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Faculty Perceptions of Accreditation in the Field of Educator Preparation

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FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF ACCREDITATION IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Education
at the University of Kentucky

By
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2021

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF ACCREDITATION IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION

Accreditation is a measure the federal government, states, and other stakeholders utilize to determine the quality of an institution or a program. Educator preparation providers in Kentucky are required to obtain programmatic accreditation to offer educator preparation programs leading to certification or licensure. The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) is the national accrediting body with which Kentucky has an agreement for joint programmatic accreditation. The Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) adopted the 2013 CAEP initial standards in 2015 and those standards remain in effect today. Faculty in educator preparation programs are largely responsible for carrying out the activities and collection of data that is required for earning accreditation, but these faculty members' perceptions of accreditation have not been given much direct attention.

This study was designed to identify Kentucky educator preparation provider (EPP) faculty perceptions of programmatic accreditation through analysis of quantitative and qualitative survey data. This study analyzes faculty perceptions of the effectiveness of accreditation for improving EPP quality; the effectiveness of the accreditation process; the effectiveness of the 2013 CAEP initial standards for improving EPPs; and programmatic accreditation's impact on faculty academic freedom and program autonomy.

Results of this study suggest the majority of faculty agree programmatic accreditation is valuable for its effectiveness for improving EPP quality, programmatic accreditation processes are effective for improving EPPs to prepare P-12 educators, and the 2013 CAEP initial standards are effective for improving EPPs. A theme analysis was conducted to explore accreditation's impact on academic freedom and program autonomy. "Prescriptive" emerged as a major theme in regard to academic freedom and program autonomy.

KEYWORDS: Accreditation, Faculty perceptions, CAEP

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FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF ACCREDITATION IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION

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DEDICATION

To Russell and Clayton

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Accountability is a familiar term to higher education faculty and administrators who carry out the functions of a college or university. As familiar as the term may be, the intensity of accountability has increased and continues to evolve to include additional measures for which institutions, programs, faculty, and administrators are responsible for providing evidence (Abadie-Mendia, 2013; Procopio, 2010). The stakes are high, and the pressure to produce data evidencing institutional/program effectiveness and graduate success (however defined by the body holding the entity accountable) is intense. The federal government, other government entities, taxpayers, and students are demanding institutions and programs provide evidence of educational quality (Bardo, 2009; Kreighbaum, 2018; Procopio, 2010). Continuing in this fashion, accrediting bodies are requiring performance-based measures and focusing on outcome measures, in addition to the traditional input measures to determine effectiveness (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education [AACTE], 2013; Crowe et al., 2013). As student loan defaults increase and tuition continues to rise, future and current students want to know where they can get the biggest bang for their buck. The federal government also has a great interest in where federal student loan money is spent (U.S. Department of Education [USDE], 2016a). It is assumed that a program deemed high quality will produce graduates who can obtain jobs to pay back student loans. Accreditation is a measure utilized for evaluating institutions and programs and accrediting only those that are of high quality, as determined by meeting a set of standards set forth by the accrediting agency.

Accreditation began in the late 1800s/early 1900s when institutions themselves determined the need to evaluate the quality of education across institutions and has continued to evolve to become an integral part of institutional and program operations in higher education (Alstete, 2004). As higher education has become more of a right than a privilege and many employers require college degrees for employment, students and society acknowledge its contribution to societal and economic growth (Department of Treasury, 2012). With that realization, there is a need for confidence in the quality of postsecondary institutions. Accreditation is largely known as an indicator of quality in higher education (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation [CAEP], 2016; USDE, 2016a), sought through regional accreditation and programmatic accreditation. As mentioned above, the federal government depends on accreditation to determine which institution or program can accept federal student financial aid; students and parents seek accredited institutions that have been deemed "of quality"; accreditation is required for many programs if students are seeking a license or certification; taxpayers demand accountability through any mechanism that indicates their tax dollars are well spent, and government entities want to ensure tax dollars are well spent and ensure graduates can contribute to society and the economy. Accreditation is utilized as the "gatekeeper" (Perley et al., 2008, p. 88) for protecting students and student aid dollars from institutions who cannot meet minimum standards enforced by a regional accreditor; in the same manner, specialized accreditation protects those seeking credentials or licenses. Through the accreditation process and the standards identified by the accreditor for the discipline, institutions and programs should gain insights for program improvement and be able to demonstrate they offer a high-quality program; on the other hand, the process and

standards should identify underserving programs and weed out those that are not of high-quality. In a world focused on accountability, accreditation is depended upon, leading to heightened scrutiny of its value and effectiveness.

Benefits of accreditation are found in studies across higher education fields, but not without identified costs. Studies on faculty perceptions of accreditation found that accreditation improved communication among faculty in the program, increased attention to improving the program itself, and assisted in the inclusion of new courses (Cecil & Comas, 1986; Jacobs, 2005). The self-study has been found to yield valuable information to improve program and institutional operations to increase quality (Cecil & Comas, 1986; Kornfield, et al., 2003; Olson, 2016). Costs associated with accreditation are identified as monetary costs and faculty time and workload costs (Basinger, 1998; J; Hail et al., 2019; Jacobs, 2005).

This evaluation is, in part, to determine if EPP faculty find programmatic accreditation valuable for its effectiveness, if the processes are effective, and if the standards yield improvements. Most faculty have some sort of experience with or knowledge of the accreditation process. Institutional accreditation is required for institutions to accept federal funds, many states require accreditation for state fund eligibility, and programmatic accreditation is often required for the operation of credentialing or licensure programs. In Kentucky, institutions must earn regional accreditation to accept student aid; educator preparation providers must seek state accreditation through the KY EPSB[1] to operate educator preparation programs for

[1] KY EPSB utilizes the CAEP standards for accreditation. In October 2020, the EPSB meeting agenda included an information item to revise accreditation requirements. If an EPP seeks accreditation from a nationally approved educator preparation accreditor, the

certification, and may seek accreditation through CAEP. Faculty may be required to adjust curriculum, procedures, and assessments to meet the requirements of the accreditor (Aydarova & Berliner, 2018; Bardo, 2009). The effects may be significant, and some programs may not be able to meet the standards in order to continue operating. Faculty buy-in is critical to the success of meeting accreditation requirements, yet little research was located on faculty perceptions of accreditation in the field of educator preparation. As Perley and Tanguay (2008) state,

> The faculty at each college or university must examine how it can best have an impact on its institution's efforts to improve the quality of programs and of the educational processes, and accreditation is one important avenue to this end. If faculty members increase their involvement in institutional accreditation, we believe that higher education overall will be strengthened, and institutions- and the public- will benefit accordingly. (p. 91)

Lack of faculty buy-in can result in weak involvement and weaker effects for the improvement of programs (Lederman, 2010; Turley, 2005). A deeper understanding of faculty perceptions on the effects of accreditation is necessary for the success of accreditation policies. As Turley (2005) stated, "policymakers need not abandon their legitimate role in establishing policy mandates and implementation guidelines for teacher preparation, but they could do more to understand the impact of policy decisions on the field" (p. 148).

EPSB will recognize the results. This change has not yet been presented to the EPSB as an action item.

Statement of the Problem

> Accreditation is being transformed from a valued private-sector process—over which the federal government historically exercised limited control—to a process that is subject to more and more federal involvement. The implications of this shift, profound for faculty members, can include the erosion of academic freedom and the loss of appropriate authority and responsibility for the key academic decisions that have defined the faculty role for centuries…(Eaton, 2010, p. 1)

Faculty employed by educator preparation providers (EPP), the term CAEP uses to describe both IHE-based and non-IHE-based[2] preparation programs, are vital to the functioning and operation of the programs, and to the implementation of curricula, assessments, and policies. Accountability through accreditation is shifting to a more clinical-based preparation changing the curriculum of preparation programs and from mostly inputs to the inclusion of outcomes, requiring assessments at both the provider and program level.

> Faculty response to program assessment can be cautious, wary, or even negative…. resistance to program assessment is typically driven by awareness that it is a part of an accountability agenda imposed outside the school and that it represents new work in an already busy day as well as by the belief that it poses a threat to faculty autonomy, curricular control, and academic freedom. (Haviland et al., 2011, p. 70-71)

[2] IHE-based is an educator preparation provider based at an institution of higher education. Non-IHE-based includes independent programs not based at an institution of higher education, e.g. a district-based provider or a provider such as Teach for America.

As Ducharme (1987) stated 30 years ago, “If teacher education programs are to change significantly, and they must change if they are to survive, they will do so through the efforts of existing teacher education faculty” (p. 71). This statement still rings true. Faculty are the catalyst for change, and their willingness to adjust curriculum and assessments to meet evolving standards and regulations is necessary for the reform of educator preparation.

Accreditation should influence continuous improvement where the work is part of the normal activities, not perceived by faculty as merely a compliance activity they must address and prepare for only a couple of years before the accreditation visit, which has often been the approach (Bardo, 2009; Stanskas et al., 2015). “If institutions [programs] are only acting in compliance, little is accomplished” (Ewell & Jones, 2006). Accreditation was designed to be a “self-regulation process” (Eaton, 2010) that is effective, leading to improvement through an avenue valued and endorsed by faculty that carry out the work. It is unclear from current literature how faculty perceive the CAEP accreditation standards, process, effectiveness, and impact on academic freedom and program autonomy, partially due to the newness of CAEP. This research will add important data from Kentucky faculty to aid with bridging the gap in literature.

In June 2015, the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) adopted the 2013 CAEP standards for initial preparation programs. The EPSB, using the 2013 CAEP standards, evaluates EPPs to determine if accreditation is earned. Since accreditation is not voluntary in Kentucky, EPPs and their faculty must address the standards adopted by the EPSB and earn accreditation to operate. Recent educator preparation accreditation changes have affected EPPs and faculty (Bardo, 2009; Brabeck,

2014; Ewell, 2012; Ewell, 2015; Lotze, 2014; Sawchuck, 2016). Faculty are vital to EPP success, yet it is not clear from literature how deeply faculty are affected, or how they perceive accreditation for program improvement and effectiveness. Choosing not to seek, or not earning, accreditation in Kentucky removes the option for EPPs to prepare educators for Kentucky certification, as accreditation is required to operate programs leading to certification of educators in the state. Faculty who do not follow the requirements as determined by the state and CAEP may affect the stability of the EPP and eligibility to offer programs leading to certification. Faculty are not given a choice whether or not their EPP will pursue or not pursue accreditation. However, their perceptions of its effectiveness can reinforce the importance of accreditation, help shape accreditation to be more effective, or cast doubt on its importance. Since little research is available, faculty voices need an avenue to be heard. Based on their expertise in the field, consideration should be given to their perceptions of the accreditation process, standards, its merit, and its impact on the traditional role of faculty.

Purpose and Significance

This research seeks to discover the perceptions of EPP faculty and what factors are associated with perceptions of accreditation through survey analysis and comparison of faculty responses to the survey targeting educator preparation accreditation. The literature on perceptions of accreditation yields varying results among those involved in the process (Baker et al., 2004; Basinger, 1998; Berliner, 2011; Cecil & Comas, 1983; Coupland, 2011; Dill, 1998b; Gardner et al.,1996; Goodlad, 1990; Jacobs, 2005; Johnson et al., 2005; Kornfield et al., 2003; Mitchell & Yamagishi, 2005; Nicklin, 1992; Portnoi & Bagley, 2015; Sutton, 1993; Tom, 1999; Wheeler, 1980). Few studies were located

regarding faculty perceptions of accreditation in educator preparation. Those that were located varied in focus of components of accreditation. Shim (2012) conducted a quantitative study surveying faculty and administrators examining their perceived value of the accreditation process in terms of "status and prestige, benefits and costs, and the outcomes of teacher and educator training" (p. vi). Lewis (2016) conducted a qualitative study of tenured faculty in a college of education regarding their perceptions on "the value accreditation, faculty roles and rewards, and the impact on curriculum" (p.39). Moffett (2016) conducted a case analysis of a Mid-South U.S. College looking to identify challenges associated with seeking CAEP accreditation. Hail et al., (2019) sought faculty perceptions through a survey and interviews regarding "the CAEP process in accrediting their teacher education programs and the impact on resources including human resources and morale" (p.17). The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) surveyed members and stakeholders on separate occasions through convenience samples regarding the five standards (Murray, 2016), though faculty do not appear to be the target. CAEP envisions that accreditation should lead to EPP and program improvement (CAEP, 2020). This study seeks to expand the literature by exploring perceptions of faculty from EPPs in Kentucky in the areas of value and effectiveness, process, standards, and impact on academic freedom and program autonomy[3].

[3] Material presented within this chapter was included in a paper submitted for EDP 621, spring 2015.

Definition of Terms

- Adjunct faculty member- Not a full-time employee of the institution but has an assignment in the professional educator preparation provider (EPP) (NCATE, 2008).
- Continuous improvement- "A process of gathering information about all aspects of preparation activities and experiences, analyzing that information (looking for patterns, trends, making comparisons with peers), identifying what works and what seems to be troubled, making adjustments, and repeating the cycle" (CAEP, 2020, p. 159).
- Educator preparation provider (EPP)- "An entity responsible for the preparation of educators at a nonprofit or for-profit institution of higher education, organizations, corporations, governmental agency or school district" (CAEP, 2021, p. 161).
- Educator preparation program- An approved program leading to a certificate or license to work in the state in the area prepared such as elementary, middle school science, and learning and behavior disorders, among others.
- Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB)- The board in Kentucky "charged with establishing standards of performance both for preparation programs and practitioners; accrediting educator preparation providers and approving educator preparation programs at colleges, universities, local school districts, and private contractors; selecting assessments for teachers and administrators; overseeing internship programs for new teachers and new principals; administering Kentucky's National Board for Professional Teaching

Standards certification; and issuing, renewing, suspending, and revoking Kentucky certificates for professional school personnel" (EPSB, 2020).

- Full-time faculty member- Faculty with full-time status in an educator preparation provider (EPP) (NCATE, 2008).
- High quality- Indicates the ability to meet high standards and components as established by the reviewing entity/accreditor.
- Part-time faculty member- Faculty with part-time status in an educator preparation provider (EPP) (NCATE, 2008).
- Site visitors- "Volunteer evaluators, subject to qualifications, training, and selection criteria provided for in Accreditation Policy, who review educator preparation providers (EPPs) as part of the accreditation process. Site visitors examine the EPP against the evidence presented to make the case for meeting the CAEP Standards" (CAEP, 2020, p. 171).

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study in collecting faculty perceptions of accreditation in the field of educator preparation:

1. To what extent do EPP faculty value programmatic accreditation's effectiveness for improving EPP quality?

   1a. To what extent do faculty perceive programmatic accreditation to be important? (Why or why not?)

2. To what extent do EPP faculty perceive accreditation processes to be effective?

3. To what extent do EPP faculty perceive the 2013 CAEP initial standards to be effective?
4. What demographic and professional variable(s) are associated with faculty perceptions of accreditation?
5. To what extent do faculty perceive accreditation affects their academic freedom? How?
6. To what extent do faculty perceive accreditation affects their individual program autonomy? How?

Context of Study

Due to the low response rate in the study, presumably as a result of a global pandemic, modifications were made for analyzing data. Data instability affected the ability to answer research question four, though additional methods were explored. Regression analysis was the initial method selected for analyzing demographic and professional variables associated with faculty perceptions of accreditation. The small N did not allow for regression analysis to be conducted. Non-parametric analysis methods were explored. Mann-Whitney-U and Kruskal Wallis-H were applied to the data, but again, the small N yielded insufficient data for many variables where the results could not be interpreted to properly answer the research question.

Even though the response rate yielded challenges, it is clear that this study is timely and important given that any faculty responded at the onset and in the midst of a global pandemic that was and is significantly impacting their professional and personal lives. Educator preparation programs had to swiftly adjust program delivery methods, curriculum, assessment, and identify alternatives for teacher candidates to successfully

complete field and clinical experiences. Faculty were at the forefront of driving and enduring these challenges. The context for this study having been conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic is returned in the Limitations section in chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

History of Accreditation in the United States

Accreditation in U.S. Higher Education has evolved as higher education has grown and expectations have changed. According to Alstete (2004), there are three generations of accreditation:

> First generation (1880s to early 1900s): Focus on admission standards, definition of postsecondary institutions; Second generation (early 1900s to early 1970s): Attempts at national coordination among the regional agencies and periodic changes in the supraregional oversight coordinating bodies. Increasing number of specialized accreditation agencies. Largely input driven numerical analysis for meeting standards;
>
> Third generation (late 1970s to present [2004]): Diversity of quality standards among regional and specialized agencies, focused self-studies, coordinated evaluations, and other new models for periodic review. Increasing criticism of the accreditation system. (p. 13)

Between the late 1800s and early 1900s, higher education institutions' presence increased across the United States. Institutions themselves determined that a set of standards was necessary for establishing a baseline for what a college should be, the criteria that establish a college education, and admission requirements. There was a need to ensure equity among educational institutions and to distinguish higher education from secondary education schools in the different regions (Alstete, 2004). As institutions popped up across the states, the need to ensure transfer students were adequately prepared was also of concern, and regional agencies assisted in establishing standards for transfer

eligibility. Out of these regional agencies developed regional accrediting organizations (El-Khawas, 2001).

The establishment of specialized accreditation organizations came in the late 1800s/ early 1900s. In collaboration with the Carnegie Foundation, the American Medical Association conducted a study that resulted in the Flexner Report. The Flexner Report indicated a need for standards and better preparation for those pursuing a career in the medical field to raise the quality of programs and professionals completing those programs (Flexner, 1910). The medical field initiated accreditation as a means to improve the quality of programs and the profession. Standards were developed to set mutual base criteria for medical preparation schools across the United States (Taradejna, 2007). Other professional fields followed in the footsteps of the medical field by developing accrediting agencies and standards, including the field of educator preparation.

Moving into the 1980s, a uniform accreditation process was developed; however, the standards by which programs were accredited became more independent and addressed the quality indicators as defined by the accreditor (Alstete, 2004). Organizations defined a standard process for accreditation to include self-studies, evaluations by peers, and monitoring of continuous improvement between accreditation visits (Alstete, 2004).

Accreditation has always had its critics, but the value of accreditation questions increased during the third generation. After WWII, enrollment and tuition increased. Students were spending more on their education, and the federal government was issuing more financial aid; questions regarding the value versus the cost arose and resulted in greater accountability of institutions. The Higher Education Act of 1965 also contributed

to a heightened critique of accreditation as the law provided more financial assistance to students for a college education and provided more federal funds to institutions of higher education. The Act enabled the government to have some strings attached to the way funds were spent by ensuring institutions receiving aid met criteria within the Act.

Starting where Alstete left off in 2004, another shift in accreditation resulted in increased accountability and inclusion of outcome data. Most accreditation standards evaluate the input data and the processes an institution or program has in place to evaluate progress of a student throughout a program or until a degree is earned. Standards now include outcome data, evaluation of employment rates, how graduates perform in their fields of studies, and earning rates. The shift to outcomes data resulted from concerns regarding college graduates' ability to obtain jobs, ability to pay back loans, and ability to contribute to society (USDE, n.d.a). Transparency through outcomes data is desired and demanded in order for students and parents to determine which institution and field will yield the highest return on investment and provide data for accreditors to evaluate effectiveness. Accrediting organizations' value is being critiqued more now than ever. Former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan recently stated, "Today, only students, families and taxpayers lose when students don't succeed, and that makes no sense. Institutions must be held accountable when they get paid by students and taxpayers but fail to deliver a quality education. So should states and accreditors who are responsible to oversee them under the law" (USDE, 2015, para. 49).

Accreditation has expanded and gained momentum since its inception to provide a sense of security, confidence, and verification of credibility and quality. Even with criticism of accreditation, accreditation is still heavily relied upon to evaluate

institutions/programs and provide an indication of quality. There are currently (spring 2021) over 52,000 higher education institutions and programs, 8,200 and 44,000 respectively, accredited by one of the recognized accrediting agencies in the United States (Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), n.d.b). Accreditation has become an essential process and status in American higher education. Although accreditation has been modified to meet social and political demands, some of the foundational generational elements developed remain.

WWII and the GI Bill. World War II was a turning point for American higher education and accreditation. Upon returning from the war, veterans were challenged to find employment to support themselves and settle back into normal life. The federal government determined an alternative to seeking employment may benefit veterans to adjust to life after the war. After much debate, the Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944, more commonly known as the GI Bill, was passed offering veterans seeking higher education a supplement for living expenses and up to $500 for tuition costs per year (United States Department of Veteran Affairs [VA], 2013). In 1945, eighty-eight thousand veterans received assistance to attend higher education through the GI Bill, and by 1950, over two million veterans were receiving assistance (Thelin, 2011). In addition to veterans seeking higher education, more high school graduates chose to pursue college, further increasing the demand for institutions. During this time, more colleges and universities, including community colleges, opened to accommodate rising enrollment.

To ensure federal funds were utilized efficiently and effectively, the government relied on accreditation for validation of quality in institutions accepting billions in federal student aid. This reliance highlighted the need and value for a process of quality

assurance through accreditation. The Higher Education Act of 1965 provided a mechanism for quality assurance.

Higher Education Act of 1965. The 1965 Higher Education Act (HEA) affected accreditation in the United States; the HEA was a result of President Lyndon B. Johnson's initiative to provide more financial aid to students and increase higher education opportunities for low-income and middle-class students (Capt, 2013). The HEA regulates accreditation in the United States and determines which institutions may accept funding through Title IV (USDE, n.d.b).

The U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare described the role of accreditors as "the primary agents in the development and maintenance of educational standards in the United States" (as cited in Eaton, 2010, p. 1). The role, as stated in 1970, still rings true today with several additional responsibilities added in over the years. There have been eight reauthorizations of HEA: 1968, 1972, 1976, 1980, 1986, 1992, 1998, and 2008. Each reauthorization affected accountability and accreditation. Under the recent (2019) reauthorization proposal, a bill called the College Affordability Act (CAA) was introduced focusing on outcomes and transparency. The proposed legislation extends the federal government's role in accreditation and includes specific language for educator preparation programs. As reviewed by CHEA (n.d.d),

> The bill, if its provisions become law, would be a major expansion of the federal authority in relation to academic decision-making, setting requirements for the content of some accreditation standards as well as expectations of levels of institutional and program performance. It is a continuation of the federal efforts over the past several years to play a stronger and stronger oversight role in

accreditation: how accrediting organizations operate, accreditation standard-setting and how accrediting organizations engage the public. (Resources, para. 1)

The HEA is an important piece of legislation impacting accreditation as it guides the direction in which accreditors must proceed and defines their roles. Federal oversight through accreditation has increased since the original HEA of 1965, and with the suggested additions in this reauthorization, it is likely the history of increasing oversight will repeat itself.

Accreditation

Obtaining accreditation is a process many institutions and programs undergo for a variety of reasons, but most commonly reported are the opportunity to accept federal aid (Burke & Butler, 2012; Eaton, 2015; Leef & Burris, n.d.; Shim, 2012); ability to offer programs leading to licensure/certification (CHEA, 2013; Eaton, 2015); recognition/prestige (Lewis, 2016; Shim, 2012, Blom et al., 2012); ability to compete with other institutions and programs (Lewis, 2016; Shim, 2012); improvement of programs (Eaton, 2015); and compliance requirements (Ewell & Jones, 2006; Stanskas et al., 2015). What began as a voluntary process and an institution driven mechanism for quality assurance has evolved to become the quality assurance mechanism also utilized by the federal government, states, taxpayers, and students. Institutions seek regional accreditation from one of the accrediting agencies recognized by the USDE's National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI); programs seek specialized/programmatic through the specific field's recognized accrediting agency.

Generally, accreditation of institutions and programs are similar in process. Accreditation, both regional and programmatic, is based on an established set of

standards and typically includes a self-study, off-site review conducted by trained peers, on-site review conducted by trained peers, and a review by the accrediting agency board or appointed council; many also include an annual report in between accreditation visits. Accreditation visits typically occur every 5-10 years.

Types of Accreditation

The two overarching types of accreditation in the United States are institutional and specialized/programmatic (USDE, 2016b). Institutional accrediting organizations include regional, national faith-related, and national career-related accreditors; specialized/programmatic includes professional fields such as medicine, education, and business. The two most prominent types of accreditors and the two that will be discussed are regional and programmatic. Accreditation is a process that includes a self-study, a visit, peer review, and a conclusive decision by the accrediting organization to grant accreditation, accreditation with conditions, or no accreditation based on established standards.

Regional Accreditation. Regional accreditation began due to the desire for the distinction between secondary schools and institutions of higher education. Regional agencies were responsible for determining basic standards for colleges, establishing admission criteria, and monitoring the implementation of standards and admissions. According to El-Khawas (2001), accreditation's role in its infancy was to maintain equivalency among institutions for ease of transfer of students from one institution to another.

The first regional organization, the New England Association, was established in 1885. Five additional regional accreditors were established in the following years: Middle

States Association (1887); Southern Association (1895); North Central Association (1895); Northwest Association (1917); and Western Association (1924) (Harcleroad, 2011, p. 3). These six regional associations began with the original purpose to establish base criteria for admission to and standards for college and eventually grew into accrediting organizations (Harcleroad, 2011, p. 3). In 1910, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools Higher Learning Commission (HLC) was the first to engage in accreditation. Between 1919 and 1921, three other associations, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS) (1919), Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) (1921), and Northwest Association (NWCCU) (1921), followed HLC's lead. The Western College Association (WCA) began accrediting in 1949, and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges Commission on Institutions of Higher Education (NEASC-CIHE) began accrediting in 1954 (Harcleroad, 2011. p. 3).

Regional accreditors evaluate the institution as a whole and determine if accreditation is earned. Responsibilities now include continuous monitoring and more intense reviews through triangulation of data provided by the institution through reports and during interviews of faculty, administrators, staff, and students. Since the inception of accreditation, the federal government has had an increased interest in the quality and effectiveness of higher education. Accreditation is an avenue for the federal government to obtain information and gain some control indirectly (USDE, n.d.c). This is conducted through the recognition process where the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education's advisory committee and the National Advisory Committee on Institutional

Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) review accrediting agencies ensuring they uphold their standards set in place for institutions/programs (Eaton, 2010).

Programmatic Accreditation. Programmatic or specialized accreditation is applied to professional schools and typically mirrors the process for regional accreditation in establishing standards and monitoring implementation. Specialized accreditation began with the establishment of the Council on Medical Education and Hospitals (CMEH) founded in 1904 by the American Medical Association (AMA) (Alstete, 2004). Other professional fields followed suit, including the Council of the ABA Section of Legal Education and Admission to the Bar of the American Bar Association (ABA) for the law profession in 1921 (American Bar Association, n.d.) and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in 1954. Today, 71 specialized/programmatic accrediting bodies are recognized by the US Department of Education's NACIQI and or the Council for Accreditation of Higher Education (CHEA) (Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), n.d.c).

The development of standards and a quality assurance process was an effort to improve the value and effectiveness of the preparation in professional schools and raise the prestige of various professions. As Bloland (2001) states, the purpose of seeking accreditation in the medical field was partially due to "the desire in the profession to increase legitimacy and raise the individual status of practitioners" (p. 19). Other professional fields followed suit shortly after, finding that accreditation contributed to their status within and among professions and institutions.

Programmatic accreditation enables specific programs to self-evaluate, receive feedback from peers regarding the quality of the program, and seek to continuously

improve to become stronger in their fields. The peer component of accreditation is valued, especially in programmatic accreditation, as it involves practitioners in the field (Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA), 2013; Brittingham, 2009; Shanker, 1986). However, literature also identifies "the growing need to 'professionalize' peer reviewers" (Crow, 2009, p. 90)[4].

Accreditation of Educator Preparation Providers

Early institutional accreditation evaluated the college or university's overall quality and did not determine if individual programs were of quality. Programs recognized the need for measuring the quality of the specialized area, and by the mid-twentieth century, agencies focusing on program quality were in place. For educator preparation, the development of normal schools sparked the need for specialized or program evaluations.

Normal schools were developed to focus strictly on teacher preparation as the need for highly educated teachers was recognized across the states. The curriculum in normal schools came into question regarding the rigor and effectiveness for preparing teachers to teach children. Although not an accreditor, the American Normal School Association (later the Department of Normal Schools of the National Education Association [NEA]), established in 1858, was tasked with improving the rigor and effectiveness of the curriculum and determining common requirements for admission to be implemented for new schools (Roames, 1987). Seven standards were developed but not implemented. Soon after standards were initially developed, a committee of the

[4] Material presented within this section was included in an exam submitted in spring 2016.

Department of Normal Schools of the NEA released The Declaration of Principles that mirrored many of those seven standards and was adopted by the NEA (Roames, 1987). This work towards establishing and implementing standards for the preparation of teachers was halted due to funding but was the first step in highlighting the need to standardize normal schools. Efforts to establish standards continued over the years with various appointed committees, councils, and associations in the field. Some of these councils and associations merged over the years. As a result, the American Association of Teachers College (AATC) became the representative association for teacher preparation, established standards, and eventually became the accreditor for teacher preparation institutions in 1923 (Roames, 1987). However, AATC did not accredit any institutions at that time "even though AATC adopted standards and mailed out to member institutions" (Roames, 1987, p. 133) "an application for recognition as an approved teacher training institution" (as cited in Roames 1987, p.133). It was not until 1927 that standards for accreditation were in place for teacher preparation institutions, and in 1929, a list of AATC accredited institutions was released (Roames, 1987).

Neither AATC itself nor the standards were fondly accepted, and another merge of agencies occurred shortly after in 1948. The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) resulted from the merge of AATC, the National Association of Colleges and Departments of Education, and the National Association of Teacher Education. AACTE, as the recognized accreditor, had a short-lived reign, although it remains a thriving agency today. Continued concerns about the effectiveness of teacher education accreditation led to the establishment of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) as the sole accreditor for teacher education

in 1951, beginning implementation in 1954. NCATE was the vision of five key stakeholder agencies: AACTE, the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC), the National Education Association (NEA), the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), and the National School Boards Association (NSBA) (NCATE, 2008).

NCATE's role was to be the "profession's mechanism to help establish high quality teacher preparation" (National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE], n.d. para. 2). Over NCATE's almost 60 years of operation as the accreditor for teacher preparation, several revisions to the standards occurred. NCATE initially continued with the standards developed by AACTE until they made revisions of their own in 1955. The latest revisions to NCATE were in 2008, and those standards remained until the 2013 CAEP standards were implemented.

Earning accreditation from a recognized accreditor suggests to students, parents, and other stakeholders that the educator preparation provider is sufficient for preparing educators with the knowledge and skills to be effective educators in P-12 schools. At this time, the status of accreditation is one of the few indicators of quality available to prospective students, concerned parents, and other stakeholders. U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan stated,

> It has long been clear that as a nation, we could do a far better job of preparing teachers for the classroom… New teachers want to do a great job for their kids, but often, they struggle at the beginning of their careers and have to figure out too much for themselves. Teachers deserve better, and our students do too. (USDE, 2014, para. 3)

States hold the power to determine if programmatic accreditation is a requirement for EPPs to offer programs leading to state licensure or certification. Accreditation of educator EPPs is a required status in Kentucky for programs to prepare teachers, administrators, and other school professionals for certification for employment in certified P-12 school positions. The Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) is the agency responsible in Kentucky for reviewing and approving educator preparation programs, facilitating and conducting accreditation visits, issuing and renewing teacher and administrative certificates, and overseeing and carrying out legal actions on certified teachers, administrators, and other school professionals. Accreditation of EPPs is a critical component of the agency's responsibilities since the board requires programmatic accreditation for operation in the state. After the merger of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) to form a new accreditor in educator preparation, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), EPSB adopted the 2013 CAEP standards for the purposes of accreditation. As previously mentioned, Kentucky has a joint accreditation process with CAEP in which the site visitors consist of both CAEP and state members. Together they write one report, but the Kentucky site visitors have the option to write a separate report if findings differ; EPSB also has the authority to make a separate accreditation decision from CAEP.

EPSB initially adopted the then-current NCATE standards in September 1994 but did not require national accreditation; the requirement was to seek and obtain state accreditation utilizing the adopted NCATE standards in KY with the option to seek national accreditation as a decision by the EPP. With the EPSB adoption of the 2013

CAEP standards, EPPs are reviewed utilizing the standards for state accreditation and have the option to seek national accreditation through a joint visit (both EPSB and CAEP) with CAEP. Essentially, state accreditation is not voluntary in Kentucky if an EPP wishes to offer programs leading to licensure/certification; seeking national accreditation through CAEP is voluntary. Nineteen of the 25 Kentucky EPPs included in this study are both nationally and state accredited; six are state-only accredited.

Accreditation's purpose is similar across fields in higher education, as is the process of seeking and obtaining accreditation. Several studies were examined regarding faculty perceptions or dean/administrator perceptions of accreditation's effect on faculty in the fields of counseling, educator preparation, and business (Cecil & Comas, 1983; Jacobs, 2005; Lewis, 2016; Roberts et al., 2004). The literature identifies common costs and benefits of the process and the outcome. Exploration of additional articles and publications provides perceptions from stakeholders of the current status of educator preparation and NCATE/CAEP accreditation. There is less literature identifying administration and faculty perceptions of accreditation compared to the literature of what accreditation is and why it is important, especially in the field of educator preparation. A great deal of the literature discussing accreditation comes from accrediting organizations or stakeholders with an attachment to accreditation. Faculty have first-hand experience on the effectiveness of accreditation and can provide important feedback on the effectiveness of accreditation, the benefits, and the costs. As Germaine and Spencer (2016) state, "Gathering evidence of educational effectiveness and using the findings to inform practice requires active involvement of administrators and faculty, including the commitment of time, effort, resources, and openness to change" (pp. 68-69). "This need

then for accountability trickles down to the individual professor or instructor in a class. If there is no buy-in from the individual, then there will be no valid and reliable evidence to prove effectiveness" (Hasbun & Rudolph, 2016, p. 7).

National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). In 1954, NCATE became the sole national accreditor of educator preparation programs. NCATE was established as the specialized accreditor, taking over AACTE's role in evaluating and accrediting teacher preparation programs. Over NCATE's almost 60 years, the standards were revised 13 times (1957, 1960, 1970, 1982, 1985, 1987, 1990, 1992, 1995, 1997, 2001, 2002, 2008) to address the changes in education and the criticisms of the accreditation process and purpose. The standards have generally focused on institutional/unit/faculty capacity, input data regarding candidate ability to meet a set of admission requirements, and experiences candidates should have to prepare for the classroom as an employee of a P-12 school district. NCATE's accreditation evaluated units made up of programs; either an entire unit earned accreditation, or an entire unit did not.

The NCATE standards have been met with conflicting views over the years. Tierney's (1994) analysis of faculty regarding NCATE accreditation revealed that accreditation is valuable to faculty even with the additional work required for the process. Some educator preparation providers have deemed the process unnecessary and expensive and decided not to pursue accreditation (Johnson et al., 2005).

Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC). Resulting from criticism of NCATE and its accreditation processes from the Council of Independent Colleges, TEAC was created by the Council of Independent Colleges in 1997 as an alternative accreditor

for educator preparation programs (Gideonse, 1998). TEAC's accreditation process primarily differed from NCATE in that it has goals and principles instead of standards on which to base the accreditation decision; TEAC also accredited individual programs rather than a unit. Education programs determined goals and principles they believed indicated quality preparation and provided the evidence to verify meeting those goals and principles. "The TEAC quality principles are the means by which the faculty makes the case that its professional education program has succeeded in preparing competent, caring, and qualified professional educators" (TEAC, 2014, para. 2). TEAC enabled educator preparation programs to focus on their missions with more flexibility while maintaining what they deemed "quality." The process of accreditation remained similar including a self-study and peer review.

Benefits of TEAC accreditation included the ability of an educator preparation program to identify program goals and the measures they saw fit to address the principles of TEAC; the potential to increase faculty involvement and focus on program improvement (Vergari & Hess, 2002); and engagement in an accreditation process that was "…shorter, more challenging, and 'much more meaningful'" (Bollag, 2006, n.p., para. 26). However, faculty feel the effect of the accreditation process and are responsible for many of the sources of information and data necessary for addressing standards.

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The merge of NCATE and TEAC in 2013 resulted in CAEP, the recognized[5] national accreditor for

[5] Accreditors themselves often seek recognition as an indicator of their effectiveness. The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) is a "national coordinating body for U.S. accreditation" whose purpose is "to provide assurance to the public that accrediting organizations are competent to engage in quality review of institutions and programs based on the standards that CHEA has developed…" (CHEA, n.d.).

educator preparation. CAEP encompasses components from NCATE and TEAC in its standards and processes while seeking to strengthen educator preparation, graduates of programs, and P-12 achievement. CAEP appointed individuals to serve on the CAEP Commission on Standards and Performance Reporting to develop both initial and advanced level standards paving the way for the future of educator preparation. The CAEP initial standards were put into effect in 2013. The forty-member commission consisted of five educator preparation faculty from institutions in the United States; eight deans of educator preparation; two P-12 teachers; 19 representatives from higher education agencies or administrators at a college or university; and six representatives from P-12 associations (CAEP, n.d.a, para. 3).

CAEP requires more evidence on the performance of the EPP through outcome measures in addition to input measures. CAEP has developed more stringent standards aimed at raising the quality of EPPs while promoting continuous improvement. These standards are primarily focused on the evidence an EPP can provide.

Since experts and stakeholder groups developed the 2013 CAEP standards, CAEP-accredited EPPs should be effective for preparing educators for the realities of the classroom, but faculty perceptions of accreditation and ability to meet the requirements of CAEP will determine the success of the EPP in achieving accreditation. As stated by Moffett (2016), "Buy-in by the Education faculty is critical to the success of change initiatives…With changes in accreditation requirements, there must be changes in the teacher education programs" (p. 10).

CAEP is intended to be an accountability model driving continuous improvement, not a compliance model (CAEP, 2020). Continuous improvement and quality are CAEP's

goals, with EPPs providing evidence of growth and addressing standards through data (CAEP, 2020). This model enables a culture of continuous improvement over time to develop the program and improve their graduates' abilities to affect P-12 student achievement. The compliance model is often thought of with accreditation where institutions or programs prepare for accreditation a couple of years before the visit and provide evidence of complying with regulations and standards, not necessarily showing continuous improvement, but simply that they have met the standards. CAEP's process includes establishing a preponderance of the evidence reviewed by peers and the Accreditation Council that the 2013 CAEP standards are met by showing data and how it was used to improve the program (CAEP, 2020); the CAEP accreditation process is not intended to be a checklist with site visitors merely checking off boxes.

Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP).

Since the beginning of this study, another accrediting agency entered the field in 2017, although not yet recognized by CHEA. AAQEP is not included in this study since the EPSB has not adopted AAQEP's standards as an option for Kentucky EPPs, but it is important to note its presence as an accreditor and potential future option as an accreditor for EPPs in Kentucky.

Effectiveness of Accreditation

"Ten years from now, neither NCATE nor TEAC may seem relevant" (Dill, 1998a, p. 14). In 2008, ten years later, NCATE and TEAC were still relevant in the field, but still trying to find their place and value by revising standards and seeking quality indicators. Interestingly, over 20 years later, NCATE and TEAC are phasing out, but accreditation in educator preparation has not. During this time of transition from

NCATE/TEAC to CAEP, states determine if they will create a partnership with CAEP. Those that had partnerships previously with NCATE/TEAC are evaluating the current standards and practices with CAEP. With NCATE/TEAC, more than half of the EPPs operating in the United States chose not to pursue national accreditation indicating that accreditation was unnecessary for preparing educators. As of January 2021, 34 states have a partnership with CAEP (CAEP, n.d.d). However, a partnership with the state does not necessarily mean all EPPs within the state must seek CAEP accreditation; in the state of Kentucky at the time of this study, all EPPs must be state accredited using the 2013 CAEP standards and can choose to seek accreditation through CAEP.

Literature supports multiple points of view on the effectiveness and value of accreditation, both regional and in a variety of fields for programmatic accreditation (Baker et al., 2004; Basinger, 1998; Berliner, 2011; Cecil & Comas, 1983; Coupland, 2011; Dill, 1998b; Gardner et al., 1996; Goodlad, 1990; Jacobs, 2005; Johnson et al., 2005; Kornfield et al., 2003; Mitchell & Yamagishi, 2005; Nicklin, 1992; Portnoi & Bagley, 2015; Sutton, 1993; Tom, 1999; Wheeler, 1980). It is clear that accreditation is utilized in many fields to maintain and indicate quality; however, not all view it as a valuable process, and some programs have chosen to forgo seeking accreditation status. As Coupland (2011) stated, "Many research universities and liberal arts colleges balked at NCATE accreditation, however, because they found the process to be time-consuming, expensive, and ultimately unnecessary" (p. 215). Several studies indicate accreditation is not about determining high quality; instead, it is about weeding out those programs that are lacking evidence to meet *minimum* standards (Goodlad, 1990; Tom, 1999; Wheeler, 1980). Essentially, accreditation is not directly linked to a high-quality program but more

of a process to eliminate incompetent programs that are not equipped to prepare educators (Tom, 1999). Accreditation is also not necessary to have the ability to offer a high-quality program that produces educators with the skills school seek. Michigan's Hillsdale College teacher preparation program determined that seeking national accreditation would not increase their ability to prepare effective teachers and chose not to pursue accreditation. As a result, they could no longer offer a preparation program for state certification as the state required national accreditation to offer certification (Coupland, 2011). Although Hillsdale could not offer certification, they knew they could still provide a high-quality program and that many non-public schools that did not require certification for teachers wanted to hire Hillsdale graduates regardless if the college earned accreditation or not (Coupland, 2011).

In Roberts et al., (2004) study of business faculty perspectives of specialized accreditation effect and value, results indicated 83% of those surveyed found accreditation to positively affect the program and increase their competitiveness in recruiting faculty and students and also financial resources. In addition, 72.9% of faculty respondents believe accreditation benefitted new faculty, 68.2% of respondents believe it benefitted students, and 41.1% believe accreditation benefitted their graduates' employers. On the flip side, the majority of respondents indicated it increased job stress and did not improve teaching. However, the overall perception is that accreditation was valuable and "worth the effort" (para. 36).

Babson College, an institution in the business preparation field, did not find accreditation by the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) to be effective. William Dill (1998b), president of Babson College, stated, "We had wanted

accreditation for competitive reasons, yet having it seemed to matter less than we had anticipated to students, parents, and employers" (p. 18). Dill felt accreditation limited their ability to address improvement for their program with flexibility, meeting the needs of the students and the institution because AACSB had specific requirements they had to be concerned about meeting that did not necessarily improve the quality of their program (p. 18). As AACSB has evolved from mostly input data to outcome data, Dill has changed his view on accreditation as the flexibility to meet the school's need is accepted.

A faculty perception survey conducted by Jacobs (2005) found that faculty believe accreditation benefits include improvement of programs and status. According to Jacobs' (2005) findings, faculty believed NCATE accreditation was effective in the following areas: program improvement, "teamwork", and recognition of weak areas needing improvement (p.92). Similarly, NCATE conducted a study of deans and NCATE coordinators and found the majority of respondents believed NCATE was effective for program improvement through a deeper commitment to meeting standards, improved techniques used by faculty to improve instruction (Mitchell & Yamagishi, 2005, pp. 10-11), and "increased focus on candidate learning" (Mitchell & Yamagashi, 2005, p.11). According to Mitchell and Yamagishi (2005), the survey was distributed to 1154 deans and NCATE coordinators with a 66% response rate (p. 2). The questions sought perceptions on "the structure and organization of the unit standards; the appropriateness of the unit standards; the effectiveness of the unit standards; and the worth of the accreditation process" (Mitchell & Yamagashi, 2005, p. 2). Overall, respondents favored accreditation. It is not clear, however, how the participants were selected for the study. The study states, "NCATE conducted a survey for deans and NCATE coordinators at

accredited institutions and institutions in the accreditation pipeline" (Mitchell & Yamagashi, 2005, p. 1) but did not clarify if it targeted *all* institutions meeting this criterion.

Findings from Cecil and Comas' (1983) survey conducted with faculty in counseling programs accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) indicated faculty had varying perceptions regarding CACREP's effect on quality improvement. However, the survey indicated faculty believed the self-study to be beneficial for program improvement, the standards to be sufficient, and valued accreditation overall. Similar to CAEP accreditation, CACREP was not the initial accreditor of counseling and went through a trying time before standards and accreditation were valued. The researchers identified 25 institutions with CACREP accreditation and surveyed only faculty associated with the counseling program. Selecting faculty involved in the program is ideal for determining programmatic accreditation value as they would be more aware than those outside of the program. The survey assisted in the identification of faculty member position, the number of years as an educator in counseling, and involvement with the accreditation process. Identifying factors provided data for determining if experience or position affects perceptions. Cecil and Comas found that of their 41% usable responses, significant positive responses were given on program alignment with standards. There was also an overall positive response to the effect of the self-study leading to program improvement. Overall, findings indicated faculty believe accreditation is a valuable process and is effective for improving programs.

Four faculty members involved in the NCATE accreditation critically analyzed NCATE as an organization looking at the components of NCATE, including the results of a questionnaire sent to faculty regarding experiences with NCATE. The survey was sent to faculty at NCATE accredited institutions across the U.S. with a minimum of six years' experience in education (Johnson et al., 2005). The questions were similar to Cecil and Comas' study of CACREP accreditation seeking perceptions of the value of accreditation and the process of accreditation. The authors did not specify how many possible participants were sent the survey, only that 18 responses were included. They did this in response to NCATE publishing 18 responses supporting accreditation in one of their publications called NCATE *Speaker Guide.* The book's tone is clear in its mission to identify the negatives and costs of NCATE accreditation. Although valuable, it is not clear how many, if any, were responses in support of NCATE.

Other faculty and stakeholders also find accreditation beneficial. Herman Berliner has served on a few different accreditation teams, including NCATE. His experience aligns with other research regarding perceptions of accreditation, recognizing the process is far from perfect, yet it still "translates into verifiable quality" (Berliner, 2011, n.p.). His two concerns are the bias that can occur with visiting team members and expectations of perfection from the visiting team.

A consistent concern of accreditation are the costs (Basinger, 1998; Gardner et al., 1996, Goodlad, 1990; Hail et al., 2019; Jacobs, 2005; Lewis, 2016; Nicklin, 1992; Tom, 1999). Costs include the monetary sums it takes to prepare for and conduct an accreditation review, and the costs of faculty time and workload. McGee's (1995) study of faculty perceptions of NCATE accreditation at the University of Northern Iowa and

Arizona State University found one contributing reason for not continuing accreditation was the high costs (as cited in Jacobs, 2005).

Four institutions, Iowa State University, Drake University, University of Northern Iowa, and the University of Iowa, all withdrew from seeking NCATE accreditation, claiming "expense, irrelevance, and low standards" (Sutton, 1993, p. 158) played into their decisions. However, according to Sutton, these institutions were facing some budgetary challenges that could have led to a negative outcome in their accreditation status, indicating their concerns regarding earning accreditation weighed heavily on the decision to forfeit national accreditation (p.159). Sutton (1993) argues that cost should not be a factor in deciding to pursue accreditation.

> One must either accept the professional value of accreditation or deny it. If one accepts it, one has decided that it is a precondition of legitimacy. In such a case, one pays what is necessary to ensure that the process delivers legitimacy. If one does not accept accreditation… one has decided that the process is irrelevant. (p. 160)

Jacobs (2005) conducted a cost/benefit analysis based on faculty perceptions of NCATE accreditation. Ninety-five survey respondents from 23 institutions contributed to the findings. Benefits resulting from accreditation were program improvement; prestige, reputation, and recognition; political contributions; and maintaining or increased competitiveness (pp. 82-83). Negatives associated with accreditation ranged from time; faculty workload; accreditation process; and monetary costs; however, 16 of the respondents believed there were no negatives associated with accreditation (p. 84). Overall, most participants agreed that NCATE was valuable to their institutions (p. 90),

but fewer believed "costs associated with NCATE accreditation were a necessary expenditure" (p. 92). As found in other studies, the self-study was beneficial for program improvement, according to faculty responses (p. 91).

Accreditation also enables EPPs to remain competitive with other EPPs within a state and across the country (Portnoi & Bagley, 2015). For reciprocity of certification to occur across states, many states require a candidate seeking certification in another state to have graduated from a nationally accredited EPP. Accreditation enables EPPs to promote program completer mobility from state to state, ensuring equivalent preparation in terms of quality as defined by the national accreditor for educator preparation. On the other hand, costs associated with accreditation come in the forms of time, money, limitations in flexibility and innovation, and resources (Cecil & Comas, 1986; Kornfield et al., 2003). As NCATE's president from 2008 into CAEP's beginning years until 2015, James Cibulka once stated, "Accreditation must create perceived value for educator preparation to help leaders improve their programs" (2009, p. 49). It is currently unclear if benefits outweigh the costs of accreditation in the view of educator preparation faculty. Improving programs requires the efforts of all involved, most importantly faculty that teach courses in which much of the evidence for accreditation will result from course experiences and requirements.

It is clear that perceptions vary, but few studies drilled down to perceptions of EPP faculty where the foundation for successful accreditation lies. In order to find purpose in accreditation, faculty need to be of the mindset that "'using the standards' framework and utility as a structure for the systematic assessment, planning, and implementation of operational clinical best practice" (Yawn, 2004, p. 52) enables

accreditation to be effective for continuous improvement; a mindset of compliance alone will not maximize the potential of accreditation; a mindset that accreditation impedes on the traditional faculty role will not yield the improvement potential as a result of engaging in the accreditation process. Not knowing how faculty perceive educator preparation programmatic accreditation's effectiveness leaves a gap in research that would provide a better understanding of the concerns with accreditation so that government entities, accreditors, institutions, and programs can work toward ensuring accreditation is a meaningful, effective process[6].

Components and Process of Accreditation

Institutional and programmatic accreditation processes consist of a cycle of review with standard components. The U.S. Department of Education (2016a) identifies the six typical accreditation components: "standards, self-study, on-site evaluation, decision and publication, monitoring, and reevaluation" (History and Context, para. 4). Similarly, the CAEP accreditation components include standards and the program review process, and the process includes the self-study with formative feedback, on-site review, accreditation decision, and annual reports. In part, this study will seek perceptions on the standards and the process including the self-study, on-site visit, final decision, and the annual report. The program review process is not included in this study as it is a component defined and conducted by the state. Since accreditation is conducted through peer review, this study also seeks perceptions of the peer review method.

[6] Material within this section was included in a paper submitted for EDP 621, spring 2015.

Standards. The 2013 CAEP standards include five standards for initial level programs by which EPPs are evaluated:

1. Content and Pedagogical Knowledge
   Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions
2. Clinical Partnerships and Practice
   Partnerships for Clinical Preparation
   Clinical Educators
   Clinical Experiences
3. Candidate Quality, Recruitment, and Selectivity
   Plan for Recruitment of Diverse Candidates who Meet Employment Needs
   Candidates Demonstrate Academic Achievement
   Additional Selectivity Factors
   Selectivity During Preparation
   Selection at Completion
4. Program Impact
   Impact on P-12 Student Learning and Development
   Indicators of Teaching Effectiveness
   Satisfaction of Employment
   Satisfaction of Completers
5. Provider Quality, Continuous Improvement, and Capacity
   Quality and Strategic Evaluation
   Continuous Improvement
   (CAEP, 2019, n.p.)

Standards 1, 2, 3, and 5 will affect faculty and their courses. CAEP does not dictate how to meet the standards but requires components of the standards to be addressed using evidence. Student learning outcomes of students taught by completers are expected to be one way EPPs will demonstrate completers' application of knowledge gained from courses. Assessments will need to be developed to measure knowledge and experiences with outcome data. The curriculum will need to reflect the 2013 CAEP standards for the EPP to achieve accreditation status. The standards are covered further in the section below.

Program Review. States negotiate agreements with CAEP. The standards are not altered through agreements, but there are areas where flexibility is allowed, one of which is

program review. Kentucky's partnership with CAEP states that the EPSB is responsible for approving educator preparation programs. The state review process must occur before the on-site visit, and all programs must be approved via Kentucky's program review process. Specialized Professional Association (SPA) standards are utilized for the evaluation of programs. EPPs identify 6-8 key assessments: State Licensure Exam, Additional Content Assessment, Assessment of Candidates' Ability to Plan Instruction, Assessment of Student Teaching/Internship Performance, Assessment of Candidate Impact on Student Performance, an Additional Required Assessment (specified for some SPAs) and 2 Optional Additional Assessments" (CAEP, n.d.c, para. 1). Program review usually occurs concurrently with the self-study and is often seen as part of self-reflection. Although program review is necessary for EPPs prior to seeking accreditation, it is not included as part of this study.

Self- Study and Formative Feedback. EPPs use the CAEP standards to compare to their current practice in preparing educators. During the time between accreditation visits, EPPs assess candidates, assess their processes, gather evidence, and utilize evidence for program improvement to show they meet the CAEP standards. Prior to the off-site visit, the EPP is required to write and submit a self-study report explaining how they meet the five standards, and the EPP must include evidence to support its assertions (CAEP, 2020, p. 11).

Assigned site visitors participate in a review of the self-study submitted by the EPP (CAEP, 2020, p. 9). The review seeks evidence for addressing the five 2013 CAEP standards and inclusion of diversity and technology. Site visitors determine areas in which more evidence or clarification is needed and provide feedback to the EPP in

preparation for the on-site review (CAEP, 2020, p. 8). This report is called the Formative Feedback Report. The EPP has the opportunity to respond to the report in which all members of the site visitor team can view prior to the on-site visit (CAEP, 2020, p. 8).

On-Site Visit. The on-site visit to the EPP takes place over a 2 to 3-day period in which site visitors verify the data cited in the self-study, seek additional evidence for any concerns resulting from the self-study, seek clarification on unclear statements/data, and triangulate evidence through discussions with faculty, staff, candidates, P-12 partners, and any others identified as key to the EPP for carrying out its role in preparing educators (CAEP, 2020, p. 8). The site visitors complete a report writing to each of the CAEP standards and identifying any strengths or areas for improvement. This report is posted for the EPP to review within 30 days of the completion of the on-site visit (CAEP, 2020, p. 9). The EPP has the opportunity to respond to the report, and the Accreditation Council reviews both the report and EPP responses (CAEP, 2020, p. 9). In Kentucky, the EPSB's Accreditation Audit Committee (AAC) also reviews the report.

Accreditation Decision. The Accreditation Council is the decision making body of CAEP (CAEP, 2020, p. 10). The Accreditation Council has three panels that evaluate evidence for determining an EPP's accreditation status:1) initial review panel, 2) joint review panel, 3) CAEP Accreditation Council (CAEP, 2020, p. 10). The initial review panel evaluates the self-study reports, site team reports, and the lead site visitor's comments to the EPP's response to the site team report; the joint review panel's purpose is to "ensure rigor, clarity, and consistency in accreditation in one joint panel" (CAEP, n.d.b, para. 5); and the final evaluation is conducted by the Accreditation Council through reviewing "evidence submitted by the provider; findings from the visitor team together

with their identification evidence; and the joint panel's recommendations relevant to the CAEP standards" (CAEP, n.d.b, para. 6). If accreditation is granted, the institution/program continues to operate and prepares for the next visit within 5-7 years (7 years for full accreditation); if accreditation with conditions is granted, the institution/program continues to operate, but will have to provide evidence for the areas of weakness or the team may conduct another review on a shorter timeline; if accreditation is not granted, the program must cease to operate (CAEP, 2021, pp. 74-75); however, there is typically a teach-out plan for students currently enrolled. Reapplication for accreditation can occur as determined by the accrediting organization for programs that do not obtain accreditation. In Kentucky, the EPSB's Accreditation Audit Committee (AAC) also reviews the on-site report and the CAEP decision for EPPs that choose to seek both national and state accreditation through the joint process. The AAC can concur with CAEP's decision, or it can reach a different accreditation decision. The ultimate decision lies with the state through the EPSB's AAC. In the event of differing decisions, if CAEP were to grant accreditation and the state does not, the EPP would not be able to operate in Kentucky; if the state grants accreditation, but CAEP does not, the EPP would still be able to operate fully and would simply not earn national accreditation status. At the time of this study, no separate decisions have occurred.

Annual Reports. EPPs are required to respond to specific components to complete the annual report. The components currently include data on the number of program completers in the most recent completed academic year with the date range of September 1-August 31; substantive changes that occurred within the EPP such as newly approved programs; evidence of public accessibility to candidate performance data; responses to

areas for improvement and stipulations resulting from the EPP's last accreditation visit; and a summary of the continuous improvement the EPP is making in addressing the EPP selected CAEP standard(s) (CAEP, 2017). These reports are reviewed by CAEP's Annual Report Monitoring (ARM) Committee (CAEP, 2017).

The standards and process of accreditation are intended to lead to continuous improvement, be of value to providers by identifying the requirements needed to prepare future educators, improve the quality of the EPP and programs, and be effective through implementation. Faculty must begin preparing for accreditation years in advance and collecting data to provide evidence of meeting the standards. What is unclear at this time is faculty attitudes toward the accreditation process (self-study, on-site visit, accreditation decision, annual report) for its effectiveness for EPP improvement and if the peer review is the preferred method by which accreditation is carried out.

2013 CAEP Initial Standards

The 2013 CAEP standards have yielded both positive and negative reactions. Sam Evans, who previously served as the dean of the school of education at Western Kentucky University, stated in regards to CAEP accreditation and standards, "I see this as an opportunity, not a challenge. We have to keep our P-12 students foremost in our work" (as cited in Sawchuck, 2013b, para. 24). Another positive comment revolves around the idea that CAEP will enhance the profession by enhancing the rigor (Sawchuck, 2011). On the other side, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Board of Directors responded in a resolution to the standards on behalf of its 811 member institutions (Sawchuck, 2013a). Their "specific concerns are related to the accreditation standards, process for accreditation, costs associated with accreditation, the

capacity of CAEP to implement the accreditation system, and the representativeness of the CAEP governance structure" (AACTE, n.d., para. 1). In a case study of an EPP in Kentucky regarding the challenges faced in seeking CAEP accreditation, the investigator indicated that faculty resistance to the changes required for a successful accreditation visit was a barrier and stated, "Change is difficult, and often resisted. The new CAEP accreditation requirements are daunting. Each EPP is different and unique" (Moffett, 2016, p. 26). If we expect faculty to provide evidence to address these standards, we should understand their acceptance or lack thereof and seek to understand their concerns. CAEP states that the 2013 accreditation standards stem from "two principles: (1) solid evidence that the provider's graduates are competent educators and (2) there must also be solid evidence that the provider's faculty and clinical educators create a culture of evidence and use it to maintain and enhance the quality of their professional programs they offer" (CAEP, n.d.e. para. 3). Faculty are essential to the success of accreditation. It is clear they will be the primary source for providing evidence and will be required to adapt the curriculum and their practices to meet the demands of the accreditation standards. The effect may be significant and faculty buy-in is necessary for success. "There is a substantial body of research indicating that if those who implement policy do not have significant buy-in, the chances of the policy being enacted in recognizable form lessens" (Turley, 2005, p. 148). "The majority of barriers to accreditation…are influenced by the mindset of faculty…Thus, perceptions of faculty are of critical importance in planning and facilitating successful change based on assessment" (Germaine & Spencer, 2016, p. 72). If EPP faculty do not support programmatic

accreditation, faculty buy-in will be tough to gain, and obtaining accreditation may be a struggle.

CAEP solicited feedback regarding the 2013 initial standards. According to Murray (2016), two surveys were conducted: one sampling Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) leaders and one sampling education stakeholders. Faculty were included in the sample of education stakeholders, though they were not the target of the survey. Murray's (2016) conclusion states that the respondents "find CAEP standards 1 and 2 to be important ways to document the quality of their EPP with relatively less but still substantial confidence in the other three standards" (Conclusion section, para. 3). Although this study is not addressing advanced-level standards or specific components of standards, CAEP also solicited feedback regarding the advanced-level standards in 2014 and 2015; in late 2015/early 2016, CAEP surveyed EPPs and states regarding standard 3.2, "the provider meets CAEP minimum criteria or the state's minimum criteria for academic achievement, whichever are higher, and gathers disaggregated data on the enrolled candidates whose preparation begins during an academic year" (CAEP, 2019, n.p.), and results were shared with the CAEP board in February 2016 (R. Rice, personal communication, April 6, 2017).

Minor changes to the standards have occurred since the original release[7], and now that they are in effect, faculty associated with the accreditation process have more

[7] CAEP recently released the 2022 initial standards. Kentucky EPPs continue to operate under the 2013 standards until the EPSB decides to adopt the 2022 standards. Regarding the 2022 standards, CAEP (n.d.f) states, "In most cases the changes include the consolidation, clarification, and the removal of extraneous language. In addition, specific standards for technology have been added, given the increase in online learning. Equity and diversity measures have been specifically included in components of the standards to ensure proper attention is given and each provider must demonstrate progress toward

experience addressing the standards as they are working through the process or have completed the process. The survey in this study allows faculty to give their perceptions of the standards based on their experience.

Effects of Accreditation on Faculty

Accreditation is intended to provide a quality assurance mechanism by way of peer review, keeping the government out of the direct process and maintaining higher education values. According to Eaton (2010), "Accreditation reflects three core values of higher education, all essential to academic quality: institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and peer and professional review" (para. 5). As with institutional autonomy from regional accreditation, program autonomy from programmatic accreditation should also be protected. As Zumeta (2000) states, "Academic freedom does not exist securely, absent institutional [programmatic] autonomy from government" (p. 59). Do faculty believe accreditation, academic freedom, and autonomy work in concert? Do they find that accreditation negatively affects their faculty roles and encroaches on program autonomy? Or do they believe accreditation has little to no effect on academic freedom and autonomy? Literature leaves this question to remain as varying views were found, and little literature was located on faculty in educator preparation.

Academic Freedom. Academic freedom serves an important role in protecting the rights of faculty to explore subjects and teach without external influence. As stated in AAUP's 1915 Declaration, "Academic freedom in this sense comprises three elements: freedom of inquiry and research; freedom of teaching within the university or college; and freedom

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recruiting and graduating a candidate pool that reflects the diversity of America's P-12 students, as well as increased flexibility in documenting candidates academic knowledge and their impact on student learning and development" (Introduction section, para 2.).

of extramural utterance and action" (p. 292). Faculty are tasked with pursuing and promoting knowledge, supporting and expanding research, and advancing society by educating students. Academic freedom enables faculty to reach beyond the surface topics and delve into areas that can advance the society's knowledge by increasing the capacity of students' abilities to understand and discuss various views on topics, providing research backing the need for such discussions to occur.

> The success of American higher education, including the high regard in which it is held worldwide, is explained in good measure by the observance of academic freedom. This freedom is manifested institutionally as colleges and universities seek to conduct their educational missions without inappropriate influence from external centers of power – public and private. (AAUP, 2012, p. 1)

Academic freedom gives faculty flexibility to address controversial topics relating to the course, develop curricula appropriate to the field and mission of the institution/program, and engage in research advancing knowledge without repercussion. Institutions hold faculty accountable but allow self-evaluation and flexibility unless academic freedom is abused (Pullin, 2004). Academic freedom allows for advancement in the field through new knowledge and allows the expertise of the faculty to align the course to student needs. Gaff (2010) stated, "…academic freedom is central to not just faculty research but also to the proper education of students…" (p. 1).

In 2012, the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) released an advisory statement highlighting the connection between accreditation and academic freedom in that accreditation can and should support faculty academic freedom (AAUP, 2012). Academic

freedom is not only important for faculty and students but also the functioning of programs and the institution. Berube and Ruth (2015) state, "…academic freedom is indispensable for any faculty member who wants to participate in university governance" (p. 87).

The liberty to design a course and determine what and how students are taught, within reason, is a result of academic freedom. At the regional accreditor level, some standards indicate protection of academic freedom; at the programmatic level, it is less evident that it is a priority of the accreditor, but not necessarily indicative that it is not important to programmatic accreditors. Benjamin Baez, a faculty member in the college of education at a university in Florida, believes that accreditation infringes on his academic freedom by "dictating to me how I should teach my classes, assess my students, develop my syllabi, and so on…" and he believes these components are "essential to the academic profession" (2009, p. 55). Increased accountability has affected institutions, programs, and faculty as they seek to meet the demands of internal and external social and political factors. As stated in Cain (2014), "If external pressures and requirements are too strict and intrusive, they can influence institutional reward structures, limit the roles of faculty in defining their students' intended learning outcomes, and otherwise impinge on academic freedom" (p. 9). Elmore (2010) stated, "I believe that there is no discipline that has suffered more the loss of academic freedom that teacher preparation" (p. 4). The loss comes from the additional requirements of programs from entities that limit the freedoms of faculty traditionally protected. The requirements pushed on to institutions, programs, and faculty push academic freedom to the edge, barely within reach (Elmore, 2010). Accreditation has the ability to protect academic freedom or hinder academic

freedom as identified in the literature but is leaning towards the latter, much due to the political influence.

Faculty participation in the accreditation process is essential for the success of earning the status of an accredited institution/program. As stated by Perley and Tanguay (2008), "It is increasingly important that faculty participate in the accreditation of their own institutions, because greater involvement of faculty members can increase the likelihood that teaching and learning are maintained at a high level of quality" (p. 89). However, over the years, more restrictions have been put on faculty through accreditation.

> The [Higher Education Act] reauthorization completed in 2008 especially targeted the area of academic judgment (related to curriculum, faculty, and academic standards) in higher education, an area that traditionally had been under the purview of faculty and administrators. Accreditation was the vehicle used to assert more control in the area of academic judgment, through provisions and regulations targeting the daily operations of accrediting organizations. (Eaton, 2013, p. 4)

Academic freedom is an important component of the faculty profession. Individual academic freedom is a protection that enables faculty to research, teach, and express their viewpoints without overreach of the institution; institutional academic freedom allows institutions to "determine for itself on academic grounds who may teach, what may be taught, how it shall be taught, and who may be admitted to study" as stated in a U.S. Supreme Court opinion (Standler, 2000, para. 25). Over the years, with increased enrollment, investment in education, and federal funding of higher education,

accreditation has shifted to an outcome-driven process with more federal guidance and oversight that has affected accreditation with more demanding standards and reporting requirements.

> When the federal government makes demands on accrediting organizations, the intent is to influence the behavior of institutions, and this affects faculty members. To the extent that they are at odds with our core academic values, demands that accreditation be more accountable, set standards for student achievement, and be more transparent endanger the traditional role of the faculty. (Eaton, 2010, n.p., para. 4)

As stated in Perley et al. (2008), "…accreditation reviews can result in significant changes in areas of primary concern to faculty, such as governance, curriculum, and academic policy" (p. 88). In some observers' views, "This process [national accreditation] also limits faculty from creativity in research, teaching, and scholarship" (Bazler et al., 2014, p. 8). Faculty carry the responsibility of implementing changes in curriculum and assessments to meet accrediting bodies' requirements; without their cooperation and support, the modifications to programs and the collection of data for evidence would not occur. As Finkelstein et al. (2016) state, "the changes in accreditation—and quality assessment measures more generally—that have been implemented have served to diminish the faculty's influence over the academic core of postsecondary education" (p. 481). The experts in the field no longer have uninfluenced control to determine program quality. The federal government has influenced accreditation, and therefore, external factors are influencing how faculty operate and what they must include in their curriculums. As evidenced by the literature, there are

varying views of accreditation's effect on academic freedom. Accreditation has supported academic freedom but seems to be shifting as the demands increase from the curricular and assessment standpoints. There is a gap in the literature regarding EPP faculty perceptions of accreditation's affect, positive or negative, on academic freedom in which this research seeks to shed light.

Program Autonomy. One of accreditation's foundational roles is to protect autonomy. Program autonomy provides those within the program to govern internal activities to meet its mission without external control. The self-regulation accreditation is based upon provides a shield of protection for those most knowledgeable about a specific field to be the evaluators of peers to ensure program quality. Self-regulation and peer review still define accreditation today; however, as accountability has increased, so has the federal government's role (Eaton, 2010; Eaton, 2016). "The intricacy and unpredictability of both learning and investigation require a high degree of freedom from intellectually limiting external intervention and control if an institution of higher education is to perform effectively" (Schmidtlein & Berdahl, 2011, p. 69). Accreditation's historical nature of protecting autonomy is being challenged as additional measures are included in accreditation, and the standards are becoming more demanding and rigorous. It appears as the pressure increases to show program effectiveness on students and candidates through outcomes, some accreditors are a bit heavy-handed and easing into the area in which faculty are qualified to make decisions regarding programs. As Ledoux et al. (2010) state,

> Forcing teacher educators to follow rigid standards determined by a large organization, be it the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher

> Educators (NCATE) or some state board, equates teacher educators with technicians who practice mechanical skills mandated by the accrediting agency. Mastery of knowledge is no longer necessary…No intellectual skill is needed. (p. 251)

If accreditation limits or reduces innovation and flexibility through restrictive, prescriptive standards, autonomy is diminished. Faculty perceiving accreditation to protect and support autonomy may see the effectiveness, process, and standards more positively. However, those faculty perceiving accreditation to limit flexibility to meet the mission of the program and institution and put parameters on the students served may find accreditation to have an adverse effect on the program. It is not yet clear what EPP faculty believe regarding accreditation's effect on program autonomy. Understanding these perceptions will yield the opportunity to address pros and cons at the program, institution, and accreditor levels.

Perceptions

Perceptions influence individuals' behaviors (Gormley & Kennerly, 2010; Kim et al., 2017). In the context of working environments, how someone perceives his or her organization, the importance of his or her role within an organization, and how external influences affect work dictates one's behaviors. As supported by Ripley et al. (2006), "employee's perception of the work environment influences behavior and that behavior leads to performance" (p. 43). The work environment for faculty is affected by external influences such as accreditation. Understanding faculty perceptions regarding accreditation is valuable for determining whether accreditation positively or negatively affects their work and success. Accreditation is intended to promote continuous

improvement and ensure quality programs; if the faculty within those programs negatively perceive accreditation, the process may not yield its intended outcome to the extent possible with stronger faculty buy-in.

Perceptions are established based on personal experiences and developed as a "response that is generated by the quality of faculty members' work life and can be influenced by internal (e.g., enrollment management, program evaluation and assessment), as well as external (e.g., accountability measures, resource allocation) pressures to perform, either directly or indirectly, through institutional outcomes" (Rosser, 2005, p. 83). Therefore, examining faculty demographic and professional variables will reveal if these variables affect faculty perception of accreditation and if there are differences between variable levels. Faculty demographic and professional variables are unique to each faculty member, and those variables will form the frame of reference from which perceptions come.

Perceptions of accreditation have been studied in educator preparation, as well as other fields. However, little research could be located regarding faculty perceptions of the CAEP 2013 initial standards and expectations, and literature is limited regarding faculty perceptions of the accreditation process, its perceived effectiveness, and its impact, positive or negative, on academic freedom and program autonomy. Accreditation's purpose is similar across fields in higher education, as is the process of seeking and obtaining accreditation; standards differ per the academic field. The literature identifies common costs and benefits of the process and the outcomes. Exploration of additional articles and publications provide perceptions from stakeholders of the current status of

educator preparation and NCATE/CAEP accreditation and general perceptions of accreditation's value and processes and impact on foundations of the faculty role.

As indicated above, faculty buy-in is critical for earning accreditation. As accountability is increasing with the demands from various stakeholders additional tasks and time are asked of faculty in addition to their teaching, research, and service. CAEP has some specific requirements that the provider must incorporate that may directly affect faculty. What are faculty perceptions of accreditation? Including faculty in the conversation regarding an activity to which much time and resources are devoted is important for understanding costs and benefits of a mandatory process to meet designated standards. Targeting faculty for this study fills in some gaps relating to programmatic accreditation in educator preparation and identifies how they perceive accreditation's effectiveness, the process, the standards, and the impact on them and their programs. Faculty are the pillars of colleges and universities that support and drive much of the work required to meet accreditation standards. Asking faculty for their perceptions acknowledges their role in earning accreditation and enables them to provide feedback that can be used to support the current practices and offer ideas for improvement.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study sought to identify faculty perceptions of the value of accreditation for its effectiveness, the process of accreditation, the 2013 CAEP initial standards, accreditation's impact on academic freedom, and accreditation's impact on individual program autonomy. A systematic review of the literature was conducted to investigate faculty perceptions of accreditation in various fields and, specifically, in educator preparation. A search in electronic databases was performed to review journal articles, governmental documents, agency documents, and accreditation websites and resources. Articles and documents about faculty perceptions of accreditation were included; some articles are outside of educator preparation, but provided insight into perceptions of accreditation, the accreditation process, and gave information for comparison. Research questions were developed using the literature and corresponding survey questions were developed based on the research.

A survey including multiple choice options for demographic questions, open-ended questions, and 4-point Likert scale and Likert-type scale was developed and administered using Qualtrics electronic survey program to gather perception data. A pilot study was conducted with Kentucky EPP faculty in the fall of 2018. Revisions were made based on the feedback from the pilot participants and the full survey was administered in spring 2020.

The following research questions were identified to guide this study in collecting faculty perceptions of accreditation in the field of educator preparation:

1. To what extent do EPP faculty value programmatic accreditation's effectiveness for improving EPP quality?

    1a. To what extent do faculty perceive programmatic accreditation to be important? (Why or why not?)

2. To what extent do EPP faculty perceive accreditation processes to be effective?

3. To what extent do EPP faculty perceive the 2013 initial CAEP standards to be effective?

4. What demographic and professional variable(s) are associated with faculty perceptions of accreditation?

5. To what extent do faculty perceive accreditation affects their individual academic freedom? How?

6. To what extent do faculty perceive accreditation affects their individual program autonomy? How?

Design of the Study

Survey research was the chosen approach to gathering perception data that would be difficult to collect through solely observing faculty. The survey developed for this study incorporates quantitative and qualitative approaches and was the single tool utilized for obtaining data. Answer choices include multiple choice for demographic questions, open-ended questions, dichotomous questions, and 4-point Likert scale questions. Research questions 1, 1a, 2, 5, and 6 included both quantitative and qualitative questions to expand on key components identified in literature for which the researcher sought further explanation; research questions 3 and 4 included only quantitative. Skip logic was utilized to include questions pertaining to accreditation based on experience with the accreditation process. Those that had not participated in an accreditation visit were not asked questions regarding their experiences during an accreditation visit. All participants were asked their perceptions of the effectiveness of accreditation, the accreditation

process, the 2013 CAEP initial standards, accreditation's effect on academic freedom, and accreditation's effect on individual program autonomy, regardless of experience. The statistical software SPSS was utilized to analyze the quantitative data and NVivo was utilized to analyze the qualitative data.

Quantitative research allows the researcher to describe data, explain relationships among variables, explore the frequency and variations of responses, and identify significance (Creswell, 2002). Survey questions were designed to collect data on perceptions in numerical form yielding the type of data for which statistical analyses could be applied.

Qualitative research collects non-numerical data allowing for data analyses to identify patterns or themes. Qualitative research is utilized when a researcher wants to explore a phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). Inclusion of open-ended questions are meant to explore participant feelings and beliefs that are not captured through quantitative methods. As Creswell (2007) stated, "We conduct qualitative research when we want to empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices…" (p. 40). This research sought to provide an avenue for faculty voices to be heard and incorporating qualitative research expanded the opportunity for faculty to provide further explanation of their perceptions.

Incorporating quantitative and qualitative data in a study allows for a deeper understanding of the data when the researcher finds it appropriate for the research question at hand. Measuring attitudes and perceptions often leads to additional inquiry to determine the "why" or the "how"; including qualitative data can expand understanding. As Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) state, "In many situations, researchers can put together insights and procedures from both approaches [quantitative and qualitative] to

produce a superior product (i.e. often mixed methods research provides a more workable solution and produces a superior product)" (p. 17). The complexity of perceptions warranted inclusion of additional questions for research questions 1, 1a, 2, 5, and 6 to expand on the understanding of the data.

Pilot Study. This study included piloting the survey as the instrument was developed by the researcher due to lack of an already developed tool addressing the specifics of this research. Prior to administration, the pilot survey was shared with experts in the field of education with experience in survey research, shared with a CAEP leader, and two EPSB staff. The feedback from these experts was used to clarify ambiguities identified in questions, add open-ended questions for additional data around specific scale questions, and determine face validity. Cronbach's alpha was conducted to measure internal consistency for questions related to composites for research questions 1, 2, and 3. "Internal consistency describes the extent to which all the items in a test measure the same concept or construct and hence it is connected to the inter-relatedness of the items within the test" (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011, p. 53). An acceptable score is 0.70 for Cronbach's alpha (Bland & Altman, 1997). According to George and Mallery (2003), "_> .9- Excellent, _> .8- Good, _> .7- Acceptable, _>.6- Questionable, _>.5- Poor, and _<.5- Unacceptable" (p. 231). Analysis of the pilot study data resulted in a (0.89) Cronbach's alpha for research question 1; (0.70) for research question 2; and (0.90) for research question 3.

The pilot survey was administered on August 30, 2018, and remained open for one week, closing on September 6, 2018. Faculty from three public and three independent EPPs in Kentucky participated in the pilot study. In order to maintain anonymity of

participants, EPP leaders were contacted and asked if they would be willing to participate and if so, to send the recruitment letter with survey link to several faculty members meeting the criteria of full-time, part-time, or adjunct to the EPP. The researcher sought a minimum of 15 participants and received responses from 17. One question was included seeking feedback on the instrument regarding clarity, vagueness, relevance, or any other comments the participant felt was applicable. The pilot survey and feedback resulted in revising the wording of questions for clarity and the addition of a question to allow for skip logic, but did not change the overall content of the instrument.

Full Survey. Through an open-records request to the EPSB, the researcher obtained a list of all EPP leader names and email addresses during the spring 2020 semester (Appendix C). All Kentucky-based EPP leaders were contacted via email requesting participation in the full study. In order to maintain anonymity of participants, EPP leaders who were willing to allow their EPP to participate were asked to send the survey link to faculty meeting the criteria of full-time, part-time, or adjunct to the EPP, and to respond to the researcher with the number of faculty who received the invitation/survey link. The survey opened on February 25, 2020, and closed on March 10, 2020, allowing 2 weeks for participation. At the end of week one, a request to remind faculty to participate was sent to EPP leaders.

The following "validation strategies" (Creswell, 2007, p. 207) for qualitative data applied to this study include "prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field", "clarifying researcher bias" and "rich, thick description" (pp. 207-209). These three strategies were selected as the researcher has spent time in accreditation working directly with faculty for educator preparation provider accreditation in Kentucky, through

transition from NCATE to CAEP, learned the culture, and, identified what would be relevant to this study. Clarifying bias from the beginning was identified as critical to this study as the researcher held positions at the EPSB directly associated with the accreditation process and currently holds a higher education position directly involved in regional and programmatic accreditation. Lastly, detailed description of the steps and participants in the study allows readers to determine the transferability.

Participants

Full-time, part-time faculty, and adjunct faculty of the 25 Kentucky-based educator preparation providers (EPP) in the spring 2020 semester were invited to participate in this study; there are 8 public EPPs and 17 independent EPPs. All Kentucky-based EPPs are currently accredited under the NCATE 2008 standards or 2013 CAEP standards. The following are definitions for EPP full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty for the purposes of this study:

- Full-time faculty: Professional education faculty with a full-time assignment in the professional educator preparation provider.
- Part-time faculty: Professional education faculty who have less than a full-time assignment in the professional education unit. May be full-time employees of the college or university with a portion of their assignments in the professional educator preparation provider.
- Adjunct faculty: Not a full-time employee of the institution but has an assignment in the professional educator preparation provider (NCATE, 2008, pp. 84-89)[8].

[8] Although part-time and adjunct faculty may not have as great a role in accreditation depending on the size of the EPP, they will still be affected by the accreditation process and standards, and will be a part of collecting and analyzing data to provide evidence of

EPP faculty as identified by each EPP leader self-selected the type of faculty with which he/she most closely identified for the spring 2020 semester. This research sought to identify the overall perceptions of EPP faculty as well as potential varying views of full-time faculty versus part-time faculty versus adjunct faculty regarding the effectiveness of accreditation, the processes of accreditation, and the CAEP initial standards; this study also seeks to look at overall faculty perceptions of accreditation's impact on academic freedom and individual program autonomy. Of the 25 Kentucky-based EPPs, 15 participated in this study, including five public institutions and 10 independent institutions.

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Full-time, part-time faculty, and adjunct faculty employed in spring 2020 were the target population. The target population included all EPP faculty employed during spring 2020 semester, approximately 700 faculty. The EPP leaders from the 25 Kentucky-based EPPs[9] were contacted and asked to send the recruitment letter with survey link to all EPP

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meeting standards and continuous improvement. For example, the accreditation coordinator versus part-time faculty may yield differing perceptions about accreditation. The inclusion of all is important for capturing the big picture of accreditation in addition to the compartmentalized perceptions and effects. Given the shift in accreditation to a more clinical model, including outcome measures, curriculum, collection of data, and assessment of performance and knowledge, the impact may affect full-time, part-time faculty, and adjunct faculty. Research indicates there has been a shift in employment from one of full-time faculty dominating institutions to now one of part-time faculty and adjunct faculty dominating instruction - such that contingency faculty now make up over 70% of the instructional faculty in the United States (Kezar and Maxey, 2013).

[9] Kentucky-based EPPs invited to participate in this study: Alice Lloyd College, Asbury University, Bellarmine University, Berea College, Brescia University, Campbellsville University, Eastern Kentucky University, Georgetown College, Kentucky Christian University, Kentucky State University, Kentucky Wesleyan College, Lindsey Wilson College, Midway University, Morehead State University, Murray State University, Northern Kentucky University, Spalding University, Thomas More University, Translyvania University, Union College, University of Kentucky, University of

faculty. Of the 25 EPPs, 15 EPP leaders responded and agreed to participate; 422 EPP faculty were provided the link to participate. This study did not include two Kentucky-based EPPs: Jefferson County Public Schools ACES program and Teach for America. JCPS ACES operates under 16 KAR 9:060 and 16 KAR 9:080 enabling a local school district to offer an alternative training program for middle grades and secondary teachers; Teach for America operates under 16 KAR 9:080 enabling alternative preparation for teachers to obtain certification in Kentucky.

Survey Instrument

The survey (Appendix E) consists of the following sections:

1. Demographic and professional variables: These questions gathered data on 12 variables: type of institution, type of accreditation the EPP has attained, faculty status to EPP, role to EPP, years of employment at current EPP, years of employment at all EPPs, participating in an accreditation visit, role in the accreditation process, hours per week preparing for an accreditation visit, weeks preparing for an accreditation visit, level of involvement in accreditation, and participation as a CAEP site visitor.
2. Effectiveness of accreditation: Data on the perceptions of the effectiveness of accreditation were gathered to determine how faculty feel about accreditation's effect on the profession, candidates, and faculty, as well as its effectiveness for improving the quality of the EPP. Open-ended questions were included to gain data on benefits and drawbacks of accreditation. Three dichotomous questions

Louisville, University of Pikeville, University of the Cumberlands, Western Kentucky University.

were included to gather data on beliefs of effectiveness around time and costs and if the state should mandate national accreditation.

3. Process: Data were gathered on perceptions of the process of accreditation including the self-study, on-site visit, the final accreditation decision, annual report, peer review and overall process. Open-ended questions sought additional information about peer review as it is the method by which accreditation is conducted.
4. 2013 CAEP initial standards: Data were gathered on faculty perceptions of the CAEP initial preparation standards and if each is attainable, and if each will lead to effective candidate/completers and more effective programs.
5. Accreditation's effect on academic freedom. Faculty were asked if they believe accreditation affects academic freedom. Participants that selected strongly agree or agree were asked an open-ended question seeking information about perceptions of accreditation's effect on academic freedom. Themes were identified based on participant responses.
6. Accreditation's effect on individual program autonomy. Faculty were asked if they believe accreditation affects individual program autonomy. Participants that selected strongly agree or agree were asked an open-ended question seeking information about perceptions of accreditation's effect on individual program autonomy. Themes were identified based on participant responses.

Data Analysis

This exploratory study examined Kentucky EPP faculty perceptions of accreditation. Descriptive analysis was used to summarize and describe the

characteristics of participants and participant perceptions of the effectiveness of accreditation, the processes of accreditation and the standards; themes were identified for responses to open-ended questions. A description of analysis follows each research question below. Likert-scale questions and Likert-type response questions were included in this study, but analyzed differently according to the specific research question and appropriate statistical treatment of the data. Likert-scale allow for aggregation of items and can be treated as interval or ordinal. All Likert-scale were treated as interval and interpretation of results based on means are as follows: 1-1.75= Strongly Disagree; 1.76-2.5= Disagree; 2.51-3.25= Agree; 3.26-4.0=Strongly Agree. Likert-type questions are not aggregated to create a scale, are ordinal in nature, and were interpreted using frequencies. All open-ended questions were analyzed by identifying themes. The following analyses took place for each research question:

Research Question 1: *To what extent do EPP faculty value programmatic accreditation's effectiveness for improving EPP quality?*

Descriptive analysis was conducted for Likert-scale questions to determine the extent to which faculty value CAEP accreditation for its effectiveness for improving EPP quality. The mean and standard deviation are reported for faculty overall and by faculty status to the EPP. The analysis was conducted on a composite score of Likert-scale questions; one question required reverse coding. Five additional survey questions, three Likert-type scale and two open-ended, were asked and analyzed for a better understanding of perceptions of the value and effectiveness of accreditation. Frequencies are reported for the Likert-type response scale and themes are reported for the open-ended questions.

Research Question 1a: *To what extent do faculty perceive programmatic accreditation to be important? (Why or why not?)*

A frequency table indicates the responses by faculty status to the EPP and overall faculty response. The response scale includes "Not at all Important", "Slightly Important", "Moderately Important", and "Very Important". The responses were coded from 1-4; 1= "Not at all Important", 2= "Slightly Important", 3= "Moderately Important", 4= "Very Important". Based on the participant's answer selection, an open-ended follow up question to determine the "why?" was prompted. Thematic analysis was conducted for the open-ended questions.

Research Question 2: *To what extent do EPP faculty perceive accreditation processes to be effective?*

Descriptive analysis was conducted for Likert-scale questions to determine the extent to which faculty perceive the accreditation process to be effective. The mean and standard deviation are reported for faculty overall and by faculty status to the EPP. The analysis was conducted on a composite score of Likert-scale questions. Two additional Likert-type scale questions were asked of faculty who have participated in an accreditation visit to gather additional data on the processes. A frequency table is included to show responses. Three open-ended questions regarding the peer review aspect of accreditation were included to gather data that may provide context to the perceptions of accreditation processes; themes identified in the open-ended responses are reported.

Research Question 3: *To what extent do EPP faculty perceive the 2013 CAEP initial standards to be effective for improving the EPP?*

Descriptive analysis was conducted for Likert-scale questions to determine the extent to which faculty perceive the CAEP initial standards effective for improving the EPP. The means and standard deviations are reported for faculty overall and by faculty status to the EPP. The analysis was conducted on a composite score of Likert-scale questions.

Frequency tables are included for five questions pertaining to the individual standards measured on a 4-point Likert-type scale. These questions seek to determine if participants believe each standard is attainable and if the standards will lead to the intended outcome of effective program completers and effective programs.

Research Question 4: *What demographic and professional variable(s) are associated with faculty perceptions of accreditation?*

While the intended statistical method for this study included regression analysis, the researcher explored a non-parametric test due to limitations and data being fit for analysis. Non-parametric analyses Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis H tests were explored to test if there were statistically significant differences in the demographic and professional independent groups mean ranks for perceptions of the effectiveness of programmatic accreditation, effectiveness of the processes of accreditation, and the effectiveness of the 2013 CAEP initial standards. The Mann-Whitney U test is appropriate for small sample sizes and does not require normal distribution of the two groups being tested; the Kruskal-Wallis H test is also appropriate in the same manner when there are more than two groups. The non-parametric analysis could not be carried out due to limited responses. As a result of data limitations, the analysis could not be conducted for this research question.

Research Question 5: *To what extent do faculty believe accreditation affects their academic freedom? How?*

A Likert-type scale question was asked to determine if faculty believe accreditation affects their academic freedom. A frequency table is included with results. For those that responded with "Agree" or "Strongly Agree", a follow up question to explain the "How" was asked. The open-ended question responses were analyzed by coding and identifying overarching themes. Themes emerging from the responses are reported.

Research Question 6: *To what extent do faculty believe accreditation affects their individual program autonomy? How?*

A Likert-type scale question was asked to determine if faculty believe accreditation affects their individual program autonomy. A frequency table is included with results. For those that responded with "Agree" or "Strongly Agree", a follow up question to explain the "How" was asked. The open-ended question responses were analyzed by coding and identifying overarching themes. Themes emerging from the responses are reported.

Summary

The exploratory nature of this study enabled the researcher to create and implement a survey directed at collecting data from participants who have not had such an opportunity to voice their beliefs regarding programmatic accreditation, how it impacts their work, and to provide important feedback. Although the breadth of this study was limited due to uncontrollable circumstances, faculty who participated were invested in providing their perceptions of accreditation where there have been limited opportunities to do so previously. This study provides important contributions to the field of educator preparation opening the door for future research on faculty perceptions of

accreditation. This one study provided faculty, who are in the trenches of the work and expected to implement practices and provide much of the data for successful accreditation, an avenue to give feedback and be heard.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Introduction

This research study focused on programmatic faculty's perceptions of the accreditation process and policy of a professional accreditation organization in one state. Results of this study provide contributions to the field where little data exist around faculty perceptions of accreditation. This research consisted of a survey developed by the researcher using quantitative and qualitative approaches to explore layers of faculty perceptions by including open-ended questions that expanded on the quantitative data by taking the opportunity to explore the "why?" and the "how?"

The quantitative and qualitative data (where available) are presented according to each research question. Descriptive statistics are provided for survey participants; quantitative data are analyzed for each research question and qualitative data are analyzed and presented for the open-ended research questions and for further exploration of the quantitative data.

Descriptive Statistics

All Kentucky educator preparation provider (EPP) leaders were contacted to invite EPP faculty to participate in this study. Of the 25 Kentucky-based EPPs, 15 leaders responded and sent the link for participation to 422 faculty. Participants, with usable results, for this study totaled 41, yielding a 9.7% response rate. Participants who completed only the demographic questions were not included; participants that completed some of the perception questions, even if all were not answered, were included. The sample includes five of eight public institutions and 10 of 17 independent institutions.

Descriptive statistics, non-parametric analysis, and identification of themes were utilized for answering research questions.

Demographic and professional characteristics of participants are included in Table 1.

Table 1.

Demographic and Professional Characteristics of Participants

Variable name	Group	n	%
Type of institution	Public	12	29.3
	Independent	29	70.7
Type of accreditation	State-only	11	26.8
	State and NCATE/CAEP	29	70.7
	Unsure	1	2.4
Faculty status to EPP	Full-time	36	87.8
	Part-time	0	0.0
	Adjunct	5	12.2
Role to EPP	Full Professor	12	29.3
	Associate Professor	16	39.0
	Assistant Professor	6	14.6
	Adjunct Instructor	4	9.8
	Lecturer	1	2.4
	Dean	2	4.9
Years of employment in current EPP	0-5 years	12	29.3
	6-10 years	10	24.4
	11-15 years	9	22.0
	16-20 years	6	14.6
	More than 20 years	4	9.8
Years of employment all EPPs	0-5 years	6	14.6
	6-10 years	11	26.8
	11-15 years	8	19.5
	16-20 years	4	9.8
	More than 20 years	12	29.3

Table 1 (continued)
Demographic and Professional Characteristics of Participants

Participation in accreditation visit	Yes	21	52.5
	No	19	47.5
*Role in accreditation process	Accreditation Coordinator	1	5.6
	Professor	7	38.9
	Content Area Specialist	1	5.6
	Accreditation Coordinator, Professor, Dean	1	5.6
	Clinical Faculty, Professor, Standard Lead, Interviewee	1	5.6
	Assessment Coordinator, Professor	2	11.1
	Accreditation Coordinator, Professor	1	5.6
	Accreditation Coordinator, Assessment Coordinator, Clinical Faculty, Professor, Content Area Specialist, Std. 5 Assessment Committee	1	5.6
	Clinical Faculty, Professor, Content Area Specialist	1	5.6
	Professor, Data Analyst	1	5.6
	Professor, Content Area Specialist	1	5.6

Table 1 (continued)
Demographic and Professional Characteristics of Participants

*Hours/week preparing for accreditation visit	Less than 5 hours/week	8	38.1
	5-10 hours/week	6	28.6
	11-15 hours/week	2	9.5
	16-20 hours/week	2	9.5
	More than 20 hours/week	3	14.3
*Weeks preparing for visit	Less than 26 weeks	5	23.8
	27-52 weeks	3	14.3
	53-78 weeks	1	4.8
	79-104 weeks	8	38.1
	131-156 weeks	4	19.0
Level of involvement in accreditation	Not involved	5	12.2
	1-9 hours/week	24	58.5
	10-19 hours/week	8	19.5
	More than 20 hours/week	4	9.8
Participation as a CAEP Site Visitor	Yes	8	19.5
	No	33	80.5

* Includes only those participants that selected "Yes" for participation in an accreditation visit.

The majority of participants identify as full-time faculty (87.8%, n=36) and mostly from independent institutions (70.7%, n=29). Respondents from CAEP/NCATE and state accredited EPPs (70.7%, n=29) as compared to state-only (26.8%, n=11) and unsure (2.4%, n=1). Associate Professors and Full Professors made up the majority of participants, (39.0%, n=16) and (29.3%, n=12), respectively. Years of employment at current EPP ranged from the majority of respondents with 0-5 years (29.3%, n=12), followed by 6-10 years (24.4%, n=10), 11-15 years (22.0%, n=9), 16-20 years (14.6%, n=6) and more than 20 years (9.8%, n=4). Years of employment at all EPPs shifted with

the majority at more than 20 years (29.3%, n=12), followed by 6-10 years (26.8%, n=11), 11-15 years (19.5%, n=8), 0-5 years (14.6%, n=6), and 16-20 years (9.8%, n=4). Participation in an accreditation visit in a role other than a site visitor was almost evenly split between Yes (52.5%, n=21) and No (47.5%, n=19). Role in the accreditation process was Professor (38.9%, n=7), followed by Assessment Coordinator and Professor (11.1%, n=2), and other roles with one respondent (different participants for each) identified in each combination. Hours per week preparing for an accreditation visit ranged from less than 5 hours per week (38.1%, n=8), to 5-10 hours per week (28.6%, n=6), to 11-15 hours per week (9.5%, n=2), to 16-20 hours per week (9.5%, n=2), and more than 20 hours per week (14.3%, n=3). Weeks preparing for an accreditation visit were less than 26 weeks (23.8%, n=5), 27-52 weeks (14.3%, n=3), 53-78 weeks (4.8%, n=1), 79-104 weeks (38.1%, n=8), and 131-156 weeks (19.0%, n=4). Level of involvement in accreditation was not involved (12.2%, n=5), 1-9 hours per week (58.5%, n=24), followed by 10-19 hours per week (19.5%, n=8), and more than 20 hours per week (9/8%, n=4). Whether the respondent had participated as a CAEP site visitor was largely No (80.5%, n=33) compared to Yes (19.5%, n=8).

Research Question 1: ***To what extent do EPP faculty value programmatic accreditation's effectiveness for improving EPP quality?***

EPP faculty were asked to respond to questions regarding their perceptions of the value of accreditation with respect to its effectiveness at improving EPP quality. Results of overall faculty perception are in Table 2.

Table 2.

Faculty Perceptions of the Value of Accreditation for Effectiveness

Variable	n	M	SD
Full-time faculty	30	2.57	0.78
Part-time faculty	0		
Adjunct faculty	2	3.13	0.35
Faculty overall	32	2.61	0.77

Results suggest that overall, faculty agree that accreditation is valuable for its effectiveness for improving EPPs quality. By faculty type, both full-time and adjunct faculty agree that accreditation is valuable for its effectiveness for improving EPP quality.

Faculty who have participated in an accreditation visit in a role other than a site visitor were asked if, in their experience, the efforts directed toward obtaining accreditation were worth the time and energy invested. Results of faculty perception by faculty type and overall are in Table 3.

Table 3.

Efforts Worth Time and Energy

Question	Group	SD	D	A	SA	n
Efforts directed toward obtaining accreditation were worth the time and energy invested by faculty.	Full-time faculty	5 28%	4 22%	7 39%	2 11%	18
	Adjunct faculty		1 33%	1 33%	1 33%	3
	Overall	5 24%	5 24%	8 38%	3 14%	21

Overall, faculty were almost evenly split with 52% of faculty agree to strongly agree efforts were worth the time and energy invested and 48% disagree to strongly disagree efforts were worth the time and energy invested. By faculty type, full-time faculty are evenly split with 50% selecting agree to strongly agree and 50% selecting

disagree to strongly disagree. For adjunct faculty, 33% disagree and 66% agree to strongly agree.

Additionally, all faculty were asked the following two questions to gather more detailed information regarding the costs versus benefits of accreditation. Results of faculty perception by faculty type and overall are in Table 4.

Table 4.

Faculty Perceptions of Accreditation Costs versus Benefits

Question	Group	Yes	%	No	%
Do you believe the benefits of programmatic accreditation outweigh the time put into seeking programmatic accreditation?	Full-time faculty	14	46.67	16	53.33
	Adjunct faculty	1	50.00	1	50.00
	Overall faculty	15	46.88	17	53.12
Do you believe the benefits of programmatic accreditation outweigh the costs in terms of resources for seeking programmatic accreditation?	Full-time faculty	13	43.33	17	56.67
	Adjunct faculty	1	50.00	1	50.00
	Overall faculty	14	43.75	18	56.25

Participants who are full-time faculty (N=30) are almost evenly split with 46.67% (N=14) believing the benefits of programmatic accreditation outweigh the time put into seeking programmatic accreditation and 53.33% (N=16) not believing the benefits of programmatic accreditation outweigh the time put into seeking programmatic accreditation. Adjunct faculty (N=2) are evenly split regarding benefits of programmatic accreditation outweighing the time put into seeking programmatic accreditation. Of faculty overall, (N=32), 46.88% (N=15) believe the benefits of seeking programmatic

accreditation outweigh the time put into seeking programmatic accreditation; 53.12% (N=17) do not believe the benefits of seeking programmatic accreditation outweigh the time put into seeking programmatic accreditation.

Participants who are full-time faculty (N=30), 43.33% (N=13) believe the benefits of programmatic accreditation outweigh the costs in terms of resources for seeking programmatic accreditation; 56.67% (N=17) do not believe the benefits of programmatic accreditation outweigh the costs in terms of resources for seeking programmatic accreditation. Adjunct faculty (N=2) are evenly split regarding benefits of programmatic accreditation outweighing the costs in terms of resources for seeking programmatic accreditation. Overall, 43.75% (N=14) of faculty believe the benefits of programmatic accreditation outweigh the costs in terms of resources for seeking programmatic accreditation, and 56.25% (N=18) do not believe the benefits of programmatic accreditation outweigh the costs in terms of resources for seeking programmatic accreditation.

An additional question was asked to determine if faculty believe national accreditation, in addition to the required state accreditation, should be mandated. Results of faculty perception by faculty type and overall are in Table 5.

Table 5.

Faculty Perceptions of Attaining State and National Accreditation

Question	Group	Yes	%	No	%
The Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) requires all EPPs to attain state accreditation using the CAEP standards. Do you believe national accreditation in addition to state accreditation should be mandated by the EPSB?	Full-time faculty	11	36.67	19	63.33
	Adjunct faculty	1	33.33	2	66.67
	Overall faculty	12	36.36	21	63.64

Participants who identified as full-time faculty (N=30), 36.67% (N=11) believe national accreditation in addition to state accreditation should be mandated by the EPSB; 63.33% (N=19) do not believe national accreditation in addition to state accreditation should be mandated by the EPSB.

Participants who identified as adjunct faculty (N=3), 33.33% (N=1) believe national accreditation in addition to state accreditation should be mandated by the EPSB; 66.67% (N=2) do not believe national accreditation in addition to state accreditation should be mandated by the EPSB.

Overall, 36.63% (N=12) of participants believe national accreditation in addition to state accreditation should be mandated by the EPSB; 63.64% (N=21) do not believe national accreditation in addition to state accreditation should be mandated by the EPSB.

Two open-ended questions were asked of all faculty regarding benefits and costs or negatives of accreditation: *Please share any benefits you believe result from programmatic accreditation,* and *Please share any costs or negatives you believe result*

from programmatic accreditation. Themes emerging from responses and frequencies of themes for each of these questions are included in Table 6 and Table 7, respectively.

Table 6.

Benefits of Programmatic Accreditation

Benefits (N=21)	Themes	Frequency
	Program improvement	7
	Quality	5
	Accountability	4
	None	3

Program improvement

One of the top themes that emerged from the data regarding benefits of program accreditation was *program improvement*. According to one participant, "The process gives the entire faculty of the EPP an opportunity to strengthen their program." Another participant stated,

> During the first year of preparing for an accreditation visit it prompts faculty and the administration to take time to think about how things are done and what is covered in the program. This often results in a realization that there are processes that need to be implemented or changed. It also brings to light deficiencies in programs that need to be addressed--perhaps the world has shifted since the program was designed. This prompts the creation of new courses and the revision of existing courses.

Quality

Participants indicated that quality control was a benefit of programmatic accreditation stating that "Accreditation is a confirmation that you have a quality program" and "It indicates that a program is valid and reliable--reliability & validity."

One participant also supported quality control as a benefit stating that programmatic accreditation is a "Quality control system that indeed has its place."

Accountability

The third theme that emerged from the data was *accountability* as a benefit of programmatic accreditation. One participant indicated, "It creates accountability within each program." Along the same line, another participant stated, "[Accreditation] Causes the program to periodically evaluate its results."

None

A few participants indicated there are no benefits of accreditation. As stated by one participant, "The only benefit was when it was finished. The time and energy the various steps take diminish the faculty's ability to do the job of teaching their candidates." Another participant said, "CAEP is a crazy and costly system that should be completely revised. Colleges can't afford the time or the expense involved and the insane requirements are part of the reason the number of teacher education students has declined."

Table 7.

Costs/Negative Outcomes of Programmatic Accreditation

Costs/negative outcomes (N=23)	Themes	Frequency
	Time	11
	Diverts attention from other responsibilities	8
	Cost	5
	Compliance task	3
	Impact on faculty authority	2
	None	2

Time

The theme with the highest frequency emerging from participant responses regarding cost or negative outcomes of programmatic accreditation is *time*. As stated by

participants, “It is incredibly time consuming” and that it takes “A great deal of time and effort.” One participant stated that “It takes time, but is well worth it.” Another participant stated, “It makes faculty not believe in the process because the work is to [*sic*] mundane and time intensive…”

Diverts attention from other responsibilities

Along with *time*, *diverts attention from other responsibilities* was an emerging theme from participant responses. Responses include, “A great deal of time and effort better spent on instruction and program enhancement is spent on other tasks” and “I really feel it takes away from our teaching.” Another participant stated,

> After the first year of preparing for accreditation most of the processes have been implemented/changed and the programs/courses have been revised. After that, accreditation work takes faculty away (time) from, and forces them to focus on things that do not significantly impact program or curricular quality. This time and focus on accreditation is perhaps the biggest change I have seen in my our department since I was hired.

Cost

The costs of accreditation also emerged from participants’ responses. One participant stated, “Costs associated with membership and the site visit can be difficult for small, private institutions.” Another participant indicated a similar response stating, “Hugh [sic] financial burden for small EPPs.”

Compliance task

Programmatic accreditation being a compliance task emerged from the data in responses such as the following from one participant,

> Programmatic accreditation is a waste of faculty time as it is mainly seen as compliance - "what do we have to do to pass" rather than anything else. We are strongly focused on the format of the report and getting approval than we are looking at information and learning from it.

Another participant stated, “Without strong leadership at the EPP it tends to become a compliance task rather than a vehicle for improvement.”

Impact on faculty authority

A negative outcome of accreditation that emerged from reponses was that it has an “impact on faculty authority.” One participant stated, “The required features of a program take much decision making by us, the experts, away. CAEP in particular requires the same things from all teaching area programs, and the same size does not fit all.” Another participant said, “Most curricular decisions are now mandated by the administration based on some regulatory change or in order to address some requirement identified by staff while preparing for accreditation.”

None

Two participants indicated there are no costs or negative outcomes as a result of accreditation by simply stating “none.”

Research Question 1a: ***How important do you think it is for an Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) to be accredited****?*

Participants were asked to indicate their perception of importance of accreditation for an EPP. Results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8.

Faculty Perceptions of the Importance of Accreditation

Question	Group	NI	SI	MI	VI	n
How important do you think it is for an Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) to be accredited?	Full-time faculty	2 (5.56%)	4 (11.11%)	7 (19.44%)	23 (63.89%)	36
	Adjunct faculty			1 (20.00%)	4 (80.00%)	5
	Overall	2 (4.88%)	4 (9.76%)	8 (19.51%)	27 (65.85%)	41

Not at all important (NI), somewhat important (SI), moderately important (MI), very important (VI).

Results suggest that of the 41 respondents, the majority of faculty (85.36%) think it is moderately to very important for an EPP to be accredited; 14.64% think it is not at all important to slightly important for an EPP to be accredited. By faculty type, the majority of full-time faculty (83.33%) think it is moderately to very important for an EPP to be accredited and 16.67% think it is not at all important to slightly important for an EPP to be accredited. Adjunct faculty (100%) think it is moderately to very important for an EPP to be accredited.

Each response filtered to a follow-up "Why do you believe it is (very important/moderately important/slightly important/not at all important) for an EPP to be accredited?" Themes were identified from responses to *very important* and *moderately important and* located in Table 9 and Table 10. For *slightly important* and *not at all important*, each response is included.

Table 9.

Why Do You Believe it is Very Important for an EPP to be Accredited?

Very Important (N=19)	Themes	Frequency
	Quality	9
	Credibility	5
	Continuous improvement	5
	Standardization	4

Quality

The theme that emerged most prominently from responses was *quality*. Indication of quality and quality control were central to the responses. One participant stated, "Having an accredited program signifies that the institution is meeting standards that have been identified as important to educational quality." Another stated, "It demonstrates to others that we are adhering to high standards." In terms of quality control, a participant responded, "State and national accreditation ensure an additional layer of scrutiny to verify that the standards are met." Another participant stated, "To ensure you are providing the best educator preparation program possible for your students."

Credibility

Participants indicated that *credibility* of a program was a reason why programmatic accreditation is very important. As one participant stated, "Reputable programs tend to be nationally accredited, in fact until recently, all programs in Kentucky were required to be nationally accredited[10]." Similarly, another participant responded, "It validates that the EPP adheres to a high set of standards and goals that ensure the credibility of the program." Although the following participant indicates some changes

[10] As a point of clarification, EPSB did not formally approve that all EPPs must be nationally accredited, but did include that all EPPs would be nationally accredited as a goal in their strategic plan.

need to be made to programmatic accreditation, the sentiment of importance for credibility is still apparent as stated,

> CAEP is a crazy and costly system that should be completely revised. Colleges of education can't afford the time or the expense involved and the insane requirements are part of the reason the number of teacher education students has declined. BUT accreditation is important for any institution for legitimacy, etc. REVISE CAEP/ESPB!

Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement emerged as a theme from responses as a reason programmatic accreditation is very important. Participants stated, "It ensures that we are continuously improving our practices" and "The process does guide the institution in ongoing program improvement, and lends the institution increased status--which is huge in student recruitment, securing of grants, etc."

Standardization

Participants acknowledged that one reason programmatic accreditation is important is because it leads to standardization. As one participant stated, "It is important so that standards and expectations are normalized across the board so candidates are adequately prepared in their chosen fields/professions." Another participant responded, "Being able to show that you are meeting standards that are similar to other institutions, whether public or private is important so candidates are confident that their courses and experiences will be recognized by others throughout the country."

Table 10.

Why Do You Believe it is Moderately Important for an EPP to be Accredited?

Moderately Important (N=6)	Themes	Frequency
	Accountability	3
	Limitations	2

Accountability

Participants indicated accreditation is moderately important because of the value of standards. One participant stated, "It's important that EPPs provide preparation that is actually correct and useful. Without some guidance, it is possible for EPPs to drift from useful preparation to areas that are[n't] productive for future teachers." Another participant said, "It is important to uphold standards and maintain the integrity of preparing future teachers."

Limitations

Participant responses indicated programmatic accreditation is moderately important but it has some limitations. One participant stated, "It leads to improvement, but it also limits options for the program. The standards and requirements change so often that the improvements in your program can never be fine-tuned." Another participant stated,

> I also think that accreditors such as CAEP are poorly focused and have given inadequate consideration to the capability for obtaining information they as EPPs to gather. I think considering the incredible amount of work and money accreditation requires, it provides a poor value proposition for the EPP.

Why do you believe it is slightly important for an EPP to be accredited?

Of the four participants indicating programmatic accreditation is *slightly important*, only one participant responded to this question stating, "There should be a level of accountability for all programs."

Why do you believe it is not important at all for an EPP to be accredited?

Of the two participants indicating programmatic accreditation is *not at all important,* only one participant responded to this question stating,

> We are already monitored and evaluated by our state professional standards board. We are regulated by state legislation. We are active in professional organizations that provide opportunity for discussion and evaluation of research and best practices. We routinely self-evaluate by programs. It just feels like a redundant process that steals valuable time from the real work we do to put artifacts in an [sic] specific format and then have a team show up for a few days to make assumptions off of short interviews and skimmed/minimal reading of artifacts and rationales. We received a report of areas we were already working on like any good organization with plans for growth and improvement to meet the needs of their customers. It just felt like a time consuming redundant process to meet constantly changing rules from the accrediting organization.

Research Question 2: To what extent do EPP faculty perceive programmatic accreditation processes to be effective?

EPP faculty were asked to respond to questions regarding their perceptions of the effectiveness of the accreditation process. Results of overall faculty perceptions are in Table 11.

Table 11.

Perceptions of the Accreditation Process

Variable	n	M	SD
Full-time faculty	30	2.91	0.67
Part-time faculty	0		
Adjunct faculty	3	3.11	0.35
Faculty overall	33	2.93	0.65

Results suggest that overall, faculty agree that programmatic accreditation processes are effective. By faculty type, both full-time and adjunct faculty agree that programmatic accreditation processes are effective.

Faculty who have participated in an accreditation visit in a role other than a site visitor were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements: *The self-study led to program improvement carried out between accreditation visits* and *The rationale for the final accreditation decision was clearly communicated.* Results are in Table 12.

Table 12.

Faculty Perceptions of Self-Study and Final Decision

Question	SD	D	A	SA	n
The self-study led to program improvement carried out between accreditation visits.	1 (4.76%)	3 (14.29%)	9 (42.86%)	8 (38.09%)	21
The rationale for the final accreditation decision was clearly communicated.	1 (5.00%)	5 (25.00%)	9 (45.00%)	5 (25.00%)	20

The majority of faculty who have participated in an accreditation visit agree to strongly agree that the self-study led to program improvements and the final accreditation was clearly communicated.

Three open-ended questions were asked about the peer review aspect of accreditation since it is the foundational structure to the approach of accreditation: *List*

any benefits you believe result from the peer review process of accreditation, List any concerns you have with the peer review process of accreditation, and List any other methods other than peer review you believe would be more beneficial for evaluating EPP quality for accreditation. Themes were identified from the responses and included in Table 13, Table 14, and Table 15.

Table 13.

Peer Review Benefits

Benefits (N=25)	Themes	Frequency
	Learn from others	11
	Peer understanding of field and culture	6
	Program improvement	6

Learn from others

Emerging from the responses was that peer review provides an opportunity to learn from each other. A participant stated, "Faculty become more aware of what each program is doing and may learn of more effective ways of assessing and communicating program results." Another said, "It is beneficial both ways. The reviewer gives recommendations for improvement and may observe/discover methods/forms/procedures that other EPPs are currently being used." A third participant said, "I have learned a lot by seeing how other EPPs are creating and improving their own programs."

Peer understanding of field and culture

Emerging from the responses was the theme of peer understanding of the field and culture that surround EPPs as a benefit of peer review. One participant stated, "Peers have a more refined appreciation of all that goes into the making of an excellent teacher." Another participant stated,

Also, since the programs are peer reviewed, we (as the reviewers) can relate to the struggles and successes much better than if the programs were only reviewed by the state or national administrators who may (or may not) know the context of higher education, especially in independent, smaller EPPs.

As stated by a third participant, "Reviewers [peers] are best able to understand the challenges and advantages of an EPP."

Program improvement

Another theme emerging from the data is *program improvement.* A participant stated, "I have input into improving educational outcomes. We receive feedback that leads to program improvement." A second participant said that they receive "suggestions for things that may work to help improve programs." Similarly, another participant said the "reviewer gives recommendations for improvement."

Table 14.

Peer Review Concerns

Concerns (N=27)	Themes	Frequency
	Training of site visitors	8
	Bias	4
	Consistency	3
	None	3

Training of site visitors

Overwhelmingly the theme that emerged from the data was "training of site visitors". From the perspective of the need for better understanding of the standards and requirements, one participant stated, "It's important that the 'peer review teams' have at LEAST one member of the team who understands measurement and principles and the difference between reliable measure and valid measures…and the importance of both." Another participant said, "Some peers are ill-informed of the process and can then be a

hindrance to the review." In relation to understanding the evidence that can be used to meet the standards, one participant stated, "Fairness when looking at the data. We are located all over the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Some data is going to look very different given locations." Another participant said, "Not all peer institutions are similar in how they operate or who they serve and that can make it harder for peer institutions to properly review another institution."

Bias

In regard to bias, one participant said, "They may be biased. Example: they don't like online teaching and downrate [sic] an online program." Another participant indicated bias is a concern from experience from their visit where the peer "wanted to give us an AFI [area for improvement] because we didn't do things the way their university did."

Consistency

The concern of consistency arose in the responses. In regard to consistency, one participant stated, "The process is highly subjective and variable. Based on site visitors' stories it seems that team members sometimes obsess about a particular component of the review and that some teams go easier on a program than others." Another participant said, "groups and individuals vary" and listed "consistency" as a concern.

None

Three participants indicated that there are no concerns with peer review by simply stating "none" or "none at this time."

Table 15.

Peer Review Alternatives

Alternatives (N=20)	Themes	Frequency
	No alternative	12
	Professional organizations	4

No alternative

The theme that emerged most in the data was *no alternative.* Overwhelmingly faculty did not provide any other method as an alternative to peer review for accreditation with four responses simply stating "none". Another participant stated, "Peer review is fine, just pick the peers more carefully." A couple of participants indicated no alternative for peer review, but did comment on the makeup of the peer reviewers with one participant stating "It would be helpful to have at least some experts on an accreditation team that had a lot of experience."

Professional Organizations

A few participants indicated a review by a professional organization would be an alternative to peer review. As stated by one participant, "Oversight of programs by state professional board who provide ongoing communication and data analysis on programs" would be an alternative to peer review. Another participant indicated an alternative would be to "Work with professional organizations to assist us with ideas for best practice."

Beyond the themes of "no alternative" and "professional organizations," other alternatives to peer review mentioned by participants included "a team of people who evaluated each EPP in the state," "external body consisting of school-based practitioners," and "program faculty members," and "one expert to review programs."

Research Question 3: To what extent do EPP faculty perceive the 2013 initial standards to be effective?

EPP faculty were asked to respond to questions regarding their perceptions of the effectiveness of the 2013 CAEP standards. Results of overall faculty perception are in Table 16.

Table 16.

Perceptions of the 2013 CAEP Initial Standards

Variable	n	M	SD
Full-time faculty	30	2.57	0.73
Part-time faculty	0		
Adjunct faculty	2	2.58	0.71
Faculty overall	32	2.58	0.71

Results indicate that overall, faculty agree that the 2013 CAEP initial standards are effective. By faculty type, both full-time and adjunct faculty agree that the 2013 CAEP initial standards are effective.

EPP faculty were asked to respond to questions regarding their perceptions of the 2013 CAEP initial standards individually for attainability and effectiveness. Results are in Table 17.

Table 17.

Perceptions of the 2013 CAEP Initial Standards by Standard

Question	SD	D	A	SA	n
Standard 1 is attainable.	2 (6.45%)	2 (6.45%)	16 (51.61%)	11 (35.48%)	31
Standard 1 will lead to effective candidates/completers of educator preparation programs.	3 (10.00%)	4 (13.33%)	15 (50.00%)	8 (26.67%)	30
Standard 2 is attainable.	1 (3.13%)	3 (9.38%)	18 (56.25%)	10 (31.25%)	32
Standard 2 will lead to effective preparation of candidates/completers of educator preparation programs.	3 (9.38%)	4 (12.50%)	17 (53.13%)	8 (25.00%)	32
Standard 3 is attainable.	1 (3.13%)	2 (6.25%)	21 (65.63%)	8 (25.00%)	32
Standard 3 will lead to effective candidates/completers of educator preparation programs.	3 (9.38%)	6 (18.75%)	17 (53.13%)	6 (18.75%)	32

Table 18 (continued)

Perceptions of the 2013 CAEP Initial Standards by Standard

Standard 4 is attainable.	5 (15.63%)	4 (12.50%)	15 (46.88%)	8 (25.00%)	32
Standard 4 will provide data that will lead to more effective educator preparation programs.	5 (15.63%)	7 (21.88%)	14 (43.75%)	6 (18.75%)	32
Standard 5 is attainable.	1 (3.13%)	4 (12.50%)	20 (62.50%)	7 (21.88%)	32
Standard 5 will lead to effective educator preparation programs.	3 (9.38%)	6 (18.75%)	16 (50.00%)	7 (21.88%)	32

For all standards, the majority of participants agree to strongly agree that the standards are attainable and the standards will lead to more effective candidates/completers of educator preparation programs, or more effective educator preparation programs.

Research Question 4: What demographic and professional variable(s) are associated with faculty perceptions of accreditation?

This research question sought to determine if relationships exist between faculty demographic and professional variables and faculty perceptions of effectiveness, process, and standards. Regression analysis was the intended method for analyzing this research question. Given the low response rate, the statistical power was not appropriate for carrying out the analysis. Non-parametric methods were explored for an alternative method for analysis, but due to the instability of the data, it was determined that this research question could not be answered.

Research Question 5: To what extent do faculty perceive accreditation affects their individual academic freedom? How?

A frequency table (Table 18) is provided to show respondents' beliefs regarding programmatic accreditation's effect on academic freedom.

Table 19.

Faculty Perceptions of Accreditation's Impact on Academic Freedom

	n	SD	D	A	SA
I believe programmatic accreditation affects academic freedom.	32	1 (3.13%)	7 (21.88%)	14 (43.75%)	10 (31.25%)

The majority of participants agree to strongly agree that programmatic accreditation affects academic freedom. Participants answering agree or strongly agree were guided to a follow up open-ended question to answer "how": *Please explain how you believe accreditation affects academic freedom.*

Themes from responses are reported in Table 19.

Table 20.

Academic Freedom Themes

Academic Freedom (N=18)	Themes	Frequency
	Prescriptive	13

Prescriptive

Throughout participant responses, the theme of *prescriptive* emerged. As stated by one participant,

> Accreditation requires adherence to specific standards selected by the accrediting agency rather than allowing EPPs the freedom to choose the standards they feel are best in the field. While accreditors claim to support innovation, the evidence site teams are looking for is really very prescribed.

Another participant stated,

> Having set standards which necessitate common assessments for data collection begins a system of standardization which diminishes the academic freedom of

faculty to teach what they think is important and provide authentic assessments rather than follow the 'cookie cutter' prescribed curriculum and assessments. A third participant said, "Faculty required to 'cookie cut' syllabi, include an unreasonable amount of standards to be covered per course, and expected to 'color within the lines' in terms of satisfying external expectations."

Although the emerging themes included mostly negative comments toward accreditation, one participant indicated accreditation "standards have insured my academic freedom in assuring that I can include the critical approaches in my curricula-conservative area that struggle with discussions of diversity." Another participant indicated that accreditation "allows EPPs to find creative ways to develop courses and provide resources."

Research Question 6: To what extent do faculty perceive accreditation affects their individual program autonomy? How?

A frequency table (Table 20) is provided to show respondents' beliefs regarding programmatic accreditation's effect on individual program autonomy.

Table 21.

Faculty Perceptions of Accreditation's Impact on Individual Program Autonomy

	n	SD	D	A	SA
I believe programmatic accreditation affects individual program autonomy.	32	1 (3.13%)	5 (15.63%)	15 (46.87%)	11 (34.37%)

The majority of participants agree to strongly agree that programmatic accreditation affects individual program autonomy. Participants answering agree or strongly agree were guided to a follow up open-ended question to answer "how": *Please explain how you believe programmatic accreditation affects individual program autonomy.* Themes from responses are reported in Table 21.

Table 22.

Program Autonomy Themes

Program Autonomy (N=20)	Themes	Frequency
	Prescriptive	9
	Innovation	7

Prescriptive

A theme that emerged from the data was the prescriptive nature of programmatic accreditation. One participant stated that accreditation had "Way too much external expectation to conform. Every school has its niche, and areas of specialization. We all can't be the same, nor should be." Another participant said, "The process and questions are very similar for all institutions, though some may not apply to all because of size, populations served, etc." Similarly, another participant stated,

> Size, student background, location all affect what works best for the epp. The interpretations of the site visitors is [are] heavily influenced by what works for them. They expect our program to look like their program, but they are vastly different.

Innovation

In response to how programmatic accreditation affects individual program autonomy, "innovation," mostly in the sense of limiting innovation, emerged as a theme. One participant stated,

> The expectations of site visitors are shaped by their own experiences and beliefs. Making change, trying new possibilities, and exploring and adapting to student needs risks not being recognized as viable practice by some site visitors and reviewers. As artifacts are collected and prepared and rigorous workloads are

imposed by the accrediting agency, change and adaptation become a giant task of revisions. It makes innovation and change prohibitive.

From a cost perspective, a participant stated, "The time and financial resources needed to complete accreditation negatively impacts the abilities to create innovative programming components designed for the individual university's needs." One participant providing both sides of accreditation's effect on autonomy comparing experiences from a larger to a smaller program stating,

> Large innovative programs in cities where they can work well with local school are somewhat restricted when their programs must be shaped specifically to how someone imagines the standards must be enacted. But at a smaller more conservative institution I have been able to push against admin for changes in our program by claiming it is something we need for accreditation.

Although the two emerging themes included mostly negative comments toward accreditation, it's important to note that two participants provided responses to the positive effects of accreditation on program autonomy. One participant, as shown above under *innovation*, believes that programmatic accreditation has provided a justification or need for program changes to be implemented at a smaller institution. Another participant said that accreditation "Allows the EPP to monitor their programs effectively and be accountable."

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This exploratory study was intended to identify faculty perceptions of accreditation in the field of educator preparation where little faculty targeted research is available. Accreditation is the dominant method for determining the quality of an educator preparation provider. Faculty are largely responsible for the implementation of the day-to-day activities that will yield the evidence needed for earning accreditation. The focus of this study was faculty perceptions of the effectiveness of accreditation, the effectiveness of the process, the effectiveness of the 2013 CAEP initial standards, and the effect accreditation has on academic freedom and program autonomy.

Methods

Data was collected through an on-line survey consisting of both quantitative and qualitative questions to gain a better understanding of faculty perceptions. Faculty from all Kentucky-based EPPs were asked to participate in the study. Faculty were identified as those who had full-time assignment to the EPP, part-time assignment to the EPP, and adjunct faculty, not fully employed by the institution, but who had assignment to the EPP. Of the 25 EPPs asked to participate, 15 of the EPP leaders responded agreeing to send the survey link to a total of 422 faculty. The number of participants with usable data was 41, yielding a 9.7% response rate. See "Limitations" section below for discussion of the response rate. The response rate posed some challenges with the data analysis and additional methods were explored but ultimately one research question (research question four) could not be answered.

To explore faculty perceptions of accreditation, this study was guided by the following research questions:

1. To what extent do EPP faculty value programmatic accreditation's effectiveness for improving EPP quality?

    1a. To what extent do faculty perceive programmatic accreditation to be important? (Why or why not?)

2. To what extent do EPP faculty perceive accreditation processes to be effective?

3. To what extent do EPP faculty perceive the 2013 initial CAEP standards to be effective?

4. What demographic and professional variable(s) are associated with faculty perceptions of accreditation?

5. To what extent do faculty perceive accreditation affects their individual academic freedom? How?

6. To what extent do faculty perceive accreditation affects their individual program autonomy? How?

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data and thematic analysis was used for qualitative data. Findings from each research question, significance and implications, limitations, and areas for future research follow.

Research Question 1: Effectiveness of Accreditation

The first research question sought to determine the extent to which faculty perceive accreditation to be effective for improving EPP quality. For this research question, quality is associated with status, enhancement, recruitment, commitment, and ability to do what you say you can do. As indicated in the literature, EPP status (Jacobs, 2005), ability to recruit strong students and faculty (Roberts et al., 2004), faculty commitment (Jacobs, 2005; Mitchell & Yamagishi, 2005), and strengthened profession (Sutton, 1993) are benefits of accreditation. These factors contribute to the quality of an EPP.

Results suggest that overall (M=2.61), and by faculty type (full-time M=2.57, adjunct M=3.13), participants acknowledge that accreditation may be effective for improving the quality of an EPP. When faculty can see the value of accreditation, the time and efforts put into the process have a purpose. Faculty who have participated in an accreditation visit were asked if their efforts directed toward obtaining accreditation were worth the time and energy invested. Fifty-two percent of faculty agree or strongly agree and 48% disagree to strongly disagree. These findings are supported by the literature where faculty believed the time and energy were worth the end result (Roberts et al., 2004).

Participants were asked if they believe the benefits outweighed the costs of accreditation in terms of time. The results were close with 53.12% of participants indicating they do not believe the benefits outweigh the time as compared to 46.88% indicating they do. Similarly, but with a slightly larger difference, in terms of benefits outweighing the costs in terms of resources, 56.25% believe benefits do not and 43.33% believe they do. Similar findings are present in the literature with faculty being divided on benefits and costs (Hail et al., 2019), and costs exceeding benefits (Shim, 2012; Sutton, 1993). Of the 52.5% of participants in this study who have participated in an accreditation visit, a little over half (52%) of participants indicated time and energy were worth the efforts.

Participants identified both benefits of accreditation, (program improvement, accountability, quality) and costs/negative outcomes (time, diverting attention, monetary costs, compliance, and impact on faculty authority). The literature supports that accreditation can be beneficial for program improvement (Jacobs, 2005; Mitchell &

Yamagishi, 2005), as a mechanism for determining quality (Berliner, 2011) or improving quality (Eaton, 2010; Roberts et al., 2004), and for accountability purposes (Perley et al., 2008; Shim, 2012; USDE, 2015). Additionally, the literature identifies similar costs/negative outcomes in relation to the amount of time and costs of accreditation (Basinger, 1998; Gardner, Scannell, & Wisiewski, 1996, Goodlad, 1990; Hail et al., 2019; Jacobs, 2005; Lewis, 2016; Nicklin, 1992; Tom, 1999), diverting attention from other faculty activities to accreditation related tasks (Jacobs, 2005; Shim 2012), compliance (Ewell & Jones, 2006; Stanskas et al., 2015) and impact to faculty authority (Aydarova & Berliner, 2018; Bardo, 2009; Eaton, 2010). Perceptions of benefits and costs provide a sense of where faculty may find value and where they may have resistance and can assist EPPs and accreditors with building faculty buy-in.

Since accreditation is mandated in Kentucky, and up until recently EPSB had a strategic plan goal that all EPPs seek both state and national (CAEP) accreditation, faculty were asked if they believed the EPSB should mandate both state and national accreditation. Results suggest faculty overall (63.64%) and by faculty type (full-time 63.33%, adjunct 66.67%) do not believe state and national accreditation should be mandated by the EPSB. Given that EPSB adopted the 2013 initial standards and the state process mirrors CAEP's process for accreditation, the mandate of national accreditation could be seen as an unnecessary addition, especially for smaller institutions in relation to the costs.

Given the results of this study, it may be the case that increased demands from external stakeholders increase the workload of faculty and forces change to occur to meet the evolving requirements from accreditors and regulatory entities. More and more is

asked of faculty to support accreditation efforts in addition to teaching and scholarship. EPPs are driven by their missions and adopt practices and outcomes that lend to carrying out those efforts. Faculty who are on board with what accreditation can offer or lead to in terms of establishing a quality EPP can see the value of its effectiveness and be committed to seeing it through and leveraging it as a mechanism for driving their mission. As literature suggests, buy-in is necessary for accreditation's success (Hasbun & Rudolph, 2016, Lederman, 2010, Moffett, 2016, Turley, 2005), and better understanding if faculty believe in accreditation's effectiveness helps shape the conversations and work that surround the accreditation cycle that demands commitment and time. The commitment from faculty is somewhat forced given that accreditation is required in Kentucky for EPPs offering programs leading to certification. It is important to understand faculty perceptions of the value of accreditation for its effectiveness to alert EPPs and accreditors and encourage them to work collaboratively to identify ways to maximize benefits and reduce costs of accreditation.

Research Question 1a: Importance of accreditation for EPP

Participants were asked about the importance of accreditation for an EPP. The majority of participants (85.36%) believe accreditation is moderately important to very important for an EPP. To gain further understanding of the importance, all participants were asked why they believe accreditation is very, moderately, slightly, or not at all important. For faculty that perceive accreditation to be very important, the theme emerging most from the data was *quality.* Accreditation is a validation mechanism that ensures the quality of a program and indicates an EPP's ability to meet standards set forth by the national accreditor. Participants referred to accreditation as the method for

providing the evidence demonstrating they meet standards. Other reasons reported for the importance of programmatic accreditation were *continuous improvement* and *credibility*. Successful accreditation indicates to others, internally and externally, that the EPP is collecting, analyzing, and using data for improvements, which is really at the heart of accreditation. Earning accreditation based on standards established by a national accrediting body also provides credibility to the program. Stakeholders can trust that the EPP is doing what it says it is doing and has been externally checked by those in the field that are knowledgeable of best practices.

Accountability emerged as a theme for faculty perceiving accreditation to be moderately important. As indicated in the literature, students, parents, government entities, and other stakeholders seek out programs that will make good on their promise of providing higher education that prepares graduates for the workplace. The accountability through accreditation enables faculty to show they meet standards that are indicative of quality.

Only one response was provided for slightly important and one response for not at all important; themes were not identified, but the need for accountability and redundancy were mentioned, respectively. This study suggests faculty acknowledge that accreditation may be important for determining quality and credibility, accountability of EPPs, and driving continuous improvement . As stated by Hawkins (2008), "The pressure for greater accountability has been coming from both Republicans and Democrats, from corporate America, from accreditors, from trustees, and from other stakeholders. This is not a partisan issue, and it will not be going away" (para. 15). The accreditation-related demands on faculty are increasing and changes must be made within programs to satisfy

requirements. More evidence is needed to demonstrate meeting standards of accrediting bodies and other agencies with a stake in educator preparation. With the ever increasing demands, faculty belief of accreditation's importance can be the tipping point for earning or not earning accreditation.

Research Question 2: Effectiveness of the Accreditation Process

Research question two sought faculty perceptions of the effectiveness of the accreditation process. The process for this study includes the self-study, the onsite visit, the accreditation decision, the annual report, and the peer review component of accreditation. Overall, faculty agree that programmatic accreditation processes are effective for improving an EPP to prepare P-12 educators. The literature suggest that faculty engagement in the accreditation process is critical for accreditation efforts (Eaton, 2010; Moffett, 2016).

Findings from this study indicate the majority of faculty (80.95%, N=21) who have participated in an accreditation visit perceive that the self-study led to program improvement. The literature supports this finding as the self-study is seen as perhaps the most valuable aspect of accreditation (Blom et al., 2012; Coombs & Allred, 1993) and program improvement resulted from the self-study (Berliner, 2011; Cecil & Comas,1983; Kornfield et al., 2003). Additionally, participants believe the accreditation decision rationale was clearly communicated which provides guidance from peers on how to improve program components (70.00%, N=20). This study finding differs from Dill's (1998b) review of specialized accreditation where reports "described agencies' failures to communicate that there were serious issues before decisions were rendered" and that

there is concern “when final review committees reversed team judgments without team members participating in the discussion or vote” (p. 23).

The accreditation cycle for educator preparation in Kentucky is every seven years, but 2-3 years prior to a visit evidence gathering and writing begin to take place. The immense time and effort required of faculty during the accreditation process and beyond is often underestimated. Faculty support of the process can lead to stronger engagement that is necessary for program improvement and reaccreditation (Bucalos, 2014; Greenberg, 2012).

As indicated in the literature, peer review is a foundational component of accreditation (Eaton, 2010) keeping the government from directly imposing an external review of quality by enabling peers in the profession to apply their expertise for determining if the evidence meets professional standards. This study suggests faculty believe that peer review offers benefits to the EPP and to the peers reviewing other EPPs. The largest concern with peer review is the training of the site visitors. Identifying this concern elevates the need for more in-depth training and perhaps ongoing training or periodic training required of site visitors. Understanding that peer review is a voluntary, non-paid process, the re-training idea may not be met with enthusiasm, but could alleviate some concerns with the consistency and bias participants experienced and lead to a stronger belief in the effectiveness of the process. When participants were asked about alternatives to peer review, the majority of responses suggest no alternative, and the few that offered an alternative suggested review through a professional organization. This suggests that most participants find the peer review process to have its place in accreditation.

Research Question 3: Effectiveness of the 2013 CAEP Initial Standards

Research question three targeted faculty perceptions of the 2013 CAEP initial standards. Accreditation standards lay the foundation for the work that is involved in seeking or maintaining accreditation status. The CAEP standards are more rigorous and the expectations are higher in both what the standards should drive and what the EPPs must provide as evidence.

Overall, participants in this study find the 2013 CAEP initial standards to be effective for improving the EPP (M=2.58, N=32). By accreditation standard, most participants find the standards to be attainable and effective for preparation of candidates/completers and programs. The literature represented both positive (Sawchuck 2011; Sawchuck, 2013b) and negative perspectives (AACTE, n.d.; Moffett, 2016; Sawchuck, 2015) of the standards. This study supports the idea that CAEP standards are effective for improving the EPP. Responses suggest that faculty believe the standards are attainable which indicates the standards are not a barrier to successfully achieving accreditation: (standard one (87.09%), standard two (87.50%), standard three (90.63%), standard four (71.88%), and standard five (84.38%). Murray's (2016) analysis of the CAEP solicited feedback of standards indicated standards one and two could show EPP quality, but "relatively less but still substantial confidence in the other three standards" (Conclusion section, para. 3). Results of this study suggest that overall, participants find the standards to be similar for their effectiveness to lead to effective candidates, completers, and programs, with standard four coming in lower: standard one (76.67%), standard two (78.13%), standard three (71.88%), standard four (62.5%), and standard five (71.88%). It is perhaps not surprising standard four comes in with the least support for

both attainability and effectiveness given the ability of EPPs to collect the data required with limited assistance from the state. Standard four requires EPPs to determine their graduates' impact on P-12 student achievement. The state initially had plans to collect and provide much of the data EPPs would need in order to demonstrate such impacts; however, the state was unable to reach agreements with local school districts to obtain such data to, in turn, provide to EPPs. The lack of state data put EPPs in a difficult position to meet the requirements of the standard. Alternative methods, such as case studies, have been utilized by EPPs to meet standard four.

Research Question 4: Variables Associated with Perceptions

The intention of this research question was to look at experience and professional demographic variables that may be associated with perceptions of accreditation and open the conversation to how those variables may impact faculty perceptions of and reaction to accreditation. Due to uncontrollable circumstances, the data from this study were not sufficient for addressing this research question. The method of analysis initially selected was regression analysis. The small N created challenges and assumptions could not be met nor could a reasonable attempt at regression analysis be made with few violations. Mann Whitney-U and Kruskal Wallis-H analyses were attempted, yet data were not sufficient for carrying out the analyses.

Research Questions 5 and 6: Accreditation's Effect on Faculty and Programs

Research question five sought faculty perceptions of accreditation's impact on academic freedom and research question six sought faculty perceptions of accreditation's impact on program autonomy. The questions did not imply positive or negative impact, allowing faculty to simply answer if they believe accreditation has an impact. A follow-

up open-ended question sought information regarding *how* accreditation affects academic freedom and program autonomy. Because these findings were so closely aligned, the discussion will encompass both academic freedom and program autonomy together.

Findings suggest that the majority of participants believe programmatic accreditation affects both academic freedom (75.00%) and program autonomy (81.24%). The responses were similar at the faculty and program level and the theme that emerged most frequently from both questions of "how" was "prescriptive". Jacobs' (2005) study of faculty perceptions also revealed that participants found accreditation to be prescriptive in relation to NCATE (p. 126). Academic freedom supports faculty expertise and authority for what and how they teach. Participant responses indicate they feel their expertise is superseded by the prescriptive nature of accreditation through set standards and requirements that must be included in syllabi, instruction, and assessment. Participants' statements included reference to specific outcomes that must be included in programs, requirements of content that may not align with faculty ideas for the course or students, and specific data to support meeting standards, suggesting that there is a level of enforcement with accreditation that hinders faculty determination of what is best for their field and their students. Similarly, with program autonomy, participants felt there is pressure to conform and the individuality of programs and EPPs is limited due to the requirements of the standards. Location, size, student background, and delivery method were mentioned in participant responses as program characteristics that contribute to the uniqueness of an EPP, but that accreditation narrows the uniqueness through specific standards and requirements. The term 'cookie-cutter' was included in several responses. These findings conflict with the intent of CAEP as stated in an essay on CAEP's website

by Fallon (2017), “An accreditation site review does not require you to submit to a cookie-cutter approach to meet the CAEP Standards” (n.p., Essay, para. 12). Interestingly, “standardization” was one of the themes identified for the research question regarding why accreditation is very important. However, when shifting the focus to how accreditation impacts academic freedom and program autonomy, the term “standardization” is reflected negatively in the comments surrounding the theme of “prescriptive”. When authority of faculty or authority of programs is minimized or infringed upon, the reaction is often negative and met with resistance as supported by the literature (Baez, 2009; Cain, 2014, Eaton, 2010).

Participants indicated that accreditation sets the standards that are required of each provider that shapes the curricula and assessments of each program. Several responses mentioned that the prescriptive nature limits faculty expertise and flexibility to design courses as they see best fit for their students, and requires specific components and assessments be included on syllabi, impacting academic freedom. The literature identifies similar concerns regarding accreditation’s impact on academic freedom (Eaton, 2010; Ledoux et al., 2010). Additionally, the literature indicates that mandates through accreditation are often met with resistance, especially in areas that impact faculty authority (Hail et al., 2019; Moffett, 2016).

In relation to program autonomy, participants indicated that accreditation does not allow for the differences or individuality in instruction in for students, size, and areas of concentration at their institutions. “Innovation” emerged as a theme for program autonomy. Participants indicated that accreditation limits innovation because of the time demands of faculty, the requirement to meet standards and follow practices that do not

necessarily align with needs, and the financial resources that are allocated to accreditation. The literature supports this theme that accreditation can hinder innovation (Ewell, 2015; USDE, 2006, p.5). Although there is some literature mirroring these same types of perceptions, that is not the intent of accreditation. Accreditation should enable flexibility and innovation. CAEP claims, "There is not 'one way' to make a case for accreditation and accreditation is not simply providing what 'CAEP wants'" (CAEP, 2020, p.4).

Given the intent of accreditation and the results of this study, there is a disconnect. This conflict of perception versus intent should be addressed by external entities. Additional information and guidance regarding the flexibility of the standards could result in stronger faculty buy-in and reduce the feeling that accreditation infringes upon academic freedom and reduces the autonomy of programs. Identifying the perceived infringements on academic freedom and program autonomy can launch a discussion that explores ways to leverage accreditation as a way to protect academic freedom and elevate program autonomy.

Limitations of Study

In addition to anticipated limitations of this type of research (see below), this study was also affected by the timing of its survey distribution. It is important to note that the administration of the survey happened at the onset of a world-wide pandemic and the fact that any faculty participated in the study supports the need for such research. The survey was administered beginning February 25, 2020, and closed March 10, 2020. During this time, the nation was beginning to realize the magnitude of the worldwide health

pandemic due to the coronavirus, COVID-19. The following timeline details the rapid evolution of the coronavirus:

- December 31, 2019, pneumonia cases identified in Wuhan China was a result of an unknown virus.
- January 7, 2020, Chinese authorities identify coronavirus.
- January 21, 2020, first case of coronavirus in the United States.
- January 30, 2020, the Worldwide Health Organization (WHO) declares a public health emergency of international concern.
- February 11, 2020, coronavirus named COVID-19 by the WHO.
- March 6, 2020, Governor Beshear of Kentucky declared a state of emergency ("Kentucky's Response", n.d.).
- March 11, 2020, global pandemic officially declared by the Worldwide Health Organization (Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020).
- March 12, 2020, the Governor of Kentucky recommended all P-12 schools close to in-person instruction beginning on March 16, 2020 ("Kentucky's Response", n.d.).
- March 13, 2020, President Trump declares a national emergency
- March 16, 2020, all public schools closed for in-person instruction ("Kentucky's Response", n.d.). Closure of schools impacted the ability of educator preparation students to complete field experiences and student teaching; modifications had to be made by EPPs.
- Beginning March 16, 2020, many colleges and universities closed for in-person instruction.

Prior to the declaration of the state emergency announced on March 6, 2020, there was much uncertainty in Kentucky surrounding the implications COVID-19 may have on teaching and learning for all of education. In preparation for these uncertain and unprecedented times, administrators and faculty began to make plans and modifications for delivering the curriculum and managing the anticipated effects of a state-wide and nation-wide shutdown. Educator preparation involves not only universities and colleges, but also P-12 schools and a regulatory agency. Discussions were taking place among these entities regarding the potential impact on teaching, learning, and logistics even before official emergencies were declared in March.

Many institutions had to shift the method of delivery of instruction to an online format in its entirety in a very short amount of time. The impact of this pandemic on educator preparation providers was large and unprecedented under the current requirements and best practices to prepare future educators in Kentucky. Assignments, assessments, field experiences and student teaching were among the key components that had to be immediately modified by faculty within each educator preparation provider. In Kentucky, candidates in educator preparation must complete a minimum of 200 hours of field experience which includes observations in schools and related agencies, student tutoring, interaction with families of students, attendance at school board and school-based council meetings, participation in a school-based professional learning community, and assisting teachers and other school professionals; student teachers are required to complete 70 days of student teaching in order to complete an educator preparation program. As a result of COVID-19, candidates in field experiences and student teachers were not able to complete the requirements in the traditional methods, therefore EPPs had

to work with school districts to determine how to continue these experiences while the P-12 schools were also working to modify their instruction and incorporate virtual experiences, when possible. Understandably, transitioning to remote learning and modifying practices took priority over completion of the survey distributed for this study. The final response rate for the study was 9.7%. Given the low response rate, analyses were modified and the results cannot be generalized; however, the results still provide insightful and useful data on faculty perceptions that can be used in further research of the topic.

The researcher sought the entire population's participation, but the choice to participate was up to each EPP leader and then each individual faculty member affiliated with the EPP. The researcher utilized EPP leaders to distribute the recruitment letter and survey link as a method to ensure anonymity. Given the researcher's previous employment at the state agency, additional steps were taken for anonymity of participants that could have resulted in participation limitations.

Additionally, open-ended questions are subject to coding error as this practice is influenced by the researcher's interpretation of the data and the researcher's choice of coding assignment. Given the researcher's extensive time working in accreditation, researcher bias is possible.

Responses may have been impacted based on the cycle of accreditation. Faculty preparing for an accreditation visit at the time of survey completion may have chosen not to participate due to the already increased work-load associated with a site visit. In addition, the researcher previously held a position at the EPSB working with EPPs and served as the state consultant on many accreditation visits. Steps were taken to ensure

anonymity of participants with the intent of removing any relational barriers that would hinder participation. EPP leaders were the point of contact instead of individual faculty, institution names were not attached to individual answers, and personal demographic data were not collected to assist in separating identifying information, especially in small providers.

Areas for Future Research

For future research on faculty perceptions in relation to programmatic accreditation in educator preparation, the researcher suggests including a research question specifically focused on program review. The approach to program review varies by state, and in Kentucky, it is conducted by the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB). Distinguishing program review and the accreditation processes would provide clearer data on the perceptions of each individually. Additional questions around effectiveness of accreditation for improving EPP quality and effectiveness of the process would provide more depth and breadth. Perhaps conducting individual studies of effectiveness, process, standards, and accreditation's impact on traditional faculty roles and program authority utilizing mixed-methods would provide a more in-depth discovery and clarity of perceptions.

Participants in this study perceive accreditation to be effective for improving quality, but did not perceive the benefits to outweigh the costs. A study focused on ways to mitigate costs, both cost of time and cost of other resources, could reveal opportunities for addressing the cost concern.

A qualitative study seeking to identify ways to improve accreditation at the administrative and faculty levels would extend the literature. This research identified

some areas of accreditation that could be improved, but did not explore ways to implement improvements that could increase the satisfaction of those involved in the process.

Duplicating a similar study as standards change every seven years would contribute to the literature to determine if faculty perceive the changes more positively or negatively.

Additionally, incorporating at what point in the accreditation cycle faculty are at the time of the research may provide interesting data and contribute to the understanding of perceptions.

Implications

The results of this study have implications for EPPs, the EPSB, and educator preparation provider accreditors. While the results cannot be generalized, the study suggests accreditation is supported by faculty, but there are costs that impact faculty time, academic freedom, and program autonomy. Overall faculty find accreditation leads to quality improvement, the processes are effective, and the standards are attainable and effective, but results reveal there are identified costs associated with accreditation that negatively impact faculty. Participants believe peer review is the best method for reviewing ability to meet accreditation standards, but concerns were raised regarding the training of site visitors. This is important for both CAEP and EPSB to note as training falls to them. Enhancing training or requiring continued training may alleviate concerns and strengthen the effectiveness of accreditation by ensuring consistency and fairness. Additionally, faculty in this study perceive accreditation to negatively impact academic freedom and program autonomy. These two foundational components to the faculty role

and program functionality are intended to be supported by accreditation. However, as external demands increase, faculty and programs are being shaped by those demands, lessening the ability of faculty to rely on their own expertise and their candidate needs; program autonomy diminishes as the need to conform is increased. Addressing concerns at the EPP, state, and accreditor level can increase the value of accreditation by assuring accreditation maintains its neutral role, supports faculty and EPPs, and provides protection from government control.

Through this research, Kentucky EPP faculty had an opportunity to let their voices be heard regarding a process that impacts their day-to-day functions. With the continued focus on the effectiveness of accreditation and the outcomes-driven mentality, the external demands continue to increase. Addressing the concerns of faculty can enhance accreditation while keeping its intention of continuous improvement mechanism for identifying quality programs at the forefront. Accreditation does not have to be viewed as prescriptive or limiting; accreditation should support innovation and provide flexibility while maintaining quality through standards established by those most knowledgeable in the field. EPSB and CAEP should intentionally survey faculty regarding the effectiveness, process, and standards surrounding accreditation and allow faculty to help shape standard revisions. Better understanding how accreditation impacts faculty roles and program functionality can contribute to strengthened collaboration to enhance educator preparation through innovation and flexibility to meet student needs that should, in turn, improve P-12 student learning.

This study begins bridging the gap between the practice and research of accreditation. Accreditation has a long history in higher education, but there is still much

to be studied and ongoing research opportunities will present themselves as practices and standards evolve. This research provides an evaluation of accreditation from the viewpoint of faculty and reveals that much can be learned from those who are involved in accreditation practices.

Faculty engage in the service activity of accreditation but accreditation activities can expand beyond the scope of service. Involvement in the accreditation process requires significant time commitment from faculty, but perhaps faculty research agendas might expand to include exploration of accreditation through a research lens allowing for the identification of pressing issues and, hopefully, identifying possible solutions to the challenges EPPs and institutions face with respect to accreditation. Accreditation can also lead to relationship building through collaboration with other areas in the institution that may assist with accreditation needs (e.g. development of instruments) and provide opportunities to learn from others through the peer evaluation process. Although accreditation has its challenges, significant research and scholarly opportunities exist in the realm of accreditation, opportunities beyond the service and practice aspects that this study begins to uncover. Faculty participating in accreditation, which includes evaluating their practices in relation to accreditation standards, have a unique opportunity to identify areas for further exploration. Specific research questions may emerge that can contribute to better understandings of accreditation and practices that will strengthen a provider or program. Faculty may begin to look at accreditation as a research opportunity in addition to the service aspect.

Since the implementation of this study, the EPSB has explored the option of another accreditor for educator preparation and is seeking to allow providers to choose an

accreditor that best suits their needs. Additionally, CAEP has revised their standards as part of their continuous improvement process, and has addressed some concerns and provided clarity, although the standards are not drastically different. Faculty voice should be at the top when considering modifications as they have first-hand experience in implementation and can provide insight to the varying opportunities and challenges of each unique EPP. Allowing faculty to give input and have an intentional role in the process of developing accreditation requirements allows them to contribute to the profession in a valuable way that can enhance the profession. Those that are directly involved in preparing future educators, are engaged in scholarly activities in the field, and are impacted by the process and standards are equipped to provide input on how to make improvements and should be called upon for their feedback and guidance.

The results of this study reveal both positive and negative perceptions that can be used by the state, CAEP and other accrediting agencies, and the EPP to address the concerns of faculty, highlight the benefits of and satisfaction with accreditation, and provide more information or examples that can help faculty and EPPs achieve accreditation while also limiting the negative impact. Identifying faculty perceptions enables accreditation to evolve to become a more effective mechanism for improving the quality and status of EPPs.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: IRB Consent Form

XP Continuation Review

Approval Ends: 6/9/2021

TO:

FROM:

SUBJECT: DATE:

IRB Number: 44784

Lauren Graves, Ph.D. Higher Education Educational Policy Studies and
PI phone #

PI email: lauren.graves@uky.edu

Chairperson/Vice Chairperson
Nonmedical Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval for Continuation
6/11/2020

On 6/10/2020, the Nonmedical Institutional Review Board approved your protocol entitled:

Faculty Perceptions of Accreditation in the Field of Educator Preparation

Approval is effective from 6/10/2020 until 6/9/2021 and extends to any consent/assent form, cover letter, and/or phone script. If applicable, the IRB approved consent/assent document(s) to be used when enrolling subjects can be found in the "All Attachments" menu item of your E-IRB application. [Note, subjects can onlybeenrolledusingconsent/assentformswhichhaveavalid"IRBApproval"stampunlessspecialwaiverhasbeenobtainedfromtheIRB.] Priortotheendof this period, you will be sent a Continuation Review (CR) request which must be completed and submitted to the Office of Research Integrity so that the protocol can be reviewed and approved for the next period.

Inimplementingtheresearchactivities,youareresponsibleforcomplyingwithIRBdecisions,conditionsandrequirements. Theresearchproceduresshouldbe implemented as approved in the IRB protocol. It is the principal investigator's responsibility to ensure any changes planned for the research are submitted for review and approval by the IRB prior to implementation. Protocol changes made without prior IRB approval to eliminate apparent hazards to the subject(s) shouldbereportedinwritingimmediatelytotheIRB.
Furthermore,discontinuingastudyorcompletionofastudyisconsideredachangeintheprotocol'sstatus and therefore the IRB should be promptly notified in writing.

For information describing investigator responsibilities after obtaining IRB approval, download and read the document "PI Guidance to Responsibilities, Qualifications, Records and Documentation of Human Subjects Research" available in the online Office of Research Integrity's IRB Survival Handbook. Additional information regarding IRB review, federal regulations, and institutional policies may be found through ORI's web site. If you have questions, need additional information, or would like a paper copy of the above mentioned document, contact the Office of Research Integrity at 859-257-9428.

APPENDIX B: 2013 CAEP Initial Standards

1. Content and Pedagogical Knowledge
   Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions
   1.1 Candidates demonstrate an understanding of the 10 InTASC standards at the appropriate progression level(s)2 in the following categories: the learner and learning; content; instructional practice; and professional responsibility.
   Provider Responsibilities
   1.2 Providers ensure that candidates use research and evidence to develop an understanding of the teaching profession and use both to measure their P-12 students' progress and their own professional practice.
   1.3 Providers ensure that candidates apply content and pedagogical knowledge as reflected in outcome assessments in response to standards of Specialized Professional Associations (SPA), the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), states, or other accrediting bodies (e.g., National Association of Schools of Music – NASM).
   1.4 Providers ensure that candidates demonstrate skills and commitment that afford all P-12 students access to rigorous college- and career-ready standards (e.g., Next Generation Science Standards, National Career Readiness Certificate, Common Core State Standards).
   1.5 Providers ensure that candidates model and apply technology standards as they design, implement and assess learning experiences to engage students and improve learning; and enrich professional practice.

2. Clinical Partnerships and Practice
   Partnerships for Clinical Preparation
   2.1 Partners co-construct mutually beneficial P-12 school and community arrangements, including technology-based collaborations, for clinical preparation and share responsibility for continuous improvement of candidate preparation. Partnerships for clinical preparation can follow a range of forms, participants, and functions. They establish mutually agreeable expectations for candidate entry, preparation, and exit; ensure that theory and practice are linked; maintain coherence across clinical and academic components of preparation; and share accountability for candidate outcomes.
   Clinical Educators
   2.2. Partners co-select, prepare, evaluate, support, and retain high-quality clinical educators, both provider- and school-based, who demonstrate a positive impact on candidates' development and P-12 student learning and development. In collaboration with their partners, providers use multiple indicators and appropriate technology-based applications to establish, maintain, and refine criteria for selection, professional development, performance evaluation, continuous improvement, and retention of clinical educators in all clinical placement settings.
   Clinical Experiences
   2.3 The provider works with partners to design clinical experiences of sufficient depth, breadth, diversity, coherence, and duration to ensure that candidates demonstrate their developing effectiveness and positive impact on all students'

learning and development. Clinical experiences, including technology-enhanced learning opportunities, are structured to have multiple performance-based assessments at key points within the program to demonstrate candidates' development of the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions, as delineated in Standard 1, that are associated with a positive impact on the learning and development of all P-12 students.

3. Candidate Quality, Recruitment, and Selectivity

Plan for Recruitment of Diverse Candidates who Meet Employment Needs

3.1 The provider presents plans and goals to recruit and support completion of high-quality candidates from a broad range of backgrounds and diverse populations to accomplish their mission. The admitted pool of candidates reflects the diversity of America's P-12 students. The provider demonstrates efforts to know and address community, state, national, regional, or local needs for hard-to-staff schools and shortage fields, currently, STEM, English-language learning, and students with disabilities.

Candidates Demonstrate Academic Achievement

3.2 **REQUIRED COMPONENT**: The provider meets CAEP minimum criteria or the state's minimum criteria for academic achievement, whichever are higher, and gathers disaggregated data on the enrolled candidates whose preparation begins during an academic year.

Additional Selectivity Factors

3.3 Educator preparation providers establish and monitor attributes and dispositions beyond academic ability that candidates must demonstrate at admissions and during the program. The provider selects criteria, describes the measures used and evidence of the reliability and validity of those measures, and reports data that show how the academic and non-academic factors predict candidate performance in the program and effective teaching.

Selectivity During Preparation

3.4 The provider creates criteria for program progression and monitors candidates' advancement from admissions through completion. All candidates demonstrate the ability to teach to college- and career-ready standards. Providers present multiple forms of evidence to indicate candidates' developing content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and the integration of technology in all of these domains.

Selection At Completion

3.5 Before the provider recommends any completing candidate for licensure or certification, it documents that the candidate has reached a high standard for content knowledge in the fields where certification is sought and can teach effectively with positive impacts on P-12 student learning and development.

3.6 Before the provider recommends any completing candidate for licensure or certification, it documents that the candidate understands the expectations of the profession, including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice, and relevant laws and policies. CAEP monitors the development of measures that assess candidates' success and revises standards in light of new results.

4. Program Impact

   Impact on P-12 Student Learning and Development

   4.1 **REQUIRED COMPONENT** The provider documents, using multiple measures, that program completers contribute to an expected level of student-learning growth. Multiple measures shall include all available growth measures (including value-added measures, student-growth percentiles, and student learning and development objectives) required by the state for its teachers and available to educator preparation providers, other state-supported P-12 impact measures, and any other measures employed by the provider.

   Indicators of Teaching Effectiveness

   4.2 **REQUIRED COMPONENT** The provider demonstrates, through structured and validated observation instruments and/or student surveys, that completers effectively apply the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions that the preparation experiences were designed to achieve.

   Satisfaction of Employment

   4.3 **REQUIRED COMPONENT** The provider demonstrates, using measures that result in valid and reliable data and including employment milestones such as promotion and retention, that employers are satisfied with the completers' preparation for their assigned responsibilities in working with P-12 students.

   Satisfaction of Completers

   4.4 **REQUIRED COMPONENT** The provider demonstrates, using measures that result in valid and reliable data, that program completers perceive their preparation as relevant to the responsibilities they confront on the job, and that the preparation was effective.

5. Provider Quality, Continuous Improvement, and Capacity

   Quality and Strategic Evaluation

   5.1 The provider's quality assurance system is comprised of multiple measures that can monitor candidate progress, completer achievements, and provider operational effectiveness. Evidence demonstrates that the provider satisfies all CAEP standards.

   5.2 The provider's quality assurance system relies on relevant, verifiable, representative, cumulative and actionable measures, and produces empirical evidence that interpretations of data are valid and consistent.

   Continuous Improvement

   5.3 **REQUIRED COMPONENT** The provider regularly and systematically assesses performance against its goals and relevant standards, tracks results over time, tests innovations and the effects of selection criteria on subsequent progress and completion, and uses results to improve program elements and processes.

   5.4 **REQUIRED COMPONENT** Measures of completer impact, including available outcome data on P-12 student growth, are summarized, externally benchmarked, analyzed, shared widely, and acted upon in decision-making related to programs, resource allocation, and future direction.

   5.5 The provider assures that appropriate stakeholders, including alumni, employers, practitioners, school and community partners, and others defined by

the provider, are involved in program evaluation, improvement, and identification of models of excellence.

APPENDIX C: EPSB Open-Records Request

Trueblood, Cassie - Office of Legal Services
Mon, Feb 17, 2:52 PM

Good Afternoon, Lauren-

Pursuant to the Kentucky Open Records Act, you requested the following documents from the Kentucky Department of Education:

copies of all Kentucky Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) leaders' names and email addresses as identified by the Kentucky Department of Education's Office of Educator Preparation, Assessment, and Internship

Attached, please find the information that you requested. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Cassie L. Trueblood
Policy Advisor and Special Counsel
Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness

Kentucky Department of Education
300 Sower Blvd, 5th Floor
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 564-4606

From: Lauren Graves **Sent:** Wednesday, February 12, 2020 9:43 PM **To:** Allen, Todd - Office of Legal Services **Subject:** Open Records Request

February 12, 2020

Todd G. Allen
Kentucky Department of Education
300 Sower Boulevard, Fifth Floor

Frankfort, Kentucky, 40601

In accordance with KRS 61.870 through KRS 61.884, I am requesting copies of all Kentucky Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) leaders' names and email addresses as identified by the Kentucky Department of Education's Office of Educator Preparation, Assessment, and Internship.
Please provide the requested information in electronic format.

Thank you,
Lauren Graves

APPENDIX D: Survey Recruitment Letter

Dear Participant,
I invite you to participate in a research study on Kentucky Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) Faculty Perceptions of Accreditation, including those that participated in the pilot study. I am a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Kentucky in the process of writing my dissertation. The purpose of the research is to gather Kentucky Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) faculty perceptions of national accreditation and, specifically, perceptions of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation's (CAEP) standards and impact on faculty academic freedom and individual program autonomy. This survey will address the CAEP initial standards and the process by which accreditation is carried out, as adopted and followed by the Education Professional Standards Board. Your name and institution will not be used; data results will be aggregated for the purpose of this study.

There is little literature available regarding faculty perceptions of accreditation in educator preparation, and I believe you as a faculty member are the linchpin for a successful accreditation visit, and for improving programs preparing Kentucky's future educators. Your voice needs to be heard. I intend to share findings with the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board and with key leaders at CAEP. This study offers the benefit of providing an avenue for the voices of Kentucky EPP faculty to be heard at the state and national level. This study will contribute to the field in which little research has been conducted in regard to faculty perceptions of accreditation in educator preparation.

Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary. You may decline altogether, or leave blank any questions you do not wish to answer. There are no known risks to participation in this study. Your individual responses will remain confidential and anonymous. Data from this research will be reported only in aggregate form. No one other than the researcher will have access to your individual answers. We will make every effort to safeguard your data, but as with anything online, we cannot guarantee the security of data obtained via the Internet. Third-party applications used in this study may have Terms of Service and Privacy policies outside of the control of the University of Kentucky.
If you agree to participate in this project, please answer the questions on the survey below. It should take approximately 20 minutes to complete the survey depending on

how much is contributed to the open-ended response questions. The survey will be open for two (2) weeks closing on March 10, 2020.

If you have any questions about this research, feel free to contact Lauren Graves at laurenbellgraves@gmail.com.

This dissertation is under the supervision of Dr. Jeffery Bieber.

University of Kentucky, Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation

jpbieb01@uky.edu

Thank you for taking the time to assist my research, and to assist in identifying positives of accreditation and needed improvements.

Sincerely,

Lauren Graves

University of Kentucky, Educational Policy Studies and Evaluation

PhD candidate

You may contact the Office of Research Integrity if you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer.

Office of Research Integrity

315 Kinkead Hall

University of Kentucky

Lexington, KY 40506-0057

Ph: (859) 257-9428

FAX: (859) 257-8995

APPENDIX E: Survey Instrument

Faculty Perceptions of Accreditation in the Field of Educator Preparation

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Q2 Select the type of institution in which you are employed.

- ❍ Public
- ❍ Independent

Q3 Is your Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) currently accredited only by the state or by the state and NCATE/CAEP?

- ❍ State-only
- ❍ State and NCATE/CAEP
- ❍ Unsure

Q4 With which of the following groups do you most closely identify? (Full-time, part-time, or adjunct to the educator preparation provider (EPP))

- ❍ Full-time faculty member (Professional education faculty with a full-time assignment in the professional educator preparation provider)
- ❍ Part-time faculty member (Professional education faculty who has less than a full-time assignment in the professional education unit. May be full-time employee of the college or university with a portion of your assignments in the professional educator preparation provider)
- ❍ Adjunct faculty member (Not a full-time employee of the institution, but has an assignment in the professional educator preparation provider)

Q5 What is your current position with the Educator Preparation Provider (EPP)?

- ❍ Full Professor
- ❍ Associate Professor
- ❍ Assistant Professor
- ❍ Adjunct Instructor
- ❍ Lecturer
- ❍ Other _____

Q6 How long have you been employed by the Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) in which you are **currently** employed? Please identify by year(s) and/or month(s).

_____

Q7 How long have you been a faculty member in educator preparation, counting employment at **all institutions**? Please identify by year(s) and/or month(s).

_____

Q8 Have you participated in a state-only or joint state/NCATE/CAEP accreditation visit at any EPP in Kentucky in a role other than a site visitor? (Participation includes any involvement in the accreditation process)

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Display This Question:

If Have you participated in a state-only or joint state/NCATE/CAEP accreditation visit at any EPP in... = Yes

Q9 What was/were your role(s) in the accreditation process? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Accreditation Coordinator
- ☐ Assessment Coordinator
- ☐ Clinical Faculty
- ☐ Professor
- ☐ Content Area Specialist
- ☐ Other _____

Display This Question:
If Have you participated in a state-only or joint state/NCATE/CAEP accreditation visit at any EPP in... = Yes

Q10 For an average of a 40-hour work week, how many hours per week did you spend preparing for an accreditation visit?

- ❍ less than 5 hours per week
- ❍ 5-10 hours per week
- ❍ 11-15 hours per week
- ❍ 16-20 hours per week
- ❍ more than 20 hours per week

Display This Question:
If Have you participated in a state-only or joint state/NCATE/CAEP accreditation visit at any EPP in... = Yes

Q11 For approximately how many weeks did you prepare for an accreditation visit?

_____

Display This Question:

If Have you participated in a state-only or joint state/NCATE/CAEP accreditation visit at any EPP in... = Yes

Q12 Based on your experience, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding programmatic accreditation:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Efforts directed toward obtaining programmatic accreditation were worth the time and energy invested by faculty.	❍	❍	❍	❍
The self-study led to program improvement carried out between programmatic accreditation visits.	❍	❍	❍	❍
The rationale for the final accreditation decision was clearly communicated.	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q13 Have you ever participated in an accreditation visit as a CAEP Site Visitor?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Q14 How involved are you with the accreditation process for the educator preparation programs at your institution?

- ❍ not involved
- ❍ 1-9 hours/week
- ❍ 10-19 hours/week
- ❍ more than 20 hours/week

Q15 How important do you think it is for an Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) to be accredited?

- ❍ Not at all important
- ❍ Slightly important
- ❍ Moderately important
- ❍ Very important

Display This Question:
If How important do you think it is for an Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) to be accredited? = Very important

Q16 Why do you believe it is very important for an EPP to be accredited?

_____

_____

Display This Question:
If How important do you think it is for an Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) to be accredited? = Moderately important

Q17 Why do you believe it is moderately important for an EPP to be accredited?

_____

_____

Display This Question:

If How important do you think it is for an Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) to be accredited? = Slightly important

Q18 Why do you believe it is slightly important for an EPP to be accredited?

_____

_____

Display This Question:

If How important do you think it is for an Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) to be accredited? = Not at all important

Q19 Why do you believe it is not at all important for an EPP to be accredited?

_____

_____

Q20 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the processes of programmatic accreditation:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The accreditation process, as a whole, is effective for improving the quality of educator preparation programs.	❍	❍	❍	❍
The self-study contributes to provider improvement.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Peer review is the best method for evaluating Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) quality.	❍	❍	❍	❍
The on-site visit contributes to provider improvement.	❍	❍	❍	❍
The final accreditation decision is clearly communicated.	❍	❍	❍	❍
The annual report contributes to provider improvement.	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q21 Please list any benefits you believe result from the peer review component of accreditation.

_____

_____

Q22 Please list any concerns you have with the peer review component of accreditation.

_____

_____

Q23 Please list any methods other than peer review you believe would be more beneficial for evaluating Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) quality for accreditation.

_____

_____

Q24 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the effectiveness of programmatic accreditation:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Programmatic accreditation enhances the status of the Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) in the profession.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Programmatic accreditation contributes to a strengthened education and teaching profession.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Programmatic accreditation improves the academic quality of applicants entering the education program.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Programmatic accreditation promotes a deepened sense of professional commitment as a faculty member.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Programmatic accreditation is primarily a compliance activity.	❍	❍	❍	❍

Programmatic accreditation enhances the status of the Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) on campus.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Programmatic accreditation enables innovation to meet the mission of my EPP.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Programmatic accreditation enables flexibility to meet the needs of the EPP's P-12 schools.	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q25 Please share any benefits you believe result from programmatic accreditation.

_____

_____

Q26 Please share any costs or negative outcomes you believe result from programmatic accreditation.

_____

_____

Q27 Do you believe the benefits of programmatic accreditation outweigh the time put into seeking programmatic accreditation?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Q28 Do you believe the benefits of programmatic accreditation outweigh the costs in terms of resources for seeking programmatic accreditation?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

Q29 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding the CAEP initial preparation standards:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
CAEP standards are indicative of quality.	❍	❍	❍	❍
CAEP standards will yield sufficient data for EPP improvement.	❍	❍	❍	❍
CAEP standards will improve learning for P-12 students.	❍	❍	❍	❍
CAEP standards ensure the selection of capable candidates.	❍	❍	❍	❍
CAEP standards ensure the selection of diverse candidates.	❍	❍	❍	❍
CAEP standards assure stakeholders of candidate quality.	❍	❍	❍	❍
CAEP standards encourage innovation.	❍	❍	❍	❍
CAEP standards effectively address diversity.	❍	❍	❍	❍
CAEP standards effectively address technology.	❍	❍	❍	❍
CAEP standards are rigorous.	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q30 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements on each of the CAEP standards:

CAEP Standard 1: Content and Pedagogical Knowledge.
The provider ensures that candidates develop a deep understanding of the critical concepts and principles of their discipline and, by completion, are able to use discipline-specific practices flexibly to advance the learning of all students toward attainment of college- and career-readiness standards.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard 1 is attainable.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Standard 1 will lead to effective candidates/completers of educator preparation programs.	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q31 CAEP Standard 2: Clinical Partnerships and Practice.
The provider ensures that effective partnerships and high-quality clinical practice are central to preparation so that candidates develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to demonstrate positive impact on all P-12 students' learning and development.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard 2 is attainable.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Standard 2 will lead to effective preparation of candidates/completers of educator preparation programs.	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q32 CAEP Standard 3: Candidate Quality, Recruitment, and Selectivity.
The provider demonstrates that the quality of candidates is a continuing and purposeful part of its responsibility from recruitment, at admission, through the progression of courses and clinical experiences, and to decisions that completers are prepared to teach effectively and are recommended for certification. The provider demonstrates that development of candidate quality is the goal of educator preparation in all phases of the program. This process is ultimately determined by a program's meeting of Standard 4.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard 3 is attainable.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Standard 3 will lead to effective candidates/completers of educator preparation programs.	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q33 CAEP Standard 4: Program Impact.
The provider demonstrates the impact of its completers on P-12 student learning and development, classroom instruction, and schools, and the satisfaction of its completers with the relevance and effectiveness of their preparation.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard 4 is attainable.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Standard 4 will provide data that will lead to more effective educator preparation programs.	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q34 CAEP Standard 5: Provider Quality, Continuous Improvement, and Capacity.
The provider maintains a quality assurance system comprised of valid data from multiple measures, including evidence of candidates' and completers' positive impact on P-12

student learning and development. The provider supports continuous improvement that is sustained and evidence-based, and that evaluates the effectiveness of its completers. The provider uses the results of inquiry and data collection to establish priorities, enhance program elements and capacity, and test innovations to improve completers' impact on P-12 student learning and development.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard 5 is attainable.	❍	❍	❍	❍
Standard 5 will lead to effective educator preparation programs.	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q35 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I believe programmatic accreditation affects academic freedom.	❍	❍	❍	❍
I believe programmatic accreditation affects individual program autonomy.	❍	❍	❍	❍

Display This Question:

If Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: = I believe programmatic accreditation affects academic freedom. [Agree]

Or Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: = I believe programmatic accreditation affects academic freedom. [Strongly Agree]

Q36 Please explain how you believe accreditation affects academic freedom.

_____

_____

Display This Question:

If Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: = I believe programmatic accreditation affects individual program autonomy. [Agree]

Or Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: = I believe programmatic accreditation affects individual program autonomy. [Strongly Agree]

Q37 Please explain how you believe programmatic accreditation affects individual program autonomy.

_____

_____

Q38 The Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) requires all EPPs attain state accreditation using the CAEP standards. Do you believe national accreditation in addition to state accreditation should be mandated by the EPSB?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

End of Block: Default Question Block

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EDUCATION

University of the Cumberlands — Williamsburg, KY
Master of Arts in Teaching, Elementary Education — 2010

University of Kentucky — Lexington, KY
Bachelor of Science, Family and Consumer Sciences — 2008

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Kentucky State University — Frankfort, KY
Director of Institutional Effectiveness — 2018-Present

Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board — Frankfort, KY
Executive Staff Advisor/Legislative Liaison — 2017-2018
Education Administration Program Consultant — 2012-2017

Pennyrile Allied Community Services — Villa Hills, KY
Regional Supervisor — 2009-2011

PRESENTATIONS

National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) 2017 89th Annual Conference
Building Shared Accountability and Encouraging Improvement by Bridging Data Across States, Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs), and P-12
Jennifer Carinci, Lauren Graves, and Kim Walters-Parker, June 13, 2017

National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) 2017 89th Annual Conference
The Kentucky Educator Preparation Accountability System (KEPAS)
Ben Boggs and Lauren Graves, June 12, 2017

Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) 2016 Annual Conference
Aligning Standards with Reality: What Early-Career Teachers Wish They Had Known Before Day One (Standard 4)
Lauren Graves and Kim Walters-Parker, May 24, 2016

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

2020 Bluegrass Higher Education Consortium Academic Leadership Academy Fellow