

Glossary of NCATE Terms

Accreditation. (1) A process for assessing and enhancing academic and educational quality through voluntary peer review. NCATE accreditation informs the public that an institution has a professional education unit that has met state, professional, and institutional standards of educational quality. (2) The decision rendered by NCATE when an institution's professional education unit meets NCATE's standards and requirements.

Accreditation Action Report. The report issued by the Unit Accreditation Board that indicates the unit's accreditation status, standards met, and the areas for improvement to which the unit should respond in its annual reports.

Accreditation with Conditions. An NCATE accreditation decision rendered by the Unit Accreditation Board following a continuing visit that indicates that the unit has not met one or more of the NCATE standards. When the UAB renders this decision, the unit maintains its accredited status but must satisfy conditions by meeting the unmet standard(s) within 18 months.

Accreditation with Probation. An NCATE accreditation decision rendered by the Unit Accreditation Board following a continuing visit that indicates that the unit does not meet one or more of the NCATE standards and has pervasive problems across standards that limit its capacity to offer quality programs that adequately prepare candidates. If accreditation with probation is granted, the unit must schedule an on-site visit within 18 months of the semester in which the probationary decision was rendered.

Accuracy in Assessment. The assurance that key assessments are of the appropriate type and content such that they measure what they purport to measure. To this end, the assessments should be aligned with the standards and/or learning proficiencies that they are designed to measure.

Adjunct Faculty. Part-time faculty in the professional education unit who are not full-time employees of the institution. *See Part-time Faculty and Professional Education Faculty.*

Advanced Programs. Programs at postbaccalaureate levels for (1) the continuing education of teachers who have previously completed initial preparation or (2) the preparation of other school professionals. Advanced programs commonly award graduate credit and include master's, specialist, and doctoral degree programs as well as non-degree licensure programs offered at the postbaccalaureate level. Examples of these programs include those for teachers who are preparing for a second license at the graduate level in a field different from the field in which they have their first license; programs for teachers who are seeking a master's degree in the field in which they teach; and programs not tied to licensure, such as programs in curriculum and instruction. In addition, advanced programs include those for other school professionals such as school counselors, school psychologists, educational administrators, and reading specialists.

Alternate Route Programs. Postbaccalaureate programs designed for individuals who did not prepare as educators during their undergraduate studies. These programs, which usually lead to a unit's recommendation for a state license, accommodate the schedules of adults and recognize their earlier academic preparation and life experiences. In some instances, candidates may be employed as educators while enrolled. Examples include MAT programs, programs that operate in professional development schools, and Troops to Teachers programs. They are sometimes called nontraditional programs.

Annual Report. The AACTE/NCATE Joint Data Collection Report that is required of all NCATE-affiliated institutions as a condition of accreditation. A compilation of these reports serves as primary documentation for Board of Examiners teams as they prepare for on-site accreditation visits.

Area for Improvement (AFI). A statement cited by the Board of Examiners or the Unit Accreditation Board indicating that a unit has not met expected levels of achievement in one or more elements of a standard. The Board of Examiners may cite one or more areas for improvement and still recommend that the standard is met.

Assessment. An evaluated activity or task used by a program or unit to determine the extent to which specific learning proficiencies, outcomes, or standards have been mastered by candidates. Assessments usually include an instrument that details the task or activity and a scoring guide used to evaluate the task or activity.

Assessment Data. Quantified information communicating the results of an evaluative activity or task designed to determine the extent to which candidates meet specific learning proficiencies, outcomes, or standards.

Assessment System. A comprehensive and integrated set of evaluation measures that provides information for use in monitoring candidate performance and managing and improving unit operations and programs for the preparation of professional educators.

Avoidance of Bias in Assessment. The assurance that the unit has addressed any contextual distractions and/or problems with key assessment instruments that introduce sources of bias and thus adversely influence candidate performance. Contextual distractions include inappropriate noise, poor lighting, discomfort, and the lack of proper equipment. Problems with assessments include missing or vague instructions, poorly worded questions, and poorly reproduced copies that make reading difficult.

Benchmark. A description or example of candidate or institutional performance that serves as a standard of comparison for evaluation or judging quality.

Best Practices. Techniques or methodologies that, through experience and research, have proven to lead reliably to a desired result.

Board of Examiners (BOE). On-site evaluators who review institutions based on the NCATE Unit Standards. BOE members are nominated by NCATE member organizations and must successfully complete the NCATE training.

Board of Examiners Report. The report prepared by the Board of Examiners team that conducts the on-site accreditation review of a unit. The report describes how the unit meets the NCATE standards and recommends any areas for improvement in relation to the standards.

BOE Report Rejoinder. The written response a unit is required to submit following receipt of the BOE report. The rejoinder may take the form of a letter acknowledging the receipt of the report or a document that substantively responds to the report or the conduct of the team visit.

Candidacy for Accreditation. The status granted to a non-accredited unit seeking accreditation that has established itself as a *precandidate* and has met NCATE's *preconditions for accreditation*.

Candidate Performance Data. Information derived from assessments of candidate proficiencies, in areas of teaching and effects on student learning, candidate knowledge, and professional dispositions. Candidate performance data may be derived from a wide variety of sources, such as projects, essays, or tests demonstrating subject content mastery; employer evaluations; state licensure tests; and mentoring year *portfolios* as well as assessments, projects, reflections, clinical observations, and other evidence of pedagogical and professional teaching proficiencies.

Candidates. Individuals admitted to, or enrolled in, programs for the initial or advanced preparation of teachers, teachers continuing their professional development, or other school professionals. Candidates are distinguished from *students* in P–12 schools.

Certification. The process by which a non-governmental agency or association grants professional recognition to an individual who has met certain predetermined qualifications specified by that agency or association. (The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards grants advanced certification.)

Clinical Faculty. P–12 school personnel and professional education faculty responsible for instruction, supervision, and/or assessment of candidates during field experiences and clinical practice. *See Professional Education Faculty.*

Clinical Practice. Student teaching or internships that provide candidates with an intensive and extensive culminating activity. Candidates are immersed in the learning community and are provided opportunities to develop and demonstrate competence in the professional roles for which they are preparing.

Conceptual Framework. An underlying structure in a professional education unit that gives conceptual meaning to the unit's operations through an articulated rationale and provides direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance, faculty scholarship and service, and unit accountability.

Consistency in Assessment. The assurance that key assessments produce dependable results or results that would remain constant on repeated trials. Institutions can document consistency through providing training for raters that promote similar scoring patterns, using multiple raters, conducting simple studies of inter-rater reliability, and/or comparing results to other internal or external assessments that measure comparable knowledge, skills, and/or professional dispositions.

Contemporary Professional Experiences. Meaningful and structured activities in a P–12 school setting within the last five years. Examples include structured observation, working in schools as a teacher or other school professional, action research, research projects that are school-based, and participating in professional development school activities.



Content. The subject matter or discipline that teachers are being prepared to teach at the elementary, middle, and/or secondary levels. Content also refers to the professional field of study (e.g., special education, early childhood education, school psychology, reading, or school administration).

Cultural Background. The context of one's life experience as shaped by membership in groups based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area.

Curriculum. Courses, experiences, and assessments necessary to prepare candidates to teach or work with students at a specific age level and/or to teach a specific subject area.

Disabilities. As defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act, a disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Such conditions include mental retardation, hearing impairments (including deafness), speech or language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments or specific learning disabilities that require special education or related services.

Dispositions. *See Professional Dispositions.*

Distance Learning. A formal educational process in which instruction occurs when the learner and the instructor are not in the same place at the same time. Distance learning can occur through virtually any media including asynchronous or synchronous, electronic or printed communications.

Distance Learning Program. A program in which over half of the required courses in the program occur when the learner and the instructor are not in the same place at the same time. *See Distance Learning.* These programs include those offered by the professional educational unit through a contract with an outside vendor or in a consortium arrangement with other higher education institutions, as well as those offered solely by the unit.

Diversity. Differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area. The types of diversity necessary for addressing the elements on candidate interactions with diverse faculty, candidates, and P–12 students are stated in the rubrics for those elements.

Elements of Standards. The major components of each standard that are described in the rubrics and explanations that accompany the standards. Board of Examiners teams will look for evidence that the unit and its programs address the elements.

Ethnicity. Physical and cultural characteristics that make a social group distinctive. These may include, but are not limited to national origin, ancestry, language, shared history, traditions, values, and symbols—all of which contribute to a sense of distinctiveness among members of the group.

Exceptional Expertise. Skill or knowledge surpassing what is common, usual, or expected, as a result of experience or training. Refers to professional education faculty who may not have a doctorate but who possess outstanding knowledge and skills that bring conceptual understanding and real-world sensitivities to teaching in the unit. Examples include teachers certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and former school superintendents who have been recognized for outstanding service.

Exceptionalities. Physical, mental, or emotional conditions, including gifted/talented abilities, that require individualized instruction and/or other educational support or services.

Faculty. *See Professional Education Faculty.*

Fairness (professional disposition). The commitment demonstrated in striving to meet the educational needs of all students in a caring, non-discriminatory, and equitable manner.

Fairness in Assessment. The assurance that candidates have been exposed to the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are being evaluated in key assessments and understand what is expected of them to complete the assessments. To this end, instructions and timing of the assessments should be clearly stated and shared with candidates. In addition, candidates should be given information on how the assessments are scored and how they count toward completion of programs.

Field Experiences. A variety of early and ongoing field-based opportunities in which candidates may observe, assist, tutor, instruct, and/or conduct research. Field experiences may occur in off-campus settings such as schools, community centers, or homeless shelters.

Full-time Faculty. Professional education faculty with full-time assignments in the professional education unit as instructors, professors at different ranks, and administrators. *See Professional Education Faculty.*

General Education Knowledge. Theoretical and practical understanding generally expected of a liberally educated person. General education includes developing knowledge related to the arts, communications, history, literature, mathematics, philosophy, sciences, and the social studies, from *multicultural* and *global* perspectives.

Global Perspective. An understanding of the interdependency of nations and peoples and the political, economic, ecological, and social concepts and values that affect lives within and across national boundaries. It allows for the exploration of multiple perspectives on events and issues.

Good Faith Efforts. Specific actions that units take, which, given their scope, intensity, and appropriateness, could reasonably be expected to increase or maintain candidate opportunities to interact with diverse faculty, peers, or P-12 students over an agreed-upon length of time.

Governance. The system and structure for defining policy, providing leadership, and managing and coordinating the procedures and resources that ensure the quality of all school professionals prepared at the institution.

Higher Education Faculty. Full-time or part-time employees of an institution of higher education. *See Professional Education Faculty.*

Information Technology. Computer hardware and software; voice, data, network, satellite and other telecommunications technologies; and multimedia and application development tools. These technologies are used for the input, storage, processing, and communication of information.

Initial Teacher Preparation Programs. Programs at the baccalaureate or postbaccalaureate levels that prepare candidates for the first license to teach. They include five-year programs, master's programs, and other postbaccalaureate and alternate route programs that prepare individuals for their first license in teaching.

Institutions. Schools, colleges, or departments of education in a university, or non-university providers.

Institutional Report. A report that provides the institutional and unit contexts, a description of the unit's conceptual framework, and evidence that the unit is meeting the NCATE unit standards. The report serves as primary documentation for Board of Examiners teams conducting on-site visits. (See the NCATE website for details.)

Institutional Standards. Standards set by the institution that reflect its mission and identify important expectations for candidate learning that may be unique to the institution's professional education unit.

Internship. Generally, the post-licensure and/or graduate clinical practice under the supervision of clinical faculty; sometimes refers to the preservice clinical experience.

INTASC. The Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, a project of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) that has developed model performance-based standards and assessments for the licensure of teachers.

Knowledge Bases. Empirical research, disciplined inquiry, informed theory, and the wisdom of practice.

Licensure. The official recognition by a state governmental agency that an individual has met certain qualifications specified by the state and is, therefore, approved to practice in an occupation as a professional. (Some state agencies call their licenses certificates or credentials.)

Multicultural Perspective. An understanding of the social, political, economic, academic, and historical constructs of ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area.

National Program Review. The process by which NCATE, in collaboration with the specialized professional associations (SPAs), assesses the quality of teacher preparation programs offered by an institution. Institutions are required to submit their programs for review by SPAs as part of the accreditation process, unless otherwise specified by the state partnership agreement with NCATE. The following terms are used in the program review process:

- a. **Continued National Recognition with Probation.** This decision is applied to programs that received *National Recognition* during the previous review cycle. The decision denotes that the program has not met SPA criteria for *National Recognition* or *National Recognition with Conditions*. The program will have two opportunities within the 12 to 14 months after the first decision to attain *National Recognition* or *National Recognition*



with Conditions. If the program is unsuccessful after two attempts, the program status will be changed to *Not Recognized*.

- b. Further Development Required.** This decision is applied to programs that are undergoing program review for the very first time. The decision denotes that the program has not met SPA criteria for *National Recognition* or *National Recognition with Conditions*. The program will have two opportunities within the 12 to 14 months after the first decision to attain *National Recognition* or *National Recognition with Conditions*. If the program is unsuccessful after two attempts, the program status will be changed to *Not Recognized*.
- c. Key Program Assessments.** The six to eight required assessments used by a program to demonstrate candidate mastery of the professional standards.
- d. National Recognition.** The decision made when a program has met professional standards. A program receiving this decision is recognized for five or seven years depending on the state's agreement with NCATE.
- e. National Recognition Report.** The written findings by a specialized professional association of an institution's programs for the preparation of teachers or other school professionals.
- f. National Recognition with Conditions.** The decision made when a program has substantially met the standards of a specialized professional association but there remain sufficient weaknesses or issues to prevent the program from receiving full national recognition. A program receiving this decision is considered nationally recognized for the subsequent 18 months. If the program does not submit acceptable information within the designated timeframe, the decision reverts to "Not Nationally Recognized."
- g. NCATE/SPA Standards.** See *Professional Standards*. See listing of specialized professional associations with professional standards (pp. 47-48). Also see: www.ncate.org/institutions/process.asp.
- h. Not Nationally Recognized.** The program has not met SPA criteria for *National Recognition* or *National Recognition with Conditions* within the 18 months following its first submission. If the program chooses to continue to seek national recognition, it must submit a completely new report.
- i. Program Report.** The report prepared by faculty responsible for a program (e.g., math education, elementary education) responding to specialized professional association (SPA) standards.
- j. Response to Conditions Report.** A program's written response to a specialized professional association's review of the teacher preparation programs when the decision from that review was that the program was "Nationally Recognized with Conditions."
- k. Revised Program Report.** A program's written response to a specialized professional association's review of the program when the decision from that review was "Further Development Required" or "Recognized with Probation."
- l. Scoring Guide.** A tool used by faculty to evaluate an assessment such as a *rubric*, evaluation form, etc. Scoring guides should differentiate varying levels of proficiency on *performance criteria*.

Nationally Recognized Program. A program that has met the standards of a specialized professional association that is a member organization of NCATE. An institution's state-approved program also will be considered a *nationally recognized program* if the state program standards and the state's review process have been approved by the appropriate national association. (Nationally recognized programs are listed on NCATE's website.)

NBPTS. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, an organization of teachers and other educators, which has developed both standards and a system for assessing the performance of experienced teachers seeking national certification.

NCATE Coordinator. The person(s) identified by the unit to manage preparations for the NCATE visit. The NCATE coordinator, along with the unit head, is NCATE's contact at an institution. At some institutions, the unit head is the NCATE coordinator.

Off-Campus Programs. Programs offered by a unit on sites other than the main campus. Off-campus programs may be offered in the same state, in other states, or in countries other than the United States.

Other School Professionals. Educators who provide professional services other than teaching in schools. They include, but are not limited to, principals, reading specialists and supervisors, school library media specialists, school psychologists, school superintendents, and instructional technology specialists.

P–12 School Personnel. Licensed practitioners in P–12 schools who provide instruction, supervision, and direction for candidates during field-based assignments. *See Professional Education Faculty and School Faculty.*

Part-time Faculty. Professional education faculty who have less than a full-time assignment in the professional education unit. Some part-time faculty are full-time employees of the college or university with a portion of their assignments in the professional education unit. Other part-time faculty are not full-time employees of the institution and are commonly considered adjunct faculty. *See Adjunct Faculty and Professional Education Faculty.*

Pedagogical Content Knowledge. The interaction of the subject matter and effective teaching strategies to help students learn the subject matter. It requires a thorough understanding of the content to teach it in multiple ways, drawing on the cultural backgrounds and prior knowledge and experiences of students.

Pedagogical Knowledge. The general concepts, theories, and research about effective teaching, regardless of content areas.

Performance Assessment. A comprehensive assessment through which candidates demonstrate their proficiencies in subject, professional, and pedagogical knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions, including their abilities to have positive effects on student learning.

Performance-based Licensing. Licensing based on a system of multiple assessments that measure a teacher candidate’s knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to determine whether he/she can perform effectively as a teacher or in another school specialty.

Performance-based Program. A professional preparation program that systematically gathers, analyzes, and uses data for self-improvement and candidate advisement, especially data that demonstrate candidate proficiencies, including positive effects on student learning.

Performance-based Accreditation System. A practice in accreditation that makes use of assessment information describing candidate proficiencies or actions of professional education units as evidence for determining whether professional standards are met. It contrasts with accreditation decisions based solely on course offerings, program experiences, and other “inputs” as the evidence for judging attainment of professional standards.

Performance Criteria. Qualities or levels of candidate proficiency that are used to evaluate candidate performance, as specified in *scoring guides* such as descriptions or *rubrics*.

Performance Data. Information that describes the qualities and levels of proficiency of candidates, especially in application of their knowledge to classroom teaching and other professional situations. Sometimes the phrase is used to indicate the qualities and levels of institutional practice, for example, in making collaborative arrangements with clinical schools, setting faculty professional development policies, or providing leadership through technical assistance to community schools.

Policymakers. Representatives of public and governmental agencies with public education responsibility at the national, state, and local levels.

Portfolio. An accumulation of evidence about individual proficiencies, especially in relation to explicit standards and rubrics, used in evaluation of competency as a teacher or other school professional. Contents might include end-of-course evaluations and tasks used for instructional or clinical experience purposes such as projects, journals, and observations by faculty, videos, comments by cooperating teachers or internship supervisors, and samples of student work.

Precandidate Unit. A unit that has filed an “Intent to Seek NCATE Accreditation” form and has begun to pay NCATE’s annual base fees.

Preconditions for Accreditation. A specified number of fundamental requirements that undergird NCATE’s standards that must be met before a unit is permitted to advance to candidacy for first accreditation.

Professional Community. Full- and part-time faculty (including clinical faculty) in the professional education unit, faculty in other units of the college/university, P–12 practitioners, candidates, and others involved in professional education.

Professional Development. Opportunities for professional education faculty to develop new knowledge and skills through activities such as inservice education, conference attendance, sabbatical leave, summer leave, intra- and inter-institutional visitations, fellowships, and work in P–12 schools.

Professional Dispositions. Professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-



verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development. NCATE expects institutions to assess professional dispositions based on observable behaviors in educational settings. The two professional dispositions that NCATE expects institutions to assess are *fairness* and the belief that all students can learn. Based on their mission and conceptual framework, professional education units can identify, define, and operationalize additional professional dispositions.

Professional Development Schools (PDS). Specially structured schools in which the P–12 school and higher education faculty collaborate to (1) provide practicum, student teaching, and internship experiences; (2) support and enable the professional development of school and higher education faculty; (3) support and enable inquiry directed at the improvement of practice; and (4) support and enhance student achievement. PDSs require the institutional commitment of colleges and universities, school districts, and teachers' organizations.

Professional Education Faculty. Those individuals employed by a college or university, including graduate teaching assistants, who teach one or more courses in education, provide services to candidates (e.g., advising), supervise clinical experiences, or administer some portion of the unit. *See Adjunct Faculty, Clinical Faculty, Full-time Faculty, Higher Education Faculty, and Part-time Faculty.*

Professional Education Unit. *See Unit.*

Professional Knowledge. The historical, economic, sociological, philosophical, and psychological understandings of schooling and education. It also includes knowledge about learning, diversity, technology, professional ethics, legal and policy issues, pedagogy, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession of teaching.

Professional Standards. Standards set by the specialized professional associations (SPAs) and adopted by NCATE for use in its accreditation review. Professional standards also refer to standards set by other recognized national organizations/accrediting agencies that evaluate professional education programs (e.g., the National Association of Schools of Music).

Proficiencies. Required knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions identified in the professional, state, or institutional standards.

Program. A planned sequence of courses and experiences for the purpose of preparing teachers and other school professionals to work in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade settings. Programs may lead to a degree, a recommendation for a state license, both, or neither.

Program Completers. NCATE uses the Higher Education Act, Title II definition for program completers. Program completers are persons who have met all the requirements of a state-approved teacher preparation program. Program completers include all those who are documented as having met such requirements. Documentation may take the form of a degree, institutional certificate, program credential, transcript, or other written proof of having met the program's requirements.

Program Review. *See National Program Review.*

Program Report. The report prepared by faculty responsible for a program (e.g., math education, elementary education) responding to specialized professional association (SPA) standards.

Provisional Accreditation. An NCATE accreditation decision rendered by the Unit Accreditation Board following a first accreditation visit that indicates that the unit is provisionally accredited, and has significant problems related to one or more standards. When the UAB renders this decision, the unit maintains its accredited status but must satisfy conditions by meeting the unmet standard(s) within 18 months.

Rubrics. Written and shared criteria for judging performance that indicate the qualities by which levels of performance can be differentiated, and that anchor judgments about the degree of success on a candidate assessment. *See Performance Criteria and Scoring Guide.*

SASB. Specialty Areas Studies Board.

Scholarship. Systematic inquiry into the areas related to teaching, learning, and the education of teachers and other school professionals. Scholarship includes traditional research and publication as well as the rigorous and systematic study of pedagogy and the application of current research findings in new settings. Scholarship further presupposes submission of one's work for professional review and evaluation.

School Faculty. Licensed practitioners in P–12 schools who provide instruction, supervision, and direction for candidates during field-based assignments. *See P–12 Schools Personnel and Professional Education Faculty.*

School Partners. P–12 schools that collaborate with the higher education institution in designing, developing, and implementing field experiences, clinical practice, delivery of instruction, and research.

Scoring Guide. A tool such as a *rubric*, evaluation form, etc. used by faculty to evaluate an assessment. Scoring guides should differentiate varying levels of proficiency on *performance criteria*.

Service. Faculty contributions to college or university activities, P–12 schools, communities, and professional associations in ways that are consistent with the institution and unit’s mission.

Service Learning. A teaching/learning method that integrates community service into academic courses, using structured reflective thinking to enhance learning of course content. Through meaningful service, candidates are engaged in problem solving to create improved schools and communities while developing their academic skills, their sense of civic responsibility, and their understanding of social problems affecting children and families. When used as a pedagogical strategy, service learning can help candidates understand the culture, community, and families of students, as well as the connections between the school and the community.

Skills. The ability to use content, professional, and pedagogical knowledge effectively and readily in diverse teaching settings in a manner that ensures that all students are learning.

SPAs. Specialized Professional Associations. The national organizations that represent teachers, professional education faculty, and other school professionals who teach a specific subject matter (e.g., mathematics or social studies), teach students at a specific developmental level (i.e., early childhood, elementary, middle level, or secondary), teach students with specific needs (e.g., bilingual education or special education), administer schools (e.g., principals or superintendents), or provide services to students (e.g., school counselors or school psychologists). Many of these associations are member organizations of NCATE and have standards for both students in schools and candidates preparing to work in schools.

SPA Program Standards. *See Professional Standards.*

State Program Standards Review. The process by which specialized professional associations evaluate the degree to which a state’s program standards are aligned with the NCATE and SPA standards. (In states where state program standards are judged to be substantially aligned with SPA standards, the state standards will be approved by NCATE’s Specialty Area Studies Board, and NCATE will defer to the state’s review of institutions’ teacher education programs.)

SPB. State Partnership Board.

Standards. Written expectations for meeting a specified level of performance.

State Consultant. An individual from the state agency with teacher education authority who serves as a resource to the BOE team during on-site visits, along with an NEA/AFT state affiliate representative. The consultant provides clarification of state conditions and policies.

State Director of Teacher Education. State education agency official responsible for administering policies and programs related to teacher preparation and licensing.

State Board of Teaching. State governing body with authority for teacher licensing, licensing of other school professionals, license renewal/revocation, and/or teacher education program approval within a state.

State Professional Standards Response. A state’s written response to a specialized professional association’s review of the state’s program review standards.

State Program Approval. Process by which a state governmental agency reviews a professional education program to determine if it meets the state’s standards for the preparation of school professionals.

State Program Review. The process by which the state assesses the quality of programs offered by an institution for teachers and other school professionals.

State Program Standards Report. Documentation submitted to a SPA by a state to demonstrate how state program standards are aligned with SPA program standards.

State Protocol. Rules, procedures, and expectations for NCATE, the state, the state higher education commission (when applicable), and the unit for conducting joint state-NCATE site visits in NCATE partnership states.

State Standards. The standards adopted by state agencies responsible for the approval of programs that prepare teachers and other school professionals. State standards may include candidate knowledge, skills, and dispositions.



Structured Field Experiences. Activities designed to introduce candidates to increasingly greater levels of responsibility in the roles for which they are preparing. These activities are specifically designed to help candidates attain identified knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions outlined in professional, state, and institutional standards.

Student Teaching. Preservice clinical practice in P–12 schools for candidates preparing to teach.

Students. Children and youth attending P–12 schools as distinguished from teacher candidates.

Support Personnel. Individuals other than faculty employed by an institution of higher education to ensure the functioning of the unit. Support personnel can include professionals in non-faculty roles as well as individuals providing administrative support, including work-study students.

Technology, Use of. What candidates must know and understand about information technology in order to use it in working effectively with students and professional colleagues in (1) the delivery, development, prescription, and assessment of instruction; (2) problem solving; (3) school and classroom administration; (4) educational research; (5) electronic information access and exchange; and (6) personal and professional productivity.

Technology Education. The study of technology, which provides an opportunity for students to learn about the processes and knowledge related to technology that are needed to solve problems and extend human capabilities.

Transition Point. Key points in a program when a unit assesses candidate knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to determine if candidates are ready to proceed to the next stage in a program. Standard 2 requires transition points upon program entry, at appropriate point(s) during the program, and upon program completion.

UAB. Unit Accreditation Board.

Unit. The college, school, department, or other administrative body in colleges, universities, or other organizations with the responsibility for managing or coordinating all programs offered for the initial and advanced preparation of teachers and other school professionals, regardless of where these programs are administratively housed in an institution. Also known as the “professional education unit.” The professional education unit must include in its accreditation review all programs offered by the institution for the purpose of preparing teachers and other school professionals to work in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade settings.

Unit Head. The individual officially designated to provide leadership for the unit (e.g., dean, director, or chair), with the authority and responsibility for its overall administration and operation.

Unit Operations. Activities undertaken by the unit pertaining to governance, planning, budget, personnel, facilities, services and procedures such as advising and admission, and resources that support the unit’s mission in preparing candidates.

Unit Review. The process by which NCATE applies national standards for the preparation of school personnel to the unit.



