Guide to Accreditation

Teacher
Education
Accreditation
Council

2010

TEAC's accreditation process at a glance

Steps	Program faculty actions	TEAC actions
1. Application	Program faculty prepares and submits on-line application and sends membership fee	TEAC staff consults with the institution and program faculty; TEAC accepts or rejects application (on eligibility requirements) and accepts or returns fee accordingly★★
2. Formative evaluation	• Program faculty attends TEAC workshops on writing the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* (optional)★★ • Program faculty submits draft of the *Brief** with checklist	• TEAC staff reviews draft Brief or sections for coverage, clarity, and auditability and returns drafts for revisions and resubmission as needed • If appropriate, TEAC solicits outside reviews on technical matters, claims, and rationale★★
3. *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*	• Program faculty responds to TEAC staff and reviewers' comments★★ • Program submits final *Brief* with checklist	• TEAC declares *Brief* auditable and instructs program to submit final version of *Brief* • TEAC accepts *Brief* for audit and submits it to the lead auditor for instructions to audit team
4. Call for comment	Program faculty distributes call-for-comment letter to all specified parties	TEAC places program on TEAC website's "call-for-comment" page
5. Survey	Program sends email addresses for faculty, students, and cooperating teachers	TEAC electronically surveys the faculty, students, and cooperating teachers who send their responses anonymously to TEAC through a third-party vendor
6. Audit	• Program faculty submits data for audit as requested • Program faculty responds to any clarification questions as needed • Program faculty receives and hosts auditors during visit (2–4 days) • Program faculty responds to audit report★★	• TEAC schedules audit and sends *Guide to the Audit*★★ • Auditors verify submitted data and formulate questions for the audit • Auditors complete visit to campus • Auditors prepare audit report and send to program faculty • TEAC staff responds to program faculty's comments about the draft audit report★★ • Auditors prepare final audit report and send it to program faculty, copying state representatives when applicable
7. Case analysis	Faculty responds to accuracy of case analysis (optional)	• TEAC sends *Brief,* audit report, and faculty response to panel members • TEAC competes case analysis and sends to program and panel members★★
8. Accreditation Panel	• Program representatives attend meeting (optional) • Program faculty responds (within 2 weeks)★★	• Panel meets to make accreditation recommendation • TEAC sends Accreditation Panel report to program faculty • TEAC staff responds to program faculty as needed★★ • Call for comment announced via email and website
9. Accreditation Committee		• TEAC sends *Brief,* reviewers' comments (if applicable), audit report, case analysis, Accreditation Panel report to Accreditation Committee for decision • Accreditation Committee meets to accept or revise the Accreditation Panel recommendation • TEAC sends Accreditation Committee's decision to program
10. Acceptance or appeal	Program faculty accepts or appeals TEAC's action (within 30 days)★★	• If the decision is to accredit and the program accepts the decision, TEAC announces the decision and schedules the annual report • If the decision is not to accredit and the program appeals, TEAC initiates its appeal process
11. Annual report	Program faculty submits annual report and fees to TEAC★★	TEAC reviews annual reports for as many years as required by program's status with TEAC★★

Key: ★★ signifies the process continues until there is consensus among the parties

* TEAC uses *"Brief"* to refer to both the *Inquiry Brief* and the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

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Education
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Guide to Accreditation

Accreditation of teacher education
through the audit of evidence
of student achievement

2010

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Using TEAC's *Guide to Accreditation*

TEAC's *Guide to Accreditation* is primarily for the faculty, staff, and administrators of TEAC member programs. It is designed for use in preparing for both initial and continuing accreditation.

Content

Program personnel should understand and accept all the components of the TEAC accreditation process before entering into it. We encourage everyone in the program who is responsible for some or all parts of the program's accreditation (including annual reports) to read and use this guide.

Our goal in writing the guide was to make each step of the process clear and to make the accreditation process itself transparent. For example, throughout, we explain the rationale behind the process as well as each step. We also include details about formative evaluation, the audit, and the accreditation decision.

Format

We know that program personnel will focus on particular sections of the guide as they enter different stages of the accreditation process, and we have designed a format that makes selective use easy. With those writing the *Brief* in mind, we have also included forms that can be downloaded from the TEAC website (www.teac.org) and used in the *Brief*, along with one-page outlines and checklists that program members can use as handy reference while assembling the *Brief* and preparing for the audit.

Also available at the website is the *TEAC Exercise Workbook*, designed for use in TEAC's workshops to help faculty get started on the *Brief*, and the *TEAC Sampler* with actual *Briefs* (an *Inquiry Brief* and *Inquiry Brief Proposal* for teacher preparation and an *Inquiry Brief* for educational leadership), audit tasks, and summaries of the case for accreditation.

Other users

Because this guide spells out in detail what is expected from the members and how all the steps in the process fit together, TEAC auditors and members of the Accreditation Panel and Accreditation Committee should also find the volume useful.

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PART ONE:
ABOUT TEAC ACCREDITATION

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About the Teacher Education Accreditation Council

The Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC), founded in 1997, is dedicated to improving academic degree and certificate programs for professional educators—those who teach and lead in schools, pre-K through grade 12, and to assuring the public of their quality.

TEAC accredits undergraduate and graduate programs, including alternate route programs, based on (1) the evidence they have that they prepare competent, caring, and qualified professional educators and (2) their capacity to monitor and improve the program's quality. TEAC believes this is the soundest way to assure the public about the quality of college and university programs.

The education program, not the college, school, department, or other administrative unit of the institution, receives TEAC accreditation.

TEAC's unique approach to accreditation helps programs improve and be accountable for their quality. TEAC's accreditation process starts with the evidence (quantitative and/or qualitative) the faculty truly relies on to convince itself that the graduates are competent beginning professionals. The program writes a scholarly monograph, called an *Inquiry Brief*, which makes the case that the claims the program makes about its graduates are warranted. TEAC's academic audit verifies that the evidence cited in the *Brief* is accurate and trustworthy and that the institution is committed to the program. TEAC's Accreditation Panel and Accreditation Committee determine whether the evidence is convincing and of sufficient magnitude to support the program's claims that its graduates are competent, caring, and qualified.

TEAC's membership represents a broad range of higher education institutions, from small liberal arts colleges to large research universities. Affiliate membership is available to institutions that support the TEAC agenda but do not wish to pursue accreditation for any of their programs at this time. State education agencies, professional organizations, or individuals may also hold affiliate membership. Licensure programs offered by non-higher education organizations, which satisfy TEAC's requirements, may also be accredited by TEAC.

As its principles and standards suggest, TEAC is an advocate for program improvement based on research evidence and confirmed scholarship. To that end, TEAC shares information about factors it has discovered in its accrediting work that influence the evidence programs rely on to support their claims. TEAC also conducts meetings and workshops on its innovative approach to accreditation for members, state groups, and consortia.

Since 2001 TEAC has been recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), and since 2003 it has been recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE). TEAC is a member of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors, American Council on Education, Association of Teacher Educators, Teacher Education Council of State Colleges and Universities, and the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification.

Dues and member fees support TEAC's work. Since its founding, TEAC has also received funding from The Pew Charitable Trusts, the John M. Olin Foundation, Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, an anonymous donor, The Atlantic Philanthropies, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and the William Randolph Hearst Foundations.

TEAC has its principal offices at the University of Delaware and at One Dupont Circle in Washington, DC in the suite of the Council of Independent Colleges, but it also has regional offices in Virginia, New York, and Missouri. Additional information about TEAC's accreditation activities and events is available on TEAC's website (www.teac.org).

TEAC's goal and accreditation principles

To achieve TEAC program accreditation, a faculty must make the case that its program has satisfied the following three quality principles:

Quality Principle I: *Evidence of candidate learning*

The core *outcome* of the programs that TEAC accredits is evidence that the program's graduates are competent, caring, and qualified educators. TEAC accreditation is based on the validity of the interpretation of the evidence that the program faculty relies on to support its claims about its graduates' understanding of the professional education curriculum, especially their subject matter knowledge and their teaching and leadership skills.

The core *value* in TEAC accreditation is that the faculty's interpretation of the evidence upon which it relies to support its claims about its graduates is valid. This means that the faculty members must investigate and document the reliability and validity of their assessments.

Quality Principle II: *Evidence of faculty learning and inquiry*

The core *activity* of the programs TEAC accredits is the faculty's learning and inquiry. TEAC accreditation is based in part on the faculty's system of quality control. This system is the means by which the faculty finds the evidence for *Quality Principle I,* regularly inquires into ways to improve the program's quality, makes decisions based on the evidence, and monitors and enhances the program's capacity for quality.

Quality Principle III: *Evidence of institutional commitment and program capacity for quality*

TEAC defines a *quality* program as one that has credible and consistent evidence that it satisfies the first two quality principles. However, TEAC also requires the program faculty members to provide evidence that their institution is committed to the program and that the program has adequate capacity for quality with regard to its curriculum, faculty, resources, facilities, publications, student support services, and policies.

TEAC's standard of quality: *The evidence is trustworthy, consistent with the program's claims and TEAC's requirements, and is of sufficient magnitude.*

A program meets the TEAC standard of quality when the evidence cited in the program's self-study document, called the *Inquiry Brief,* is consistent with the claims made about the graduates' accomplishments and when there is little or no credible evidence that is inconsistent with the claims. TEAC uses a system of heuristics to arrive at its accreditation decision and judgment about whether the program's evidence of the students' and graduates' accomplishments and other matters is *trustworthy* and *sufficient*.

To establish that a program meets TEAC's principles and standards, TEAC first determines whether or not the cited evidence of the graduates' learning is accurate. This is accomplished through the academic audit. TEAC's Accreditation Panel and Accreditation Committee then determine whether or not the evidence is sufficient to support the program faculty's claims for the graduates' accomplishments.

The quality of evidence and the quality of the system that produced it are the two key factors in the TEAC accreditation decision.

Four principles guide TEAC's accreditation process:

1. It leads to program improvement, which is a continuous process in which each step helps define the next one and moves it forward.
2. It is inquiry driven, starting from the faculty's own questions and curiosity about the program's accomplishments.
3. It examines the trustworthiness and adequacy of the evidence the faculty relies on to support its claims about its students, and it examines the effectiveness of the system the faculty has in place to control and monitor the program's quality.
4. It is frugal, not burdening the program and institution with unnecessary activities or costs in paperwork, personnel, time, and money.

Throughout all stages of the accreditation process, TEAC and program faculty maintain open and frequent communication on all relevant matters.

Process principle one: *Continuous improvement to advance quality*

The three TEAC quality principles—candidate learning, faculty learning, and institutional capacity—constitute a dynamic cycle in which the program formulates goals for student achievement, allocates needed resources, assesses student performance, and uses the evidence from the assessment to improve program quality.

TEAC's quality principles are complemented with an accreditation process that incorporates practices of continuous improvement. TEAC's approach to accreditation relies on the following ideas from the continuous improvement literature:

- Create constancy of purpose for improvement;
- Balance constancy of purpose and continual improvement, short- and long-term results, and knowledge and action;
- Link program improvement to student learning;
- Improve every system in the program to enhance the quality of teaching, learning, research, service activities, and outcomes;
- Eliminate misleading and superficial numerical quotas and indicators of "quality."

TEAC does not assume a single model or template for education programs. Rather, TEAC's approach reflects an understanding that continuous improvement is a process that offers many different paths to excellence in professional teacher education.

Process principle two: *Inquiry-driven accreditation*

Institutions of higher education justifiably take pride in their record of thoughtful and scholarly approaches to their work. TEAC believes that accreditation of professional teacher education programs should be grounded in exactly the same kind of scholarly inquiry.

The questions driving the inquiry should be interesting and important to the program faculty and should address the relationship between teaching and student learning, both important indicators of quality. Rather than being designed simply to comply with the external demands of accrediting bodies and state agencies, the program faculty's questions should reflect the unique mission of the program and the goal of preparing competent, caring, qualified professional educators.

Process principle three: *Audits to ensure quality*

An audit provides an external verification of the program's internal quality assurance mechanisms and the evidence they produce. An *academic audit* is an investigative review of the way a professional education program is producing student learning, assessing the outcomes of instruction, making improvements

in the program, and gaining support for the program. An academic audit does not evaluate quality itself: instead, it verifies the *processes* that are intended to produce quality. (Note: the quality of the evidence, once its trustworthiness has been assured, is assessed in the accreditation decision process, of which more is found below.) TEAC's approach to the audit emphasizes both the quality processes *and* the evidence of student learning and accomplishment that flow from it. TEAC's approach requires the program faculty to live up to its publicly proclaimed promises about the program. This is accomplished when the institution and program demonstrate accountability through the display of solid evidence of student achievement.

Process principle four: *Frugality*

The accreditation process is weakened when a program faculty takes steps *solely* for the purpose of satisfying an external accreditation requirement. The TEAC accreditation process is designed to be efficient and use the minimum resources necessary to reach timely decisions. The process should be a part of the normal quality control system the program employs.

The document that the program produces to provide evidence of its quality, the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*, is a research monograph of about 50 pages. It is based primarily on existing documents, such as reports of ongoing inquiry, state program review, and institutional research and other publications. It focuses on what the program faculty wants and needs to know about the program's performance.

Overview of TEAC's accreditation process

Although TEAC's accreditation process assures the public of the quality of teacher education programs, TEAC's unique approach to accreditation also helps programs improve and be confident about their quality.

TEAC accreditation is based on the understanding that programs can follow many different paths in preparing competent, caring, and qualified professional educators. TEAC's accreditation process therefore starts with the questions a faculty asks about its program's quality and the evidence it currently relies on to convince itself of its program's quality outcomes. TEAC's academic audit verifies the accuracy of this evidence of student accomplishment and that the program is following processes that produce quality. TEAC accredits the program on the basis of this evidence. The quality of evidence and the quality of the system that produced it provide the basis for the TEAC accreditation decision.

To be accredited, an eligible program submits a research monograph, called an *Inquiry Brief*, in which the faculty and administrators present the following evidence in support of their claim that their program satisfies TEAC's three quality principles:

1. Evidence of their students' learning together with evidence that the data are reliable and that their interpretation of the evidence is valid,
2. Evidence that the program's system of continuous improvement and quality control are based on information about its students' learning,
3. Evidence of the program's capacity for quality.

In the *Inquiry Brief*, the program faculty members document their evidence about what their graduates have learned, the validity of their interpretations of the assessment of that learning, and the basis on which the program faculty makes its decisions to improve its program.

Faculty members representing new programs or programs that are in the process of collecting evidence for their claims about student learning – beyond the evidence they have for state program approval – may submit an *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. In their proposal, they show what evidence they will have in a subsequent *Inquiry Brief* that their graduates are competent, caring, and qualified. They give their reasons for selecting the assessments they propose to use and for thinking their interpretations of the proposed assessment results are valid. They give evidence that their quality control system functions as it was designed, and that the program has the capacity for quality.

Through an academic audit, TEAC verifies the evidence presented in the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. The audit takes place on campus, over two to four days. A team of two to four trained auditors verifies both the evidence presented in the *Brief* and corroborating evidence. A panel then evaluates whether or not the evidence supports the program's claim that it prepares competent, caring, and qualified educators. Finally, a committee of TEAC's board of directors reviews the entire case and makes the final accreditation decision.

Throughout all stages of the accreditation process, TEAC and program faculty maintain open and frequent communication. *For easy reference, see the "TEAC Accreditation Process at a Glance," inside front cover.*

TEAC's accreditation status designations

When TEAC awards accreditation, it is in fact making two decisions—(1) that the program now satisfies TEAC's requirements and (2) that TEAC is confident the program will continue to meet the requirements for a specified length of time.

TEAC's confidence is highest when no or few problems are found in a program that has already earned accreditation. In that circumstance TEAC is comfortable awarding accreditation for a ten-year period provided the annual reports are satisfactory. For a first time program's demonstration that it meets TEAC's standards, TEAC is comfortable in awarding accreditation for five years. When problems are uncovered in the course of the audit and panel deliberations, TEAC's confidence in warranting the program's capacity to continue to satisfy TEAC's standards in the future is more limited. For that reason a shorter period of accreditation is justified – two years in fact.

Programs that submit an *Inquiry Brief Proposal* that satisfies TEAC's *Quality Principles II* and *III* may earn *initial accreditation*, signifying that the program has sufficient additional evidence to indicate that it can earn full accreditation within a five year period.

Table 1: Guidelines for TEAC's accreditation status designations based on whether the evidence for the three *Quality Principles* is above or below TEAC's standards

I. Candidate learning	II. Faculty learning	III. Capacity and commitment	Accreditation status designations
Above	Above	Above	Accreditation (10 years)
Above	Above	Above	Accreditation (5 years)*
Above	Below	Above	Accreditation (2 years)
Below	Above	Above	Accreditation (2 years)
Above	Above	Below	Accreditation (2 years)
*IB Proposal***	Above	Above	Initial accreditation (5 years)
*IB Proposal***	Above	Below	Initial accreditation (2 years)
*IB Proposal***	Below	Above	Initial accreditation (2 years)
*IB Proposal***	Below	Below	Deny
Below	Below	Above	Deny
Below	Above	Below	Deny
Above	Below	Below	Deny

** For the initial* Inquiry Brief

***For the* Inquiry Brief Proposal, *which does not require evidence of candidate learning apart from pilot data and data used for state program approval*

TEAC's audit of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* carries forward the features of formative evaluation into the audit itself. In this audit, the auditors search on-site for evidence that will support the program's claims with the result that a firm and realistic plan for the eventual *Inquiry Brief* can be established. The details of this audit can be found on TEAC's website (www.teac.org), but the idea behind the audit is that the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* is like a grant proposal to a foundation. The foundation typically shapes the proposal into a project in which the foundation has an interest in supporting. In this *IBP* option, the program and TEAC become partners in designing a plan for a successful *Inquiry Brief.*

What is a program?

TEAC accredits programs that prepare professional educators who will teach and lead in the nation's schools, grades pre-K–12. Naturally, TEAC can accredit only those education programs for which there is evidence that the graduates are competent, caring, and qualified.

The *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* is about a single program, but, in the TEAC system, a *single program* may include several license areas, options, and levels if they share a common logic, structure, quality control system, and similar and comparable categories of evidence. Thus, if an institution has two or more education programs, some or all of them might be submitted for accreditation within a *Brief* as a single program. In cases where the state requires that all education programs be accredited, the faculty should use the criteria below to determine whether to bundle some or all of the institution's programs as a single program for accreditation or treat them in separate *Inquiry Briefs* or *Inquiry Brief Proposals*. Faculty should consider the following three factors in their decision:

1. **Program structure**. Those programs that have essentially the same requirements, rationale, logic, and faculty can be presented in a single *Brief*.
2. **Quality control system**. Programs that share the same quality control system can usually be presented in a single *Brief*.
3. **Evidence**. Programs for which the evidence is comparable and can be honestly aggregated can be presented in a single *Brief*.

Even if the programs are registered with the state separately or lead to different professional licenses, they can nevertheless be bundled as a single program for TEAC accreditation if they satisfy each of the three conditions above. They would be treated as a single program, but one that has multiple options, areas, levels, and license outcomes.

If the institution's education programs are dissimilar in their underlying logic or in the nature of the evidence for the TEAC quality principles, the institution must submit separate *Briefs* for each distinct program.

TEAC will review for accreditation *only* those professional education programs for which the institution has evidence to support its claims. It is possible, therefore, that some of the institution's teacher education programs would have TEAC accreditation and others would not. Those that do not would simply remain unaccredited, and the institution would have to accept the consequences of their relative status. Programs that cannot provide convincing evidence should not benefit undeservedly from their association with programs that have solid evidence and have earned accreditation.

Note that TEAC's protocol agreements with most states, however, require that the institution submit all its education programs for accreditation review. Also, in some protocol agreements, states recognize TEAC accreditation for terms that differ from TEAC's award.

TEAC's relationship to states, other accreditors, and professional associations

States

The purposes of the state program approval review and accreditation, and the evidence each requires, differ: the former assures the eligibility of the program's graduates for the state's license in the profession; the latter assures the quality of the program. However, in practice the reviews themselves are sufficiently similar that states and accreditors can fruitfully cooperate in the process.

TEAC has entered into agreements with several states[1] to coordinate TEAC program accreditation and state program review. For the state, the benefit of these agreements is that they allow TEAC to share with the state valuable information that would otherwise be unavailable to the state. For the program, the benefit is a marked reduction in cost and effort. For TEAC, the benefit is that accreditation is more attractive to programs when it can be integrated with the state's program approval process.

Coordination has other benefits. Most states have developed curriculum and performance-based standards for teacher education. Naturally, the states wish to see that the programs seeking TEAC accreditation meet those standards. For its part, TEAC requires that the claims a program faculty makes in its *Brief* must be consistent with the claims it makes elsewhere (for example, the program faculty cannot make one set of claims for the purpose of TEAC accreditation and another set for state program approval). Thus, TEAC expects and requires consistency between the program's claims about *Quality Principle I* (candidate learning) and the claims that the program makes to the state and others: in these instances, the program's claims about *Quality Principle I* must incorporate the state's standards within TEAC's requirement that the program provide evidence that its graduates have learned their teaching subject matters, pedagogy, and caring teaching skills, along with the cross-cutting themes of learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives, and technology.

TEAC's agreements and review protocols with states take several forms, but most base accreditation and continuing state program approval on a single document: the *Brief*. Agreements typically have the following characteristics, contingent on local needs and contexts:

1. **Mandated accreditation**. A few states simply require that all professional education programs in the state be accredited by a nationally recognized accreditor, such as TEAC or NCATE; in some cases, a state accreditation agency is another option. The programs in these states have no option other than meeting the accreditor's standards. In some states, TEAC and the state have added to the accreditation process requirements that are of particular interest to the state.

2. **Reliance on TEAC for program approval**. All states require program approval if the graduates are to receive a professional license. While only a few states actually require that programs be accredited, most are supportive of accreditation and freely encourage education programs in the state to undertake the self-examination required by accreditation. Nearly all of the states find that the standards adopted by NCATE and TEAC align with their own views of program quality. Some states have chosen to rely on TEAC accreditation for the continuing program review function, and their agreements with TEAC reflect that fact. TEAC's agreements with these states are usually similar to those with states that mandate accreditation, with

[1] Currently 13 states — California, Colorado, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Utah, Virginia, and West Virginia. Discussions about partnership agreements and/or draft agreements are currently underway in Maryland, North Carolina, Montana, Oklahoma, Iowa, and Pennsylvania.

the exception that in these states accreditation is voluntary.

3. **TEAC as consultant to the state's program approval process**. In another kind of agreement, the state fully retains its authority and independence in making the program approval decision, but uses the contents of the program's *Brief* and TEAC's Audit Report, Case Analysis, and/or Accreditation Report to corroborate and arrive at its own program approval decision. In these cases, TEAC's accreditation process assists the state in its own program approval work and simplifies that work as the documentation prepared for TEAC also serves the state's program review needs.

4. **Cooperation on joint site visits**. Yet another form of agreement between TEAC and a state involves a simple understanding that to ease the burden on the program, the state and TEAC will make every effort to schedule the TEAC audit and program review visit at the same time and to use common documentation.

Misaligned terms of accreditation and program approval. Occasionally, the lengths of state's terms of program approval and TEAC's terms of accreditation do not match. This usually means that for the purposes of program approval, the state will not recognize TEAC's accreditation beyond the state's program approval term and that the program will need to become reaccredited by TEAC sooner than TEAC's policies require. In cases where the state's term for program approval is longer than TEAC's term for accreditation, the program may receive a just cause extension of its accreditation term from TEAC or simply become reaccredited before its program approval term expires.

Other accreditors

To be eligible for TEAC accreditation, the institution that offers the education program must itself have regional accreditation or the equivalent.

Some professional education programs, whether housed in the school or college of education or another unit of the institution, are accredited by other specialized discipline- or profession-based accreditors (for example, music education, library science, school psychology and counseling). TEAC accepts the accreditation of professional education programs by other nationally recognized accreditors (that is, accreditors recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, CHEA).

This policy is of particular value to those institutions that, under state regulation, must have all the institution's professional education programs accredited by TEAC or NCATE. The policy is based on the fact that TEAC's accreditation is rooted in evidence that the program's graduates have learned what was expected of them. TEAC and all other accreditors recognized by USDE and CHEA have standards about student achievement and must give weight to evidence of student achievement in their accreditation decisions. It is on this basis that TEAC accepts the decisions of others as equivalent to its own for the purposes of fulfilling state requirements for accreditation. An official notice and documentation that the program was accredited will suffice for TEAC's purposes in meeting its obligations to the states.

The purpose of the policy is to make as much use as possible of the work the program has done for other specialized or profession-based accreditors. In this way, TEAC can meet its obligations to institutions that have elected TEAC for the purposes of satisfying a state's mandate that all programs that prepare professionals for work in schools be accredited, and the program does not have to duplicate its efforts.

Professional organizations

Most of the national associations and societies that support the professional activities of teachers and administrators have developed their own standards for preparation in their fields. Although there are some important divergences, generally these standards and those of the states and accreditors align.

At the current time, TEAC relies on the standards of professional societies, organizations, and other accreditors, for its analysis of the appropriateness of the program's curriculum and other program require-

ments as they relate to the contents of TEAC's *Quality Principle I*. This is especially the case for those professional educator programs whose roles are not covered by TEAC's own principles for teachers and school leaders. Programs seeking TEAC accreditation are also free to adopt the standards of these societies and associations and use them in their TEAC accreditation.

In practice, that means that in presenting its case for meeting *Quality Principle I*, the program faculty must incorporate these standards in the evidence that the program's graduates have learned their subject matter, pedagogy, and caring and effective teaching skills along with the cross-cutting themes of learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives, and technology. They must also show how their program requirements align with these standards (see discussion of Appendix D of the *Brief)*.

PART TWO:
TEAC'S STANDARDS AND PRINCIPLES

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TEAC's accreditation goal, principles, and standards

The common purpose of teacher education programs and other programs for those professionals who work in schools is to prepare *competent, caring,* and *qualified* educators. The faculty members seeking TEAC accreditation of their program are required to affirm this straightforward goal as the goal of their program.

The TEAC quality principles, described in detail below, are the means by which the faculty makes the case that its professional education program has succeeded in preparing competent, caring, and qualified professional educators.

For easy reference, see the complete TEAC Framework of Principles and Standards in outline form, inside back cover.

Eligibility requirements

To be eligible for candidate status in TEAC, the program's administrator (e.g., chair, dean, director, vice president) must attest by letter to the following:

0.1 Institutional accreditation
The institution giving the program is accredited by one of the regional accreditation agencies, or the equivalent. TEAC's requirement for regional accreditation, or the equivalent, of the institution offering the program provides additional assurance that the institution is administratively and financially capable and itself has a capacity for quality.

0.2 Professional licensure
The graduates of the program have fulfilled the academic requirements for a professional license in education.

0.3 Commitment to comply with TEAC's standards
The institution has a commitment and intent to comply with TEAC's standards and requirements (fees, annual reports, etc.).

0.4 Disclosure of any actions regarding the program's accreditation status
There is an understanding of, and agreement to, the fact that TEAC, at its discretion, may make known the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding the program's status with TEAC.

0.5 Willingness to cooperate and provide needed information to TEAC
There is an agreement to disclose to TEAC, at any time, all such information as TEAC may require to carry out its auditing, evaluating, and accrediting functions.

TEAC principles and standards for teacher education programs

1.0 Quality Principle I: *Evidence of candidate learning*

Programs must provide sufficient evidence that candidates have learned and understood the teacher education curriculum. This evidence is verified through audit and evaluated for its consistency and sufficiency. Each component and cross-cutting theme of *Quality Principle I* must contribute to the overall goal of producing competent, caring, and qualified teachers.

1.1 Subject matter knowledge
The program candidates must understand the subject matter they will teach.

1.2 Pedagogical knowledge
The program candidates must be able to convert their knowledge of subject matter into compelling lessons that meet the needs of a wide range of pupils and students.

1.3 Caring and effective teaching skill
The program candidates must be able to teach effectively in a caring way and to act as knowledgeable professionals.

1.4 Cross-cutting themes
In meeting each of TEAC components 1.1–1.3, the program must provide evidence that its candidates have addressed the following three cross-cutting liberal education themes:

> **1.4.1 Learning how to learn:** Candidates must demonstrate that they have learned how to learn information on their own, that they can transfer what they have learned to new situations, and that they have acquired the dispositions and skills of critical reflection that will support lifelong learning in their field.
>
> **1.4.2 Multicultural perspectives and accuracy:** Candidates must demonstrate that they have learned accurate and sound information on matters of race, gender, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives.
>
> **1.4.3 Technology:** Candidates must be able to use appropriate technology in carrying out their professional responsibilities.

1.5 Evidence of valid assessment
The program must provide evidence regarding the trustworthiness, reliability, and validity of the evidence produced from the assessment method or methods that it has adopted.

2.0 Quality Principle II: *Evidence of faculty learning and inquiry*

There must be a system of inquiry, review, and quality control in place through which the faculty secures evidence and informed opinion needed to improve program quality. Program faculty should be undertaking inquiry directed at the improvement of teaching and learning, and they should modify the program and practices to reflect the knowledge gained from their inquiry.

2.1 Rationale for the assessments
There must be a rationale for the program's assessment methods that explains why the faculty selected the assessments it used, why it thinks its interpretations of the assessment results are valid, and why the criteria and standards the faculty has set as indicating success are appropriate.

2.2 Program decisions and planning based on evidence
Where appropriate, the program must base decisions to modify its assessment systems, pedagogical approaches, and curriculum and program requirements on evidence of candidate learning.

2.3 Influential quality control system
The program must provide evidence, based on an internal audit conducted by the program faculty, that the quality control system functions as it was designed, that it promotes the faculty's continual improvement of the program, and that it yields the following additional and specific outcomes:

2.3.1 Curriculum: The curriculum meets the state's program or curriculum course requirements for granting a professional license.

2.3.2 Faculty: The *Inquiry Brief,* as endorsed and accepted by the faculty, demonstrates the faculty's accurate and balanced understanding of the disciplines that are connected to the program.

2.3.3 Candidates: Admissions and mentoring policies encourage the recruitment and retention of diverse candidates with demonstrated potential as professional educators, and must respond to the nation's needs for qualified individuals to serve in high demand areas and locations.

The program must monitor the quality of the support services provided to candidates to ensure that student support services contribute to candidate success in learning as required by *Quality Principle I.*

2.3.4 Resources: The program faculty must monitor and seek to improve the suitability and appropriateness of program facilities, supplies, and equipment and to ensure that the program has adequate financial and administrative resources.

3.0 Quality Principle III: *Evidence of institutional commitment and capacity for program quality*

The program faculty must make a case that overall it has the capacity to offer a quality program, and it does this by bringing forth evidence in the ways described below.

3.1 Commitment (program parity with the institution)
In assessing whether a program has demonstrated the existence of adequate and appropriate facilities, equipment, and supplies, the auditors, Accreditation Panel, and Accreditation Committee consider a variety of factors, most notably whether the program's facilities, equipment, and supplies are proportionate to the overall institutional resources and whether the program's financial and administrative resources are proportionate to the overall institutional resources. TEAC requires parity or proportionality in six areas:

3.1.1 Curriculum: The curriculum does not deviate from, and has parity with, the institution's overall standards and requirements for granting the academic degree.

3.1.2 Faculty: Faculty qualifications must be equal to or better than the statistics for the institution as a whole with regard to the attributes of the members of the faculty (e.g., proportion of terminal degree holders, alignment of degree specialization and program responsibilities, proportions and balance of the academic ranks, and diversity). See also 3.2.4.

3.1.3 Facilities: The facilities, equipment, and supplies allocated to the program by the institution, at a minimum, must be proportionate to the overall institutional resources. The program candidates, faculty, and staff must have equal and sufficient access to, and benefit from, the institution's facilities, equipment, and supplies.

3.1.4 Fiscal and administrative: The financial and administrative resources allocated to the program must, at a minimum, be proportionate to the overall allocation of financial resources to other programs at the institution.

3.1.5 Candidate support: Student support services available to candidates in the program must be, at a minimum, equal to the level of support services provided by the institution as a whole.

3.1.6. Candidate complaints: Complaints about the program's quality must be proportionally no greater or significant than the complaints made by candidates in the institution's other programs.

3.2 Sufficient capacity for quality
The program must also show that it has adequate and

sufficient capacity in the same areas. The curriculum is adequate to support a quality program that meets the candidate learning requirements of *Quality Principle I.* The program must also demonstrate that the faculty members associated with the program are qualified for their assigned duties in the program consistent with the goal of preparing competent, caring, and qualified educators. The program must demonstrate that the facilities provided by the institution for the program are sufficient and adequate to support a quality program. The program must have adequate and appropriate fiscal and administrative resources that are sufficient to support the mission of the program and to achieve the goal of preparing competent, caring, and qualified educators. The program must make available to candidates regular and sufficient student services such as counseling, career placement, advising, financial aid, health care, and media and technology support.

The institution that offers the program must publish in its catalog, or other appropriate documents distributed to candidates, accurate information that fairly describes the program, policies and procedures directly affecting admitted candidates in the program, charges and refund policies, grading policies and the academic credentials of faculty members and administrators.

The quality of a program depends on its ability to meet the needs of its candidates. One effective way to determine if those needs are met is to encourage candidates to evaluate the program and express their concerns, grievances, and ideas about the program. The faculty is asked to provide evidence that it makes a provision for the free expression of candidate views about the program and responds to candidate feedback and complaints.

3.2.1. Curriculum: The curriculum must reflect an appropriate number of credits and credit hour requirements for the components of *Quality Principle I.* An academic major, or its equivalent, is necessary for subject matter knowledge (1.1) and no less than an academic minor, or its equivalent, is necessary for pedagogical knowledge and teaching skill (1.2 and 1.3).

3.2.2. **Faculty:** Faculty members must be qualified to teach the courses in the program to which they are assigned, as evidenced by advanced degrees held, scholarship, advanced study, contributions to the field, and professional experience. TEAC requires that a majority of the faculty members must hold a graduate or doctoral level degree in subjects appropriate to teach the education program of study and curricula. The program may, however, demonstrate that faculty not holding such degrees are qualified for their roles based on the other factors than those stated above.

3.2.3. Facilities: The program must demonstrate that there are appropriate and adequate budgetary and other resource allocations for program space, equipment, and supplies to promote success in candidate learning as required by *Quality Principle I.*

3.2.4. Fiscal and administrative: The financial condition of the institution that supports the program must be sound, the institution must be financially viable, and the resources available to the program must be sufficient to support the operations of the program and to promote success in candidate learning as required by *Quality Principle I.*

The program must demonstrate that there is an appropriate level of institutional investment in and commitment to faculty development, research and scholarship, and national and regional service. Faculty workload obligations must be commensurate with the institution's expectations for promotion, tenure, and other program obligations.

3.2.5. Student support services: Student services available to candidates in the program must be sufficient to support successful completion of the program and success in candidate learning. In cases where the program does not directly provide student support services, the program must show that candidates have equal access to, and benefit from, student support services provided by the institution.

3.2.6. **Policies and practices:** The program must distribute an academic calendar to candidates. The academic calendar must list the beginning and end dates of terms, holidays, and examination periods. If the program's academic calendar coincides with the institution's academic calendar, it may distribute the institution's academic calendar.

Claims made by the program in its published materials must be accurate and supported with evidence. Claims made in the *Inquiry Brief* regarding the program must be consistent with, and inclusive of, the claims made about the program that appear in the institution's catalog, mission statements, website, and other promotional literature.

The program must have a fair and equitable published grading policy, which may be the institution's grading policy. The program must have a published transfer of credit and transfer of student enrollment policy.

The institution is required to keep a file of complaints from its candidates about the program's quality and must provide TEAC with access to all complaints regarding the program and their resolution.

3.3. State standards

When appropriate, usually because of TEAC's protocol agreement with a state, a third component to the TEAC capacity standards (3.3) is added, with subcomponents (3.3.1, etc.), in accordance to the state's particular additional requirements.

Nonspecific concerns

If the *Brief* contains claims and information that are not clearly related to any feature of the TEAC accreditation framework, but which nevertheless speak to the overall reliability and trustworthiness of the *Brief*, the auditors will list them as nonspecific concerns about the accuracy of the *Brief*, and the tasks that probe these concerns will be counted in the overall audit opinion with regard to whether they were verified or not.

TEAC's principles and standards for educational leadership programs

Educational Leadership and Educational Administration preparation programs seeking TEAC accreditation must satisfy the same eligibility standards and *Quality Principle II* and *III* standards as teacher education programs (above) must satisfy. The educational leadership/administration requirements for *Quality Principle I*, however, differ from the teacher education requirements and are as follows:

1.0 Quality Principle I
Evidence of candidate learning

Programs must provide sufficient evidence that candidates have learned and understood the educational leadership curriculum. This evidence is verified through audit and evaluated for its consistency and sufficiency. Each component and cross-cutting theme of *Quality Principle I* must contribute to the overall goal of producing competent, caring, and qualified professionals.

1.1 Professional knowledge
The program faculty must provide evidence that its candidates understand organizational theory and development, human resource management, school finance and law, instructional supervision, educational policy and politics, and data analysis and interpretation.

The graduates must be prepared to create or develop (1) an ethical and productive school culture, (2) an effective instructional program, (3) a comprehensive professional staff development plan, (4) a safe and efficient learning environment, (5) a profitable collaboration with families and other community members, (6) the capacity to serve diverse community interests and needs, and (7) the ability to mobilize the community's resources in support of the school's goals.

1.2 Strategic decision-making
The program faculty must provide evidence that the candidates know how to (1) make decisions fairly, collaboratively, and informed by research evidence; (2) formulate strategy to achieve the school's goals; and (3) articulate and communicate an educational vision that is consistent with the school's mission and the nation's democratic ideals.

1.3 Caring leadership skills
The program faculty must provide evidence that the candidates know how to act on their knowledge in a caring and professional manner that results in appropriate levels of achievement for all the school's pupils.

1.4 Cross-cutting themes
In meeting each of TEAC components 1.1–1.3, the program must demonstrate that its candidates have addressed the following three cross-cutting liberal education themes:

1.4.1 Learning how to learn: Candidates must demonstrate that they have learned how to learn information on their own, that they can transfer what they have learned to new situations, and that they have acquired the dispositions and skills of critical reflection that will support lifelong learning in their field.

1.4.2 Multicultural perspectives and accuracy: Candidates must demonstrate that they have learned accurate and sound information on matters of race, gender, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives.

1.4.3 Technology: Candidates must be able to use appropriate technology in carrying out their professional responsibilities.

1.5 Evidence of valid assessment
The program must provide evidence regarding the trustworthiness, reliability, and validity of the evidence produced from the assessment method or methods that it has adopted.

Practical matters

Our program meets TEAC's eligibility criteria. How do we join?

Complete an on-line membership application form available at www.teac.org (Membership, How to Join). A completed application includes the application form, documentation of the institution's regional accreditation, evidence that the program's graduates are eligible for state licensure, a copy of the institution's current catalog (or, preferably, a link to the on-line catalog), and a check to cover the membership fee.

How much does it cost to be a member of TEAC?

In 2009, annual membership dues for the institution are $2,800; dues are subject to annual percentage increases equal to the higher education inflation index (HEPI). Affiliate members (institutions and organizations) pay $675 annually in support of TEAC as an alternate accreditor and have no intention of pursuing accreditation at this time.

Members receive invoices for their dues by June 15. Payment is due by July 1.

For the year in which a program's *Brief* is audited, the institution pays an audit fee of $2,000 per *Brief*. In addition, the institution is responsible for all costs related to each audit and audit team (two to four people, over two to four days): lodging (up to four nights), food, travel, and fees ($1,500 per auditor; an honorarium of at least $100 per day for the on-site practitioners and the cost of a substitute if the practitioner is a classroom teacher). The audit fee and related audit costs are separate from the membership dues.

How long does it take to complete TEAC accreditation?

The time it takes a program faculty to prepare an *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* varies, depending on local circumstances such as program structure, available documentation, state context, and the institution's commitment to the process. The amount of time it takes to complete a research article or monograph is a good guide for the time needed to write a *Brief*.

Once the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* is accepted for audit, the process to the accreditation decision takes eight to ten months (see inside front cover for details of the accreditation process and TEAC's audit schedule, below).

Who should write the Brief *and how long should it be?*

The program faculty should produce the *Brief*. All faculty members of the programs represented in the *Brief* should contribute to the process, and they are required to approve the final *Brief* before it is submitted to TEAC for audit. The *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* should run about 50 pages, exclusive of appendices.

Will TEAC give us any guidance as we prepare our Brief*?*

The TEAC staff's decision that a *Brief* is auditable is based on the accuracy of the checklist submitted with the *Brief*, which attests that all the required parts are in fact in the *Brief*. The authors are free to make their case in any way they find persuasive, while at the same time conforming to format requirements such as page limitations, required sections, and accuracy.

TEAC offers guidance and feedback in a variety of ways. This comprehensive *Guide to Accreditation* gives detailed instructions on writing the *Brief*, and two copies are available as part of membership in TEAC (extra copies may be purchased).

In addition, TEAC provides a staff liaison to assist the program over a period of weeks and months in the writing and editing of the *Brief*, methodological design, statistical analysis, interpretations of evidence. TEAC funds this service

from the audit fees all programs pay in the year of their audits.

To further guide members in their process, TEAC offers a variety of additional formative evaluation services. Each of these services has a fee (for workshop dates and ordering information, see www.teac.org):

1. Each October and March, TEAC conducts workshops for those who would like more assistance. (Workshop fees run between $450 and $500 excluding travel costs.) The workbook given to participants is designed to help program faculty get started on a *Brief*; extra copies for campus colleagues are also available for purchase.
2. On request, TEAC can provide tailored workshops on-site for a program or group of programs (such as a sector- or state-based consortium) for $2,000 plus the cost of materials and travel.
3. TEAC can provide individual consultation for a program, in TEAC's offices for a fee of $1,000.
4. In rare cases where a program requires or desires more help than the staff liaison can provide, TEAC can provide consultants on an individually negotiated cost basis.

Are the TEAC staff providing formative evaluation for the Inquiry Brief *involved in the accreditation decision?*

There is a "firewall" between TEAC's formative evaluation of the *Inquiry Brief* and its summative evaluation: the staff who conduct one do not conduct the other. In the case of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*, however, the auditors may provide formative evaluation and guidance in the formulation of a successful plan for writing an *Inquiry Brief.*

When will TEAC conduct the audit?

During the formative evaluation, TEAC staff review drafts of the *Brief*. When TEAC finds the *Brief* complete, it is then ready for audit, or *auditable*, and the program submits a final version of the *Brief*. Only after an *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* is declared auditable will TEAC schedule an audit of the program or, if the program has a target audit date because of state requirements, confirm a scheduled audit.

TEAC audits programs only while courses are in full session, when most students and faculty on campus. Thus, TEAC has two audit periods during each academic year: from September 15 to December 15; and from January 15 to April 15. The current TEAC audit schedule, below, includes a period for formative evaluation and the timing of accreditation decision.

To allow sufficient time for both TEAC's review and any revisions the program may make in the *Brief*, TEAC asks each candidate for accreditation to develop and commit to an accreditation plan. Start by using the schedule below to identify the target audit period and accreditation date. To take advantage of any of the optional formative evaluation services TEAC offers, the program must submit an initial full draft for review at least six months before the audit date to allow sufficient time both for the TEAC staff to study the draft and for the program faculty to meet and address TEAC feedback and make any revisions that may be required or advisable. Whether a program engages the optional formative evaluation services or not, the program should plan to submit its last revised, or final, draft of the *Brief* at least two months before the target audit date for an auditability decision. If TEAC finds the *Brief* auditable, the audit date will be confirmed. If, however, the *Brief* needs more than very minor revisions, the review process will have to continue into the next audit period and the program will need to schedule a new audit date.

Once accredited, what is the obligation to TEAC?

Accredited TEAC members must keep their annual dues current; submit annual reports; and stay in compliance with TEAC's eligibility requirements and quality principles. Annual reports are due on the anniversary of the accreditation decision.

What schedule should we anticipate for accreditation renewal?

In order for accreditation status to be continuous, the anniversary date of the accreditation decision is the deadline for the **audit** of the new *Inquiry Brief*. When preparing a schedule for producing a new *Brief*, keep in mind that an *Inquiry Brief* must be declared complete and ready ("auditable") for the audit *eight weeks* before an anticipated audit visit. A possible schedule would be:

Announcement of accreditation status	**June 2009**
Next audit cycle	**January – May 2014**
***IB* declared auditable**	**December 2013 – March 2014**
***IB* due to TEAC for formative evaluation**	**June – August 2013**

As long as the audit takes place before the date on which your accreditation status ends, that status will be extended until the Accreditation Committee meets for programs audited in your cycle, ensuring continuous accreditation for the program.

What kind of information can we find on TEAC's website, www.teac.org?

TEAC's website provides information on membership (how to join and participate), upcoming workshops and meetings, full details on TEAC's accreditation process, links to TEAC member institutions and their accredited program status, forms for use in the *Brief*, access to TEAC literature and related articles, and important updates to TEAC policies and the accreditation process.

Table 2: TEAC audit schedule 2009–2012

***Inquiry Brief* declared auditable no later than**	**Audit period From**	**to**	**Reports and responses completed by**	**Panel meeting***	**Committee meeting***
2009–2010 season					
August 1, 2009	Sept. 1, 2009	Sept 20, 2009	Nov. 1, 2009	Nov. 2009	January 2010
Sept. 1, 2009	Oct. 1, 2009	Nov. 30, 2010	Jan. 1, 2010	Feb. 2010	March 2010
Nov. 1, 2009	Dec. 1, 2009	Feb. 28, 2010	April 1, 2010	May 2010	June 2010
Feb. 1, 2010	March 1, 2010	May 31, 2010	July 1, 2010	August 2010	Sept. 2010
2010–2011 season					
August 1, 2010	Sept. 1, 2010	Nov. 30, 2010	Jan. 1, 2011	Feb. 2011	March 2011
Nov. 1, 2010	Dec. 1, 2010	Feb. 28, 2011	April 1, 2011	May 2011	June 2011
Feb. 1, 2011	March 1, 2011	May 31, 2011	July 1, 2011	August 2011	Sept. 2011
2011–2012 season					
August 1, 2011	Sept. 1, 2011	Nov. 30, 2011	Jan. 1, 2012	Feb. 2012	March 2012
Nov. 1, 2011	Dec. 1, 2011	Feb. 28, 2012	April 1, 2012	May 2012	June 2012
Feb. 1, 2012	March 1, 2012	May 31, 2012	July 1, 2012	August 2012	Sept. 2012

* The exact date for the panel and committee meetings will be scheduled at the close of each audit period.

More about the TEAC principles and standards for teacher education programs

1.0 Quality Principle I
Evidence of candidate learning

The core of TEAC accreditation is the quality of the evidence the program faculty members provide in support of their claims about their students' learning and understanding of the teacher education curriculum.

Overall, TEAC requires evidence that the candidates can teach effectively and do what else is expected of them as professional educators.

Whatever the particular topics of the curriculum that faculty members claim their students master, TEAC requires that the program faculty members address the following general components of their program in ways that *also* indicate that the faculty has an accurate and balanced understanding of the academic disciplines that are connected to the program under accreditation review.

1.1 Subject matter knowledge
Candidates for program completion must learn and understand the subject matters they hope to teach. TEAC requires evidence that the program's candidates acquire and understand these subject matters.

1.2 Pedagogical knowledge
The primary obligation of the teacher is representing the subject matter in ways that his or her students can readily learn and understand. TEAC requires evidence that the candidates for the program's degree learn how to convert their knowledge of a subject matter into compelling lessons that meet the needs of a wide range of students.

1.3 Caring and effective teaching skill
Above all, teachers are expected to act on their knowledge in a caring and professional manner that would lead to appropriate levels of achievement for *all* their pupils.

Caring is a particular kind of relationship between the teacher and the student that is defined by the teacher's unconditional acceptance of the student, the teacher's intention to address the student's educational needs, the teacher's competence to meet those needs, and the student's recognition that the teacher cares.

Although it recognizes that the available measures of caring are not as well developed as the measures of student learning, TEAC requires evidence that the program's graduates are caring.

1.4 Cross-cutting dimensions or themes of *Quality Principle I*
TEAC calls special attention to some liberal arts and general education dimensions of the teacher education curriculum. Because these dimensions cut across and are essential parts of each component of *Quality Principle I*, the program faculty must also address and provide evidence about them, as they would for any other aspects of their case for their graduates' subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and caring teaching skill.

The skills and content of a liberal arts education (e.g., *learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives and accuracy,* and *technology*) are essential parts of the teacher's subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and teaching skill. Graduates who understand their teaching subject also know and understand:

1. The technological dimensions of their subject;
2. The qualifications that limit generalization owing to different cultural perspectives;
3. How to fill in the gaps in their knowledge and apply what they have learned in the program to new situations;
4. How their subject matter fits with the rest of knowledge, its purpose, value, and limitations.

Teachers are expected to be well-informed persons even though they may never directly teach much of the information they acquire. TEAC requires evidence that the candidates know and understand subject matters that they may never be called upon to teach, but which are still associated with and expected of educated persons and professional educators in particular.

These include the oral and written rhetorical skills, critical thinking, and the qualitative and quantitative reasoning skills that are embedded in subject matter, pedagogy, and teaching performance. They also include knowledge of other perspectives and cultures and some of the modern technological tools of scholarship.

1.4.1 Learning how to learn. The liberal arts include a set of intellectual skills, tools, and ideas that enable the program's students to learn on their own. In particular, the program faculty must teach the candidates how to address those parts of their disciplines that could not be taught in the program, but which, as teachers, the candidates will nevertheless be expected to know and use at some later time. For example, there isn't time for the whole of the subject matter and pedagogy to be covered in the teacher education curriculum. Moreover, some of what is covered may not be true or useful later, and some of what will be needed later would not have been known at the time of the program was offered.

TEAC requires evidence that the candidates learn how to learn important information on their own, that they can transfer what they have learned to new contexts, and that they acquire the dispositions and skills that will support lifelong learning in their fields.

1.4.2 Multicultural perspectives and accuracy. Included in the liberal arts is the knowledge of other cultural perspectives, practices, and traditions. TEAC requires evidence that candidates for the degree understand the implications of confirmed scholarship on gender, race, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives for educational practice. For all persons, but especially for prospective teachers, the program must yield an accurate and sound understanding of the educational significance of race, gender, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives.

1.4.3 Technology. Increasingly, the tools of a liberal arts education include technology. Programs should give special attention to assuring that the technologies that enhance the teacher's work and the pupil's learning are firmly integrated into their teacher education curriculum. TEAC requires evidence that the program's graduates acquire the basic productivity tools of the profession.

COMMENT on cross-cutting themes:
Teachers can be said to have acquired teaching skill at the level TEAC envisions (1) if they employ the teaching technologies that are available; (2) if they reach all the pupils in their class through their knowledge of individual and cultural differences; and (3) if they continue to develop professionally because they understand how to learn on their own and how to apply what they have learned to novel situations in their classrooms.

Cross-cutting themes: two examples

1. The case that the program's graduates know their subject matter in mathematics would also include evidence that they know how to solve mathematics problems they were not directly taught, that they know how to learn new areas of mathematics, that they understand the contributions of other cultures to the discipline of mathematics, and that they can use technology appropriately when they apply their mathematics to problems.
2. The case that the program's graduates know pedagogy (e.g., how to teach reading) would include evidence that the graduates know how to learn and use new or alternative methods of teaching reading, know how to improve their teaching of reading, know how to make accommodations in their teaching for students of differing backgrounds, and know how to employ, when it is appropriate, technologically based instructional programs in reading.

They can be said to have acquired teaching skill at a sufficient level if they have ways to distinguish the essential content from the peripheral, ethical teaching practices from the unethical ones, knowledge from opinion, obligations from academic freedom, and the unique responsibilities of teaching in a democratic society from teaching in a non-democratic one.

1.5 Valid assessment of student learning
TEAC expects program faculty to provide evidence documenting the reliability and validity of their interpretations of the results of their assessments. Because the evidence currently available to support claims of candidate learning is largely suggestive and not particularly compelling, the program faculty needs to have an ongoing investigation of the means by which it provides evidence for each component of *Quality Principle I.*

The program faculty's investigation should focus on two aspects of its assessment of candidate learning: (1) the links with the program's design, the program's goal, and the faculty's claims made in support of the program goal; and (2) the elimination of confounding factors associated with the evidence from which the faculty draws the inferences.

To satisfy *Quality Principle I*, the faculty must satisfy itself and TEAC that its inferences from its assessments are credible empirically. TEAC requires empirical evidence about the trustworthiness, reliability, and validity of the assessment method, or methods, the faculty employs.

Before the faculty members could conclude, for example, that their graduates are *reflective practitioners,* they would also need a way to be sure that they had ruled out some plausible alternative inferences based on the evidence from their assessments: for example, the inference that their graduates were simply following some template or formula; had guessed; had memorized or parroted their *reflective* responses; had copied their *reflections* from some source; or had fabricated the evidence of reflection; or that the evaluators were influenced by halo effects or were simply unable to make the appropriate discriminations required in the program's assessment rubric.

However the program faculty members assess what their students have learned from the teacher education program, TEAC requires the program to provide evidence that the inferences made from the assessment system meet the appropriate and accepted research standards for reliability and validity.

This requirement means that the faculty will need to (1) address and rule out competing and rival inferences for the evidence of candidate learning; and (2) establish a point at which the evidence for their inference is sufficient, clear, and consistent, and below which the evidence for their inference would be insufficient, flawed, or inconsistent.

2.0 Quality Principle II
Faculty learning and inquiry

The program must have a system of inquiry, review, and quality control in place through which the faculty secures the evidence and informed opinion needed to improve program quality. This can happen only if the program faculty members undertake inquiry directed at the improvement of teaching and learning, and modify the program and practices to reflect the knowledge gained from their inquiry.

Quality Principle II addresses the ongoing research and inquiry needed to meet the other two quality principles. TEAC's *Quality Principle II* presupposes the faculty has a body of evidence and informed opinion upon which they rely to justify its claims and to initiate or improve program quality.

Quality Principle II also encourages the program faculty to become skilled at creating knowledge for the improvement of teaching and learning and to modify the program and practices to reflect this new knowledge.

TEAC expects that the faculty will systematically and continuously improve the quality of its professional education programs and provide evidence about the following three components in the faculty's ongoing processes of inquiry and program improvement:

2.1 Rationale

Undoubtedly the faculty has some basis for thinking that its assessments are reliable and valid even though nearly all the currently available methods for assessing students' caring and learning are flawed and compromised in one way or another. The faculty is asked to simply give its reasons for selecting and relying on the measures that it does rely on in support of its claims and show that it understands the limitations of the measures.

Because no single measure can be trusted to accurately reveal candidate learning, the program will invariably need to cite multiple measures and assessment methods to achieve a dependable finding about what the candidates have learned.

In addition to offering an explanation for the validity of the assessments, the rationale needs to present the faculty's standard for its assessments and an argument for why performance at a certain level or character indicates that the faculty's claim is supported and why performance at a different and lower level indicates that the claim is not supported.

2.2 Program decisions and planning based on evidence

From time to time, a teacher education faculty will decide to modify its curricula, assessment systems, pedagogical approaches, faculty composition, and so forth. TEAC asks the faculty to give the reasons for its decision to modify the program in the hope that at least on occasion the information derived from faculty's research and inquiry has a role in improving the program, and will continue to have such a role in the future.

The program faculty's research into *Quality Principles I* and *III* entails, for example, the investigation of any local factors that are associated with, and implicated in, candidate learning and its assessment.

To satisfy *Quality Principle II,* the program faculty must be committed to consistently improving its capacity to offer quality professional education programs. Wherever possible, the program faculty should base the steps it takes to improve the program on evidence derived from its inquiry into the effects various factors have on the assessment of student learning.

2.3 Influential quality control system

It would be a rare and unusual faculty that did not have a quality control system in place to examine and evaluate the components of the program's capacity for quality, particularly, its ways of figuring out that it had the right curriculum, students, faculty expertise, program and course requirements, and facilities. TEAC asks that the faculty describe this system.

TEAC further asks for evidence, based on an internal audit conducted by the program's faculty, that the quality control system functions as it was designed, that it promotes the program's continual improvement, and that it yields evidence that supports the quality principles.

Many factors may affect the quality of a program and influence the assessments of the academic accomplishments of the program's students. TEAC asks that the faculty plan to undertake ongoing inquiry and research into the likely factors associated with the candidates' accomplishments.

TEAC expects that, over time, this inquiry will lead to a better understanding of the local factors and components of program quality that are important and would justify their continued nurture and investment.

This inquiry and the efforts to control quality should also lead to an awareness of some factors that can be treated with indifference because they have only marginal effects on program quality.

Although any number of factors and components of the program may affect program quality, TEAC requires the program faculty to address directly four areas (quality of the curriculum, faculty, candidates, and resources), each of which seems to have a plausible association with candidate achievement and program quality and each of which the program has some capacity to control and monitor.

Although TEAC encourages programs to investigate and provide evidence of other local factors that affect capacity for quality, TEAC requires programs to provide plans to investigate, over time, and through their quality control systems, plausible links between candidate learning and these four components of program quality.

Ultimately, the evidence for an adequate quality control system comes from the program faculty's ongoing investigation of any plausible links between capacity and candidate learning. In other words, the program faculty's quality control system should have agents that continually investigate and ask, *What about each component could be expected to facilitate student accomplishment and learning, what justifies the program's requirements, and what evidence can we rely on to support and justify that expectation?*

One of the agents in the program's quality control system obviously must be the body that does the inquiry that supports the writing of the *Inquiry Brief* and Annual Reports. In the end, the faculty must show that it monitors systematically the quality of the program and that the faculty is disposed to act to continuously improve program quality. This is just another way of saying that the faculty maintains a system of quality control and inquiry, verified by periodic internal audits, in which the quality of the curriculum, faculty, students, and resources are monitored by the program faculty.

3.0 Quality Principle III
Capacity for program quality

TEAC defines a *quality* program as one that has credible evidence that it satisfies *Quality Principles I* and *II*. However, TEAC also requires the program faculty to provide evidence that it has the capacity — curriculum, faculty, resources, facilities, publications, student support services, and policies — to support student learning and program quality. This evidence may be independent of candidate learning and based on some traditional and consensus *input* features of capacity.

TEAC's requirements in this area are based upon the U.S. Department of Education's requirement that any accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary as a reliable gatekeeper for federal funding have standards for seven dimensions of program capacity: curriculum, faculty, resources, facilities, accurate publications, student support services, and student feedback.

The faculty can make the case that the program has a sufficient capacity for quality in any way that meets scholarly standards of evidence; however, TEAC requires that the faculty cover the following basic points in making its case that it satisfies *Quality Principle III*.

Evidence of commitment. The faculty must provide evidence that the institution is committed to the program. Commitment is most conveniently seen in the evidence of parity of the program within the institution. The program must at least have the *normative* capacity of the institution's academic programs with regard to the quality of the curriculum, faculty, facilities, resources, student support services, and other features it shares with the institution's other programs.

Unique elements of capacity. The faculty must also address whatever unique capacity is needed for program quality in professional education.

Teacher education programs, for example, have unique features, such as student teaching and clinical courses. The institution and program must provide resources, administrative direction, and facilities for these unique and distinctive features of professional education programs.

The program faculty must make a case that overall it has the capacity to offer a quality program. The program satisfies *Quality Principle III* by providing evidence in the ways described below.

Curriculum. TEAC's *Quality Principle I* sets out the required components of the curriculum (1.1–1.3). In addition TEAC has three standards for the professional curriculum's capacity for quality:

1. The curriculum reflects an appropriate number of credits and credit-hour requirements for the components of *Quality Principle I*. An academic major, or its equivalent, is necessary for subject matter knowledge (1.1) and no less than an academic minor, or its equivalent, is necessary for pedagogical knowledge and teaching skill (1.2 and 1.3).
2. The curriculum meets the state's program or curriculum course requirements for granting a professional license.
3. The curriculum does not deviate from, and has parity with, the institution's overall stan-

dards and requirements for granting the academic degree.

Faculty. TEAC requires evidence of oversight and coordination of the curriculum of the professional teacher education program. The entity responsible for the program may be an administrative department, school, program, center, institute, or faculty group. It may be as large as the entire college or university or as small as a committee of faculty and staff who have direct authority and responsibility for those aspects of the program that pertain to TEAC's quality principles. Because of the variety of structures among institutions, TEAC uses the term *faculty* to represent this entity.

TEAC's standard for the quality of the program faculty is the presence of the following attributes in the faculty:

1. The program faculty members must approve the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* and accept the preparation of competent, caring, and qualified educators as the goal for their program.
2. The *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* must demonstrate the faculty's accurate and balanced understanding of the disciplines that are connected to the program.
3. The program faculty members must be qualified to teach the courses in the program to which they are assigned, as evidenced by advanced degrees held, scholarship, contributions to the field, and professional experience. TEAC requires that a majority of the faculty members hold a graduate or doctoral level degree in subjects appropriate to teach the education program of study and curricula. The program may, however, demonstrate that faculty not holding such degrees are qualified for their roles based on the other factors stated above.
4. The program faculty's qualifications must be equal to or better than those of the faculty across the institution as a whole: e.g., proportion of terminal degree holders, alignment of degree specialization and program responsibilities, proportions and balance of the academic ranks, and diversity.

Facilities, equipment, and supplies. The program must demonstrate that the facilities provided by the institution for the program are sufficient and adequate to support a quality program as follows:

1. The program must demonstrate that it has appropriate and adequate budgetary and other resource allocations for program space, equipment, and supplies to promote success in student learning as required by *Quality Principle I*.
2. The facilities, equipment, and supplies that the institution allocates to the program must, at a minimum, be proportionate to the overall institutional resources and must be sufficient to support the operations of the program. The program students, faculty, and staff must have equal and sufficient access to, and benefit from, the institution's facilities, equipment, and supplies.

Fiscal and administrative. The program must have adequate and appropriate fiscal and administrative resources that are sufficient to support the mission of the program and to achieve the goal of preparing competent, caring, and qualified educators, as indicated by the following:

1. The financial condition of the institution that supports the program must be sound, and the institution must be financially viable.
2. The program must demonstrate an appropriate level of institutional investment in and commitment to faculty development, research and scholarship, and national and regional service. The program faculty's workload obligations must be commensurate with those the institution as a whole expects in hiring, promotion, tenure, and other employment contracts.
3. The program must have adequate financial and administrative resources.
4. The financial and administrative resources allocated to the program must, at a minimum,

be proportionate to the overall allocation of financial resources to other programs at the institution and must be sufficient to support the operations of the program and to promote success in student learning as required by *Quality Principle I*.

Student support services. The program must make available to students regular and sufficient services such as counseling, career placement, advising, financial aid, health care, and media and technology support.

1. Services available to students in the program must be sufficient to support their success in learning (*Quality Principle I*) and successful completion of the program.[1]

2. Support services available to students in the program must, at a minimum, be equal to the level of student support services provided by the institution as a whole.

Recruiting and admissions practices, academic calendars, catalogs, publications, grading, and advertising. The institution that offers the program must publish in its catalog, or other appropriate documents distributed to students, information that fairly and accurately describes the program, policies, and procedures directly affecting admitted students in the program; charges and refund policies; grading policies; transfer of credit policies; and the academic credentials of faculty members and administrators.

1. As part of its audit, TEAC examines the program catalog, Web pages, or other descriptive publications (including those that contain the program's academic calendar, a list of faculty teaching in the program, and a description of the program's history and guiding philosophy) to ensure that they are both accurate and consistent with the claims made in the *Brief*.

2. The program or institution must distribute an academic calendar to students. The academic calendar must list the beginning and end dates of terms, holidays, and examination periods.

3. Claims made by the program in its published materials must be accurate and supported with evidence. Claims made in the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* regarding the program must be consistent with, and inclusive of, claims made about the program that appear in the institution's catalog, mission statements, website, and other promotional literature.

4. The program must have a fair, equitable, and published grading policy. (This policy may also be the institution's grading policy.)

Student feedback. The quality of a program depends upon its ability to meet the needs of its students. One effective way to determine if those needs are met is to encourage students to evaluate the program and express their concerns, grievances, and ideas about the program. The faculty is asked to provide evidence that it makes a provision for the free expression of student feedback about the program and responds to student views and complaints.

1. The institution is required to keep a file of student feedback and complaints about the program's quality, and the program's response. The program must provide TEAC with access to those records, including resolution of student grievances.

2. Complaints from students about the program's quality must be proportionally no greater or more significant than complaints made by students in the institution's other programs.

TEAC and state standards

TEAC's principles and standards are compatible with the standards promulgated by many states and professional educational organizations, for example, the ten standards of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) and the five core propositions and standards of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). The program faculty members are free to adopt these standards and to organize the *Brief* around them, as they are an equivalent and permissible way to satisfy the content of *Quality Principle I*.

[1] In cases where the program does not directly provide student support services, the program must show that students have equal access to, and benefit from, student support services provided by the institution.

More about TEAC's accreditation goal, principles, and standards for educational leadership programs

Faculty members seeking TEAC accreditation for their programs in educational leadership must affirm that their goal is to prepare "competent, caring, and qualified" leaders for the schools. It is the program that is accredited by TEAC, not an administrative unit of the institution.

TEAC's three quality principles, described below, are the means by which the faculty makes the case that its goal was achieved.

1.0 Quality Principle I
Evidence of candidate learning

The core of TEAC accreditation is the quality of the evidence that the program faculty members provide in support of their claims about their students' learning and understanding of the professional education curriculum.

TEAC requires that the educational leadership faculty members address the following components of their program in ways that also indicate that they have an accurate and balanced understanding of the academic disciplines that are connected to the program:

1.1 Professional knowledge

While no one doubts that teachers must understand the subject matters they hope to teach, there is less agreement about what specific disciplines educational leaders must study and understand. There is universal consensus, however, that whatever particular topics are studied, they should be sufficient to ensure that districts and schools are led in an ethical manner and succeed in their primary mission of having all students acquire an education that meets national and state curriculum and instructional standards.

Programs in educational leadership are typically at the graduate level and include an amalgam of the consensus literature in the following subjects: organizational theory and development; human resource management; school finance and law; instructional supervision; educational policy and politics; and data analysis and interpretation. These areas constitute the "major" in educational leadership.

The program faculty must provide evidence that its candidates understand these subjects and that the program equips its graduates with sufficient knowledge so that they would be able to undertake a number of important tasks in the schools they hope to lead. The graduates must be prepared to create or develop (1) an ethical and productive school culture; (2) an effective instructional program and comprehensive professional staff development plans; (3) a safe and efficient learning environment; (4) a profitable collaboration with families and other community members; (5) the capacity to serve diverse community interests and needs; and (6) the ability to mobilize the community's resources in support of the school's goals.

1.2 Strategic decision-making

The primary obligation of school leaders is to maintain and enhance an organization that meets the educational needs of the full range of the school's students and to create an environment in which the district's and school's curriculum can be readily learned and understood by *all* the school's students. To this end, TEAC requires evidence that the candidates learn how to (1) make decisions fairly and collaboratively, and do so informed by the relevant research and evidence; (2) formulate strategy to achieve the school's goals; and (3) articulate and communicate an educational vision that is consistent with the school's mission and the nation's democratic ideals.

1.3 Caring and effective leadership skills

Above all, educational leaders are expected to lead by acting on their knowledge in a caring and professional manner that results in appropriate levels of achievement for all the school's pupils. Caring is a particular kind of relationship between the leader and

the staff and students that is defined by the leader's unconditional acceptance of the staff and students, the leader's intention to address the staff's and student's professional and educational needs, the leader's competence to meet those needs, and also by the students' and staff's recognition that the leader cares. Although it recognizes that the available measures of caring are not as well developed as other measures of candidate performance, TEAC requires evidence that the program's graduates are caring.

1.4 Cross-cutting themes

The liberal arts are often neglected in educational leadership programs, but because they cut across the program, the faculty must also provide evidence about them, as they would for any other aspects of their case for professional knowledge, strategic decision-making, and caring and effective leadership skill.

Educational leaders are expected to be well-informed persons and the program should provide evidence that the candidates know and understand subject matters that are expected of educated persons. These include the oral and written rhetorical skills, critical thinking, and the qualitative and quantitative reasoning skills that foster independent learning. They also include knowledge of other perspectives and cultures and the modern technological tools of scholarship and administration.

1.4.1 Learning how to learn. There is a set of intellectual skills, tools, and ideas that enable leaders to learn on their own. The program's graduates must know how to acquire those other parts of the field that could not be taught in the program, but which the graduates will nevertheless be expected to know and use at some later time.

The whole of the professional knowledge base cannot be covered in the curriculum, some of what is covered may not be true or useful later, and some of what will be needed later would not have been known at the time of the degree program. TEAC requires evidence that the candidates learned how to learn important information on their own, that they can transfer what they have learned to new contexts, and that they have acquired the dispositions and skills for lifelong learning in their field.

1.4.2 Multicultural perspectives and accuracy. The liberal arts include knowledge of multiple cultural perspectives, practices, and traditions. TEAC requires evidence that the candidates for the degree (or certificate program) understand the implications of confirmed scholarship on gender, race, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives for educational practice.

1.4.3 Technology. Increasingly, the tools of a liberal arts education include technology, and candidates should know the technologies that enhance the work of leaders and staff and the students' learning. TEAC requires evidence that graduates have acquired the basic productivity tools of the profession.

Technology, learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives are essential parts of the leader's professional knowledge and skill. It makes little sense to claim that candidates understand how to organize the school's schedule, for example, if they do not also know and understand (1) the technological dimensions of scheduling; (2) the implications of the scheduling options for different cultural groups; (3) how to fill in the gaps in their knowledge of scheduling and apply what they have learned in their program to new situations; and (4) how the schedule fits with the rest of the school's purpose, values, mission, and so forth.

The case that the program's graduates have sufficient professional knowledge, for example, of assessment, would include evidence that they know how to (1) solve assessment problems they were not directly taught (e.g., disaggregation by groups); (2) learn new areas of assessment (e.g., value-added assessment); (3) evaluate the implications of other cultural practices on assessment (e.g., cheating or face-saving); and (4) use computer programs appropriately in implementing school-wide assessments.

Leaders can be said to have acquired *leadership skill* at the level TEAC envisions if, when they communicate with their faculty, for example, they (1) employ the teaching technologies that are available; (2) can make their point to all the staff because of their knowledge of individual

and cultural differences; (3) are convincing because they develop professionally on their own and know how to apply what they have learned to novel situations. And, to take another example, they can be said to have acquired *leadership skill* at a sufficient level if they know how to distinguish essential educational issues from the peripheral, ethical administrative practices from the unethical ones, knowledge from opinion, administrative prerogative from effective delegation, and the unique leadership responsibilities of schooling in a democratic society from schooling in a non-democratic one.

1.5 Valid assessment of leader learning
However the program faculty members assess what their candidates have learned, TEAC requires the program to provide evidence that the inferences made from the assessment system meet the accepted research standards for reliability and validity.

This means that faculty members must rule out competing and rival inferences for their evidence of candidate learning, and establish a point at which the evidence for their inference is sufficient, clear, and consistent, and below which the evidence for their inference is insufficient or inconsistent.

The faculty must satisfy itself and TEAC that its inferences from its assessments are empirically credible and supported with local evidence about the trustworthiness, reliability, and validity of the assessment method the faculty employed.

2.0 Quality Principle II
Faculty learning

There must be a system of inquiry, review, and quality control in place through which the faculty secures evidence and informed opinion needed to improve program quality. Program faculty should be undertaking inquiry directed at the improvement of teaching and learning, and they should modify the program and practices to reflect the knowledge gained from their inquiry.

2.1 Rationale
TEAC requires that the faculty members have a rationale for its assessments that shows that the links between assessments and (1) the program goal, (2) the faculty claims made about candidate learning, and (3) the program's features[2] are reasonable and credible. The faculty members give their reasons for selecting the assessment instruments they rely on and their reasons for believing that their interpretations of the results will be valid. In addition they show why the standards they set for the graduates' success were appropriate.

The faculty members who claim, for example, that their program prepares *instructional leaders* would need to make a case that their ways of assessing *instructional leadership* are reasonable and logical; they would need to explain how their assessments are related conceptually to the program requirements and to their claims about what the candidates know, and why the inferences they make about the graduates are valid.

Before the faculty members conclude that their assessments show that the graduates have learned how to be *instructional leaders*, they would need to rule out that their graduates had merely memorized or parroted slogans as their *instructional leadership* responses; endorsed administrative practices that actually thwarted genuine pupil learning; or failed to anticipate the unintended negative consequences of an otherwise acceptable administrative decision.

2.2 Program decisions and planning based on evidence
TEAC requires evidence that the information derived from faculty's quality control monitoring and inquiry has a role in the improvement of the program. Quality control entails an investigation of any local factors that are associated with, and implicated in, candidate learning and assessment of that learning.

2.3 Influential quality control system
The faculty's quality control system must examine and evaluate the components of the program's capac-

[2] One of these features must be an internship in a school setting during in which the candidate has the opportunity to apply the knowledge and to practice and develop the skills assigned to *Quality Principle I* to a convincing level of proficiency.

ity for quality, including its curriculum, candidates, faculty expertise, program and course requirements, and facilities. TEAC requires evidence, based on an internal audit conducted by the program's faculty, that the system functions as it was designed, that it promotes the program's continual improvement, and that it yields evidence that supports the first and second quality principles.

Although any number of factors and components of the program may affect program quality, TEAC does require the program faculty to address at least four components (curriculum, faculty, students, resources) most of which seem to have a plausible association with candidate learning and program quality.

3.0 Quality Principle III
Capacity for program quality

TEAC defines a *quality* program as one that has credible evidence that it satisfies the three quality principles. However, TEAC also requires the program faculty to provide evidence that it has the capacity—curriculum, faculty, resources, facilities, publications, student support services, and policies—to support student learning and program quality. This evidence should be independent of student learning and based on some traditional *input* features of capacity.

The program faculty can make the case that it has sufficient capacity for quality in any way that meets scholarly standards of evidence; however, TEAC requires that the faculty cover the following basic two points in making its case.

Evidence of commitment. The faculty must also show evidence that the institution is committed to the program. Commitment is most conveniently seen in the evidence of parity of the program with the institution. The program must at least have the *normative* capacity of the institution's academic programs with regard to the quality of the curriculum, faculty, facilities, resources, candidate support services, publications, and features it shares with the institution's other programs.

Unique capacity. The faculty must also monitor whatever unique capacity is needed for program quality (e.g., an administrative internship). Because the field has no firm consensus about any standard for unique capacity other than it be sufficient to insure that the program's graduates are competent, caring, and qualified, these capacity standards are inevitably a matter for further inquiry and hypothesis testing.

TEAC and state standards

TEAC's principles and standards are compatible with the standards promulgated by many states and professional educational organizations, for example, the six standards of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) and the seven standards of the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA). The program faculty members are free to adopt these standards and to organize the *Brief* around them, as they are an equivalent and permissible way to satisfy the content of *Quality Principle I.*

The particular details of the requirements for *Quality Principle III* for educational leadership programs are the same as they are for teacher education (see previous section).

PART THREE:
THE *INQUIRY BRIEF* AND *INQUIRY BRIEF PROPOSAL*

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Overview

In the TEAC accreditation process, the program's self-study document is either an *Inquiry Brief* (for those pursuing accreditation status) or an *Inquiry Brief Proposal* (for those pursuing initial accreditation status). TEAC accredits a program on the basis of its evidence that it produces graduates who are competent, caring, and qualified educators, and that the program has the capacity to offer a quality program. The program presents this evidence in the *Brief.*

The whole point of the TEAC accreditation process is to test the claims that the program faculty makes in its *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal.* TEAC verifies the evidence presented in the *Inquiry Brief* and evaluates whether or not the evidence supports the program's claim that it prepares competent, caring, and qualified educators. The quality of evidence and the quality of the system that produced it are the two key factors in the TEAC accreditation decision. In the case of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal,* TEAC verifies the evidence of the program's capacity and plan to produce an *Inquiry Brief* with evidence beyond what was required for state program approval.

The *Brief* is, in essence, a research monograph (or, in the case of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal,* a plan for such a monograph), and should be focused on what the program faculty wants and needs to know about the program's performance. It should run about 50 pages, and it should be based primarily on existing documents, such as reports of ongoing inquiry, other accreditation reports, and institutional research reports prepared for internal or external audiences.

The *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* should be meaningful to the program and contain information necessary to properly and responsibly administer and improve the program. It should be *brief,* and it should be about *inquiry.* Producing the *Brief* should be a seamless part of the program faculty's normal, collective activity to improve the program.

The program faculty members should work together to produce the *Brief.* All faculty members of the programs represented in the *Brief* should contribute to the process, and TEAC requires that faculty members in the program review and approve the final *Brief* before it is submitted for audit.

TEAC reviews drafts of the *Brief* and works with the program faculty, providing feedback and guidance, until the *Brief* is accepted for audit.

The time it takes a program faculty to prepare a *Brief* varies, depending on local circumstances, such a program structure, available documentation, state context, and the institution's commitment to the process. Generally, it takes the same amount of time as needed to produce a solid research article.

To produce the *Brief,* TEAC recommends that program faculty follow the steps described below in the "Guidelines for producing the *Brief."* In doing so, the faculty members will develop a comprehensive understanding of their program necessary to writing the *Brief.* They will also be well-prepared for the audit.

Content of the *Inquiry Brief* and *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

The *Inquiry Brief*

To be accredited, an eligible program submits a research monograph, called an *Inquiry Brief*, in which the faculty and administrators present the evidence supporting their claims that their program satisfies TEAC's three quality principles:

1. Evidence of their students' achievement and that their interpretation of their assessments of student achievement is valid,
2. Evidence that the program monitors quality and systematically engages in continuous improvement that is based in part on information about its students' learning, and
3. Evidence of the program's capacity for quality.

Through the *Inquiry Brief*, the program faculty members present qualitative and/or quantitative evidence that their graduates are competent, qualified, and caring and that the institution has the capacity to offer a quality program.

The program faculty members document the evidence they possess about what their graduates have learned, the validity of their interpretations of the assessment of that learning, and the basis on which the program faculty makes its decisions to improve its program. To do this, the faculty members must show that they have a valid method for determining what their students have learned and accomplished. Then they must show that their students have learned the subject matter they will teach, the pedagogical subject matters of the field of education, and, most important, that their students can teach effectively and caringly.

The faculty members must also show that they use what they learn about their students' learning to improve both the program and the system they have in place for monitoring and ensuring the quality of the program. Finally, they must show that they have plans to undertake a systematic inquiry into the factors that affect the quality of the program and their students' accomplishments.

The *Inquiry Brief* focuses on what the program faculty wants and needs to know about the program's performance. It includes the claims a faculty makes about its graduates' knowledge and skill, a rationale for the assessments of those claims, the empirical basis of the validity of the evidence that is presented to support the claims, the findings related to the claims, and a discussion of what the evidence means and what has been learned from it. In addition, the *Inquiry Brief* reports on the faculty's efforts to evaluate the rigor of its own quality control system and the adequacy of the program's capacity to offer a quality program.

Based primarily on existing documents, the *Inquiry Brief* contains only information and analysis relevant to the case that the program prepares competent, caring, and qualified professionals.

The *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

Faculty members representing new programs, or programs that are in the process of collecting evidence for their claims beyond what they cite for state program approval, may submit for initial accreditation status an *Inquiry Brief Proposal*, in which they propose the *method* by which they will find the evidence that will show that their graduates are competent, qualified, and caring, and that the program meets TEAC's three quality principles.

The *Inquiry Brief Proposal* is appropriate for new programs or programs that have been significantly revised in recent years. The program faculty does not yet have sufficient evidence that meets a scholarly standard for its claims of student accomplishment but has evidence of its capacity for program quality. The program also has evidence of a sound quality control system, evidence that the institution is committed to the program, and a plan for acquiring evidence over time to support its claims.

The *Inquiry Brief Proposal* is a research proposal, a scholarly work like a grant or dissertation proposal, in which the program faculty proposes the method by which it will find evidence (qualitative, quantitative, or both) to demonstrate at a research standard level that the program's graduates are competent, qualified, and caring. The program faculty also demonstrates that it has a reasonable basis for thinking (1) that the program's students have learned the subject matters they will teach; (2) that the students have solid pedagogical knowledge; and (3) that the students can teach effectively in a caring manner. In addition, the program faculty has a rationale for its assessments that gives its reasons for thinking they are reliabile and valid and that the criterion for success for each is appropriate.

The faculty members also show how they will use what they learn about their students' learning to improve both the program and the system they have in place for monitoring and ensuring the quality of the program. In addition, they present their plans to undertake a systematic inquiry into the factors that affect the quality of the program and their students' accomplishments. They also provide evidence that the institution has the capacity to offer a quality program.

Like the *Inquiry Brief*, the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* is based primarily on existing documents, such as reports of ongoing inquiry, other accrediting and state review reports, and institutional research and publications. It contains only information and analysis relevant to the case that the program will be able to bring forward evidence that it prepares competent, caring, and qualified professionals. The *Inquiry Brief Proposal* is also about 50 pages.

Guidelines for producing the *Brief**

TEAC recommends that program faculty follow these steps to produce the *Brief.*

1. **Review.** Study and understand the TEAC process and requirements. Know the requirements for the three quality principles and the required components of the *Brief.* Study this *Guide to TEAC Accreditation* and navigate the website (www.teac.org) for the most up-to-date information. Also review state standards and protocols as appropriate, especially for those states with which TEAC has a partnership agreement. When in doubt, ask TEAC staff.
2. **Gather information and prepare appendices.** Invest time in examining the program thoroughly. We suggest that the program faculty gather and review all required information about the program, specifically — and in this order, from least to most complex — the information that will eventually appear in the program overview, the program requirements (Appendix D), the faculty qualifications (Appendix C), copies of any local instruments and rubrics used to assess candidate knowledge and skills (Appendix F), and the program's capacity (Appendix B). It would be appropriate to assemble and draft these appendices as the second step.
3. **Inventory available measures.** Continuing the examination of the program, the program faculty should examine the inventory of evidence in the field (Appendix E), noting what evidence the program relies on, what it does not, and what it might collect in the future. Once faculty has formulated claims, it may need to revisit Appendix E to identify evidence it considers irrelevant to its claims.
4. **Conduct an internal audit.** Next, the program faculty should describe its quality control system, conduct an internal audit of the system, and draft an internal audit report (Appendix A).
5. **Take stock.** TEAC suggests that the program faculty now meet together to review what they have learned about their program from steps 1–4.
6. **Formulate claims.** Draft a set of statements that makes clear what the faculty believes the program accomplishes with regard to TEAC's *Quality Principle I* (graduates know their subject matter, have pedagogical knowledge, and have caring and effective teaching skills). These statements can be unique to the program and are often aligned with state or national standards. They must be consistent with any other public statement of the program's claims and be linked to the program's assessments.
7. **Draft the *Brief.*** Analyze and interpret the results of the assessments identified in Appendix E, develop the case, and assemble a draft *Brief.* Review the draft, using the checklist on page 69. Submit a draft to TEAC.

*The word *Brief* is used to refer to both the *Inquiry Brief* and the *Inquiry Brief Proposal.*

Checklist for preparing the *Brief*

1. Review	**Done!**	**Date**
TEAC's principles and requirements		
State & professional association standards		
TEAC's accreditation process		
TEAC's requirements for content of the Brief		

2. Gather information	**Done!**	**Date**
Program overview		
Alignment of program requirements with *Quality Principle I* and state and national standards (Appendix D)		
Program faculty qualifications (Appendix C)		
Program capacity (Appendix B)		
Collect copies of all local assessments (Appendix F)		

3. Inventory available measures	**Done!**	**Date**
Study the evidence available in the field pertaining to the graduates' learning, note what evidence the faculty relies on currently, what it does not, and what it might collect in the future (Appendix E)		
Assemble a list of the program's assessments and explain how and why the program uses them (rationale)		
Add any newly developed instruments to Appendix F		
Determine the program's standard for the sufficiency of evidence of graduates' learning that would support claims for *Quality Principle I* (e.g., what are the cut scores?)		

4. Conduct an internal audit	**Done!**	**Date**
Describe the program's quality control system and conduct an internal audit		
Draft the internal audit report (Appendix A)		

5. Take stock	**Done!**	**Date**
Review all materials and findings to date		

6. Formulate claims	**Done!**	**Date**
Write your claims and align claims with evidence for them		
Check consistency of your claims with your published public claims		

7. Draft *Brief*	**Done!**	**Date**
Study the results of the assessments cited in Appendix E, and formulate the program's interpretation of the meaning of the results of the assessments		
Compare draft against checklists for program and formative Evaluators		
Submit a draft to TEAC		

TEAC resources

TEAC offers the following print and electronic resources and guidance:

Website

TEAC's website (www.teac.org) is a comprehensive and up-to-date guide to TEAC, the accreditation process, and membership. Check the TEAC website regularly for updates on policies and procedures, and announcements about events and members. TEAC members also receive periodic email announcements. The website has a feature that encourages members and others to make suggestions and comments about TEAC.

Publications

Teacher Education Accreditation Council. A short introduction to TEAC, including the accreditation process and principles and standards. ©2009

Guide to Accreditation. A comprehensive guide for the faculty, staff, and administrators of TEAC member programs preparing for initial and continuing education. The guide includes a full description of TEAC's principles and standards; the accreditation process, including the audit; and detailed instructions on writing the *Brief*. ©2010 [Two copies are sent to each program as a benefit of membership.]

Guide to the TEAC Audit. A comprehensive guide to the audit process, including responsibilities of the program, TEAC staff, and auditors. Includes a checklist for tracking the audit process. ©2010 [One copy is sent to each program when the *Brief* is declared auditable.]

TEAC brochure. A brief, succinct description of TEAC and its quality principles, available on request to programs for use in informing campus leaders and others in advance of the audit. Three-panel brochure [size of a #10 business envelope] ©2009

TEAC Operations Policy Manual. A convenient reference for all TEAC members, staff, and auditors, board of directors, and members of the Accreditation Panel, this manual describes all of TEAC's current policies and procedures. ©2010

Guidance and feedback

TEAC provides a staff liaison to assist the candidate programs while the faculty members are writing and editing the *Brief*, offering feedback on methodological design, statistical analysis, and interpretations of evidence. TEAC funds this service from the audit fees all programs pay in the year of their audits. To further guide members in their process, TEAC offers a variety of additional formative evaluation services. Contact TEAC for the cost of these services:

1. On request, TEAC can provide tailored workshops on-site for a program or group of programs (such as a sector- or state-based consortium).
2. TEAC can provide individual consultation for program representatives in TEAC's offices.
3. In rare cases where a program requires or desires more help than workshops or the staff liaison can provide, TEAC can provide consultants on an individually negotiated cost basis.

Outline for a typical TEAC *Brief*

1. Program overview
Overall logic: guiding philosophy and orientation of the program
Program areas, levels, specialties, and options
Brief history of the program
Program demographics
Table of enrollment trends, numbers and types of students, numbers of faculty and types, etc.

2. Claims and Rationale
Statement of the claims (consistent with all relevant claims in the program's literature)
Reasons why the program thinks its assessments are valid and that the passing scores are appropriate

3. Method of assessment
Detailed description of the assessments
Criteria for achievement or success
Published information about the reliability and validity of the assessments
Arguments for the content validity of the assessments
Sampling procedure and procurement of evidence

4. Results
Results of the investigation into the reliability and validity of the assessments
Evidence of stability and consistency of the measures
Evidence of relationship, convergence, triangulation with other measures or evidence
Results of the assessments with attention to the following issues:
a. Significant digits
b. Ranges of the scores and their variance
c. Disaggregation of evidence
d. Accurate and comprehensive table headings
e. Sensitivity to insignificant differences
f. Full disclosure of available evidence (all of the program's cited evidence) See Appendix E
g. Evidence for each claim

5. Discussion and Plan
Discussion
Meaning of the results: Were the claims supported? Were the results good news or bad news?
Implications of the results for the program's design

Plan
Steps to be taken based on the evidence: modifications to the program, quality control system (QCS), plans for inquiry into the factors responsible for the results.

6. References
A list of any works cited in the *Brief*

7. Appendices
Appendix A: Internal audit report
Introduction: Auditors; faculty approval
Description: Schematic and mechanisms of QCS
Procedure: Audit plan and trail
Findings: Discoveries about the QCS
Conclusions: How well does QCS work?
Discussion: Needed modifications in QCS or future audit procedures

Appendix B: Capacity
Evidence that the program is supported on a par with other programs at the institution
Evidence that the program's capacity is sufficient and adequate

Appendix C: Qualifications of the faculty
Current academic rank and title
Terminal degree, institution, field, and date
Number of years of service
Scholarly publications (number, type)
Assigned courses in the program
Awards, public school teaching, boards

Appendix D: Program requirements
Admissions requirements
Course requirements and standards
Course titles and descriptions
Program standards and requirements
Graduation requirements
State license requirements
Alignment of program requirements with state and national standards

Appendix E: Full disclosure of all relevant and available evidence (including any evidence cited elsewhere in support of, or about, the program)
a. Grades
b. Standardized tests (entrance, exit, and license) about the graduates or the graduates' own students
c. Surveys of students, alumni, employers
d. Ratings of portfolios, work samples, cases
e. Basis for rates: hiring/promotion, certification, graduate study, professional awards, publications, etc.
f. Reasons for neglecting or rejecting certain categories of evidence
g. Plan for inclusion of new categories of evidence in a subsequent *Inquiry Brief*

Appendix F: copies of locally developed assessment instruments cited in the *Brief*

Appendix G: status of educator programs accredited by other USDE or CHEA recognized accreditors

Organizing the *Brief*

Within the TEAC system there is always considerable latitude in how the program faculty will make its case and what kinds of quantitative and/or qualitative evidence it will bring forth to support the case that it has fulfilled the requirements of TEAC's system of accreditation.

Most programs choose to organize the *Brief* as a research article or monograph.

Recommended article or monograph format

1. Program overview
2. Claims and rationale for the assessments
3. Method of assessing
4. Results
5. Discussion of results
6. References
7. Appendices
    - A. Internal audit of quality control system
    - B. Capacity for quality
    - C. Qualifications of the program faculty
    - D. Program requirements
    - E. Inventory: disclosure of available measures used or declined
    - F. Local assessment instruments
    - G. Status of program options accredited by other recognized accreditors

Alternate approaches

As long as the *Brief* addresses all the elements, components, and subcomponents of the TEAC system (1.1–3.2.6), a program may take any approach that allows the faculty to best make its case. Some possible forms that may suite the faculty members are:

1. An essay with sections corresponding to each of TEAC's quality principles and standards (1.1–3.2.6);
2. A comprehensive internal audit report that probes all dimensions of the TEAC quality principles (1.1–3.2.6);
3. A full account of each numbered element, component, and subcomponent of the TEAC system (1.1–3.2.6);
4. A qualitative case study about their students' accomplishments with regard to the quality principles and the program's role in fostering them, controlling, and monitoring quality.
5. A state or other report that aligns with each of TEAC's requirements (1.1–3.2.6)

Each of these forms would be audited for accuracy and evaluated by the same processes as the recommended monograph format.

TEAC believes that however the *Brief* is organized, writing the *Brief* should serve the program's needs apart from TEAC accreditation.

TEAC's evaluation of the *Brief*

TEAC evaluates the *Brief* in a sequence of five steps, each one dependent on, and informed by, the ones before it:

1. formative evaluation (optional, see www.teac.org for a description TEAC's services),
2. auditability decision by the lead auditor,
3. audit visit and audit report by the audit team,
4. summative evaluation and recommendation by the Accreditation Panel, and
5. accreditation decision by the Accreditation Committee.

Each step is based on a set of questions.

1. Formative evaluation

Is the program making a persuasive case for itself? Does the Brief *include all the required elements? Is the language clear and precise?*

The process of developing the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* embodies the idea of continuous improvement. TEAC sees the *Brief* as a living document, so to speak, and consequently welcomes frequent consultation between the program faculty and TEAC about the *Brief*, particularly about effective approaches to substantiating the claims the program faculty makes. The TEAC staff sees its role as assisting the program faculty in making the best case possible that is consistent with the evidence the faculty has about its students' accomplishments and related claims. For this reason, and at the program's request, TEAC reviews draft *Briefs* and provides feedback and guidance and a range of services to those seeking accreditation. A key task of the TEAC staff 's formative evaluation of the *Inquiry Brief* is checking the precision of the language and evidence.

2. Auditability decision

Is the Brief *complete and ready to be audited?*

When the program faculty is satisfied with the case it has made, it submits a final draft of the *Brief*, complete with a covering checklist. TEAC staff completes a similar checklist that certifies that the *Brief* contains all the features required for an audit. This certification is a simple precaution and raises the probability that the audit will have a satisfactory outcome for the program and TEAC. Only then is the audit scheduled (or, if scheduled through a state protocol, confirmed). At that point the form of the *Brief* is final and no changes, except minor editorial changes, are permitted. Any changes the program wishes to make after the *Brief* is declared auditable and the audit has begun are made through the audit report findings.

3. Audit

Is the evidence in the Brief *trustworthy?*

Through the audit, TEAC verifies the evidence the faculty cites in the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* in support of its claims.

The auditors determine whether or not the evidence in the *Brief* is trustworthy. To do so, the auditors need access to the raw data, spreadsheets, and documents upon which the authors of the *Brief* relied in writing the *Brief*. The faculty should be prepared to show the TEAC auditors the data (records, journals, ratings, evalutations, transcripts, artifacts, etc.) that are portrayed in the *Brief*. A simple rule is: *if the authors needed to look at it, the auditors may also.* Because the TEAC auditors will try to verify as much of the *Brief* as can be practically managed from the TEAC's offices, the faculty may be asked to send the supporting source data (e.g., spreadsheets) to TEAC before the audit. By its very nature, a substantial portion of the audit, however, must be conducted on site.

Audit of the *Inquiry Brief*. The main purpose of the audit of an *Inquiry Brief* is to verify the evidence the program faculty has cited in support of its claims that the program meets TEAC's three quality principles. The auditors select samples of evidence that they predict will reveal and represent the totality of the evidence the program faculty has presented in the *Inquiry Brief*. The auditors are free to search for additional evidence in the process of the audit and these discoveries may support, strengthen, or weaken the corroboration of the evidence behind the program faculty's claims with regard to the quality principles.

Audit of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. The main purpose of the audit of an *Inquiry Brief Proposal* is to verify the accuracy of the plan the faculty is proposing for its eventual *Inquiry Brief.* This entails verifying the statements the program faculty members have cited with respect to their rationale and the evidence they have for *Quality Principles II* and *III*. As with the audit of the *Inquiry Brief*, the auditors select samples of evidence that they predict will reveal and represent the totality of the evidence the program faculty has that its plan for an *Inquiry Brief* will be successful.

4. Summative evaluation

Is the preponderance of the evidence in the Brief *consistent with the program's claims that its the program's graduates are competent, caring, and qualified? Is the evidence reliable, valid, and of sufficient magnitude to support the program's claims?*

TEAC's Accreditation Panel determines if the evidence, as verified by the audit, is consistent with the program's claims and the requirements of the TEAC system and also if the evidence is of sufficient magnitude to support the claims in the *Brief*. On the basis of its examination and evaluation, the panelists recommend an accreditation status for the program to the Accreditation Committee.

5. Accreditation decision

Should the Accreditation Panelists' recommendation be accepted? Was the TEAC process that ended in the panel's recommendation followed properly?

TEAC's Accreditation Committee makes two decisions: (1) whether TEAC followed its own guidelines and quality control system and (2) whether there is anything in the record that would call the panelists' recommendation into question. In their deliberations, the panelists and the committee are guided by a set of common heuristics for the accreditation decision but the panelists are satisfied if the preponderance of the evidence is consistent with the program's claims. The committee assumes the panelists were correct and can only undo the panelists' recommendation if there is conclusive evidence that the program's claims were not true.

PART FOUR: INGREDIENTS OF THE *INQUIRY BRIEF*

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The *Inquiry Brief* (for accreditation status)

Section 1: Program overview

The program overview provides a brief context and a snapshot of the program. No more than two or three pages, it is an advance organizer for the *Inquiry Brief* and alerts the reader about what can be expected in the document.

The program overview includes the program's age, general history, and distinguishing features; summary of program requirements (elaborated in Appendix D of the *Brief*); a table of some straightforward demographics about the institution and the program (e.g., number and ethnic composition of students, graduates, program faculty); the program's place in the institution.

The program overview should also describe succinctly the train of reasoning behind the program: what theories, literature, thinkers, arguments, experiences, or traditions the faculty members rely on to support their beliefs about the program. In addition, the program overview might portray how the local market and political contexts have shaped the program.

The program overview to the *Inquiry Brief* usually includes the following items:

1. General history of the program and the place of the program in the institution
2. Distinguishing features of the program
3. Requirements for admission; for graduation
4. Demographics associated with the students in the program, such as admissions, graduates, SAT/ACT scores, diversity indicators, and the like
5. Description (and numbers) of types of program faculty
6. An explanation of the logic of the program
7. Outline of the *Brief* as a whole, including the program and licensure options presented in the *Brief*
8. Statements that faculty accepts the goal of preparing competent, caring, and qualified educators; and has read, discussed, and approved the *Brief* (and the date on which this occurred)

Precise language

Because the *Inquiry Brief* is subject to an academic audit and the audit is fundamentally about the *meaning* of a target (some text, table, figure, etc. in the *Brief),* an *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* calls for a kind of writing that is different from the usual self-study or program approval document. Consequently, TEAC seeks a writing style that has greater precision and clarity than is typically called for in accreditation or state program approval self-study reports.

Why does precise language matter to TEAC?

TEAC stresses clear and precise language because the claims and supporting evidence that TEAC asks of its candidates for accreditation need to be verified in the audit.

Teacher education programs seeking TEAC accreditation must provide solid evidence that their students understand their subject matter and the pedagogical literature, and that they can teach in a caring and effective manner. The programs must also demonstrate that they have an ongoing process for reviewing and improving themselves and the capacity to offer quality education. The program faculty's claims and the measures used to support them are very specific; therefore the language must be precise.

Vague, imprecise language will not only obscure the goals and accomplishments of the program, but it will make it more difficult for the auditors to verify the text of the *Brief* because the auditors need to determine whether or not the errors they may find in the text alter the meaning of the *Brief* or would mislead a reader. Imprecise text is likely to be open to multiple interpretations, some of which may not even have been intended by the authors, but which if adopted by the reader may alter the meaning of the text and potentially mislead him or her. For this reason, checking the precision of the language and evidence of the *Inquiry Brief* and *Inquiry Brief Proposal* is a key task in both TEAC's formative evaluation and the audit of the *Brief*. TEAC staff and auditors focus on language and precision in order to determine the degree to which the *Brief* means exactly what the program faculty intend it to say.

Consider the assertion, "*our students acquire a deeply rooted matrix of the application of theory to practice,*" and ask: *How could one know this? Could that really be the case? What exactly does this mean*? And the most important question of all – *What evidence could make it wrong*? This kind of assertion is unacceptably imprecise and should be avoided in an *Inquiry Brief* because it is unlikely that its author could answer obvious questions about it — such as, how deeply rooted is the matrix, how could you tell if it were deeply or shallowly rooted, what was there before the matrix was acquired, what is it rooted to, what kind of matrix is it (orthogonal, oblique), how many cells does the matrix have, how are the theories connected to the matrix, what specific practices flow from the theories, which others do not, are there wrong-head applications of theory to practice, how many theories are there, and so forth.

Section 2: Claims and rationale

In the second section of the *Inquiry Brief* the faculty states its claims and its argument about why the assessments it is relying on to support the claims should be trusted.

Claims

What are claims? Claims are statements that a program faculty makes about the accomplishments of its students and graduates. The faculty supports its claims with evidence. Through the audit, TEAC then verifies the evidence. Indeed, the whole point of the TEAC accreditation process is to test whether the program's claims are supported with evidence.

Which claims are important to TEAC?

The public and policy-makers are largely concerned with the status of the program's graduates. They want to know whether the graduates are competent, caring, and qualified. TEAC wants to know this as well, but for a different reason: TEAC uses the information to judge the quality of the program.

The institution and the program faculty, on the other hand, may be more interested in knowing which attributes of the program contributed to the graduates' competence. Those who enrolled in the program and those who paid tuition and funded scholarships might also have a keen interest in whether any value was added by the program and whether the students showed growth and development over the course of the program. Indeed, in communicating with the public, the program faculty and institution undoubtedly make ambitious claims about the effectiveness of the program and the value that is added from the college experience.

However, TEAC's responsibility as an accreditor is to assure the public that the program meets its standards, which is served by the program's evidence of its graduates' competence. This evidence is quite apart from how the competence was acquired and to what, exactly, it might be attributed.

Quality Principle I addresses the public's and policy-makers' interests in status, while *Quality Principles II* and *III* address the institution's and faculty's primary interest in what value was added and what contributed to that value.

In making its claims, the program faculty describes the professional characteristics of its graduates, addressing each of the three components of *Quality Principle I* (candidate learning: subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, caring teaching skill) and the cross-cutting themes (learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives, technology).

Note: Some claims may be written about *students* in the program while others may be written about *graduates* of the program. The latter is generally the better choice whenever possible because it is the graduates of the program about which TEAC and the public want to make inferences.

Claims and state and national standards. Many state agencies for teacher education and other professional educational organizations promulgate standards for teaching that require graduates to have mastered subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and caring teaching skills—the components of TEAC's *Quality Principle I*. TEAC easily accommodates, for example, the five core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), the ten principles of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), the six standards for school leaders of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), the domains of Pathwise formulated by the Educational Testing Service, or even the six NCATE unit standards.

Therefore, the program faculty members are free to claim that the program meets any national or state standards that are consistent with TEAC's *Quality Principle I*. They are free to organize the *Brief* around these standards as an equivalent, and therefore permissible, way to define the content of *Quality Principle I*. The program faculty would simply show the alignment of the state or national standards with each component of TEAC's *Quality Principle I* and explain that the evidence supports the claims that the program meets these standards. In other words, the *Inquiry Brief* would make the case that the program has verifiable and valid evidence that it meets state or national standards.

Formulating claims. It is important to write claims about *Quality Principle I* at an appropriate level of generality. To simply claim that "*all our graduates are good teachers*" is worthy, but the claim may be too broad for the evidence behind it to be convincing. On the other hand, the particular evidence for the claim that *"all our graduates know how to employ 'wait time' in their lessons"* may itself be convincing, but trivial and therefore ultimately unconvincing with regard to the larger goals of the program.

It is best to pitch claims at the level the faculty believes is true of its program and its graduates, and at a level that is faithful to the manner in which the faculty represents the program and its graduates to the public and prospective students.

Formatting claims. Claims can be advanced as assertions (e.g., *All our graduates know their teaching subject matter. Our graduates have successfully completed an academic major in the subject and have passed the state licensing examination in the same subject*).

Claims can also be advanced as questions in the same way that researchers advance their expectations and hunches as research questions. A program's claim could read: "*Is it the case that the pupils of our graduates succeed on the state's curriculum standards tests?"*

The *Inquiry Brief* is a research report that answers the faculty's questions about the quality and effectiveness of its program. The question format, rather than the assertion format, gives emphasis to the inquiry process that is at the heart of the TEAC philosophy and embodied in *Quality Principle II*. However, both formats for claims are suitable, and within the same *Inquiry Brief* some claims about the program's outcomes may be presented as assertions and others as questions.

Claims and evidence. As the program faculty members develop claims about their programs, they must ask themselves critical questions about evidence: *What evidence do we have to support our claims? What quantitative or qualitative evidence do we have that makes us confident that our graduates are competent, caring, and qualified educators?*

Kinds of claims. Some claims merely assert, or question, the *status* of the graduates (*Do they know their subject matter?* or *Do they employ technology?*). Claims like these can be supported with evidence from the graduates alone and no other group needs to be examined.

Some claims assert a cause: *The graduates know how to use technology because the program requires six credit hours of computer laboratories*; or *Does the academic major or minor we require ensure understanding of the graduate's teaching subject?* The evidence for claims of cause inevitably entails the examination of a group that did not participate in some way (e.g., did not take computer laboratories, did not take the major or minor). The evidence for the claim would include a comparison group.

Some claims may assert or question whether there was any value added by the program: *Did the students grow in their understanding of technology over the course of the degree program? Did their knowledge of the subject matter improve over time?* The answers to these kinds of questions require comparisons of the group with itself over the course of the program.

Being consistent with public claims. The program faculty should carefully review all public literature before beginning to develop its *Inquiry Brief*. It is important that the claims in the *Brief* are consistent with those made elsewhere to the public.

In the process of generating claims about *Quality Principle I,* the program faculty should examine the statements of the goals, objectives, promises, and standards published in the institution's catalogs, brochures, state approval or registration reports, and websites describing the program's projected outcomes. These public materials contain statements about what graduates of the program should know and be able to do. The claims in the *Brief* must be consistent with the program's public claims. The faculty cannot make one set of claims for TEAC and a different set for other audiences.

One way to check these statements against the components of TEAC's *Quality Principle I* would be to classify these published statements as statements about the program graduates' knowledge of *subject matter*, *pedagogy*, or *teaching skills* (including learning how to learn, technology, and multicultural perspectives). Some statements may fit more than one category,[1] and some may not fit any category.[2] Although the statements in the latter group may be important to the institution, because they do not fit any TEAC category, they need not have any further role in the TEAC accreditation process.

Generating claims: three steps.

1. The process of generating the claims about *Quality Principle I* should begin with an examination of the statements of the goals, claims, objectives, promises, and standards published in the institution's catalogs, brochures, state approval/registration reports, and websites describing the program's projected outcomes.

2. If some component of *Quality Principle I* is not currently part of the program, or is not a component about which the faculty could make a claim, then the faculty members would need to take steps to modify the program, or their instructional emphasis, before they can submit an *Inquiry Brief*. Alternatively, the faculty might submit an *Inquiry Brief Proposal* (see Part Five) in which they would document, among other things, the steps they propose to take to modify their instructional program.

3. The program faculty should be able to identify at least two measures or categories of evidence associated with each claim unless they have a single measure which is unimpeachable with regard to its reliability and validity.

[1] The claim by some programs, for example, that their graduates are liberally educated could be sustained as a claim of subject matter knowledge, caring, diversity, technology, and learning how to learn. A claim that graduates are master teachers, depending on how *master* is defined, could prove to be a claim that encompassed all of the *Quality Principle I* components.

[2] The published materials may claim that the graduates are the most competent in the state, or that the program is the leading program in the region, or that the graduates are devout, or hold liberal political beliefs and dispositions, etc. Although these claims may be core and signature claims of the institution, if a clear connection to *Quality Principle I* cannot be made, these claims need not be included in the *Brief.* If they are included, they could be audited and treated as nonspecific concerns in the audit report.

***Subsidiary claims throughout the* Inquiry Brief.** Throughout the *Inquiry Brief* the faculty also makes subsidiary claims about other important matters, all ultimately supportive of the claims about *Quality Principle I* and candidate learning. These subsidiary claims concern, for example, the validity of the assessments, the effectiveness of the quality control system, the institution's commitment to the program and the capacity of the program for quality. They are claims in their own right, and like all claims, must be supported with evidence that is verified by audit and found to be sufficient by a panel of experts.

Meeting *Quality Principle I* requires that the faculty members make subsidiary claims about the validity of their interpretations of the evidence they use to substantiate their claims of student learning. Thus, each measure that the faculty employs entails a subsidiary claim that the measure is truly about what the students learned. Each claim of validity always carries with it the prior claim that the measure is reliable and dependable.

To meet *Quality Principle II*, the program faculty must also investigate the claim that its quality control system (QCS) is comprehensive, functions as it was designed, and that it improves the program's quality by enhancing candidate learning. The faculty makes its case for this claim in the internal audit report, described in Appendix A of the *Brief*.

Finally, to address TEAC's *Quality Principle III* (capacity for quality), the program faculty members must make a claim that the program meets TEAC's requirements for curriculum, faculty, students, resources, facilities, accurate publications, student support services, and student feedback.

Claims and causes. The faculty's case for *Quality Principle I* requires only evidence about the *status* of graduates, not how well they perform in comparison to some other group, or in comparison to how much less they knew at some earlier points in the program. The claims associated with *Quality Principle I*, in other words, need not be claims about the source of the graduates' competence or how much it changed over the course of the program.

Claims about *cause* and *growth* are encouraged and expected in connection with *Quality Principle II*, however, as a way of demonstrating the ongoing inquiry of the program faculty. TEAC's *Quality Principle II* requires the program faculty to be curious and conduct research into the factors associated with the effectiveness of its program.

Rationale

Rationale for the assessments. The rationale section of the *Inquiry Brief* establishes that the assessments the faculty uses in supporting each claim associated with *Quality Principle I* are reasonable and that there are plausible reasons for thinking the faculty members' interpretations of the assessment results are valid.[3]

The program should describe its assessments in such a way that a reasonable person would conclude: *Yes, it makes sense that the measures selected are fitting, apt, and appropriate to test the claims. It makes sense, based on these measures, that the claims are (or could be expected to be) true.*

The rationale would show how the assessment of subject matter knowledge is connected to, for example, the grade point average in the completion of the major in the subject matter field, the individual course requirements, the grades given in the courses, the scores on standardized tests of the major field, pupil learning from the student teacher, an evaluation of a senior thesis, and the ratings of clinical supervisors.

The faculty members, in other words, explain why it is reasonable that they have chosen to support their claim that the teacher education candidates know their subject matter with such measures, for example, as grades in the major courses, scores on Praxis II, scores on the state curriculum tests, scores on the GRE subject matter test, grades on the senior thesis in the major, and cogency of the candidates' lesson plans in their subjects.

[3] Empirical evidence of reliability and validity may be the major reason the faculty uses certain assessments and in that case components 1.5 and 2.1 may overlap considerably. However, there may be psychometrically sound assessments that could be dismissed in the rationale as weakly aligned with the claims.

In sum, the rationale section explains why faculty members think it is reasonable to use the particular measures of candidate learning they have selected. Their reasons inevitably must indicate why they think the assessments will prove to be reliable and valid. Much of the rationale is implicitly revealed in the selection of the measures identified in Appendix E. The rationale section makes explicit the logic of the faculty's reasons for its choices.

Perhaps the most important factor of the rationale is that it gives the program's standard for its assessments and explains why the particular criterion the faculty believes indicates success is appropriate.

EXAMPLE: A rationale for the assessment of subject matter knowledge

The assessment (1) is tied to various program subject matter requirements, (2) has a basis and track record in the literature, (3) is empirically supported, (4) is practical and efficient, and (5) is otherwise a reasonable procedure for assessing subject matter knowledge.

In the rationale, the program faculty members give their reasons and their argument for using the measures they do. They address such questions as these:

1. Why do they think this measure indicates subject matter knowledge?

2. How is this measure related to the teacher's competence to teach the subject matter?

3. How does the measure align with the program requirements?

4. Why would anyone think the measure has anything to do with subject matter knowledge?

5. What are the limitations of the measure and what are its strengths?

6. How did the faculty figure out what the criterion of success is for the assessment (the passing score)? How do they know those who show certain traits, skills, scores, and behaviors understand the subject matter while those who don't show these things do not meet the program's standard for subject matter understanding?

Writing the rationale. The rationale is not simply a listing of the assessments (as presented in Appendix F) or an assertion that they measure the program's claims and goals, although it is partly that. It is an argument that gives the faculty's reasons for thinking its assessments are reliable and stable (usually because they have been used over time and the outcomes are consistent) and that they are valid (usually because the faculty sees that those who score highly on one assessment score highly on others and vice versa). The faculty members, if they are using an assessment for the first time and do not have a track record of experience with the assessment, may have some basis in the scholarly literature for thinking it will prove to be valid.

The rationale also provides the hypotheses that the faculty entertains in its inquiry into whether or not the assessments are valid: Why do faculty members think Praxis II scores and grades in the major should be related? Why do they think assessments of student teaching should be related to grades in the methods courses? Are the faculty supervisors or cooperating teachers more accurate in their assessment of the student's teaching? Can the pupils of student teachers assess the quality of the student teacher's teaching, etc?

The narrative of the rationale. The narrative might address such questions as these:

1. Did the faculty measure what was covered in the program?
2. Did the faculty assess what the overall program was designed to produce?
3. Did the faculty's assessment procedures assure them and others that their graduates are competent, caring, and qualified?

Comment

Why include a rationale? Many educators and other professionals have legitimate concerns about the reliability and validity of the evidence available in the field of education. To satisfy TEAC's *Quality Principle II*, the program faculty must have an ongoing investigation of the means by which it provides evidence for each component of *Quality Principle I.*

Quality Principle II, in fact, is partly about the need for this investigation. The investigation must accomplish two goals related to the assessment of candidate learning:

1. Support the choice of the assessments, particularly their links with the program's design, the program's goal, and the faculty claims made in support of the program goal.
2. Reduce the credibility of confounding factors associated with the evidence from which the faculty draws its inferences.

Finally, when faculty use the same assessment to support several claims, the rationale has to make clear which components of the assessment instrument support the several claims and that the faculty's interpretation of parts of the instrument are valid. The cooperating teacher rating form, which may be cited in support of each component of *Quality Principle I,* may be a weaker indicator of subject matter skill than teaching skill and vice versa for course grades or license test results. The rationale would acknowledge these differences in the validity of the interpretation based on various components of the assessment instrument.

Section 3: Methods of assessment

In this third section of the *Inquiry Brief,* the program faculty describes in detail the assessment **methods** cited in the rationale. These are the methods by which the faculty found the evidence that supported, or failed to support, its claims of candidate learning and accomplishment. The particular assessment forms and rubrics the faculty may have developed are presented in Appendix F.

The faculty also describes the research design it has employed to secure the evidence. *Was the evidence based on all the students and graduates of the program? Some representative sample? If it was based on a sample, how was the sample drawn and determined?* The faculty members also describe how the research design addresses rival explanations for the results and how they will address potential aggregation errors and other threats to the validity of their findings.

The methods section also describes any assessments and measures that will provide corroborating evidence for the faculty's main findings and any other evidence that has a bearing on any rival or alternative explanations of their findings. Faculty might show that the sample was truly representative of the program student body, that what look like ceiling or halo effects were really the outcome of a mastery learning regime, etc.

The design of the faculty's investigation must support the faculty's interpretations of the results of its assessment system and the appropriateness of the uses to which it puts them. The faculty members must consider several factors: evidence about the content of the assessments, the assessment criterion relationships, the theoretical and scholarly basis of the construct they assessed, and the uses to which they put the assessments.

In the *Inquiry Brief,* a program faculty will invariably provide evidence of the quality of student learning in the program. Typically, programs use some combination of the categories of evidence presented in the chart following this page. However, each program is encouraged to present novel and tailored evidence of student learning, in place of or in addition to, these categories.

Qualitative assessments and measures

When a program faculty uses qualitative assessments and measures, those writing the *Inquiry Brief* describe the methods of procuring the evidence and give a rationale for them, just as with any quantitative assessment. The program faculty would present precisely the procedures it employs: for example, team-recorded observations; interview protocols with students, alumni, faculty, administrators, employers; representations of student products or artifacts; interpretations of student journals, lessons, field notes, and audio/video presentations.

Linking to *Quality Principle I*

Whether qualitative or quantitative, each source of evidence must have a clear link to a component of *Quality Principle I.* Without such links, the measures may still have value, but only in documenting the context of the program or providing corroboration for subsidiary claims in the *Inquiry Brief.*

Categories of evidence

Most program faculties actually have a fairly limited number of sources of evidence with which to make their case for the claims about *Quality Principle I.* The types of evidence fall into the following five categories:

1. Course grades
2. Standardized test scores (entrance, exit, and license scores) from the graduates or the graduates' own students
3. Ratings of candidates and graduates (by students, alumni, employers of graduates, portfolios, work samples, cases, impressions, and recollections)
4. Rates of hiring, promotion, certification, graduate study, professional awards, publications, etc., when the decisions are made by third parties in the areas of *Quality Principle I*
5. Case studies of students and alumni competence

EXAMPLE: Types of evidence

Grades

1. Candidate grades and grade point averages in each component of *Quality Principle I:* subject matter; pedagogy; and teaching skill

Scores on standardized tests

2. Student scores on standardized license or board examinations in any of the areas of *Quality Principle I*
3. Student scores on admission tests for graduate study in the areas of *Quality Principle I*
4. Standardized scores and gains of the program graduates' own pupils

Ratings

5. Ratings of portfolios of academic accomplishment
6. Third-party rating of the program's graduates (employers, principals, etc.)
7. Ratings of in-service, clinical, and Professional Development School teaching
8. Ratings by cooperating teachers and college/university supervisors, of practice teachers' work samples

Rates which indicate candidate competence

9. Rates of completion of courses and program
10. Graduates' career retention rates
11. Graduates' job placement rates
12. Rates of graduates' professional advanced study
13. Rates of graduates' leadership roles
14. Rates of graduates' professional service activities

Case studies and alumni competence

15. Evaluations of graduates by their own pupils
16. Alumni self-assessment of their accomplishments
17. Third-party professional recognition of graduates (e.g., NBPTS)
18. Employers' evaluations of the program's graduates
19. Graduates' authoring of textbooks, curriculum materials, etc.
20. Case studies of the graduates' learning

Multiple measures. Because each kind of evidence (grades, surveys, portfolios, standardized tests, etc.) can be misleading, it is important that the faculty commits to include several measures that converge, triangulate, and indicate true student learning. The faculty should also take steps to reduce factors that which affect the validity of the faculty's interpretations. (See Comment, at the end of this section, on issues of reliability and validity.)

At least two measures are generally needed for each component of *Quality Principle I* and the methods of investigating the reliability and validity of the measures must be described and reported.

The methods section of the *Inquiry Brief* gives a complete account of the measures and the faculty's case for the reliability and validity of the measures.

In the case of qualitative measures, the faculty should present the triangulation methods used to reduce error and increase the trustworthiness, dependability, and authenticity of the measures.

Comment

Validity issues. There are validity issues for each category of evidence.

Rates. Hiring rates, for example, based upon the hiring district's own evaluation of the subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and caring teaching skill (*Quality Principle I* components), may not be as much an indicator of student accomplishment in times of teacher shortages, such as are expected in the decade ahead, as they would be in times of teacher oversupply. In times of shortage, hiring rates may indicate very little about quality because virtually everyone is hired. The rate of first choice hires, for example, may prove to be a more persuasive indicator of student accomplishment.

Similarly, some categories of evidence may be relatively meaningless if the rates are low or less than the normative rates. The rates may indicate something important about the program's quality, however, if the rates are significantly higher than the norm – for example, if nearly all the program's graduates become certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Passing rates on the currently available teaching license tests, for example, are surprisingly high,[4] but some passing-scores are set as low as the 25th percentile of actual cohort performance and with fewer than half the test's items answered correctly in some cases. Retention, program completion, and graduation rates average 50 percent in most cases.

Rates have meaning in the TEAC framework only if they are based upon an evaluation by a third-party of some aspect of *Quality Principle I* that also provides for normative comparison.

Survey data particularly that derived from survey forms created by those without special expertise in instrument development are known to be affected by a number of extraneous factors. For example:

- the order in which questions were presented,
- the context in which questions appeared,
- whether the questions weed out those with no opinion (filtering),
- the range and order of choices,
- whether middle categories were provided, and
- whether the format was open or closed.

Survey results need to be examined for their reliability and validity, as do course grades.

Course grades are meant to be a measure of subject matter understanding, but their validity is threatened by the fact that they are frequently measures of other matters that may have only a tangential or no relationship with the student's mastery of the subject matter of the course.

Some of the common threats to the validity of course grades occur when they become influenced by other factors and become as a result measures of these other factors. In contemporary higher education, it is fair to say that grades may be, in varying degrees, measures of any, or all, of the following:

Punctuality: when faculty members take points off for late work or give extra points for early work

Gain or growth: when faculty members base the grade on the degree of improvement over the course of the semester

Place in a distribution: when faculty assign grades on the curve, or some predetermined

[4] Pass rates of 100 percent are becoming common, but many programs achieve them by using the state's license test as a program admission test or screening test for later stages of a program. High pass rates in this instance are of little use as indicators of program quality.

percentage formula, so that the grade indicates only the student's percentile or rank in the class

Dishonesty: when faculty or the university lower the grade for cheating, plagiarism, etc. with the result that a low grade is uninterpretable because it may signify a low level of understanding or a low level of honesty

Extra or additional achievement: when faculty give extra points for more work that may not be qualitatively superior to the prior work, but is simply quantitatively more than other students have done

Attendance: when faculty members deduct points for unexcused absences

Writing skill: or some prior expertise separable from the subject matter as when neatness, rhetoric, or format count

Reduced spread: when faculty members inflate the grades or reduce the variance (as in the quip, "the best way to turn C students into B students is to put them in graduate school")

Motivation and perseverance: when students receive the last grade of several unsuccessful attempts at the subject matter, or when effort is rewarded

Group membership: when faculty members introduce examples and analogies that speak to some groups of students more than others, or when there is cultural, racial, or gender bias in the teaching format

Political statement: when faculty are sensitive to the student's military draft or immigration status, scholarship and grant conditions, graduate or undergraduate status, race, and gender, etc., and take these into favorable consideration in the assignment of course grades

The inference that grades, or any other measures of learning, are valid can be based on a number of considerations and investigations:

- Are the grades the faculty members give consistent and correlated with other known measures of student learning (e.g., standardized tests of the same content)?
- Are they based on the appropriate content so that they measure only what they are supposed to measure?
- Are they correlated with and predict later accomplishment that depends on student learning?
- Are they related to other factors that one would expect, in theory, to be related to what the grade measures (e.g., intelligence, prior grades, aptitudes, specialty training, beginning or end of the program accomplishment, motivation)?

In general, the correlations about .50 provide confidence that the measure is valid for the purposes to which it is put.

Reliability issues. An investigation of the *reliability* of course grades or any other quantitative measure of student learning might entail the following:

The computation of an *alpha* or *kappa* coefficient when the grades are thought to be measuring a single attribute.

Correlations between two different administrations of a test that determined the grade;

- or between even and odd items on the test;
- or between the first and second half of the test;
- or a correlation between equivalent versions of the test;
- or the stability of the mean grades and standard deviations across several administrations of the test to comparable groups;
- or published reliability statistics from test manuals.

Along the same lines, faculty members might explore the reliability of their grades through correlations of the grades from each half of the transcript

for a random sample of students; or correlations between grades in the same course in two semesters from a sample of professors.

Or they might examine whether the variance in the distribution of a faculty member's grades (0-4), or the variance in the average grade in selected courses, is contained within one point or a letter grade.

In general, correlations about .80 yield confidence that the measure is trustworthy and dependable.

Section 4: Results

In this section of the *Inquiry Brief*, the program faculty reports the **results** of its investigation.

Program faculty members may present the results regarding their claims about their graduates' accomplishments in either a quantitative or qualitative format, but they must meet the reporting standards commonly required in quantitative or qualitative research paradigms. The results must also address each component of TEAC's *Quality Principle I*. (Note that for security reasons, data files should never include students' social security numbers.)

One straightforward way to present the reliability and validity of the data is through an *inter-correlation matrix* of the measures used for each component of *Quality Principle I*. The faculty might also use the stability of mean grades over time to depict the reliability of the program's grading system.

Table 3 below offers an example of how a program faculty might organize its quantitative results for the components of *Quality Principle I*.

Note that although means and standard deviations are the likely entries in each cell of Table 3, frequency counts, ranks, percentages, percentiles, or whatever quantitative metric the faculty relies on could be also entered. These cell entries could also vary with regard to the power of their numerical properties entered (nominal, ordinal, interval, or ratio numbers).

Table 3. Hypothetical means (standard deviations) of a sample of program students (N=) in six categories of assessments in support of claims for *Quality Principle I*

Outcome claims* *The program's graduates have acquired…*	**Categories of evidence and range of scores**								
	Grade point index Score range, e.g. 0–4	**Standardized tests**		**Faculty & Cooperating Teacher evaluation**		**Student self-report**	**Survey of graduates and employers**		**Gains in pupil scores on work samples**
		Praxis (Score range and cut score)	**NES** (Score range and cut score)	**Fac** (Score range and cut score)	**CT** (Score range and cut score)	(Score range and cut score)	**Grad** (Score range and cut score)	**Emp** (Score range and cut score)	(Score range and cut score)
Subject matter									
Pedagogy									
Teaching skill									

*Includes measures of learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives, and technology

Table 4 below gives an example of evidence used to support subject matter knowledge in mathematics with data from a sample of program students.

Table 4. Mean (and SD) GPA and Praxis II scores and pass rates in secondary mathematics for years 2005–2010 at Exemplar University

	GPA in upper level mathematics courses: math department mean 3.1, math department standard: 2.75			Scores on Praxis II: mathematics national mean: 540 State cut score: 520			Correlation: GPA-Praxis II
Year of graduation	Number graduates/ number admitted	Mean (0-4)	SD	Graduates N	Mean and (pass rates) 400-800	SD	Pearson *R*
05-06	15/20	3.5	.5	15	610 (84%)	90	.89
06-07	12/21	3.4	.4	12	590 (77%)	95	.70
07-08	14/22	3.6	.5	14	615 (85%)	92	.69
08-09	20/22	3.0	1.1	20	510 (47%)	130	.71
09-10	15/20	3.5	.5	15	610 (84%)	95	80
Total	76/105	3.4	.6	75	587 (75%)	100	.75

Note: The faculty assessed the reliability of the GPA by drawing a sample of 30 students from the five-year period and calculating the mean GPA each year. The means were within .05 of each other. ETS reports that the Praxis II examination in mathematics has a reliability of .83 for its norming group. The faculty reported that the graduates of its program match well the scores and demographics of the ETS norm group.

The results, whether quantitative or qualitative, should be truly representative of the program under review and not be idiosyncratic to a particular time period or circumstance.

The results must also be disaggregated by subcategory when an aggregated presentation would mask important differences within the groups and categories being reported.

In cases where a program is undergoing revisions and renewal, the results should be of a character that will support a sound prediction of what future results will be. Generally, this means that the most recent results will carry greater weight in the faculty's and TEAC's decision making.

Section 5: Discussion and plan

In this section, the faculty announces its conclusions about each of the claims it has made about *Quality Principle I. Were the claims supported by the results? Fully? Partially? Not at all?* In other words, the faculty explains what the results mean with regard to the claims it advances in the *Inquiry Brief* about *Quality Principle I.* It is important that the faculty members be as explicit as possible about what they think the results mean and do not mean. In other words, were the results good news or bad news?

To meet *Quality Principle II*, the faculty must also explain what the results mean for the program. How, for example, will the results affect the faculty's ongoing plan for continuous improvement of the program (required by *Quality Principle II*)? Will the results prompt the faculty to modify the program, undertake some further line of inquiry to check a finding, or probe a new area? What do the faculty members think the results mean for the improvement of the program's quality, and how do they plan to use the results to continually improve the program?

It is appropriate to describe how past decisions about the program have been influenced by the evidence

of student learning brought to light in the operation of the quality control system. How have decisions made in the past about the program been shaped by the evidence procured by the quality control system? Finally, how will the results of the assessments influence the faculty's system of quality control?

The system that the faculty has developed to investigate, ensure, and monitor the quality of the program (documented in Appendix A of the *Inquiry Brief*) is the core of *Quality Principle II*, and the discussion must make clear how that system responds to the findings reported in the results section.

Section 6: References

This section contains a **list of all works and sources** mentioned in the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. TEAC requests that program faculty use the citation format of the American Psychological Association. For example:

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Section 7: Appendices

The *Inquiry Brief* will need to have six to seven appendices:

Appendix A documents that the program faculty's quality control system functions as claimed and enhances quality *(Quality Principle II).*

Appendix B documents that the institution meets the TEAC standards of capacity for program quality (*Quality Principle III).*

Appendix C presents a profile of the program faculty including characteristics relevant to the faculty members' qualifications for their teaching or other program assignments.

Appendix D presents comprehensively the program's requirements and their alignment with state or professional standards.

Appendix E catalogs the available evidence that is or is not included in the *Brief.*

Appendix F consists of copies of local assessments used by the program.

Appendix G includes copies of accreditation decisions by other recognized accreditors for institutional programs in professional education not included in the *Brief.*

Appendix A
Report of the internal audit of the quality control system

Every institution and program has a set of procedures and structures — reporting lines, committees, offices, positions, policies — to ensure quality in hiring, admissions, courses, program design, facilities, and the like. It is the faculty's way to insure that it has the right curriculum, faculty, program design, etc. Together, these procedures and structures — people and the actions they take — function *de facto* as a **quality control system**.

For example, in the typical quality control system the faculty attempts to insure and monitor faculty quality through recruitment and search procedures, workload policies, faculty development support, promotion and tenure procedures, post-tenure reviews, and so forth. The faculty monitors student quality by admissions standards, student support services, advisement, course grade requirements, student teaching reviews, state license requirements, institutional standards, and so forth. The faculty attempts to insure and monitor the quality of the program through committees and administrators who review course syllabi, student course evaluations, employer surveys, state program approval reviews, action research projects, and so on.

Ideally, each component in the quality control system is intentionally connected in a meaningful way, each informing or reinforcing the others. The people and actions they take result in program quality, and specifically, improved student learning.

However, in many programs (and institutions), the components of the quality control system are often not articulated, or fully articulated.

The degree to which the institution thinks about the elements as a system and evaluates their individual and collective effectiveness varies enormously from institution to institution, program to program. Nonetheless, there is usually some kind of system, and it no doubt affects the quality of the program and student learning.

TEAC requires that the program faculty members understand their quality control system. In addition, the faculty should understand how the program's quality control system affects the program's capacity for quality (the curriculum, faculty, facilities and resources) and how they in turn inevitably affect student learning.

TEAC requires evidence that the faculty members of the program seeking accreditation describe and query their quality control system, asking if the individual components and the whole system function as intended. TEAC requires that the program faculty seek to understand how the quality control system affects program quality and, specifically, how it leads to student learning and program improvement.

To meet this requirement, the faculty conducts an **internal audit** of the program's quality control system.

Through the internal audit, the faculty investigates whether the quality control system's mechanisms have any influence on program capacity and on student learning and accomplishment.

The faculty represents the internal audit—the process and the results—in **Appendix A** of the *Inquiry Brief*. Appendix A includes the following sections:

1. Description of the quality control system,
2. Description of the procedure followed in conducting the internal audit, and
3. Presentation of the findings, the conclusions that faculty draws from the findings, and a discussion of the implications for the program.

It is important to keep in mind that the internal audit is a description of what is, not a presentation of what the program faculty thinks should be, or thinks that TEAC wants. The internal audit captures the quality control system at the moment—its strengths and weakness alike.

What is an internal audit?
The internal audit of the quality control system is analagous to an accountant's audit of a financial system.

In a financial audit, the accountant randomly selects a payment and follows it through the institution's financial policies and regulations (the audit trail) to see if the payment was duly authorized, was in the correct amount, was recorded and reported properly, was for a proper purchase and purpose, was backed by deposited funds, and so forth. These many probes are the basis for the accountant's professional opinion about whether or not the corporation's financial system can be trusted or depended upon to provide the corporation's directors, stockholders, and federal agencies with sound results regarding the corporation's financial integrity and quality.

Figure 1, below, gives a visual representation of an internal academic audit trail. It indicates the starting point of the audit (in this case, a student folder) and shows the pathways and the elements that the faculty members checked from that point forward. These pathways are a sequence of audit tasks: targets and probes to understand how the quality control system works.

Getting started
To carry out the internal audit of its quality control system, the program faculty should follow these steps:

Conducting the internal audit

1. *Understand the program's quality control system.* In whatever way is effective and efficient for the program, assemble a picture of the quality control system. List all the elements, group them, and note their relationship to each other.
2. *It may help to describe the quality control system visually.* Create a schematic which shows how the administrators, agents, committees, etc., interact with each other (which report to which, which are dependent on which others for their tasks) and hold each other accountable.
3. *Describe the quality control system in words.* Write a narrative of the system.
4. *Determine an overarching set of questions about the quality control system.*
5. *Develop an audit plan.* Determine the focus and the point of entry. Determine targets and probes. Assign roles and responsibilities for carrying out the audit. Be clear and sensitive to potential weaknesses in the system. (See "Entering the quality control system," below.)
6. *Ask for formal approval of the audit plan.* Everyone involved should know and understand why and how the audit will be conducted, and should approve the plan in some formal way.
7. *Carry out the audit.* Keep track of the process and findings.
8. *Write the audit report* (see below).

Entering the quality control system

The internal audit can begin at any point in the system. The entry point has no particular significance and merely provides a manageable way to begin the audit probes and constrain the amount of information that must be considered. The faculty may enter the system in several ways.

For example: As in Figure 1, the faculty identifies a student folder through an unbiased method (e.g., randomly, or by a student whose birthday is closest to a randomly selected date).

To see if the quality control system works as it is designed to work in that instance, the faculty probes each element in the system that is linked to the folder (follow Figure 1).

The internal audit probe would determine, for example, whether or not:

1. The particular faculty member who gave the grade in a randomly selected course in the student folder was appointed, reviewed, and assigned properly;[5]
2. The student was admitted and enrolled properly;
3. The work on which the grade was given was evaluated properly;
4. The course was established properly as a curricular requirement;
5. The course was evaluated and reviewed properly;
6. The course was properly funded;
7. The course was given in an appropriate facility,
8. The program in which the course was required was properly evaluated.

The faculty examines all links to the course grade that are implicated in the system to see whether or not the system functioned properly in the particular instance.

[5] *Properly* means only that the actions took place in accordance with the program's statements of policy and regulation *and* that they yielded quality outcomes. The TEAC audit verifies the evidence the faculty provides in its internal audit in support of its assertions that the system functioned properly.

If the program faculty members feel their system is probed better by starting with a particular faculty member, the initial audit probe can begin there and move through the system from that point. The questions of the system are the same:

1. Was the faculty member's appointment, assignment proper?
2. Was the tenure or promotion decision conducted properly?
3. Were the faculty member's students selected and admitted properly?
4. Does the faculty member evaluate student learning properly?
5. Was the faculty member's course properly approved and evaluated?
6. Was the course properly funded?
7. Was the course given in an appropriately equipped classroom?

The probe continues until each element in the system that bears on the quality of a particularly selected case has been examined.

Enter the audit at points of suspected weakness. If faculty members are concerned about some aspects of their system (for example, the process of hiring adjuncts or the trustworthiness of grades), they may choose to audit the system from this perspective and with these targets perhaps receiving an initial focus of the audit procedures. Thus, the faculty would specifically address the areas of suspected weakness and begin the audit trail at these points and enter the system, for example, with the agent within the system that was supposed to insure quality adjunct appointments.

Audit probes

The number of probes necessary for the internal audit depends, as in all sampling, on the degree of variability that is revealed. The number should be of a magnitude that would convince the faculty and others that a reasonably accurate reading of the system had been taken. A sample of 10 percent is usually sufficient.

Sampling just one or two students, for example, or one or two courses, will probably not provide suffi-

cient confidence to the interpretations gleaned from the audit. When the faculty determines how many elements should be sampled, a rationale for the number should be provided so that the reader can be assured that the audit findings are truly representative of the system.

Understanding the audit findings

The purpose of the internal audit is for the faculty to make some judgments about how well its quality control system is working. It is unlikely that a faculty could come to an unqualified conclusion that the system works as it was designed. Almost nothing works just as it was designed. The faculty's conclusions will be more credible if the audit uncovers some exceptions and problems.

The faculty might advance any one (or more) of the following conclusions:

1. Our quality control system is working well, overall, except we have learned that we cannot put a great deal of faith in the course grades our students receive because they are not predictors of the subsequent performance in student teaching.

2. Our quality control system has several significant breakdowns: violations of our appointment policies in the hiring of adjunct faculty, inconsistencies in content and practices within various sections of the same course, and inconsistencies in the way clearances into student teaching are administered.

These conclusions would give direction to faculty for strengthening their quality control system and their program. However, a fair-minded reader might still ask, *What is the evidence that the system is working well, or that breakdowns exist?*

The faculty finds the basis for its judgments in the **evidence** that it collects during the internal audit. So, it makes sense to see judgments as flowing from evidence. For this reason it is important to keep the reporting of the evidence separate from the reporting of the judgments or conclusions about the quality control system.

Writing the internal audit report

TEAC suggests that program faculty organize the internal audit report in the following way:

1. ***Introduction***: The introduction to Appendix A explains who conducted the audit, how the plan for the audit was approved by faculty, and how the internal audit complemented the evidence presented for *Quality Principle III* in the *Inquiry Brief*.

2. ***Description of the quality control system (QCS)***: The program faculty provides a description of components and agents of its quality control system.

3. ***Audit procedures***: In this section, the faculty members describe how they conducted the audit, what evidence they collected, what trail they followed, how many elements (students, courses, and faculty members) they audited, and who participated in organizing and interpreting the findings. Figure 1 represents such a procedure. The faculty members should provide a visual or tabular representation of the steps they took in their audit.

4. ***Findings***: What did the faculty discover about each part of its QCS?

5. ***Conclusions***: What are the internal auditors' summative judgments? Here the faculty addresses two key questions:

   A. How well is the quality control system working for our program?

   B. Is there evidence that the program was improved by the faculty's efforts and/or is there a plan to investigate whether the program was improved by the actions the faculty and administrators take in their QCS?

6. ***Discussion***: In this section, the faculty addresses several questions:

   A. What are the implications of the evidence?

   B. What are the faculty's conclusions for further action?

C. What modifications, for example, will the faculty make in its QCS and the program as a result of the findings and conclusions of the internal audit?

D. What investigations will the faculty undertake to test whether the actions taken in the system is enhancing the quality of the program and the quality of student learning in particular?

In the discussion section, the faculty will also recommend ways to conduct the internal audit in subsequent years.

The quality control system and *Quality Principle III*

Whereas *Quality Principle I* represents the core **outcome** of the TEAC accreditation system, student learning, *Quality Principle II* represents the core **activity** of the TEAC accreditation system, institutional or faculty learning. *Quality Principle II* requires the program faculty, in monitoring the program's quality, to engage in a systematic program of inquiry about the factors that support the program's success and failure with respect to *Quality Principles I* and *III*.

TEAC believes that programs must continuously investigate the factors that contribute to their success and failures, so they can better understand them and improve upon them. TEAC's *Quality Principle II* and the QCS are precisely about the need for programs to investigate and understand the sources of their success and failure, to search for ways to improve the program, and to discard unproductive practices.

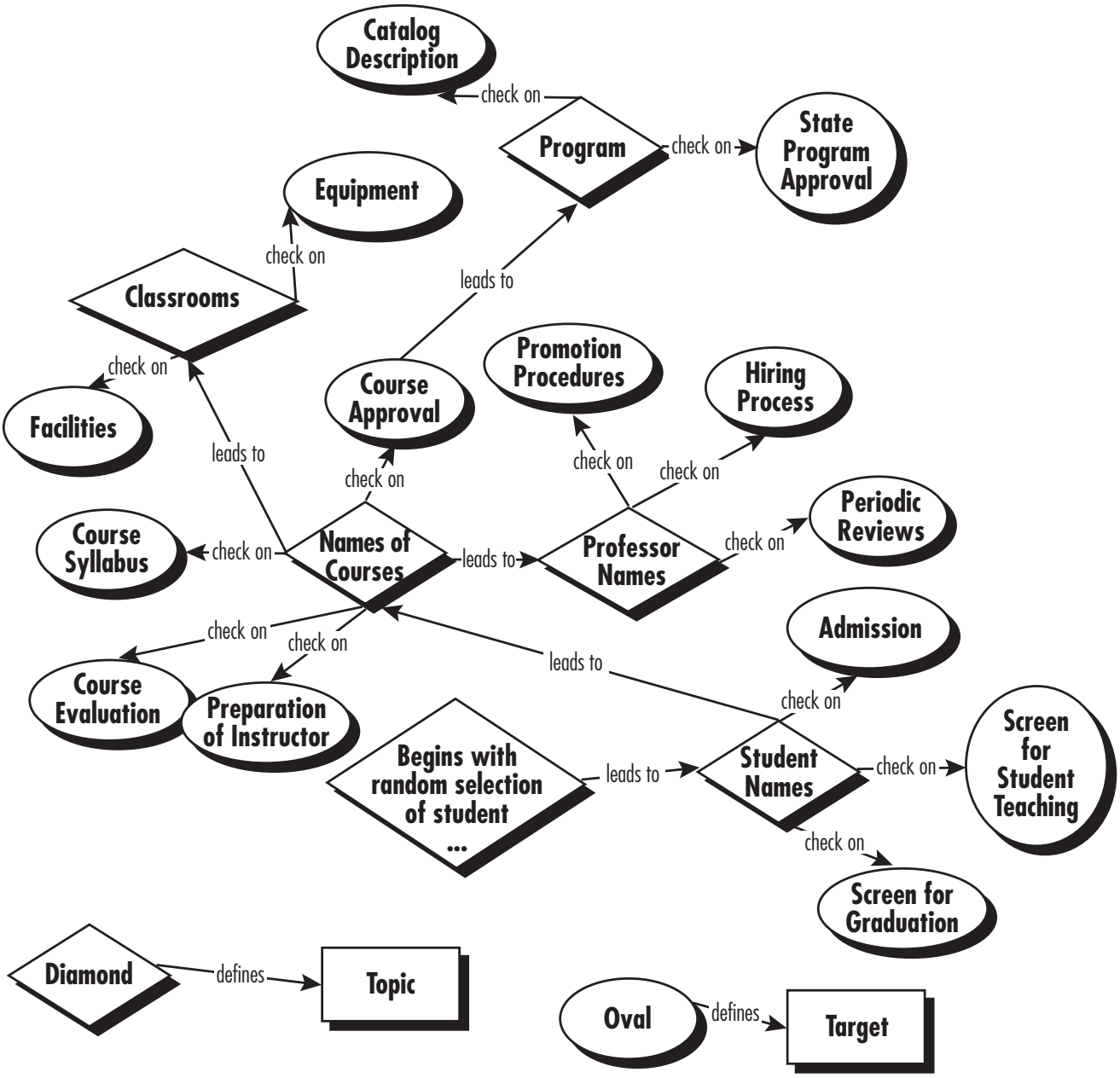
Linking the quality control system and candidate learning

In truth, almost no one has done the inquiry needed to establish the suspected links between the components of quality control and the quality of candidate learning.

For example, through the quality control system, faculty can monitor whether or not the students admitted to the program in fact meet the entrance requirements. Yet few programs are in the habit of asking whether or not the entrance requirements accomplish the program's mission or how they might be modified if they fail to support the mission. A counseling program might conclude that an in depth interview of prospective counselors should be investigated as a potentially superior way to admit students than by their scores on some standardized test of academic aptitude that the program had been using.

Figure 1. Hypothetical audit trail followed in the internal audit

Note: The program internal audit comprises a series of audit tasks. Each audit task is made up of a target and a probe activity. In the figure below, the "check on" arrows represent the probes and the ovals represent the targets. The topic areas are represented by the diamonds. The "leads to" arrows represent the audit trail, or sequence of tasks. This audit trail begins with a student folder and the figure indicates what it led to.



Appendix B
Evidence of institutional capacity for program quality

In Appendix B, the faculty addresses the claim that the program meets the requirements set out in *Quality Principle III* (the capacity to offer a quality program).

To this point in the *Inquiry Brief*, the faculty has demonstrated the program meets TEAC's first two quality principles[6], which by definition means that it is a quality program. However, because TEAC's role is to assure the public about the quality of professional educator preparation programs, it matters how the program accomplished its goals. TEAC must also be concerned about the *way* in which the program meets the quality principles. For this reason, TEAC requires programs to address and provide evidence of the program's capacity for quality in seven areas identified by the USDE: curriculum; program faculty; facilities, equipment, and supplies; fiscal and administrative capacity; student support services; recruiting and admissions practices, academic calendars, catalogs, publications, grading, and advertising; and student feedback (3.1.1–3.2.6) if only to be assured that the program's procedures are ethical and proper.

The program's case for capacity

The program faculty can make the case in any way that meets scholarly standards of evidence, but TEAC requires that the faculty address the following basic points in making its case for capacity to offer a quality program:

1. The faculty must also show evidence of institutional commitment to the program and, in particular, evidence that the level of commitment is consistent with the institution's commitment to its other programs. The program must at least have parity with the institution's typical academic program with regard to the quality of the curriculum, faculty, facilities, resources, student support services, publications, and the like. By showing that the program conforms to the institutional norm in the key capacity components of program quality, the faculty establishes the institution's commitment to the program.

   Further, if the program has parity within the institution, TEAC can then ensure that the program's capacity for quality is sufficient to meet USDE accreditation standards for the typical academic program. All accreditors recognized by the USDE adhere to the same capacity standards: an institution's accreditation by a regional accreditor in good standing signifies that the institution's overall capacity for quality has been documented and verified. Because an institution that offers the program under review by TEAC must be regionally or nationally accredited, TEAC can also be assured that owing to program parity with the institution, the program satisfies the same standards for capacity.

2. The faculty must also address whatever unique capacity is necessary for quality in a professional teacher education program. TEAC recognizes that because the field has no consensus about any standard for unique capacity (other than it is sufficient to ensure that the graduates are competent, caring, and qualified) the program faculty must rely on scholarly speculation, inference, and inquiry in making its case.

COMMENT

TEAC's interest in the institutional commitment to the capacity of the program for quality extends beyond TEAC's standards on capacity, however. When it can be shown that the institution is serious about teacher education, and that it is committed to the continual improvement of the quality of the programs it offers, TEAC can refute the common allegation that education programs are "cash cows."

Writing Appendix B

Appendix B should be organized by each component of capacity (3.1.1 through 3.2.6) with supporting text explicating the program's evidence for each claim that it has satisfied TEAC's standards and references to institutional documents that also provide evidence.

[6] *Quality Principle I* is handled in the main body of the *Inquiry Brief* and *Quality Principle II* is covered in Appendix A.

An efficient way to portray that the program has parity with other programs in the institution is by means of a brief statistical report composed of a table like Table 5 which gives the comparative metrics for each category.

Metrics

Institutions have different conventions for measuring capacity in each dimension. They may keep track of their facilities with such measures as square feet per student or faculty member, number of faculty per office, classroom size or number of students per classroom, proportions of dedicated program space. Similarly, an institution may use various metrics for its equipment (e.g., the number of computers, copying machines, projectors, phones per faculty member or student, the age of its equipment). Faculty workload may be measured by the number of sections or courses, by the number of students served, by the number of student-credit hours, or some similar metric. TEAC encourages the program faculty to use metrics that may be particularly revealing or persuasive of the program's capacity for quality.

Table 5. Capacity for quality: A comparison of program and institutional statistics

Capacity dimension	**Program statistics**	**Institution statistics** (Norm)	**Difference analysis** Analysis of the differences between the program & the institutional statistics
3.1.1 Curriculum (number of credits)			
3.1.2 Faculty (percentages at ranks; workload)			
3.1.3 Facilities (space & equipment provided)			
3.1.4 Fiscal and administrative (support dollars/faculty member)			
3.1.5 Student support services (equal access to services)			
3.1.6 Student feedback (course evaluation means, numbers of complaints)			

Table 6 gives a convenient way for the faculty to document that the program satisfies the balance of the requirements for *Quality Principle III* by referring to documentation that provides the evidence requested.

Table 6: References to institutional documents for each requirement

TEAC requirements for quality control of capacity (3.2)	Program's reference to documentation for each requirement
3.2.1 Curriculum	
Document showing credit hours required in the subject matter are tantamount to an academic major Document showing credit hours required in pedagogical subjects are tantamount to an academic minor	
3.2.2 Faculty	
Majority of the faculty have a terminal degree (major or minor) in the areas of course subjects they teach	See Appendix C
3.2.3 Facilities	
Documents showing appropriate and adequate resources	
3.2.4 Fiscal and Administrative	
Documents attesting to the financial health of the institution Documents showing program administrators are qualified for their positions Documents showing resources are adequate to administer the program	
3.2.5 Student support	
Documents showing adequate student support services Documents showing the drop-out and program completion rates	
3.2.6 Policies	
Documents showing an academic calendar is published Documents showing a grading policy is published and is accurate Documents showing there is a procedure for students' complaints to be evaluated	

Appendix C
Faculty qualifications

The program undoubtedly believes its faculty members are qualified for their assignments and TEAC asks only that the program faculty members summarize the evidence upon which they rely to substantiate their belief that the faculty members assigned to the program are qualified. The evidence can be efficiently summarized in a table. For each faculty member, the entries in the table might include the following information, any item of which it may omit if it sees the item as not related to the qualifications the program truly values:

1. current academic rank and title at the institution,
2. terminal degree,
3. the institution that granted it,
4. the year it was granted,
5. the field of the degree,
6. the number of scholarly publications,

7. number of years at the institution, and
8. the numbers of the courses the person is regularly assigned to teach in the program.

The program faculty may choose to provide any other information that the program values and that it feels represents the quality of the program faculty: for example, the number of awards the person has received, grants, editorial board memberships, professional service assignments, public school teaching experience, national board certification. The program faculty members, in other words, are free to create a table with different entries as long as it accurately represents the quality of the program faculty and its suitability for the assignments and responsibilities in the program. The qualifications the program cites must also be consistent with the faculty qualifications the institution uses to promote and review faculty.

As with all information in the *Inquiry Brief*, each entry is subject to audit verification.

Appendix D
Program requirements

In Appendix D, the program faculty presents the program's standards and requirements for each license area option in the program. Typically, these include

1. Admission requirements,
2. Course requirements and standards,
3. Course titles and descriptions,
4. Requirements and standards for continuing in the program,
5. Graduation requirements, and
6. Requirements and standards for the state's professional license.

The way to represent these program requirements and show how they are related to the state's or a professional association's standards is to complete Table 7 for each program option, linking requirements to a state or association standard for teacher education.

In this table, the program is free to tailor the column headings to its particular requirements for each of its program options. For example, a program might have made the following provisions for subject matter knowledge in its program requirements for math teachers: the state may have some math standards the program names, the program may have adopted the subject matter standards of NCTM, certain math courses are required and named, some field work may require math lessons and units, for admission the program may require a math aptitude test score, some prerequisite math courses, a portfolio may require work samples of math lessons and their assessment by the student teacher, and finally the program may require some exit survey on math preparation and knowledge or some standardized math test (e.g., Praxis II). All of these requirements would be cited in the cells in Table 7 either directly and/or by reference to some other document. A program may have requirements of a different kind from those in the column headings above to address *Quality Principle I*, etc. and these should be cited either by substitution or addition.

Appendix E
Inventory of evidence

Using the inventory

What evidence does the program have to support its claims that its graduates are competent, caring, and qualified? On what evidence does the program rely to assess its own progress toward the goal of preparing competent, caring, and qualified educators?

Early in the process of preparing to write the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*, program faculty should complete the inventory (see form below) as a way of taking stock: the program faculty asks, What is the status of our evidence? What measures and indicators for TEAC *Quality Principle I* are available to the program? What other evidence is available to the program? What evidence does the faculty rely on to support its claims? What might the program need to collect? What does it choose not to rely on?

Later in the process, the completed form becomes Appendix E of the *Brief*. TEAC's auditors are required to verify and find any evidence, whether reported or not in the *Brief*, that can corroborate or disconfirm the evidence that is cited in the *Brief*. The inventory that makes up Appendix E assists them in

Table 7. Possible format for Appendix D

TEAC *Quality Principle I* components	State standard number	Professional association standard number	Program option requirements that address *Quality Principle I* and state subject matter and pedagogical standards for _____				
			Required courses	Field work requirements	Admissions requirements	Portfolio requirements	Exit requirements
1.1 Subject matter knowledge							
1.2 Pedagogical knowledge							
1.3 Caring and effective teaching skill							
1.4.1 Cross-cutting theme: Learning how to learn							
1.4.2 Cross-cutting theme: Multicultural perspectives							
1.4.3 Cross-cutting theme: Technology							

their work and makes their on-site audit more efficient and productive.

What evidence should be used?
In supporting its claims that the program meets TEAC's quality principles, program faculty members are free to make their case for *Quality Principle I* with only the evidence on which the program truly relies. Not all the categories of evidence listed in the inventory may be relevant or useful to the program faculty. However, faculty must *fully report* all the available evidence that bears on its claims or that it has reported elsewhere in support of the quality of the program.

In the spirit of open inquiry, faculty must examine and explain all the evidence available to it that bears on the TEAC quality principles. However, if some evidence is not supportive of the program's claims, or seems to be unsupportive, the faculty would make the case, like any other researcher, that the contrary evidence should not be relied on for various reasons.

Thus, TEAC expects that any assessment results related to TEAC *Quality Principle I* that the program faculty uses elsewhere will be included in the *Inquiry Brief*. For example, evidence that is reported to the institution or state licensing authorities, or alluded to in publications, websites, catalogs, and the like must be included in the *Inquiry Brief*. Title II results, grades (if they are used for graduation, transfer, admission), admission test results (if they are used by the institution), hiring rates (if they are reported elsewhere) would all be included in the *Brief*.

Available evidence that is *not* cited elsewhere or used in decisions, placements and the like, and which the program does *not* use to support its claims and which are unrelated to *Quality Principle I* can simply be identified as both "Available" and "Not used in the *Brief*."

Although program faculty may be making its case for candidate achievement with several novel measures, it will also need to disclose all the traditional measures available to it, such as the grades the students have earned, the results of the state's license test that is reported for Title II, and the results of any admission tests the institution requires. The faculty may hold these measures in low regard and see each as problematic for several reasons. If it does, the faculty would simply indicate that the measure was available, but that it was investigated and found to be problematic because it was unreliable or invalid for the program.

Some forms of evidence listed in the inventory may be perfectly acceptable to the faculty, but the evidence is currently unavailable. In that case, the faculty would indicate that the evidence is unavailable at the current time, but not problematic and that it may employ the evidence in the future. Or, the faculty may indicate that some evidence is both unavailable at the present time and so problematic, costly, etc., that the faculty would not propose to examine it at any time in the future. The inventory affords the faculty the opportunity to indicate any of these possibilities with regard to each form of evidence (or any other forms of evidence) the faculty may wish to consider.

Appendix F
Local assessments

Many faculty have developed their own rating forms and evaluation instruments and copies of these locally unique assessments must be placed in Appendix F if there is evidence in the *Brief* that was based on them. While the auditors could use copies that were made available to them on-site, the members of the Accreditation Panel and the Accreditation Committee often rely on them to fully understand the evidence presented in the *Inquiry Brief* and the evidence proposed in the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*.

Appendix G
Programs accredited by other recognized accreditors

Some of TEAC's state protocols call for the accreditation of all the institution's professional education programs whether or not they are in the department, school, or college of education. TEAC recognizes the accreditation of these programs (e.g., school nurse, school librarian, school psychologist) that are ac-

Inventory: Status of evidence from measures and indicators for TEAC *Quality Principle I*

Type of Evidence	Available and in the *Brief*[7]			Not Available and Not in the *Brief*	
Note: items under each category are examples. Program may have more or different evidence	**Relied on** Reasons for including the results in the *Brief*	Location in *Brief*	**Not relied on** Reasons for not relying on this eficence	**For future use** Reasons for including in future *Briefs*	**Not for future use** Reasons for not including in future *Briefs*
Grades					
1.Student grades and grade point averages					
Scores on standardized tests					
2. Student scores on standardized license or board examinations					
3. Student scores on undergraduate and/or graduate admission tests of subject matter knowledge and aptitude					
4. Standardized scores and gains of the program graduates' own pupils					
Ratings					
5. Ratings of portfolios of academic and clinical accomplishments					
6. Third-party rating of program's students					
7. Ratings of in-service, clinical, and PDS teaching					
8. Ratings, by cooperating teacher and college/university supervisors, of practice teachers' work samples.					

[7] Assessment results related to TEAC *Quality Principle I* that the program faculty uses elsewhere must be included in the *Brief*. Evidence that is reported to the institution or state licensing authorities, or alluded to in publications, websites, catalogs, and the like must be included in the *Brief*. Therefore, Title II results, grades (if they are used for graduation, transfer, admission), admission test results (if they are used), hiring rates (if they are reported elsewhere) would all be included in the *Brief*.

Type of Evidence	Available and in the *Brief*[7]			Not Available and Not in the *Brief*	
Note: items under each category are examples. Program may have more or different evidence	**Relied on** Reasons for including the results in the *Brief* Location in *Brief*		**Not relied on** Reasons for not relying on this eficence Location in *Brief*	**For future use** Reasons for including in future *Briefs*	**Not for future use** Reasons for not including in future *Briefs*
Rates					
9. Rates of completion of courses and program					
10. Graduates' career retention rates					
11. Graduates' job placement rates					
12. Rates of graduates' professional advanced study					
13. Rates of graduates' leadership roles					
14. Rates of graduates' professional service activities					
Case studies and alumni competence					
15. Evaluations of graduates by their own pupils					
16. Alumni self-assessment of their accomplishments					
17. Third-party professional recognition of graduates (e.g., NBPTS)					
18. Employers' evaluations of the program's graduates					
19. Graduates' authoring of textbooks, curriculum materials, etc.					
20. Case studies of graduates' own pupils' learning and accomplishment					

credited by a recognized national accreditor (recognized by CHEA or USDE) for the purposes of TEAC fulfilling its protocol obligations to the state. In these instances, Appendix G contains the formal notification and documentation from the accreditor that the program was accredited.

Submitting the *Brief*

Programs should submit their *Briefs* as a single electronic file. If the program's email service does not permit large attachments, then the program may send the file by mail on a flash drive or CD. The electronic file should be in a format that allows commenting (e.g., Microsoft Word, Adobe Acrobat with commenting enabled). Note also that Appendix F needs to contain only the local forms from which data was analyzed and presented in the *Brief.*

Electronic *Briefs* may contain hyperlinks to websites and other submitted documents as appropriate. Sometimes programs prefer to construct their *Brief* on the web and while that may serve the program well in developing its *Brief*, TEAC will still need to have the *Brief* as a single file for its archive and for its work. The issue with an *IB* stored on the web is that it can be altered, and even removed, by non-TEAC staff and that would place TEAC out of compliance with its obligations to USDE and CHEA.

In addition TEAC needs to have at least five bound paper copies for the following functions:

1. Two copies, one for the lead auditor and one for a consulting auditor
2. A copy for the lead panelist
3. A copy for the lead accreditation committee member
4. A copy for the TEAC archive

Generally, TEAC has the capacity to project the materials the panel and committee need to see during their deliberations, but some members prefer to prepare with paper copies.

The five paper copies of the *Brief* with appendices should be mailed to the TEAC office at:

Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC)
Suite 101 Willard Hall Education Building
Newark, DE 19716

Checklist to accompany the submission of the *Inquiry Brief* and *Inquiry Brief Proposal*[8]

Requirement for the *Brief*	Find it on page	Still missing
1. We identify the author(s) of the document.		
2. We provide evidence that the faculty approved the document.		
3. We give a brief account of the history and logic of the program and its place within the institution.		
4. We provide some demographics of program faculty and students (e.g., race and gender), broken out by year, by each program option.		
5. We state our claims explicitly and precisely.		
6. We provide evidence to support our claims organized by their relationship to the components of *QPI* (1.1–1.3).		
7. We provide evidence for all the subcomponents of *QPI* (I.4): learning how to learn (1.4.1); multicultural perspectives and accuracy (1.4.2) and technology (1.4.3).		
8. We have checked that our claims are consistent with other program documents (e.g., catalogs, websites and brochures).		
9. In the rationale, we explain why we selected our particular measures and why we thought these measures would be reliable and valid indicators of our claims.		
10. In the rationale, we also explain why we think the criteria and standards we have selected as indicating success are appropriate.		
11. We describe our method of acquiring our evidence — the overall design of our approach, including sampling and comparison groups (if applicable).		
12. We provide at least two measures for each claim unless there is a single measure of certain or authentic validity.		
13. For each measure we include empirical evidence of the degree of reliability and validity.		
14. We present findings related to each claim, and we offer a conclusion for each claim, explaining how our evidence supports or does not support the claim.		
15. We describe how we have recently used evidence of student performance in making decisions to change and improve the program.		
16. We provide a plan for making future decisions concerning program improvements based on evidence of our students' performance.		
17. We provide evidence that we have conducted an internal audit of our quality control system (QCS) and we present and discuss the implications of the findings from our internal audit.		
18. We provide Appendix C that describes faculty qualifications.		
19.. We provide Appendix D that describes our program requirements and their alignment with state and national standards.		
20. We make a case for institutional commitment to the program (Appendix B).		
21. We make a case that we have sufficient capacity to offer a quality program (Appendix B).		
22. We list all evidence (related to accreditation) available to the program (Appendix E).		
23. We provide copies of all locally developed assessments in Appendix F.		
24. We provide, if applicable, copies of decisions by other recognized accreditors for professional education programs not covered in the *Inquiry Brief* (Appendix G).		

[8] The checklist for the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* need not have entries for rows 6, 7, 13, 14 and 15.

Expanded information required for continuing accreditation

The program's first *Inquiry Brief* contained three implicit promises for the future and these need to be addressed in the program's subsequent bid for re-accreditation. These three were: a plan to undertake continuing inquiry into the factors that might influence candidate learning and accomplishment in the program; evidence that not only did the Quality Control System work more or less as it was designed, but that it improved program quality; and that some of the categories of evidence, cited in Appendix E, that were not available or relied upon in the first *Inquiry Brief* would be used in the subsequent *Brief*.

The *Inquiry Brief* from program faculty seeking continuing accreditation will make the case for accreditation with TEAC by including all the familiar elements outlined on pages 41–69, but within that framework, the program will also need to integrate information about the three points above into its *Inquiry Brief* for re-accreditation:

1. With regard to its plan for future and on-going inquiry, the faculty can provide a separate report of how the plan turned out, or the report can be included in the *Inquiry Brief* in the Discussion section if it does not exist in a separate format. The program is not obligated to conduct the inquiry it planned in its first *Brief*, but it is obligated to have conducted some inquiry to earn a full continuing accreditation term. If the program abandoned its initial plan for inquiry, it would simply give the reasons for its going in a different direction and report the results of the inquiry it in fact undertook.
2. With regard to evidence that the activities of the Quality Control System actually improved something in the program, the faculty should report the evidence it has that it has made something better in the program. This evidence may be the same as that undertaken in Item 1 above or it may be in some other area of interest to the faculty.
3. With regard to how the evidence promised in Appendix E "for future use" has been addressed, the faculty may either include it or provide reasons for not using it.

There is always the hope and expectation that the faculty seeking reaccreditation will also have refined and enhanced the quality of the evidence it uses to make its case so that it is more persuasive and conclusive than what was submitted in the prior *Inquiry Brief*.

PART FIVE: INGREDIENTS OF THE *INQUIRY BRIEF PROPOSAL*

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The *Inquiry Brief Proposal* (for initial accreditation status)

The *Inquiry Brief Proposal* presents a plan for acquiring evidence, beyond that submitted for state program approval, that the program meets TEAC's *Quality Principle I.* The program faculty may have some evidence that meets a research standard about its program, or may have results from pilot studies or from evaluations of prior versions of the program, to report. Such evidence may be indicative of what the faculty expects to report in the *Inquiry Brief;* in the context of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal,* however, such historical or pilot evidence is best regarded as part of the program's **rationale** for its assessments as it constitutes one of the reasons the faculty selected and invested in these assessments.

The rationale for the assessments, required as part of *Quality Principle II,* is the central element of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* because in it the program faculty makes the case that the proposed assessments will yield the evidence of student learning at a standard that TEAC requires to satisfy *Quality Principle I.*

Because the evidence of reliability and validity of the method of assessment, also required by *Quality Principle I,* is invariably based upon the results of the assessments, the faculty may not have adequate evidence of validity, either. The faculty members may, however, have pilot studies of validity, or they may have published studies of these assessments as used in other programs.

In the absence of any prior or empirical work about the assessments, the faculty members explain why their likely interpretations of the proposed measures would be valid and credible and how they will determine the reliability and validity of the measures and assessments they are proposing.

Although the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* cannot fulfill all the requirements of *Quality Principle I,* it can and should fulfill the requirements of *Quality Principles II* and *III* by presenting the evidence that the program faculty has a quality control system that functions as it was designed and promotes program improvement. Also, in fulfillment of *Quality Principle II* the faculty can show how it has relied on evidence of student learning in the past to shape the program it is seeking to have accredited by TEAC.

In their *Inquiry Brief Proposal,* the faculty members must present evidence that the institution is committed to the program. An effective way to do this, as in the *Inquiry Brief,* is by showing that the statistics about their program with regard to capacity are equivalent or superior to the same statistics about the institution as a whole.

The complete case that the program's quality control system monitors quality entails evidence that the steps the faculty takes to control quality actually have some positive impact on student learning and accomplishment. For this reason, the *Inquiry Brief Proposal,* like the *Inquiry Brief,* should describe the program faculty's plans for investigating the links between the program's capacity for quality and the evidence for *Quality Principle I.*

Content of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

Section 1.
Program overview

This opening section is identical to that described for the *Inquiry Brief* (see pages 41–42).

Section 2.
Claims and rationale

This section is also the same as in the *Inquiry Brief* (see pages 42–47). In the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* the term *claim* is used to indicate the proposed claim, the prediction, the hoped-for-outcome, or the hypothesis. The general guidelines for writing claims about the projected outcomes of the program are the same as they are for writing claims for the *Inquiry Brief*.

In the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*, claims are more appropriately advanced as questions in the same way that researchers advance their expectations and hunches as hypotheses and research questions. A claim in the program's proposal could read: *Is it the case that our graduates succeed on the state's curriculum standards tests?* The *Inquiry Brief Proposal* sets out the plan to answer this and other related questions in the affirmative.

The guidelines for the rationale of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* are the same as those for the *Inquiry Brief*.

Section 3.
Methods of assessment

In this section, the program faculty describes in detail the research design and the methods of assessment that it proposed in the rationale. It also describes, in detail, the methods by which it proposes to find the evidence it will use to support the claim that its assessments of student learning are reliable and valid. Here the program faculty proposes the methods by which it will assure itself and others that the claims it will make about its students are credible and that the proposed methods can be trusted and relied upon.

A program faculty will typically provide its evidence of student learning through some combination of the available evidence (see the inventory for Appendix E). Only in the *Inquiry Brief* must the program faculty report all the evidence available. However, in writing the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*, the faculty will also need to consider research design issues discussed in the section on methods in Part Four, above (see pages 47–51).

Section 4.
Results

The results section of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* briefly describes the kinds of data and evidence that can be expected in the *Inquiry Brief*. The proposal may contain results from previous analyses, or pilot studies, which would be predictive of results that will be expected and used to support the claims that will be made in the subsequent *Inquiry Brief* itself. The section may also contain evidence that speaks to the reliability and validity of the measures the faculty is proposing to use. If the faculty members have had the opportunity to investigate the properties of measures they have used for some time, they may already have some evidence about the reliability and validity of the measures they are proposing. It is appropriate to present this evidence in the results section of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*.

The proposed evidence, whether quantitative or qualitative, should be representative of the program under review and not idiosyncratic to a particular time period or circumstance. In cases where a program is undergoing revisions and renewal, the results should be of a character that will support a sound prediction of what future results will be.

Section 5.
Discussion and plan

This section also speaks to two elements of *Quality Principle II*: (1) how the program and the plan for continuous improvement of the program will be

affected by the expected results, and (2) how past decisions about the program have been influenced by the results from the operation of the quality control system. (See pages 52–53.)

Section 6.
References

In this section, the faculty lists all works and sources mentioned in the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. (See page 53.)

Section 7.
Appendices

The *Inquiry Brief Proposal* should have the same appendices as does the *Inquiry Brief*. (See pages 54–68.)

Evaluation of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

See Part Three of this guide for a full description of TEAC's five-step evaluation process and the questions that inform each step. (See pages 39–40.)

Formative evaluation

As with the *Inquiry Brief*, faculty preparing an *Inquiry Brief Proposal* will submit draft sections to TEAC for staff review and consultation.

Audit

TEAC audits the program, based on the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. The auditors select samples of text and evidence that are particularly revealing and representative of the totality of the claims the program faculty members have presented in the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. The auditors are free to search for additional evidence in the process of the audit. These discoveries may support, strengthen, or weaken the verification of the evidence, or proposed evidence, behind the program faculty's claims with regard to the rationale, *Quality Principle III*, and the evidence of commitment and capacity.

Summative evaluation

On the recommendation of TEAC's Accreditation Panel, TEAC's Accreditation Committee decides whether or not to grant initial accreditation.

In their deliberations, the panel and committee are guided by a set of heuristics for the accreditation decision. These heuristics are the same for both the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* and the *Inquiry Brief* with regard to *Quality Principle II* (2.1, 2.2 and 2.3), and the evidence of commitment and capacity for *Quality Principle III*.

PART SIX:
THE TEAC AUDIT

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Overview of the TEAC audit

One defining feature of the TEAC accreditation process is the academic audit: a team of auditors visits a campus to examine and verify on site the evidence that supports the claims made in the professional education program's *Inquiry Brief* or the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*.

The team of two to four TEAC-trained auditors visits the campus for two to three days. In some cases, the visit may be extended if the audit challenge is especially complex or broad.

It is TEAC's philosophy that throughout all stages of the accreditation process, TEAC and the program faculty maintain open and frequent communications on any and all relevant matters. Maintaining communication is especially important during the audit process, as is understanding the process and the responsibilities of each party involved.

Scope of the audit

The audit process does not address the basic accreditation question of whether or not the evidence is compelling, persuasive, sufficient, or convincing. Instead, the audit, with the exception of the case for institutional commitment, determines only whether the descriptions and characterizations of evidence in the *Brief* are accurate. The auditors' question is no more or no less than *Are the statements in the* Brief *accurate?*

In designing and conducting the audit, TEAC staff and auditors use as a guide the general instructions laid out in TEAC's annotated template of principles and standards.

Responsibilities

Before the audit, TEAC staff, the auditors, and the program faculty should review the responsibilities of all involved, described directly below, and the details of the TEAC audit process described in this section. The program faculty and TEAC staff members share responsibilities for supporting the work of the auditors on site, and the auditors have very specific responsibilities before, during, and after the audit.

The program's responsibilities. For the year in which a program's *Brief* is audited, the institution currently pays an audit fee of $2,000 per *Brief*. In addition, the institution is responsible for all costs related to each audit and audit team (two to four people, over two to four days): lodging (up to four nights), food, travel, and fees ($1,500 per auditor; an honorarium of at least $100 per day for the on-site practitioners and the cost of a substitute if the practitioner is a classroom teacher). The audit fee and related audit costs are separate from the membership dues.

The program faculty under review will be responsible for designating an audit coordinator who is responsible for the logistical aspects of the audit visit. The duties of the coordinator might include the following:

1. Make provisions for lodging, meals, transportation, and the handling of expenses.
2. Schedule interviews and meeting rooms.
3. Nominate a teacher or administrator to serve on the audit team as the local practitioner.
4. Provide email addresses for faculty, students, and cooperating teachers to whom TEAC will send an electronic survey.
5. Provide administrative support such as access to telephones, a fax machine, computers, the Internet, photocopiers, and secretarial services.
6. Ensure that the auditors are able to obtain needed information, documentation, and other evidence necessary to complete the audit.

TEAC's responsibilities. Before the audit visit, TEAC staff will be responsible for the following:

1. Scheduling the audit, assigning auditors, sharing auditors' cv's with the program for review.

2. Communicating with the audit coordinator to assure that all logistical arrangements have been made satisfactorily.

3. Communicating with the auditors to discuss logistical arrangements, the visit schedule, the ethical obligations of auditors, and other audit policies and concerns.

4. Preparing, with the auditors and the chair of the Accreditation Panel, the initial audit tasks, with reference to any matters in the *Brief* that seem of particular interest or show signs of being problematic.

5. Reviewing the auditors' summary of the case.

After the audit, TEAC staff sends the audit report to the program for review.

Auditors' responsibilities. TEAC auditors have five interrelated responsibilities:

1. **Understand.** At the outset of the audit, the auditors must understand the *Brief* and the local contexts about which the *Brief* is written. This understanding helps build a sense of rapport and confidence among the parties, thereby avoiding the tense and confrontational relationship that sometimes characterizes audits in other circumstances.

   TEAC auditors base their judgments solely on the evidence and not on preconceived ideas or biases, no matter what their source. The auditors therefore make every effort to fully understand the contexts in which they are operating and to treat all persons they meet with respect and comity.

2. **Verify.** The text of the *Inquiry Brief* or the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* and the selected evidence are the *targets* of the audit.

   The auditors verify the text of the *Brief*, and they do this by examining the *referents* of the text to be sure that the text is accurate with respect to the meaning of the language, data, and evidence. The auditors examine and probe the accuracy of the language of selected formal statements of the program's goals, claims, rationale, and the TEAC quality control system. These probes are meant to verify that the language is precise, trustworthy, and means exactly what it seems to say.

3. **Corroborate.** Sometimes the verification purposes of the audit lead the auditors to examine evidence that was not cited in the *Brief* but which nevertheless has a direct bearing on their verification of the evidence and the precision of the language in the *Brief*. The auditors, in fact, sometimes seek evidence that was not in the *Brief* to corroborate, reinforce, or disconfirm the evidence that is in the *Brief.*

4. **Judge.** The auditors come to a conclusion about whether any errors they find in the *Brief* are trivial or consequential and alter the meaning of text. If the error is minor and trivial, then the target is scored as verified but with a note of the error. If it the error is of consequence and significant and alters the meaning, then the target is scored as not verified and the error noted.

   To do this, the auditors must distinguish between errors in the *Brief* that are of no significance or consequence to the meaning of the text and errors that change the meaning of the text and lead a reader to a misinterpretation of the evidence.

   In addition to verifying the evidence in the *Brief*, the auditors also make a determination of whether the evidence is sufficient to support the claim that the institution is committed to the program.

5. **Represent TEAC.** Auditors represent TEAC as an organization and as the embodiment of a new idea about specialized accreditation in higher education. As such, the TEAC auditors answer questions, grant interviews, and present TEAC positions in informal and formal occasions.

   It is expected that during the visit to the campus, auditors may, at the discretion of the program faculty, meet with campus and state

leaders to exchange greetings, to answer any questions about TEAC and the TEAC processes, and to corroborate evidence and argument found in the *Brief*. The training program that TEAC provides for auditors prepares them to answer questions that can be anticipated and gives them procedures for responding to questions that have not been anticipated and which challenge the auditors' knowledge.

In all exchanges, it is important that the auditors acknowledge their own limited roles, and that the campus representatives respect the limits of the auditors' roles. With the exception of the evidence about institutional commitment, auditors do not make evaluative decisions about accreditation, nor should they be asked to. Also, they are not on campus to suggest how programs might be improved or to offer personal positions about accreditation issues in higher education. Auditors of *Inquiry Brief Proposals*, however, may make suggestions on how the case the program plans to make in its eventual *Inquiry Brief* could be made stronger.

Ten principles to guide auditors in their work (or, what programs should expect from TEAC auditors)

These ten principles describe the qualities the program faculty, staff, and students should expect from a TEAC auditor:

1. **TEAC auditors maintain confidentiality during and after audits.** Auditors do not discuss or share their knowledge of programs or institutions, faculty, staff, and students with others except as required to fulfill their responsibilities to TEAC. In particular this means that they should not discuss at one institution the auditing experiences they had at another institution. There is a *need to know* criterion about shared information from site to site, but interpreting the *need to know* should be done as cautiously and conservatively as possible. (See principle 9, below.)

2. **TEAC auditors commit fully to the process of the audit.** The auditors are prepared to participate in all activities related to the audit. While on site, they maintain focus and are not distracted from the work at hand by making and receiving phone calls, faxes, emails and other messages. Auditors are instructed to arrange personal and professional schedule according to the requirements of the audit.

3. **TEAC auditors disclose any conflict of interest.** Auditors should not audit programs at institutions where there is any appearance of a conflict of interest, such as could exist if the auditor:
   - Worked at the institution at some previous time;
   - Applied for a position at the institution at some previous time;
   - Is or was involved in a professional or personal conflict or collaboration with a member of the institution's faculty now or at some previous time; or
   - Is a candidate, or will soon be a candidate, for a position at the institution.

   None of these conditions will necessarily disqualify a person as a consulting auditor of a program at an institution. However, the person alone cannot decide whether a conflict of interest exists. The decision must be made by TEAC in consultation with the institution. Because TEAC staff will not be able to know if these or similar conditions exist, it is incumbent upon potential auditors to bring them to the attention of TEAC staff.

   While TEAC's policies firmly discourage gift-giving, receptions, banquets, and entertainment during the audit visit, sometimes these cannot be avoided altogether, and in these rare instances the auditors must be vigilant that their decision-making is not compromised as a result.

4. **TEAC auditors are sensitive to privacy issues.** If faculty members or their faculty representatives show reluctance to share data that are requested by the auditors, then the auditors are instructed to be sensitive to their feelings and stop asking for them. If the data are central to the auditing process, the auditors will contact TEAC for direction in these matters. Privacy issues are very important to faculty and to TEAC, and care is needed to respect them and seek other ways to verify the evidence in the *Brief*. TEAC has also anticipated the fact that other ways may not be possible (see *disclaimer* audit opinions).

5. **TEAC auditors do not evaluate the program or offer judgments or commendations to program faculty or institutional representatives.** At no time should auditors characterize the data they are reviewing in an *Inquiry Brief* in terms of whether or not they

provide support for the faculty claims (except data about institutional commitment and the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* plan). It is important that TEAC auditors stay in role on this question — speaking and reporting *only* to whether the evidence in the *Brief* is accurate and fairly represented.

6. **TEAC auditors are not coaches or consultants.** Auditors should not advance suggestions about how programs can be improved, how *Inquiry Briefs* might be improved, or how the program's chances for accreditation can be improved. Auditors are not to diagnose weaknesses in education programs, nor volunteer advice on these matters. Auditors of *Inquiry Brief Proposals*, however, are at liberty to seek information that will strengthen the program's eventual case and otherwise advise the program about methods that might be better suited to the program's argument.

7. **TEAC auditors characterize TEAC policies with great care.** It is important that auditors qualify their interpretations or cite the language in one of the TEAC publications that officially addresses the questions posed to the auditor. In case of doubt, and without being dismissive, auditors will suggest that the inquirers to call the TEAC office for official interpretations of TEAC policies.

8. **TEAC auditors maintain a professional distance between themselves and the program faculty.** Every event during the visit is part of the audit. Auditors are constantly on the alert for information that corroborates or disconfirms the information in the *Brief*. The audit team makes the best use of its time through continuous inquiry. Although sharing rides or meals with faculty and administrators during the audit sessions should be avoided if at all possible, meals are sometimes an efficient and effective way to convene a group; in such instances, auditors use the occasion to verify targets of interest. The issue is maintaining an optimum and uncompromised professional distance. Auditors should not be cold, aloof, or unfriendly.

9. **TEAC auditors are discreet.** Auditors share information and perceptions with discipline and care. Wherever auditors travel, whether to large cities or remote rural areas, they will find that the *community* represented by the institution is also well represented in airports, restaurants, and public transportation. Although the auditor might feel safe in off-campus sites to characterize, for example, an exchange with a faculty member, or to portray a data set advanced to support a claim, such activity is extremely unwise.

10. **TEAC auditors are positive and sensitive.** Auditors are expected to make every effort to convey the attitude that their purpose is to verify the evidence in the *Brief*. They should avoid any mannerism that could be taken as a "gotcha" style or inquisitor approach to the audit. They are there to verify, and their demeanor should make it clear that they are willing to go the extra mile to verify and corroborate evidence. Should they fail to verify some evidence, which undoubtedly will happen, they must make doubly sure they are correct, and then take care not embarrass the faculty with the revelation or otherwise call attention to their disappointment over the negative findings. This approach, apart from flowing from TEAC's core beliefs, also increases the likelihood that the faculty will cooperate and be forthcoming with auditors and as a result that the audit will successfully arrive at the proper conclusion.

The TEAC audit

Before the audit

TEAC's process of formative evaluation includes reviewing the *Brief* to ensure that it (1) is complete, (2) addresses the appropriate elements and components of the TEAC system, and (3) is written clearly and precisely. When TEAC is satisfied that the *Brief* meets all requirements, then it declares the *Brief* "auditable."

Once the program's *Brief* has been accepted as auditable, TEAC staff and the program faculty schedule and plan the audit. TEAC will assign a team of auditors and schedule the audit. (*See the TEAC audit schedule in Part One of this guide.*)

Once selected, the audit team members insure that there are no undeclared conflicts of interest surrounding their participation in the audit. In this initial period of planning for the auditors' visit, program faculty members have an opportunity to review the resumes of the members of the audit team to identify any potential conflicts of interest that may exist and that the match between the auditor's qualifications and the program is appropriate. TEAC officers and program faculty will negotiate claims of conflicts of interests.

After their study of the *Brief*, the auditors will propose audit tasks (see "Constructing audit tasks," below) and review the audit tasks proposed by others. Some audit tasks can be conducted without an on-site analysis; in those cases, the auditor may conduct the analysis before arriving on site.

Then, TEAC and the program faculty will determine what evidence the program must make available to the auditors, the interviews that need to be scheduled, and the observations that are required. In some instances, TEAC and program faculty may agree that some data records can be sent to the auditors prior to the visit to make more efficient use of their on-site time.

Next, the auditors prepare a **summary of the case**. The summary of the case explicates the case the program has made to support its claims; it tells the program's story, but in the auditors' words. The purpose of the summary is at least threefold: (1) to convey to the authors (and to others) that the auditors' fully understand the *Brief's* meanings and contexts; (2) to facilitate the construction of the final audit strategy; and (3) to provide the members of the Accreditation Panel and Accreditation Committee with an accurate summary of the case the *Brief* makes.

The auditors' summary of the case generally has the following parts:

1. The auditors briefly describe in one or two paragraphs the salient characteristics of the institution and program (type, location, age, number of faculty and students, mission, relevant demographic information and any unique and distinguishing features).

2. The auditors restate, in their own words, the claims advanced in the *Brief* related to TEAC's *Quality Principle I,* the categories of evidence the program cites supporting the claims, the nature of the evidence is presenting, and the program's evidence related to the reliability and validity of the measures used to assess the claims.

3. The auditors summarize the principal results of the program's internal audit and the findings reported in Appendix B related to institutional commitment to the program.

4. Finally, because the auditors are *telling the program's story,* they do not comment about aspects of the case for accreditation that they may think are weak or problematic. Nor do they make the case stronger than the program faculty made it. The summary is *about* the program's case, not the case the auditors would have made or could have made.

The lead auditor prepares the initial draft of the summary of the case; other members of the team review

it, and once the team accepts the summary, TEAC sends it to the program head, who corrects any errors the auditors may have made.

Constructing audit tasks

The audit is a series of tasks, each assigned to an aspect of the *Brief* that is also associated with one of the principles or standards of the TEAC system.

Before the auditors arrive at a campus, the TEAC staff and the auditors will have created a set of initial audit tasks that are directed at the parts of the *Brief* that are relevant for one or another of the TEAC principles. They are called *initial* tasks because the auditors may also employ follow-up tasks and new tasks that they create during the audit or that they draw from the larger set of potential audit tasks TEAC has created. The auditors may also have created a set of questions (called clarification tasks) about any aspects of the *Brief* that were unclear to them or puzzling to which the program faculty respond in writing at a time that is convenient for them, but preferably before the audit visit.

An audit task is composed of a ***target*** and a ***probe***. The *audit task* is constructed by selecting some aspect of the *Brief* text (the *target*) and *probing* it.

A *target* is what the auditors are seeking to verify in the *Brief*. A target can be a particular sentence, claim, statistic, number, or piece of evidence. Each target is linked to an element, component, or subcomponent of the TEAC system.

A *probe* is a specific action taken by the auditor to establish whether the portrayal of the evidence for a target is accurate. If the result of the probe of a target is ambiguous or in cases where the outcomes of a probe are variable or uncertain with regard to the accuracy of the evidence for a target in the *Brief*, the auditors probe further until a stable pattern is uncovered or until a probe's result is unambiguous.

A target is verified if the auditor determines that the evidence, statistic, or claim, representing the target is accurate. This judgment can be made even if there are slight and inconsequential inaccuracies in the targeted text of the *Brief*.

The following are examples of possible audit task probes that would be directed at the verification of some target in the *Brief*. Some audit task probes are also designed to corroborate targets in the *Brief* but with evidence that may not have been cited in the *Brief* but is available on site to the auditors.

1. Check records, such as minutes of meetings or memos on file of faculty actions in making program decisions claimed in the *Brief.*
2. Review notes taken of interviews with focus groups and with students at their exit from the program from which summaries are prepared or generalizations included in the *Brief* are induced.
3. Inspect the responses received from stakeholders who were surveyed by the program about the program and whose responses are summarized in tables or in narrative in the *Brief.*
4. Re-compute percentages, means, standard deviations, and correlations, etc., reported in the *Brief* from the original spreadsheets and check the accuracy of the spreadsheet entries from raw data.
5. Use institutional records to re-compute the means and standard deviations of grade point averages, license test scores, admission test scores, etc., reported in the *Brief.*
6. Survey students, faculty, and cooperating teachers about the accomplishments of the students with regard to *Quality Principle I* components.
7. Have raters re-apply the coding schemes used to draw inferences from qualitative data to see if the results can be reproduced.
8. Interview senior administrators to uncover evidence of the institution's commitment to the program.
9. Pose teaching scenarios and dilemmas to students and faculty to determine if their responses align with the description of the program's mission, goals, and claims in the *Inquiry Brief.*
10. Check reports concerning the reliability of multiple observers by asking the observers to rate a videotaped student teaching event, a portfolio, or some other artifact and computing the appropriate coefficients of agreement.

11. Tour the campus to verify cited evidence about claims concerning facilities, resources, and services available to program candidates, the availability of computers, faculty office space, and other capacity-related issues.

12. Check brochures, catalogs, and websites to make sure the information found in the *Brief* is consistent with the information found in these sources.

13. Examine both the data (video tapes, transcripts, field notes) and the procedures for coding the data for evidence used to support claims.

14. Examine data sets (also institutional and state reports where those same data are provided) to verify evidence of parity of funds, space, full-time faculty equivalent per student enrollment of the program with other programs on campus.

15. Interview faculty who participated in the deliberations leading to program change, examine minutes of meetings, and inspect the copies of proposals that were taken to the faculty or administration for action to determine if the *Brief* claims that changes were made in the program after considering data generated by the quality control system.

16. Visit class sessions to see if the facilities, pedagogical values, and substance of the lesson(s) align with descriptions found in the *Brief.*

17. Interview faculty who conducted the internal audit probes and inspect their records to determine that the audit was undertaken as described.

18. Interview students and faculty who were the focus of the internal audit probes to ascertain that the characterizations found in the internal audit report in Appendix A are accurate.

19. Interview faculty with regard to any errors they found in the *Brief* with regard to the portrayal of the program and its characteristics.

20. Examine files and archives describing actions taken by the faculty to improve the program to document the accuracy of the characterizations of these actions in the *Brief.*

Of course, situations will vary from site to site. Claims and the sources of data for claims that have not been anticipated may arise, and auditors may need to consider additional kinds of probes to use in their efforts to determine if the statements and evidence found in the *Brief* are accurate.

TEAC prescribes the following features for some of the audit tasks. At least one audit task must meet each of the following conditions:

1. The auditors must observe a session of at least two regularly scheduled courses that the program offers.

2. The auditors must interview the students in the program's sample for its internal audit or for the evidence cited for *Quality Principle I.*

3. The auditors must interview a sample of cooperating teachers.

4. The auditors must select four facilities cited in the *Brief* and tour each to verify their existence and similarity to their description in the *Brief.*

5. The auditors must verify the program's plan to investigate, or an investigation, of a link between student learning and any program factor.

6. The auditors must interview members of the administration to verify their commitment to the program, their allocation of resources to the program, and their qualifications for their positions.

7. The auditors must verify that the call for comment from third parties was distributed to the parties required by TEAC policy.

8. The auditors must verify that the raters were trained and the rating forms and instruments exist.

The auditors must note any discrepancies between characterizations of the institution described in the *Brief* and the experience of the site visit, particularly facts at variance with what is reported in Appendix E.

On-site audit activities

The auditors' verification process entails the review of relevant documents and interviews with representatives of the institution, faculty, staff, and students associated with the program. The sorts of activities the auditors might undertake, and the data to which the auditors need to have access, are described below.

Review of the pre-visit audit tasks

The auditors *tell the story* of the program seeking accreditation so that the program faculty can be assured that the auditors have understood the *Brief* in the manner intended by the program faculty. The *story* (summary of the case*)* will have been sent to the program faculty before the audit so the faculty members can respond with corrections and amendments. The point is to ensure that the auditors and program faculty can conduct the rest of the audit from a common basis of understanding of the *Brief*.

Understanding the local context. During this first meeting with program faculty, after the introductions are complete, the discussion turns to the summary of the case prepared by the TEAC staff and auditors and sent to the program faculty before the audit visit.

The auditors seek the program faculty's reaction to the summary of the case*:* Does it hit the mark? Is it complete? Has it distorted any elements of the *Brief*? The auditors should receive feedback from the faculty without argument or debate. When the auditors write their report, they will also amend the summary, based on these comments from the program faculty.

Having determined that the auditors understood the *Brief* at a level acceptable to the program faculty, the auditors move to clarifying their own understanding, or misunderstanding, of the *Brief*.

Clarification. Before the audit visit, the auditors may have asked the authors and endorsers of the *Brief* to clarify any language used in the *Brief* that may be unclear to the auditors. This effort is critical because it is essential that the program faculty believe that the auditors understand the *Brief*. TEAC believes that this feature of the audit process helps to build the rapport between the audit team members and the program faculty that comes when one party feels the other party understands its positions.

Before the audit visit, the auditors sample from a pool of statements in the text that may have been unclear to them and ask the program faculty to put in writing their explanation and clarification of the text. The auditors need to probe assertions made in the *Brief* to determine if the referents exist and mean exactly what they seem to mean. The purpose of these probes is to verify that the match between the referent and the language in the *Brief* is accurate and precise. The auditors can verify the program's assertions only if the language is clear and precise.

The audit tasks focused on language are designed to clarify text that is ambiguous or that, when explained, may be particularly revealing of the program faculty members' thinking about matters related to the quality principles. Through this process, the auditors provide the Accreditation Panel members with a basis for determining the degree to which the language and evidence in the *Brief mean exactly what they seem to.*

Review of on-site audit tasks

The main purpose of the audit is to verify the evidence the program faculty has cited in support of its claims with respect to the quality principles. From a pool of audit targets, the auditors select a sample that is particularly revealing and representative of the totality of the evidence the program faculty has presented in the *Brief*. The auditors divide some tasks among themselves, and others, such as interviewing students, administrators, and faculty or observing classes, together as a full team. Throughout the entire visit, the auditors are alert and sensitive to unobtrusive information that may have a bearing on the targets of the audit.

While the auditors are on site, they use the evenings and team meals as opportunities for debriefing. The auditors make mid-course corrections in the audit tasks, modify the agenda and schedule as needed, develop new audit trails, and review preliminary impressions and observations.

Verifying the evidence related to specific claims. The *Brief* includes the evidence the faculty uses to support its claims related to the program's goal of preparing *competent, qualified,* and *caring* professionals as well as to support the claim that the institution has the capacity to offer a quality program. The auditors do *not* judge whether the claims are true or even credible. The auditors do not judge, for example, whether or not the program's graduates understand pedagogy or whether the evidence is persuasive or weak. They judge only whether or not the evidence cited in support of the graduate's understanding of pedagogy is in fact what is reported in the *Brief*. For example, if the program faculty relies on a mean score on a standardized test to advance and support its claim that the program's graduates understand pedagogy, the auditors will check to see if, in fact, the score the program's graduates earned on the test is as the program faculty reports in the *Brief*. They will not express an opinion about whether the score actually shows the graduates understand pedagogy.

Corroborating evidence. Throughout the audit the auditors are alert to the discovery of evidence that was not cited in the *Brief* but has a direct bearing (positive or negative) on the verification of the evidence and the clarity and precision of the language in the *Brief.* The auditors are charged with assuring the Accreditation Panel that there is evidence behind the claims made in the *Brief.* There are two kinds of errors the auditors need to avoid: (1) false positive errors (concluding the evidence is present and accurate when it is not); and (2) false negative errors (concluding there is no evidence for a claim when in fact there is).[1]

Errors. The auditors must also determine whether any errors they find in the *Brief* are trivial or are of some consequence to the meaning of the text. When a misstatement is trivial and of no consequence, the targeted text is not misleading in spite of the error and the statement means more or less the same thing with the error as without the error.

For example, if the auditors had recalculated a mean score and found it was 3.16 instead of the 3.06 reported in a table or in some text, it is probably the case that the targeted text would have the same meaning whether the mean is one or the other value. If the faculty claimed they are *constructivists* and it turns out in response to the auditors' probes that they meant only that they are *Piagetians,* the statement is still acceptably accurate.

The errors, or misstatements, that are *of consequence* are those that alter the meaning of a targeted statement in the *Brief* in such a way that the statement could mislead the reader and as result it is not verified. If the *Brief* asserts, for example, that the program students have two faculty advisors, one in arts & science and one in education, and the auditors find in their review of student files, that only 10% of the students had two advisors, the auditors would be unable to verify the program's assertion. In this instance the auditors would attempt to verify the assertion in other ways – perhaps interviewing a sample of students about the number of advisors they had, interviewing the arts and science faculty about whether they advised education students, or asking the program's administrators why their student files were incomplete, etc. If these additional probes yielded more or less the same outcome, the program's claim of two advisors cannot be relied upon. If on the other hand 95% of the students had two advisors, the program's assertion, while in error, is acceptably accurate and no reader would be misled appreciably by believing it. The auditors would score the target as verified with error and state what the error was (viz., 5% of the students did not have two advisors).

If the recalculated mean (to take the example above) differed by more than 25 percent of the standard deviation from the reported mean, the misstatement of the mean is probably *of consequence* and the audi-

[1] False negative errors are somewhat less likely than false positive errors as the former would surely be noted in the program faculty's response to the audit report while the latter might not be mentioned.

tors would conclude that the reported and misstated mean was not confirmed and verified.

Final on-site session

In its final on-site session, the audit team considers the findings from each audit task and formulates its audit opinions. The team also analyzes the evidence about institutional commitment and determines whether or not the evidence is sufficient to support the conclusion that the institution is committed to the program. The team uses the session to start planning the **audit report**.

Judging. The auditors must come to a conclusion about whether or not the evidence advanced by the faculty in support of the TEAC quality principles, the capacity components, and internal audit was in fact verified. The auditors also must make a separate determination of whether the evidence of institutional commitment is sufficient to support the claim that the institution is committed to the program.

In their audit report, the trustworthiness of the evidence for *Quality Principle III* is represented in two tables in the Audit Report in which the auditors show what they have found with regard to the documentation for each subcomponent of parity and capacity. The auditors give one of the following four judgments (audit opinions) about the overall trustworthiness of the *Brief* and about *Quality Principles I* and *II:*

1. **Clean opinion**: A clean audit opinion is given when most of the evidence (at least 90%) in the *Brief* that bears on a principle is free of significant errors and found to be trustworthy on that account.
2. **Qualified opinion**: A qualified opinion is given when much of the evidence in the *Brief* (at least 75%) that bears on a principle is free of major errors and the evidence is found to be acceptably trustworthy on that account.
3. **Adverse opinion**: An element is assigned an adverse opinion when a significant portion of evidence (more than 25%) in the *Brief* that bears on it cannot be confirmed and verified.
4. **Disclaimer opinion**: An element is assigned a disclaimer opinion when it is not possible to verify a significant portion of the evidence in the *Brief* that pertains to the element owing to missing data, limited access to information and informants, or policies and regulations that preclude the auditors' access to the information they would need to verify a target.

Post-audit activities

After the visit, the team drafts the Audit Report. TEAC then sends the draft to the program for review. With TEAC staff, the auditors respond to any comments from the program faculty, negotiate points raised by the faculty, and finalize the Audit Report. The auditors might meet in person, if convenient, or communicate by phone or electronically. Finally, the lead auditor, as a non-voting member of the Accreditation Panel, participates in the discussions of the case in the panel meeting devoted to the program's *Brief.*

Audit Report

Immediately after their campus visit, the auditors prepare the Audit Report, which is submitted to TEAC and the program faculty within a time period that maintains the time limits of the program's audit cycle and insures that the program can be considered at the cycle's panel meeting. It is submitted first in draft form inviting comment, and subsequently in final, official, form.

In the Audit Report, the auditors give their opinion about the accuracy of the evidence in the *Brief* and summarize their findings about each principle. The auditors do not comment on the implication the evidence holds for the accreditation decision.

Within two weeks of receiving the Audit Report, the program faculty must correct any factual errors. At this time, the program may formally respond in writing to the findings of the audit. After correcting factual errors and considering any responses by the program faculty, the auditors submit a final Audit Report to the TEAC staff, program faculty, and Accreditation Panel.

The Audit Report includes seven major sections:

Section I: Introduction. The first part of this section contains the final and agreed upon version of the summary of the case. The second part gives the auditors' overall opinion about the *trustworthiness* of the *Brief* and its parts devoted to the quality principles. The auditors' judgment about the level of institutional commitment to the program and logistics of the audit are also included in the introduction.

Section II: Audit Map. This section gives a table of audit findings, displaying the number of tasks devoted to *Quality Principles I* and *II* components and the audit tasks by number that were verified, verified with error, and not verified. The purpose of the audit map is to insure that the targets adequately sampled TEAC's requirements and to give an overview and summary of the audit conclusions.

Section III: Method. This section briefly describes the character and method of the audit.

Section IV: Findings. The third part is a full report of the findings from the auditors' probes into the evidence included in the *Brief* related to each of the TEAC quality principles. It is organized by quality principle and gives a summary of the audit findings for each principle.

The findings for *Quality Principle III* are presented in tabular form showing whether or not the auditors were able to find documentation for each requirement for parity and capacity. The tables state what documentation the auditor sought and whether it was *Found, Found in Part, Not Found, Not Checked,* or *Not Available*. In cases where the documentation was incomplete or otherwise problematic, the auditors often follow-up with an audit task in connection with *Quality Principle II.*

The findings for *Quality Principles I* and *II* are presented in the following format:

> **Audit task # and** TEAC number (the number of the requirement of the TEAC system, 1.1-2.3, to which its verification is relevant).
>
> **Target:** The auditors cite by page number and quotation the text, table cell entry, etc., in the *Brief* that they are attempting to verify.

Probe: The action the auditors took to verify the target is stated (e.g., interview, calculate, corroborate, pose a problem, set a task, inspect a document, etc.).

Finding: The result of the action is described in a narrative, sometimes including a table of results from the auditors' analysis. The narrative is followed by the auditors' conclusion about the target's verification, which simply states one of the following conclusions and citations about the target: Verified (cites what precisely was verified), Verified with error (cites the minor error), or Not Verified (cites the significant error in the target).

Section V: Judgment about commitment. The auditors make a determination of whether the evidence of institutional commitment is sufficient to support the claim that the institution is committed to the program. In this section they refer to relevant audit tasks and may report additional evidence from surveys and interviews that bear on commitment but not necessarily on another target in the *Brief*.

Section VI: Audit Opinion. The sixth section contains the auditors' judgments, given as audit opinions, about whether or not the evidence advanced by the faculty in support of each element was verified. The section contains a table that gives the total number of audit targets, the number that were verified, the number that had errors, the percentage verified, and percentage with errors and the audit opinion related to these percentages. If a sufficient number of the probes confirm, or fail to confirm or verify the evidence, the report explains the findings and reasoning behind the auditors' opinions. The auditors are only guided by these percentages and if they deviate from them, they give their justifications for their conclusions.

Section VII: Audit Schedule. This section simply gives the detailed schedule of the audit visit.

Additional guidelines for TEAC auditors

The audit team's decision-making process

Substantive decisions

Audit tasks. Before the audit, the team selects appropriate targets and formulates audit probes that comprise the initial audit tasks. Some audit tasks will be constructed by the TEAC staff before the audit in response to particular concerns of the Accreditation Panel director. Before the audit visit, by consensus, the team agrees to a set of about 30 initial audit tasks.

Audit report. The audit team uses its final on-site session to come to consensus on the three key issues that must be reported in the audit report:

1. The determination of whether the target of each audit task was verified, verified with error, or not verified.
2. The formulation of the correct audit opinion for *Quality Principles I* and *II* and the overall *Brief*.
3. The judgment of whether or not the institution is committed to the program.

In the unlikely event that the team cannot reach a consensus on a point, the Audit Report notes the stalemate, the reasons for it, and moves to a conclusion, or conclusions, based upon other findings and opinions. It may be that the stalemate has no bearing on an accreditation decision, but if it does, the Audit Report presents the differing options, and consequences of the options, for the Accreditation Panel's deliberation.

The lead auditor, unless the team has agreed to another plan, writes the first and final drafts of the Audit Report, in consultation with the other member(s) of the team. The precise language of the report is negotiated by consensus, and, as above, both versions of any stalemate are noted in the final Audit Report.

Process decisions

The team makes many decisions about how the audit will be conducted. These decisions are made by consensus and based on equity and special competence. The principal decisions center on the schedule and the assignment of responsibility for various audit tasks to the team members. The lead auditor, however, has the final say in these matters should consensus be elusive.

Guidelines for the audit strategy

The lead auditor, the director of the Accreditation Panel, and TEAC's director of audits select the audit tasks. The particular **audit trail** (the sequence and nature of the audit tasks) is a matter of the auditors' professional judgments. A target is appropriate for probing if it is related to one of the elements and components of the TEAC system.

What commends one audit task over another, and what leads to some claims receiving more audit tasks than others? TEAC employs the following criteria for the crafting of the tasks that comprise the audit:

Centrality. There must be an audit task for each element, component, and subcomponent of the TEAC *Quality Principles I* and *II*. The centrality criterion for the selection of audit tasks provides a challenge for the auditors because the authors of the *Brief* are free to address the quality principles in differing ways. The auditors are required to audit targets related to each element, component, and subcomponent of the TEAC system, but the *Brief* authors may write claims and provide evidence that spans more than one element of the system. Because the same claim and data source may serve more than one element, a single audit task may help verify more than one part (e.g., the verification of the student teaching evaluation data may be related to claims of teaching skill, pedagogical knowledge, student services, student feedback, and subject matter knowledge). Nevertheless, the auditors must verify the evidence in the *Brief* that is associated with each claim that is related

to each element, component, and subcomponent of the TEAC principles I and II.

Priority. Some parts of the TEAC system play a larger role in the accreditation decision than others and have a higher priority and claim on the auditor's time and effort on that account. The evidence behind *Quality Principle I*, for example, is a determinative factor in the accreditation decision and the length of the accreditation term and for that reason it is important that the evidence be conclusively verified for components 1.1–1.3.

Quality Principle II also has a determinative role in the accreditation decision and the length of the accreditation term, which is why special attention is given to the verification of the internal audit findings. On the other hand, the evidence for *Quality Principle III* has less influence on the accreditation decision than does the evidence behind *Quality Principles I* and *II*. Thus, the audit probes of some components have a higher priority in the strategy of the audit than other components.

Variability. If the first outcome of a probe fails to confirm the target, the auditors will extend their probe until they find a stable pattern of outcomes. If the auditors cannot find a stable pattern, then it is unlikely that the target can be verified if fewer than 75 percent of probes of the target will have succeeded in confirmation.

For example, if the grade point index from a sequence of courses on the transcript in a randomly selected student file is the target of a probe to verify whether graduates mastered their teaching subject (as surely was claimed in support of *Quality Principle I*), and the probe fails to confirm the cited program index standard, then other students' transcripts need to become targets of probes until the grade point index can be discovered, confirmed, or disconfirmed.

Internal consistency and corroboration. Auditors are encouraged to seek external targets that could corroborate evidence that is in the *Brief*. If the *Brief* cites a grade point index of 3.25/4.00 in certain mathematics courses in support of the claim that students know their mathematics, the index, taking the example above, could be the target of an audit probe that could calculate the index of a sample of students to confirm that the index indeed was 3.25/4.00 more or less. The scores of the sample of students on Praxis I (math), Praxis II (math), the scores on the SAT (math), the variability in math course grades, or the math lessons in student teaching could also be probed to see if they were consistent with, and corroborated, the meaning of the math grade index.

If, to take another example, the program faculty supports a claim of institutional commitment by reporting that the median salaries of assistant professors in education are insignificantly different from the median salaries of all the institution's assistant professors, the auditors might probe other sources of institutional salary information to check if they corroborate the evidence reported in the *Brief*.

Conclusive and persuasive. Some sources of evidence are more persuasive and compelling than others. The evidence for the claim that the program's graduates possess teaching skill (1.3) might be attributed in the *Brief* to their student teaching course grades, their employers' ratings of them, their cooperating teachers' opinion, or the academic accomplishments of the graduates' own pupils. The latter source of evidence, if it were available, would be more persuasive than the student teaching course grade, for example, and would be a preferred target of the probe over the target of the grades in the student teaching course.

Rival Explanations. Upon seeing the results of a survey of employers cited in support of a claim, an auditor could verify and confirm the results. The panel members might want to know more about the sample of employers than the program revealed in the *Brief*. The auditor has to consider what evidence would support a rival hypothesis for the employer results. If the survey response rate were only 10 percent, or if the employers were also employees of the program, or if the survey instrument had a bias for positive ratings, the verified evidence would be also be consistent with an explanation that might rival the program's interpretation of the employer survey and it could be that the survey results, while accurate, might not support the program's claims after all.

Even though the actual results of the survey were accurate as reported in the *Brief,* the auditors would be instructed to construct probes to examine these areas of potential alternative explanation as a further way of verifying (or not) the *meaning* of survey evidence.

For example, if the *Brief* claims as evidence of teaching skill that 90 percent of the "teachers of the year" in their state are graduates of the program, the auditors could easily confirm the number and percentage. They should also probe how many teachers in the state are graduates of the program. If 90 percent of the teachers in the state are also graduates of the program, the teacher of the year data would probably not be persuasive to the Accreditation Panel. However, if only 10 percent of the state's teachers are graduates of the program, but 90 percent of the teachers of the year are graduates, the panel might be more persuaded that the teacher of the year data indicated something about the program's quality with regard to the acquisition of teaching skill.

Similarly, if the program cites as evidence of teaching skill that 90 percent of its graduates secure teaching positions within three months of graduation, the panel could direct the auditors to determine what the hiring rates are for the program's region. If there is a severe teacher shortage in the region, and 100 percent of applicants are routinely hired by local districts, the program's evidence for its claim would be less persuasive to the panel.

Primary sources. Whenever possible, it is better to trace the evidence back to its origin, the *raw data.* When the results of a survey of graduates, for example, are cited as evidence that the graduates care about their students, the verification of the results of the survey is on surer ground when the auditors inspect the survey instrument, inspect some completed forms from graduates, re-tally a random sample of returns, and perhaps interview one or two of the respondents to see if their responses were entered correctly on the program's forms.

When an interview is taken as the primary source, it is important to establish that the source is representative of the group in question. In general, the statements of the person interviewed are not intrinsically more authentic or accurate than the statements in the *Inquiry Brief,* which the auditor is attempting to verify. With that in mind, auditors are instructed to probe primary sources and find a probe that is less dependent on what an informant says, particularly an informant who participated in writing the *Brief.*

Auditors' heuristics

The Audit Report must include a judgment, or opinion, about the trustworthiness of the program's evidence for each of the principles of the TEAC system. The auditors use the following heuristics to guide their opinion of the evidence for the quality principles as they are presented in the *Brief.*

1. A target is said to be verified when it is confirmed by at least 75 percent of the probes assigned to it. In practice this means that if one probe fails to confirm a target, at least three other probes would need to yield positive results to verify it.

2. An element (1.0–3.0), receives a clean opinion if at least 90 percent of its targets are confirmed. If more than 10 percent of the targets are not confirmed, the element cannot receive a *clean* opinion and must receive some other opinion, depending on the circumstances described below.

3. An element is given a *qualified* opinion when at least 75 percent, but less than 90 percent, of its targets are confirmed. An element that would otherwise receive a clean opinion is also given a *qualified* opinion if more than 25 percent of the targets reveal misstatements of any kind, either trivial or consequential.

4. An element is given an *adverse* opinion if more than 25 percent of its targets cannot be confirmed.

5. An element is given a *disclaimer* opinion if more than 25 percent of the targets associated with it cannot be verified because of missing data, limited access to information and informants, or evidence that the findings reported in the *Brief* are not genuine.

These five guidelines are **heuristics** for formulating an audit opinion about each element. They are not algorithms or rules: a simple counting of outcomes of probes could be misleading with regard to the trustworthiness of the *Brief.* Some audit tasks may be more revealing than others. For example, some may have targeted only minor points, and some may be merely following up on other audit tasks on a single point. The guidelines may prove unreliable in cases where the number of audit tasks is small. The audit team knows that they are not to treat the heuristic as an algorithm or rule that can be mechanically applied. If the findings suggest anomalies that make the heuristic unworkable, the auditors will rely on their good judgments, explaining in their Audit Report the difficulties they experienced and the reasons for their audit opinions.

Heuristics, by definition and design, only *guide* decision making. Because TEAC cannot predict or accommodate all possible outcomes and circumstances, the auditors make judgments when the findings are complex and lack a regular pattern. When there is doubt, the auditors will render a lower, more conservative audit opinion rather than a higher audit opinion to alert the Accreditation Panel and the Accreditation Committee to possible dangers in interpreting the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* as trustworthy and reliable. Should a TEAC auditing team make errors in judgment in these matters, the lower and more conservative audit opinions always can be adjusted in the process that requires the mutual acceptance of the Audit Report or through the TEAC appeals process.

Overall auditors' opinion. If no quality principle received an adverse or disclaimer opinion, the auditors give the *Brief* a clean audit opinion overall if 90 percent or more of the targets are verified, and they give it a qualified opinion if at least 75 percent of the targets, but less than 90 percent, are verified or if more than 25% of the targets have errors of any kind. The *Brief* can go forward to the Accreditation Panel *only* with a clean or qualified opinion (i.e., at least 75 percent of the targets are verified overall *and* for each principle). It cannot go forward if an element has been awarded an adverse or disclaimer opinion. *Briefs* that cannot go forward are returned to the program faculty for reworking and resubmission.

Auditors' judgment of commitment. The auditors are charged not only with verifying the evidence for commitment, but with determining whether the evidence is sufficient to support the program's claim that the institution is committed to the program. The program faculty members are free to provide any evidence they find convincing of their institution's commitment to their program, but they must address the issue of parity between the program and the institution in *Quality Principle III* in making their case for commitment.

Before the auditors can conclude that the institution is committed to the program, there must be documentation of evidence of parity reported in Appendix B. In forming their conclusion, the auditors are guided by the same heuristic that guides the Accreditation Panel with regard to its judgments of how much evidence is sufficient to support a claim. This heuristic, when applied to the evidence of commitment, supports the conclusion that the institution is committed to the program when at least 75 percent of the points of comparison documented by the auditors show parity or favor the program.

Parity between the program and the institution is taken as signifying the institution's commitment to the program. Unless there is a credible rival hypothesis to the contrary, it is invariably *prima fascia* evidence of commitment.

But not always — for example, the mean salaries of the teacher education faculty and the mean salary for the institution as a whole could be indistinguishable and show a parity that would seemingly signify commitment. One salary might be for 12 months of effort, however, and the other for nine months of effort, or one might include overload teaching assignments while the other does not, etc. Thus, the salary parity, as reported in the *Brief*, between the program and the institution may not always indicate institutional commitment, but may indicate the institution's exploitation of the education program faculty. Or the allocations of resources to the program faculty and the institution's faculty in general may be the same, but the allocations to the education faculty may include unique costs not shared by the others (e.g., payments to cooperating teachers, a curriculum resource cen-

ter, mileage for student teaching supervision, and so forth). The auditors must consider the possibility that parity in resource allocation may have come about for reasons that might signify that the institution is really not committed to the program.

While parity usually signifies commitment, the lack of parity may not be *prima fascia* evidence of a lack of commitment either. For example, the faculty may claim that a discrepancy between program and institutional salaries is in fact evidence of commitment if the institution has added a disproportionately large number of new, junior-level positions to the program, positions that were not available to other programs. The auditors would have targeted this salary claim, and if they had verified the evidence for the claim, they could easily have concluded that the salary discrepancy, as explained, indicated the institution was in fact committed to the program with regard to compensation.

PART SEVEN:
THE ACCREDITATION DECISION

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The accreditation decision

Once the audit is completed, the final phase of the accreditation process is the accreditation decision. The accreditation decision is made in two steps:

1. First, the Accreditation Panel reviews all the materials related to the case and then determines if the evidence, as verified by the audit, is of sufficient magnitude to support the claims of the *Brief*. On the basis of its examination, the panel recommends an accreditation decision to the Accreditation Committee.
2. TEAC's Accreditation Committee, a committee of the TEAC Board of Directors, makes the TEAC accreditation decision. The committee arrives at the decision after a systematic evaluation of the panel's recommendations and the process that led up to it. In this work the committee is guided by two overarching questions:
   - Should the Accreditation Panel's recommendation be accepted?
   - Was the TEAC process that ended in the panel's recommendation followed properly?

In their deliberations, the panel and committee are guided by a set of heuristics for the accreditation decision. These heuristics, described in detail in this section of the guide, are the same for both the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* and the *Inquiry Brief* with regard to the rationale (2.1), the quality control system (2.3), and the evidence of commitment and capacity (*Quality Principle III*).

Once the committee makes its decision, the program is notified. If the decision is to accredit, and the program accepts the decision, TEAC announces the decision and schedules the annual report. If the decision is not to accredit and the program appeals, TEAC initiates its appeal process, as described at the end of this section.

The Accreditation Panel

Role

After the auditors have determined that the evidence in the *Brief* is sufficiently accurate and trustworthy, the Accreditation Panel reviews the case. The panel's charge is to address three questions, and, based on the findings, make a recommendation to the Accreditation Committee:

1. Does what have the program's students learned with regard to their subject matter, pedagogy, and teaching skill satisfy *Quality Principle I?*
2. Does what the faculty has learned from its monitoring and inquiry into the program's quality satisfy *Quality Principle II?*
3. Does the evidence in Appendix B, as documented by the auditors, satisfy *Quality Principle III?*

To answer these questions, the panel examines and evaluates the evidence about each element and component of the TEAC system (1.0–3.0) to see (1) if there are other plausible interpretations of the evidence, and (2) if the evidence presented is sufficient to satisfy TEAC's requirements.

In their deliberations, the Accreditation Panel members consider the following documents, all prepared in advance of the meeting: the *Brief*; the Audit Report; any responses to the Audit Report from program faculty; reports from any consulting reviewers; and a Case Analysis prepared by the lead auditor and the lead panelist (which sets out the case for accreditation and notes the evidence that is consistent and inconsistent with TEAC's principles and any rival explanations of the evidence).

On the basis of its findings, the panel recommends to the Accreditation Committee one of the categories of TEAC accreditation — initial accreditation for two or five years[1] or accreditation for two, five, or ten years. The Accreditation Committee, a subcommittee of the TEAC Board of Directors, then reviews the Accreditation Report and all the materials related to the case, and makes the accreditation decision.

Composition and responsibilities

The director of the Accreditation Panel, assisted by a staff liaison to the panel, manages the Accreditation Panel's work and supervises and directs panel functions and meetings. The director serves as chair of all Accreditation Panel meetings and is an *ex-officio* voting member. The director also assists TEAC's president in recruiting and training members of the Accreditation Panel.

The panel's members are appointed by TEAC's president for their experience and expertise in the evaluation of evidence and include at least one professional educator and one faculty member from an educator preparation program, and the lead auditor *(ex officio)*.

At least one member of the Accreditation Panel is someone who is familiar with institutions similar in size, mission, and context to the one offering the program.

In addition, so that they may be fully aware of the issues and reasoning that played roles in the panel's recommendations for the program's accreditation, representatives of the program are entitled to attend (in person, by video- or teleconference) the session of the meeting of the Accreditation Panel at which their program is considered for accreditation. They are invited to observe, without comment, the panel's deliberations and voting process. They also answer any remaining questions the TEAC staff and panel members may have about the *Brief*. They do not present their *Brief* or debate their case; nor do they introduce new unaudited evidence, but before the panelists vote, the representative(s) are asked to correct any errors or misstatements they have heard in the panelists' deliberations.

[1] If the first *Inquiry Brief Proposal* earned a two year term, a second proposal may also earn a two year term. If the second proposal earned a five year term, however, it could only have the term for three years before an *Inquiry Brief* would be required. This is because initial accreditation can only be awarded for a total of five years.

Any or all of the panelists may participate in a meeting of the panel by conference telephone or by e-mail or video conferencing. As long as everyone participating in the meeting is able to hear or read one another's messages, the panelist is considered present.

Terms of service on the panel. The panel is assembled from a pool of about a dozen persons. The members of the pool are appointed to an initial three-year term and may be reappointed for one additional term of up to three years. No member serves in the pool for more than two consecutive terms (i.e., consecutive terms cannot exceed six years).

Training for the panelists. All members of the Accreditation Panel pool receive initial and periodic training in the TEAC system and operational policies and participate in an orientation and review of the policies at the outset of each panel meeting.

Frequency of panel meetings. The Accreditation Panel convenes on an as-needed basis, but usually no more than three times a year.

Any action required or permitted to be taken by the panel may be taken without a meeting if a written consent, setting forth the action to be taken, is signed by all the panelists authorizing the action. The panelists' consent has the same force and effect as their unanimous vote would in a meeting.

Voting protocol. Accreditation recommendations require no less than four affirmative votes. This means that a four-person quorum must provide a unanimous recommendation for an accreditation recommendation to be forwarded to the TEAC Accreditation Committee. Similarly, five- and six-member panels must achieve at least four affirmative votes to advance a recommendation.

Process

Before the meeting

At least two weeks before the meeting, all participants receive the *Briefs* and supporting materials. The panelists are expected to study the materials thoroughly, review the lead auditor's and panelist's analysis of the program's case for accreditation, and be prepared to make and defend a recommendation about each *Brief* in accordance with TEAC's principles and requirements.

The panel director, assisted by a staff liaison to the panel, assures that all necessary materials for the meeting are assembled, and that rules related to the meeting quorum and composition are satisfied. Any supporting documents not mailed to panelists are made available for review prior to the beginning of the opening panel session.

Order of business for the panel's meeting. During its meetings, the Accreditation Panel follows Roberts Rules of Order. A simple majority vote is required to affirm all procedural motions.

During the meeting

At the opening session, the director reminds panelists and observers of the guidelines for the meeting, provides an orientation, and reviews pertinent information, including the availability of materials and the schedule. The panel's deliberation of each program will conform to the following format.

Introductions. The panelists and the program representatives introduce themselves to each other, giving their affiliations and a brief summary of their experiences related to the panel's work.

Motion. To open the panel's deliberations, the director of the Accreditation Panel enters a formal motion for the accreditation status requested by the program faculty and seeks a *pro forma* second from members of the Accreditation Panel.

Review of materials. The lead panelist for the case presents and reviews the case analysis, which is followed by a discussion among the panel members about the documents pertinent to the case, particularly the findings in the Audit Report and the Case Analysis. During this open discussion, the panelists may query the auditors and staff about these documents and any matters relating to them.

Questions for the program representatives. When they are ready, the panelists formulate any questions they have for the program's representative(s).

Review of questions. If there are questions, the director of the Accreditation Panel then reviews with the panel the questions that have emerged during this discussion and indicates which will be asked of the program representative(s).

Responses by the program representatives. The program representative(s) responds briefly to each question, which is posed by the director of the Accreditation Panel on behalf of the panel. The answer must be limited to the question asked and should not be a response to other issues heard during the panel's opening discussion, except to correct an error of fact. The purpose of this part of the meeting is only the clarification of points of fact pertinent to an accreditation recommendation. It is not an occasion for debate, presentation, or the introduction of new evidence and information.

Panel's deliberation. After the program representative(s) has responded, the panel members move on to consider the lead auditor's and lead panelist's recommendation for an accreditation status and whether the record warrants the citation of any weaknesses and stipulations.

The director of the panel reviews any possible stipulations and weaknesses with the panelists, both those that were noted in the Case Analysis, and any new ones that emerged during the discussion. Following a discussion, the director notes any weaknesses and stipulations for inclusion in the Accreditation Report.

Panel's judgment. After the panel has set aside any plausible rival explanations for the evidence, determined that the evidence is of a sufficient magnitude, noted any areas of weakness and potential stipulation, and determined whether the program makes the case for satisfying each TEAC principle, the director turns the panel's deliberations to the opening accreditation motion or one modified by the panelists.

If the evidence for a *subcomponent* is insufficient and inadequate, the panel formally considers and cites a **weakness** in the subcomponent.

If the deficiency is in the evidence for a *component*, the panel considers and cites a **stipulation** in the component.

The citations of weaknesses and stipulations may be voted on separately or collectively and before, after, or with the accreditation motion.

Before the panel votes, the panel director asks the program representatives if they have heard the panelists make any errors and how, if they have, the error should be corrected.

Voting. The motion must be voted on and passed with a minimum of four votes (a meeting quorum consists of four voting Accreditation Panel members).

If the motion does not receive at least four positive votes, the chair enters a substitute motion. A second to this motion is, then, secured from members of the Accreditation Panel.[2]

At the conclusion of this portion of the meeting, any program representatives are excused from the room, with the panel's appreciation and presumably with its congratulations.

Accreditation justifications. After the panel approves the final accreditation recommendation and any formal stipulations and weaknesses, its deliberations are concluded. The panelists now discuss their reasons for their decision for the purpose of giving the panel director guidance with regard the panel's report, which must provide written justification and feedback to the program about student achievement and the accreditation recommendation.

Debriefing. After each case, the Accreditation Panel members also rate their confidence in their individual decisions and in the panel's recommendation. The panelists offer the director suggestions for improving the quality and efficiency of the review and deliberation process.

[2] *Protocol for an unlikely scenario.* Should the motion for accreditation, weakness, or stipulation fail, another motion is made until one is passed by at least four votes. In the event of a tie, the president of TEAC will cast a tie-breaking vote and enable a majority report. In the unlikely event that four votes cannot be found for any motion, the members in majority write an accreditation report and the members of the minority write a minority report in which they explicate their contrary recommendation. The two reports are sent to the Accreditation Committee for a decision.

The program is able to appeal the lack of a single panel recommendation if there are adequate grounds. If there are no qualifying grounds, the two reports are sent to the Accreditation Committee.

Accreditation report and follow-up activities. The director of the Accreditation Panel writes an Accreditation Report, drawing on the panel's deliberations, findings, and debriefing comments. The Accreditation Report contains:

1. The time and place of the panel meeting and the names and affiliations of the members of the panel, the program representatives, and the TEAC staff members who were present;
2. The vote and the accreditation recommendation;
3. The panel's justification for the recommendation;
4. Feedback to the program about the program's performance with respect to student achievement (this feedback reiterates the case analysis evidence which is consistent and inconsistent with the program's claims about student achievement);
5. Recommendations about any weaknesses that must be addressed in the program's annual report or subsequent *Inquiry Brief* to TEAC; and
6. Recommendations for any stipulations that must be addressed and removed within two years.

The director submits the report to TEAC's president within five business days of the panel's decision. The president of TEAC, in turn, sends the Accreditation Report to the program faculty for comment. The program faculty then has two weeks to respond in writing to the arguments and findings in the Accreditation Report.

Guidelines for the Accreditation Panel's deliberations

The charge to the panel

In evaluating the program's evidence for each component of the TEAC system, the panel has two tasks: (1) to eliminate, if possible, the plausible rival hypotheses for the interpretation of the evidence; and (2) to determine whether there is sufficient evidence to support the claim that the program satisfies the system's requirements.

In this respect, TEAC panel members are like jurors in the American judicial process who must determine whether the evidence rises to a level that satisfies a legal standard. Whereas the legal standard may require, for example, evidence of the defendant's *intent*, the evidence that supports the claim of *intent* resists a clear-cut standard in the traditional sense of some bright line between *intention* and *no intention*. TEAC Accreditation Panel members, like these jurors, must weigh the evidence and decide if the evidence is sufficient to certify that the program merits accreditation for ten, five, or two years, or does not merit accreditation at all.

TEAC defines the standard for each element and component of its system as the point, as determined by the Accreditation Panel, at which competing and rival claims can be ruled out, the point at which the evidence is conclusive, clear, and convincing, and the point below which the evidence is insufficient, flawed, or inconsistent.

In practice, given the current state of scholarship in education, the TEAC standard of evidence is met when the evidence cited in the *Brief* is consistent with the claims made about student learning *and* when there is little or no credible evidence that is inconsistent with the claims and supportive of a competing rival explanation.

How the panel makes its decision

Although TEAC's quality principles suggest the characteristics of a quality program, they do not offer sure rules or algorithms to follow that would determine whether or not the evidence that a program has these characteristics is trustworthy and sufficient.

For this reason, to establish that a program has met TEAC's principles, TEAC employs *heuristics* to guide the accreditation decision making and judgment about whether or not the evidence of student learning is *trustworthy* (determined by the audit team) and *sufficient* (determined by the Accreditation Panel and Accreditation Committee).

TEAC's audit and panel heuristics guide the determination of whether or not the cited evidence of candidate learning, for example, is accurate and trustwor-

thy; is, in fact, evidence of what it purports to be; and is sufficient to support the program faculty's claims for candidate learning.

Ruling out rival hypotheses. The panel members represent several roles in the profession because their diversity makes it more likely that they can bring forward alternative explanations of the evidence presented in the *Brief*. Based on the evidence in the record, the panel conceptually tests the evidence in the record to see if these alternatives can be ruled out, or shown to be inconsistent with the claims made in the *Brief*. The panelists, however, are not at liberty to consider just any possible rival hypothesis, but only ones that can be supported with evidence in the record. Usually any credible rival hypotheses are cited in the Case Analysis, which the program has also seen.

Determining sufficiency of the evidence. The panel then determines whether the evidence that survives these tests is of sufficient magnitude. It does this, in the absence of any other guidance, by applying a heuristic of 75 percent.

The 75 percent heuristic is a guide to assist the panel in its determination of evidentiary sufficiency in cases where there are no other guides provided in the TEAC principles or by research standards or findings from the scholarship and practices in education.

The 75 percent heuristic is applied to the evidence that is presented in the *Brief*. It is applied, in other words, to the evidence the faculty truly relies upon. It is also applied to corroborating, or disconfirming, evidence that was uncovered by the auditors and presented in the Audit Report.

TEAC elements. The panel must determine whether or not the program satisfies TEAC's quality principles. For this decision, TEAC has adopted a *part/whole* heuristic. This heuristic calls for the panel to consider the components of each element, make a decision about each, and move on successively to the consideration of each element in the TEAC system until the panel can determine by vote the program's conformity to one of the TEAC accreditation categories.

The sections that follow describe in detail the heuristics that the panel uses to determine the sufficiency of evidence, to determine that the program meets TEAC's quality principles, and to make the accreditation recommendation.

Ruling out rival hypotheses and determining sufficiency of evidence

The panel begins its work by attempting to reduce the credibility of the obvious rival hypothesis of chance—that the evidence the program presents in the *Brief* is simply what would have been expected by chance, and not by what the program faculty claims. Generally, the role of unsystematic or random factors and "noise" can be reduced, or substantially eliminated, when the *Brief* has evidence supporting the reliability of the assessment procedures used to generate the evidence in the first place. This is the logic behind *Quality Principle I*'s component 1.5.

Threats to reliability

The panel considers several threats to the reliability and validity of the evidence in the *Brief*. One threat is from *unsystematic* factors that introduce errors that plague much of the evidence in education.

For example, if a program faculty were to claim that 20 percent of the board-certified teachers in its state are graduates of its program, the panelists would wonder whether or not this was merely what would be expected by chance. If the program had prepared 60 percent or more of the teachers in the state, 20 percent or more could be expected by chance alone to become board-certified. Had only 1 percent of the teachers in the state graduated from the program, it would be unlikely that the 20 percent board-certified teacher rate could be dismissed as just what would have been expected by chance. Had the program faculty missed this point, incidentally, the formative evaluation or the audit could be expected to have examined it by way of corroborating the evidence in the *Brief*.

Regression to the mean is a statistical artifact associated with the retesting of those who had extremely high or low scores. These retested scores can be expected to shift by chance towards the group's average or mean score as a consequence of the statistical error properties of extreme scores, and not as a consequence of what might be claimed by the program faculty.

Ruling out rival hypotheses

The next step in the deliberation calls for the panelists to attempt to rule out rival hypotheses that are rooted in *systematic* errors that might be embedded in the evidence cited in the *Brief.* Campbell and Stanley[3] have identified several sources of systematic error that could reduce the validity of the evidence cited in a *Brief.* Those potentially related to a *Brief* are recounted below.

For every data point (mean, count, frequency, etc.) reported to advance the credibility of a claim associated with *Quality Principle I,* the panel members should ask themselves the following questions.

1. ***Representative data.*** *Are the measures reported truly representative of the program's students and graduates?* At least two rival hypotheses or factors come into play in deliberating on this question and each needs to be ruled out:

   a. *Is there a "selection" factor?* Is the evidence in the *Brief* about only a select and unrepresentative group of students and graduates? If a program reports 100 percent pass rate on a license examination, or an average score at the 85th percentile, but it is only for some of its students, the panelists cannot easily rule out the rival hypothesis that evidence may have more to do with the selection of the students than with accomplishments of the entire group about which the claims are made. It may be that the evidence cited in the *Brief* is only about full-time students when the majority of students are part-time attendees, or it may be about only those who work in state when most of the graduates work elsewhere, or it may be about only the in-state residents, when substantial portions were out-of-state enrollees, or it may exclude transfer students, or it may exclude dual majors, etc. The auditors should have investigated this possibility so the panel can set the possibility aside or credit it as a legitimate rival hypothesis.

   b. *Is there a "dropout" factor?* This question is quite similar to the selection factor, because it refers to the possibility that the evidence is restricted to a particular select group—in this case, those who secured a teaching position. This factor might show itself in gain score evidence. Here a rival hypothesis for the gains reported in an *Inquiry Brief* would be that the gains in average scores, for example, were not really gains in accomplishment on anyone's part, but only evidence that the weaker students were not hired as teachers and were not counted. Or it might be the case that the evidence of accomplishment of the program's graduates might only be based on the more able graduates who gained employment immediately upon graduation. It might not be evidence that was representative of all of the students who completed the program. Here again the auditors should have investigated this possibility so the panel can set the possibility aside or credit it as a legitimate rival hypothesis.

   The panel determines that the statistics and findings are relevant to the populations about which the claims are advanced and not just some part of the population that does not truly represent the population of students or graduates.

2. ***Measurement errors and influence.*** *Are the procedures and assessments used by the program faculty to collect the evidence reported in the* Brief *themselves a factor in the evidence? Do these rival the claims the faculty seeks to make about the evidence?* Again, the panel members should take at least three factors into consideration.

   a. *Is the assessment itself a factor?* Do raters get tired as they rate large numbers of students, so their discriminations become less accurate over time? Is there "observer bias"? Is care taken to shield raters and

[3] D. Campbell & J Stanley. (1963). Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research on teaching. In N. L. Gage (Ed*.) Handbook of Research on Teaching.* Chicago: Rand McNally.

observers from having a bias (positive or negative) toward the program or toward its graduates? Are the reviewers "blind"? Are they disinterested parties? Do they have the opportunity to rate students in the program and those not in the program? Do they have the opportunity to rate students near the finish of their program as well as those just beginning?

Is there variation in the calibration of the assessment instrument from one time to another so that a score gain is nothing more than a recalibration effect (as in the new SAT, for example)? Has the cut-score, or the scale range, been changed so that gains in pass rate, or even absolute scores, are meaningless? Is the true zero score known? A score of 170 out of 190 may look impressive if the zero score is truly zero, but not if the zero score (as in some Praxis tests) is set at 150. Has there been grade inflation over the period of the program's reporting? Are grades given for reasons other than academic accomplishment, such as attendance, punctuality, honesty, effort, or extra work?

The results from surveys, as noted earlier, are known to be affected by the order in which questions were presented, the context in which questions appeared, whether the questions weed out those with no opinion (filtering), the range and order of choices, whether middle categories were provided, whether the format was open or closed, and so forth. As above, the auditors should have investigated this possibility so the panel can set the possibility aside or credit it as a legitimate rival hypothesis.

b. *Is there a testing factor?* Testing itself is a factor, for example, when the students taking the test, or being rated with a checklist, have experienced the ratings and received feedback many, many times prior to the occasion reported in the *Brief*. Repeated testing, while perhaps a component of an effective evaluation system, renders the measures hard to interpret because the reported effects may be more parsimoniously accounted for as *practice* effects, i.e., the result of the student's experience or practice with the test. Related to the testing factor is the Hawthorne effect, namely the finding that testing or observation itself, independently of what is being tested, is a factor that affects the results of the test or observation (i.e., the mere looking or measuring itself has an effect on what is being measured). Once again, the auditors should have investigated this possibility so the panel can set the possibility aside or credit it as a legitimate rival hypothesis.

c. Next, drawing on their professional expertise, the panel members consider (and, presumably, reject) any other *rival hypotheses.* For example, any number of events, and the interaction of events, that could have intervened between one measurement and another. Many of these events are candidates for hypotheses that rival the one the faculty has advanced in its *Brief*, and the panel members should bring them forward in the discussion and deliberations so that they may be eliminated.

Determining sufficiency

The final step in the deliberation comes after the panel has satisfied itself that there are no surviving plausible rival hypotheses. At this stage, the panel would also have concluded that the TEAC standard of evidence is met because the evidence is consistent with the claims, and there is little credible evidence in the *Brief* or in the audit report that is inconsistent with the claims. The question that remains, however, is whether the evidence, which has survived the challenges cited above, is *sufficient* to support the claims that TEAC requires to satisfy the quality principles.

To determine sufficiency, the panel applies a 75 percent heuristic to the evidence as a guide. This heuristic is applied in instances where there is no other guide provided by TEAC or by the state-of-the-art practices and standards of contemporary scholarship.

Why use the 75 percent heuristic?
The field has established very few metrics for magnitude, but it has some, like the universally used, although not uncontested, criterion for statistical significance:

1. A probability less than .05 is the research standard used to establish that an event probably happened for some reasons other than chance.
2. Satisfactory reliability coefficients for individually administered standardized tests are found generally in .90 range and in the .80 range for group administered standardized tests.
3. The best validity coefficients are about .50 (e.g., between IQ and school grades).
4. Universities and colleges typically require a 2.0 minimum index out of 4.0 for graduation.
5. States have set the Praxis I cut scores around 170 out of 190 (where the zero score is 150).
6. The academic major is typically 30 credits, the academic minor is usually 15 credits, the semester is 14 to15 weeks, the BA or BS degree is rarely less than 120 credits, the master's degree is about 30 graduate credits, and so forth.[4]

By and large, however, the field has not committed itself to a minimum magnitude for the measures it uses, and it has rarely validated the few minimums it has set. So, the question remains for the panelists: how much is enough to support the claim that *Quality Principle I* has been satisfied, or how much stability or consistency is enough to support the claim that a measure is reliable, or how large does the association need to be between two measures to support the claim that they are measuring more or less the same thing, and so forth?

Therefore, in areas where there is no other guidance, TEAC employs a 75 percent heuristic as a guide to solve these problems; that is, 75 percent of whatever measure is cited in the *Brief* is a good guide to the amount or magnitude that would be sufficient to meet TEAC's standard. The panel applies the 75 percent heuristic to whatever measure the program cites as evidence.

When to use the 75 percent heuristic. The panel should apply the 75 percent heuristic to the *empirical* maximum, not the theoretical maximum.

For example, one Praxis test has a top score of 990, but, in fact, no one out of 27,000 test takers scores higher than 790. The panelists would apply the 75 percent heuristic to the 790 score, not to the 990 maximum score. Because the highest reliability coefficients in the literature are about .90, the TEAC heuristic would accept .68 as the lowest index of reliability and about .38 for the lowest index of validity as the best validity coefficients are about .50. The lowest mean grade index on a four-point scale would be 3.0 by the heuristic, but only if there were a reasonable number of 4.0 scorers, for example. The empirical maximum, if it is not otherwise known, may be established by determining the average score (frequencies, counts, etc.) of the top 10 percent of scorers.

If the program reports the mean score on a standardized test, the 75 percent heuristic would be applied to the maximum empirical score. For example, if the program reported a mean score of 170 on a test which ranges from 150 to 190, the panelists would take 75 percent of the 40 point spread (i.e., 30 points) and be guided not to accept mean scores less than 180 as sufficient evidence (not 75 percent of 190 or the much lower score of 142). If, however, the program reported only pass rates (as currently required under Title II), and not the mean score, then the panel would determine sufficiency by considering 75 percent of the pass rates for the top 10 percent of programs. Thus, if the average pass rate of the top 10 percent of programs were 95 percent, a program's 71 percent pass rate would be sufficient. In many cases, the state has provided guidance on the tests it requires for the license by establishing passing scores and passing rates for the programs in the state and these trump TEAC's 75% heuristic because the TEAC heuristic is only applied in cases where there is no other standard in the field.

[4] There is, however, no consensus about the number of credits for the doctoral degree.

It would also be appropriate for the panelists to apply the 75 percent heuristic to the *preponderance of the evidence* standard, as TEAC has left the judgment of what constitutes "preponderance" to the panel's judgment. The panel, using the 75 percent heuristic, would accept as sufficient evidence of commitment a case where at least 75 percent of the program's parity measures meet the parity standard (no appreciable difference between the norms of the program and the institution with regard to the standards of capacity).

When* not *to use the 75 percent heuristic. The panel employs the 75 percent heuristic only in the absence of any other guidance with regard to the magnitude of what would constitute a sufficient or adequate amount for TEAC's principles and standards.

TEAC requires, for example, the program faculty to address in its *Brief all* the components of the TEAC system (1.0-2.3.6), not just 75 percent of them.

TEAC requires that the preponderance of evidence for commitment show *no* appreciable differences between the institutional norm and the program norm. Because the field has established procedures for determining if differences are trivial or significant, it would not be appropriate for the panelists to apply the 75 percent heuristic to the parity itself. The panel would not accept as evidence of commitment a case where the program norm was 75 percent of the institutional norm in place of TEAC's requirement of it being only trivially different from it.

Because the 75 percent heuristic is not a rule or an algorithm, it is only a guide to assist the panel in determining the sufficiency of the evidence with regard to any claim made in the *Brief*. It cannot be a rule or algorithm because if it were applied automatically to all the evidence, it could lead to serious errors. For example:

1. Some regions of the country have such teacher shortages that nearly 100 percent of graduates who wish to teach will find teaching positions. In such a region, a 75 percent hiring rate might actually indicate a significant weakness in the program, not the strength that the program faculty may be alleging. Employers may have significant doubts about the competence of the program's graduates. If a program in a region with teacher shortages were to base a claim of program quality on hiring rates, the panel would need to be free to consider a more demanding standard than 75 percent. If the panel did, it would insure that it applied its logic even-handedly to all programs during the period in which there was a teaching shortage in a region.
2. If there were evidence of grade or score inflation, the panel would need to be free to consider a higher magnitude than 75 percent of the top grade or score as a measure of sufficient evidence. On the other hand, the panel needs to be free to consider a lower magnitude for programs that have resisted grade inflation pressures and held to an older standard in which the modal grade at the institution and program for satisfactory work is a C or 2.0. In other cases, the 75 percent guideline may not reflect the grade index a program may have actually determined through careful studies of predictive and concurrent validity.

Heuristics for the quality principles

TEAC has adopted a *part/whole* heuristic for guiding the next stage of the panel's decision-making. This heuristic calls for the panel to consider the components of each element, make a decision about each, and move on successively to the consideration of each element in the TEAC system until the panel can move to the "whole" and determine by vote the program's conformity to one of the TEAC accreditation categories.

By this time in its deliberations, the panel would have determined whether or not there is sufficient evidence for the claims associated with each component in the system and whether there were grounds for awarding weaknesses and stipulations. Once that is determined, the panel takes up the major elements of the TEAC system (1.0 and 2.0) in accordance with the guidance provided in heuristic below.

Quality Principle I

The dimensions that the panel considers in its evaluation of whether the evidence of student learning is at or above standard are:

1. *Consistency:* The preponderance of the evidence is consistent with the claim that students had subject matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and teaching skill, and the preponderance of the measures for each component are consistent with each other.
2. *Sufficiency:* The preponderance of evidence for each component is of sufficient magnitude.

The panel finds the program below standard for *Quality Principle I* when the preponderance of the evidence is inconsistent with the claims and is of insufficient magnitude. With regard to the evidence for reliability and validity, the panel finds the program below standard when the preponderance of the measures is inconsistent with each other and when the preponderance of the measures of reliability and validity is of insufficient magnitude.

The *above standard* rating defines a goal and band of achievement, which means that some programs may be well above the threshold for meeting the standard while others may be just above the *below standard* mark.

An *Inquiry Brief* that is well above the standard has compelling and persuasive evidence, from several mutually consistent and valid sources, about each component and has received a clean opinion in the audit for the principle.

A *Brief* that is at the standard might have received a qualified audit opinion on element 1.0 and had evidence that was, if not compelling, at least sufficient for, and consistent with, its claims of student learning on each component of *Quality Principle I*.

It is possible, for example, that the empirical evidence for reliability and validity (1.5) could be weak, but that overall the rationale (2.1) for the assessments is compelling. *Authentic assessment* approaches sometimes fit this case where the rationale is persuasive, but the usual evidence for reliability and validity, if acquired at all, is lacking.

Or, it could be the other way around. The program could be found to satisfy 1.5 if the panel determines that the program provides compelling and persuasive empirical evidence that the assessments were valid, but its rationale (2.1) for the assessments is relatively weak. This might happen in the case of some standardized tests: they have sound reliability and validity statistics, but the faculty's rationale does not make a credible connection between the test and the program's goals, the faculty's claims for the program, or the program's requirements. For example, the faculty might cite an aptitude test as evidence of subject matter knowledge or pedagogical knowledge.

Note: In the *Inquiry Brief Proposal,* the citation of pilot evidence about the *Quality Principle I* components is considered as evidence for the program's rationale, not *Quality Principle I,* which is not addressed in an *Inquiry Brief Proposal.* The faculty's experience with the pilot evidence, and analysis of it, is what gives them confidence that their proposed assessments may prove to be reliable and valid.

Quality Principle II

The panel bases its evaluation of *Quality Principle II* on the evidence of institutional or faculty learning. The dimensions for evaluation of whether institutional learning is at or above standard are:

1. *Rationale:* There is a coherent argument for why the particular assessments were selected that entails a case for their reliability and validity and explains how the standard set by the program for success is appropriate.
2. *Grounded in scholarship:* The rationale contains an accurate and balanced interpretation of the scholarly literature on assessment.
3. *Basis for past decisions:* Where appropriate and feasible, some program decisions were informed by evidence.
4. *Functioning quality control system:* The internal audit provides evidence that the system functions as it was designed.
5. *Plan for inquiry:* There is a plan to investigate whether the activities of the faculty, as

described in the quality control system, improve the program's quality.

Evidence that is below standard for *Quality Principle II* would entail a rationale that was merely assertion unsupported by argument and/or contained misstatements, showed no instances of decisions based on evidence when the evidence was available, showed a preponderance of failures in the quality control system's operation, and showed no plan to improve the program.

The evidence that supports *Quality Principle II* is found in the program's internal audit report. The internal audit report shows that the program has addressed the quality of the curriculum, faculty, students, and resources, and if it did not address one, other elements in the quality control system compensated for the absence. A program, for example, might have an open admissions policy (no evidence of selection for quality), but also evidence that other elements in the quality control system (e.g., student support services) enhanced quality and compensated for the weakness or absence of admission standards.

A quality control system (QCS) is also successful when it also identifies factors, issues, and problems that the program faculty should address to improve the program. These problems and issues are documented in the record of decisions the faculty has made over the years, and in the faculty's plans to undertake the inquiries needed to improve the program.

When the QCS identifies problematic areas in the program, the faculty is expected to consider ways to remedy the problem and formulate a plan to improve the program. The principal test of whether a modification in the program is an improvement, and not simply a change, is its link to the subsequent evidence of greater student learning that enhances the faculty's claim that the program's graduates are competent, caring, and qualified.

Over time, the faculty members' ongoing inquiry and research efforts, called for in *Quality Principle II,* should be able to uncover important links between *Quality Principle III* and appropriate levels of student learning. *Quality Principle II* requires that there is a plan to undertake these investigations as a part of the normal workings of the program's QCS.

Quality Principle III: Capacity for program quality

The factors that contribute to the panel's conclusion about whether the program has sufficient capacity to offer a quality program are found in two tables in the Audit Report, the table on parity and the table on capacity. TEAC's standard for this quality principle is that the preponderance of the evidence for the requirements was verified and documented by the auditors.

Issues in evaluating capacity for quality

One key indicator that the program has the capacity for quality is if the program is either superior to, or indistinguishable from, other programs in the institution with regard to the components of capacity. Because all accreditors recognized by the U.S. Department of Education have capacity standards that align with the components of *Quality Principle III*, the institution's accreditation by a regional accreditor in good standing, or the equivalent, is required by TEAC because it signifies that the institution overall has the capacity for quality.

The capacity of a teacher education program for quality, while rarely investigated directly by a regional accreditor, can be established in the *Inquiry Brief* when the program faculty can show that the program conforms to, or exceeds, the institutional norm on each of the dimensions of program quality that are shared by the program and the institution's other programs.

On this line of reasoning, TEAC requires evidence that the institution is committed to providing sufficient capacity for program quality. This commitment is shown by the fact that the institution's investment in the program with regard to the curriculum, faculty, facilities, fiscal and administrative support, student services, and respect for student views conforms to the overall institutional standards in each of these areas. Each of these institutional standards, having been evaluated by a regional accreditor, of course, satisfies, as TEAC's standards do, the standards for recognition by the U.S. Department of Education

and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. The details of the metrics associated with the components of capacity are left to the institution to craft with the obvious provision that they be applied uniformly across all programs the institution offers.

TEAC's interest in the institutional commitment to the capacity of the program for quality extends beyond TEAC's standards on capacity, however. TEAC seeks to assure itself and others that the institution is serious about teacher education, and that it is committed to the continual improvement of the quality of the programs it offers. The institution can be said to be committed to the program when it supports the program at the same level as, or better than, its support of the institution's programs as a whole.

The program faculty also needs to provide evidence that the capacity the program enjoys, even when on a par with the capacity of the institution overall, is sufficient for a quality professional education program. For this reason TEAC's capacity standards include subcomponents, in addition to those devoted to parity, which specifically address the evidence of the sufficiency and adequacy of the program's capacity for quality.

Heuristics for the accreditation recommendation

The table below provides a continuation of the *part/whole* heuristic of decision-making that the panel uses to come to one of the accreditation recommendations.

Table 8: Guidelines for TEAC's accreditation status designations based on whether the evidence for the three *Quality Principles* is above or below TEAC's standards

I. Candidate learning	II. Faculty learning	III. Capacity & commitment	Accreditation status designations
Above	Above	Above	Accreditation (10 years)
Above	Above	Above	Accreditation (5 years)*
Above	Below	Above	Accreditation (2 years)
Below	Above	Above	Accreditation (2 years)
Above	Above	Below	Accreditation (2 years)
IB Proposal**	Above	Above	Initial Accreditation (5 years)
IB Proposal**	Above	Below	Initial Accreditation (2 years)
IB Proposal**	Below	Above	Initial Accreditation (2 years)
IB Proposal**	Below	Below	Deny
Below	Below	Above	Deny
Below	Above	Below	Deny
Above	Below	Below	Deny

* For the initial *Inquiry Brief*

**For the *Inquiry Brief Proposal,* which does not require evidence of candidate learning apart from pilot data and data used for state program approval

The heuristic, one of several that could be employed, calls for the separate evaluation of each element of the system (I, II, III) as a way of guiding the decision about the whole system. The table shows how the evaluations of the elements of the TEAC system are combined to inform and guide the panel to making an overall accreditation recommendation (shown in the fourth column).

Initial accreditation is based upon the soundness of the quality control system, the claims and assessment rationale, and the evidence of commitment and capacity. The expectation in any case is that the program faculty can develop research standard evidence supporting the claims of student learning, and the validity of the measures within five years.

On logical grounds it would also seem that programs without the capacity for quality (i.e., below standard in 3.0) could not have compelling evidence to support the other quality principles. The theoretical and empirical links between capacity and quality, however, are confused and uncertain in the field of education. As a result, it is possible that a program could satisfy

TEAC's *Quality Principles I* and *II* and still fail to satisfy all, or even the preponderance, of TEAC's *Quality Principle III.* It could do this through exploitation of heroic efforts on the part of students and faculty, for example. For this reason the heuristic table indicates that programs below standard in their capacity for quality can still be accredited, but only for two years.

The panel's accreditation recommendation

Inquiry Brief

A recommendation to accredit for five or ten years is made when, guided by the factors in the heuristic table, the panel finds that the *Inquiry Brief*, coupled with the auditors' findings, indicates that the program faculty's claims about the quality principles are fully warranted and justified, or that the evidence in support for the claims is at least consistent with evidence derived from contemporary research practices. A five year term is given for the first *Inquiry Brief* and the ten year term is usually given for each succeeding one.

A recommendation to grant accreditation for two years is made when the panel finds that the *Inquiry Brief*, coupled with the auditors' findings, indicates that the program faculty's claims about all but one of *Quality Principles I, II* and *III* are warranted and justified and on the strength of the evidence that the program faculty can remedy the weaknesses in the principle within two years.

Inquiry Brief Proposal

A recommendation to grant initial accreditation for two or five years is made when the panel finds that the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*, coupled with the auditors' findings, indicates that there is evidence of a sound rationale, commitment and capacity, and a functioning quality control system and that the evidence for *Quality Principle I* will be forthcoming within five years. The recommendation for two years is made when the evidence of *Quality Principle II* or *III* is below standard, but when both are above standard the term for initial accreditation is five years.

Length of terms and resubmissions of the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

Programs are required to submit their next *Brief* and have an audit visit concluded before their current accreditation term expires. Those with initial accreditation for two years may submit another *Inquiry Brief Proposal*, and it could earn a two year term. If, however, it earned a five year term, the program would be awarded initial accreditation for only three years at which time it would need to submit an *Inquiry Brief.* This is because there is a maximum five year term for initial accreditation. Alternatively, if they are ready, they can submit an *Inquiry Brief*, which can earn a two or five year term depending on its quality.

Accreditation denied

A recommendation to deny accreditation is made when the panel finds that the *Inquiry Brief* or the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*, coupled with the auditors' findings, fails to support the program faculty's claims and there is little likelihood that additional evidence and analysis would indicate the faculty's claims about the quality principles could be supported.

A *denied* decision usually indicates a weak quality control system and a program faculty that has not been able to react productively at the current time to the weaknesses uncovered in the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. Accreditation must be denied in these circumstances. The program has the option of terminating its bid for accreditation in TEAC or returning to candidate status and the eventual formulation of a plan that would lead to accreditation.

Panel's consideration and designation of stipulations and weaknesses

In their evaluation of the evidence for and against each quality principle, the panelists may find that the evidence for a particular component or subcomponent of the principle is insufficient, but that overall there is other evidence that is sufficient to adequately support the quality principle. In these cases, the panel formally notes the deficiencies in evidence for parts of a quality principle. It does so in one of two ways, depending on whether the deficiency is in a subcomponent or a component of the quality principle.

A **weakness** is a deficiency in the evidence for a subcomponent that is *not* so serious that it causes the panel to find one of the components below standard.

A **stipulation** is a deficiency that is serious enough to place a component below the standard, but not so serious that it causes the panel to find one of the elements below standard.

If the *evidence for a subcomponent* is insufficient, the panel formally cites a *weakness* in the quality principle and cites the subcomponent as weak.

A stipulation is a deficiency in the *evidence for a component* in which case the panel cites a stipulation for the component of the quality principle and states that the quality principle is supported, but with the stipulation that the evidence for the component must be made sufficient and remedied within a two-year period.

For example:

> The panelists' consideration of weaknesses and stipulations follows the part/whole heuristic and is analogous to the auditors' following an audit trial insofar as the panelists' consideration of strengths and weakness in one area may lead the panel to the discovery of weaknesses and strengths in other areas. A panelist might notice, for example, that the program's graduates reported that they did not use technology in their teaching because they were poorly prepared in that area. The weakness in this cross-cutting theme (1.4.3) would cause the panelists to look at the evidence for teaching itself (1.3), for pedagogy (1.2), the evidence about the adequacy of resources (2.3.4), the rationale (2.1) for the program's assessment of technology, the quality control system (2.3) for its capacity to uncover any issues with technology, and so forth. It might be that the panelists, upon examining the evidence in these other areas, could find related weaknesses there as well. If it were the case, that some components (e.g., 1.2 or 1.3) were so weakened by the inadequate preparation in technology that the evidence for them was insufficient, the panelists might cite a stipulation in 1.2 or 1.3. Or, the panelists might see that the problem was in 2.1 and 2.3 insofar as the quality control system was so inattentive to the technology issue that it had also missed other areas of weakness and a stipulation would be warranted in 2.3 on that account.

To take some other examples:

> If the program does not publish an academic calendar (as required in 3.2.6) but there is sufficient other evidence for 3.2, this circumstance would lead the panel to cite the failure to publish a calendar as a weakness in the evidence for one subcomponent of capacity.
>
> If the evidence for multicultural competence in the subject matter was insufficient, but the rest of the evidence for subject matter knowledge were sufficient, the weakness in subject matter attributed to multicultural competence would be formally noted as a weakness in the evidence in 1.4.2.
>
> It might be the case that the evidence shows more student complaints for the program than other programs at the institution (3.1.6), but the evidence for the 3.1 and 3.2 might also be implicated insofar as the higher level of complaining could indicate both a weaker faculty, curriculum, facilities, support services, administration than other programs (3.1) and/or insufficient capacity in these same areas (3.2). The panel could stipulate that 3.2 or 3.1 was deficient and would need to be remedied in two years or it could conclude that all of *Quality Principle III* was problematic and recommend that accreditation be given for only two years owing to *Quality Principle III* being below standard.
>
> Or, it might be the case that the evidence for pedagogical knowledge (1.2) was insufficient, but that the evidence for 1.1 and 1.3 and the cross-cutting themes was so strong that the panel concluded that *Quality Principle I* was satisfied. In that case, the panel would recommend accreditation but cite a stipulation in pedagogical knowledge (1.2). In other words, the panel would find that the evidence for *Quality Principle I* was sufficient but with the stipulation that deficiencies in evidence for pedagogical knowledge be remedied within two years.
>
> Or it might be the case that the program has insufficient evidence for the reliability of its assessments (1.5), but has a particularly persuasive and comprehensive rationale for the assessments it had selected (2.1). The panel might find that

overall *Quality Principle I* was satisfied, but with the stipulation that the deficiencies in the empirical evidence of reliability and validity be remedied within two years.

Weaknesses, stipulations, and the panel's accreditation recommendation

In summary:

- Problems with the program's evidence for subcomponents are noted as *weaknesses*, but the program is accredited for at least five years.
- Problems with the program's evidence for components are noted as *stipulations* and the program is accredited for at least five years.
- Problems with the program's evidence for an element (1.0-3.0) results in a recommendation that the program be awarded accreditation for two years.
- Problems with the program's evidence for two or more elements result in a recommendation to *deny* accreditation.

After the panel meeting, the TEAC staff sends the panel's Accreditation Report, which contains its accreditation recommendations, to the program's head, who has two weeks in which to respond in writing to the recommendations in the report. In anticipation of the next meeting of the Accreditation Committee, the TEAC staff collects, reviews, and distributes the appropriate documents from the accreditation process to the committee members.

TEAC's Accreditation Committee and the accreditation decision

The Accreditation Committee, a committee of TEAC's Board of Directors, makes the accreditation decision. At its meeting, the Accreditation Committee reviews the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*, the final Audit Report, any reports from consulting reviewers, the Case Analysis, the Accreditation Report, any additional information provided by TEAC's president, and any responses from the program under review. After deliberation, the Accreditation Committee either accepts or rejects by a majority vote the recommendation of the Accreditation Panel.

In the unlikely event that the Accreditation Committee fails to accept the panel's recommendation, the committee must give written reasons for its own decision to reject the recommendations in the Accreditation Report and to formulate new ones. The program may appeal the Accreditation Committee's decision and an Appeals Panel, appointed by the chair of the Board of Directors, hears the appeal in accordance with TEAC's policy on appeals.

Order of business

At the opening of the Accreditation Committee meeting, the chair of the committee introduces the members, staff, observers, and guests. The chair reminds those in attendance of the guidelines for the meeting and reviews pertinent information, including an orientation to the committee's procedures and policies, the availability of materials, and the schedule. Following the introductions and orientation, the chair asks if any committee member has a conflict of interest to declare with regard to any case before the committee.

The consideration of each *Brief* conforms to the following format:

1. **Presentation of the case.** One member of the committee, selected beforehand by the chair, gives an overview of the panel's recommendations and the evidence that the TEAC staff complied with TEAC's policies and regulations.
2. **Certification of the process.** Certification that TEAC has followed its procedures in the case before the committee is determined by a majority vote of the committee. The committee examines the documentation cited by the staff liaison to the committee and certifies that TEAC's procedures, policies, and regulations were followed. In cases where the committee finds that the staff 's failure to satisfactorily comply with the procedures was of some consequence, it orders remedies for the errors made by the staff.
3. **Acceptance of the panel's recommendations.** Once the committee certifies that TEAC has followed its process appropriately, or determines that the process was not unduly compromised and/or did not adversely affect the program's accreditation case, the committee examines each finding and recommendation the panel has made.

Recommendation for an *Inquiry Brief*

In the case of an *Inquiry Brief,* where the recommendation typically is for accreditation for two, five, or ten years, the committee scrutinizes the panel's conclusions with regard to each of the three quality principles, including any stipulations and weaknesses cited in the Case Analysis or by the panelists themselves during the discussion. The committee examines the record to see if there is any basis for a different accreditation recommendation from the one the panel brought forward.

The committee's examination of *weaknesses* and *stipulations,* for example, entails searching for supportive evidence for the subcomponent or component in the record that might have been overlooked or misinterpreted by the

panel. If it fails to find conclusive supporting evidence, the committee accepts the *weaknesses* and *stipulations* cited by the panel.

While the panel need only find that the preponderance of the evidence is consistent with claims and TEAC's principles, the committee must find evidence *conclusive* for the opposite of the Panel's recommendation, not just evidence that is *consistent* with the opposite recommendation. If the panel finds the evidence inconsistent with the rival hypotheses and rejects it, the committee must find that the evidence would support and prove the rival hypotheses before it could accept it.

Recommendation for an *Inquiry Brief Proposal*

In most cases, the panel, based on its evaluation of the entire record, finds that the *Inquiry Brief Proposal* supports the program's overall claim that it can produce an acceptable *Inquiry Brief* within five years if it follows the plan presented in the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. The committee's task, however, is to see if there is credible evidence to show that the program faculty will *not* succeed. If there is credible evidence, the committee would not award *initial accreditation*. If, on the other hand, there is no *counter* evidence of consequence, the committee accepts the panel's recommendation for *initial accreditation*.

If the panel had not recommended *initial accreditation*, or recommended it for only two years, then the committee would seek evidence in the record that the program *can* produce an acceptable *Inquiry Brief* within five years if it follows the plan presented in the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. If the committee finds credible and persuasive evidence that the program can produce an acceptable *Inquiry Brief*, the committee rejects the panel's recommendation to deny or limit accreditation and awards initial accreditation status in its place.

4. **Committee's decisions, minutes, and report.** After the committee has made each of its accreditation decisions, by majority vote, it discusses the contents of the draft minutes of its meeting. The committee's minutes in the instance where it accepts the panel's recommendations can be brief and simply state the outcomes of the committee's deliberations.

   In the cases where the committee rejects any of the panel's recommendations, including those about stipulations and weaknesses, and makes a new accreditation decision, the committee must fully justify its findings and new decision. This will require a separate report to the program faculty and to the TEAC staff.

   The committee's minutes also present its findings, its decision on the certification of TEAC's procedures, and any remedies it orders. The minutes may also present recommendations to the staff and the full board of directors about changes in TEAC's policies, regulations, and procedures.

5. **Debriefing.** At the close of its meeting, the committee will analyze its own decision-making, particularly with reference to its individual and collective confidence in its conclusions and accreditation decisions and to procedural modifications it would like to implement at its next meeting.

The Accreditation Committee's decision process

The Accreditation Committee is asked to make two decisions. The first concerns whether TEAC followed its own procedures throughout the entire accreditation process.

The second concerns the accreditation decision itself. The Accreditation Committee must decide whether the Accreditation Report, which contains the Accreditation Panel's recommendation, is convincing and consistent with its own reading of the *Brief*, the Audit Report, the Case Analysis, any reports of the consultants, any correspondence, TEAC's Guidelines, and TEAC's policies. To modify the recommendations of the Accreditation Report, the Accreditation Committee must find evidence that falsifies or contradicts the panel's recommendation.

Certification of TEAC procedures

The Accreditation Committee determines whether the TEAC staff has complied throughout the accreditation process with TEAC's policies and regulations by examining the documentation provided by the staff liaison to the committee for each stage of the accreditation process. If the TEAC staff did not follow a policy, the committee would need to determine if the error had a material effect on the accreditation recommendation. If the program faculty was not given an opportunity to respond, for example, to errors in the audit report (favorable or unfavorable to the program) before it went to the Accreditation Panel, the panel's recommendation might have been different from the one it submitted to the Accreditation Committee. On the other hand, if the program faculty waived its right to the full period it had in which to comment, the effect on the recommendation might be negligible.

If the director of the Accreditation Panel made no suggestions for audit tasks, as recommended in TEAC's policy, and the panel's deliberations raised no additional issues of verification, this departure from TEAC policy could be a matter of no consequence.

If the panel's deliberations were frustrated by the fact that some key pieces of evidence were not verified owing to the auditors not receiving proper instructions, the committee might conclude that the audit would need to be conducted again, or that some other remedy should be found to compensate for the effects of the staff 's error.

If an auditor strayed from verifying evidence into making judgments about whether the claims were supported by the evidence in the *Brief* (apart from the evidence about institutional commitment), the committee would need to consider whether this auditor's error interfered with the proper deliberations of the Accreditation Panel.

It may be that some important elements of TEAC's procedures cannot be documented directly owing to the staff 's oversight, carelessness, inattention, and so forth (e.g., there may not be a letter formally accepting the *Brief*, panel minutes might be silent on the matter of a quorum, or some dues or fees may not have been paid, etc.). Here again, the committee will need to decide if the point is sufficiently important to call into question the panel's recommendation.

Occasionally there may be departures from TEAC's established policy that were driven by local exigencies. A conflict of interest between the program and an auditor or panel member may not have been declared in a timely manner or at all. The committee would consider whether the existence of the conflict, or even the appearance of the conflict, had compromised the auditors' or panel members' conclusions.

The auditors may have been unable to avoid, as required in TEAC policies, occasions of *"wining and dining"* while they were on the campus. Compromises in the procedures may have been made over unavoidable changes in travel plans, flight delays, and so forth. The committee would assure itself that these compromises were of little consequence.

It is the responsibility of the Accreditation Committee to probe the evidence the staff has assembled to verify that the procedures followed in each case have the integrity required by TEAC's system.

Scrutiny of the Accreditation Report

The TEAC system is designed so that the Accreditation Committee is able to easily accept the recommendations that the Accreditation Panel makes in its Accreditation Report.

The method the committee uses to determine whether it will accept or reject the panel's recommendations is the common method of *falsification.* If the committee cannot falsify a panel recommendation, the committee must accept it, because its *opposite* cannot be supported with evidence based in the record.

In this method, the committee considers each recommendation in the Accreditation Report to see whether it can find some evidence in the *Brief,* the Audit Report, the Accreditation Report itself, or any other documentation about the case, that would conclusively undermine a recommendation or finding in the Accreditation Report.

For example, the panel may have recommended accreditation but with the stipulation that the program must remedy its weak evidence for the graduates' subject matter knowledge. The topic, in the panel's judgment, may have been overlooked, misconstrued, or the modes of assessment may have been suspect with regard to their validity. The committee would then seek to find evidence that would undermine or falsify the panel's conclusion. The committee, for example, would look for persuasive evidence of the valid assessment of subject matter, or a cogent rationale for the assessment of subject matter that adequately reflected the current state of scholarship about the subject matter. If the committee found sufficient evidence in the record to satisfy the *Quality Principle I* requirement that the program's graduates learned their subject matter, they would reject the panel's recommendation for a stipulation. The stipulation would be removed from the TEAC accreditation decision. However, if the committee could find no evidence in the record that could undermine or nullify the panel's recommendation of a stipulation, the committee would accept it, and the stipulation would stand.

To take another example, the panel may have recommended *accreditation for two years* on the grounds that, while there was sufficient evidence that the students had learned the elements of *Quality Principle I*, the evidence was inconclusive about *Quality Principle II.* The committee's approach on this point, as on all points, would be to seek evidence that would disconfirm the panel's conclusion. The committee would examine the evidence about the internal audit and *Quality Principle II* presented in the *Brief* and in the Audit Report to see if it were sufficient to support the program's claim that it had in fact satisfied *Quality Principle II*. To accept the panel's recommendation for accreditation for two years, the committee, in other words, would need to satisfy itself that there was insufficient evidence that the program's quality control system was effective.

If the panel were to recommend initial accreditation on the strength of the program's rationale, quality control system, and the evidence of commitment, the committee would seek evidence that would show that each of these areas were problematic insofar as there was conclusive evidence to show that the rationale was weak, or that the internal audit failed to perform adequately, or that there was persuasive evidence that the institution was not committed to the program. Should the committee fail to find the evidence it sought on these points, it would have to accept the panel's recommendation.

The Accreditation Committee's method is closely connected to the panel's method and is, in a sense, its mirror image. The committee is attempting to find sufficient and persuasive evidence for the opposite of what the panel claimed. Thus, when the panel rejects an alternative or rival explanation, the committee seeks evidence that would enable it to accept the rival explanation.

In a field like education, where the evidence is rarely conclusive, greater weight is given by necessity to the panel's conclusions because of the difficulty in finding conclusive evidence on any point that would rebut the panel's determination.

Thus, the standard of evidence for the panel is somewhat lower than is the standard for the committee in the sense that the threshold for the panel's recommendation is that the evidence in the *Brief* and record be consistent with the program faculty's claims, while the standard for the committee is that the evidence against the panel's recommendation must be conclusive. In other words, if the panel found that the program's evidence is consistent with the conclusion that the program's graduates know their subject matter, the committee would have to base its challenge to the panel's recommendation on evidence that indicates that the graduates do *not* know their subject matter, not merely that there was evidence that was inconsistent with their knowing subject matter.

The Accreditation Committee's decision

The Accreditation Committee makes one of the following determinations:

1. **Accreditation (*Inquiry Brief*)**. The committee accredits for five or ten years, upon the recommendation of the panel, when it cannot

find conclusive evidence that is contrary to panel's recommendation.

2. **Initial accreditation (*Inquiry Brief Proposal*)**. The committee awards initial accreditation for five years, upon the recommendation of the panel, when the committee cannot find conclusive evidence contrary to the panel's recommendation (e.g., it cannot find that the rationale for the assessments was unsound, that the institution was uncommitted to the program, that the quality control system failed to operate as designed, and overall the plan for an *Inquiry Brief* would not succeed.

3. **Accreditation or Initial Accreditation for two years.** The committee, following the procedures described for the committee's work, may accept the panel's recommendation for the award of a two-year term for accreditation or initial accreditation. However, it may also reduce the term of the panel's recommendation from five or ten years to two years when it finds conclusive evidence that any single element (1.0-3.0) the panel found as above standard was below standard (see Table 1 or 6).

4. **Denied accreditation.** The committee may deny accreditation upon the recommendation of the panel, when the committee cannot find conclusive evidence that would support the program faculty's claims. It may also deny accreditation to a program the panel recommends for accreditation if it can find conclusive evidence in the record that shows that any two elements the panel found above standard were below standard (see Table 1 or 6).

Program's acceptance or appeal of the accreditation decision

The program has 30 days in which to accept or appeal TEAC's action.

If the decision is to accredit and the program accepts the decision, TEAC announces the decision, informs stakeholders, posts the summary of the case on the TEAC website, and schedules the annual report.

Next steps for accreditation decisions with weaknesses or stipulations

If either a weakness or stipulation is cited, the program takes the following steps:

Weakness. The program must remedy the weakness before or in its next *Inquiry Brief.*

Stipulation. The program must address the stipulation within two years — that is, in its second Annual Report — to remain compliant with its accreditation status in TEAC.

Stipulations are removed by the Accreditation Committee upon recommendation of the Accreditation Panel. In the annual report, the program faculty makes its case that the program is no longer weak in the area stipulated by the Accreditation Committee. TEAC's Vice President of Audits verifies that the new evidence in the case is trustworthy. The verification may require a site visit and the payment of audit fees. Once the evidence is verified, the director of the Accreditation Panel places the case on the agenda of the next Accreditation Panel meeting for the panel's consideration. The panel, following its regular procedures, makes a recommendation to the Accreditation Committee that the stipulation be removed. The Accreditation Committee either accepts or rejects the recommendation.

If the panel does not make a recommendation for removal of the stipulation, or if the Accreditation Committee rejects the panel's recommendation for removal, TEAC will implement its adverse action policy to remove the program's accreditation status.

Appeals process

If the decision is not to accredit, the program may appeal the decision if it has evidence to support its claim. A program has grounds for appeal if it has any or all of the following evidence:

1. Evidence of errors or omissions in prescribed procedures on the part of the auditors, any reviewers, members of the Accreditation Panel, the TEAC staff, or the Accreditation Committee.
2. Evidence that demonstrable bias, conflict of interest, or prejudice on the part of a member of the TEAC staff or Board, an auditor, a reviewer, or member of the Accreditation Panel or Accreditation Committee influenced the Accreditation Committee's accreditation decision.
3. Evidence that TEAC's decision was not supported adequately or was contrary to the facts presented and known at the time of the decision.

If a program seeks to appeal an accreditation decision, it must do so within 30 days of being notified of the accreditation decision. The program must file in writing its intent for appeal and grounds for appeal. The program must submit relevant documentation along with the written appeal. A program may also elect to make an oral presentation at the appeal hearing and may be represented by legal counsel at the hearing. Until the appeal process is completed, the accreditation status of the program will remain in effect. The program must pay all expenses associated with the appeal.

The appeals panel

The chair of the TEAC Board of Directors will appoint a five-member appeals panel to adjudicate appeals. No member of the appeals panel may participate in an appeal by a program about which he or she

has voted an accreditation determination. Members of the appeals panel will select a chair from among themselves.

The TEAC president will forward the program's intent to appeal and its written grounds for appeal to the chair of the appeals panel within 30 days of submission. In determining if the appeal has merit, the appeals panel will consider the record before the TEAC Accreditation Committee at the time of its decision. The record includes the *Brief*, the final audit report, any reviewer's evaluation, the case analysis, the accreditation report, the Accreditation Committee's decision and report, and any institutional responses made during the accreditation process. The record considered by the appeals panel also includes the written grounds for appeal with any attached documents, and the record of any complaints. The appeals panel will not consider evidence that was not reviewed or considered by the TEAC Accreditation Committee at the time of its decision and cannot take into account evidence of corrective action that occurred after the date of the decision by the TEAC Accreditation Committee.

The appeal hearing will be held within 60 days of the filing of the appeal. The program will be provided with an opportunity to provide a verbal statement, be represented by legal counsel, and to respond to questions of the appeals panel. The appeals panel meets in closed session to deliberate on the merits of the program's appeal.

In consultation with the members of the appeals panel, the chair prepares a written report of the panel's findings, which includes a proposed action by TEAC based on the appeals panel's review.

Within 15 days of the appeal hearing, the appeals panel's report is sent to the chair of the Accreditation Committee, who will consider the report and recommend to the executive committee of the board whether TEAC should sustain its original decision, grant a new category of accreditation (including denial), or take administrative action to redress the grievances in the appeal. The Executive Committee will consider the results of the appeal within 30 days of the appeal hearing.

Notification

Within 45 days of the appeal hearing, the TEAC president will provide written notification to the program of the executive committee's decision that details the basis for the committee's decision.

Other roles of the Accreditation Committee

Accreditation Committee's role in adverse actions

Should a program fall out of compliance with TEAC's quality principles and standards, TEAC may initiate a complaint under its non-compliance policy and its adverse action policy. The latter requires the Committee's consideration of the complaint.

Accreditation Committee's role in complaints against TEAC Members

Should a complaint be made against a TEAC member, and the president of TEAC receives the member's response to the complaint, the TEAC president then places the matter before the Accreditation Committee.

If the Accreditation Committee determines that the program has failed to demonstrate that its policies and processes are occurring as they were represented in the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal*, or determines that the complaint represents a breach of TEAC's principles of quality, or if the program fails to respond to the complaint, the Accreditation Committee may take action against the program. The program will be notified of the Accreditation Committee's decision to consider the complaint and be permitted to provide additional evidence concerning the matters addressed in the complaint.

At the next meeting of the Accreditation Committee, the members will review the program's responses and decide whether the program should submit additional information regarding the complaint and its compliance with TEAC standards or whether the program's accreditation status should be changed. A written response that details the basis for the Accreditation Committee's decision will be sent within thirty days of this meeting to the program head.

The Accreditation Committee will then inform the complainant and the program of the actions it has taken with regard to the complaint in writing within 30 days.

Accreditation Committee's role in the review of standards

Under TEAC's Review of Standards Policy, once every five years, TEAC surveys its clients with regard to the continuing validity of TEAC's regulations and standards. The Accreditation Committee reviews the results of the survey and determines if modifications should be proposed for further consideration by TEAC in accordance with TEAC's policy.

Accreditation Committee's role in the revision of standards

Under TEAC's Revision of Standards Policy, the Accreditation Committee, in response to the review of standards, will draft revisions for TEAC's consideration.

PART EIGHT:
MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION STATUS

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Maintaining accreditation status

Programs maintain their accreditation status by keeping their membership in TEAC current. The program must continue to meet TEAC's eligibility criteria, must continue to meet TEAC's quality principles, and must submit annual membership dues to TEAC. In addition, the program must submit an annual report, due on the anniversary of its accreditation decision. The annual report is submitted on-line and is typically no more than two or three pages.

Annual reports

The number of annual reports between *Briefs*, and the focus of these reports, varies according to the program's accreditation status.

Once the program has received accreditation or initial accreditation for five years, the program faculty is required to file four annual reports before a new *Inquiry Brief* is submitted to TEAC in the fifth year.

Programs that hold accreditation status for ten years are required to submit nine annual reports before submitting the next *Inquiry Brief* in the tenth year.

Programs that have received *accreditation* with stipulations submit a report in the **second year** that targets the areas that were found to be below standard in their *Brief* and provides evidence to support the claim that the program is no longer below standard and has remedied the deficiency.

Reporting substantive change
TEAC respects institutional autonomy, but requires that programs communicate with TEAC about substantive change that might require an alteration in the program's accreditation status.

Programs holding TEAC accreditation must bring any significant alterations in their institutions or programs to the attention of TEAC prior to making those changes. TEAC has the responsibility to determine what effect, if any, these changes would have on a program's accreditation status.

Types of substantive change include:

- Any change in the published mission or objectives of the institution or education program;
- The addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure, in terms of either content or delivery, from those that were offered when TEAC most recently accredited the program;
- A change in legal status or form of control of the program;
- A contract with other providers for direct instructional services, including any *teach-out* agreements.
- A change that alters the adequacy of the evidence the program uses to support its claim that it satisfies TEAC's quality principles.

Submitting the annual report
The annual report, which should be 5–10 pages in length, should be submitted online to TEAC, on the anniversary of the program's formal notification of its accreditation status.

Content and focus for the annual report
The typical TEAC annual report includes two things, which are to be submitted only in online electronic format:

1. An update of Appendix E, which is a table which describes the evidence the program relies upon, or plans to rely upon, and which indicates any information that is different from that submitted in the *Brief* or an earlier annual report, and
2. An update of the program's data spreadsheet(s) or data tables related to the program's claims.

Appendix E: The program is asked to update Appendix E to confirm the categories of evidence the faculty members rely on and have available to support their claims that their students know their subjects, know pedagogy, and can teach in an effective and caring manner. The update also notes any new categories of evidence the faculty plans to collect.

Spreadsheet and data tables: The program submits a spreadsheet in SPSS or Excel to which it has added the most recent evidence the program has collected related to its claims, or the program updates the data tables related to claims that appear in the Results Section of the *Inquiry Brief*. Note that for security reasons, data files should never include students' social security numbers.

Other items that may be required in the Annual Report:

***Addressing Weaknesses and Stipulations*:** Weaknesses need only be addressed at the time of the new *Inquiry Brief*. Stipulations are removed by recommendation of the Accreditation Panel and decision of the Accreditation Committee. The second Annual Report presents the case that the program has addressed any stipulations. A site visit to verify the Annual Report may be scheduled and audit fees may be charged. The Vice President of Audits prepares a summary of evidence, based on the Annual Reports, that the stipulations have been addressed and presents the summary as well as the Annual Reports to the Accreditation Panel and Accreditation Committee.

Avoiding adverse action

If TEAC receives confirmed complaints that the program does not continue to adhere to the TEAC quality principles and standards; discovers substantive changes in the program's professional education programs that were not reported to TEAC; or learns through the program's annual report or a complaint that the program no longer has the evidence to support the claims made in its *Brief*, then TEAC has proper reasons to believe that the program may no longer have the evidence to support or justify its accreditation status.

In such cases, TEAC may require the program to provide a report showing corrective action regarding unmet claims or promptly repeat the accreditation process for accreditation. Or TEAC may take **adverse action** against the program.

TEAC may also take adverse action if a program fails to pay dues and fees or fails to otherwise comply with the obligations of membership in TEAC.

The question to be considered in an *adverse action* proceeding is whether to withdraw the program's accreditation status.

In this procedure, TEAC will provide to the program, in writing, its complaint; the program head must respond in 30 days. TEAC then reviews the program's response.

TEAC's president then places the matter before the TEAC Accreditation Committee for consideration. If the Accreditation Committee determines that the program fails to comply with TEAC's principles, standards, or requirements for accreditation, the program will be notified of the Accreditation Committee's decision to consider the complaint and be permitted to provide additional evidence concerning the matter. At the next meeting of the Accreditation Committee, the members will review the program's responses and decide whether the program should submit additional information regarding the complaint and its compliance with TEAC standards or whether the program's accreditation status should be changed. A written response that details the basis for the Accreditation Committee's decision will be sent to the program head within 30 days of this meeting.

Adverse action is also taken against programs holding accreditation whose subsequent *Inquiry Brief* fails to meet the quality principles (when the decision is "accreditation denied"), but this kind of adverse action is taken by the Accreditation Committee.

In adverse action cases, whose outcome is the removal of the accreditation status, the program may hold candidate status if it so desires.

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES, AND FORMATS

List of tables, figures, and formats

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APPENDIX 2: TEAC GLOSSARY

TEAC Glossary

Accreditation (1): A process, active for the past 100 years, for assessing and enhancing academic and educational quality through voluntary peer review.

Accreditation (2): The status of public recognition that TEAC grants to an educational program that has evidence that it meets TEAC's standards, quality principles, and requirements.

Accreditation Committee: A decision-making subcommittee of TEAC's Board of Directors with the authority to make the accreditation decision. The Accreditation Committee has at least five members and includes a member of the public, a teacher, and a higher education faculty member. The Accreditation Committee is the TEAC entity recognized by the US Secretary of Education.

Accreditation Panel: The Accreditation Panel, appointed by the president of TEAC, makes a recommendation for an appropriate accreditation status for a program.

The members of the panel are skilled in evaluating evidence. Selected to represent the field of professional education, the panel members include teacher educators and P–12 educators and the TEAC lead auditor who visited the program under review. At least one member of the panel is a person familiar with the kind of institution sponsoring program under review.

Accreditation recommendation: The recommendation that the Accreditation Panel makes to the Accreditation Committee after giving due consideration to the *Brief*,[1] the Audit Report, any response from the program faculty to the audit report, reports from consulting reviewers if applicable, and an analysis of the program's case by the lead auditor and panelist.

The Accreditation Panel makes one of the following recommendations about a program: (1) it meets the standards for accreditation for two, five, or ten years (for *Inquiry Briefs*); (2) it meets the standards for initial accreditation for two or five years (for *Inquiry Brief Proposals*), or (3) it should return to candidate status. The Accreditation Panel also may recommend the citation of weaknesses or stipulations.

Accreditation Panel report: A report from the Accreditation Panel to the TEAC Accreditation Committee and the program faculty, which includes its accreditation recommendation for the program, its justification for the recommendation, and feedback to the program about student achievement.

Adverse audit opinion: An unsatisfactory audit opinion, reflecting the finding that the auditors were not able to conclude that the *Brief* was trustworthy. They are guided to this conclusion if they could not confirm at least 75 percent of the targets they probed.

Affiliate membership: A form of membership available to institutions that support the TEAC agenda but that do not wish to undertake candidate membership status. Affiliate membership is also available to individuals and professional associations and agencies.

Annual report: A report submitted on-line each year by accredited programs. Typically no more than 2–3 pages, the annual report includes an updated Appendix E and updated data tables or spreadsheets. In the annual report, the faculty also addresses any weaknesses or stipulations cited in the accreditation decision and notes any substantive changes in the program.

Appeal: A request by a program under review that TEAC reconsider an action or decision. An appeal is warranted when there may be:

1. Evidence of errors or omissions in carrying out prescribed procedures by the auditors, any

[1] TEAC uses *Brief* to refer to both the *Inquiry Brief* and the *Inquiry Brief Proposal.*

reviewers, Panel members, members of the Accreditation Committee, the TEAC staff, or the Board of Directors.

2. Evidence that demonstrable bias, conflict of interest, or prejudice by a member of the TEAC staff or Board, an auditor, panelist, a reviewer, or member of the Accreditation Committee unduly influenced the accreditation decision.

3. Evidence that the accreditation decision was not supported adequately or was contrary to the facts presented and known at the time of the decision.

Audit: The on-site examination and verification of the evidence presented in the program's *Inquiry Brief*. The audit is concerned with whether the evidence presented in the *Inquiry Brief* is in fact as it is presented. The audit does not address the quality of the program. In the case of the *Inquiry Brief Proposal*, the auditors may assist the program in improving its proposal.

Auditable: A judgment by the lead auditor that the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* is complete and ready for examination by the audit team.

Audit report: A document informing the program faculty about the results of the audit. The TEAC audit report generally includes:

1. The summary of the case, which reflects the auditors' understanding of the case the faculty is making for accreditation.

2. The auditors' overall opinion about the trustworthiness of the *Brief*.

3. A full report of the findings from the auditors' probes.

4. The auditors' judgments about whether or not the preponderance of the evidence advanced by the faculty in support of each element was verified, and a determination of whether the institution is committed to the program.

5. The schedule and logistics of the audit.

Audit task: A component of the main body of the Audit Report in which aspects of the *Brief* are probed for their accuracy. An audit task is composed of a *target*, a *probe*, a *finding*, and a conclusion about whether the target was verified, verified with error, or not verified (see below for their definitions).

Candidate (see student)

Candidate status: The status given to programs pursuing accreditation that have satisfied TEAC's eligibility requirements (see below).

Caring: A particular kind of relationship between the teacher and the student (or a leader and the staff) that is defined by the teacher's unconditional acceptance of the student, the teacher's intention to address the student's educational needs, the teacher's competence to meet those needs, and also by the student's recognition that the teacher cares.

Caring is addressed in the evaluation of teaching skill through candidate performance, observation, selection, screening, or even direct instruction including modeling on the part of faculty.

Caring encompasses the professional dispositions (attitudes, values, and beliefs) valued by the field and exhibited in the teacher's behavior.

Case analysis: A document prepared by lead auditor and the lead panelist to assist the Accreditation Panel in its deliberation. This document takes into consideration the lead auditor's and panelist's individual analyses of the program's case for accreditation and outlines the possible accreditation recommendations (including weaknesses and stipulations) that are consistent with the record. The case analysis cites the evidence in the record that is consistent and inconsistent with TEAC's requirements, including whether or not there are credible rival hypotheses for the claims in the *Brief*.

Certification (see Licensing)

Claims: The statements that a program faculty makes to describe how its program meets the TEAC standards in preparing competent, caring, and qualified teachers.

Clarification tasks: Prior to the site visit, auditors may send a set of questions about the *Brief* that need to be clarified in writing before the audit begins. These questions are included, with the program's answers, in the audit report and may lead to follow-up tasks during the audit and may serve to verify a target in the *Brief*.

Clean audit opinion: The most confident rating TEAC gives pertaining to the audit team's conclusion with regard to the verification or trustworthiness of the *Brief* and its parts. It usually means that the auditors were able to verify 90% or more of the targets they probed and that no more than 25% of the targets contained errors of any kind.

Component: One of the major parts of each element of the TEAC system of principles and standards.

The components are represented by a single decimal number. For example, 1.5, evidence of valid interpretations of the assessments is a component of element 1.0, *Quality Principle I.* In the accreditation process, components may be awarded *stipulations* if the evidence for them is sufficiently weak and below standard.

Confirming probe: A probe is said to be confirming if the auditor determines that the evidence (e.g., statistic, claim) representing the target is accurate. This judgment can be made even if there are slight and inconsequential inaccuracies in the targeted text of the *Brief*.

Consulting auditor: A volunteer member of the profession of education (e.g., teacher, higher education faculty member, state department official) or member of the public who has been trained by TEAC as an auditor. Consulting auditors are contrasted with staff auditors who are employed by TEAC as auditors or in other roles.

Content knowledge (see subject matter knowledge)

Continuing accreditation: The term is no longer used by TEAC as a status of accreditation. In the past it referred to an accreditation status awarded for ten years for *Inquiry Briefs* submitted after the first one.

Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA): A nonprofit and nongovernmental organization of the nation's colleges and universities, CHEA recognizes accreditors. Established in 1996, CHEA also acts as the national policy center and clearinghouse on accreditation. CHEA recognized TEAC in 2001.

Cross-cutting themes: These themes are aspects of subject matter knowledge, pedagogy, and caring and effective teaching skill. They are: learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives and accuracy, and technology. Evidence that each is attained is required.

Denied accreditation: Accreditation is denied when the *Brief*, coupled with the auditors' findings, fails to support the program faculty's claims, and there is little likelihood that additional evidence and analysis would indicate the faculty's claims about the quality principles could be warranted.

Design team: A joint project between TEAC and NCATE to create a system of national teacher education accreditation that is unified in its goals and voice while offering the nation's schools of education a genuine choice between the evolving NCATE and TEAC systems of accreditation.

Disclaimer audit opinion: A rating by the auditors that indicates that the evidence could not be audited because it was not available for auditing or that the TEAC auditors were not given access to the evidence. Auditors are guided to this conclusion if more than 75 percent of the targets assigned to an element or component could not be audited.

Disposition (see Caring)

Element: An element (1.0, 2.0, 3.0) is one of the quality principles – *Quality Principle I, Quality Principle II* and *Quality Principle III.*

Eligibility: The requirements for membership in TEAC that confer candidate status on the program. The principal requirements are that the institution offering the program is regionally accredited (or its equivalent), that the graduates of the program are eligible for a professional license in the state where the program is given, and that the fees are paid.

Evidence: The body of fact and analysis that meets the standards of contemporary scholarship and warrants the claims and assertions made by the program faculty about each of the quality principles.

TEAC requires that programs provide evidence that their students have learned (1) the subject matter they will teach, (2) the subject matters of the field of education, and (3) how to teach in a caring and effective manner. Educational leadership programs are required to provide evidence that their students have learned (1) the professional knowledge of management and leadership, (2) strategic decision-making, and (3) how to act on their knowledge in a caring and professional manner. In addition, programs must show that the way they warrant student learning is valid. The faculty must also show that they use what they learn about their students' learning to improve the program and the system they have in place for ensuring the quality of the program.

Heuristic: Generally speaking, a heuristic is a "rule of thumb," or a good guide to follow when making decisions. The goal of heuristics is to guide problem solving to accurate results in an acceptable amount of time. It is contrasted with solving the problem by following some pre-established formula or algorithm. TEAC uses several heuristics to guide the thinking of auditors, panelists, and committee members. One is a "part/whole" heuristic in which the problem (*what is the right accreditation status to award?*) is dissolved into its constituent parts, which being smaller, are more easily solved and their solutions provide a pathway to the solution of the larger problem.

Higher Education Price Index: A price index which measures average changes in the prices of goods and services purchased by colleges and universities through current-fund expenditures and educational and general expenditures (excluding expenditures for sponsored research and auxiliary enterprises). TEAC's dues are incremented annually by this index.

Initial audit tasks: Before the auditors arrive at a campus, the TEAC staff and the auditors will have created a set of *initial* audit tasks that focus on the parts of the *Brief* that are relevant for one or another of the TEAC principles and standards. They are called *initial* tasks because the auditors may also employ follow-up tasks and new tasks that they have created on the spot or that they draw from the large set of potential audit tasks the TEAC staff has created.

Inquiry Brief: An analogue to a research report or monograph, the *Inquiry Brief* includes the claims a faculty makes for its graduates, a rationale for the assessment of those claims, a description of the psychometric properties of the evidence that is presented to support the claims, the findings related to the claims, and a discussion of what has been learned from the data. In addition, the *Inquiry Brief* reports on evidence of a functioning quality control system, evidence that the institution is committed to the program, the faculty's efforts to evaluate the rigor of its own quality control system, and the program's capacity for quality.

Inquiry Brief Proposal: An analogue to a grant proposal, the proposal explains how the program will acquire the research standard evidence it needs and how it has the capacity to carry out the inquiry needed for the evidence. A program faculty that does not yet have convincing evidence for its claims of student learning but has evidence of the capacity of its program for quality may submit an *Inquiry Brief Proposal*. The program must, however, have evidence of a sound quality control system, evidence that the institution is committed to the program, the faculty's efforts to evaluate the rigor of its own quality control

system and a plan and rationale for acquiring evidence over time to support its claims that it will meet the requirements of the TEAC system.

It may be that a program that submits a *Proposal* has a respectable reputation for quality and success, but the evidence that presumably supports and corroborates the reputation, beyond that needed for state program approval, has not been systematically collected and examined recently to see if it continues to support the program's exemplary reputation.

Inquiry committees: For the purpose of their participation in the governance and activities of TEAC, the members of the program faculty, or faculties, are encouraged to form inquiry committees, composed of representatives of all groups that play a role in the programs.

Institutional learning: Sometimes referred to as faculty learning, it is one of TEAC's quality principles. Institutional learning suggests that every program has in place a quality control system and that the faculty responds to data about the program, from student outcomes to faculty competence. According to this principle, the faculty should collect data about all aspects of the program; the program faculty should also learn something about its program as a result of this process and demonstrate learning by making appropriate accommodations.

Institutional accrediting agencies: These agencies accredit all aspects of an entire institution. They are further subdivided into regional and national accrediting agencies. Regional accrediting agencies tend to accredit comprehensive institutions with both undergraduate and graduate components that offer instruction in a variety of subject fields. National accrediting agencies, sometimes referred to as specialized accrediting agencies, tend to accredit specialized institutions that offer instruction in one or a few subject fields, such as independent law and medical schools, theological seminaries, schools of visual and performing arts, and others. The standards and rules governing both regional and national accrediting agencies are identical, and institutions accredited by any regional or national accrediting agency are considered to be recognized higher education institutions within the U.S. education system. Programmatic accrediting agencies**,** like TEAC, accredit specific programs of study at institutionally accredited institutions. They do not accredit the entire institution. Nearly all programmatic accrediting agencies operate in subject fields that provide professional education and preparation for meeting state licensing requirements.

INTASC: The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium that has developed standards for the licensure of teachers that can be used in all states.

Internal audit: An examination of the program's quality control system undertaken by the program faculty to determine whether the system functions as intended and whether the program is improved as a result of its functioning. The findings of the internal audit are reported in Appendix A of the *Inquiry Brief.*

ISLLC: The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium that has developed standards for the licensure of school administrators that can be used in all states.

Lead auditor: An officer on the TEAC staff who leads the audit team, provides consistency in the audits from site to site, drafts the Audit Report, helps prepare the Case Analysis and participates in the panel's deliberations as a non-voting member.

Leadership skills: A component of *Quality Principle I* for educational leadership programs that requires that candidates know how to act on their knowledge in a caring and effective manner that results in appropriate levels of achievement for all the school's students.

Learning how to learn: The TEAC cross-cutting theme indicating that candidates learn how to acquire new knowledge on their own. The state of subject matters taught in school is in constant flux, as are the expectations of what should be taught in the public schools. Teachers must there-

fore be ready to teach content in their fields, even content about which they are initially quite unfamiliar and to develop meta-cognitive knowledge that gives them insights into their own learning practices.

Liberal education: Liberal education is an approach to learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. TEAC requires that the programs it accredits provide evidence, as part of *Quality Principle I*, that their graduates have the habits of mind that come from liberal education, in particular, learning how to learn, multicultural perspectives and accuracy, and an understanding of the uses of technology in learning.

Licensing: The official recognition by a state governmental agency that a person has met state requirements for teaching or school administration and is, therefore, approved to practice as a certified or licensed professional.

The term *certification* is still used to mean teacher licensing in some states.

Local practitioner: A teacher or administrator nominated by the program to serve on the audit team. The person is familiar with the program, has no disqualifying conflicts of interest, receives training in TEAC's audit procedures, and primarily serves to provide local context to assist the other members of the audit team.

Multicultural perspectives: The TEAC cross-cutting theme indicating accuracy of the curriculum with respect to sound scholarship on matters of race, gender, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspective.

NBPTS: The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is a nongovernmental organization that has developed standards and an assessment system for the purpose of awarding *board certification* to any of the nation's teachers who has three or more years of experience, without regard to how he or she was prepared for teaching assignments.

NCATE (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education) is a coalition of 33 specialty professional associations of teachers, teacher educators, content specialists, and local and state policy makers. Like TEAC, it has established standards and procedures for accrediting educator preparation programs.

New program accreditation: TEAC no longer uses this term for programs that submit *Inquiry Brief Proposals.* In the past, the "new program" accreditation status signified that the program faculty has proposed a valid way of measuring its students' learning, has a sound rationale for the program, has a quality control system in place to monitor and improve program quality, and has evidence of institutional commitment to the program.

Non-specific concerns: Content in the *Brief* that is not clearly related to any feature of the TEAC system but which nevertheless speaks to the overall reliability and trustworthiness of the *Brief* and is taken into consideration by the audit team in the overall conclusion about the correct audit opinion for the *Brief.*

Part/whole heuristic (see heuristic)

Pedagogical content knowledge: A mixture of the knowledge and skill represented by all the components, including the cross-cutting themes, of *Quality Principle I.* It is the knowledge the teacher draws upon to teach lessons effectively and caringly to diverse students and is essentially the interaction of deep subject matter and pedagogical knowledge.

Pedagogical knowledge: A component of *Quality Principle I* relating to the conversion of the subject matter into something else: a school subject that has its own structure and logic that helps the student make sense of the subject matter. The knowledge that supports this conversion of the academic major into a school subject is called pedagogical knowledge (sometimes called *pedagogical content knowledge).*

Someone who has pedagogical knowledge knows what is a telling example; a good analogy, algo-

rithm, or heuristic; a provocative question; a compelling theme; a different way of representing a subject matter; and more than one example, metaphor, or mode of explanation. Typically the content of *methods courses* and clinically-based courses in the teacher education program show the prospective teacher the methods of instructing, motivating, and evaluating students. TEAC expects that a program devote the equivalent of an academic minor to developing students' pedagogical knowledge.

Pre-accreditation: The status of public recognition that an accrediting agency grants to an institution or program for a limited period of time that signifies the agency has determined that the institution or program is progressing towards full accreditation and is likely to gain full accreditation before the expiration of that limited period of time. TEAC no longer awards pre-accreditation, as it had done, for *Inquiry Brief Proposals;* it now awards initial accreditation status for successful proposals.

Preponderance: The amount or degree of evidence that is sufficient to satisfy a TEAC principle or standard.

As a general guideline, TEAC uses *preponderance* to connote that 75 percent of whatever is being modified by "preponderance" is sufficient for a claim.

Probe: A specific action taken by the auditor to establish whether a target is accurate.

In cases in which the outcomes of a probe are variable or uncertain with regard to the accuracy of the target, the auditors probe further until a stable pattern is uncovered or until a probe's result is unambiguous (see *confirming probe*). An acceptable pattern for the verification of a target has at least 75 percent of the probes yielding verification or confirmation.

Professional Development Schools: Often referred to as PDSs, these are regular public schools, usually in challenging environments, that serve teacher education programs the way teaching hospitals serve medical education.

Professional knowledge: A component of *Quality Principle I* for educational leadership programs which defines the subject matter of educational leadership (organizational theory, human resource management, school finance, law, instructional supervision, policy and politics, and data analysis and interpretation).

Program: A planned sequence of academic courses and experiences leading to a degree, state license (or certificate), or some other credential that entitles the holder to perform professional education services in schools.

In cases where the institution offers more than one program option, or where graduates are eligible for different professional licenses, the institution determines how it wishes to represent and organize the evidence about its programs. It may submit one *Brief* that treats all the program options as one coherent program with special license options or tracks. Or it may submit several *Briefs*, as many as one for each of its distinct program options. A single program may include several license areas, options, and levels if they share a common logic, structure, quality control system, and have similar and comparable evidence.

The number of program options and *Briefs* has no bearing on the program's annual fees to TEAC, but it will affect the audit fee levied in the audit year.

Program approval (see also state approval): The process by which a state governmental agency reviews a professional education program to determine if it meets the state's standards for the preparation of school personnel.

Program approval can be coordinated with TEAC program accreditation through a state/TEAC accreditation agreement or protocol; in certain cases, TEAC accreditation can replace program approval.

Program faculty: The individuals who are assigned responsibility for the program and are held accountable by the institution for the quality of the program.

The program faculty is often lead by a dean, director, or chair who is officially designated to represent the professional education program.

Program option: Options are usually the individual disciplines, endorsements, or license options for which the graduates of the program are eligible. Thus a single program in the TEAC lexicon might have options in elementary education, secondary education (core subjects), and special education. A program might also have different levels (graduate and undergraduate) and be at several locations. Options, levels, and locations can only be grouped as a single program if they share a logic and framework, have a common quality control system, and have comparable evidence for the same claims.

Pupil: TEAC uses the term to refer to those individuals in the P-12 grades.

Qualified audit opinion: An audit opinion that signifies that although there are significant errors, overall, the *Brief* can still be trusted. It usually signifies that at least 75 percent (but less than 90 percent) of the targets were verified or confirmed.

Quality control system: The system the institution and program faculty have in place to yield the evidence they need to ensure that they have identified the right faculty, students, administrators, courses, standards, and policies for the program.

TEAC requires evidence that the system functions as intended and that it at least addresses program capacity of the curriculum, faculty, candidates, and resources.

Rationale: An argument (called the rationale) which gives the faculty members' reasons for selecting the assessments they rely on, the reasons they think the assessments are reliable and valid, and the reasons why their standard or the criterion for success is appropriate.

Recognition: A designation that indicates that an accrediting agency meets the standards of the recognizing body. The United States Department of Education (USDE) and the Council of Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) *recognize* accrediting organizations. Both bodies recognize TEAC.

The USDE recognition process is governed by federal law and regulation and is restricted to accreditors whose accreditation provides eligibility for federal funding for a program or institution. The purpose is to assure that federal funds purchase quality courses and programs. The CHEA recognition process is governed by the policies of its board, a private entity, and is designed to assure and strengthen academic quality (see above, Council for Higher Education Accreditation).

Regional accrediting agencies: Regional accrediting agencies are recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education as reliable authorities concerning the quality of education or training offered by the institutions of higher education they accredit. The individual agencies accredit institutions in specific geographic regions of the country. TEAC requires that the institutions offering the program be regionally accredited (or its equivalent).

Reliability: The degree to which test scores for a group of test takers are consistent over repeated applications of a measurement procedure and hence are inferred to be dependable and repeatable for an individual test taker.

Staff analysis (see case analysis)

Staff auditor (see lead auditor): An officer on the TEAC staff who leads the audit team, provides consistency in the audits from site to site, drafts the Audit Report, helps prepare the Case Analysis and participates in the panel's deliberations as a non-voting member.

State accreditation agreement or protocol agreement: A formal agreement between a state and TEAC that defines the state's recognition of TEAC's accreditation of programs, the relationship of accreditation and program approval, and guides any joint or concurrent state-TEAC site visits.

State approval (see also program approval): A state activity requiring professional education programs within a state to meet standards set by

the state so that the program's graduates will be eligible for a state license (same as program approval or program registration).

State accreditation agreement: A formal agreement between a state and TEAC that defines the state's recognition of TEAC's accreditation of programs, its relationship with state program approval, and guides any joint or concurrent state-TEAC site visits. It is sometimes called a protocol agreement.

State approval: A governmental activity requiring specific professional education programs within a state to meet standards of quality so that their graduates will be eligible for a state license (same as program approval or program registration).

Stipulation: A finding by the Accreditation Panel, and confirmed by the Accreditation Committee, of a weakness in the evidence for a component of any element in the TEAC system (1.1–3.2) that is sufficient to indicate that component is below standard, but insufficient to place the entire element (1.0, 2.0, or 3.0) below standard.

A program must address stipulations immediately and within two years must present evidence in its annual report to TEAC that is sufficient to refute the deficiency. A stipulation is recommended for removal by the Accreditation Panel and removed by the Accreditation Committee.

Strategic decision-making: A component of *Quality Principle I* for programs in educational leadership which refers to candidate's ability to make decisions fairly, collaboratively, and informed by research evidence. It refers also to their ability to formulate strategy and communicate an educational vision.

Student: Usually refers to a student in the teacher education program, not a student in the schools. TEAC sometimes refers to students in the program as candidates (as in candidates for the degree or license) and sometimes students are referred to as graduates of the program.

Student learning: The term is used interchangeably with "student achievement" or "student accomplishment" and refers generally to what the students and graduates of the program know and can do with regard to *Quality Principle I*.

Subcomponent: One of the parts of a component of the TEAC system that is designated by a double decimal number (e.g., 3.2.6).

Subject matter knowledge: A component of *Quality Principle I* relating to the knowledge of the content of the subject to be taught. TEAC requires that the teacher education programs it accredits offer the traditional academic college major of approximately 30 credit hours of graduated study, or its equivalent.

Because the *major* is geared toward graduate study or entry level employment in the discipline, however, the program faculty should carefully examine each major to insure that it is appropriate for the future teacher because it leads students to the kind of basic understanding necessary to be an effective educator.

Those seeking some teaching assignments (for example, elementary school teaching or secondary school teaching in social studies or general science) are required to have the *equivalent* of the academic major because there is often no appropriate formal major for these fields.

Substantive change: Any change in the published mission or objectives of the institution or education program; the addition of courses or programs that represent a significant departure in terms of either content or delivery from those that were offered when TEAC most recently accredited the programs; a change in legal status or form of control of the program; or a change from contracting with other providers for direct instructional services, including any teach-out agreements. Any change in the program that would indicate that the program no longer has sufficient evidence that it still satisfies TEAC's quality principles.

Target: What the auditors are seeking to verify in the *Brief*. A target can be a particular sentence, claim, statistic, or piece of evidence. Each target

is linked to an element, component, or subcomponent of the TEAC system.

Teach-out agreement: An agreement between accredited institutions which provides equitable treatment of students if one of the institutions stops offering an educational program before all enrolled students have completed the program.

Teacher competence: A teacher's competence is a reflection of the repertoire of skills, understandings, and dispositions he or she possesses. The particular set of skills, understandings, and dispositions that a program faculty takes to represent competence is reflected in the claims made about the program's candidates and in the literature and evidence cited in the *Inquiry Brief* to justify the claims. The *Inquiry Brief* must provide evidence about teaching skill that indicates that the candidates for the degree know how to teach and can show their skill in clinical settings.

Teacher qualifications: TEAC expects that program graduates will receive a state license to teach.

In the past, earning a license was tantamount to successfully completing an approved program and receiving a recommendation for licensure from the faculty. But in most states, graduating from an approved program is now necessary but not sufficient to receive a state license. Many states require candidates in addition to pass criminal background checks, take and pass examinations, and meet health standards.

TEAC requires that a program that merits accreditation should select, screen, and prepare its candidates to meet all of the state licensure requirements. The significant data bearing on this claim are twofold: (1) the number of teacher education candidates who graduate from a program each year; and (2) the proportion of those graduates who earn a state teaching license.

Teacher skill: The component of *Quality Principle I* that refers to the teacher's ability to teach in a caring and effective manner. TEAC expects that all teacher candidates at the close of their teacher education programs can perform well in rudimentary ways in the classroom. In an independent manner, candidates are expected to plan lessons effectively, implement them well, and assess their impact with rigor. In their performances, it is expected that teacher candidates will meet standard problems facing teachers and address them successfully. It is TEAC's perspective that no teacher candidate should be recommended for licensure in the profession without demonstrating teacher competence as defined.

USDE recognition: A designation by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) that an accreditation agency is a reliable authority as to the quality of education or training provided by the institutions of higher education and the higher education programs they accredit. TEAC was recognized by USDE in September 2003.

Validity is the extent to which a test or set of operations measures what it is supposed to measure. Validity refers to the appropriateness of inferences from test scores or other forms of assessment.

Valid assessment of learning: The *Inquiry Brief* conveys to TEAC and to the field how faculty has substantiated the claims it has made about the candidates. In a quantitative design, an assessment is valid to the extent that the credibility of rival explanations for the findings is low and the likelihood that the program itself is responsible for the findings is high. A key to any analysis of an assessment is the validity of the interpretations made of the data. In a qualitative design, validity is a function of triangulation where multiple sources of data suggest converging interpretations of the extent to which the faculty claims are substantiated.

Validity of interpretations of data: In modern psychometric views, validity is not a property of a data set. Instead, validity refers to the credibility of the interpretations that are made concerning the findings of a measurement effort. For example, if SAT scores are taken to measure teacher competence, and the scores are interpreted in that fashion, faculty would need to present an argument including related findings and research

to substantiate the credibility of this interpretation. If college grade-point averages are taken as measures of pedagogical content knowledge, again, the interpretation would need to be defended by some sort of analysis of the procedures used to assign course grades. And if measures of the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory were taken as measures of teachers' caring, arguments to make such an interpretation seem credible would be required.

Verified target: A target, whether lined to an element, component, sub-component, or item of text, is said to be verified when at least 75 percent of the probes assigned to it are confirmed, or when, in the case of text, there is a clear, unambiguous confirmation by a probe.

TEAC also speaks of targets that are verified as being *confirmed*.

Verified with error: A target is said to be verified with error when the errors uncovered by the auditors in the target are minor and do not alter the meaning of the target.

Weakness: When the evidence for a claim about part of the TEAC system is weak, but the evidence is still sufficient to support the claim for the component or element, the Accreditation Panel notes this by citing a weakness that must be subsequently addressed by the accredited program in its annual reports to TEAC.

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TEAC's Accreditation Framework
TEAC's Principles and Standards

Eligibility for the program's candidate accreditation status

- 0.1 Institutional accreditation by one of the regional accreditation agencies, or the equivalent
- 0.2 Professional licensure available to graduates
- 0.3 Commitment to comply with TEAC's standards
- 0.4 Disclosure of any actions regarding the program's accreditation status
- 0.5 Willingness to cooperate and provide needed information to TEAC

Quality Principle I: **Evidence of candidate learning**

- 1.1 Evidence of candidates' subject matter knowledge
- 1.2 Evidence of candidates' pedagogical knowledge
- 1.3 Evidence of candidates' caring and effective teaching skill
- 1.4 Evidence of the cross-cutting liberal education themes
  - 1.4.1 Learning how to learn
  - 1.4.2 Multicultural perspectives and accuracy
  - 1.4.3 Technology
- 1.5 Evidence of valid interpretations of the assessments

Quality Principle II: **Evidence of faculty learning and inquiry**

- 2.1 Rationale for assessments
- 2.2 Program decisions and planning based on evidence
- 2.3 Influential quality control system
  - 2.3.1 Curriculum meets professional license requirements
  - 2.3.2 Faculty accept TEAC goal and program's *Inquiry Brief* / *Inquiry Brief Proposal* and have an accurate and balanced understanding of the field
  - 2.3.3 Candidates: admissions policies encourage diversity and service in high-demand areas and student services contribute to candidate success in learning
  - 2.3.4 Resources monitored and enhanced by the program's quality control system

Quality Principle III: **Evidence of institutional commitment and capacity for program quality**

- 3.1 Commitment (parity)
  - 3.1.1 **Curriculum** meets institutional standards and degree requirements
  - 3.1.2 **Faculty** qualifications are equal to or better than the statistics for the institution as a whole
  - 3.1.3 **Facilities** are proportionate to the overall institutional resources
  - 3.1.4 **Fiscal and administrative** resources adequate to promote candidate learning as required by *Quality Principle I* and in parity with the institution
  - 3.1.5 **Candidate support** equal to the level of support services provided by the institution as a whole
  - 3.1.6 **Candidate complaints** proportionally no greater or significant than the complaints by candidates in the institution's other programs
- 3.2 Capacity (sufficiency)
  - 3.2.1 **Curriculum** reflects an appropriate number of credits and credit hour requirements for the components of *Quality Principle I*
  - 3.2.2 **Faculty** are qualified for their teaching assignments
  - 3.2.3 **Facilities** are appropriate and adequate to promote success in candidate learning as required by *Quality Principle I*
  - 3.2.4 **Fiscal and administrative:** institution is financially sound and there is an appropriate level of institutional resources for faculty development
  - 3.2.5 **Candidate support** services are sufficient to support successful completion of the program
  - 3.2.6 **Policies and practices** are adequate for program quality and satisfy federal requirements

State standards: When appropriate because of TEAC's protocol agreement with a state, a third component to the TEAC capacity standards (3.3) is added with subcomponents (3.3.1, etc.) in accordance to the state's particular requirements.

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