Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation

Request for Proposals: Study of the Impact of CAEP Standards

CAEP welcomes proposals to collect data to assess whether the changes in its new accreditation standards are systemic and have the intended effect on 1) educator preparation providers (EPPs), 2) their graduates, 3) the P-12 students taught by their graduates, and, in general, 4) the broader field of educator preparation.

Project Description

CAEP seeks a third-party research organization to design, implement, and share results from the study of the impact of CAEP standards. The ultimate interest of CAEP, its Standards, and this study is to strengthen P-12 student learning. In order to describe the impact of the CAEP standards on P-12 students (RQ3), it is first necessary to see if there are changes in the actions of EPPs (RQ1) and their completers (RQ2). Observing actions in the field will further inform interpretation of results. Beyond the intended consequences, this study will also be particularly mindful of any unintended consequences. Measures, analyses, and short- and long-term indicators will be shared with the field, as well as become an integral part of CAEP's data-driven decisions and quality assurance system.

ABET, Inc., the recognized accreditor of postsecondary degree-granting programs in engineering, undertook such a study after similarly shifting the focus of their accreditation standards from inputs to outputs. ABET's three and one-half year study began in 2002 to assess the results of their new standards called Engineering Criteria 2000 (EC2000). The study compared the performance of the graduating class of 1994 to the class of 2004. Notably, ABET's paradigm shift resulted in statistically significant improvement in the preparation of engineering graduates.

CAEP plans to learn from and build on this example through more prospective data collection, increased methodological rigor, and a longer period of study with both formative and summative research questions and analyses. This will be a landmark study for accreditation and educator preparation. Additionally, the results of this study will serve to inform future evidence expectations and make the next generation of CAEP standards more informed by evidence. The ABET Executive Director Emeritus is consulting on CAEP's preparation of this study.

It is critically important that CAEP undertake this study as soon as possible in order to capture baseline data – via existing methods or methods that need to be developed – and early changes in providers and the field. The new CAEP standards become effective in the academic year beginning 2016. Study design, methods, baselines, and comparisons are critical to the utility of this study and will be the primary responsibility of the selected third-party research organization.

Organizational Background

Accreditation is a lever for systemic improvement, through the application of rigorous standards and evidence-based outcomes that insist that all educators arrive *classroom-ready* to meet the needs of increasingly diverse learners.

The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) is the new single specialized accreditor of educator preparation in the United States with a mission to advance excellence in educator preparation. This goal is achieved through evidence-based accreditation that assures quality and supports continuous improvement in order to raise the levels of preschool through grade 12 (P-12) student achievement.

CAEP's emergence and new vision for accreditation comes at a pivotal time for education, with the public demand for higher academic standards, significant efforts to improve the effectiveness of instruction for an increasingly diverse student population, and the need for increased entry into the STEM pipeline.

The scope of CAEP's work is the accreditation of U.S. and international educator preparation programs at the certification/ licensure, bachelor's, master's, post-baccalaureate, and doctoral levels. Currently, more than 900 educator preparation providers (EPPs) participate in the CAEP accreditation system, and the number is growing. EPPs include traditional institutions of higher education, as well as alternative pathways such as residency programs. The initial participants include all providers currently accredited by, or seeking accreditation from, CAEP's predecessor organizations, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC). Participating institutions account for just over 50% of the providers of educator preparation in the US, and their enrolments account for over 60% of newly prepared teachers and school leaders. As such the impact of CAEP's new standards as they are implemented will be broad. The proposed study's objective is to specifically investigate these impacts to inform accreditation, EPPs, and the broader field of educator preparation and stakeholders.

CAEP recently adopted both a new set of challenging standards for educator preparation and a strategic plan that calls for it to *raise the bar* in educator preparation. These standards are a significant paradigm shift from a focus on inputs and compliance to an evidence-based culture that values learning outcomes and continuous improvement. Ultimately, CAEP strives to answer the question:

> *"Are completers of CAEP accredited provider programs any better prepared to enter the profession and raise the level of P-12 student achievement than were their pre-CAEP counterparts?"*

Accreditation Standards

CAEP established the Commission on Standards and Performance Reporting to develop accreditation standards for all educator preparation providers, accompanied by public accountability reporting with multiple measures. The Commission was comprised of content experts in mathematics and reading; practitioners, including a P-12 teacher, principal, and school superintendent; deans of schools of education as well as alternative provider/charter school leadership; state policymakers; representatives of education policy/advocacy organizations; public members, and prominent critics of the current practice of teacher education. The Commission aligned its work with other efforts, including the college- and career-ready standards initiative, the new InTASC standards, the 2012 report by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) Task Force on Education Preparation and Entry into the Profession, and other national reform efforts.

On August 29, 2013, the CAEP Board of Directors approved new accreditation standards based on consensus recommendations from the CAEP Commission on Standards and Performance Reporting. Those recommendations established the new accreditation standards and the framework for evidence that documents that those standards have been met. CAEP requires that EPPs seeking accreditation complete a self-study and host a site visit, during which site visitors determine whether or not the provider meets CAEP standards based on evidence of candidate performance, completer performance, and use of data in program self-improvement.

History Leading to the Creation of CAEP

July 1, 2013, marked the de facto consolidation of NCATE and TEAC, making the CAEP the sole specialized accreditor for educator preparation. (CAEP accreditation is specific to educator preparation and is different from regional accreditation of an institution of higher education. It is the educator preparation provider, specifically, that receives CAEP accreditation — not the larger organization that may house the provider.)

Under their de facto consolidation, NCATE and TEAC are currently subsidiaries of CAEP. EPPs accredited under either of these legacy accrediting bodies maintain their status until such time as said providers come up for accreditation under CAEP.

A council of educators created to ensure and raise the quality of preparation for their profession, NCATE was founded in 1954 to accredit teacher certification programs at U.S. colleges and universities. Five national education groups were instrumental in the creation of NCATE:

1. American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE, which formerly accredited teachers colleges),
2. National Education Association (NEA),
3. National School Boards Association (NSBA),
4. National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC)
5. Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

TEAC was founded in 1997 as a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving academic degree programs for professional educators, those who will teach and lead in schools, pre-K through grade 12. The TEAC accreditation process — which forms the basis for CAEP's Inquiry Brief Accreditation Pathway – was built around the provider's case that it prepares competent, caring, and qualified professional educators. The provider is required to have evidence to support its case, and the accreditation process examines and verifies the evidence.

CAEP represents more than a coming together of two existing organizations. The design team that recommended to their respective boards the creation of CAEP as a unified accrediting body made clear its ambitions for CAEP to serve as a lever for systemic improvement:

> *We wish to emphasize that we have not approached our task as merely unifying NCATE and TEAC with the least possible change to two accrediting systems that are already quite similar and effective. Rather, we have set a much more ambitious goal: to create a model unified accreditation system….*

CAEP's goals should be not only to raise the performance of candidates as practitioners in the nation's P-12 schools, but also to raise the stature of the entire profession by raising the standards for the evidence the field relies on to support its claims of quality.

It is the goal of this study to assess the extent to which these ambitious goals are being realized.

Member Organizations

CAEP has member organizations of teachers, teacher educators, content specialists, and local and state policy makers, all committed to advancing excellence in educator preparation with the ultimate goal of strengthening P-12 student learning. Together, these organizations represent more than 3 million individuals. The professional associations that comprise CAEP also provide financial support and participate in the development of standards, policies, and procedures. These members, as well as the broader field of educator preparation, comprise both the sources of data for the proposed study and the primary audience for its results.

Study Objectives and Questions for Investigation

The primary objective is for the successful applicant to develop and implement a research design that will provide information sufficient to address the following research questions. These questions are intended to gauge the impact of the CAEP standards on the profession. Further, the research conducted will allow CAEP and researchers in the profession to explore, analyze, and utilize CAEP-EPP data. The intent is for all CAEP Standards to be investigated, particularly those that differ from what was required of EPPs by the two legacy accreditors, NCATE and TEAC, as these areas are where effects are most likely to be found. Beyond intended consequences, the investigators will also be charged with examining unintended consequences.

The following four primary research questions (RQ) have been crafted to explore the overall impact of CAEP Standards on various stakeholders relevant to educator preparation accreditation. Formative research questions (FRQ) correspond to the summative research questions and are included in the study of the impact of CAEP Standards. These questions will allow CAEP to address EPP needs, increase the capacity of EPPs, and provide more specific insight into how EPPs are achieving results. These questions seek to explore the mechanisms behind and relationships among the impacts studied in the summative research questions. As a result, qualitative methods will be employed to look deeper into areas in which quantitative impacts are (or are not) found. Working with the selected third party higher education research organization, these general questions will be paired with appropriate methods and operationalized during the initial project phase.

Specifically, the first question (RQ1) looks at the first order impacts of how the CAEP Standards have, in observable ways, affected how EPPs prepare teachers.

> RQ1 - What is the impact, if any, of CAEP Standards on the **practices and policies of educator preparation providers (EPPs)**?
>
> > FRQ1-A - How are EPPs modifying practices and policies to successfully address CAEP Standards?

FRQ1-B - What human, fiscal, and other resources were needed to achieve these changes?

The second question (RQ2) looks at the impact of these EPP changes on the completers they produce.

RQ2 - What is the impact, if any, of CAEP standards on the **skills, knowledge, and behaviors of EPP completers?**

FRQ2-A - What EPP activities and changes in EPP practices and policies lead to more prepared completers?

The third question (RQ3) looks at the impact of completers on their students.

RQ3 - What is the impact, if any, of the CAEP Standards on P-12 **students**?

FRQ3-A - What EPP activities and changes in EPP practices and policies lead to more positive P-12 student learning outcomes?

FRQ3-B - What skills, knowledge, and behaviors of EPP completers lead to more positive P-12 student learning outcomes?

These first three questions reflect the chain of events needed to assess impact on the ultimate beneficiaries of EPP accreditation - P-12 students. The final question (RQ4) addresses the long-run impacts of CAEP standards on the field of educator preparation. This includes the combined effects in RQ1-3, as well as actions CAEP takes in working with states, national organizations, members, policy makers, funders, and researchers. For example, states (a key partner in national accreditation) may, as a result of partnership with CAEP, 1) require EPPs to accomplish CAEP accreditation, 2) more closely align their state standards with CAEP Standards, 3) change indicators collected in state data systems to help EPPs acquire evidence needed for Standards such as P-12 completer impact data, and/or 4) make adjustments to their own program approval processes.

RQ4 - What is the impact, if any, of the CAEP Standards on the **field of educator preparation**?

FRQ4-A - How are the effects in RQ1-3 affecting the field of educator preparation?

FRQ4-B - How are direct actions taken by CAEP (working with states, national organizations, members, policy makers, funders, researchers, and others) affecting the field of educator preparation?

CAEP's Accreditation Information Management System (AIMS)

AIMS is a web-based application that was designed and developed in-house to benefit all parties involved in CAEP's accreditation process. It is a cross-platform, cross-browser application that can be accessed at any time, from any device that connects to Internet.

AIMS uses N-Tier architecture which contains a web portal front, a workflow engine based middle tier and Microsoft SQL database as the back end. It employs Microsoft Active Server Page (ASP) and .NET technologies. AIMS is a part of CAEP's infrastructure solution that was virtualized and is hosted at CAEP's state-of-the-art data center. AIMS is also a cloud-based solution that is capable of handling any amount of workload dynamically without limits.

As an integrated and unified enterprise solution, the AIMS database links all data together in an effective way to support information sharing. For example, an individual in the database is linked to the EPP. CAEP not only knows an individual's academic role (i.e. dean or assessment director) or activities records (training and conference activities), CAEP also knows which EPP an individual serves. Additional linked information includes the EPP's last accreditation visit, self-study report, annual report, previous accreditation decision(s), and when the next cycle of accreditation data are due. In the big data era, AIMS records all sorts of activities and logs data which can be used for multiple research and business development purposes.

AIMS uses multiple processes on the system level and on the user level to check for data quality. On the web portal, data entered into a form is checked by AIMS via Client Side Scripting and only the right type and right range of data are allowed to be inserted into the database. AIMS also provides channels for a user to update data at any time when changes occur. Case in point, the 3000+ Education Preparation Program (EPP) contacts kept in AIMS showed and accuracy of 99.7% when a large blast email communication was sent on September 15th, 2015.

Data are only useful when able to flow. AIMS successfully connects with multiple external data sources including Title II and AACTE PEDS data. The common database architecture AIMS uses makes data sharing easy. Once a data sharing agreement is reached, CAEP can grant read-only database level access or a SQL store procedure based data exchange with an external organization in both incoming and outgoing directions.

The CAEP IT department is ready to provide any type of data services needed for research and development projects that serve our Nation's education needs.

Information to be Included in Response to the RFP

Please submit a Letter of Intent to respond to the RFP to Jennifer.Carinci@caepnet.org by November 2, 2015. Please address the following when responding to the RFP. CAEP realizes this plan will be preliminary and is likely to evolve once the selected organization becomes more familiar with the CAEP process and the sources of evidence available. **The deadline for proposal submission in response to the RFP is December 16, 2015. Completed submissions containing the following information should be sent to Jennifer.Carinci@caepnet.org.**

Organization Expertise, Experience, and Capacity

Experience: Description of the organization including experience designing, evaluating, and implementing research studies, especially of a similar nature to the proposed CAEP study.

Capacity: Description of the organization's capacity to provide direct support, coordination, implementation of the study.

Communication: Description of the organization's practices in communication and coordination with clients and stakeholders

Integrity: Description of the organization's practices in relation to ethical and other standards of practice and addressing bias.

Reporting: Description of the organization's ability to generate accurate, useful research reports for wide dissemination to various constituencies.

Awareness: Description of the organization's familiarity with research involving EPPs and states, understanding of current educational policy related to educator preparation, and knowledge of accreditation and CAEP.

References: Permission to contact references in previous studies in higher education research. Please include contact information of former clients and any relevant publications or deliverables as work samples.

Proposal Plan

Methodology: Describe in detail the methods to be used to answer the research questions including the following:

Research Design

Baselines, Samples, Comparisons

Procedures

Data collection

Data Sources – (existing within the CAEP process, available data sets outside CAEP, new data to be collected, etc.)

Instrumentation

Analyses

Sustainability: Describe the plan for integration of the study processes and results into CAEP's continuous improvement, data, and accreditation processes.

Dissemination: Describe the plan for reporting and dissemination of results.

Budget and Timeline

Budget: Detail the requested budget broken down by items.

Timeline: Outline the timeline and steps involved in the project.

Criteria for Review

Members of the Research Committee and CAEP staff will review and identify a competitive RFP response based on rigorous evaluation criteria. Selecting the right third party higher education research organization to conduct the study is critical to the integrity and usefulness of results. The panel will evaluate the proposals received according to the following criteria. Competitive submissions will demonstrate the following capabilities and experience.

Third-Party Research Organization Expertise, Experience, and Capacity

- Track Record of credibility and experience designing, evaluating, implementing research studies
- Capacity to provide direct support, coordination, and dissemination
- Expertise in qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methodologies
- Communication and coordination with clients and stakeholders
- Unbiased and ethical standards of practice
- Ability to generate accurate, useful research reports for wide dissemination to various constituencies
- Familiarity with EPP research, current educational policy, and CAEP
- Quality of references from both previous clients and studies in higher education research

Proposal Quality and Alignment with CAEP Needs

- Methodological consistency with best practices
- Quality of evidence proposed to answer research questions
- Alignment of proposal with CAEP's mission and needs
- Quality of sustainability for ongoing use within CAEP
- Ability to integrate with and enhance current CAEP continuous improvement and data collection systems

Feasibility, Budget, and Scope

- Feasibility of the proposal
- Budget efficiency and maximization
- Scope of the proposal in terms of how comprehensively/appropriately the research questions have been addressed, particularly in relation to budget and feasibility

Project Budget

CAEP is seeking support for this study from external sources. The final budget for this project will be a balance of the external funding received, budget request of the successful third-party research organization, and scope determined by CAEP to be feasible and useful.

Project Timing

The proposal plan should span five years. Ideally, the investigations will be longitudinal and become part of CAEP's ongoing data and continuous improvement system. The new CAEP standards become effective in the academic year beginning 2016. Accreditation is on a seven year cycle. Therefore, it will be seven years from 2016 before all EPPs working toward CAEP accreditation have written a self-study and received a decision under the CAEP Standards. As EPP's due dates for their self-studies fall at various points over the seven years from 2016, one expectation is that EPPs will be at different points in transitioning to and having evidence of meeting the CAEP Standards. This affects the degree to which the research questions can be answered in the near future. The proposal should include periodic reporting of findings as well as more comprehensive analysis at the end of five years. This will allow CAEP and CAEP's stakeholders to remain informed and receive timely, actionable information.

It is reasonable to expect the first cohort from undergraduate programs in 2020. Developing the study protocols and methodology prior to the emerging 2020 class allows this cohort to be identified and tracked through the four-year undergraduate program and to continue follow up when they are in the workplace. Additionally, it is very important to capture baseline data on the present graduates, as soon as possible. These graduates will provide valuable baseline data for the next few years or until the EPPs come up for re-accreditation under the new CAEP Standards. Collecting this baseline data now will help define and refine the appropriate assessment tools (i.e., rubrics, surveys, focus groups, interviews) and identify and address any gaps in the data.

Milestones and Deadlines

September 28, 2015	RFP published and disseminated.
October 22, 2015 3:00 – 4:30pm	**Opportunity for Q & A with CAEP regarding the RFP.** Join WebEx meeting Number: 731 373 591 Password: 1234 Join by phone 1-866-469-3239 Access code: 731 373 591 Add this meeting to your calendar Can't join the meeting? Contact support.
November 2, 2015	**Submit a Letter of Intent to respond to the RFP to Jennifer.Carinci@caepnet.org.**
December 16, 2015	**Deadline for proposal submission in response to the RFP. Please send completed submissions to Jennifer.Carinci@caepnet.org.**
January 2016	Finalists contacted for more information, presentations, and interviews, as needed.
February 2016	Selection of third-party research organization.
Spring 2016	The selected third party higher education research organization will work with members of the Research Committee and CAEP staff to refine their proposal by identifying available data sources, ascertaining gaps in data needed to answer the research questions, building matrices matching available and needed data to research questions and instruments, and beginning to develop instruments or collecting baseline data, as appropriate.
Through 2021	Over the course of the long-term study, real-time data, assessment, and evaluations will be incorporated into the CAEP continuous improvement process and shared with the field.

Contact Information

Please direct any questions about this RFP to:

Jennifer E. Carinci | *Director of Research, Innovation, and Data Strategy*

Email: Jennifer.Carinci@caepnet.org Phone: 202.753.1643

Additional Information

For additional information please consult the following resources.

Study on the Impact of ABET's Outcomes-Based Accreditation Criteria

- Engineering Change: A Study of the Impact of EC2000

CAEP Standards

- CAEP Standards

CAEP Accreditation Process

- CAEP Accreditation Manual

Evidence

- CAEP Evidence Guide
- Building an Evidence-Based System for Teacher Preparation

Pathways/Self-Study Reports

- Inquiry Brief
- Selected Improvement
- Transformation Initiative

Annual Report

- 2015 EPP Annual Report Technical Guide
- 2015 EPP Annual Report Template

Assessments

- CAEP Assessment Rubric

Member Partners

- Partners of CAEP

Website

- caepnet.org CAEP Excellence in Educator Preparation