

# Reflections on Accreditation and Approval Processes

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MDE TPPSG

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# *History of Accreditation and Certification*

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Three Stages

# Stage One:

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Superintendents or locally elected lay school boards issued local teaching licenses using oral exams focused on character and morality and later written exams of content knowledge.

- Opposition to this system came from state administrators and teachers who wanted to raise entrance requirements into teaching.

# Stage Two:

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An “educational establishment” in university schools of education, state education departments, and urban school district administrators raise and control standards for state teacher certification.

- Rise of normal schools and university prep
- Formal requirements for education courses and arts and science courses increased
- The number of teaching specializations increased.

# Stage Three:

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Classroom teachers and their representative organizations gain more control over teacher preparation and certification. Efforts begin to focus on professionalization.

- Authority for teacher certification completely moved to state departments of education
- “Approved program” approach to teacher education oversight
- The standards movement begins

*Issues Related to  
Certification, Accreditation  
and Approval*

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Selected Questions from the Study Group  
on Wednesday, September 18, 2006

# Institutional Issues:

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- Who determines the entry requirements into teaching?
- Who prepares, mentors, and develops teachers?

# Curriculum Issues:

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- What types of characteristics, dispositions, and knowledge do teachers need?
- What type of preparation do teachers need to teach to a variety of learners?
- What subject matter knowledge is needed to teach?

# Curriculum Issues:

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- How do we teach teachers to teach subject matter knowledge?
- What pedagogical content knowledge is needed to teach?
- What do we teach teachers and during what phase in their career?

# Systemic Issues:

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- How do we link initial teacher preparation and continued professional development?
- What is the role of arts and science faculty in teacher education?
- What is the role of professional organizations in teacher education?
- What is the role of accreditation in teacher education?

# Teaching Performance:

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- How do we assess and recognize the performance of teachers?
- What helps or hinders innovation and improvement in teaching?

*A Framework for  
Understanding Issues  
Related to Certification*

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*Two Schools of Thought on Certification  
in the Standards Era*

# Professionalism

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- teaching as a profession like law or medicine
- increased formal education requirements
- teacher training conducted by an institution of higher education
- NCATE accreditation
- increased professional development
- required subject area certification
- control of profession by professional educators
- higher teacher pay across the board
- a broad view of effective teaching that is not limited to measured student performance

# Competitive

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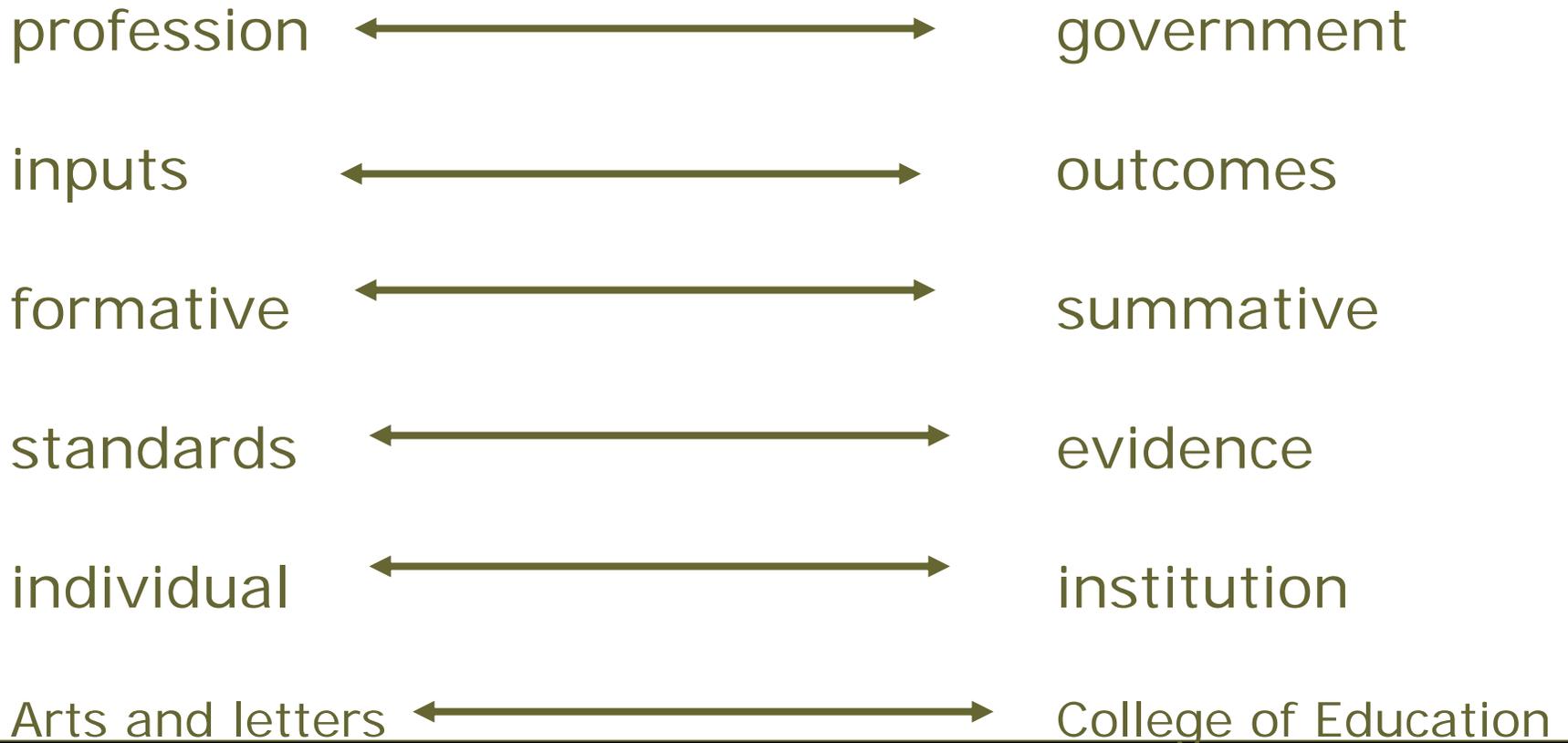
- teaching as a craft like journalism or business management
- reducing education coursework where research evidence does not link prove effectiveness
- expanding alternative forms of teacher training and pathways to licensure
- emphasis on subject matter knowledge
- greater flexibility in teacher hiring
- differential or performance-based pay to reward teachers with specialized or scarce skills
- teacher quality based on measured student performance

# Dimensions of Accreditation and Approval

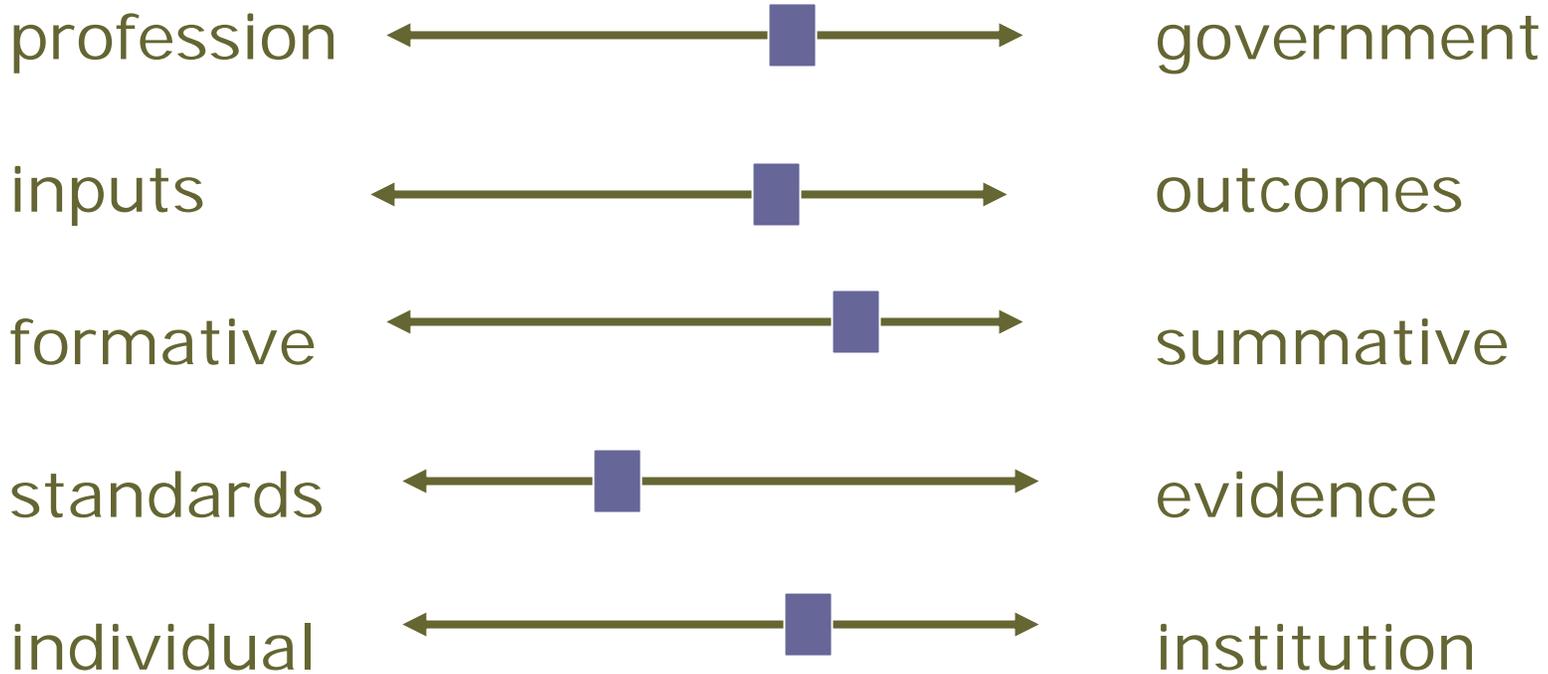
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- Who regulates?
- What is required?
- What is the purpose?
- Who is evaluated?
- Based on what?

# Framing Dimensions



# Framing Dimensions



# Who regulates?

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*Profession* ↔ *Government*

A view about who is “in charge”

Example, in Steve’s presentation:  
Institution identifies its priorities.

Scholarly consensus vs. political consensus

Who is “the profession”: K-12, arts and letters?

# What is required?

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*Inputs*



*Outputs*

## Inputs

- "All students must have 40 semester hours of general or liberal education."

## Outputs

- "All students must attain a score of 220 on the Basic Skills Test of the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification."

# What is the purpose?

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*Formative*



*Summative*

- Continuous learning and improvement versus evaluation and sanctioning
  - “a reading of the research concerning accreditation suggests that we know little about the effects of such processes on teacher quality”  
Tamir & Wilson

# Who is regulated?

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*Individual*



*Institution*

- Individual: entrance requirements based on GPA, test scores, and performance on teaching exams (content and pedagogical knowledge).
- Institutions: institutions are held accountable for the overall performance of their students. High institutional requirements would mean difficult entry and approval for teacher education providers, warranties, etc.

# Based on what?

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*standards*



*evidence*

NCTE Standard 1.2: "Candidates explore both theory and practice in their ELA preparation and meet performance requirements in a range of field experiences, including a minimum of ten weeks of student teaching in ELA classrooms"

TEAC Quality Principle 1.1 "Candidates for the degree must learn and understand the subject matters they hope to teach. TEAC requires evidence that the program's candidates acquire and understand these subject matters."

# Why does this matter?

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- Approaches to accreditation and approval reflect values regarding teaching, teacher education, the role of government and the profession, and beliefs about the purpose of accreditation.
- Our approach to accreditation will impact the design of our policy recommendations.

# Capacity and Feasibility

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- Our policy recommendations must consider the capacity in MI teacher preparation programs, MDE, and more.
- Our policy recommendations must be feasible.

# Sources

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- Clift, R.T. & Brady, P. (2005) Research on methods courses and field experiences. In M. Cochran-Smith & K. Zeichner (Eds.) Studying teacher education: The report of the AERA panel on research and teacher education. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Publishers.
- Hess, F.M., Rotherham, A.J. & Walsh, K. (Eds.) (2004) A Highly Qualified Teacher in Every Classroom? Appraising Old Answers and New Ideas. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

# Assumptions Underlying Periodic Review

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- That it is possible to construct the “right” standards
- That unit review and specialty program review are separated for practical reasons
- That we have the capacity and expertise across the system to do this
- State doesn't accredit

# Possible areas to consider more deeply:

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- The portfolio of standards
- The processes and timeline
  - Phases 1-3, and the pilots
- Capacity and expertise to sustain the system
- Relationships among TEAC, NCATE, and state approval process
- Relationships among approval, accreditation, IHE performance scores, MTTC, MEAP
- Elementary program approval

# Lunch

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Discussion topic: recommendations  
of Levine report

# Entry Level Standards/Professional Standards for Michigan Teachers

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- Subject matter understanding in the liberal arts/sciences
- Instructional design and assessment
- Curricular and pedagogical content knowledge aligned with state resources
- Effective learning environments
- Responsibilities and relationships to the school, classroom and student

# Entry Level Standards/Professional Standards for Michigan Teachers

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- Responsibilities and relationships to the greater community
- Technology operations and concepts

# Small groups:

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Generate DRAFT recommendations, specific suggestions about topics for recommendations, and concerns, relative to:

- A. The portfolio of standards
- B. The approval processes and timelines
- C. Capacity and expertise to sustain the approval process system

