

NCATE: Helping or Hurting Prospective Teachers
Preparation for Democracy?

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ABSTRACT

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NCATE: Helping or Hindering Prospective Teachers' Preparation for Democracy
(Under the direction of Lynda Stone)

The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) sets standards dictating what prospective teachers should be able to know and do. Democracy, one of the founding principles of the United States, is a national ideal as well as a goal indicated for many schools of education. Since NCATE has significant control over what prospective teachers learn, a question concerns whether the organization help students prepare for teaching within a democratic context. In this thesis, writings on democracy and education from John Dewey are analyzed. Then NCATE's own literature on how to create highly qualified teachers is compared to the democratic ideal. Finally a position is offered on what can further help schools of education and pre-service teachers work towards a democratic ideal in light of NCATE.

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INTRODUCTION

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accredits more than 700 schools of education or teacher training programs in the United States, giving it unsurpassed influence over the content and methodology of teacher education (“National Council for the Association of Teacher Education”, 2008). The substance and the shape of teacher training entail much of the shape of schools of education. Which classes are taught, time commitments of faculty members, and how money is spent are among determination. The content of teacher education influences students who will be in teachers’ classrooms for years to come, what they will learn and how they will learn. Teacher education also has an impact on society. The students will become full members of the adult society and what they learn in school will influence how they interact as citizens and as members of the workforce. Most immediately, however, teacher education shapes teachers. NCATE accreditation influences what teachers are taught and how they learn it.

Autobiographical Experience

As a pre-service teacher in an NCATE accredited program, I believed that I was learning information and participating in field experiences that would give a strong foundation to help me develop into a prepared professional once I began practicing in the classroom setting. When I began teaching, I found that the training I received did assist in developing lessons based on student subject matter needs. It did not prepare me to deal with the greater context of education and the varied facets of what is essential for students besides academic content. I found that this last mattered. What are the purposes of education? What

are the challenges in education and why are problems not always solved by differentiating a lesson plan and by raising expectations? The world of the school was much bigger and complex than I expected. In sum, I did not have the mental frameworks to process complex, contextualized situations that I encountered on a daily basis. So as a graduate of an NCATE accredited program, I became an initially licensed teacher, and I was ready to deliver “quality” instruction but I encountered many challenges partly because I was unaware of the greater context.

During my pre-service program, there were many components that aimed at helping me enter the teaching profession including methods courses, field experiences, and seminars. First, methods classes taught me how to prepare, differentiate, and implement lessons for a variety of students based on state standards. I was placed in schools working with students and teachers for five consecutive semesters including student teaching. I interned at three different schools in three different grade levels. Second, in each field experience I had an opportunity to teach lessons from the various methods classes I was taking. During junior year and senior year I spent nine hours a week in my assigned classroom at professional development schools, and finally during student teaching I taught all lessons in the classroom for six weeks. Third, in seminar classes we discussed issues, read articles and books, wrote papers, and made presentations on various topics ranging from students with special needs to classroom management to diversity. At the beginning of the teacher education program we took a foundations course. Democracy was mentioned briefly with other philosophies of teaching but was not considered in any way again.

We were not required to think about the purposes of education, even though we did weekly reflections on our teaching experiences. I can remember thinking that it was

important for my students to do well in school so they could progress through the remainder of school and go to college so they could obtain good jobs. Never did I think about teaching students to become citizens within schools. I always thought that school was a place that encouraged social mobility. I did not know that school could be a place where students' talents were hindered and where students were treated inequitably. I believed that if I taught the right lessons, the correct way for each and all students, they would be successful. Success meant passing the End-of-Grade (EOG) test so they could matriculate through school. In the teacher education program I attended, NCATE standards were found on every syllabus. We even had to create a portfolio demonstrating that we were following the standards. There were no courses that did not adhere to NCATE standards. Again, there was also no course that dealt explicitly with the larger purposes of education and how schools fit within a larger society.

As a practicing teacher, I quickly learned that even if I taught exciting and well-planned lessons, students did not always learn the objectives. Classroom management, high expectations, and differentiated lessons were not enough to help my all my students pass the EOG. With experience my confidence in teaching grew stronger. However, it still did not result in all of my students being successful on their EOGs, even though I, as a teacher, according to NCATE, was "highly qualified". I did not realize the challenges that schools face because of their relationship to the larger society. I was unaware of the stratification that occurs in schools due to tracking and various grouping practices. I was ignorant of the democratic aims of the United States and that schools also serve the purposes of developing democratic citizens. To summarize, I was uninformed to the fact that there was more to education than delivering and implementing lesson plans. I did not know about the social

context of schools or how to use what I knew about the social context of schools to better help my students learn.

Teacher Quality and Preparation

As part of a public's responsibility in a democracy there is a sense of agreement among the public that teachers should be qualified, or licensed before they begin teaching. People want knowledgeable teachers who know how to work with youth or children. Society wants to ensure that people instructing in classrooms are safe, caring, and have some type of expertise either in a specific subject matter or in education. For most people, qualification equals knowledge acquisition and preparation for teaching. Equally important is that teachers are highly qualified to teach within a certain context. Historically, people have taught many different things, but it could be argued that the aim of their teaching was not in the communities' best interests. People have been taught to become extremists such as in Fascist Germany. In times past within this country, teachers have taught superiority and inferiority of certain groups; they have prepared students for a future based on their race and gender. People are not always in agreement or even aware of what the aims of education are. It is important to clarify what are the goals of teaching, and then, to have an agreed upon purpose towards which teachers are working.

In a present era, within No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the agreed upon aim is for states to hire highly qualified teachers to teach in schools, but the larger question is highly qualified to teach for what purpose? A No Child Left Behind factsheet cites a study done by Sanders and Rivers (1996) in Texas and Tennessee that says, "students who had effective teachers greatly outperformed those who had ineffective teachers". (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, n.d.). This raises the question of what constitutes an

effective teacher. According to NCLB requirements, an “effective” teacher is one who has a bachelor’s degree, can prove sufficient knowledge of subject matter, and is certified by the state. As indicated this mirrors public opinion. In order to ensure “teacher quality”, states grant accrediting power to organizations such as NCATE. Accreditation in professions is similar to a stamp of approval supposedly verifying for the public that an individual, program, or organization has been through an official process verifying competence. Accrediting organizations work to control the quality of programs by setting standards and requirements, and then by following up with the programs to ensure that standards are being met for individuals. An accrediting body therefore controls content, structure, and assessment within programs. Because candidates must graduate from an accredited institution to be licensed, programs must adhere to the requirements of the accrediting body. Schools and programs that prepare teachers are accredited by associations such as NCATE.

In this era of accountability reform it is necessary to step back and think about why the United States is interested and invested in these reforms. Again historically, democracy and education have been linked in the U.S.A—at least rhetorically. Significantly, NCLB has no connection to democracy despite the fact that it is one of this nation’s goals. A critical component of a democracy is schools. Schools have the purpose of teaching students about democracy and how to live democratically so that the way of life and the government of the United States can continue and can improve. If democracy is truly one of the United States’ goals, then any reform of schools should address democracy. Some schools of education address democracy in their schools’ mission. For example, the Conceptual Framework at the University of North Carolina (UNC) School of Education includes three broad areas of emphasis: equity, excellence, and democracy. The UNC School of Education is accredited

by NCATE whose slogan is “the standard of excellence in teacher education” (“National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education”, 2008). NCATE does have a specific focus on preparing excellent teachers who will work to foster excellence in their students. However, NCATE does not appear to have a visible focus on teaching for equity or in preparing teachers for a democratic society. The question becomes this: does NCATE help or hinder schools of education from preparing teachers to work in a democratic society? For the purpose of this thesis excellence and equity will be subsumed within the concept of democracy.

Outline of Thesis

What follows in this thesis provides an answer to the aforementioned question. In section one, a definition of democracy and an explanation of the goals of democracy will be given using various articles either written by John Dewey or about his work on democracy. In section two, background information will be given about NCATE and about the standards they use to determine the quality of teacher education programs. Additionally, NCATE has four assumptions that they make about effective teachers. The pertinent assumption regarding teacher preparation will be reviewed in this thesis. This assumption is qualified by NCATE using various sources. In section four, the literature NCATE highlights regarding teacher preparation will be reviewed to further determine what NCATE claims should be accomplished in teacher education programs, looking to see if the literature suggests the importance of social context, specifically preparation for a democratic society. Next, in section five, using the established democratic framework, NCATE as an accrediting organization will be analyzed. Additionally the impact NCATE has on schools of education and on prospective teachers and their students will be analyzed using the democratic

framework. In section six, a position will be stated suggesting how NCATE can further the creation and the continuation of democracy in schools. A conclusion follows.

DEMOCRACY

As previously mentioned the concept of democracy appears in many mission statements and ideals about schools. In order to determine if NCATE is helping schools of education meet this part of their individual mission statements and this national ideal, it is necessary to explore what the word means for society and education. John Dewey was a philosopher who wrote about many different things including democracy and education. Because of his extensive writing on democracy, there are many different texts that show how he conceptualized it: For him, democracy is a philosophy, a form of government, and a lifestyle. All democracies aim to socialize citizens, educate individuals, and to increase and sustain a democratic way of life. Using selected articles, Dewey's definition of democracy and the goals of democracy will be outlined.

Democracy as a Philosophy

In *Philosophy and Democracy*, Dewey defines both words taken from the title and outlines the connections between them. Democracy is a philosophy. Philosophy encompasses a person's basic beliefs about how life should be lived. It is a statement of goals and of how things should ideally be accomplished. Philosophies start from moral convictions and then using available knowledge, statements are formed that envision and detail a certain way of life informing and convincing others that this is the way life should be lived. Philosophy embodies an eagerness for wisdom, an assurance that a specific way of living is better than another. Philosophies must be orderly and logical, for the intent is to persuade others of the value of living in the suggested manner. Philosophizing involves

envisioning a future goal which is being worked towards, not a way of life that is fully in existence in the present time. Democracy is then something that is an ideal that should be worked towards; it is not something that is necessarily already established (Dewey, 1919, 1993, pp. 39-42).

During the period of the Enlightenment, the French motto captured the essence of the democratic philosophy: “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity”. These three words bring a wide range of meanings. One way to define what they mean is through Dewey’s definition of democracy. First, liberty can broadly refer to two different things. If a person follows the established order by aligning himself with that order without being forced, then he is free. This type of liberty also assumes that there is one unchanging reality that exists, but this type of liberty does not align itself with the way of life in a democratic society. In the second type of liberty reality changes based on different experiences and different events. There is no one final result for everyone but results depend on experiences. All achievement is not necessarily positive, and defeat and dissatisfaction is not necessarily negative (Dewey 1919, 1993). Second, equality is also central to democracy. In *Ethics and Democracy*, Dewey discusses the principles of conduct in a democracy versus other ways of life. Historically philosophies have supported and justified those who were in authority. Authorities in power did not consider themselves equal to those who were (Dewey, 1888, 1993). Returning to *Philosophy and Democracy*, equality means that every living thing has value, simply because it is alive and it offers something unique. Ranking beings based on value is unnecessary; differences between people are unimportant but what is important are individual characteristics. Distinctive factors about individuals however are not to be ranked. Third, fraternity with democracy refers to connection. Even though individuals have their own

unique characteristics, hold equal rank, and possess the liberty to create their own paths, people are bonded through associating with each other through dialogues, relationships, and other various interactions. Even though people are all different, there are still ways people can come together (Dewey, 1919, 1993a, pp. 43-46).

Democracy as a Lifestyle

In order for a philosophy to have an impact, individuals must take action to follow it. In a democracy people must continuously strive for, as previously mentioned, liberty, equality, and fraternity. In, *Creative Democracy—The Task Before Us*, John Dewey specifies further requirements for individuals in a democracy. As Dewey puts this, “democracy is a personal way of individual life” (Dewey, 1939, 1988, p. 226). At the heart of democracy lies the importance and value of each person. Each person has an active role to play in order for a society to truly embody the characteristics of a democracy. Also in *Creative Democracy*, he writes that democrats embody a spirit that trusts in the ability of humans to have intelligent thought processes that they use to act in ways that are mutually beneficial to themselves and society. Consulting, conferencing, persuading, and discussing are all part of the democratic process. These actions allow people to think with clarity and to act based on thorough, mutually-engaged, thought processes. Because of trust that is placed in the individual, democracies seek to resolve conflict through the democratic process, not through violence or military action. Challenges are tackled through working to change and develop the attitudes of individuals (Dewey, 1939, 1988, pp. 226-228).

Democracy as a Government

Again from *The Ethics of Democracy* individuals following a philosophy have a need to be organized and in agreement to make progress. Democracy is a form of government; when individuals decide to pursue the philosophy of democracy, there must be a method of

organization. In order to follow the philosophy of democracy, individuals use government to manage thoughts, actions, and needs. According to Dewey, the purpose of government is to bring people into agreement with the way of life. People in a common society must have a consensus as to the general direction or goal of that society. The government helps create that consensus (Dewey, 1888, 1993). In *The Need of an Industrial Education in an Industrial Democracy*, a democracy, Dewey writes, is

a form of government which does not esteem the well-being of one individual or class above that of another. It is a system of laws and administration which ranks the happiness and interest of all as upon the same plane and before whose laws and administration all individuals are alike or equal (Dewey, 1916, 1980 p. 137).

Back to *The Ethics of Democracy*, voting for representatives and the administration is a direct part of democratic process (Dewey, 1888, 1993).

Socialization of Democratic Citizens

In a democracy, the relationship between government and individuals is two-way. In order to have a democratic society, on the one hand individuals must create and sustain a government that works for the best interests of all the people. On the other hand, the government must foster programs or institutions that help people learn how to develop their talents and reach their potential so they can fully take part in the democratic process. The institution of education fits within this role by creating schools that aid in the development of future citizens. Pertinent to this process, philosopher Larry Hickman in a book chapter *Socialization, Social Control, and Social Efficiency* discusses Dewey's views. Socialization must enrich a person's intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic capacities. Further, socialization must also help people learn how to interact and develop working relationships with others in society (Hickman, 2006, pp. 68-69). Socialization in a society leads to social efficiency. Citing Dewey, "social efficiency is nothing less than socialization of the mind which is

actively concerned in making experiences more communicable; in breaking down the barriers of social stratification which make individuals impervious to the interests of others” (Dewey, 1999, cited in Hickman, p. 70). Social efficiency allows people to fully experience occurrences and happenings, finding meaning in them. Social efficiency also leads to the development of thought processes which allow people to communicate with others despite differences between individuals (Hickman, 2006, pp.70-71).

Socialization leads to a democratic form of social control. When people are enhanced intellectually, emotionally, and aesthetically, and they are able to fully experience events and communicate ideas effectively with others, social control is acquired. Dewey says that social control is the creation of an intellectual attitude and a way of comprehending things and actions which allows people to take part in societal endeavors. When these characteristics become a habit, an automatic part of a person’s response system, social control is taking place (Hickman, 2006, pp. 72). Social control is thus a goal of democracy and socialization takes place within democratic institutions such as education and schools. Again from *The Need of an Industrial Education in an Industrial Democracy*, Dewey (1916, 1980) describes the goals of education and he gives specifics on what education should entail. A goal of education in a democratic society is to prepare people to be valuable to society. Education should help individuals find meaningful work that benefits the community and additionally utilizes individual strengths and talents. Education should help students become producers of their own talents and as well as becoming savvy consumers. According to Dewey education should value liberty, inventiveness, intuitiveness, and comprehension as opposed to submissiveness, memorization, and repetitive drills. Schools have a significant role to play. They should not be stratified according to social class, but they should be reorganized so that

various children from different backgrounds learn to admire hard work, to serve others, and to disprove of those who are societal leeches. (Dewey, 1916, 1980).

Experience in a Democracy

In *Creative Democracy—The Task Before Us*, Dewey demonstrates the relationship between experience and democracy, perhaps the basic component. Experience is what gives people the tools they need to be productive, valuable citizens in a democratic society. He says that experience is unrestricted interaction with various components of the environment, especially the sectors that involve relating to other people. This interaction increases development, knowledge and awareness. This awareness creates a need and desire to know more as well as satisfies the need to know more. Democracy utilizes experience as the process to get to a desired result, which is more experience (Dewey, 1939, 1988).

To summarize at this point: A society striving for democracy starts with individuals who are themselves committed to the goal of democracy. Those individuals create and continue a government which uses a democratic process but also creates democratic institutions and programs. The institutions and programs help individuals develop themselves so they can become valuable, responsible members of society with developed talents that they use to serve themselves but also the common goal of the society. The common goal starts with the democratic vision of finding solutions that best meet the needs of each individual. For Dewey experience is what makes this democratic cycle run and hold together.

Based on Dewey's vision of democracy, the democratic process can be conceptualized as a wheel: a cyclical model with spokes connecting the outlying components. The wheel begins moving with the philosophy, the ideals that a country holds.

Individuals believe in this philosophy and they create a government to lead and organize the needs of people striving to reach this ideal. The government creates institutions such as schools that develop the talents of individuals and teach students about the ideals and goals of a democratic society.

Teachers' Role in a Democracy

Because a democracy is inseparable from education, it is critical for schools to prepare students for democratic life. If schools are to be reformed for the betterment of society, teachers must be prepared to teach students how to participate in a democracy. In accredited programs, NCATE takes the responsibility of outlining and requiring what teachers need to be highly qualified. Recall that NCATE does not have any requirement or standard that mandates that teachers be taught how to prepare democratic citizens. Because NCATE has many other requirements, it appears to place democracy on the backburner, an afterthought for institutions to fit in where they can. The important point is that schools and teachers are primary for the continuation and building of a democracy. Therefore, it seems to follow that democracy should be addressed by NCATE.

Dewey's conception of democracy can serve as a framework for guiding expectations of educators teaching in a society striving for democracy. Out of his writings on education this central question emerges: what does a society striving for democracy ask of schools and teachers? The founding premise of this thesis is that unlike NCATE's organization and mission, schools and teachers must emphasize democracy. To return to the ideas of Dewey's philosophy from the French motto, teachers need to help their students find freedom in the various choices they can make, teach their students about the equality of all people, and show their students that despite differences, individuals can find commonality. Part of a teacher's

job connected to this choice is to instruct students about the equality of humans, while at the same time developing talent in individuals regardless of difference. It is a teacher's responsibility in a democracy to help students realize that even though individuals have different talents, beliefs, and orientations, people in society still have commonalities that tie them together. Teachers in a democracy are thus responsible for helping to plant "liberty, equality, and fraternity" in their students. Sadly this is something that many teachers have not been taught in their P-12 preparation experience. If creation and continuation of democracy is truly a national goal, then teachers must be knowledgeable of this goal and knowledgeable of how to share this ideal with students. In sum they also must be able to give their students a liberating education, recognize the equality of all students, and foster fraternity despite differences. NCATE becomes important in this issue of democracy because it acts as a governing body, determining what prospective teachers should know and be able to do.

NCATE

This next section gives general background information on NCATE. NCATE's purpose and role as an accreditation agency will be discussed. Next, NCATE's specific organizational goals will be listed. Then, the standards which are used to accredit schools will be listed, highlighting the expectations that NCATE has of schools of education. Lastly NCATE's claims about the relationship between accreditation, teacher education, and student achievement will be overviewed from research based premises.

NCATE is the largest and nearly sole teacher accreditation body in the United States. Schools accredited by NCATE graduate almost all of the teachers who are entering the workforce. Today some 632 schools are NCATE accredited, and schools are currently in the process of seeking NCATE accreditation. NCATE was chartered in 1954 by five different educational organizations: the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (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) ("About NCATE", 2007).

NCATE's general purpose is to ensure that teachers graduating from various teacher education programs are well prepared to meet the needs of students who will be served in schools across the United States. It is an independent non-profit organization that is not affiliated with the government or any businesses. NCATE is an umbrella network for thirty-

three organizations and agencies seeking to improve the quality of education. The thirty-three organizations include groups representing teachers, policy makers, and specialized professional associations. These organizations provide NCATE with representatives who help create and improve standards, policies, and procedures. The representatives also help with the accreditation applications, and the organizations significant contributors to NCATE financially (“NCATE’s Mission”, 2007).

NCATE accredits any type of program or institution that prepares teachers to work in P-12 settings. Operating under a performance-based competency system, teachers from accredited programs must demonstrate proficiency within each of the required competencies. The accredited schools are responsible for ensuring that licensure programs offer classes that will help teachers learn and perform NCATE’s outlined standards (“About NCATE”, 2007).

NCATE has four specific goals. The first goal is to create and uphold rigorous principles for the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions expected of teachers and for the schools and facilities that provide training. The second goal is to run a well organized and resourceful accreditation structure to evaluate the components of teacher education programs. The third goal is to give guidance and some procedural help to schools of education in enhancing their programs and in better preparing their graduates. The final goal of NCATE is to share information with all stakeholders in education about accreditation and to work with others collaboratively to develop high quality teachers (“NCATE, Strategic Goals and Objectives and Current Issues”, 2007).

NCATE Standards

Related to the four goals, NCATE provides a set of six standards. For purposes of this thesis it is important to note NCATE’s stance on social justice. The organization

believes that the achievement gap is worsened by lack of teacher preparation in underserved schools. It has pledged to address this problem by working to develop educators, through accreditation, who are prepared to close the gap. Here is its position statement: “When the education profession, the public, and policymakers demand that all children be taught by well prepared teachers, then no child will be left behind and social justice will be advanced” (“Professional Standards”, 2008, p. 6)

NCATE’s accreditation process is based on its standards. The NCATE standards outline what is expected of professional candidates and how institutions can help their students master these expectations. A standard is an expectation statement of what students within programs are to master. Each standard states an expectation, contains a rubric delineating how the standards should be assessed as well as a more in-depth explanation of the standard. According to NCATE, its standards are based on “significant emergent research”. In addition to meeting six standards, institutions must develop a conceptual framework which establishes a common goal for the students within an institution and how faculty will prepare students to meet those goals (“National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education”, 2008).

NCATE uses the standards to determine if a program or school is preparing highly qualified teachers based on research about what teachers should be able to know and do. The first standard says that teachers should be knowledgeable and be able to show “content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and skills, pedagogical and professional knowledge and skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn”. The second standard states that each school or program must “collect and analyze data on applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations to evaluate

and improve the performance”. In order to give practical experience applying knowledge from courses, the third standard states that programs must “design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school professionals develop and demonstrate knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions”.

The fourth standard is built off of the first standard in that all candidates must have the “knowledge and skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn”, but specifically refers to diversity and in working with student populations. Standard five requires programs to evaluate their faculty and provide faculty professional development, and it asks that faculty use and model “best practices in scholarship, service, and teaching”. The final standard says that “the unit...[must have] the leadership, authority, budget, personnel, facilities, and resources” to help its students meet NCATE’s requirements as well as other requirements dictated by all levels of government (“Professional Standards”, 2008, pp.12-13). Check page numbers

NCATE uses research that supports the importance of teacher preparation and its standards. Using various sources NCATE has four research-based premises. First, student achievement is strengthened by adequate teacher training. Next, beginning teachers stay in the profession longer when they have participated in a preparation program. Third, appropriate training aids pre-service teachers in gaining knowledge and skills necessary for classroom teaching. Finally, NCATE itself claims that it influences teacher training by impacting pre-service teacher performance, student academic performance, and school of education performance. In this thesis, the third premise will be focused on because of its attention on the content of teacher preparation. This research based assertion has influenced the development of NCATE’s standards for training teachers (“Research Supporting the

Effectiveness of Teacher Preparation”, 2005). To follow, a review of the literature cited on NCATE’s website will highlight NCATE’s areas of focus, and it will also expose any recommendations that NCATE chooses not to value.

AIMS AND SUBSTANTIATION

Connected to NCATE's desire to help schools of education effectively prepare teachers, NCATE uses the previously mentioned claims, especially the claim regarding the content of teacher preparation, to prove the necessity of their Standards. A close examination of one of the sources cited by NCATE will show what information led NCATE to make this assumptions. In the following section, *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World: What Teachers Should Learn and Be Able to Do* edited by Linda Darling-Hammond and John Bransford will be analyzed to see how they contribute to the claims NCATE makes.

Components of High Quality Preparation

Attention is focused on *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World* for several reasons. John Bransford is the James W. Mifflin University Professor of Education and Psychology at the University of Washington in Seattle, and Linda Darling-Hammond is the Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education at Stanford University. Both authors are widely recognized and respected in the field of teacher education and its policy implications. Next, NCATE uses *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World* repeatedly in publications explaining why accreditation is helpful and why it is important. Finally, this work speaks very specifically to how teachers should be prepared in a broad sense. *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World* is used by NCATE to support the need for standards; thus, the standards should follow the recommendations of this book. Portions of the book will be analyzed to verify if NCATE is adhering to the literature cited. The authors additionally

refer to John Dewey when speaking about the importance of the social context of school and democracy in schools.

The aim of authors Darling-Hammond, Bransford, and Pamela LePage, in the book's introduction (2005) is to create a shared vision of how to prepare teachers with the knowledge and tools they need to be successful in schools. Specifically, the authors target what teachers will need to know, be able to do, and obligations teachers should hold to be successful. This outline for teacher preparation is built around a specific concept map that gives five areas of necessary teacher knowledge: knowledge of teaching as a profession, knowledge of learners and their development in social contexts, knowledge of subject matter and curriculum goals, knowledge of teaching, and knowledge of teaching in a democracy. Their framework builds on John Dewey's idea in *The Child and Curriculum* (1902) that teachers must balance the curriculum with what is required for student development and Deborah Ball and David Cohen's (1999) conception of instruction, that connections between student, teacher, content, and environment all influence each other and form education. Knowledge of learners, teaching, and subject matter are visually represented in the framework with intersecting bodies surrounded by the knowledge of teaching as a profession and the knowledge of democracy. The diagram shows that learning needs to occur in situations where teachers are regarded as professionals and where learning furthers the cause and aims of a democracy. According to the authors, working for democracy means that schools allow and encourage youth to engage in political, civil, and economic life in society. Additionally, education should lead to equal access to resources and opportunities for all students (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005a, pp. 5-18).

Darling-Hammond et al. (2005) turn to Lee Shulman (1998), President Emeritus of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, to define what professionalism means for educators. He stated six characteristics of professionals including the following: “service to society,...[acquisition of]...scholarly knowledge, engagement in practical action,... toleration.. [of]...uncertainty,...experience in developing practice,...and...[establishment] of professional community (Shulman, 1998, p. 516).

As part of being a professional Darling-Hammond et al. assert that teachers need to know what their responsibilities are and what policies influence their work within schools. This is especially important for new teachers. Specific rules, many times unwritten, carry a heavy weight; an example is laws regarding abused children. Situations such as these are extremely sensitive and are attached to legal repercussion for people involved (2005a, p.13). Teachers need to know how to interact with their students, parents, others working in the school, and representatives from the community. They need to know that schools are socially, politically, and culturally situated institutions. Educators should understand how these forces interact with the school and the community where the school is located. Indeed, they assert that the cause of new teacher turnover is a lack of knowledge about the social context of schools and the teachers’ relationship to that social context.

Furthermore, in another chapter from *Preparing Teachers*, it is essential that teachers take the social context of schools into account when considering their personal professional role in facilitating the broad purposes of education. Turning to Darling-Hammond, Banks, Zumwalt, Gomez, Sherin, Griesdorn, et al., teachers as professionals have a great impact on their students. (2005b, pp. 174-175). However, the Coleman Report in 1966 stated that teachers were not as influential on achievement as parental social class and education levels.

More recent data suggests, however, that effective teachers do influence their students' academic outcomes. The link here is that effective teachers are created by effective preparation (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005a, p.13).

Connected to professional responsibility, teachers need to know about subject matter and about the curriculum. Included in this area of knowledge is an awareness of the social context of education. The authors pose the content of social context: preparation of democratic citizens, the social structure of schools and society, and the study of various topics under the umbrella of social foundations including the history of education. Teachers need to construct lessons with an awareness of the social context and an awareness of individual student need. (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005b, pp. 171-172). Darling-Hammond et al. then turn to James A. Banks, the Kerry and Linda Killinger Professor of Diversity Studies and Director of the Center for Multicultural Education at the University of Washington, Seattle. His contribution asserts that schools must teach students how to participate in a democracy. When a society does not prepare students to become democratic citizens, that nation begins to decline because individuals do not feel included. To do this, teachers need to know about the social structure of schools and communities; students come from different cultures and different experiences. Teachers need to know how to appreciate and help students learn through their differences, while pursuing a common goal of equity, acceptance, and appreciation. Teachers also need to know that education in a democracy provides equal access to resources and the development of talent, and it should prepare students for being active in public affairs (Banks, 1997). This means too that beginning teachers should know about the social aims of education. Learning about educational history will enable teachers to see that many goals in education today result from things that have

happened in the past. The goals of education are political. Teachers need to know that they are part of a political and a changing system. (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005b, p. 172). In sum, educators need to be able to deliver and create a curriculum that “represents and connects to their students lives and experiences, allows students to develop habits of participation in a diverse community, beginning with the classroom itself, supports academic, vocational, civic, and personal goals,...[and] supports academic achievement” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005b, p.173).

A final component of subject matter knowledge is the study of curriculum and the development of curriculum. Teachers need to not only know about the materials they will use to teach a certain topic but they also need to know other resources they can use to help their students reach a given objective. Teachers should be able to select an objective for their students to master, but they also need to know how that particular objective fits in with what students have already learned and how it fits in with what students will need to learn in the future. Teachers need to know what strategies are best to use in order to teach certain objectives. Teachers also need to be aware of the hidden curriculum that they are imparting to their students (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005b, pp. 175-177). In summary, it is important for teachers to be knowledgeable professionals, but it is also critical for teachers to surround their content knowledge with consideration of the social context and to teach for democratic purposes.

ANALYSIS

In analyzing the effect of NCATE on preparing teachers for democracy many approaches can be taken. NCATE and its practices can be directly compared to all of the components in Dewey's definition of democracy. A second approach is to list all of the pros in favor of democracy and all of the cons hurting democracy found within the study of NCATE. However, for this paper, NCATE's influence on democratic development for the following groups will be analyzed: NCATE as an organization, prospective teachers, and the future students of NCATE accredited teachers.

Recall that NCATE's goal is to "further excellence in preparation for the practice of education". The roots of the excellence movement can be traced back to the publication *A Nation at Risk* and other relevant publications by many different groups and individuals. The business community, the government, and educators were incited to work to reform schools. The major impetus of the reform movement was standards coupled with accountability (Webb, 2006). In this spirit, and as previously overviewed, NCATE operates with standards and accountability. They create standards that schools of education must follow, and then they hold them accountable for meeting the standards by enforcing various consequences if the standards are not met. Even though NCATE's organizational goal is to increase excellence, a national goal is to pursue democracy. The underlying premise of this study based in part from Dewey is that excellence for all students will be reached more effectively with a connection to democracy. Any organization that has control over what prospective

teachers learn should model democracy and should have within it documented efforts to further democracy.

NCATE as an Organization and Democracy

This thesis contends that NCATE as an organization, interacting with schools of education, is not democratic. Their philosophy does not incorporate democratic ideals. NCATE does not make any claim to be democratic, but it does cite sources that refer to the importance of democracy in preparing teachers. First, NCATE does not work to develop schools of education based on their individual strengths. Instead, NCATE employs a standard model which is the same for all schools of education, not taking into account different types of universities, differences in location, types of programs, or different placements of students. In a democracy, every individual and community has worth, while at the same time there is recognition of personal liberty, freedom to choose what path is most desirable. NCATE leaves little room for liberty within schools of education. Second, the accreditation process is tedious and expensive. This takes resources and time away from scholars in schools of education who are researching and teaching. Third, in some states, NCATE accreditation is required, so if schools lose accreditation, students will not be able to receive teacher certification. Schools of education have little choice but to follow the rules NCATE has set in place because of this state requirement. Fourth, NCATE does not have a forum to take critique from its membership into consideration. Finally, NCATE standards encourage a narrow form of teaching that does not include the social context of teaching or consider the beliefs and backgrounds of teachers and students.

NCATE does move towards democracy in some ways. It fosters a sense of fraternity. Because most schools of education are accredited, there is a common experience of going through the accreditation process. Schools of education are united in having the same standards that they have to follow which creates a sense of commonality. This fraternity is, weak, however, because the threat of consequences helps create this brotherhood, not a genuine desire for a common ideal. Additionally, NCATE's diversity standard as well as its commitment to social justice shows that the organization believes that education can be used to better society. Perhaps democracy in society is presumed.

NCATE encourages only certain voices to be represented in the support or critique of its organization. In a democracy, all individuals can have a voice. If there is a disagreement, both sides are valued and there is an opportunity to discuss and learn from differing opinions to reach a consensus. On NCATE's website, they share various testimonials of the many benefits of NCATE accreditation. Johnson, Johnson, Farenga, and Ness point out in *Trivializing Teacher Education: The Accreditation Squeeze* (2005) that none of the testimonials are from professors who have to prepare for the NCATE accreditation process. The testimonials instead are from people who are not directly involved such as deans, university presidents, and state department of education members. The authors did their own survey, soliciting testimonials about NCATE. The respondents had several complaints about NCATE. Included are these that echo points above; the accreditation process is time consuming, and aspects are tedious. NCATE is also expensive. Some schools reported that without NCATE accreditation, there would be additional money to hire more faculty members. NCATE does not address any of these problems on its website, and they do not mention that any of these issues have occurred (Johnson et al., 2005). In a democracy, equality is

valued. By not recognizing the voices of scholars engaging in the accreditation process, NCATE is setting itself up in effect as the ruler of the accreditation process. Clearly this is not a system that treats schools of education as equal or as needing to have a say or influence in the process. In a democratic society, the purpose of the governing organization is to create consensus among diverse parties and to create institutions that further the democratic process. NCATE does not create consensus among diverse groups. They silence certain stakeholders, and they keep them voiceless through the threat of losing accreditation which could cause students not to get licensed.

It is clear also that NCATE influences prospective teachers, and this also relates to democratic practices. It appears that rigidity of the standards builds a rigid model for teaching: The linear process is that when teaching students one sets objectives, one teaches the objectives, and students meet them. This is a simplistic view of teaching that does not take into account any of the other variables or the social context of teaching. Additionally, NCATE's rhetoric of "highly qualified" and "well-prepared" gives beginning teachers a false sense of readiness and competence. Teachers may leave NCATE accredited institutions thinking that they are ready to help all students learn, or that they can provide the complete answer to students who are struggling academically.

To summarize at this point, NCATE as an organization does not operate democratically nor does it speak to the importance of democracy in schools of education even though many schools include democracy in their missions and conceptual frameworks. NCATE does not use a democratic process in seeking the input of scholars in education, even though accreditation directly impacts the courses that these scholars teach. This arrangement makes it difficult for schools of education to prepare educators for a democratic society.

Some views on this issue are quite strong. Herve Varenne (2007) believes that NCATE accreditation is about control or manipulating schools of education so that it can influence how and what teachers teach in turn influencing what their students learn. This idea of control that permeates throughout much of NCATE's activities is undemocratic. Returning to Dewey, in democracies there is a fundamental belief that all humans possess the ability to use intelligent thought processes to discuss, confer, to draw reasonable conclusions and to plan thoughtful courses of action which are beneficial to all parties involved. NCATE's standards which are imposed on schools directly negate this idea. Schools are not given power or authority to directly have input on its standards and how they will be carried out. NCATE claims to give schools input through members that represent schools. However, these accreditation team members are not representative of all schools or of all disciplines that influence education.

NCATE's Influence on Prospective Teachers

To balance the negative account and even though there are many ways NCATE hinders preparation for democracy, there are also practices that help preparation for democracy. NCATE influences the way schools of education prepare their teachers for diversity. From a democratic perspective, teaching for diversity means believing that every individual has worth because they are a human being. Each human being has different talents and characteristics that are unique, and every person has the capacity to engage in intelligent thought. Education should develop the talents of individuals and teach people that even though their individual talents, characteristics, and thoughts are different there is still common ground that people can find based on desire to achieve the common goal of society. NCATE's diversity standard does allow room for the democratic conception of equity. The standard asks schools to provide experiences for teachers to work with diverse students. It

specifically references students with cultures different from that of the teacher and with students who have disabilities. The standard refers back to the conceptual framework and how each institution individually defines what it wants teachers to be able to do in regards to diversity. This standard leaves room for schools to implement components of courses or entire courses to support prospective teachers' preparation for attending to diverse students and teaching them in an equitable manner. Even though NCATE mandates that prospective teachers be able to work with diverse students and even diverse faculty members, NCATE does not require the same for itself. It does not recognize that the schools that it accredits may have different backgrounds, beliefs, and needs, thus exposing a contradiction between what they claim is best practice and what it actually does.

NCATE's accreditation does specifically influence teachers who graduate from accredited programs. NCATE repeatedly states that teachers graduating from their programs are prepared for the classroom. Pre-service preparation programs can prepare teachers with frames that they will continue to build upon once they begin teaching. Feiman-Nemser (1983) believes that pre-service training does not completely ready prospective teachers to teach. If it did, then in-service training would be unnecessary. Teacher educators should focus on laying the groundwork that will support continuous learning once in the classroom. NCATE does say that teacher preparation should be looked at as a range of levels. However, this range is mentioned only once in their standards, and it does not offer a way of differentiating levels of practice. It does, however, claim that NCATE accredited teachers are better prepared. This readiness, once again, is narrow and refers specifically to content and methods preparation.

NCATE accreditation teaches pre-service teachers a narrow form of teaching that includes teaching and assessing standards. As indicated in this thesis, the standards put so much focus on content and pedagogy that they largely ignore the social context of teaching. The reflection that many times occurs is on how the teacher delivers the lesson and whether another delivery will be more effective. In this process there is no recognition of the individual needs or background of the student; there is no thought of how the culture of the teacher and the student might be influencing the teacher's delivery method and the student's construction of knowledge. When teaching it is important to be able to dialectically analyze the learning process. If teachers are missing the social context of teaching there is no way for them to be able to see the entire picture. Also without the social context, some of the other pieces that influence student learning are missing such as the fact that curriculum and knowledge is socially constructed and biased. One consequence of NCATE's narrow focus is little space for prospective teachers to learn about the purpose of education and to think about their own personal goals for teaching. In contradiction, as portrayed above, the sources that NCATE use state that learning to teach must be placed in the context of preparing for a democratic society. Democracy is one of the goals of education, but teachers do not leave schools of education aware of this and of knowing how to help prepare their students for democratic citizenship.

Related to the narrow focus on content and pedagogy is a similar stance toward dispositions. Dispositions are the beliefs and morals that affect teachers' interactions with all members of a school community. NCATE tells schools of education and prospective teachers what dispositions they should hold. Prospective teachers are then assessed to see if they exhibit these dispositions. This assessment is troubling because these beliefs are forced

upon pre-service teachers. Pre-service teachers' grades are directly impacted by holding these dispositions; therefore, students in education courses learn what they are supposed to do and say so that they can get the grade that is needed to pass the course. In other words, the assessment of dispositions is unauthentic. Additionally the process of forcing these dispositions on teachers is undemocratic. Differing beliefs and opinions should be discussed and talked about. Alternative ways of thinking should not be thrown out but all opinions should be valued and discussed. If a thought is deemed detrimental to the success of future students, then attitudes should be developed through consulting and conferencing. An important aspect of this attitude development is through helping prospective teachers to examine their own schooling experiences and their own thoughts and beliefs about schools, students, and the purposes of education (Feiman-Nemser and Remillard, 1995). This fosters development of sound dispositions.

Again for balance NCATE's standard requiring teachers to have pedagogical and professional skills comes close to furthering the goal of democracy. The standard says that prospective teachers should "consider school, family, and community contexts in connecting concepts to students' prior experience and applying the ideas to real-world issues" ("Professional Standards", 2008, 18). Mentioning school, family, and community bring to mind a surface context, referring only to consideration in delivery of content. The standard does not ask prospective teachers to think about the educational goals of schooling or to work towards helping students to construct their own relevant understanding of various types of knowledge that connect to specific social contexts.

NCATE's Influence on P-12 Students

In addition influencing pre-service teachers, NCATE's standards for prospective teachers have a direct impact on the students who will be in these teachers' classrooms. As

cited in the NCATE's source by Darling-Hammond et al. (2005), "It is important for teachers to understand their roles and responsibilities as professionals in schools that must prepare all students for equitable participation in a democratic society" (p. 11). Students must be equipped to become citizens in a democracy. Within NCATE's mission they specifically refer to a need for a prepared labor force; NCATE's mission states, "Student learning must mean not only basic skills but also the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed as a responsible citizen and contributor to an information economy" ("Professional Standards", 2008, p.3). This quote does mention being a responsible citizen, but it couples this with being a contributor to an information economy. It appears that NCATE wants teachers who leave its accredited programs to develop children for the purpose of contributing to society through economic means. There is no mention of developing individual talents based on the child's desires or strengths. NCATE does believe that all children should be taught and can learn regardless of difference. It does want teachers to be prepared to work with diverse populations ("Professional Standards", 2008, p.7). NCATE accredited teachers are taught that if they meet the standards that NCATE has set in place, they will be able to control the learning of all of their students, even the ones from diverse populations ("Professional Standards", 2008, p. 7). This impacts students because it places the weight of learning on meeting standardized objectives. The other aspects of a person that education should develop are ignored. According to Dewey, education should develop the intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic sides of the individual. Because of the value that NCATE places on teaching and meeting standardized objectives, only the intellectual part of the student is valued, and the intellectual development that takes place is narrow. In summary, if teachers adhere to the standards enforced by NCATE in their classrooms, students will not be taught about

democratic citizenship, will be trained as future members of the workforce, and will have narrow intellectual development. Preparing students for the workforce has the potential to be positive, however because this preparation is not based on democratic principles, it can lead to students being tracked into limited economic values and poor occupational choices.

POSITION

I believe that teacher responsibility is much greater than preparing and implementing lesson plans. Teacher education should include an awareness of the greater social context schools are situated within as well as knowledge of the purpose of teaching. I subscribe to the belief that one purpose of teaching should be to prepare students for democratic citizenship because through preparing for a democracy, student needs and talents become more prominent and students are prepared to give back to society. Cochran-Smith calls teaching for social change “teaching against the grain” (2001, p. 1). It is ironic, given the overview above, that NCATE could play an important role in this process because of the standards movement and because they have large control over how students are taught within schools of education. Perhaps that is its tragedy.

NCATE has gained status and importance because of the highly qualified provision in NCLB. Many states have given NCATE the authority to determine if schools of education are adequately preparing teachers to meet the demands of today’s classroom. Meeting many of the demands of today’s classroom can be accomplished by preparing students in a democratic society. If students are prepared for a democratic society, they will work towards developing themselves and developing the community. Students will learn the importance of dialogue in resolving conflicts. They will know that in a diverse world there will be different ways of life and varying opinions, but commonality can still be found through working towards similar goals. Instead of working towards building and sustaining democratic

community, however, schools appear to work towards building workplace communities only. Students are prepared to become workers of varying degrees. The point is that because this has become the goal of education, all of the people who work towards creating this educational vision have adapted to this model. NCATE appears to support this goal by telling schools of education what to teach. Schools of education train teachers based on NCATE standards, and teachers prepare students based on the vision of education that they learned or that is reinforced during their training programs.

Preparing students to only contribute to the workforce can lead to the stratification of students. In *The Need of an Industrial Education*, recall that Dewey (1916, 1980) discusses how democracy is needed in society so vast experiences can be shared and many different pursuits can be accepted and utilized for the betterment of society. Without this acceptance, only certain talents and skills are acknowledged, and only the people holding these interests benefit. The United States economy is based on some people having significant amounts of resources and other people working for them. The same can be seen in schools today. Currently, students get ranked based on how well they measure up on standardized testing. Resources and opportunities are doled out based on these tests. If one's achievement is not up to par on these tests, then she is deemed less capable of handling resources, such as advanced classes. These tests do not measure all types of knowledge or all types of ability. Therefore, some people do well and others do not. NCATE's standards place the burden of making sure that students are accountable through testing, which is not a reliable assessment of all students' abilities, on the teacher. NCATE says, "Closing the achievement gap requires that all children be educated by teachers and other professional personnel who meet rigorous professional standards" ("Professional Standards", 2008, p. 7). As the number of

schools with accreditation has increased significantly, this has not been followed by an increase of student success, thereby eliminating the achievement gap. The cycle of teaching modeled by NCATE and taught to prospective teachers does not seem to be addressing the achievement gap issue. The social context of schools is only given lip service in NCATE's plans. The social context of schools is not addressed in any way that requires action. There is more at work in schools than just teaching and assessing.

The social context of schools involves two major areas. First, the purpose of teaching and education can be found within the social context of schools. Every teacher, knowingly or unknowingly, is teaching their students for a certain purpose. Teachers should be aware and make thoughtful decisions concerning why they teach their students and for what they are preparing. The social context of schools also includes knowing about how the school, community, and the students are situated in the greater society. Knowledge is socially constructed. Who has constructed the knowledge that is being taught and who it empowers and oppresses, impacts students and how they learn. These things must be considered for teaching to be effective.

Getting students ready for a democratic society helps students develop according to what their talents are. It also teaches students that people should not be ranked solely according to what their talent is, but that each person should be valued as a human being. By NCATE subscribing to more democratic values, they could change their organization's reception by schools of education, receive more input, conduct more critical and appropriate research, more effectively prepare teachers, and help to better prepare students for the challenges of today's world. Here follows some specific suggestions.

NCATE first needs to find a way to better incorporate the ideas of faculty working in schools of education. As part of the democratic process, everyone, even those with differing opinions, should be invited to the table to plan, discuss, and debate about what should be required of teachers. Each school or program should be recognized as an individual entity having the authority and the ability to have worthy ideas about what works for teachers, especially for teachers in its surrounding community. Through inviting everyone to dialogue on the teacher education and accreditation process, NCATE's research will improve. NCATE would not negate research that disagrees with its practices or that brings to light NCATE's limited influence. Instead all of the research can be used to critique NCATE's policies and standards in order to create a more effective accrediting body for education. Further, this body has the potential to be influential not only in education but also in other circles because of its influence in furthering this country's democratic vision. It is the institutions in a democratic society that have the responsibility of preparing individuals to pursue a democratic philosophy and to act responsibly for themselves and the community. If NCATE uses wisely the authority it has for democratic purposes a more thoughtful dialogue could take place regarding what such matters as teacher quality.

Schools of education and other programs that train teachers can use the research and dialogue created from the body of scholars working with NCATE to formulate degree programs for teachers that meet the needs of students and society, while maintaining accreditation status for their prospective teachers. Schools of education can also conduct more research on their own training programs and this to the NCATE discussion. Additionally, because there would be more representation of schools of education working with NCATE, some of the key complaints such as the rewording of syllabi and other

documents and the financial expense of accreditation can be discussed. This would also be another opportunity for NCATE to work as a governing body to gain consensus of the group. Through hearing about the challenges that schools of education face in meeting these requirements, NCATE can come up with alternative solutions that better meet everyone's needs.

Because there is more dialogue and more research about the accreditation process and what it takes to prepare individuals to become effective educators, pre-service teachers will benefit. Students in teacher education training programs will learn not only how to deliver content accurately and effectively but they will also learn about the social context of schools and about the democratic purpose of schools. Teachers will gain a greater understanding of why it is not enough to teach students the prescribed standardized content. They will realize that there is more to education than the cycle of teaching and reteaching. Prospective teachers will understand that they are teaching a socially constructed curriculum to students who learn through a sociocultural framework. Teachers will also know how to use their classroom to prepare democratic citizens, furthering the ideal of democracy in the United States.

Because students are prepared as democratic citizens, they will be prepared as individuals to contribute to the common good, and they will be prepared to become involved in their communities. Students will be able to work with people who are different and who have differing opinions, and work towards coming up with a solution or a plan of action that works for everybody. As students grow this first democratic experience in school prepares them for adult civic life. Then as children mature, the hope is that they would apply these principles not only in school but also in civic life.

CONCLUSION

NCATE as an organization is not particularly democratic and it hinders schools of education from teaching their students education's role within a democracy. Instead of working towards liberty for schools of education, NCATE believes there is one fixed reality for all. Despite the need for equality, NCATE utilizes its power to narrowly define teacher quality, instead of delegating power to many in the field who research and put this question in to practice daily. As an alternative to true fraternity, based on a desire to work together towards a common goal, NCATE alienates unaccredited programs, and it causes contention among members of its programs by not recognizing alternative viewpoints. Does NCATE help or hurt prospective teachers preparation for democracy? Despite some democratic characteristics that NCATE exhibits, it mostly hinders schools of education in their mission for democracy in schools. However, by changing the organization of NCATE, allowing more representation and more input from key players in education, the goal of democracy can be furthered in schools of education and in P-12 schools in the greater society.

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