

**REJOINDER TO THE
BOARD OF EXAMINERS FINAL REPORT
NCATE**

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

**Continuing Accreditation Visit To
California State University, Fullerton
November 8-10, 2015**



College of Education

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January 27, 2016

This letter acknowledges the receipt of the Board of Examiners (BOE) report as posted on the AIMS website on December 3, 2015. An extension was requested for the submission of the rejoinder due to our winter break schedule. An extension was granted with a new submission date of January 29, 2016.

This rejoinder is written in response to the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Board of Examiners' Report on the continuing accreditation visit to California State University, Fullerton on November 8-10, 2015. This was a joint accreditation visit by NCATE and the California Commission for Teacher Credentialing (CTC).

We would like to express our thanks for the high level of dedication, integrity, and professionalism demonstrated by our NCATE team leader, Dr. Ana Maria Schuhmann, and the BOE team members in collaboration with the state review team.

The BOE report recommended that all six NCATE standards are met for both our initial and advanced programs and recommended the removal of our previous AFI in Standard 2. We are pleased to concur with the collective recommendations of the BOE.

While we concur with the final recommendations of the team, we offer this rejoinder to provide additional information and clarification in regard to suggested areas for improvement.

We appreciate the opportunities the accreditation process affords us to engage in dialogue about the continuous improvement of our education unit and look forward to the Unit Accreditation Board's final decision.

Sincerely,

Lisa Kirtman
Associate Dean

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All evidence supplied in this rejoinder was available to the Board of Examiner's (BOE) team members at the time of the visit. Most of the evidence cited in this rejoinder is in the form of exhibits that are housed on the unit's NCATE Institutional Report (IR) website. The website link was provided to the BOE team and the IR and exhibits were also provided on a flash drive to each member at the on-site visit.

In the rejoinder, we provide reference to the exhibits to show that the material was available to the team and has not been newly acquired. While it is not expected that the Unit Accreditation Board (UAB) view the exhibits electronically, we do want to provide access. Cited exhibits can be found on the unit's NCATE IR website at <http://ed.fullerton.edu/ncate>.

Given the limit on pages that can be uploaded to AIMS it was not always possible to upload full exhibits that were cited. In some cases, an excerpts or an example from one program is provided in the appendix, with the understanding that the full exhibit is available on the website.

CSUF REJOINDER

I. Introduction

The Unit concurs with the BOE Team findings.

II. Conceptual Framework

The Unit concurs with the BOE Team findings.

III. Standard 1: Area for Improvement

AFI	AFI Rationale
The unit lacks sufficient evidence that candidates Develop and demonstrate the professional dispositions identified by the unit. (Initial and Advanced)	The unit is working toward measuring disposition and has two years or less of data. However, the data show the same means for all candidates in all programs. Additionally, candidates cannot name or discuss the unit dispositions.

The Unit takes exception to some parts of this AFI as written, and asks that consideration be taken to remove, or revise the language so it accurately reflects the evidence provided in the institutional report and exhibits. To support our position, we provide clarification on specific aspects of the AFI as presented:

1. The AFI indicates that it pertains to both Initial and Advanced programs. However, the rationale does not contain any accurate arguments pertaining to initial programs.
 - a. The rationale states that the unit is "working toward measuring dispositions and has two years or less of data." This is not true for our initial programs. The unit has been continuously collecting and reporting disposition data on multiple assessments for all initial programs since the inception of the assessment system in 2006. As shown in **Exhibit 1.4.e**, multiple assessments are used to measure initial candidate dispositions, including fieldwork and student teaching evaluations, Teacher Performance Assessment tasks, and graduate/employer survey feedback. Data from the full set of eight assessments was provided in **Exhibit 1.4.f** for the most recent three years (2012-2015) as required for the institutional report. The first two years were provided in the report, the third was added on the website at the time the addendum was submitted (Sept. 2015). This was noted in the review of Standard 2

in the BOE report (page 8, paragraph 4).

- b. The rationale statement that the data show “the same means for all candidates in all programs” is clearly not true for the disposition data provided for initial programs in **Exhibit 1.4.f**. While candidate means are consistently on the high side as evaluated by supervisors, master teachers, faculty, graduates and employers they are varied across all data sets (**see example in Appendix A**).
- c. The rationale states that candidates cannot name or discuss the unit dispositions. It is not clear that this was the case for initial program candidates, as the review narrative only points to this being an issue in advanced programs. “In other onsite interviews, current candidates and completers **in advanced programs** were not able to speak to the unit’s dispositions” (BOE report, page 5, paragraph 2).

CSUF respectfully requests that initial programs be removed from this AFI based on the evidence provided.

2. While we concur with parts of the AFI in terms of our advanced programs, in our opinion some of the language is vague and misleading. For example:
 - a. The rationale states there are “two years or less of data” measuring dispositions. This is true for only one disposition assessment, which was recently developed as part of the continuous improvement process to strengthen disposition assessment at the advanced level. However, this is not the only way advanced candidate dispositions are measured. For example candidate self-perception data are collected at mid-point and exit from the program, and graduate and employer data are collected one year post-program (**see Appendix B**). Three years of data (2012-2015) for these assessments, as required for the institutional report, was provided in **Exhibit 1.4.f**. These multiple assessment measures and corresponding data were noted in the BOE’s review of Standard 2 (see page 8, paragraph 4, however, this paragraph erroneously omits mention of the third year of data submitted in September 2015 with the addendum).
 - b. It is correct that one year of data were provided for a new advanced program disposition assessment developed in spring 2013 and piloted in 2014-15 (**see Exhibit 1.4.e**). The unit does not see this as a weakness, but instead as a natural part of the continuous improvement process. We continually refine, revise, or develop new assessments to capture candidate proficiencies toward meeting outcomes. It happened that this particular assessment had recently been developed at the time of our onsite visit, so we submitted the only data available at that time (**see Exhibit 1.4.f**). We will continue to refine, improve, collect, and report data from this assessment moving forward. Again, this is not the only disposition measure, and the fact that it has been added to the assessment system, in our view, indicates improvement.
 - c. As with the initial program, the statement that data show “the same means for all candidates in all programs” is not the case in the advanced programs either. A careful look at all data presented in **Exhibit 1.4.f** shows high ratings, but the variation in means is consistent with that seen in other assessments. With the new assessment that is in the pilot stage, there are two programs where the means are the same. We are planning to take a close look at the rubric this spring (2016) as this could be a reflection of the scale not being sensitive enough to nuances in

ratings. Again, this assessment is in the pilot stage, so we expect to refine it to provide more informative data.

- d. The rationale states that “candidates” cannot name or discuss the unit dispositions. The narrative review specified this was true in interviews of current advanced candidates and completers, as such we concur. While we have unit requirements in place to ensure that candidates are informed of disposition expectations and assessments, this finding points to the need to oversee the processes put in place and build in some accountability measures to provide the unit with evidence that the processes are carried out in every program. The disposition assessments described for each advanced program in **Exhibit 1.4.e** include the Candidate Notification Requirements (**see advanced program example in Appendix C**).

Based on the evidence provided, we respectfully request that the initial programs be removed as a part of the AFI and that the AFI be rewritten to focus not on data, but on the need to better inform candidates of expectations and assessments, as the report findings do support this need.

IV. Standard 2: Areas for Improvement

AFI 1	AFI 1 Rationale
The unit does not collaborate with necessary members of the professional community to implement and evaluate the assessment system. (Initial and Advanced)	Though there is a marked presence of superintendents, college faculty, program coordinators, and assessment staff on the advisory boards that exist throughout the unit, there is no systematic opportunity for teachers, candidates, and principals to contribute to the evaluation of the assessment system on a unit or program level.

Overall, the BOE report found high levels of collaboration and strong relationships with unit stakeholders at all levels. We are indeed proud of these relationships. As noted in the report there are many opportunities at individual or specific project levels for these stakeholders, including teachers, candidates and principals to contribute input. However, we do concur with the findings that at this point in time we do not have a “regular mechanism” (BOE report, page 8, last paragraph) in place that provides such opportunities on a systematic basis.

The unit is committed to the development of a plan to eliminate this AFI and create avenues to offer such opportunities that are consistent with our core values and meet the needs of our constituency. We will provide updates on our progress in NCATE annual reports.

AFI 2	AFI 2 Rationale
Data are not shared, disseminated, or used regularly and systematically to improve performance at the unit level. (Initial and Advanced)	The assessment committee, leadership team, and some advisory boards (i.e. AURTEC) share relevant data in meetings throughout the year, as noted in interviews and meeting minutes. Also, a faculty retreat occurs each fall for the college. However, little to no evidence exists that there is a consistent dissemination and evaluation of data at the unit level. Specifically, data is not regularly shared and evaluated beyond the program level.

The unit feels there is some discrepancy between the AFI as stated and the rationale and review. The AFI states “data are not shared...regularly or systematically...”, yet the rationale and report include several examples of how data are shared beyond the program level through regular meetings of committees and boards with unit-wide representation, and regular meetings that bring all programs/departments together as a unit. Additional examples of how data are systematically shared, evaluated and used to improve unit performance, beyond those noted in the review and rationale, are provided as further support for removal or revision of this AFI.

1. Biennial Reports – The state requires all initial and advanced credential programs to provide and analyze data from candidate program outcome assessments. Section B of these reports require that data and analyses across all programs be analyzed and evaluated at the unit level and considered in unit improvement decisions (see an example from the 2015 Biennial Report in **Appendix D**). For our unit, the biennial report process will move to an annual timetable beginning in 2017.
2. University Assessment Reporting – Each year all unit programs are required to input candidate data used to measure program outcomes into a database system (Compliance Assist) that is managed by the University’s Office of Assessment and Educational Effectiveness (OAEE). These data are analyzed, evaluated and the results logged into the database system. Results are analyzed and program improvement efforts are then entered into the system. An OAEE assessment committee, made up of liaisons from every college, evaluate all programs assessment efforts using a university-wide rubric. Assessment Evaluation Reports with feedback from the review process are provided to program chairs and unit administration. These reports are shared at unit leadership meetings and inform unit improvement efforts. Sample reports can be found on the NCATE IR website in the addendum.
3. Unit evaluation and improvement includes the analysis of many data sources beyond candidate performance and self-perception data collected and shared at the unit level. These additional sources provide crucial information upon which unit decisions are made to improve program performance, such as delegation of resources, the establishment of new task forces, provisions for faculty professional development, etc. Examples of these data sources, how and when they are collected, with whom they are shared, and how they are used is described in the Assessment System Handbook provided in **Exhibit 2.4.a**, Table 3, page 25, (also provided in **Appendix E**). A narrative description of how data are shared and used for both program and unit improvement was also provided in the handbook (pages 22-27). Additional examples of unit-data based changes (2012-2015) were provided in **Exhibit 2.4.g**.

V. Standard 3

The Unit concurs with the BOE Team findings.

VI. Standard 4: Areas for Improvement

AFI	AFI Rationale
The unit does not ensure that all advanced candidates participate in diverse field experiences. (Advanced)	The majority of advanced candidates are employed in schools that are diverse, but 20 percent of advanced candidates are not employed in P-12 schools during their program. There is no evidence how the unit ensures that these advanced candidates have opportunities to work with diverse P-12 learners

The unit does not concur with the AFI as stated. As a unit we pride ourselves on our commitment to ensure that all candidates exit their programs as professional educators fully prepared to meet the educational needs of diverse learning populations. All programs have requirements and measures in place to ensure that all candidates have the opportunity to work with diverse student populations. We are fortunate that the P-12 student population in the surrounding area is one of the most diverse in the nation, which makes implementing our commitment to diversity accessible, regionally relevant, and developmentally meaningful. Many of our advanced program candidates (average 80%) are working in school settings that are diverse and can complete these field-based course requirements in their own schools and classrooms. Those who are not working in diverse school settings are required to find an appropriate setting that meets the needs of the course requirements.

To ensure that every program requires candidates to complete a field-based assignment with a diverse student population, we developed a unit-wide key assessment that all advanced candidates must complete. This "Diversity Assignment" is a unit transition point requirement. The content of each assignment differs across programs, however instructors agreed on a general set of objectives and student outcomes. It is required that a unit-wide description of this key assignment be included with the specific assignment instructions in the course syllabus for every advanced program (see example in **Appendix F**).

The Diversity Assignment has been a unit requirement since the development of the assessment system in 2006. In 2012, the Diversity Assignment instructors came together to strengthen the diversity components of their assignments to better reflect the recent work of the Just, Equitable, and Inclusive Education (JEIE) taskforce. Detailed rubrics for scoring were also created, with an agreed upon unit scale and pass point so that data could be summarized at the unit level. Each advanced program's Diversity Assignment description, which includes the unit description, the specific assignment directions, and the rubric used for scoring, was provided in **Exhibit 4.4.i**. (see program example in **Appendix F**)

Each semester Diversity Assignment scores for all rubric criteria are collected by the research data analyst, summarized at the program and unit levels and reported. Three years of data (2012-2015) from this key assessment for all six programs was provided in **Exhibit 4.4.j**.

The diversity assignment is only one measure of candidate proficiency used to ensure that all advanced candidates are prepared to work with diverse populations. As stated in the BOE report:

Initial and advanced candidates are assessed in multiple ways, with both direct and indirect assessments, on program outcome and dispositions centered on the demonstration of just, equitable and inclusive education that meets the needs of all students in a caring, respectful, and non-discriminatory manner. Data from these assessments of diversity reveal that both initial and advanced candidates regularly demonstrate proficiency and possess the knowledge, skills and dispositions to work with diverse students. (BOE report, page 17, paragraph 2)

We strongly believe the unit provided sufficient evidence showing that we are committed to ensuring all candidates, even those not employed in diverse settings, have an opportunity to work with diverse P-12 learners. As such, we respectfully ask that this AFI be removed.

VII. Standard 5:

The Unit concurs with the BOE Team findings, and was extremely proud to earn the rating of meeting target level performance on all standard elements.

VIII. Standard 6:

The Unit concurs with the BOE Team findings and was very pleased with the noted strengths cited in both technology and support services.