Concerns about faculty qualifications or diversity or technology may appear in this section. Remember, the Standard 1 section of the BOE Report template poses questions related to NRRs that must be addressed when the unit is located in a state that requires NCATE program review. Since data reviewed for national recognition will be a year old by the time of the visit, teams should review any additional data that the unit has collected (Standard 1) and ensure that units are maintaining their assessment systems (Standard 2).

The documents that institutions submit for program review, the program reports, may also contain assessment data for elements of Standard 1 other than those mentioned above. In these instances, institutions may guide teams to these reports.

**Unit Operations in Standard 2**

The assessment system expected in Standard 2 requires attention not only to the assessments of candidates’ performance, but also to the evaluation of the unit’s performance. Units should periodically and systematically examine their own operations and make any changes that are suggested by the evaluations. The unit operations include components of the unit such as the governance system, the admissions process, advising, recruitment, retention, program administration, assessment technology, faculty evaluations, and other processes that keep the unit running. Evaluations completed for the state, the provost, or the Board of Trustees often address some aspect of the unit’s operations. The BOE team’s discussion and reporting of how the unit is meeting Standard 2 should describe all or a sample of the evaluations the unit itself has conducted of its operations over the past few years and changes made as a result of the findings.

**Expectations for Unit-level Data**

There has been some confusion about aggregated data, summarized data, and NCATE expectations for unit-level data. NCATE uses “aggregate” in the technical sense of combining like data. NCATE uses “summarize” to mean pulling together information and/or data that may be similar but also may be different. The expectation in Standard 2 is that the assessment system requires that data are aggregated at the program level and that the program level data are then summarized at the unit level. Analysis can take place at both levels.

Aggregated data at the program level are used to determine the extent to which candidates as a whole have gained the knowledge, skills, and dispositions outlined in NCATE unit and program standards. The types of assessments used across programs may be similar. Licensing exams, student teaching and internship assessments, planning assessments, and assessments of student
learning are some of the types of assessments that are likely to be common across programs. Some of the content for these assessments may be common across programs, but, some of the content for these assessments may be program specific. It is possible to aggregate data within programs, because the assessments are the same. At the unit level, assessment items that are the same across programs could be aggregated. Most often, data across programs can only be summarized because the assessment items are different across programs. NCATE does not require assessments to be consistent across all programs or be scored on the same rubric. At the unit level, NCATE expects only a summary of the program-level data.

The unit is responsible for developing the assessment system, maintaining the system, and using the data to improve candidate performance, programs, and the unit. At the unit level, therefore, the expectation under Standard 2 is that the assessment system is capable of reporting program-level data for unit management purposes. The resulting summaries and analyses are then used to make decisions about needed changes within and across programs and to unit operations.

**Quick Reference on Meeting Standards and Citing AFIs**

As you know, Board of Examiners (BOE) teams consider all of the evidence presented by an institution to indicate that a standard is met. They look for evidence that the elements included in the rubrics for each standard are being addressed at the acceptable level or above. As a team considers the evidence presented for each element, they should make a holistic decision about whether each standard is met. In two instances, the Unit Accreditation Board has set minimum, or necessary, requirements for meeting a standard. These instances are:

**Standard 1**
- A necessary condition for Standard 1 to be met is the requirement that at least 80% of the candidates in initial teacher preparation and advanced preparation pass the state licensure test in the content field (e.g., the subjects to be taught or fields such as special education, early childhood education, school psychology, and school counseling).

**Standard 4**
- A necessary condition for Standard 4 to be met is the requirement that the first element on Design, Implementation, and Evaluation be addressed at the acceptable level.

Please remember that these requirements are necessary, but not sufficient for meeting the standards.

In addition, an area for improvement (AFI) must be cited if a program is not nationally recognized but is located in a state that requires NCATE program review. Similarly, an area for improvement must be cited if a program is not approved or recognized by the state if the state is conducting the program review.

**FALL 2005**

**Guidelines for Determining the Status of Standard 4 (Diversity)**
The purpose of Standard 4 is to ensure that programs for educators are preparing candidates to effectively work with or support P-12 students from different racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, language, religious, gender, sexual orientation, and exceptionality groups. The standard is based on the premise that all students can learn although the way they learn may differ because of their prior experiences and cultural background. The first element of the standard focuses on the courses and experiences required of candidates to ensure they develop proficiencies to help students from these different groups learn.

To assist teams in understanding how the unit prepares candidates to work with diverse students, the unit should be able to identify the proficiencies related to diversity that they expect candidates across the unit or in specific programs to develop. Team members should expect to see assessments that help the unit/program know if the candidates are actually acquiring those proficiencies. Finally, data on candidate performance on those assessments should be available to the team. The evidence (i.e., proficiencies, assessments, and candidate performance results) should indicate that the element on design, implementation, and evaluation is being met at the acceptable level of the rubric. If some parts of the rubric level are not being adequately addressed, they should be cited as areas for improvement. This element must be met at the acceptable level for the standard to be met.

The last three elements of the rubric focus on candidates having experiences with adults (i.e., higher education and school faculty), peers, and P-12 students from diverse populations as they prepare for their future work in schools. A description of the diversity of each of these three groups—faculty, candidates, and P-12 students—provides the context for understanding the opportunities for working with persons from diverse groups. These descriptions should be presented as numbers and percentages in the BOE report. Most institutions also report the numbers and percentages in their IRs. The data are also available in the AACTE/NCATE annual reports that team members are sent before the visit. At the same time, the BOE team should describe the nature of the experiences candidates are having with faculty, other candidates, and P-12 students. The numbers alone are not enough to determine the interactions in which candidates are engaged.

The Unit Accreditation Board has said that the first element of the diversity standard is critical to meeting Standard 4. Institutions with limited faculty, candidate, and student diversity should have developed other mechanisms for ensuring that their candidates have these experiences and should be able to provide candidate performance data to make the case that they are prepared to work with students from diverse populations. If the unit is not providing candidates with experiences in any of the last three areas, meeting the standard would be difficult.

**How Much Data Should You Expect: NCATE after the Transition Plan?**

The fall 2005 semester marks the end of the transition plan. All institutions reviewed in fall 2005 and beyond are expected to meet Standards 1 and 2 without the benefit of a transition plan. For Standard 2 this means that institutions have fully implemented assessment systems that meet each of the three elements of the standard at the acceptable level, at a minimum. All assessment instruments and scoring guides should be developed and in use; data from the assessments and other measures of program quality should be collected, summarized, and analyzed as part of an ongoing process; and evidence should indicate that the data are being used to make course, program, and/or unit improvements.
For Standard 1, the end of the transition plan means that institutions are expected to have data demonstrating that candidates have attained all of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions listed in the Standard. From fall 2005 thru spring 2007, for unit review, institutions are expected to have at a minimum, two semesters of data for the key assessments listed in their assessment systems. Originally, NCATE planned to expect three years of data at this point, but because of major changes in the program review process, NCATE adjusted these plans. Currently, institutions must have at least one semester of data for program review and two semesters of data for unit review.

As a necessary but not sufficient condition of meeting Standard 1, institutions must present data indicating that 80 percent of their program completers pass the state licensing exam in the content area, if the state has such an exam. As has always been the case, institutions can present data from the past year or data aggregated over the past three years.

The Convergence of Unit Review and Program Review

Program standards written by the specialized professional organizations are a significant part of the NCATE accreditation system. Twenty-three sets of program standards exist. These include standards for the preparation of math, science, English, and social studies educators, as well as standards for school administrators, counselors, psychologists, and other school specialists. Institutions with programs covered by the program standards must demonstrate, through the program review process, that their candidates have the content area knowledge and other types of professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills delineated in the program standards. The program review process, which is based on assessment data, is conducted by either NCATE or the state, depending upon the state partnership agreement. When NCATE conducts the review, the process is electronic and occurs before the on-site review. States conduct the reviews differently; in many instances, states conduct program reviews during the BOE visit.

The NCATE program review process underwent dramatic revision during the 2004-2005 academic year. Institutions are now asked to submit 6-8 major comprehensive assessments which are aligned with the program standards in the given program areas. Two of the assessments must address content knowledge; two of the assessments must address professional and pedagogical knowledge and skills; and one of the assessments must address student learning. The other one to three assessments are determined at the discretion of the institution or the specialized professional association. (This information is provided on the templates for institutional submissions.) Institutions are also asked to submit the data from the 6-8 assessments indicating that candidates have mastered the proficiencies in the standards.

Experts in the specialty areas fields use this information to review the quality of programs. Reviewers evaluate quality of the assessments, particularly the alignment between the submitted assessments and the program standards. They then review the data to determine if candidates have mastered the proficiencies and write reports communicating their findings. The findings are reported in categories: content knowledge, professional knowledge and skills, and student learning. These categories are aligned with elements in NCATE Unit Standard 1.

This new alignment makes the linkages between the program review process and the unit review process more explicit. Most institutions will use the same 6-8 key assessments used in the program
review process as the key assessments identified in their unit assessment system. Most institutions will present the reports from the program review process and/or data from the 6-8 key assessments as evidence for meeting the above-mentioned elements of Standard 1.

The program review process generates program level data. These data can be summarized across programs to create unit level data for Standard 1. In some instances, units will have uniform assessment types across programs and sometimes similar scoring guides. This approach makes summarizing data very straightforward. In some instances, however, units will not have uniform assessment types across programs. For example, some programs may use case studies to evaluate student learning, some may use teacher work sample methodology to evaluate student learning, and some may use another method. In this instance, the assessments are different and there are no similar scoring guides. In order to report unit level data in this instance, the unit must summarize the student learning data for each program. This second approach is like an executive summary. Both approaches are acceptable. Most likely, units will provide a mixture of the two.

The program review reports include a section written to BOE members that identifies areas that may require further investigation. Most significantly, the reports indicate whether the programs should be granted national recognition. BOE members, particularly members writing to Standard 1, are asked to read each of the program reports. If programs in an institution have been granted national recognition, then this is a strong indicator that candidates have attained the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions for several of the elements of Standard 1. If an institution has programs that have been recognized with conditions, then the BOE should investigate the conditions, and review other evidence that the unit may have presented. Areas for improvement may be in order if the program report and other evidence do not suggest that the elements of Standard 1 are being adequately addressed. If an institution has programs that have been denied recognition, then the BOE should review other data that the institution may provide, but must also cite an area for improvement indicating that the programs were not nationally recognized. In many cases, institutions will have programs that were recognized, programs that received conditions and perhaps programs that were denied. The BOE must weigh the size of the unit, the size of the programs, and other data presented to address Standard 1 and make a holistic judgment about whether the Standard is met.

SPRING 2005

Standard 5 and the Conceptual Framework

Some BOE members have asked about the relationship between the conceptual framework and the elements in Standard 5 on faculty evaluations, scholarship, and professional development. According to the rubric for the element on faculty evaluations, evaluations are not required to be aligned with the conceptual framework. The evaluations should focus on faculty teaching performance and should be used to monitor and improve faculty teaching, scholarship, and service. Please note that adjunct faculty members should also be evaluated in some form. According to the rubric for the element on scholarship, scholarship is also not required to be aligned with the conceptual framework. Scholarship should focus on faculty members' fields of specialization.

According to the rubric on unit facilitation of professional development, units should provide opportunities for faculty to engage in professional development activities that are related to
performance assessment, diversity, technology, and emerging practice, as well as other concepts and ideas that may be in a unit’s conceptual framework.

**Faculty Diversity**

The element of Standard 4 on faculty diversity encourages units to report the diversity of the institution, the unit itself, and the field-based faculty (particularly P-12 supervisors of student teaching and internships) separately. However, the intent of this section of the standard is that candidates are working with adults from diverse ethnic, racial, language, and gender groups. Thus, a team not only should look at the data on how diverse faculty are, but how often and in what ways candidates interact with those diverse faculty. Little diversity may exist in one segment of the faculty (e.g., unit faculty), but is much richer in another segment (e.g., student teaching supervisors). The BOE team’s discussion of findings should clearly present the data and nature of the interactions as it determines whether the element is adequately addressed and an area for improvement needs to be cited.

**Contemporary Professional Experiences**

The first element in Standard 5 requires that clinical faculty members from higher education have “contemporary professional experiences” in school settings at the levels that they supervise. The term “contemporary professional experiences” means that the professional education faculty members who supervise student teachers and/or interns must have had an active role in a school setting within the last five years. The intent of the requirement is to ensure that the university or college supervisors have first-hand knowledge of the culture and climate of schools so that they are aware of the situations, both positive and negative, that candidates they supervise face as the candidates complete clinical practice. Examples of contemporary professional experiences include structured observation, working in schools as a teacher or other school personnel, action research, research projects that are school-based, and participating in professional development school activities. Note that the standard indicates that the contemporary professional experiences should be at the level (elementary or secondary) that is being supervised and does not require that the university/college supervisors have experiences in the field of study that is being supervised.

**FALL 2004**

**Student Learning**

The student learning elements of Standard 1 sometimes raise questions for institutions and for BOE members. The intention of these elements is to address the extent to which teacher candidates understand assessment, use assessments as formative and summative tools in instruction, and develop meaningful learning experiences that help all students learn. In advanced programs for other school personnel, the element refers to the extent to which candidates for other school roles are able to create a positive environment for student learning. Emerson Elliot has written a paper on student learning that will be available on the NCATE website in coming weeks. An example of a well written area for improvement on this topic is the following: "The unit lacks evidence of candidates using assessments to demonstrate their impact on student learning."

**SPRING 2004**
Guidance for Implementing Test Score Requirements
At this point all BOE reports should include information on institutional pass rates as part of the response for the first elements of Standard 1. In spring 2004, BOE teams should review scores for the last annual reporting period to determine whether 80 percent of the candidates at the initial level and 80 percent of the candidates at the advanced level have passed the content-area exams, in states that require such exams for licensure. The information reviewed should include official documents from the state or from the organization that administered the exams. It is entirely acceptable for institutions to provide updated information of this sort, if the previously reported Title II data is outdated. For additional information on the application of test results in Standard I, all BOE members should visit the NCATE website at: http://www.ncate.org/documents/UseofTestScores.pdf. If the state does not require licensure tests, the team should state that fact in its response to the first element of Standard 1.

According to the UAB, in academic year 2004-2005, when the standards are expected to be fully implemented and state licensure exams are better aligned with standards, the BOE teams will be instructed to examine both current and trend data of state licensing test score results over the period since the institution’s last NCATE visit or, for new institutions, since the unit achieved candidacy or two years, whichever is longer. The trend data should show a pattern of program completers passing the state licensure tests. If an institution does not have an aggregate pass rate of 80 percent in the previous year or aggregated over the period since the last visit, then the element of the standard on content knowledge will not be met at the acceptable level and the team should recommend that Standard 1 is not met. In addition to test data, the unit must present evidence as discussed above to demonstrate that the standard is being met.

Conceptual Framework
The conceptual framework continues to be an important aspect of the NCATE standards. In the conceptual framework section of the BOE report, teams should continue writing to the evidences listed in the template. However, when teams find problems with an institution’s conceptual framework that rise to the level of an area for improvement, the area for improvement should clearly identify which of the five structural elements of conceptual frameworks that is at issue. The five structural elements include the (1) vision/mission, (2) the unit’s philosophy, purposes, goals; (3) the knowledge bases; (4) candidate proficiencies aligned with expectation in professional, state, and institutional standards; and (5) the system by which candidate performance is assessed. For example, sometimes teams find that no links exist between assessments and the conceptual framework. Because the key assessments identified in the unit assessment system should be linked to the candidate proficiencies in the conceptual framework, this lack of linkage should be reported as an area for improvement. The area for improvement should read, “The assessments are not linked to the learning proficiencies outlined in the conceptual framework.” Similarly, if the team finds that teaching methods and content are uniformly different from the philosophy, purposes and goals outlined in the conceptual framework, then an area for improvement should be written that states, “The teaching by the professional education unit does not reflect the philosophy stated in the conceptual framework.” The UAB does not find areas for improvement that only use the generic term “conceptual framework” helpful.

Pedagogical Content Knowledge
Some BOE teams have struggled to differentiate the “Pedagogical Content Knowledge” element of Standard 1 from the general pedagogy found in “Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge for Teacher Candidates.” A quick refresher:

- (General) pedagogical knowledge includes the general concepts, theories, and research about effective teaching, regardless of content area. Classroom management skills, developmentally appropriate lesson plans, and effective use of multiple teaching strategies are all included in the general “Professional and Pedagogical Knowledge for Teacher Candidates.”

- Pedagogical content knowledge describes the interaction of the subject matter and effective teaching strategies to help students learn the subject matter. Pedagogical content knowledge requires candidates to draw on both content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge to teach students specific content.

**Policy on Outside Accreditors**

The UAB adopted a policy to streamline and clarify what is required when a program within the unit is already accredited by another specialized accrediting organization. In particular,

NCATE recognizes the following specialized accrediting organizations:
- American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)
- American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AACS)
- 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), and
- 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; (2) data demonstrating that candidates in these programs meet professional and state standards as expected in NCATE’s Unit Standard 1; and (3) evidence of sufficiently extensive and intensive clinical practice (i.e., student teaching or internship). 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.

Candidates and faculty members from these nationally accredited programs may be included in BOE interviews during the on-site visit. These programs are expected to be able to articulate their conceptual framework(s).
Programs in nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and social work are not included in the NCATE review.

During the previsit, team chairs should discuss this policy with the unit.

**Focused Visit Guidelines**

This semester will include the first “focused visit” in response to a conditional or provisional accreditation decision. Several more of these visits are scheduled to occur over the coming years, and the UAB has adopted guidelines for the conduct of these visits. They are available on the NCATE website at [http://www.ncate.org/institutions/guidelinesFocusedVisit.asp?ch=44](http://www.ncate.org/institutions/guidelinesFocusedVisit.asp?ch=44)

**Should Areas for Improvement Be Cited in Standard 1 or Standard 2?**

Many BOE teams have asked whether a particular concern should be an area for improvement under Standard 1 or Standard 2. A quick rule of thumb is that if the team is feeling concerned about candidates’ abilities, an area for improvement should be cited in Standard 1. If qualitative and/or disaggregated data leave the team feeling confident about candidates’ abilities but concerned about the unit’s data collection and analysis, an area for improvement should be cited in Standard 2. If an absence of usable data leaves the team unable to judge candidates’ abilities, areas for improvement should be cited in both Standard 1 and Standard 2.

The same area for improvement might lead to a different rejoinder, depending on the standard in which it is cited. If the rejoinder should describe the candidates’ abilities, cite the area for improvement in Standard 1. If the rejoinder should describe data collection and analysis efforts, cite the area for improvement in Standard 2.

**Dispositions**

Some units do not appear to be defining in their conceptual frameworks or actively assessing expected dispositions. In some cases, dispositions are “monitored,” meaning that the unit intervenes if a candidate displays an inappropriate behavior or attitude. In these cases, the unit may be reacting to and remediating negative dispositions rather than making explicit what positive dispositions are expected and formally assessing those. The BOE report should identify the unit’s dispositions and how the unit is assessing them.

**Advanced Programs for Teachers**

NCATE expects all programs to contribute to the unit’s meeting all six standards (though see the item in this BOE Update about programs accredited by other organizations). These programs can include traditional undergraduate programs at the initial teacher preparation level, graduate programs at the initial teacher preparation level, advanced programs for teachers seeking new roles (school administration, school counseling, etc.), and advanced programs for teachers who wish to gain additional expertise to continue in their roles as teachers. Often this last category of programs leads to a master’s degree but not an additional license; therefore, some states do not include these programs in their state review. Nonetheless, NCATE expects these programs to be included in all
sections of the BOE report.

To meet Standard 3 at the advanced level, NCATE expects candidates in advanced teaching programs to put into practice what they are learning in their courses, even though they are already teaching. Often these candidates complete field experiences and clinical practice in their own classrooms. (One caveat, however: if a candidate’s field experiences and clinical practice occur entirely within his or her own classroom, the unit may not be providing adequate opportunities for advanced candidates to interact with diverse P-12 students.)

FALL 2003

Use of State Licensing Exams

As many of you know, NCATE’s performance-based accreditation system now incorporates state licensing exam scores into the accreditation process more consistently than ever before. The joint forces of maintaining recognition as an accrediting agency from the Department of Education and our own desire to move toward performance-based accreditation led NCATE to re-examine the use of testing in the accreditation process. As a result of that review, our policies toward testing have changed in three areas. First, Precondition #7 has been expanded. Not only does this precondition require that states approve all programs being offered by an institution, but it now goes on to require that institutions meet state-required pass rates for institutions in states that have set required pass rates. The new precondition went into effect in spring 2003. Second, we have re-written the rubrics for the first two elements in Standard 1 of the NCATE Unit Standards. The rubrics now include a line indicating that 80 percent of the candidates in the unit must pass the state licensing exams in the content area. Effective fall 2003, the 80 percent pass rate is a necessary but not sufficient condition for meeting Standard 1. And third, also effective in fall 2003, 80 percent of the candidates in a given program must pass the licensing exam in states where such exams exist as a condition for national recognition of a program. For more details on testing in the accreditation process, see “The Use of Testing in NCATE Accreditation” (http://www.ncate.org/documents/UseofTestScores.pdf) and Q&A (http://www.ncate.org/institutions/testScores.asp#80_percent).

BOE members must now indicate in their reports whether 80 percent of the candidates at the initial and at the advanced levels have passed licensing exams in states that offer these exams. Institutions have been instructed to provide data that was submitted to the state for Title II purposes to address the test score issue at the initial level. Institutions have been instructed to summarize information from multiple tests to demonstrate that 80 percent of the advanced-level candidates have passed licensing exams in states that offer these exams. If 80 percent of the candidates have not passed the exams, then the BOE must find Standard 1 not met. For further information, see p. 4 of “The Use of Testing in NCATE Accreditation” (http://www.ncate.org/documents/UseofTestScores.pdf).

Discussion of “Scholarship”

The UAB requested that BOE members be reminded of the NCATE definition of scholarship. Please note that scholarship includes the traditional means such as books and articles in refereed journals, as well as non-traditional approaches that might include action research projects and the
application of research in classroom settings. NCATE’s understanding of scholarship is drawn from Ernest Boyer’s *Scholarship Reconsidered* (1990, Carnegie Foundation). Scholarship according to Boyer can be conceptualized in four forms – scholarship of discovery, which is traditional research; scholarship of integration, which “seeks to interpret, draw together and bring new insight to bear on original research (Boyer, p.19)”; scholarship of application, which explores the dynamic between theory and action; and scholarship of teaching, which involves sharing and creating knowledge. Examples of scholarship beyond traditional publications include interdisciplinary research, textbooks and nonacademic writings, presentations at professional meetings, and other projects related to areas of expertise that are evaluated with the same rigor and accountability as traditional research. Regardless of the form, scholarship must always be assessed. According to Boyer, “faculty must demonstrate to the satisfaction of their peers that high performance standards have been met” (Boyer, p. 28). Consequently NCATE requires that scholarship be documented and peer reviewed. BOE members are asked to note this expanded definition of scholarship and act accordingly in the application of Standard 5.

**SPRING 2003**

**Use of Data in Standard 1**

Overall, BOE members are to be congratulated for their use of data to “make the case” in Standard 1. Increasingly, statements about candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions are being supported by data from student teaching evaluations, state licensure test results, results of reviews by specialty organizations, results of alumni and employer surveys, and other measures of candidate performance. Many BOE reports also do an excellent job of mentioning when the institution did not provide these data for the team to review. Sometimes, though, BOE reports do not mention that assessment data were not available. Remember, when the institution doesn’t provide adequate assessment data, your job is to support your conclusions as best you can and indicate in the narrative when data were not available for review. In almost all institutions, some data (e.g., test scores, program reviews, follow-up studies, and student teaching data) will be available. If those data have not been compiled and summarized in the institutional report, the team chair should ask the institutional representatives to compile the information before the visit. If the data are still not available by the beginning of the visit, the team chair should ask for it again. Give the institution the opportunity to provide the evidence throughout the visit.

A question that sometimes comes up is whether certain data or areas for improvement fit better under Standard 1 or Standard 2. A good rule of thumb is that while Standard 2 describes the assessment system, the data from that assessment system belong in Standard 1. While Standard 2 describes when and how the unit administers graduate and employer surveys, tests, performance assessments, and other evaluations of the unit, the results of the surveys, test scores, and candidate performance evaluations belong in Standard 1. Many BOE teams have found it helpful to summarize these data in one or more tables within Standard 1. The online training modules ([http://www.ncate.org/boetraining](http://www.ncate.org/boetraining)) provide some examples that might be helpful.

The placement of areas for improvement can be tricky, especially when the unit has limited data available. If the unit does not have the aggregated data required by the NCATE transition plan (see expectations for spring 2003 visits above), areas for improvement should be cited under Standard 2. The missing data could lead the team to question whether candidates have the
knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected for Standard 1. In these cases, areas for improvement should also be cited for Standard 1. However, if the available assessments, combined with information from interviews and observations, lead the team to conclude that candidates do have these knowledge, skills, and dispositions, then it might be appropriate to identify the problem as the unit’s collection and aggregation of data (Standard 2) rather than candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions (Standard 1).

**Standard 2: Unit Assessment System or Program Assessment System?**

An institution’s unit assessment system should be described in a comprehensive document that includes information about how candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions and unit operations will be assessed. Clearly, many of the assessments of candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions will vary depending on the program. However, because all programs are expected to address institutional standards, in most cases, there should be some similarities in assessments across programs. A unit with a strong emphasis on technology, for example, should assess candidate knowledge, skills, and/or dispositions related to technology in all programs. The skills related to technology expected and assessed for candidates in education leadership may be different from the technology-related skills expected and assessed for candidates in elementary education. Nonetheless, technology skills should be assessed in all programs. Overall, the unit assessment system should indicate when and how candidates in each program are assessed on the knowledge skills, and dispositions outlined in the conceptual framework and referenced in national, state, and institutional standards.

The unit assessment system should also include unit operations. Unit operations are generally assessed at the program and unit levels. For example, individual programs might be required to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their clinical practice component, but a committee made up of administrators and faculty from the entire unit may conduct faculty evaluations. Similarly, the individual programs may conduct yearly evaluations of how technology is used, which are fed into a larger needs-assessment study conducted every two years by the unit. In another example, administrators at the unit level may take sole responsibility for surveying graduates and feed the analysis of the results to individual programs for program improvement.

The unit is responsible for developing the system, ensuring that the system is regularly maintained, and ensuring that the data from the assessment system are used for program improvement. Assessments within individual programs operate under the umbrella of the larger unit assessment system. BOE members should look for a single comprehensive document that explains the system of assessment at each institution. Whether the work is actually conducted at the program or unit level is at the discretion of each institution.

**Use of State Licensing Exams in the Accreditation Process**

During the next few semesters, NCATE is required by the U.S. Department of Education to begin implementing several changes that will increase the role of state licensing exams in the accreditation process. These changes are:

1) For institutions that submit preconditions in fall 2003 or later, Precondition #7 will be changed from “In states with a program approval process, the unit’s programs are approved by the
appropriate state agency or agencies” to “In states with a program approval process, the unit’s programs are approved by the appropriate state agency or agencies. In states with candidate licensing examinations and required pass rates, the unit’s summary pass rate meets or exceeds the required state pass rate. This provision does not apply to units in states without examination requirements or required pass rates for licensure.”

2) In accordance with the revised Precondition #7, the Annual Report and Preconditions Audit Committee will review the summary pass rates of accredited institutions to ensure that each unit is meeting or exceeding state required pass rates on a yearly basis.

3) Beginning in fall 2003, a requirement for meeting Standard 1 will be that 80% of a unit’s graduates pass the state licensure examinations in their content areas or provide convincing evidence that candidates know their content. (Note: The exact language will be negotiated with the U.S. Department of Education over the next few months.)

4) The rubrics for Standard 1 will be amended to reflect this new requirement. The exact language of the rubrics for content knowledge should be available this spring/summer.

Discussion of “Scholarship”

At its meeting in October 2002, the UAB discussed the term “scholarship,” which sometimes looks different at different institutions. The NCATE definition of scholarship is, “Systematic inquiry into the areas related to teaching, learning, and the education of teachers and other school personnel. Scholarship includes traditional research and publication as well as the rigorous and systematic study of pedagogy and the application of current research findings in new settings. Scholarship further presupposes submission of one’s work for professional review and evaluation.”

The UAB clarified that under this definition, scholarship can include presentations at conferences as well as publications and can include action research (taking place in P-12 classrooms) as well as other forms of research. However, while presenting at a conference could be a form of scholarship, attending a conference without presenting should be considered professional development instead of scholarship. Similarly, while action research in a P-12 classroom that is written and submitted for peer review is considered scholarship, many other activities in P-12 classrooms would fit better under the category of service.

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Impact of Faculty Loads

Standard 6 indicates that faculty teaching loads “generally do not exceed 12 hours for undergraduate teaching and 9 hours for graduate teaching. Supervision of clinical practice does not generally exceed 18 candidates for each full-time equivalent faculty member.” The suggested faculty and supervision loads are generalizations; the suitability of these loads will depend on institutional context—the size and mission of the institution, and expectations for faculty engagement in research, publication, and service responsibilities.
Areas for improvement related to faculty teaching and supervision loads should focus on the impact of heavy loads rather than merely stating that loads are “excessive” or “exceed the standard.” For example, rather than stating that “Teaching loads exceed the NCATE guidelines,” the area for improvement should convey the impact heavy loads have on faculty: “Heavy teaching loads prevent faculty from being engaged in scholarship and service” or “Heavy faculty supervision loads have resulted in inadequate supervision for many candidates.”

**Use of Adjunct Faculty**

While NCATE does not specify the number of part-time faculty that may be employed, Standard 6 does specify that “The unit makes appropriate use of full-time, part-time, and clinical faculty as well as graduate assistants so that program coherence and integrity are assured.” Rather than citing an area for improvement that “There is a heavy reliance on part-time faculty,” or “The use of part-time faculty is excessive,” the area for improvement should indicate the negative impact of a large number of part-time faculty; for example, “Heavy reliance on part-time faculty has resulted in unevenness in the integration of the unit’s conceptual framework across programs.”

In some cases, units may employ significant numbers of adjunct faculty without harming the integrity and quality of their programs. In these instances, it is generally evident that most adjunct faculty have been employed by the unit over a period of time and are involved in the “life” of the unit, meaning that they are aware of the unit’s mission and conceptual framework, participate on committees, and are provided professional development opportunities.

**Assessing Dispositions**

In many instances, teams describe a unit using a standardized instrument that measures dispositions such as punctuality, dress, observation of rules and regulations, etc. While these are important aspects of professional behavior and units may assess these, unit assessments must also reflect the dispositions identified in its conceptual framework and in professional and state standards. Often team reports do not indicate any connection between dispositions specified in the conceptual framework and dispositions that are assessed. For example, if the unit has described its vision for teacher preparation as “Teachers as agents of change” and has indicated that a commitment to social justice is one disposition it expects of teachers who can become agents of change, then it is expected that unit assessments include some measure of a candidate’s commitment to social justice. If assessments do not exist, this should be stated in the report under Standard 1 and an area for improvement should be cited.

**Diversity**

It is still expected that teams provide data on the racial, ethnic, and gender diversity that exists among unit faculty and candidates, as well as demographic information on the settings where field experiences take place. These data will provide evidence that the unit is (or is not) providing opportunities for candidates to interact with diverse faculty, candidates, and P-12 students. Other evidence includes records of systematic placement in settings where candidates have opportunities to interact with diverse faculty in other units and in P-12 schools, and with diverse candidates from outside the institution.
If the unit is not providing candidates with opportunities to interact with diverse faculty, candidates, and P-12 students, it is more useful to cite the area for improvement as this lack of opportunity rather than the limited diversity. It is also helpful to mention specifically what type of diversity is meant—racial, ethnic, gender, etc. For example, “Candidates at the initial level have limited opportunities to interact with racially and ethnically diverse faculty,” rather than “Unit faculty represent limited diversity.”

Although units are not required to have a plan for the recruitment of diverse faculty and candidates, they are expected to make “good faith efforts…to increase or maintain” faculty and candidate diversity. The good faith efforts should be described in the BOE report; however, an area for improvement is warranted if no results have been achieved.

**Standard 1 and State Licensing Exams**

Standard 1 asks for a great deal of information about different types of knowledge, skills, and dispositions across three sets of standards—state, institutional, and professional. It is important to synthesize all of this information to convey an understanding of the big picture. At its meeting in March 2002, the UAB concluded that BOE reports should contain more analysis of data. At this stage in the Transition Plan, using multiple measures (including test data), BOE teams must be able to answer the critical question, “Do candidates demonstrate the content, pedagogical, and professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn?”

As part of reporting on candidate performance data in Standard 1, teams should be including trend data on the unit’s pass rates. **In instances where pass rates are below the state-required pass rates, it is expected that BOE teams will cite an area for improvement.** Teams should also be describing the efforts the unit is making to help its candidates pass the exams.

Within the next year, NCATE will be required by the U.S. Department of Education to develop policies and procedures to specify that “candidate state licensing test results adjusted to national norms are the primary factor to determine whether the content knowledge component of Standard 1 is met.” The UAB will be working on policies and procedures to implement this requirement at its October meeting.

**Clarification of Diversity Standard**

In response to questions from institutions and BOE members, the UAB has offered the following clarifications to Standard 4: Diversity.

*Is diversity of faculty and candidates still an expectation of the Standard?*

Yes, diversity of faculty and candidates in an expectation of the standard.

*Does UAB still expect teams to report number in regard to diversity?*

Teams should describe the diversity that exists among candidates, faculty, and P-12 students with whom candidates work. The description should include statistics about this diversity to help provide context. In addition, it is helpful for teams to describe the area/region from which the unit
recruits candidates, and to provide an indication of where graduates go.

The BOE should describe the experiences provided by the unit for candidates to help them develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help all students learn. Results of assessments that show that these experiences actually help candidates develop the appropriate knowledge, skills, and dispositions would strengthen the IR and the BOE report.

*If the unit creates experiences – summer programs, visiting scholars, lecture series, etc. – can these be sufficient to meet the intent of the standard?*

It is not enough just for the unit to provide these experiences. The experiences must be on-going activities that are regularly offered. The unit would have to demonstrate that all candidates participate and that the experiences contribute to the development of knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to diversity.

*If “good faith efforts” are being made to recruit and retain diverse faculty and candidates, but there are not results, should a weakness [area for improvement] still be cited?*

A weakness [area for improvement] should be cited if diversity does not exist, even though plans have been developed and efforts have been undertaken. The good faith efforts should be described in the BOE report, but a weakness [area for improvement] should be cited if no results have been achieved.

*If candidate and faculty diversity is limited or non-existent, but the unit meets the expectations in the first element “Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Curriculum and Experiences” is the standard met?*

The answer depends upon the experience being provided by the unit. It is possible for a unit to compensate for the lack of faculty and candidate diversity through other experiences such as having a visiting professor join the faculty on an annual basis, inviting community representative to be an active part of courses and other activities, interacting with persons from diverse backgrounds through active involvement in diverse community settings for a significant period of time – in an urban area, on an Indian reservation, in an area with many recent immigrants. Consequently, the standard could be met under certain circumstances.

*If the unit is diverse, but the unit does not meet the expectation of the first element of Standard 4, is the standard met?*

No, the standard is not met. The unit must demonstrate that candidates have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to help all students learn.