

Information on Accreditation: Facts and Questions

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1. What is accreditation?

According to CAEP, accreditation is “a process for assessing and enhancing academic and educational quality through voluntary peer review. A designation of “accredited” informs the public that the EPP has met state, professional, and institutional standards for educational quality”.

2. How often do we go through the accreditation process?

The EPP goes through the accreditation process every 7 years. Historically, accreditation visits have resulted in a team of CAEP reviewers coming to campus for an on-site visit to validate information that has been provided to them in our Self-Study Report. It is anticipated that CAEP visits will be virtual with only the CAEP team leader and maybe a state representative being on campus.

3. Who is our accrediting body?

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) is the accrediting body for most of our educator preparation programs at EIU. We do have some initial programs such as Art and Music that are accredited through their Specialty Professional Association (SPA). At the advanced level, the Departments of Counseling and Higher Education and Communication Disorders is accredited through their SPA. Therefore, these are programs that are not under the CAEP umbrella.

4. What is a Specialty Professional Association (SPA)?

As per CAEP, “The process entails alignment of licensure area program information with national standards developed by professional associations that have entered a partnership with CAEP through a service agreement. The review of individual programs within EPPs leads to National Recognition of programs upon meeting the SPA Standards. The goal is for EPPs to ensure that candidates enrolled in a program undergoing review can apply content and pedagogical knowledge as reflected in outcomes assessments in response to SPA Standards”.

In other words, the role of the SPA is to designate individual programs as “nationally recognized” based on their ability to demonstrate that their candidates have discipline-specific content and pedagogical knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be effective entry level teachers or in the case of advanced programs, candidates are prepared to effectively perform their advanced roles.

5. Is my Specialty Professional Association (SPA) active with CAEP?

The following link will establish whether the SPA is currently active or inactive with CAEP and identify the SPA contact person <http://caepnet.org/accreditation/caep-accreditation/spa-standards-and-report-forms>.

6. Does my program have to seek “national recognition”?

In Illinois, SPA national recognition is not required for program approval. Therefore, programs do not have to seek SPA recognition if they do not desire to do so. However, this does not exempt the program from participating in CAEP accreditation.

7. What is the difference in accreditation and national recognition?

Accreditation results in a decision about the EPP. The CAEP reviewers examine the evidence provided by the EPP and determine whether we are accredited, accredited with stipulation, on probation, or whether our accreditation will be revoked. Accreditation is a “blue ribbon” for the EPP and “national recognition” is a blue ribbon designation for individual teacher educator programs.

8. What is the EPP?

EPP stands for Educator Preparation Provider. The EPP is the “entity responsible for the preparation of P-12 educators at initial and advanced levels”. Although other universities may house their teacher education programs solely in the College of Education, at EIU, the EPP is not just comprised of teacher education programs within the College of Education. At EIU, the EPP is comprised of educator preparation programs across the campus.

9. What is an EPP Assessment?

An EPP assessment is an assessment that all candidates seeking a teaching license or an endorsement in a supporting professional field (school psychology, teacher leaders, principals, superintendents) are administered. The purpose of the EPP Assessments is to measure each candidate’s content and pedagogical knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

At EIU we have 5 assessments at the initial level aligned with the InTASC and IPTS Standards (not counting dispositions): Field Experience I, Unit Plan/Lesson Plan, Field Experience II, Impact on P-12, and the Student Teaching Evaluation.

At the advanced level, the 3 -5 assessments are a bit more discipline specific and the assessments are aligned to the program’s Specialty Professional Association Standards, CAEP Generic Professional Skills, and the Graduate EIU Student Learning Goals.

10. When are EPP Assessments evaluated?

EPP assessments are administered at key decision points of a candidate’s program. The decision points determine whether a candidate is permitted to move forward in their respective educator program. At the initial level the decision points where EPP assessments are administered can be found at:

<https://www.eiu.edu/edprep/gettingstarted/UATE.php>. At the advanced level, decisions are made at candidacy, mid-point, and completion.

11. How are EPP Assessment evaluated?

EPP assessments for initial programs are evaluated with rubrics that have been designed and reviewed by the EPP Initial Assessment Committee. The committee is comprised of representatives from teacher education programs across campus. At the advanced level, rubrics are designed by program faculty and will be reviewed by the EPP Advanced Assessment Committee. Following review and revision, the rubrics have and will be provided to members of the Initial and Advanced P-12 Consortium for feedback. Finally, rubrics will be provided to the Coordinator of Assessment and Accreditation for final comment and posting to the faculty.

12. Where can I find access to the EPP rubrics?

The most recent EPP rubrics can be found in D2L within the respective courses and on the College of Education – EPP webpage under the Faculty and K-12 Resources. Here is the link to the most recent rubrics as of Fall 2021 <https://www.eiu.edu/edprep/facultyp-12resources/Rubrics.php>. The most recent rubrics will also be put into Livetext to be used Fall 2021 and Spring 2022. When advanced program rubrics are completed, those rubrics will also be posted at the above web address,

13. Will there be training on the EPP rubrics?

The Initial and Advanced Assessment committee members will be coming up with ideas to train new faculty and provide refreshers for more tenured faculty on using the EPP rubrics. These materials will most likely be electronic and be posted in Faculty and K-12 Resources section on the College of Education EPP website.

14. How are data collected?

Currently, faculty who are teaching courses where EPP assessments are administered enter the data into Livetext. As of Fall 2022. The faculty will enter data into D2L.

15. Who analyzes the data?

Currently, most of the data is run by staff or GAs in the Dean's office. However, as we move to D2L, program Department Chairs or Secondary Teacher Education Coordinators will be provided their EPP data sets to analyze for program improvement. This will be a shift in the paradigm of how data will be handled. The overall EPP data will continue to be analyzed within the College of Education Dean's office by the Coordinator of Assessment and Accreditation and GAs/staff.

16. How are the EPP data shared with program faculty?

Data on candidate performance of candidates by program will be sent via email to Department Chairs or Secondary Teacher Education Coordinators in the Fall of each academic year. The data set will contain performance data for candidates who took the assessment(s) within the prior academic year. Data can then be shared through department curriculum committee meetings, faculty meetings, or in other methods deemed appropriate.

Faculty cannot access program specific data on the College of Education EPP website under the Faculty and K-12 resource tab –Assessment Data <https://www.eiu.edu/edprep/facultyp-12resources/Assessmentdata.php> but they can access overall EPP candidate performance on the various EPP assessments.

17. How are EPP data shared with the Council on Teacher Education?

As with programs, the EPP data will be shared by the Coordinator of Assessment and Accreditation or a designated representative each Fall. The data will speak to the performance of candidates within the EPP, and the data share will not be program specific.

18. How are data shared with P-12 stakeholders?

The data shared with COTE will be posted on the College of Education EPP website under the Faculty and K-12 resource tab – Assessment Data <https://www.eiu.edu/edprep/facultyp-12resources/Assessmentdata.php>. At this web address, stakeholders can find out how our candidates within the EPP performed on various assessments. Data can also be shared with P-12 partners who are members of our various department, college, and university committee structures as well as with those clinical and field-based cooperating professionals with whom we partner.