



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 reliable 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.