

National Association for Alternative Certification Quality Indicators for Non-traditional Teacher Preparation Programs

The Development Process

Informal conversations occurred for two to three years until in 2004, the Board had a strategic planning session and the idea of creating Quality Indicators for non-traditional route programs became a primary goal established for the organization. In November 2006, a group of interested members met in Washington, D.C. At that meeting the NAAC President, Dr. Nell Ingram, appointed co-chairs to begin moving the initiative forward. A Town Hall Meeting was held at the NAAC annual conference in April 2007 that provided an opportunity for all Association members to learn about the initiative and to offer input and reflection. At the closing general session of the conference, applications for serving on the task force were submitted by membership. The co-chairs and NAAC Executive Director reviewed the applications and selected members for the Task Force, assuring that all regions of the nation and a variety of programs types were represented.

The first formal meeting of the Task Force was in August, 2007. The first action by the Task Force was to adopt a vision statement:

“Through a review of current literature and the combined expertise of its members, the Task Force will delineate the important components of high quality nontraditional teacher preparation programs and describe the indicators for those components. The result will be a report that is adopted by the NAAC membership as a framework for program self-evaluation and for providing benchmarks to help programs improve their preparation of teachers.”

In October, 2007, The Ohio State University received a Transition to Teaching grant that included some funding to help develop the Quality Indicators so that they could be used in the evaluation component of their grant. Through a sub-award to NAAC, pieces of the work have occurred.

During the first seven months, the task force developed a mission statement and held in-depth discussions about the key components of high quality non-traditional certification programs. These key components were structures that would be found in most if not all non-traditional route programs; recruitment, selection, preparation, support and retention. The Task Force then divided into small working groups, each focusing on one of these components. The groups completed a literature review, reported out on the findings of the literature review, discussed the salient points in their findings, and began investigating possible quality indicators. By March 31, 2008, each of the working groups had developed presentations (delivered on April 2, 2008) summarizing for the whole group the salient findings from their literature review related to the specific key component. The task force also participated in discussions about model standards used by other organizations in related fields that might serve as models for quality indicators for nontraditional teacher preparation programs.

In April and August, 2008, the Task Force began working on development of the Indicators, based on their literature review. In November, 2008, a Revision Committee, comprised of a member from each sub-group, along with the Task Force leadership, met to refine and align the Indicators. During discussions, the Revision Committee determined that in addition to the five components, there were several dimensions that were inherent in all five components. To enable the Quality Indicator document to show this correlation, a matrix was

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designed showing six dimensions across the five components (Leadership and Governance, Design and Implementation, Collaboration and Communication, Sustainability, Accountability and Quality Assurance, and Equity and Diversity). This first draft of the Indicators was presented to the NAAC members at the annual conference in January 2009.

During the 2009 conference, the full task force came together again, and developed the first draft of the component rubrics based on a four point system.

Beginning in July, 2009, the first of three review panels looked at the framework and rubrics. The July meeting in Texas involved five individuals representing diverse programs and job responsibilities. Each participant was sent copies of all draft documents prior to the focus meeting to familiarize themselves with the documents. During a three day focus session, a NAAC representative served as the facilitator with another representative serving as process observer. Participants reviewed the Indicator Framework item by item, and then each line of the rubric documents. Feedback was received on the clarity, potential bias, adaptability, transferability, usability, etc., of the framework model. The focus group also provided input on the need for a four point rubric vs. three point rubric, the alignment of wording across components and dimensions, etc. Georgia programs were participants in August with each non-traditional certification program in the state invited to send their director or representative to the focus sessions. Eighteen programs sent a representative with eight attending the first day and 10 attending the second day. A process similar to the Texas sessions was used, but abridged due to time limitations. In September, Kansas and Nevada programs sent representatives to Nevada for three days to replicate the process done in Texas.

Finally in September, a small panel convened to assess and assimilate appropriate information from the review sessions into a new draft document. From this process, the new model emerged which moved the indicators out of the matrix format and into a more narrative format where fuller information and explanation could be given to key concepts, specific data sources could be shown, and connections between components and dimensions could be better delineated. The rubric now consists of twenty indicators with the four stages delineated.

An important benchmark for this process will be the unveiling of the full Quality Indicator document to the NAAC membership at its January, 2010 Annual Conference. Following this, the Indicators will be posted on the NAAC website for several months for review by the full membership and other professionals in the field.

Pilot testing of the indicators, with programs from the membership, will begin in 2010. Trained evaluators will work with selected programs across the nation to collect and analyze data aligned to the indicator stages in the rubric document to begin the process of determining the document's validity and reliability. To assist in this process, question prompts will be developed to guide observers in seeking consistent information across programs. Determination of alignment to rubric statements will be based on evidence from data sources. Many data sources have been predetermined in the document; however, question prompts, data sources, and observation processes will be revised through pilot testing to inform the final guidelines for independent use of the document by programs.

Following this, the organization will enlist the services of a "blue ribbon" panel of experts to provide a final review and feedback. The indicators will be available to any teacher preparation program for self-assessment, goal setting, and continuous improvement planning.

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They could also be used by state departments of education as a tool for program self-assessment prior to approval review visits. Finally researchers will have access to data that will stimulate and validate a broad knowledge base to affirm the qualities of non-traditional preparation programs. These research efforts will lead to greater teacher effectiveness and student achievement. The significant goal of this process is to develop verifiable Indicators that establish through assessment the validity and trustworthiness of particular non-traditional pathways to teacher certification.