



Overview of TEAC's accreditation process

Although TEAC's accreditation process assures the public of the quality of educator preparation 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 is 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, 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.