



Policies and Procedures Topical Action Group (TAGs)

Revised September 2018

A unique aspect of AACTE is that in addition to standing, board and special committees, the Association provides individuals from member institutions with opportunities to participate in Topical Action Groups (TAGs). TAGs are unique in that they are initiated, organized, and managed by participants; yet they are approved, overseen and funded by AACTE and a designated TAG staff administrator. Generally, they focus on topics that a segment of the membership deems to be important to the state of educator preparation.

History and Description of TAGs

Initially established at the October 1988 meeting of the Board of Directors, Special Study Groups (SSGs) were formed to investigate areas of professional education that are of interest to faculty of member institutions. In 2013, the name was changed to “Topical Action Groups” to more accurately describe the action-oriented nature of these unique constituent groups. Historically, these groups have explored the areas of multicultural education, gender issues, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), elementary education, admissions and retention, arts and sciences, international education, paraeducation, race and racism in education, service-learning, women in the deanship, deans of color, and social and cultural foundations.

TAG activities are overseen and managed by an entity comprised of the AACTE president and a staff person designated as the TAG staff administrator. The charge of this oversight entity includes the following:

- Providing a forum in which individuals from member institutions exchange information on issues related to professional education
- Promoting collaboration among member institution personnel
- Monitoring the progress of established TAGs and making suggestions for improvement
- Ensuring funds requested by the TAG are consistent with the AACTE mission and policies
- Promoting membership within the TAG program and assisting with the establishment of additional TAGs

- Maintaining consistent and accurate TAG records by ensuring all business documents such as the annual report, annual budget, business meeting agenda, meeting notes, and election of officers are provided to the AACTE staff administrator and posted on the AACTE Online Community (if applicable) in a timely manner
- Advocating for, publicizing, and supporting TAG activities to improve and advance TAG projects and goals

Definition of TAGs

AACTE defines Topical Action Groups (TAGs) as peer-generated groups of people with similar interests that provide a continuous and structured forum for discussion and action among persons from member institutions around particular professional education topics. AACTE encourages the establishment of TAGs that are congruent with the AACTE mission, goals, bylaws, and policies.

Establishing a TAG

The following are guidelines for the establishment of AACTE Topical Action Groups (TAGs), which the Association may amend at any time.

Establishment of a TAG requires completion and submission of the TAG application to the staff administrator for approval by the AACTE president. The application requires the following:

- TAG name
- Statement of purpose
- Initial projects and goals
- The names, institutions and e-mail addresses of the officers (chair, secretary, treasurer)
- The names, institutions and e-mail addresses of at least 10 additional members affiliated with AACTE member institutions and who are registered in the AACTE Member Directory as affiliated with that institution
- Signed letter of commitment by each officer

The application will be reviewed within 15 days of receipt by the staff administrator and AACTE president. The staff administrator will inform the TAG chair when the AACTE president has approved the application. The TAG's online community space within the AACTE web site will be established shortly thereafter.

The statement of purpose, submitted as part of the TAG application, should be succinct and indicate its contribution to the practice of educator preparation and professional education. Statements of purpose should take into consideration existing TAGs and standing committees.

The TAG staff administrator and AACTE president will monitor the progress of TAGs.

Individual Membership in a TAG (faculty and staff)

Individuals who meet the criteria below may request to join the TAG:

1. Employed at an institution that is an active member of AACTE (current year dues have been paid)
2. Registered in the AACTE Membership Directory as an affiliate of the institution
3. Has approval from their institution's Chief Representative (CR) to join the TAG

By submitting a request to join a TAG it is implied that the individual has the approval of their CR to serve on the TAG. The CR of each institution has the option to revoke any individual's participation in a TAG if they feel that this affiliation is inappropriate or incongruous with the faculty member's professional responsibilities at their institution.

Individual Membership in a TAG (doctoral students)

AACTE recognizes that those seeking doctoral degrees in education at member institutions constitute the pipeline of future professional leaders. AACTE is eager to engage these individuals early in their careers to provide them with valuable professional experiences, the support necessary to enrich their doctoral work, and the opportunity to establish valuable connections with others in the field. In addition, many of these individuals will one day serve in the capacity of lead administrator for an educational program and will therefore be the decision maker regarding their institution's AACTE membership status. Providing these individuals with an opportunity to experience the value of AACTE member programs early in their careers will likely be a key determinant in maintaining their continued commitment and support of the Association and its mission later in their professional lives.

Doctoral students are encouraged to join AACTE TAG groups under the following guidelines:

1. The student is enrolled at an institution that is an active member of AACTE (current year dues have been paid)
2. Registered in the AACTE Membership Directory as an affiliate of the institution
3. Has approval from their academic advisor to join the TAG

By submitting a request to join a TAG it is implied that the student has the approval of their academic advisor to serve on the TAG. Their academic advisor has the option to revoke any individual's participation in a TAG if they feel that this affiliation is inappropriate or incongruous with the student's professional and academic responsibilities at their institution.

TAG Membership Guidelines

An individual may join a TAG at any time by submitting a request to join via the AACTE web site, including acceptance of the TAG terms and conditions. The request will be forwarded to the staff administrator who will ensure that the individual's institution is an active member of AACTE and that the individual is registered in the Membership Directory as affiliated with the institution. Once accepted to a TAG, individuals have access to all online documents and resources for each TAG in which they hold membership via their AACTE username and password. *Please note that the individual's TAG membership will end continuously when the AACTE membership of the individual's institution expires.*

Based on previous experience with Special Study Groups, AACTE requests that, **individuals limit TAG membership to two groups, and serve as an officer on only one TAG at a time to ensure the quality of the experience.**

All TAG members in good standing shall be entitled to vote for TAG officers and any other matter where a vote is taken or required. Doctoral students approved for membership in a TAG will have the same privileges and responsibilities granted to faculty and staff members of the TAG, with the exception that doctoral students are not able to serve as officers in a TAG.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Officers

Three officer positions are required for each TAG: chair, secretary, and treasurer. TAG officers serve for one-year terms (with the exception of the chair, who will serve for a second year as immediate past chair). The term of newly formed TAG officer positions run from the date of inception to the first annual business meeting.

The TAG's annual business meeting shall be held in conjunction with the AACTE Annual Meeting. Officer elections shall be held each year at the TAG annual business meeting. After the one-year term of chair has ended, this individual will serve as past chair for an additional year. All officers will be registered with the Association via the staff administrator.

Responsibilities of the Chair

- Ensure all TAG policies and procedures are followed
- Serve as liaison between the TAG and AACTE
- Preside at all TAG meetings including the TAG annual business meeting
- Complete and submit the TAG annual budget/request for funds form to the staff administrator by **December 1** (if requesting funds)
- Complete and submit the TAG's annual report detailing membership, finances, and activities to the TAG staff administrator by **December 1**
- Submit a member roster of current TAG members to the TAG staff administrator by **December 1**
- Ensure all TAG materials and communications are hosted exclusively on the AACTE online community forum dedicated to the TAG
- Create TAG meeting agendas, including the annual business meeting agenda
- Notify all members and staff administrator of the date, time, place, and agenda or purposes of any TAG meeting
- Ensure the processes for determining the budget and meeting agendas are collaborative and involve the input of all TAG members
- Ensure the TAG Partnership Disclosure Form and/or the TAG Presentation Disclosure Form is submitted as necessary, per the guidelines in this document

The chair of the TAG may also appoint persons to assist officers, to chair committees or to carry out other work of the TAG.

Responsibilities of the Secretary

- Distribute agendas for all TAG meetings
- Solicit meeting agenda items from the TAG membership
- Keep detailed minutes of all TAG meetings
- Submit copies of minutes from these meetings to the AACTE staff administrator
- Post all meeting agendas and notes to the AACTE Online Community

If the secretary is unable to perform any of these tasks, they become the responsibility of the chair.

Responsibilities of the Treasurer

- Manage and ensure safe keeping of all TAG financial accounts and documents
- Assist the chair as requested in developing the annual fiscal year budget/request for funds

Responsibilities of the Past chair

- Perform such duties as designated by the chair
- Ensure continuity in the administration of the TAG from year to year

Officer Guidelines

Consecutive Terms – Individuals shall be eligible to be nominated and to succeed themselves, if elected, to the same office for consecutive terms, not to exceed three years.

Secretary and Treasurer Mid-Year Vacancies - Whenever an elected office is vacated for any reason before the term of that officer has been completed, the chair shall, with the approval of the AACTE president, appoint a replacement until new elections are held. The new appointee can be an existing member of the TAG, or an individual who is affiliated with a member institution (current year dues are paid) and is registered in the AACTE Membership Directory as an affiliate of the institution. By accepting the appointment, it is implied that the officers have the approval of their Chief Representative (CR) to serve on the TAG. The CR of each institution has the option to revoke any individual's participation in a TAG if they feel that this affiliation is inappropriate or incongruous with their professional responsibilities at their institution.

The chair shall notify the AACTE staff administrator of any vacancies and replacements as soon as possible. This replacement shall assume the full duties and responsibilities of that office immediately upon appointment.

Chair Mid-Year Vacancy - In the case where a chair is vacant, the other TAG officers must by majority vote elect an individual to complete the term of the Chair. The vote must occur and the results must be shared with the AACTE staff administrator no later than 30 days after the vacancy of the chair. An officer of the TAG may nominate themselves to serve as chair for the remainder of the term.

Nominations and Elections –The TAG officers are responsible for monitoring and overseeing all aspects of the nomination and election processes of the TAG. These elections will take place at the annual business meeting in conjunction with the AACTE Annual Meeting. *To be eligible for an officer position, an individual must: 1) meet the guidelines described in the above Individual Membership in a TAG*

(faculty and staff) section, 2) be present at the business meeting at which the elections are taking place, and 3) consent to the nomination.

It is implied that the officer has the approval of their CR to serve on the TAG. The CR of each institution has the option to revoke any individual's participation in a TAG if they feel that this affiliation is inappropriate or incongruous with their professional responsibilities at their institution. Individuals may self-nominate for any officer position of the TAG. Officers shall be elected by majority vote of those present at the business meeting. The TAG chair shall be responsible for reporting the results of the election to the staff administrator no later than 30 days after the completion of the business meeting.

Required Activities and Documents

1. Annual Business Meeting –The TAG must hold at least one business meeting per year in conjunction with the AACTE Annual Meeting. Decisions during this meeting shall be by the majority of TAG members present and voting.

In addition to convening the TAG annual business meeting, TAG officers and other members shall meet when, where, and as needed to conduct the business of the TAG or carry out the charges of the committee within the parameters and requirements of the TAG policies and procedures. The TAG can meet via conference call, in person, or virtually to carry out its business throughout the year. Decisions during these meetings shall be by the majority of TAG members present and voting. Robert's Rules of Order (current edition) shall govern all business meetings of the TAG.

2. Annual Budget/Request for Funds – If requesting AACTE funds, the TAG must submit the Annual Budget/Request for Funds document to the staff administrator by December 1.
3. Annual Report – All TAGs are required to submit an annual report to the staff administrator by December 1. This report shall detail the TAGs activities, goals, projects, finances, accomplishments, and a complete list of members.
4. TAG Member Roster – All TAGs are required to submit a roster of current members and include it with the annual report.

TAG Funds

Each year, AACTE will allocate grant money to each TAG that will be used to fund expenses throughout the fiscal year, which shall run from January 1 to December 31. All TAGs who wish to receive AACTE funds must submit a fiscal year budget/request for funds to the staff administrator by December 1 for the upcoming fiscal year. The officers of the TAG are responsible for discussing upcoming year plans with the members of the TAG and preparing and submitting a budget/request for funds that aligns with these plans to AACTE by the deadline. Requests for funds as per the fiscal year budget will be reviewed by the TAG oversight entity, and funds will be granted and the TAG leaders notified by January 1 of the new fiscal year.

Generally, any request for funds up to \$2,000 per year, per TAG will be approved providing that the fiscal year budget/request for funds is deemed to be consistent with the AACTE mission and policies and with the stated purpose of the TAG. Additional funding over \$2,000 will be considered, depending upon the relevancy or urgency of the TAG's agenda for the Association as a whole. Any request for funds submitted mid-year will be prorated accordingly. Approved funds will be distributed on a reimbursement basis. Individuals within the TAG who require reimbursement for approved expenses should submit a TAG reimbursement form with appropriate signatures and receipts. Receipts should be consistent with the budget document relating to the item/activity cost and description. This form should bear the signature of the TAG chair, and should be submitted to the staff administrator for processing. Any expenses incurred that are in excess of the approved budget request will be reimbursed at the discretion of the TAG oversight entity. The oversight entity is also entitled to approve or deny the collection and disbursement of any other funds collected and managed by the TAG. The reimbursement form and receipts are due to AACTE no later than 30 days upon completion of the event/purchase.

Coordination with AACTE Standing Committees

As is often the case, some activities of a TAG will fall within the purview of an existing AACTE standing committee. When the TAG wishes to use AACTE's name in relation to an activity, e.g., conference or workshop, the agenda and associated written materials must be reviewed and approved by the relevant standing committee(s).

TAG Communication and Materials

TAGs are AACTE-sponsored groups that remain active and ongoing regardless of the group's changing individual membership. Therefore, any electronic materials—including papers, videos, webinars, newsletters, surveys, or documents produced by a TAG—are required to be maintained exclusively within the forum space dedicated to the particular TAG on the AACTE Online Community. This policy will ensure the continuity and transparency of materials within a TAG as the membership of each group changes over time, protection of AACTE members' proprietary rights to materials produced by TAGs, and access to TAG materials is password protected and granted only to individuals who are official members of a TAG and therefore affiliated with an AACTE member institution. Any TAG that wants AACTE to consider an exception to this policy must request and receive written permission from the AACTE TAG staff administrator to maintain TAG documents or materials elsewhere.

TAG Partnerships

At times, it will be appropriate and advantageous for a TAG to partner with a non-AACTE organization or entity to complete important work. However, it is important for the Association to ensure that the lines of demarcation between the TAG and the partnering organizations are clear, are appropriate, and do not infringe on AACTE's mission and goals. All TAGs that wish to partner with another organization, either formally or informally, must submit the TAG Partnership Disclosure Form to the AACTE TAG staff administrator and receive written approval for the proposed partnership from the AACTE president before any collaborative work or discussions can take place.

TAG Publications

Any print or online publication, video, or webinar that will bear the Association's name must be submitted for review by the Association's Research and Dissemination Committee and be approved by the Board of Directors. In addition, any publications or other materials issued by an AACTE TAG must indicate in writing that it is not an official publication of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. This includes monographs or papers. Periodicals, such as newsletters, need only be submitted once but may be subject to additional review given significant changes in format or content. Further, any printed or on-line matter that will bear the Association's name, logo, or acronym must be submitted in advance to the Board via the staff administrator for review and approval.

Any publications from a TAG must also bear the following inscription:

The contents of this material were developed by an AACTE Topical Action Group. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy and/or view of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education and you should not assume endorsement by the Association.

Any conference materials, marketing information, grant proposals, webinars, videos, or other public representations by a TAG must be approved in advance by the AACTE Board of Directors and bear the inscription above in a prominent position. Similar precautions should be observed with regard to potentially misleading use of section, chapter, or page headers used in TAG publications, printed matter, or online materials. To host a webinar or web meeting, the TAG Webinar/Web Meeting reservation form must be submitted to the staff administrator.

TAG Promotional Materials

Some TAGs distribute promotional materials at AACTE events to increase awareness and promote membership. Examples include, but are not limited to, pens, pencils, and notebooks, that bear the TAG name and/or AACTE website address. These items must be approved by the AACTE staff administrator prior to distribution regardless if the TAG is using AACTE funds to purchase them. TAG officers should provide a description of the item, the text to be displayed on the item, and when the items will be distributed.

AACTE may, at its discretion, prohibit or restrict the distribution of TAG promotional materials that have not been approved by AACTE for distribution.

TAG Presentations

Because TAG membership is a benefit of AACTE membership it is important for AACTE to monitor the access that others have to TAG materials and intellectual capital. Therefore, a TAG must submit the TAG Presentation Disclosure Form and receive written permission from the AACTE staff administrator before making any presentation to an audience that includes individuals who are not members of the TAG, and therefore may not be affiliated with an AACTE member institution.

TAG Representation at the Association's Annual Meeting

Each TAG is expected to conduct an annual business meeting in conjunction with the AACTE Annual Meeting. AACTE will provide complimentary meeting space for the annual business meeting at a time that occurs just before, during, or just after the Annual Meeting depending on space availability and the preferred meeting day and time of the TAG committee members.

Termination of TAGs

Voluntary dissolution—Should it be decided that the TAG is no longer meeting the needs and serving the purposes for which it was founded, the TAG shall be voluntarily discontinued by a majority vote of the members present at a TAG business meeting followed by a two-thirds vote of those voting in person at the annual business or other meeting, or via electronic ballot. The results of this election shall be sent in writing by the TAG chair to the TAG membership and the AACTE staff administrator within one week of the counting of the votes.

Other circumstances for dissolution—The TAG may automatically be dissolved for any of the following reasons:

1. Should its members approve the merging of the TAG with one or more other TAGs
2. Failure to submit annual reports and member roster by the due date that show meaningful and measurable progress on the TAG's stated annual goals and initiatives
3. Failure to maintain the minimum membership requirements (at least 13 members, including the three officers)
4. Failure to have TAG publications or activities approved through the relevant channels
5. Failure to maintain TAG documents, materials, and communication exclusively on the AACTE online community, or receive authorization from the AACTE staff administrator to host materials and communications on a non-AACTE-sponsored site
6. Failure to hold the TAG's annual business meeting in conjunction with the AACTE Annual Meeting
7. Violation of any TAG Policies and Procedures
8. Failure to submit a TAG Partnership Disclosure form and receive proper authorization before any TAG partnerships with non-AACTE organizations or groups are undertaken
9. Failure to submit a TAG Presentation Disclosure form prior to making a presentation to an audience that includes individuals who are not members of the TAG

The AACTE president may terminate recognition of a TAG for other good and sufficient reasons, e.g., violation of AACTE's mission, bylaws, resolutions or policies, including AACTE's Policies and Procedures for TAGs.