



TEAC Quality Principles for Educational Leadership

Faculty members seeking TEAC accreditation for their programs in educational leadership must affirm that their goal is to prepare “*competent, caring, and qualified*” leaders for the schools. It is the program that is accredited by TEAC, not an administrative unit of the institution.

TEAC’s three quality principles, described below, are the means by which the faculty makes the case that its goal was achieved.

1.0 Quality Principle I: Evidence of candidate learning

The core of TEAC accreditation is the quality of the evidence that the program faculty members provide in support of their claims about their students’ learning and understanding of the professional education curriculum.

TEAC requires that the educational leadership faculty members address the following components of their program in ways that *also* indicate that they have an accurate and balanced understanding of the academic disciplines that are connected to the program:

1.1 Professional knowledge. While no one doubts that teachers must understand the subject matters they hope to teach, there is less agreement about what specific disciplines educational leaders must study and understand. There is universal consensus, however, that whatever particular topics are studied, they should be sufficient to ensure that districts and schools are led in an ethical manner and succeed in their primary mission of having all students acquire an education that meets national and state curriculum and instructional standards.

Programs in educational leadership are typically at the graduate level and include an amalgam of the consensus literature in the following subjects: organizational theory and development; human resource management; school finance and law; instructional supervision; educational policy and politics; and data analysis and interpretation. These areas constitute the “major” in educational leadership.

The program faculty must provide evidence that its candidates understand these subjects and that the program equips its graduates with sufficient knowledge so that they would be able to undertake a number of important tasks in the schools they hope to lead. The graduates must be prepared to create or develop (1) an ethical and productive school culture; (2) an effective instructional program and comprehensive professional staff development plans; (3) a safe and efficient learning environment; (4) a profitable collaboration with families and other community members; (5) the capacity to serve diverse community interests and needs; and (6) the ability to mobilize the community’s resources in support of the school’s goals.

1.2 Strategic decision making. The primary obligation of school leaders is to maintain and enhance an organization that meets the educational needs of the full range of the school’s students and to create an environment in which the district’s and school’s curriculum can be readily learned and understood by *all* the school’s students. To this end, TEAC requires evidence that the candidates learn how to (1) make decisions fairly and collaboratively, and do so informed by the relevant research and evidence; (2) formulate strategy to achieve the school’s goals; and (3) articulate and communicate an educational vision that is consistent with the school’s mission and the nation’s democratic ideals.

1.3 Caring and effective leadership skills. Above all, educational leaders are expected to lead by acting on their knowledge in a caring and professional manner that results in appropriate levels of achievement for *all* the school’s pupils. Caring is a particular kind of relationship between the leader and the staff and students that is defined by the leader’s unconditional acceptance of the staff and students, the leader’s intention to address the staff’s and student’s professional and educational needs, the leader’s competence to meet those needs, and also by the students’ and staff’s recognition that the leader cares. Although it recognizes that the available

measures of caring are not as well developed as other measures of candidate performance, TEAC requires evidence that the program's graduates are caring.

1.4 Cross-cutting themes. The liberal arts are often neglected in educational leadership programs, but because they cut across the program, the faculty must also provide evidence about them, as they would for any other aspects of their case for professional knowledge, strategic decision-making, and caring and effective leadership skill.

Educational leaders are expected to be well-informed persons and the program should provide evidence that the candidates know and understand subject matters that are expected of educated persons. These include the oral and written rhetorical skills, critical thinking, and the qualitative and quantitative reasoning skills that foster independent learning. They also include knowledge of multiple perspectives and cultures and the modern technological tools of scholarship and administration.

1.4.1 Learning how to learn. There is a set of intellectual skills, tools, and ideas that enable leaders to learn on their own. The program's graduates must know how to acquire those other parts of the field that could not be taught in the program, but which the graduates will nevertheless be expected to know and use at some later time.

The whole of the professional knowledge base cannot be covered in the curriculum, some of what is covered may not be true or useful later, and some of what will be needed later would not have been known at the time of the degree program. TEAC requires evidence that the candidates learned how to learn important information on their own, that they can transfer what they have learned to new contexts, and that they have acquired the dispositions and skills for lifelong learning in their field.

1.4.2 Multicultural perspectives and accuracy. The liberal arts include knowledge of multiple cultural perspectives, practices, and traditions. TEAC requires evidence that the candidates for the degree (or certificate program) understand the implications of confirmed scholarship on gender, race, individual differences, and ethnic and cultural perspectives for educational practice.

1.4.3 Technology. Increasingly, the tools of a liberal arts education include technology, and candidates should know the technologies that enhance the work of leaders and staff and the students' learning. TEAC requires evidence that graduates have acquired the basic productivity tools of the profession.

Technology, learning to learn, multicultural perspectives are essential parts of the leader's professional knowledge and skill. It makes little sense to claim that candidates understand how to organize the school's schedule, for example, if they do not also know and understand (1) the technological dimensions of scheduling; (2) the implications of the scheduling options for different cultural groups; (3) how to fill in the gaps in their knowledge of scheduling and apply what they have learned in their program to new situations; and (4) how the schedule fits with the rest of the school's purpose, values, mission, and so forth.

The case that the program's graduates have sufficient professional knowledge, for example, of assessment, would include evidence that they know how to (1) solve assessment problems they were not directly taught (e.g., NCLB disaggregation); (2) learn new areas of assessment (e.g., value-added assessment); (3) evaluate the implications of other cultural practices on assessment (e.g., cheating or face-saving); and (4) use computer programs appropriately in implementing school-wide assessments.

Leaders can be said to have acquired *leadership skill* at the level TEAC envisions if, when they communicate with their faculty, for example, they (1) employ the teaching technologies that are available; (2) can make their point to all the staff because of their knowledge of individual and cultural differences; (3) are convincing because they develop professionally on their own and know how to apply what they have learned to novel situations. And, to take another example, they can be said to have acquired *leadership skill* at a sufficient level if they know how to distinguish essential educational issues from the peripheral, ethical administrative practices from the unethical ones, knowledge from opinion, administrative prerogative from effective delegation, and the unique leadership responsibilities of schooling in a democratic society from schooling in a non-democratic one.

1.5 Valid assessment of leader learning

However the program faculty members assess what their candidates have learned, TEAC requires the program to provide evidence that the inferences made from the assessment system meet the accepted research standards for reliability and validity.

This means that faculty members must rule out competing and rival inferences for their evidence of candidate learning, and establish a point at which the evidence for their inference is sufficient, clear, and consistent, and below which the evidence for their inference is insufficient or inconsistent.

The faculty must satisfy itself and TEAC that its inferences from its assessments are empirically credible and supported with local evidence about the trustworthiness, reliability, and validity of the assessment method the faculty employed.

2.0 Quality Principle II: Faculty learning and inquiry

There must be a system of inquiry, review, and quality control in place through which the faculty secures evidence and informed opinion needed to improve program quality. Program faculty should be undertaking inquiry directed at the improvement of teaching and learning, and they should modify the program and practices to reflect the knowledge gained from their inquiry.

2.1 Rationale. TEAC requires that the faculty members have a rationale for its assessments that shows that the links between assessments and (1) the program goal, (2) the faculty claims made about candidate learning, and (3) the program's features¹ are reasonable and credible. The faculty members give their reasons for selecting the assessment instruments they rely on and their reasons for believing that their interpretations of the results will be valid. In addition they show why the standards they set for the graduates' success were appropriate.

The faculty members who claim, for example, that their program prepares *instructional leaders* would need to make a case that their ways of assessing *instructional leadership* are reasonable and logical; they would need to explain how their assessments are related conceptually to the program requirements and to their claims about what the candidates know, and why the inferences they make about the graduates are valid.

Before the faculty members conclude that their assessments show that the graduates have learned how to be *instructional leaders*, they would need to rule out that their graduates had merely memorized or parroted slogans as their *instructional leadership* responses; endorsed administrative practices that actually thwarted genuine pupil learning; or failed to anticipate the unintended negative consequences of an otherwise acceptable administrative decision.

2.2 Program decisions and planning based on evidence. TEAC requires evidence that the information derived from faculty's quality control monitoring and inquiry has a role in the improvement of the program. Quality control entails an investigation of any local factors that are associated with, and implicated in, candidate learning and assessment of that learning.

2.3 Influential quality control system. The faculty's quality control system must examine and evaluate the components of the program's capacity for quality, including its curriculum, candidates, faculty expertise, program and course requirements, and facilities. TEAC requires evidence, based on an internal audit conducted by the program's faculty, that the system functions as it was designed, that it promotes the program's continual improvement, and that it yields evidence that supports the first and second quality principles.

Although any number of factors and components of the program may affect program quality, TEAC does require the program faculty to address at least four components – quality of the curriculum (2.3.1), faculty (2.3.2), students (2.3.3), and resources (2.3.4) – most of which seem to have a plausible association with candidate learning and program quality.

¹ One of these features must be an internship in a school setting during in which the candidate has the opportunity to apply the knowledge and to practice and develop the skills assigned to *Quality Principle I* to a convincing level of proficiency.

3.0 Quality Principle III: Evidence of institutional commitment and capacity for program quality

TEAC defines a *quality* program as one that has credible evidence that it satisfies *Quality Principles I and II*. However, TEAC also requires the program faculty to provide evidence that it has the capacity — curriculum, faculty, resources, facilities, publications, student support services, and policies — to support student learning and program quality. This evidence may be independent of candidate learning and based on some traditional and consensus *input* features of capacity.

TEAC's requirements in this area are based upon the U.S. Department of Education's requirement that any accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary as a reliable gatekeeper for federal funding have standards for seven dimensions of program capacity: curriculum, faculty, resources, facilities, accurate publications, student support services, and student feedback.

The faculty can make the case that the program has a sufficient capacity for quality in any way that meets scholarly standards of evidence; however, TEAC requires that the faculty cover the following basic points in making its case that it satisfies *Quality Principle III*.

3.1 Evidence of commitment. The faculty must provide evidence that the institution is committed to the program. Commitment is most conveniently seen in the evidence of parity of the program within the institution. The program must at least have the *normative* capacity of the institution's academic programs with regard to the quality of the curriculum, faculty, facilities, resources, student support services, and other features it shares with the institution's other programs.

3.2 Unique elements of capacity. The faculty must also address whatever unique capacity is needed for program quality in professional education.

Educational leadership programs, for example, have unique features, such as an administrative internship. The institution and program must provide resources, administrative direction, and facilities for these unique and distinctive features of professional education programs.

The program faculty must make a case that overall it has the capacity to offer a quality program. The program satisfies *Quality Principle III* by providing evidence in the ways described below.

Curriculum (3.1.1 and 3.2.1). TEAC's *Quality Principle I* sets out the required components of the curriculum (1.1–1.3). In addition TEAC has three standards for the professional curriculum's capacity for quality:

1. The curriculum reflects an appropriate number of credits and credit-hour requirements for the components of *Quality Principle I*. An academic major, or its equivalent, is necessary for subject matter knowledge (1.1) and no less than an academic minor, or its equivalent, is necessary for pedagogical knowledge and teaching skill (1.2 and 1.3).
2. The curriculum meets the state's program or curriculum course requirements for granting a professional license.
3. The curriculum does not deviate from, and has parity with, the institution's overall standards and requirements for granting the academic degree.

Faculty (3.1.2 and 3.2.2). TEAC requires evidence of oversight and coordination of the curriculum of the professional teacher education program. The entity responsible for the program may be an administrative department, school, program, center, institute, or faculty group. It may be as large as the entire college or university or as small as a committee of faculty and staff who have direct authority and responsibility for those aspects of the program that pertain to TEAC's quality principles. Because of the variety of structures among institutions, TEAC uses the term *faculty* to represent this entity.

TEAC's standard for the quality of the program faculty is the presence of the following attributes in the faculty:

1. The program faculty members must approve the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* and accept the preparation of competent, caring, and qualified educators as the goal for their program.
2. The *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* must demonstrate the faculty's accurate and balanced understanding of the disciplines that are connected to the program.
3. The program faculty members must be qualified to teach the courses in the program to which they are assigned, as evidenced by advanced degrees held, scholarship, contributions to the field, and professional

experience. TEAC requires that a majority of the faculty members hold a graduate or doctoral level degree in subjects appropriate to teach the education program of study and curricula. The program may, however, demonstrate that faculty not holding such degrees are qualified for their roles based on the other factors stated above.

4. The program faculty's qualifications must be equal to or better than those of the faculty across the institution as a whole: e.g., proportion of terminal degree holders, alignment of degree specialization and program responsibilities, proportions and balance of the academic ranks, and diversity.

Facilities, equipment, and supplies (3.1.3 and 3.2.3). The program must demonstrate that the facilities provided by the institution for the program are sufficient and adequate to support a quality program as follows:

1. The program must demonstrate that it has appropriate and adequate budgetary and other resource allocations for program space, equipment, and supplies to promote success in student learning as required by *Quality Principle I*.
2. The facilities, equipment, and supplies that the institution allocates to the program must, at a minimum, be proportionate to the overall institutional resources and must be sufficient to support the operations of the program. The program students, faculty, and staff must have equal and sufficient access to, and benefit from, the institution's facilities, equipment, and supplies.

Fiscal and administrative (3.1.4 and 3.2.4). The program must have adequate and appropriate fiscal and administrative resources that are sufficient to support the mission of the program and to achieve the goal of preparing competent, caring, and qualified educators, as indicated by the following:

1. The financial condition of the institution that supports the program must be sound, and the institution must be financially viable.
2. The program must demonstrate an appropriate level of institutional investment in and commitment to faculty development, research and scholarship, and national and regional service. The program faculty's workload obligations must be commensurate with those the institution as a whole expects in hiring, promotion, tenure, and other employment contracts.
3. The program must have adequate financial and administrative resources.
4. The financial and administrative resources allocated to the program must, at a minimum, be proportionate to the overall allocation of financial resources to other programs at the institution and must be sufficient to support the operations of the program and to promote success in student learning as required by *Quality Principle I*.

Student support services (3.1.5 and 3.2.5). The program must make available to students regular and sufficient services such as counseling, career placement, advising, financial aid, health care, and media and technology support.

1. Services available to students in the program must be sufficient to support their success in learning (*Quality Principle I*) and successful completion of the program.²
2. Support services available to students in the program must, at a minimum, be equal to the level of student support services provided by the institution as a whole.

Student feedback (3.1.6). The quality of a program depends upon its ability to meet the needs of its students. One effective way to determine if those needs are met is to encourage students to evaluate the program and express their concerns, grievances, and ideas about the program. The faculty is asked to provide evidence that it makes a provision for the free expression of student feedback about the program and responds to student views and complaints.

1. The institution is required to keep a file of student feedback and complaints about the program's quality, and the program's response. The program must provide TEAC with access to those records, including resolution of student grievances.
2. Complaints from students about the program's quality must be proportionally no greater or more significant than complaints made by students in the institution's other programs.

² In cases where the program does not directly provide student support services, the program must show that students have equal access to, and benefit from, student support services provided by the institution.

Policies and Practices (3.2.6): Recruiting and admissions practices, academic calendars, catalogs, publications, grading, advertising, transfer of credit and other policies. The institution that offers the program must publish in its catalog, or other appropriate documents distributed to students, information that fairly and accurately describes the program, policies, and procedures directly affecting admitted students in the program; charges and refund policies; grading policies; transfer of credit policies; and the academic credentials of faculty members and administrators.

1. As part of its audit, TEAC examines the program catalog, Web pages, or other descriptive publications (including those that contain the program's academic calendar, a list of faculty teaching in the program, and a description of the program's history and guiding philosophy) to ensure that they are both accurate and consistent with the claims made in the *Brief*.
2. The program or institution must distribute an academic calendar to students. The academic calendar must list the beginning and end dates of terms, holidays, and examination periods.
3. Claims made by the program in its published materials must be accurate and supported with evidence. Claims made in the *Inquiry Brief* or *Inquiry Brief Proposal* regarding the program must be consistent with, and inclusive of, claims made about the program that appear in the institution's catalog, mission statements, website, and other promotional literature.
4. The program must have a fair, equitable, and published grading policy. (This policy may also be the institution's grading policy.)
5. The program must have a published transfer of credit and transfer of student enrollment policy. (This policy may also be the institution's transfer of credit policy.)

TEAC and state standards

TEAC's principles and standards are compatible with the standards promulgated by many states and professional educational organizations, for example, the six standards of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) and the seven standards of the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA). The program faculty members are free to adopt these standards and to organize the *Brief* around them, as they are an equivalent and permissible way to satisfy the content of *Quality Principle I*.