Joint Report to the College of Education
Dean and Faculty

2007-2008
NCATE Steering Committee
and
COE Task Force on Assessment

Submitted on behalf of members of NCATE Steering Committee
and COE Task Force on Assessment
by

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Introduction

The COE NCATE Steering Committee Chair Patti Chance and the COE Task Force on Assessment Chair Shannon Smith collaborated together during 2007-2008 academic year on respective committees. This collaboration was conducted in order to ensure efficiency of the two committees, provide relevant information to committee members, and assist each other in meeting the objectives of each committee. Drs. Chance and Smith served on their respective committees throughout the academic year by attending committee meetings and working together on respective tasks and projects. The end result of this collaboration proved to be invaluable in terms of not only coordinating efforts, but also finalizing committee objectives and goals. This combined report demonstrates our efforts and work this past year.

Part I: NCATE Steering Committee

Members of the 2007-08 Steering Committee were Patti Chance (chair), Pam Campbell, Kathi Ducasse, Sandra Odell, Tom Pierce, LeAnn Putney, Nancy Sileo, Shannon Smith, Carrol Steedman, Neal Strudler, and Doris Watson.

The Steering Committee met four times in the Fall semester and six times in the Spring semester. Much of the Fall semester was spent in organization and gathering information relative to the NCATE process. The Spring semester was devoted primarily to working with the Task Force on Assessment to clearly define student transition assessment data needed to be gathered by departments and programs.

Throughout the year, the Steering Committee encountered difficulty in gathering relevant information due to a lack of database support (as this position went unfilled and remains vacant) as well as a vacant position in COE Field Experience Director. Recommendations to resolve such difficulties are outlined below.

The following items represent primary tasks and activities related to NCATE and the disposition of these tasks:

- Extension of date of NCATE Accreditation Visit (from Spring 2010 to Spring 2011): Dean Brown informed us that a one-year extension had been requested through the Provost’s office. The disposition of this request has not been reported to this committee to date.

- SPAs: The state contract with NCATE indicates that NCATE accredited institutions must receive program approval through SPAs. However, UNR’s accreditation process did not require this; instead, they used State Program Approval process. Patti Chance contacted Vern Lusk at UNR,
Keith Rheault (State Superintendent), and Jerry Barbee (NDE Liaison to NCATE) to clarify this question. Jerry Barbee requested a formal letter requesting clarification and the desire of UNLV to use the same process as UNR (state program approval rather than SPAs). That letter was written on February 20, 2008, from Dean Brown to NDE. The disposition of this request has not been reported to this committee to date. (See Appendix, Exhibit 1.)

- Conceptual Framework: The Steering Committee supports updating, but not substantially changing the College's existing Conceptual Framework. The committee recommends the involvement of various stakeholder focus groups next year in this process.

- Syllabus: The Steering Committee reminded all faculty to continue to use the COE adopted syllabus that includes the statement “Preparing Professionals for Changing Educational Contexts”. This statement succinctly captures the COE Conceptual Framework. (See Appendix, Exhibit 2.)

- Meeting with COE Leadership Team: Patti Chance met in the fall with the COE Leadership Team to outline work in which departments should be engaged, in particular the collection of data relative to program improvement. (See Appendix, Exhibit 3.)

- Presentation to COE Faculty: Patti Chance presented an overview to faculty (January COE meeting) similar to that provided for department chairs. (See Appendix, Exhibit 4.)

- Central Depository for Minutes: The Steering Committee set up an e-mail account for the NCATE committee (ncate@unlv.edu). We requested that all departments send minutes from department, program area, and pertinent committees to this e-mail, staffed by Kathi Ducasse, in order to have a central depository for possible exhibits for the upcoming NCATE visit. This was done until the redesigning of the COE website is completed. Kathi has received minimal response to this request. (See Appendix, Exhibit 5.)

- Student Assessment Data: The Steering Committee worked closely with the COE Task Force on Assessment on this item. The Steering Committee developed a matrix that is to be completed by each program area. The matrix asked programs to align their standards with the COE Principles and to list data points they used for: (a) admission, (b) mid-point transitions, (c) exit, and follow-up. These were requested from Department Chairs to be turned in to Patti Chance by April 17. (See Part II of this report and Appendix, Exhibits 6-7.) To date, matrices have been received from the Department of Curriculum & Instruction and the
Department of Educational Leadership. (See supplemental materials turned into Dean's Office and electronically housed by Kathi Ducasse.)

- Consultation with Navin Rongratana (COE Technology Coordinator): Patti Chance consulted with Navin Rongratana regarding accessing data from Field Experience website as well as suggested way of collecting program data. Navin suggested that Field Experience data and other SIS data could be downloaded to a database (e.g., Access) which would allow departments and the COE to manipulate and analyze data in a number of ways, thus allowing more flexibility.

- Attendance at NCATE Conference in Washington, D.C.: Patti Chance, Shannon Smith, and Kendall Hartley attended this conference in April. They provided a briefing to NCATE Steering Committee. These sessions confirmed the steering committee efforts to define assessment points, as the entire NCATE self-study report under the new standards requires some kind of assessment data. (See Appendix, Exhibit 8.)

At the end of this year of organization, the NCATE Steering Committee makes the following recommendations:

- We recommend that the Dean and Provost seek formal, written approval from NCATE to extend the COE NCATE visit from Spring 2010 to Spring 2011 (or beyond).

- We recommend that the Dean seek written verification from NCATE and the State of Nevada Department of Education regarding the state agreement with NCATE related to the use of SPA or State Program standards.

- Based upon our year of work in learning about new standards required by NCATE, it is imperative that the coordination and day-to-day operations to ensure accreditation requirements must be carried out administratively from the Dean's Office. We recommend that an Associate Dean, or other designated administrator in the Dean's Office be charged with the coordination of the NCATE accreditation process.

- Based upon other institutions' successes in the NCATE accreditation process, we recommend that the Dean hire or appoint a person to be responsible to coordinate assessment for the COE. This may be the same, or a different, person appointed as administrator responsible for NCATE accreditation, as noted above.

- The NCATE Steering Committee supports the proposal for an assessment framework as put forth by the COE Task Force on Assessment appointed
by the Dean, and encourages the COE to adopt the concept of program transition assessments as a way to view program improvement. (See Appendix, Exhibit 9.)

- In order for the COE to fully embrace the concept of program improvement as outlined by the Task Force on Assessment and the NCATE Steering Committee, we recommend that the Dean's Office adopt a college-wide database template to be used for collection of student data relative to (a) admission data; (b) mid-point data; (c) exit data; and (d) follow-up data, as suggested by NCATE requirements. The selection of such a database should be made by the designated administrator from the COE, who may want to consider commercial software being used by many NCATE institutions in conjunction with common database software such as Excel, Access, or Filemaker Pro (see Appendix, Exhibits 10-14). As part of the determination of a college-wide database system, the Dean's Office coordinator should develop clear parameters for what data will be kept by a college-wide system and which data will be left for departmental discretion, considering that all data kept must be compiled, analyzed, and shared with faculty in order to make decisions for program improvement.

- Further, it is recommended that based upon implementation of the above recommendation, that department faculty receive systematic training for such data collection.

- In order to carry out the necessary requirements for data collection, the NCATE Steering Committee recommends that a person responsible for technology development and support be hired or appointed. (To fill the position vacated by Navin Rongratana.)

- Further, it is recommended that a Director of Field Experiences for the College of Education be appointed/hired who has skills and training to synthesize and report data relative to field experiences in order to assist departments in program improvement efforts.

- Finally, the NCATE Steering Committee finds great worth in the work being done in the Professional Development Schools (Paradise and Petersen), and we recommend that the various field-based programs being offered as collaborative programs between UNLV and CCSD be an integral part of the NCATE self-study for program improvement.

In order to implement and carry out the above recommendations, the NCATE Steering Committee suggests the following logistical steps to ensure that the Steering Committee and faculty have the necessary resources to continue in the COE Self Study for NCATE:
• Considering the urgency of looming deadlines, we recommend that the Dean appropriate resources to hire persons (either in full-time coordination positions or at the very least as expert consultants) knowledgeable about the newly adopted standards and requirements of NCATE.

• The Steering Committee recommends that each COE department representative on the NCATE Steering Committee participate in at least one NCATE training and that additional faculty be supported to attend SPA trainings for each participating SPA, if needed.

• In order to expedite the work of the NCATE Steering Committee and promote faculty collaboration, we recommend that a collaborative document editing system, such as WIKI or Google Documents, be employed by the committee and other involved faculty.
Part II: COE Task Force on Assessment

Members of the 2007-08 COE Task Force on Assessment were Shannon Smith (chair), Bea Babbitt, Patti Chance, Cecilia Maldonado, Lori Olafson, Tessie Rose, PG Schrader, and Doris Watson.

The COE Task Force on Assessment met once in the Fall semester and three times in the Spring semester. The fall semester meeting was spent in organization and establishing the charge. The Spring semester was devoted primarily to devising a COE assessment framework and working with NCATE Steering Committee to clearly define student transition assessment data needed to be gathered by departments and programs.

The following items represent primary tasks and activities related to COE assessment and the disposition of these tasks:

1. Challenges to COE Assessment
   a. Lack of a unified COE assessment system
   b. Lack of organizational and administrative structure for COE assessment
   c. Lack of agreed upon data points
   d. Lack of technical support for COE assessment
   e. Lack of technological platform for data collection, analysis, and report generation

2. Charge of the COE Task Force on Assessment
   a. Identify a COE framework for assessment
   b. Identify relevant data points for assessment
   c. Identify standards for alignment
   d. Identify challenges (issues, obstacles, etc.) to COE assessment
   e. Provide recommendations for implementation

3. COE Assessment Framework
   a. Aligns the following:
      i. UNLV Office of Academic Assessment (NWCCU)
      ii. COE Principles & NCATE accreditation
      iii. Program standards & accreditation
   b. Provide data collection for:
      i. Programs
      ii. Faculty
   c. Provide a system for:
      i. Reporting
      ii. Improvement
4. Assessment Framework Components
   a. Component 1: Faculty
      i. Standards Alignment (SA)
      ii. Assessment Data (AD)
      iii. Faculty Development (FD)
   b. Component 2: Program
      i. Standards Alignment (SA)
      ii. Assessment Data (AD)
      iii. Program Improvement (PI)

5. Standards Alignment (SA)
   a. NCATE
   b. NWCCU
   c. COE Principles
   d. Program & Accreditation Standards

6. Assessment Data (AD)
   a. Faculty data
      i. Teaching (e.g., awards, grants, innovations)
      ii. Research (e.g., publications, books, grants)
      iii. Service (e.g., awards, grants, innovations)
      iv. Other
   b. Student data for program improvement
      i. Admission
      ii. Midpoint
      iii. Exit
      iv. Follow-up
      v. Other

7. Framework Outcomes
   a. Faculty Development (FD)
   b. Assessment results
   c. Recommendations
   d. Steps for implementation
   e. Program Improvement (PI)
   f. Assessment results
   g. Recommendations
   h. Steps for implementation

8. Proposed COE Framework for Assessment
   a. See Appendix, Exhibit 15
9. Remaining Challenges
   a. Varied data types, forms, etc.
   b. Lack of technical support for COE assessment
   c. Lack of technological platform for data collection, analysis, and report generation
   d. Lack of assessment coordinator & personnel

10. Recommendations
    a. Adopt the proposed COE Framework for Assessment
    b. Hire or appoint a COE Assessment Coordinator & support personnel
    c. Implement the necessary technology to provide a platform for data collection, analysis, report generation, etc.
    d. Provide systematic training to COE faculty on data collection
    e. Technological solution (Database)
       i. Existing system integration (e.g., SIS)
       ii. Accommodate multiple data formats
       iii. Accommodate multi-level management
       iv. Platform independent interface (e.g., WWW)
       v. Maintained and supported over time
       vi. Extensible design (room to grow with needs)
       vii. External, professional design
    f. COE Assessment & Planning Committee
       i. Establish bylaws to govern the framework
       ii. Establish recommendations for implementation
       iii. Modify the above as necessary