"If We Did So Good, Why Do I Feel So Bad?"
An Analysis of Faculty Reaction to External Review of Credential Programs

By Dennis S. Tierney

Introduction

In spite of almost a decade of concern over the quality and preparation of our nation's teachers and a spate of reports and papers produced by a wide array of commissions and groups, Roth and Pipho (1990) report little research has been done on the standards used by state certification agencies and national accreditation agencies to evaluate teacher education programs. Their review of the literature reveals substantial interest by state licensure agencies in improving such standards as a means of improving the public schools, but much of the reform efforts were based on purely political considerations rather than research data. What little research that has been done has not looked at the impact of external reform efforts on the individuals charged with the preparation of teachers. If these state level efforts to improve the standards for teacher education are to succeed, evaluating the impact of such change on the institutions and people charged with teacher preparation seems important.

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All change efforts have unanticipated outcomes, and those that are animated by political expedience or affordable costs are likely to have higher levels of unanticipated outcomes. Roth and Pipho note that California's 1986-88 effort to alter its pedagogical standards for basic credential programs was unusual in its level of consensus-building and culling of opinions from practitioners and university faculty. This sensitivity to the views of practitioners and university faculty alike extended, by the fall of 1990, to a willingness by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to examine the training provided to individuals who conducted the external reviews under the new standards. As an element of the revision of team member training, the need for more detailed information about the institutional reaction to these new standards prompted a formal evaluation. This evaluation revealed unanticipated outcomes that countered the intended improvement efforts and suggested that reform of teacher preparation programs through rewriting credential standards alone may well be insufficient unless changes are made within the institutions themselves.

Background

In California the CTC conducts external reviews of all educator credential programs on a six year cycle. Institutions of higher education must meet minimum standards in order to continue preparing teachers and other educators. The CTC, created in 1970 as an independent body with a constituent based board appointed by the governor, has engaged in these on-site reviews of teacher credentialing programs by selecting and training classroom teachers, administrators, university teacher education faculty members, and other stakeholders in educator preparation to serve as its evaluators. These individuals read an institutionally prepared report on how the credential program meets all relevant state regulations, including CTC standards and guidelines, and then visit the campus for two days of interviews with the program administrators, program faculty, students, graduates, involved school personnel, and employers of graduates. On the basis of these interviews and the analysis of the institutional report and other documents and materials related to the program, the team makes its determination about program quality. It writes a formal report of its findings relative to the standards for that program and makes a recommendation about program continuance to the CTC.

In the early years of this external review process, the teams were given minimal training (often on the eve of the visit), but the review process was largely based on a discrepancy model and compliance with existing regulations was sufficient. By 1983, the Commission, in response to the spate of national reports on flaws in teacher education,[1] revamped, over a five-year period, the minimum regulations for the basic teaching credentials (elementary and secondary) by converting them to a set of 32 standards (1988). These standards, developed through a lengthy process of public hearings and expert panel reviews, attempted to capture the emergent

research base on generic pedagogical principles and the changed student population of the state (1986). The standards also identified attributes of organization and institutional support such as sufficient financial support, faculty qualifications and development, program evaluation and development, and student admission and support systems. There was significant overlap with the kinds of institutional input standards associated with accreditation agencies such as the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education NCATE).

The implementation of these revised expectations placed a greater burden on the institution to demonstrate that it was effectively meeting the standards and placed greater pressure on the visiting team to identify program strengths and weaknesses based on the preponderance of the evidence examined. Institutional reports required extensive narrative responses plus support documentation. Team members conducted numerous interviews with members of various stakeholder groups and prepared a qualitative report before leaving the campus.

In an effort to address concerns from the teacher education community that the teams were not well prepared and that credential programs were not being well served by this process, the CTC invited the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development (FWL) to conduct an external evaluation of the process and to make recommendations to the CTC regarding team training and program evaluation procedures. Part of those efforts involved conducting in-depth interviews with involved faculty at selected institutions that had recent experience with the CTC's evaluation process. The purpose of the interviews was to give voice to concerns that might not be written in questionnaires and to tap the intensity of concerns felt by faculty.

This qualitative study was designed to complement the other part of the CTC-FWL contract, a larger-scale questionnaire study which went to all programs evaluated by the CTC in 1990-91 (12 institutions) and used a questionnaire originally designed by the CTC. The questionnaire (Appendix A) generated descriptive statistical information about faculty perceptions of the program evaluation process and provided options for narrative responses on potential improvements to the existing process. The data from the two related studies are presented serially in this paper, with the quantitative study reported first.

Methodology

Questionnaire Section

The program evaluation questionnaire had been used by the CTC to obtain institutional reaction to external review for several years on an irregular basis. Although no formal efforts to determine its reliability or validity had been made, the CTC staff indicated the questionnaire had produced useful information regarding external review procedures and practices. The questionnaire was sent to the Dean

or Director of Teacher Education at each of the 12 institutions of higher education scheduled for a CTC visit in 1990-91. The number of institutions evaluated each year is fixed by the six-year evaluation cycle set by the CTC. In 1990-91, five campuses of the California State University (CSU), one campus of the University of California (UC), and six private university campuses were evaluated and, thus, included in this study. This "chunk" sample of institutions included two urban campuses with a commuter student population and significant minority student enrollment, four rural campuses with primarily residential student populations and low minority student enrollment, and six suburban campuses with a mix of residential and commuter students and a moderate minority student enrollment.

The Dean of Education or Director of Teacher Education at each institution was asked to make copies of the questionnaire and circulate it to each approved credential program on campus. In this manner, variations across programs could be recorded. In a number of California institutions, credential programs are housed in academic units outside the School or Department of Education (e.g., School Nurse, Library Media Specialist, Pupil Personnel Services/School Social Work, Agricultural Specialist). Had all the respondents elected to submit questionnaires for each approved credential program on campus, the total number of possible questionnaires would have been 54. Some respondents, however, elected to make an institution-wide assessment of the process and combined the opinions of all faculty into one document. For the purposes of this study, the questionnaire responses were given equal weight regardless of the actual number of faculty involved in the choice of answers. The questionnaires were returned directly to the FWL. Statistical tabulations of the questionnaires using a spreadsheet program (Excel 2.2), however, were performed by clerical staff at the CTC.

The questionnaire contains three sections of questions composed on a five-point Likert scale with a few open-ended questions regarding suggested improvements. The first section deals with preparation for this evaluation visit, document development, and interview schedules. The second section asks for opinions on team member qualifications, team use of data provided, team performance during the required meetings and intermediate decision points of the visit, and team adherence to the standards/guidelines. The third section asks for faculty opinion on the **validity** of the process for determining whether the program meets the CTC Standards and guidelines and for determining general program effectiveness. A parallel set of questions was asked about the **efficiency** of the process from the perspective of the institution.

Interview Section

The six institutions selected for follow-up interviews represented a range of institutions with approved preparation programs drawn from the larger pool of institutions already scheduled for a CTC evaluation visit in 1990-91. Three of the institutions are part of the CSU system, which is the largest preparer of credential

holders in California, and include one rural, one suburban, and one urban campus; two of the institutions are part of the private and independent colleges and universities of California, which have more programs but smaller enrollments than the CSU system and include one suburban and one rural campus; and, finally, one campus is part of the UC system, which features relatively few and small programs in educator preparation, and is in a suburban location. The sampling plan ensured that four of the institutions in the sample had at least four credential programs in operation.

Letters of invitation were sent to the Dean or Director explaining the study and requesting approval for their institution's participation. All six institutions invited to participate elected to do so and dates were set for the actual on-site interviews. Anonymity for the institutions was assured by promising that all data would be reported in the aggregate.

An interview protocol was developed to insure equivalency of data collected. The questions were based on the type of activities institutions normally complete in preparation for a CTC visit. The first section of the interview focused on pre-visit activities and preparation, with particular attention paid to personnel and material costs to the institution. Their perception of the quantity and quality of help provided by the CTC was probed and recommendations for improving the preparatory phase of the credential program evaluation process were solicited.

The second section of the interview protocol looked at the impact of the CTC procedures on the campus during the time the evaluation teams were actually on campus. Specific examples of disruption of teaching, advising, supervision, and research were sought and evidence of logistical issues relating to room usage, computer and telephone requirements, parking arrangements, and other physical demands on the campus were requested.

In addition, questions were posed about the performance of the team members. Evaluative comments were sought on the professionalism of the teams, their knowledge of the CTC standards/guidelines, their ability to properly solicit information, their absence of bias, and their knowledge of the program being evaluated. Interviewees were invited to propose alternative means of obtaining information about credential programs or to make general suggestions for improving the information seeking portion of the CTC process.

The third section of the interview asked for their assessments of the preliminary status session[2] in terms of its usefulness to them and the performance of the team during it. Other questions in this section dealt with the final status report session[3] and the perceptions of the institution as to the accuracy and appropriateness of the final recommendation. Again, team member behavior during this important meeting was asked about and the helpfulness of the elements of the written report was queried.

In some cases, senior administrators and program directors were interviewed individually, while in others the interview was a group discussion. It appears that

the data derived from individual interviews does not differ from that gained in group interviews. On several occasions, comments by one person in the group triggered additional comments regarding the topic at hand, and they were as often contrary as complementary. Nonetheless, it should be noted that the bulk of the data was gathered in group interviews of institutional faculty and staff.

The interview responses were recorded on the protocol forms along with ancillary notes on related topics. These field notes were transcribed by the author with as little editing as possible. In those cases where the opinions expressed were overtly those of the speaker only, that notation was made. In cases where the comment seemed to have the approval of the entire group, no modifying notation was made. As is always the case with interview data, the comments and observations are all self-reported information and, therefore, the data suffer from the normal bias inherent in individual perceptions of situations. All claims made about actions of team members or incidents that occurred during the team visit stand as described by the interviewees. No attempt has been made to verify those claims or assertions. Care should be taken in assuming that such claims represent accurate depictions of the actual events. Nonetheless, it is useful to note what individuals at visited institutions believe to be true about their experience and how particular events and interactions are interpreted by affected individuals.

Findings

The completed questionnaires received represented 83 percent of the total sample. Fifty percent of the responses came from CSU credential programs, four percent of the responses came from the UC credential programs, and 46 percent of the responses came from private and independent university credential programs. (Note: The statistics shown do not always equal 100 percent due to some respondents leaving answers blank.)

Section I-A of the questionnaire asked respondents to comment on the quality of the assistance provided by the CTC to institutions of higher education to aid in the development of documents and interview schedules prior to the visit. Specific questions were asked about the overview session with the CTC staff consultant, materials sent by the CTC to help institutions prepare, general assistance from the CTC consultant, and other information or assistance needed but not provided.

    A1 — Overview session?
        Excellent=19%; Good=41%; Fair=26%; Poor=7%; Unacceptable=4%
    A2 — Materials sent?
        Excellent=7%; Good=48%; Fair=22%; Poor=11%; Unacceptable=0%
    A3 — CTC assistance?
        Excellent=44%; Good=22%; Fair=11%; Poor=0%; Unacceptable=0%
    A4 — Materials needed?
        Yes=33%; No=63%; No Answer=4%
    Comments: Most of the comments about additional materials and information

focused on the need for more specific assistance in creating interview schedules and amount of data and level of detail needed to respond adequately to each standard. Those programs writing to the new Common Standards expressed concerns about not knowing how to integrate standards and guidelines where credential programs used both. More detailed information on this type of concern is found in the interview data discussed later.

Section I-B asked about additional information that should have been provided to the teams and whether the team members appeared to have an adequate understanding of the institution's programs as a result of the documents and materials prepared.

B1 — Team understanding of program?

Yes=89%; No=7%; No Answer=4%

Comments: Even though most respondents said yes, several noted that the decision of what to include in the packet sent to team members before the visit and what to place in a document review room on campus was a difficult question without clear guidelines from the CTC. Those campuses that experienced late changes in team membership were quick to note that such changes reduce the amount of time a team member has to prepare for the visit.

B2 — Additional information to the team?

This question elicited a wide array of responses ranging from one institution that felt it was up to the campus to decide how much and what kind of information should be provided to several campuses who felt the CTC should prepare a specific list of documents and materials. The issue of what to send to team members and when turns on matters of timing, of burdening team members with enormous loads of paper, and the burden of preparing multiple sets of large and complex documents.

Section I-C dealt with issues of interview schedules and the use of such data in evaluation procedures.

C1 — Interview instructions okay?

Excellent=19%; Good=41%; Fair=11%; Poor=19%; Unacceptable=7%

C2 — Interviews fair way to get data?

Excellent=44%; Good=26%; Fair=19%; Poor=11%; Unacceptable=0%

C3 — Interview concerns addressed by CTC?

Excellent=15%; Good=11%; Fair=4%; Poor=4%; No Answer=67%

Section II-A addressed the qualifications and performance of the teams as they conducted their interviews and developed their report.

A1 — Rating team members?

Excellent=67%; Good=22%; Fair=11%; Poor=0%; Unacceptable=0%

A2 — Proper team representation?

Excellent=41%; Good=48%; Fair=4%; Poor=4%; Unacceptable=0%

A3 — Team understands process?

Excellent=70%; Good=30%; Fair=0%; Poor=0%; Unacceptable=0%

A4 — Data utilization?

Excellent=52%; Good=33%; Fair=11%; Poor=0%; Unacceptable=0%

A5 — Team assessment of program?
Excellent=59%; Good=37%; Fair=0%; Poor=0%; Unacceptable=0%

A6 — Team use of quality indicators?
Excellent=63%; Good=15%; No Answer=22%

A7 — What general suggestions do you have to improve the program evaluation process and procedures to ensure greater reliability, validity, and efficiency?

This last question invoked a substantial number of written comments that ranged from requesting longer visits so that teams and faculty are not as rushed to replacing the six year cycle of visits with annual reports which would trigger a team visit for those institutions deemed "at risk." Most of the suggestions could fairly be grouped as calling for greater attention to training team members in the nuances of qualitative evaluation or suggestions that focused on providing greater training and support for the faculty who actually put together the review materials and schedules.

Section IIB asked about institutional reaction to the preliminary status report segment of the CTC program evaluation process.

B1 — Preliminary oral report helpful?
Yes=81%; Somewhat=15%; No=4%

B2 — P.O.R. gave faculty time for additional data?
Yes=81%; Somewhat=15%; No=4%

B3 — Recommend retaining P.O.R.?
Yes=70%; With revisions=11%; No=11%

Section II-C dealt with the oral presentation of the final status recommendation which is the final meeting between the team and the program faculty.

C1 — Oral summary comprehensive?
Yes=93%; Somewhat=7%; No=0%

C2 — Oral summary maximizes understanding team's recommendations?
Yes=85%; Somewhat=11%; No=0%; No Answer=4%

C3 — Positive contribution to the institution?
Yes=81%; Somewhat=11%; No=4%; No Answer=4%

Section II-D focused on institutional reactions to the written final status report that is prepared for the institution and left with them at the end of the visit.

D1 — Written rationale useful?
Yes=74%; Somewhat=7%; No=0%; No Answer=19%

D2 — Conclusions supported by the findings?
Yes=89%; Somewhat=4%; No=0%; No Answer=7%

D3 — Final report identified strengths and weaknesses?
Yes=89%; Somewhat=7%; No=0%; No Answer=4%

D4 — Retain this format?
Yes=74%; Revisions=11%; No=4%; No Answer=11%

D5 — What suggestions do you have for improving the report?

Suggestions for improvement ranged from asking that the team only make suggestions that the **program** faculty can accomplish to further clarification of the purpose and content of the meeting where the report is delivered. Two respondents noted that they like the new report format much more than the old form.

Section III dealt with the overall perceptions of the institutions of higher education regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of the current CTC program review process.

   1 — Process valid?
       Excellent=48%; Good=44%; Fair=4%; Poor=0%; Unacceptable=0%
   2 — Process valid for determining effectiveness?
       Excellent=33%; Good=41%; Fair=15%; Poor=0%; No Answer=11%
   3 — Please comment on specific ideas to make the process more effective.

Ten comments were received. Two were laudatory and contained no suggestions. One institution suggested that reviewers should be from successful programs highly rated in prior CTC reviews and that paperwork should be reduced. Two institutions requested more time and more interviews to ensure good data collection. Two other institutions suggested that more information about the process would help in institutional preparation. Other suggestions included specific requests for specialized documents (a specialist credential program) and periodic spot visits instead of six-year cycle reviews.

   4 — Process efficient for Standards?
       Excellent=33%; Good=44%; Fair=15%; Poor=0%; No Answer=7%
   5 — Process efficient for determining effectiveness?
       Excellent=30%; Good=44%; Fair=19%; Poor=0%; No Answer=7%
   6 — Please comment on specific suggestions for making the process more efficient.

Twelve comments were received, of which two were complimentary of the process. Five comments dealt with greater training for teams and institution faculty. One suggested a social event to begin the visit while another suggested that each program respond to each quality indicator.

   7 — Process benefit faculty?
       Yes=78%; Somewhat=19%; No=0%; No Answer=4%
   8 — What suggestions do you have for improving any aspect of the CTC Program Evaluation process?

Twelve comments were received for this item and ranged from one suggestion to pay team members to eight suggestions that revolved around additional team member training and additional assistance in preparing the documents and interview schedules for the CTC visit. One respondent spoke to the tone of the evaluation process, which he characterized as "curt, aggressive, and fraught with hidden agendas."

Interview Subsample Responses

I. Preparation for a CTC Visit Issues and Concerns

Although the CTC has called annual meetings of institutions of higher education undergoing program evaluation reviews for the purpose of explaining its program evaluation process, it is clear from these six campus interviews that faculty

knowledge about the CTC process and procedures varies widely. Those faculty who have served on CTC program evaluation teams tend to have more specific understanding and tend to be more "savvy" about the intricacies of preparing for a CTC visit. Given that CTC standards have changed a great deal during the last six years, those faculty that only get involved in CTC matters when a visit to their campus is imminent appear to be not always prepared. Moreover, many new faculty members have come into California institutions in the last six years and many of them are new to CTC procedures. It almost seems that no program coordinator or director really gets involved in more than one CTC visit before leaving that position. Thus, every time the CTC schedules a visit, the program director/coordinator is new and uncertain about how to proceed. While one might expect a certain amount of "craft knowledge" to remain at the institution from visit to visit, that seems to be the case in a minority of institutions.

The difficulties in preparing for a CTC visit seem to fall into two distinct categories. The first is the preparation of the institutional report. Here faculty noted uncertainty over what to include in the report mailed to team members and what is better left to a "document room" on campus. This is exacerbated by the ongoing transition from guidelines to standards as those programs writing to standards found they had to do more narrative writing than before and had to make decisions about whether to write to each of the "factors to consider." This debate has been fueled by perceptions among some faculty that teams will treat the "factors to consider" as "mini-standards" rather than as examples of how a program might meet a standard. Thus, the institutional report can become an enormous document. A second aspect of report writing is deciding whether a separate document is required for each credential program or whether the institution could argue that two related credential programs could be explained through one document. Some institutions are organized so that faculty governance, curriculum development, teaching schedules, and supervisory assignments are made through one department or division. In such an instance, the faculty see one program, not two, while the CTC sees two or more programs. The institutions polled in this study had varying degrees of success in getting clear direction from CTC staff on how the number of documents is determined.

The other major problem for institutions preparing for a CTC visit is the interview schedule. It appears that college and university faculty are more comfortable with writing reports than arranging interviews. Most of the institutions reported problems in figuring out the interview schedule, knowing if they should be individual or group, contacting the individuals, finding ways of getting them to campus, organizing room space and time schedules, and other technical aspects of this critical portion of the preparatory work. Delays in getting lists of approved interviews also heightened the concerns of those faculty charged with setting up the interviews.

One concern that came up in several of the interviews was the relative lack of

knowledge about who would serve on the CTC teams and the last minute changes that occur in the composition of the teams. The absence of biographical information about team members and the uncertainty induced by changes in team composition in the days and, on one occasion, hours before the scheduled visit adds significant anxiety to faculty who are prone to worry anyway.

II. Program Evaluation Staff and Faculty Costs

It is very clear from these interviews that there are significant hidden costs to preparing for a CTC visit. Every institution in the sample made repeated statements about the time involved in preparing for these reviews and few noted any financial assistance from the central administration. Those institutions combining an NCATE and CTC review seemed to get some financial support, but the others had to make do from regular budget allocations. All the institutions reported added costs for secretarial time ranging from hours of overtime to a special half-time secretary for six months. Copying costs were substantial at most institutions and at least two mentioned special costs for renting computers for the CTC teams and renting additional telephone lines to accommodate CTC needs. The cost in faculty and administrator time is harder to calculate and all the institutions could give no better than "guesstimates." Those estimates ranged from the equivalent of one full-time faculty member for one year to 2.5 full-time faculty members for one year. These may be generous and may also include activities that might be considered a normal part of operating a credential program. One program director stated she spent 30 working days over the course of two semesters preparing for the visit while another program director indicated he spent 31 days just writing the document and setting up initial interviews plus another 10 days assembling and organizing documents. The final caveat is that some institutions appointed a single person as coordinator and gave that person assigned time to monitor preparations. In these cases, the costs are clearer than in institutions where all tasks were delegated to the program level and thus embedded in the normal workload of the program coordinator/director.

The time commitment required of faculty generated the loudest complaint in these interviews. In probing the cause of such concerns, it seems that faculty feel overburdened by the demands of writing new documents and assembling existing documents for the review as well as finding graduates and arranging the logistics of on-campus interviews for upwards of 100 individuals. Were such efforts part of the normal workload for faculty and program administrators, their complaints might be muted. It appears, however, that such activities are above and beyond their standard work assignments and, therefore, cuts into time allotted for student advising, research, or faculty development. Many faculty reported that they accomplished their writing and organization tasks during evenings, weekends, and term breaks as there was no other time available to them.

III. Disruption of Programs

Relatively few disruptions were reported by faculty and administrators in the sample. During the CTC visits, some classes were physically moved to other rooms and buildings to make space for document rooms and group meeting rooms, but no classes were cancelled. Some classes had students pulled out for interviews during the visits, but no faculty reported significant anger or distress at that requirement. Many faculty had to vacate their offices so that team members could conduct individual interviews or make telephone calls and some faculty appeared more upset by that than any other inconvenience. A few campuses noted the complications on parking, office space, and general crowding with so many extra people in their building or area, but the general tone seemed accepting of the team size once they were on campus. One important cost mentioned by those faculty who actually do field supervision of credential candidates was the inability to supervise during the CTC visit as faculty needed to be around for interviews, travel service, and general assistance to the teams. Several faculty felt the CTC procedures prevented them from doing what the Standards suggested they should be doing.

IV. Team Member Knowledge and Professionalism

A total of 105 individuals served on the various program review teams at the six institutions in this study. In reviewing the concerns expressed by faculty, administrators, and staff, there were only ten individuals who generated negative comments. One individual was perceived to have a bias against institutions of higher education doing the preparation of school administrators; one emphasized the way her program did certain tasks and implied all institutions should emulate hers; one team member was charged with unprofessional behavior in his questions to staff and students; and one team leader was seen as not adequately conversant with recent CTC regulations. Two team members were new to California teacher education and tended to ask questions that were not germane to the state setting. The other four members were seen as less effective interviewers although not perceived as unacceptable. Other comments about bias appeared to be low level and may have been differences in style or approach to the evaluative process. Each institution was asked whether team member bias led to an unfair recommendation, and in two cases there seemed to be a belief on the part of the program director that the team did recommend a status that was based on inappropriate analysis of the data. In one instance, the belief was that the team did not perceive a new organizational structure as indicative of proper institutional support and, in the other, the belief was that the single subject (secondary level) team found the program rationale inadequate while the multiple subject (elementary level) team accepted the same rationale as adequate.

The other 90 percent of the team members were seen as very knowledgeable and highly professional in their interactions. In general, most of the institutions

would prefer to have team leaders drawn from the ranks of their system of higher education, but most want team members to come from all stakeholders in the education profession. Since the institution's faculty, administration, and staff are typically quite anxious about the outcome of a CTC visit, every word and gesture by team members is examined with intense scrutiny. Thus, team members who make jokes at the wrong moment or who make statements that are incautious can quickly generate deep concerns and rampant worries. One pattern of team member behavior that seems most upsetting from this sample is the "cop mentality" that some faculty perceived in their teams. In half the sample, this was pointedly mentioned as an irritant and a negative aspect of the CTC process. Institutions of higher education clearly dislike investigative, cynical, "we know there is a problem here and we intend to find it" attitudes. It appears to create an adversarial relationship which diminishes the educative value of a CTC program review.

One additional concern emerged from these data which relates to the anxiety of the institutions facing a CTC review. Last minute changes in team composition and lack of knowledge about the backgrounds of the team members increases anxiety levels. While the institutions were mindful of the complexities involved in creating teams for program review, those institutions that experienced changes in team membership indicated a higher level of worry than those who had stable team memberships that were known early.

V. Time Allocation During the Visit

In all six cases, all the relevant faculty were interviewed and adequate numbers of students, graduates, and other stakeholders were interviewed. In fact, some institutions felt that excessive numbers of interviews were scheduled relative to the total number of graduates of the program. In a few instances, teams cancelled interviews late on the final interview day, which caused some annoyance on the part of the institution. Several faculty indicated that they would have preferred more time for faculty interviews, particularly with the program coordinator. In general, the institutions perceived the pace of a CTC visit as rushed, with little time for relaxed conversations or discussions. A few faculty noted the difficulty of structuring the interviews in programs where all students are fully employed. This pushes all the interviews into the late afternoon and evening, which puts a heavy burden on the team. One wondered if, in such cases, a longer visit would be better so that interviews could be done at convenient times. Another faculty member warned that school districts are likely to become less and less willing to permit teachers to leave for interviews and that the CTC might have to pay for substitutes if it insists on daytime interviews with cooperating teachers.

Those institutions that had combined NCATE/CTC visits commented that the social event preceding the onset of interviews, typical to the NCATE process, was a welcome opportunity to "break the ice" and indicated that it helped with the development of understandings between the team members and the institution. One

other suggestion for time utilization was to set aside time before the interviews for document review so that the team members could begin interviews after having reviewed all the relevant documents not sent to them in the institutional report.

VI. Preliminary Status and Final Status Reports

Virtually every person participating in this study saw these two components of the CTC process as highly valuable and worth retaining. Several people contrasted the NCATE process unfavorably in this regard as that process has no "mid-point" formal discussion and there is no report given at the end of the visit. In several instances, concerns raised in the preliminary status report meeting were addressed by the institution and teams responded by removing those concerns from the report. In other instances, there were no changes in team perceptions after the preliminary status report but the institution's faculty appreciated knowing early on about the team's thinking.

There were, of course, suggestions and criticisms offered to improve this part of the CTC process. In a few cases, teams did not conduct the meetings in a manner that helped facilitate communication and understanding. One program director was offended at the degree of levity introduced into the preliminary status report meeting and another program director felt the meeting was vague and unhelpful in terms of knowing whether additional information was wanted or not. Several faculty were unclear as to what their role was in such a meeting and expressed a desire to have clearer instructions about what responses are permissible in both the preliminary and final status report meetings. One set of faculty wondered if the purpose of the preliminary status report meeting was solely to seek additional information or was it a signal of how the team was thinking about the final recommendation.

The final status report meeting came in for parallel criticism in two instances where the institution's faculty felt the team was not clear in its explanation of how they arrived at the recommendation and did not reference specific data as they discussed their decision. It was also unclear to these faculty members what role they could play at this meeting. Was this a time for lively debate about the findings or was it merely a presentation without rebuttal? This concern may well speak to the level of knowledge about the CTC process at this campus. In general, those campuses where the team recommendations were positive had many fewer concerns raised about these meetings than did those campuses where some recommendations were less than full approval.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Although these questionnaire data represent the responses from a sample of institutions of higher education that prepare educators in California, the sample is reflective of the total teacher education of the state in size and composition. Four

of the ten institutions responding are CSU campuses; five of the ten campuses represent the private and independent institutions, while the remaining campus represents the UC. While the sample size in the interview segment of the study is smaller and suggests caution in extrapolating results to all teacher education institutions in California, the power of the data is significant and warrants careful attention. The faculty were honest and forthright in their responses and spoke on the basis of recent experience with the current CTC program evaluation policies and procedures.

The Questionnaire

There is much information to be considered in these questionnaires, but the key questions of interest are those that focus on:
   o Did the teams have adequate information to make their recommendations?
   o Were the team members knowledgeable and experienced enough to make such
        recommendations?
   o Did the teams understand the CTC process in making their recommendations?
   o Were team conclusions supported by evidence?
   o Is the CTC process perceived as valid?
   o Is the CTC process perceived as efficient?
   o Are there any campus benefits to the CTC process?

The answer to these questions appears to be yes with reservations expressed regarding the efficiency of the process. The questions dealing with adequate information (IB1 and IC2) clearly indicate that the teams were perceived by the institutions as having understood their programs through the documents and interviews created for them. While there were suggestions for improvement, it does not appear from these data that any program felt it was judged on inadequate information. The low response rate regarding local concerns being met when setting up the interview schedules may suggest that the question was not understood or that the issue of making modifications to interview schedules never came up.

Team members were overwhelmingly seen as knowledgeable and experienced (IIA1) as 89 percent received a rating of excellent or good with no one receiving a rating of poor or unacceptable. Additionally, all team members were perceived as understanding the CTC Process (IIA3) at the level of excellent (70%) or good (30%) and their appropriate use of the quality indicators for each standard was judged favorably (63%=Excellent; 15%=Good). Finally, the institutional assessment of the team's assessment (IIA5) was also either excellent or good (59%=Excellent; 37%=Good; 4%=No Answer). In this area of team knowledge and performance, suggestions were made for improvement and a few problems noted, but the overall satisfaction level was high.

The questions that focused on the written final status summary report revealed that 89 percent of the respondents thought the teams' conclusions were supported by the evidence presented and that an equal percentage thought the teams captured

the strengths and weaknesses of the programs evaluated. Few changes were recommended for this part of the evaluation process.

Two questions were asked about the validity of the process; one about the validity in terms of CTC Standards and the second in terms of program effectiveness. The evidence from this study suggests the respondents see the CTC process as valid for both determining whether CTC Standards are met (Excellent or Good=96%) and for determining program effectiveness (Excellent or Good=78%) although there appears to less certainty about program effectiveness.

Two similar questions were asked about the efficiency of the current process. While the comments section of the questionnaire section and the data collected in the interview portion suggest persistent feelings of inefficiency, the numerical data are not supportive. Most of the respondents (77%) indicated the efficiency level as excellent or good for determining CTC Standards and 74 percent marked excellent or good for determining program effectiveness.

Finally, a question was asked about benefits to the program or faculty resulting from the CTC program review process. Seventy-eight percent (78%) of the respondents indicated there were benefits to the program and faculty and 19 percent indicated there were some benefits derived. The comments might be best captured by one campus's response, "Much as we hate it during the process, we value it afterward." Even the most critical respondent indicated, "Provided an opportunity for recognition of the quality of the program. Benefits were in terms of the internal efforts to organize for the visit."

The Interviews

Although the questionnaire data were positive about the process, the interviews did bring forth new voices and did tap the intensity of faculty feeling about the CTC's program evaluation process. It appears that the primary objection to the process of evaluating individual credential programs is the amount of work involved for the faculty and the relative absence of reward for successfully completing the process. Embedded in this general concern about how their professional lives are impacted is a perception that some of the work involved is duplicative and not critical to the team recommendation. Thus, a number of comments focused on work duplicated across programs and the belief that hours of work by the faculty were reviewed in minutes by the teams. While it is unlikely that teams could or should be required to make more vocal comments about materials assembled by program faculty, it is very clear that the Commission could streamline a fair amount of information through combining the 12 Common Standards[4] into an institutional level report.

The reward element is no less real an issue but more difficult for the Commission to address. Faculty appear to weigh the value of any professional activity in terms of institutional and personal reward. It was abundantly clear during the interviews that faculty care deeply about the outcome of a CTC visit and doing well

(defined largely as receiving Approval for all credential programs) is critical to both individual faculty and the education unit within the institution. What is less clear is whether institutions of higher education truly value the preparatory work that precedes a successful CTC visit. Few institutions reported special fiscal support for a CTC visit and most faculty had little or no assigned time to write their program reports. What little time was provided seemed to be for NCATE activities or for one person to monitor the total institutional preparation. In sum, the faculty appeared to feel that the amount of work necessary to do well in a CTC visit was substantially out of proportion to the meager reward they felt the institution granted them for getting approved. This "avoidance of disaster" attitude left a number of faculty feeling tired but cheated at the end of the visit. As one faculty member said wonderingly, "If we did so good, why do I feel so bad?"

In probing this issue further, it became apparent that, for most faculty, the issue of preparation could be addressed through modification of current practice rather than wholesale replacement of the process. While some faculty felt the standards could be reduced in number and that the faculty should not have to prepare so much in the way of materials and documents, the majority of the faculty and administrators interviewed wanted more direction from the CTC on how much information was needed for teams to make fair decisions. A number noted that the preparation phase was exacerbated by the changes in CTC regulations and that, barring further changes, the next visit would be easier to prepare for. thus, it appears that the CTC, through a more thorough instructional process for institutions gearing up for a CTC visit, could alleviate much of the uncertainty and anxiety that undermines confidence in the program evaluation process.

Recommendations

Specific policy recommendations to bolster the confidence of the teacher education community in the current CTC process are as follows:

    o Development of a videotape that would give an overview of the program evaluation process and explain its origins and purposes to new faculty members and potential team members;

    o Send biographical information on team members and team leaders to the institution so they understand the background and skills of the team members;

    o Create the role of "Chief of Party" or some similar term for a highly experienced team leader who would lead all the teams at the sight and be prepared to represent the combined teams at pre-visit planning meetings, social activities at the beginning of the visit, and during the visit itself. This person would have stature equivalent to the Dean or Academic Vice-President of the visited institution.

    o A social event the evening before the interviews begin can ease tensions and provide opportunities for making connections between team

members and faculty. It should focus on institutional mission and/or local context issues that all team members should know;

o Enhanced training for team leaders focused on making the preliminary and final status meetings positive and productive and more work with team members on avoiding counter-productive behavior that creates an adversarial relationship;

o Review of the observations for institutional consideration section of CTC report format to clarify the origins of these comments and their relationship to other parts of the report;

o Early formal notification to the President of an impending CTC visit with statement of implications of the visit and,perhaps, a statement on ways of supporting teacher education programs;

o Provide an option for including a nationally recognized scholar in education as an observer/evaluator who would focus on institution-ally selected issues or serve on one of the teams. This might be paid for by CTC or by the institution of higher education.

o Assign a small team to verify the 12 Common Standards while other teams would focus on the specific competencies mandated for each credential. There would be two-way communication regarding any variances in how the 12 Common Standards were applied across credential programs, but the primary work on the 12 Standards would be done by a specific team.

o Provide an option whereby the NCATE team might take responsibility for the 12 Common Standards during a joint visit thus providing an additional streamlining for those institutions seeking national ac-creditation.

The modifications to existing policy involve streamlining the process through removing duplication of effort across credential programs, clarifying the process by which the number of teams and programs are defined, specifying number and type of documents needed, providing options for institutions within the evaluation system to address internal needs of the institution, reviewing the existing proce-dures on interviewing with attention to fine-tuning numbers required or simply providing options for collecting information on graduate perceptions, and increas-ing the involvement of senior administration in the CTC process. None of these alter the fundamental orientation to individual credential program review, but they do provide "buy-in" by the institutions of higher education through increased attention to their particular needs and goals.

The need for continued team member and team leader training is clear. While the vast majority of team members were perceived as highly professional and well prepared to conduct the evaluation, problems do persist and the need for thoughtful, well trained team members will increase as the CTC adopts standards in all credential areas. The need for enhanced training for institutions should help address

the difficulties experienced by campuses and help them work smarter rather than harder. The training should also increase the fairness element as more institutions will have access to the craft knowledge about CTC visits that only some institutions now appear to possess.

Finally, the importance of maintaining a rigorous program of evaluation by the CTC about its own process should be self-evident. The faculty who participated in this study seemed very pleased to have their perceptions included into the policy review process and provided a wealth of thoughtful, articulate commentary on their experience. Such input not only improves the work of the CTC, but also sends a clear signal that the CTC is committed to improving its activities and welcomes constructive criticism.

In sum, it appears that the concerns and complaints registered by the faculty and administration as a part of this study raise serious concerns about the benefits of increasing external scrutiny of teacher education programs in the absence of programmatic and faculty rewards. Moreover, much of the focus of this evaluation system revolves around input variables to the teacher education program and little attention seems to be paid to the output variables. It may be that the rising interest in candidate-centered assessment across the United States is, in part, a reaction to the inability to affect teacher competence through modification of program and institution support. As an interim effort, several modifications to the policies and procedures currently in place for program evaluation seem sensible.

Notes

1. For a review of those reports, see Sikula, J. (1990).
2. A preliminary status report is a meeting between the evaluation team leader and key faculty in the program being evaluated, typically held during early afternoon of the second day of interviews, to review what problems or concerns the team has and to provide opportunity for the program faculty to provide additional information on those topics of concern. Such discussions to not bind the team in any way, but the meeting gives the program faculty a chance to address information gaps or errors.
3. Since the team writes its final report before leaving campus, the report is delivered orally to the program faculty at the end of the visit. There is time for questions and discussion, although teams typically do not alter their reports as a result of the conversations.
4. The CTC developed a set of 12 Standards that would govern all credential programs in the state. These 12 standards focvus on institutional inputs such as budgetary support, program rationale, faculty qualifications, student stpport services, admission practices, and program and faculty evaluation and development. They became operative in the fall of 1991.

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Acknowledgement

Appendix A — Faculty Reaction Questionnaire Items

IA1. Was the overview session by the CTC staff consultant adequate and appropriate in helping you prepare for the visit?

IA2. Did the materials distributed by the CTC provide sufficient information to enable you to prepare for program evaluation?

IA3. Did the CTC consultant provide sufficient assistance through the evaluation process?

IA4. Was there any other information or material needed that the CTC did not provide?

IB1. Did the team members appear to have an adequate understanding of your program(s) as a result of the document and materials you prepared for them?

IB2. What additional information should have been provided to the team(s) prior to their visit?

IC1. Were the written and oral instructions for scheduling interviews given clearly and with sufficient emphasis to enable your faculty to set up acceptable interview schedules?

IC2. Did the selection of interviewees and the scheduling of interviews provide a fair and appropriate means for team members to gain meaningful information?

IC3. How well were the local concerns about setting up these interview schedules addressed by the CTC Consultant and/or team leaders?

IIA1. What rating would you give the knowledge and experience of the team members?

IIA2. Was there appropriate constituency representation on the team(s)?

IIA3. In your judgment, how well did the team members understand the program evaluation process and their role in it?

IIA4. How well did the team utilize all the data sources you provided?

IIA5. How would you assess the team's assessment of your program according to CTC Standards/Guidelines?

IIA6. How appropriately did the team use the quality indicators to determine program effectiveness for each standard?

IIA7. What general suggestions do you have to improve the program evaluation process and procedures to ensure greater reliability, validity, and efficiency?

IIB1. Was the preliminary oral report helpful to you in providing early feedback from the team?

IIB2. Did the preliminary oral report provide an opportunity for the program faculty to identify additional data and sources needed by the team?

IIB3. Do you recommend retaining the preliminary oral report?

IIC1. Was the oral summary of the final status report a comprehensive summary of the evaluation findings?

IIC2. Did the oral summary of the final status report conducted by the team leader provide maximum understanding of the team's recommendation to your faculty?

IIC3. Did the oral summary of the final status report provide a positive contribution to the institution in its recommendations?

IID1. Was the written rationale of the final status report that you received before the final session useful?

IID2. Were the conclusions in the report supported by findings from interviews or review of the relevant materials?

IID3. Did the final written status report clearly identify strengths and weaknesses?

IID4. Do you recommend retaining this reporting format?

IID5. What suggestions do you have for improving the report?

III 1. Was the CTC Program Evaluation visit a valid process for determining if your program met the standards/guidelines?

III.2. Was the CTC Program Evaluation process a valid method for determining the effectiveness of your program?

III.3. Please comment on specific ideas to make the process more effective.

III.4. Was the CTC Program Evaluation process an efficient method for determining if your program met the CTC Standards/Guidelines?

III.5. Was the CTC Program Evaluation process an efficient method for determining the effectiveness of your program?

III.6. Please comment on specific suggestions for making the process more efficient.

III.7. Did the CTC Program Evaluation process benefit your program and/or faculty?

III.8. What suggestions do you have for improving any aspect of the CTC Program Evaluation process?