

TEACHER PREP REVIEW 2016

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The 2016 edition of the *Teacher Prep Review* will include the following:

- 1,125 institutions (from which 99 percent of traditionally prepared new teachers graduate)
- 1,167 elementary programs
- 1,137 secondary programs
- 235 special education programs

Programs will be assessed against 19 standards:

- Two new standards have been added (Rigor and Fundamentals of Instruction)
- Five standards have been adjusted (Elementary Content, High School Content, Student Teaching, Secondary Methods and Outcomes)
- One standard is eliminated (Middle School Content).

New Standard: Rigor

Standard: *The program holds teacher candidates to the same or a higher level of expectations regarding coursework and grading standards as that to which students in the rest of the institution are held.*

Why this standard is important: Teaching is a tough job, so the training to become a teacher should be up to the task. Coursework should be designed to ensure that teacher candidates master key knowledge and skills. Not only will rigorous coursework raise the prestige of the profession, it will help ensure that candidates know what to do when they enter the classroom.

How the rigor of grading will be assessed: Undergraduate programs will be assessed on this differential: the percentage of teacher candidates who graduate earning Latin honors compared to all students on the same campus. Programs with a modest differential (<10 percent) "meet the standard" (●); those with a differential between 10 and 20 percent "partly meet the standard" (◐); and those with a differential above 20 percent "do not meet the standard" (○).

What will be reported regarding the rigor of coursework assignments (undergraduate and graduate): Elementary reading, secondary methods and special education instructional design courses will be examined to determine whether they have an adequate proportion of criterion-referenced assignments. Such assignments:

- Require a significant degree of objective knowledge to complete
- Enable instructors to compare one candidate's work with others
- Allow instructors to check responses against a well-defined professional consensus about what is known on the subject
- Provide instructors the opportunity to verify key facts about material used for completion

For more information about this standard, see the report [Easy A's](#).

Materials that will be used to evaluate programs on this standard: For the initial rating of the rigor of grading published in 2014, commencement brochures were collected in 2012 and 2013. If you would like your program's rating updated, please either send your most recent commencement brochure which has honors status of graduates clearly marked, or send an excel spreadsheet with information about the honors status of

every graduate.

To assess coursework assignments, syllabi for elementary reading, secondary methods and special education instructional design syllabi will be examined.

New Standard: Fundamentals of Instruction

Standard: The program ensures that teacher candidates have opportunities to practice the use of fundamental instructional strategies.

Why this standard is important: Decades of research distilled by the Institute of Education Sciences have identified six strategies that teachers can use to help students learn and retain new material on any subject:

- Combine graphical and verbal presentations of content
- Explicitly connect and integrate abstract and concrete representations of content
- Ask deep questions that demand students explain what they know (e.g., “why,” “how,” “what if,” and so forth)
- Have teachers alternate between demonstrating how to solve a type of problem and asking students to solve the same type of problem independently or in groups
- Provide multiple opportunities, spread over weeks and months, for students to practice what they have previously learned
- Design and give assessments that enhance retention of content

What programs will be rated on:

An upcoming report will provide a full discussion of the methodology for the evaluation process, as well as a much broader picture of the nature of instruction in this area and the support provided by textbooks.

Materials that will be used to rate programs on this standard: Lesson and unit planning templates as well as student teaching observation forms will be examined for evidence that candidates practice these fundamentals.

Adjusted Standard: Elementary Content

Standard: The elementary program ensures that teacher candidates have the broad content preparation necessary to teach to increasingly rigorous state standards.

Why this standard has been adjusted: After thoroughly examining the full range of liberal arts content coursework requirements for elementary teacher candidates, the standard’s methodology has been adjusted to better distinguish between programs whose candidates likely lack the background knowledge necessary for high-level instruction from those that do.

How programs were formerly rated: To get credit for the coverage of a topic (e.g., world literature, modern American history/government, biology), programs had to require that candidates take a sufficiently broad survey course or demonstrate such knowledge by passing an AP test. If, for example, a program allowed elementary teachers to choose one course from a menu consisting of a survey of American history since the Civil War, a course on American government or a course on American foreign policy since WWII, it would not receive credit for the modern American history/government topic.

How programs will be rated going forward: Programs will now be given credit for coverage of a topic if choices available to elementary candidates are limited to a handful of courses, most of which are broad surveys and none of which significantly diverge from the topic. In the example above, the program would now receive credit for the modern American history/government topic because the first two choices are broad survey

courses, while the course on American foreign policy significantly overlaps with the course on American history since the Civil War

Materials that will be used to rate programs on this standard: Course requirements and descriptions listed in official catalogs are reviewed.

Adjusted Standard: High School Content

Old Standard: The program ensures that teacher candidates have the content preparation necessary to teach to increasingly rigorous state standards.

New Standards

High School Content in the Sciences: The program ensures that teacher candidates have the content preparation necessary to successfully teach the sciences to increasingly rigorous state standards for college and career readiness.

High School Content in the Social Sciences: The program ensures that teacher candidates have the content preparation necessary to successfully teach the social sciences to increasingly rigorous state standards for college and career readiness.

Why this standard has been adjusted: The standard previously lumped together analyses of the preparation of high school English, math, science and social science teachers, making it hard for consumers and programs themselves to determine where their content requirements were strong or in need of improvement. But with virtually every program in the country either requiring majors in English and math to teach those respective subjects or operating in states with adequate tests, there was little value in continuing to examine English and math content preparation. In addition, the standard's ratings provided insufficient nuance in just how well (or poorly) programs were delivering content preparation.

How programs were rated previously: All single-subject certification pathways offered by a program were examined to determine whether they required either a 30 credit major or if candidates were adequately tested by the state. Multiple subject certifications (e.g., general social studies), were examined to determine whether programs required at least two 15 credit minors in relevant subjects (e.g., minors in both history and economics for a general social studies certification) or if candidates were adequately tested for every subject they could teach.

How programs will be rated going forward: The basic methodology will remain the same (for more details, see the methodology [here](#)). However, the new standards will only examine the sciences and social sciences. In addition, rather than being rated on a three-part scale (“does not meet standard” (○), “partly meets standard” (◐), “meets standard” (◑)), they will be rated on a five-part scale (“does not meet standard” (○), “meets a small part of standard” (◐), “partly meets standard” (◑), “nearly meets standard” (◒), and “meets standard” (◓)), so that programs which, for example, require at least one minor for a multiple-subject certification can readily be distinguished from those requiring a wide variety of courses in social sciences but which do not demand a concentration that would lead to a minor.

Materials that will be used to rate this standard: Course requirements listed in course catalogs are examined.

Adjusted Standard: Student Teaching

Standard (unchanged): The program ensures that teacher candidates have a strong student teaching experience.

Why this standard is being adjusted: The standard was previously scored on a three-point scale (“does not meet standard” (○), “partly meets standard” (◐), “meets standard” (●)). This meant, for example, that a program that provided student teachers with four instances of written feedback but which fulfilled no other indicator would earn the same score as a program that satisfied no indicator. The scoring system did not provide either programs or their consumers with sufficiently nuanced information about the support provided in student teaching placements.

How programs were rated previously: The actual rating process is unchanged. For more details, see the methodology [here](#).

How programs will be rated going forward: The standard will now be scored on a five-part scale (“does not meet standard” (○), “meets a small part of standard” (◐), “partly meets standard” (◑), “nearly meets standard” (◒), and “meets standard” (●)). This will allow us to more clearly discriminate between programs that meet more indicators of the standard than others. For example, a program that provides four instances of written feedback at regular intervals throughout the student teaching placement, but which does not satisfy any other indicator of the standard, will now earn a score of “meets a small part of the standard,” (◐) rather than “does not meet standard” (○).

Materials that will be used to rate programs on this standard: Student teaching handbooks, contracts with districts on student teacher placements and cooperating teacher application and nomination forms are examined.

Adjusted Standard: Secondary Methods

Standard (unchanged): The program requires teacher candidates to practice instructional techniques specific to their content area.

Why this standard is being adjusted: To provide a more comprehensive portrait of the training in secondary methods, more coursework in secondary methods will be examined. It is desirable to provide more gradation in ratings on this standard.

How programs were rated previously: One randomly selected single subject-specific methods course out of the four key topic areas (English, math, sciences or social sciences) (if one was offered) was evaluated. Programs were scored on a three-point scale (“does not meet standard” (○), “partly meets standard” (◐), “meets standard” (●)).

How programs will be rated going forward: All secondary English and math methods courses of a program will be rated. The actual process of rating each course will be unchanged; for more details, see the methodology [here](#). Scores that a program earns in each subject will be examined. This will enable the move to a five-point scoring system for this standard (“does not meet standard” (○), “meets a small part of standard” (◐), “partly meets standard” (◑), “nearly meets standard” (◒), and “meets standard” (●)).

Materials that will be used to rate programs on this standard: Syllabi of secondary English and math methods syllabi will be examined.

Adjusted Standard: Outcomes

Standard (unchanged): The program and institution collect and monitor data on their graduates.

Why this standard is being changed: This standard was previously scored on a three-point scale (“does not

meet standard” (○), “partly meets standard” (◐), “meets standard” (◑). This meant, for example, that a program that at least conducts surveys of graduates would earn the same score as a program that took little substantive action to track its outcomes.

How programs were rated previously: The actual rating process is unchanged. For more details, see the methodology [here](#).

How programs will be rated going forward: The standard will now be scored on five-part scale (“does not meet standard” (○), “meets a small part of standard” (◐), “partly meets standard” (◑), “nearly meets standard” (◒), and “meets standard” (◓)). Programs that satisfy more indicators of the standard will be more readily distinguished from those that satisfy fewer. For example, a program that *only* surveys its graduates will receive a score of “meets a small part of the standard,” (◐) rather than “does not meet standard” (○).

Materials that will be used to rate programs on this standard: Surveys of graduates, employers, standardized performance assessments (e.g., edTPAs) and data programs collect on the learning growth of students of their graduates will be examined.

Standard that is eliminated: Middle School Content

Standard: The program ensures that teacher candidates have the content preparation necessary to teach to increasingly rigorous state standards.

Why this standard is being eliminated: In the last edition of the *Review*, 82 percent of the 375 stand-alone middle school programs in the sample met the standard, almost all of them because of adequate state testing requirements. Over the course of the next two years, all states are planning to implement adequate testing requirements for middle school content, obviating the need to evaluate the nature of program coursework requirements for content preparation.