

NAEYC Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation: Self-Study Workshop



Our agenda for today



- The Accreditation System & Standards
- The Accreditation Process & Fees
- Next steps?

Why did NAEYC develop associate degree accreditation?

- Strong **demand** from field
- Increasing **importance** of community colleges in teacher education

1999	Piloted an approval system
2001-02	Feasibility study for full system
2004-06	Field test process & materials
2006	Open to public application

Some of our guiding principles

Accreditation should:

- Be rigorous but not unduly burdensome
- Improve access for diverse and nontraditional students
- Promote articulation
- Link with national state and community efforts
- Benefit children, students and programs
- Seek input from the field, recognizing ACCESS as representing associate faculty

Evidence-Based Standards Integrate

1. Best available research with
2. Professional wisdom & values
3. Community wisdom & values

- Virginia Buysse & Patricia Wesley

Evidence-Based Practice in the Early Childhood Field, 2006

Standards as a Vision, not Standardization

Assessment makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about.



9 Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning AAHE Assessment Forum

What should tomorrow's early childhood teachers know and be able to do?

Standard 1: Promote child development and learning

Well-prepared early childhood professionals

- understand what young children are like;
- understand what influences their development; and
- use this understanding to create great environments where all children can thrive.

What should tomorrow's early childhood teachers know and be able to do?

Standard 2: Build family and community relationships

Well-prepared early childhood professionals

- understand and value children's families and communities;
- create respectful, reciprocal relationships; and
- involve all families in their children's development and learning.

What should tomorrow's early childhood teachers know and be able to do?

Standard 3: Observe, document, and assess children's development

Well-prepared early childhood professionals

- understand the purposes of assessment;
- use effective assessment strategies; and
- use assessment responsibly, to positively influence children's development and learning.

What should tomorrow's early childhood teachers know and be able to do?

Standard 4: Teach and learn

Well-prepared early childhood professionals

- build close relationships with children and families;
- use developmentally effective teaching and learning strategies;
- have sound knowledge of academic disciplines or content areas; and
- combine all of these to give children experiences that promote development and learning.

What should tomorrow's early childhood teachers know and be able to do?

Standard 5: Become a professional

Well-prepared early childhood professionals

- identify themselves with the early childhood profession;
- are guided by ethical and other professional standards;
- are continuous, collaborative learners;
- think reflectively and critically; and
- advocate for children, families, and the profession

The Accreditation Standards

- Are *learner-centered* standards for student performance
- Focus on *student assessment as evidence* of program quality
- Are *aligned with NCATE standards* for early childhood teacher preparation
- Support *reflective self-study and innovative responses* to community contexts and student needs

The Self-Study Report

- **Part 1: Criteria** describe the context for teaching and learning, your program's areas of strength and challenges.
- **Part 2: Standards** are *learner-centered, student outcome standards* so report provides evidence of student learning in relation to the accreditation standards and supportive skills.
- Your *student assessment* system provides evidence of meeting accreditation standards.

The Accreditation Criteria: How does your program support student learning?

Criteria = The Context for Teaching and Learning

Program Design:

- Mission and role in community
- Conceptual framework
- Program of studies
- Quality of teaching
- Quality of field experiences

Students:

- Qualifications and characteristics
- Advising and supporting

Faculty:

- Qualifications and composition
- Professional responsibilities
- Professional development

Program organization and resources

The Accreditation Standards: What do your graduates know? What can they do?

5 Standards

1. Promoting child development and learning
2. Building family and community relationships
3. Observing, documenting, and assessing
4. Teaching and learning
5. Becoming a professional

5 Supportive Skills

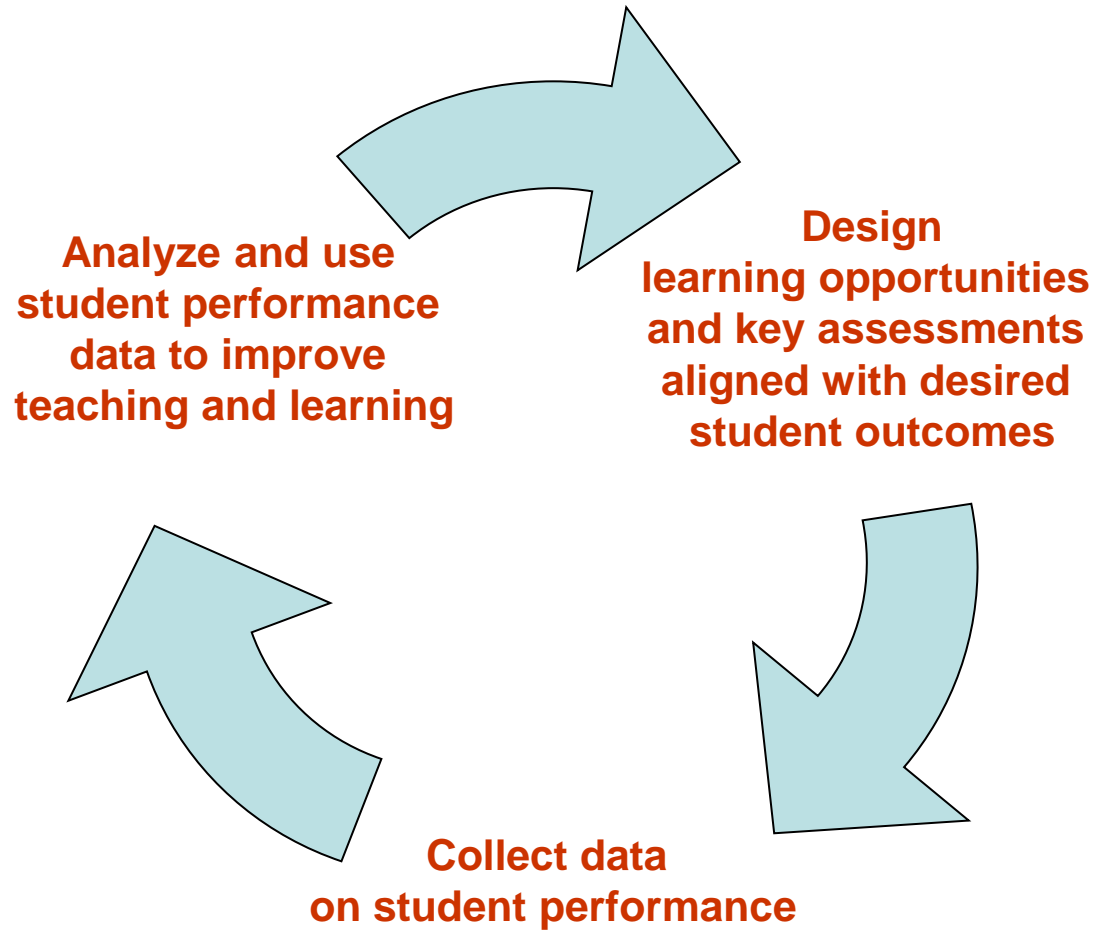
1. Self assessment and advocacy
2. Mastering and applying foundational concepts from general education
3. Written and verbal communication
4. Connecting prior knowledge to new learning
5. Identifying and using professional resources

How do we know what our students know and can do?



Learning is revealed in performance...
over time, integrated, in many dimensions.

Closing the Assessment Loop



Curriculum Alignment and Ongoing Student Assessment



Assessment requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes.

Assessment is best when it is ongoing, not episodic.

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Does our assessment system
provide evidence that we meet
the standards?



What matters most is what our
students know and can do.

The Self-Study Process requires

- **A Comprehensive** examination of your current program, looking at all criteria and standards
- **Inclusive** engagement of stakeholders in data collection, reflection and improvement goals
- **Contextual** thinking about your program identity, demographics, mission and services
- **Strengths-based** evidence of program assets, capacities and outcomes – with honest assessment of challenges and strategic improvement plans

Self-Study and Peer Review Process Engages Stakeholders

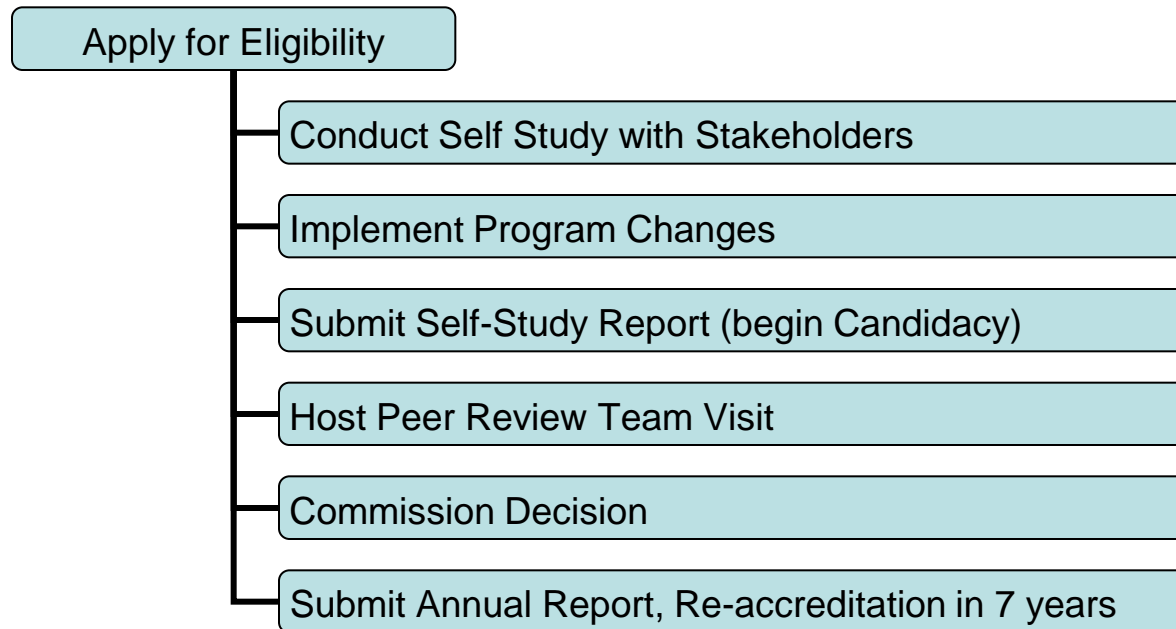
Assessment fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved.

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The Accreditation Process

Expect 2 or more years from application to decision



ACCREDITATION: STEP BY STEP

- Program meets ***eligibility requirements*** (e.g., regional accreditation)
- Eligible programs make formal ***application***
- Program engages in ***self-study***
- Program submits written ***self-study report***
- Team of ***peer reviewers*** visit program
- ***Commission*** makes accreditation decision
- Program submits an ***annual report*** to maintain accreditation status

Principles that Guide the Site Visit

- The accreditation process is *strengths based*.
- Strong programs know their communities, actively engage their stakeholders, and are *responsive to specific contexts*.
- Strong programs take risks and experiment with *innovative practices* within the framework of a sound professional knowledge base, a code of ethical conduct, and professional standards.

Principles that Guide the Site Visit

- Strong programs engage in *continuous reflection and improvement*. Strong programs benefit from self study.
- Peer review is an *inquiry process*, focused on accreditation criteria and standards, and guided by a professional code of ethical conduct.

The Site Visit

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
	Initial meetings: Coordinator, administrators and faculty	Interviews: Administrators, field supervisor, and alumni	Exit session
Team Arrives	Lunch : team meeting Interviews: Faculty Students Document review	Lunch : team meeting Observations: Field site(s), campus(es), classroom(s)	Team Departs
Dinner and team meeting	Dinner and team meeting	Dinner and team meeting	

The Accreditation Decision

Is based on evidence of student performance and use of student performance data for continuous program development and improvement - or evidence of capacity to use data.

Possible decisions:

1. **Accredited** - The standards are substantially met
2. **Accredited with Conditions** - The standards are substantially met, but some concerns must be addressed within 18 months.
3. **Not Accredited** - The standards are not met, concerns cannot be addressed in reports within 18 months.

The Accreditation Commission

Rebecca Brinks – Grand Rapids Community College, MI

Camille Catlett – FPG Child Development Institute, NC

Rebecca Gorton - Northampton Community College, PA

Elisa Huss-Hage - Owens Community College, OH

Toni Ungaretti – Johns Hopkins University, MD

John M. Johnston – University of Memphis, TN

Deborah Jordan – Council for Professional Recognition, DC

Isela Castanon-Williams – El Paso Community College, TX

Past members:

Martha Munoz – Central Arizona College. AZ

Mary Hanrahan – N. Virginia Community College, VA

Christina Lopez-Morgan – DeAnza Community College, CA

Annual Reporting Re-accreditation in 7 Years

Assessment is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change.

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Evidence of Meeting the Standards

Learning opportunities

are aligned with the standards and use responsive, intentional strategies to support student success

Assessments of student work

are aligned with the standards and define the program's expectations for student performance

Student assessment data

is used to evaluate the program and to make improvements that respond to the program's context

There are many ways to meet a standard. The right way is the way that fits your program context. Criteria and standards are integrated.

What's next?



*The best
way to get
started is
to start.*

- Myles Horton

For more information

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