Commission on English Language Program Accreditation

CEA Standards Excerpt 2018

According to its regular cycle of review activities, the Standards Review Committee reviewed the following standards areas in 2018:

- Mission
- Faculty
- Facilities, Equipment and Supplies
- Student Complaints

The following changes have been approved by the Commission and are reflected in the *2018 CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions*.

Mission

Context

The smooth functioning of an English language program or institution, as well as the determination of how it operates within established standards, depends on the existence of a mission statement. This mission statement, developed and reviewed regularly by program staff, provides a basis for all program or institution activities. The program or institution's resources must be allocated to best achieve its mission.

Mission Standard 1: The program or language institution has a written statement of its mission and goals, which guides its activities, policies, and allocation of resources. This statement is communicated to faculty, students, and staff, as well as to prospective students, student sponsors, and the public, and is evaluated periodically.

Discussion

Each program or institution must have a clearly defined mission that is communicated to and understood by individuals who work for or are served by the program or institution. The mission statement summarizes in broad terms the educational and service goals of the program or institution, as well as any other purposes.

The mission statement serves as the principal guide for:

- administrators, to determine if decisions affecting the program or institution are appropriate
- faculty and staff, to determine if their activities within the program or institution are appropriate
- current students, to determine if their evolving educational and personal goals are met
- prospective students and those who have a stake in their choices, to determine if the program or institution's programs and services are appropriate
- the public, to inform it of the purposes of the program or institution and to determine if it is achieving those purposes

The mission statement must be clearly written in terms easily understood by students, staff, and the public. It must be available to current and prospective students or their sponsors and to prospective and current employees through materials such as student recruitment literature, employee handbooks, and informational documents. Because the mission statement forms the basis for all decisions affecting the program or institution, the statement must be evaluated and updated periodically to reflect new or revised goals, activities, policies or shifts in the focus of its educational programs or services and whenever activities and policies are conceived, implemented, or revised.

> **Commented [A1]:** Edit to clarify that evaluation of the mission statement is not required each time activities and policies are conceived, implemented or revised, but that the mission statement should be consulted.

Faculty

Context

Faculty are the most significant variable in determining instructional quality. This quality manifests itself through faculty performance in many ways. Faculty members' duties include, for example,

- transforming course objectives and course materials into useful learning activities for students
- developing their own materials, tailoring them to fit the needs of specific students
- guiding students in the acquisition of English and in understanding a target culture and that culture's ways of viewing the world
- affirming learners' own cultural and linguistic backgrounds
- applying their knowledge of language, culture, cross-cultural communication, and language acquisition to assist learners in achieving their own objectives efficiently
- implementing research findings in the classroom

Good practice is established when the faculty qualifications directly align with and support the stated mission and curriculum of a program or institution.

In order to ensure a quality face-to-face, blended, or distance education experience, a program or institution must employ faculty who meet accepted professional standards with regard to educational background, professional experience, and proficiency in the language being taught.

Faculty Standard 1: Faculty members have education and training commensurate with their teaching assignments.

Discussion

Individuals with instructional responsibilities must possess the knowledge and training to make informed decisions about classroom practice and to deliver effective instruction in the courses to which they are assigned. (This includes knowledge and training relevant to blended or distance education in programs and institutions where one or more of the various forms of blended or distance education are offered.)

~~This standard requires employment of faculty who have appropriate academic credentials and who demonstrate an adequate knowledge of principles required for effective language instruction.~~ Although ~~i~~Informal preparation may be useful and may enhance faculty members' effectiveness, ~~but~~ formal education is a necessary component of <u>faculty</u> ~~their~~ preparation. Faculty <u>education and training</u> requirements must be consistent with and directly support the program or institution's mission, established curriculum, and other program components.

<u>This standard requires employment of faculty who have appropriate academic credentials and who demonstrate an adequate knowledge of principles required for effective language instruction.</u>

Formal education requirements for faculty:

- The bachelor's degree is considered the baseline qualification for teaching in a postsecondary language program or institution.
- The master's degree is highly valued and is considered the baseline qualification for teaching

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Commented [A2]: Parentheses removed.

Commented [A3]: Language moved below. Not changed.

Commented [A4]: Language relocated, but not changed, to help clarify the intent of the standard which is formal education and training, and emphasize that experience and professional development cannot substitute for formal education and training.

Commented [A5]: Mirrors language in the top-level standard

college and university preparation courses.
- In some program or institutional contexts, the doctorate may be the appropriate degree and may be required by the program or institution.

In cases where the bachelor's or master's degree is not in ESL/EFL, language teaching faculty, including teacher-trainers, must have a specific knowledge base and skill set that includes, at a minimum, the following:

- language teaching methodology~~ies~~
- the nature of language/languages (e.g., introduction to linguistics)
- the structure of English -(e.g., syntax, phonology, morphology, discourse)
- second language acquisition
- intercultural communication (e.g., sociolinguistics, cross-cultural studies)
- practicum experience

Commented [A6]: Plural reflects changing post-method era in English Language Teaching

If English language institutions independent of a college or university offer teacher-training certificates, requirements for teacher-trainers include all the above, plus additional training in language teaching pedagogy and methodology at least equivalent to the certificate content being taught. In the case where an institution requires its teacher-trainers to hold a specific certificate (e.g., for CELTA teacher trainers), the certificate is in addition to the bachelor's degree.

Faculty Standard 2: Faculty have experience relevant to teaching students at the postsecondary level in their areas of assignment and demonstrate an ongoing commitment to professional development.

Discussion

This standard accommodates the wide range of instructional experiences and professional development experiences that instructors bring to a program or institution.

Good practice includes employing faculty who possess knowledge of the needs of students, familiarity with specific issues in language instructional settings, and practice in the application of language teaching principles in both supervised and independent instructional settings. In addition, they should have experience relevant to the program or institution's mission, whether it is English for academic preparation, English for professional purposes, English for self-improvement, blended, or distance learning, or for teacher training. Specifically, language faculty should have

- taught courses in an English language program or institution
- had a supervised practicum experience or taught English in supervised settings
- taught English or other languages to adult and/or postsecondary students in supervised settings
- participated in professional development activities relevant to the program or institution's goals
- participated in the development and teaching of blended or distance education courses or programs, if applicable

In cases in which the faculty member does not have appropriate experience relevant to his/her individual teaching assignments and to the mission of the program or institution, the administration must demonstrate that careful monitoring and developmental support are provided for the faculty member while he/she is developing the experience required by this standard.

In addition, as education professionals, faculty have a responsibility to undertake appropriate and regular professional development. Continuous professional development enhances and complements relevant teaching experiences and ensures that faculty continue to have the knowledge and skills to perform effectively. Professional development activities include but are not limited to

- conference attendance and participation
- development of materials
- teacher exchange experiences
- research
- professional reading
- mentoring opportunities
- publications
- in-house training and workshops

The program or institution's responsibilities to and support for professional development of instructional and administrative personnel are addressed in Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 4.

Faculty Standard 3: Faculty who teach English demonstrate excellent proficiency in English. In language institutions where languages other than English are taught, faculty demonstrate excellent proficiency in the languages they teach.

Discussion

Faculty must have language proficiency appropriate to their teaching assignments. With regard to speakers of different varieties of English, the program must demonstrate that faculty members' proficiency in specific varieties of English is consistent with the program or institution's mission, as well as the objectives of the specific courses being taught.

The good practice this standard seeks to encourage is the employment of faculty who demonstrate excellent proficiency in the target language appropriate to their teaching assignments. To that end, programs and institutions must have in place policies and procedures for determining faculty language proficiency.

Faculty Standard 4: Teachers in training are appropriately selected, trained, and supervised for the instructional situations in which they are placed.

Discussion

Programs and institutions that use teachers in training (such as student teachers, interns, graduate teaching assistants, or practicum participants) demonstrate that they provide a quality classroom experience for the program or institution's students as well as for the teacher in training, by practicing effective selection, training, and supervision of the teacher in training. Such programs and institutions must provide careful monitoring and developmental support for teachers in training to ensure that the program meets its instructional objectives, and maintains its overall quality and continuity.

The good practices this standard seeks to encourage are that programs and institutions

- maintain an effective balance of teachers in training and faculty
- ensure that teachers in training have experience in language teaching or academic preparation for language teaching before being given instructional responsibilities
- ensure that teachers in training are supervised by individuals who possess, at a minimum, the educational level and experience required in Faculty Standards 1 and 2, and that those supervisors have significant involvement in curricular and instructional procedures for the program
- ensure that there are regular and systematic classroom observations and meetings of teachers in training and other faculty and that there are regularly scheduled one-on-one consultations between the supervisor and the teacher in training.

Faculty Standard 5: Faculty members each receive a job description and all the terms and conditions of employment in writing at the time they are hired and any time their duties or employment conditions change.

Discussion

Written job descriptions must be consistent with other evidence of faculty duties and responsibilities and must specify responsibilities expected of faculty in the areas of

- teaching and teaching support activities, including blended or distance education assignments, if applicable
- professional development
- service to the program and/or larger institution

Employment policies of the program or institution, including policies regarding confidentiality of faculty records, termination, and grievance procedures, and faculty rights and responsibilities must be available to faculty. Written terms and conditions of employment at the time a faculty member is hired ~~or whenever conditions change,~~ must describe

> **Commented [A7]:** Minor edit to reflect intent of the standard: not all of these bulleted items need to be provided to faculty any time conditions change. (Only those aspects that are changed).

- length of employment/appointment
- teaching load
- responsibilities outside the classroom, including any responsibilities related to blended or distance education programs, if applicable
- compensation and benefits
- criteria, procedures, and timelines for performance review

~~Faculty must be provided with revised job descriptions and written terms and conditions of employment whenever conditions change.~~ Whenever faculty duties or employment conditions change, information regarding such changes must be provided in writing.

> **Commented [A8]:** Revised language clarifies the requirements of the standard to present new information in writing, not entire job descriptions/terms and conditions.

Faculty Standard 6: The program or language institution has an adequate number of faculty, whose duties are structured to permit timely and effective completion.

Discussion

The program or institution must pay sufficient attention to maintaining adequate numbers of faculty. Each faculty member's duties must reflect the systematic and rational allocation of program resources and responsibilities.

Responsibilities directly related to the instructional role of faculty include

- teaching
- lesson preparation
- planning and development of materials
- assessment of student work
- conferences with students
- online or virtual responsibilities in blended or distance education programs

Other responsibilities may include

- curriculum development, test preparation, and textbook selection
- research
- professional development
- test administration
- administrative and/or student services responsibilities

Regardless of the specific duties, the program or institution is responsible for ensuring that the faculty can complete their assigned duties effectively. Good practice is demonstrated when faculty

- have realistic job descriptions that set achievable tasks
- are able to complete their duties in an effective and timely manner

See Administrative and Fiscal Capacity Standard 2 for discussion of appropriate staffing practices regarding faculty who have administrative responsibilities.

Faculty Standard 7: The program or language institution describes to faculty clearly and in writing the performance criteria and procedures for evaluation at the onset of the evaluation period; conducts faculty performance evaluations that are systematic, regular, fair, objective, and relevant to achieving program or institutional goals; and conveys evaluation results to faculty in writing in a timely manner.

Discussion

The program or institution must demonstrate an open-minded, developmental, and reliable evaluation of faculty. Evaluations All activities to be evaluated must reflect the program or institution's educational goals and the faculty members' job descriptions. Effective evaluation methods areis marked by appropriate notification , appropriate frequency of administration, consideration of multiple sources of data, and which are conducted by individuals who are qualified to do so. The standard seeks to discourage capricious or unplanned evaluation, evaluation procedures that rely on single methodsand , procedures that do not allow for faculty input., or procedures that do not allow faculty members to respond to their evaluation.

All activities to be evaluated must reflect the program or institution's educational goals and the faculty members' job descriptions. Evaluation Pprocedures must ensure that faculty performance evaluations arebe available to faculty in writing and must

Commented [A9]: Language moved from introduction to bulleted list below.

Commented [A10]: Redirect focus on the faculty performance evaluation rather than the criteria.

Commented [A11]: Subj/Verb agreement correction

Commented [A12]: Language here reflected in bulleted list below; no repetition in two locations.

Commented [A13]: These requirements appear in the list below.

Commented [A14]: Language now appears above.

- ~~be~~ conducted on a regular basis
- ~~be~~ based on data collected from more than one source
- ~~be~~ based on data collected over a specified period of time
- ~~be~~ thorough, well-documented, and consistent with program or language institution's mission and goals
- made available to faculty in writing and allow faculty members to respond to their evaluations

Facilities, Equipment, and Supplies

Context

Facilities, equipment, and supplies make up the setting for quality instruction, whether on site or through distance education, and contribute to the establishment of a positive environment for successful learning and services to students. Faculty must be provided with facilities, workspace, supplies, technology, and equipment for delivery of instruction, including blended or distance education. Administrators and staff must have adequate working conditions, facilities, and resources to achieve the mission and goals.

Facilities, Equipment, and Supplies Standard 1: The program or language institution has facilities, equipment, and supplies that support the achievement of its educational and service goals; are adequate in number, condition, and availability; and are accessible to students, faculty, and administrators.

Discussion

The facilities of the program or institution must be adequate in size and easy for students to access. Students must have a sufficient supply of learning materials and appropriate facilities to support and promote their learning.

Facilities include, but are not limited to,

- buildings (exteriors and interiors)
- classrooms
- faculty and administrative workspaces
- restrooms
- other areas used by the program, students, faculty, or administration

Equipment includes, but is not limited to

- electronic equipment for instruction, office, and student activities
- workspace, classroom, and student area furniture and fixtures

Supplies include, but are not limited to

- graphic display materials
- language learning, teaching and assessment materials
- reference materials
- office and classroom supplies
- facility maintenance supplies

Well-maintained classrooms, laboratories, and student areas of sufficient size and number must be available to students and be conducive to learning. Administrator and faculty work areas must be of sufficient size and number to ensure effective teaching, administrative, and student services functions. All facilities should be clean, safe, located in secure settings, and be adequately lighted and ventilated. Facilities and equipment must be properly maintained and available from class to class and session to session through ownership of the premises or a legally secured lease/contract. or ownership of the

> **Commented [A15]:** No change to language. Rephrase for article agreement.

~~premises~~ Equipment must be in good working condition and in sufficient quantity to meet the needs of all students, faculty, administrators, and staff.

Facilities, equipment, and supplies are accessible to all students, faculty, administrators, and staff, including those with disabilities, at times and places consistent with the stated mission and goals. ~~Where a program is part of a larger institution or campus, or where an independent language institution contracts with a larger institution, the location of the program within the larger organization supports the achievement of the program's educational and service goals and helps promote the integration of international students into the academic/professional community.~~ Programs and institutions that meet this standard are ~~characterized by a lack of complaints or~~able to provide documentation of resolution of requests for an improved learning or work environment, if any.

Commented [A16]: Language deleted. It focused on a particular type of accredited site, which may be inconsistent with CEA Values regarding respecting differences. Also adds a requirement to some site types and not others.

Commented [A17]: Language edit: reword to avoid having sites prove the negative.

Student Complaints

Context

This standard area ~~deals with procedures for responding to formal complaints made by students.~~ focuses on ensuring that students are informed about how to resolve the problems they may encounter with the program's educational programs, practices, services, and personnel. Programs and language institutions must have clear procedures to resolve a variety of levels of student complaints in a timely way. ~~It is not the intent of these standards to require the program or institution to record or respond to every critical comment; however, it must put in place procedures to handle formal complaints~~ It is not the intent of this standard to require the program or institution to record or respond to every critical comment. However, written records must be kept in the case of formal complaints.

Student Complaints Standard 1: The program or language institution makes available to students, in writing, procedures by which they may lodge complaints. The program or language institution documents and maintains records of formal student complaints, as well as the resolution of any such complaints.

Discussion

The program or institution must have ~~in place~~ written student complaint procedures and ensure that students, including both on-site and distance education students, if relevant, know what these procedures are. Such procedures typically include directions to students for resolving a range of questions and concerns, from relatively minor concerns to larger issues and complaints. The written procedures must include a process by which a student may ~~lodge~~ file a formal ~~written~~ complaint of a more serious nature. Personnel who have the requisite authority and training must resolve such formal complaints, and records of formal complaints and their resolutions must be maintained.

Commented [A18]: Revised context clarifies requirements regarding written procedures and formal complaints.

Commented [A19]: This standard requires that the procedures be written.

Commented [A20]: Emphasize for clarity.

Commented [A21]: CEA definition of formal complaint does not require that it be written. Delete for clarity.