

Report of Findings of the United States University Revisit Team March 2017

Overview of this Report

This item is the accreditation team report for the March 2017 revisit to United States University. The report includes the revisit team recommendations regarding the stipulations and accreditation status as well as revisit findings on common standards found to be less than fully met at the initial site visit.

Background

A site visit was held at the United States University (USU) from April 10-12, 2016; the report of that visit was presented to the Committee on Accreditation at its June 2016 meeting (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/coa-agendas/2016-06/2016-06-item-15.pdf>). The COA assigned the status of **Accreditation with Stipulations** to the United States University and all of its credential programs, and assigned two stipulations to be addressed in a focused revisit.

1. The University must provide evidence that a comprehensive and unit-wide assessment and evaluation system that addresses all credential programs is implemented and guides program improvement.
2. The University must provide evidence that district-employed supervisors are trained in supervision, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner.

Changes in Location and Leadership Structure following Initial Site Visit

In July 2016, USU moved its San Diego County campus from Chula Vista, to Mission Valley, California. On Friday, February 3, 2017, Commission staff were notified that the prior week United States University (USU) had restructured its overall educational program model. The University, supported by the Board of Trustees, had decided to move to a Provost model in an effort to run programs more efficiently and effectively. This decision resulted in the loss of three of the four Deans, including the Dean of the College of Education. The new 'Provost Model' and recently appointed USU Provost were introduced. A key faculty member with significant public school experience was named Director of Teacher Credential Preparation and assigned duties previously held by the Dean including Program Manager, TPA Coordinator, Credential Analyst and Workshop Facilitator. The institution assured its commitment to being prepared for the upcoming Accreditation Revisit including a Previsit conference call scheduled for Tuesday, February 7, 2017.

Revisit Team Recommendations

On the basis of the evidence presented at the revisit and provided in this report, the team recommends the retention of stipulations 1 and the removal of stipulation 2. The team also reviewed all common standards previously found to be less than fully met and determined that Common Standard 2 remains **Not Met**, and that Common Standard 8 is now **Met**. The team recommends that the accreditation status remain **Accreditation with Stipulations** that the

institution provide monthly reports on their progress toward implementing an assessment system addressing each of the following.

- *A system that utilizes data on candidate and completer performance at the program and unit levels.*
- *A system that collects, aggregates and utilizes data related to unit operations.*
- *A system that collects, aggregates and utilizes data related to program effectiveness.*

California Commission on Teacher Credentialing

**Committee on Accreditation
Revisit Team Report**

Institution: **United States University**

Date of Revisit: **March 7-9, 2017**

**Accreditation Team
Recommendation:** **Accreditation**

Rationale: Based on the evidence presented at the revisit the team concludes that of the standards required to be reviewed at the Revisit, Common Standards 2 remains **Not Met**, and Common Standard 8 is **Met**. The team recommends the accreditation status remain **Accreditation with Stipulations**.

2017 Revisit Team Standard Findings

Common Standards		
Common Standards	2016 Team Findings	2017 Revisit Findings
Standard 2: Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation	Not Met	Not Met
Standard 8: District Employed Supervisors	Met with Concerns	Met

Further, staff recommends that:

- United States University be permitted to propose new credential programs for approval by the Committee on Accreditation.
- United States University continue in its assigned cohort on the schedule of accreditation activities, subject to the continuance of the accreditation activities by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Accreditation Revisit Team

Team Leader:

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Loyola Marymount University

Staff to the Visit

Paula Jacobs

Commission on Teacher Credentialing

Interviews Conducted

Stakeholders	TOTAL
Candidates	3
Institutional Administration	6
Program Coordinators	3
Faculty	1
TPA Coordinator	1
Advisors	1
Field Supervisors – Program	1
Field Supervisors – District	2
TOTAL	18

Note: Interviews noted may be greater than the number of individuals interviewed due to both multiple interviews and the multiple roles an individual occupies at the institution.

Program Participation

Program Name	Program Level (Initial or Advanced)	Program Completers (2015-16)	Candidates Enrolled or admitted 16-17
Multiple Subject	Initial		5
Single Subject	Initial	3	12
Bilingual Authorization	Initial		1*

*Source: USU Matrix of Completers and Enrollment; March 2017; *also MS Program Candidate USU has identified an additional 5 candidates (4 MS and 1 SS) who have completed courses but have assessments pending.*

2017 Revisit Team Findings on Standards and Stipulations

On March 7, 2017 the Team Lead and the State Consultant from the 2016 site visit returned to United States University for a revisit. The team arrived Tuesday afternoon March 7, and interviewed constituencies through March 8, 2017. The Mid Visit Report was shared Wednesday morning with the United States University administration and College of Education faculty, and the Report of Findings was shared Wednesday evening March 8, 2017. The following documents the team's findings relative to each of the stipulations as well as each common standard less than fully met in the 2016 Accreditation Report.

2017 Revisit Findings and Evidence

Changes in Leadership Structure following 2016 Site Visit

Since the 2016 site visit, there have been significant changes to the administration of United States University. In February 2017, United States University revised the college structure of the University and eliminated the Deans of the College of Education, the College of Health Sciences and the College of Business. The President shared that the size of the programs did not warrant a full time Dean.

A Provost was installed to oversee the academic programs of the University. Other administrators oversee institutional assessment. According to an interview with the President, the College of Education is under the leadership of a Faculty member assigned as Program Director who reports to the Provost. The Program Director assumed many functions of the former Dean including oversight of the Teaching Performance Assessment and the role of the Credential Analyst. Online courses are still taught by adjunct faculty.

2016 Site Visit Decision	2017 Revisit Decision	Common Standard 2 Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation
Standard Not Met	Standard Not Met	2016 Rationale While the team found that candidate competency data are collected, no evidence of an assessment and evaluation system for ongoing program and unit evaluation and improvement was found. While some elements of systematic assessment are in place such as individual candidate competency assessment, a systematic approach that aggregates candidate performance at the program and unit levels is missing. Assessment of unit operations is not discussed in the program documentation. There is no description of systematic assessment processes or products for program evaluation or unit level assessment of candidate performance.

	<p>Retain</p>	<p><u>Stipulation 1:</u> United States University must provide evidence that a comprehensive and unit-wide assessment and evaluation system that addresses all credential programs is implemented and guides program improvement.</p> <p>2017 Revisit Findings: United States University provided the beginnings of a plan for a unit-wide assessment and evaluation system of candidate performance. In addition, the plan calls for the teacher credentialing programs to now be a part of the assessment system for the entire university. As stated in the report of the 2016 site visit, USU collects data such as candidate demographics, scores on the Teaching Performance Assessment, and scores from key assignments in coursework; however there is no evidence of implementation of a feedback loop to inform program improvement and unit operations. Data is currently collected in the teaching credential program at four checkpoints; Admission, Prior to Methods Classes, Following the Methods Classes, and Following Student Teaching.</p> <p>While an Assessment Cycle for Teaching Performance Expectations has been developed, full implementation had not taken place at the time of the revisit. Interviews with various administrators recently involved in the teacher credentialing programs also show an inconsistency in the understanding of the plan.</p> <p>A structure composed of key administrators has been created to support the assessment system. According to the plan presented at the site visit, and confirmed in interviews, the university-wide assessment system is overseen by the recently appointed Provost. The Provost works closely with the Associate Provost and Assistant Provost of Institutional Research and Assessment. These administrators work with the Director of the Teacher Credentialing Program so that processes developed for the unit assessment also address requirements for the university assessment as part of regional accreditation.</p> <p>A plan for candidate assessment in the teacher credentialing programs was discussed; data is to be collected on a regular basis following a prescribed timeline. Administration outlined the components currently implemented and those not yet</p>
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		<p>addressed. According to the plan, in the fall semester, data on candidate competency is gathered and analyzed. In the spring semester, a team composed of the Director of the Teacher Credentialing Program and identified adjunct faculty drafts a self-study report discussing strengths, areas for improvement, and potential solutions. The self-study is then shared with faculty and staff and feedback is solicited. After the self-study is finalized, it is forwarded to the Provost. The timeline is designed to enable decision making based on the academic quality and fiscal sustainability of the program. The data collected is limited primarily because of the small enrollment in the programs; there are instances when less than 5 candidates participate in a particular assessment activity. Program administrators stated that it is difficult to arrive at conclusions based on a very small data set.</p> <p>At the 2016 site visit, administrators expressed a desire for the program to increase enrollment; the President shared that in spite of their efforts enrollment has not increased. Administrators affirmed their commitment to teacher preparation and increasing enrollment in the programs. Personnel responsible for outreach and recruitment continue contacting partners in the San Diego and Los Angeles areas to present information on the USU programs. However; in reviewing public information available on the USU web site, team members do not find clear information on the teaching credential programs such as program requirements, timelines and coursework. Some misinformation was found; the credential programs are listed as 'degree' programs but administrators confirmed that credential programs are not designed to lead to a Master's degree.</p> <p>Documentation indicates requests have been made for professional development to improve unit operations. However, systematic assessment processes for program and unit evaluation are not discussed in the program documentation or the plan. There is no description of a system for program and unit evaluation to guide program improvement and unit operations in areas such as faculty, admissions, enrollment, or candidate completion. Institutional Administrators interviewed acknowledged that assessment activities have been focused at the institutional level and that unit assessment, including</p>
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		assessment of unit operations to inform program improvement, is a need across the institution.
2016 Site Visit Decision	2017 Revisit Decision	Standard 8: District Employed Supervisors
Met with Concerns	Met	<p>2016 Rationale: While there is an informal mechanism to provide orientation for the field supervisors, no formal training opportunities are provided in a systematic manner to prepare district-employed supervisors to carry out their responsibly to supervise student teachers. In addition, there is no systematic manner in which district-employed supervisors are evaluated or recognized.</p> <p>Stipulation 2: The University must provide evidence that district-employed supervisors are trained in supervision, evaluated and recognized in a systematic manner.</p> <p>2017 Revisit Findings: USU has developed and recently implemented a system to train, evaluate, and recognize district-employed supervisors in a systematic manner.</p> <p>The training of district-employed supervisors is documented in a training guide. An examination of the guide shows that district-employed supervisors are oriented to important aspects of the program about two weeks before the start of the semester. Since the program is small, the training is scheduled at a time that is convenient for the district-employed supervisor, takes place on a one-on-one basis, and includes the student teacher. Furthermore, USU staff provide information on the role of the district-employed supervisor in the student teaching program, expectations of what candidates should do during the student teaching assignment, and the evaluation process. District-employed supervisors are also presented with a handbook with additional information on the program. Interviews with district-employed supervisors confirmed the content of the trainings and their participation. Candidates also stated that they participated in these trainings with their district-employed supervisors. At the end of the training, supervisors complete an evaluation form to provide feedback on the training.</p>
	Remove	

		<p>District-employed supervisors are evaluated by the candidate and University staff using program-provided evaluation forms. Candidates confirmed that they rate their district-employed supervisors on the guidance that they provided and the regularity of feedback and observations. Candidates also provide feedback on their district-employed supervisor through informal conversation with USU staff.</p> <p>The system includes a process for recognizing district-employed supervisors. At the end of the semester, supervisors are recognized with a certification of appreciation. District-employed supervisor who were interviewed confirmed that they are recognized appropriately by USU.</p>
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