

ACCJC NEWS

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Summer 2011

The Future of Accreditation II: National Policy Discussions on Accreditation

Dr. Peter Ewell, Vice President of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), presented a summary of relevant national policy discussions on higher education quality and accreditation at the Commission's June 2011 meeting. This article is a brief summary of the topics discussed with the Commission.

There are broad societal concerns driving national policy discussion of higher education quality. Maintaining competitiveness in a global economy is among the most discussed issues, and maintaining or restoring the quality of American life, and the U.S. economy, is a closely related issue. It appears that the U.S. competitiveness has been declining over time, and there is a good deal of concern about whether the quality of American life will decline as well.

DEGREE ATTAINMENT AND DEMOGRAPHIC

ACHIEVEMENT GAPS: Data from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) indicate that in the United States, younger people are less likely to have attained a college degree than older persons. The U.S. now ranks tenth in the world in terms of the percentage of national population between the ages of 25 and 34 who have college degrees, with Korea, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Ireland, Denmark, Belgium, and Australia all ranked higher. In comparison, the U.S. ranks third in the world in terms of the percentage of the population between the ages of 45 and 54 who have college degrees, with only Korea and Canada ranked higher. The data indicate that the proportion of persons that attain a college degree is declining with successive (i.e., younger) generations of Americans. Furthermore, the relatively low college degree attainment levels of Black, Hispanic and Native American subpopulations relative to white and Asian American populations' achievement levels, is also a concern. The lower achieving subpopulations are becoming the "new majority" American citizens and workers.

LEVELS OF GRADUATE ACHIEVEMENT: The National Assessment of Adult Literacy research has suggested that the literacy skills of baccalaureate degree holders have declined over the last few decades. There are many arguments about the efficacy of tests that measure the skills of college graduates, and these are much debated in academe. Employer concerns about the skills of college graduates also contribute to this debate. However, globalization's influence plays a role in setting standards and expectations for graduates. Standards for what baccalaureate or master's level skills and competencies should be are converging across the world, and the definitions of acceptable levels of learning in the U.S. will need to be adjusted upward in the context of new global standards.

ACCJC BEGINS REVIEW OF STANDARDS

The ACCJC is beginning its periodic review of Accreditation Standards and processes. The Commission has taken the preliminary steps of discussing key national policy issues, examining accreditation models at other regional commissions that recently revised their standards, and contracting with Dr. Peter Ewell to provide support to the review. The Commission's Task Forces (see article on page 4) are also contributing to the Commission's preliminary work. You can expect to see more information about the ACCJC's review of the Accreditation Standards and processes in future editions of ACCJC News and at the Commission's January 2012 public meeting.

National Discussions on Accreditation, continued on page 3

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ENVIRONMENT OF CONTINUING FISCAL STRAIN: The issue of national debt sustainability, long in the making, has been pushed significantly closer by the 2008-12 recession. Office of Management and the Budget (OMB) data projections in March 2010 showed a dramatic increase in the rate at which debt as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product will increase. The fiscal strain is now setting the context in which higher education will be expected to be efficient, more effective, and more transparent about how it contributes to society in return for the public investment in higher education.

RESULTING DEMANDS ON ACCREDITATION

The accrediting community will be asked to move beyond “doing assessment” to examining actual levels of student attainment, and coming to some decisions about whether these levels are “good enough” or need to be improved. Accreditors and institutions will need to focus on retention and graduation rates, and provide more transparency to the public about quality assurance processes as well as what the higher education community is doing to improve outcomes. Easy-to-understand formats to display data in standard formats may be useful for purposes of providing more transparency. There will be greater public interest in accreditation, and accreditors will need to provide the public with understandable explanations of their quality standards.

POSSIBLE NEW DIRECTIONS FOR ACCREDITATION

There are several different alternative directions that are being discussed, some of which are familiar because they have been put forward in the past. The practical aspects of implementing any of these ideas are not often examined in detail, and the costs and organizational challenges may be greater than the expected benefits of such changes.



One idea is to organize accreditation by institutional type, allowing each type of institution to have a national accrediting body. (Note: In June 2011 discussions before the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Improvement (NACIQI), some major research universities proposed that they develop their own accreditation system.) Another idea is to establish levels of accreditation, so that better quality institutions can be distinguished from institutions that are just minimally conforming to accreditation standards. This idea responds to the public’s interest in using accreditation outcomes to compare institutions. A third idea is to establish some minimum levels of performance on such factors as graduation rate, and require that institutions that receive accreditation meet a threshold. (Note: Some national and programmatic accrediting bodies currently use thresholds for accreditation.) A fourth idea is to use professionally trained reviewers instead of peer reviewers. Many other countries currently employ this strategy, but ironically, many are looking to American peer review as a better model. Finally, a fifth idea is to decouple accreditation from federal funding, and develop a federally administered, data driven methodology for establishing institutional eligibility for Title IV, with the expectation that then institutional quality - as defined by numbers and quality of graduates - would improve.

Dr. Ewell will be working with the ACCJC as it considers revisions to the Accreditation Standards and processes. He is currently preparing a conceptual piece on the “new ecology” of community college accreditation for the ACCJC. When completed, that article will be shared with member institutions and posted on the ACCJC’s website at www.accjc.org. ♦

ACCJC Task Forces

Three recent task forces were convened to advise the ACCJC in critical areas of institutional performance. They are: Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Task Force, Distance Education Task Force, and Financial Task Force.

On March 4, 2011, the SLO/Assessment Task Force met with Commission staff to explore the idea of creating a more descriptive statement clarifying institutional good practices with respect to learning outcomes and assessment that might serve as a model for the 2012 Commission imposed deadline for colleges to be at the proficiency level on the ACCJC Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness (Rubric) with respect to Student Learning Outcomes (Part III). The participants in this first Task Force meeting were Marcy Alancraig, Cabrillo College; Robert Pacheco, Barstow College; and Fred Trapp, formerly Long Beach City College (retired).

Discussion highlights included 1) how the proficiency level of the Rubric is connected to the Accreditation Standards; 2) if proficiency were achieved, what would it look like when everything is in place; and 3) what evidence would a college provide and how would comprehensive site visit teams evaluate SLOs/Assessment?

Some of the ideas posed during the SLO/Assessment Task Force discussion were reflected in the recently revised version of the ACCJC Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness, Part III Student Learning Outcomes, which is available on the ACCJC website under Publications and Policies. A memo from Dr. Barbara Beno highlighting the changes was sent to CEOs, CIOs, CSSOs, ALOs, and Academic Senates on June 23, 2011. The Commission hopes the revised Rubric will be a useful tool for colleges and evaluators as the 2012 SLO/Assessment deadline approaches, when it is the Commission's expectation that ACCJC colleges are operating at the Proficiency level on the Rubric.

On May 27, the Distance Education Task Force members John Colson, Grossmont College; James Glappa-Grossklag, College of the Canyons; Pat James, Mt. San Jacinto College; Cherry Li-Bugg, Santa Rosa Junior College; Vince Rodriguez, Coastline Community College; and Vernon Smith, Rio Salado College, Arizona met with Commission staff for the purpose of reviewing ACCJC's current methods and materials used in evaluating distance education programs and services. In addition to making suggestions for improvements, the Task Force also recommended potential resources that could be used to enhance the work of external evaluation teams and identified effective ways that institutions could verify that their distance education programs and services effectively meet expectations of quality as defined by Accreditation Standards and the United States Department of Education. The Distance Education Task Force will develop a list of criteria for institutions and evaluation teams to use in demonstrating/verifying quality of distance education courses, programs, and services.

The Financial Task Force, originally formed five years ago, was re-commissioned in the spring of 2011 to advise the Commission on the articulation of some of the sub-sections of Standard III.D. The current Financial Task Force is chaired by Steven Kinsella, Gavilan College. Other members include Fred Harris, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office; Michael Unebasami, the Hawai'i Community College System; John Zimmerman, MTI College; Jerry Patton, College of the Desert; Jon Sharpe, the Los Rios CCD; and Fred Williams, the North Orange County CCD. The Task Force met on February 25 to discuss fiscal obligations associated with Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) liabilities, an increasingly important issue for institutional financial planning and stability. Regulations (GASB 45) require institutions to identify OPEB liabilities and account for this liability in annual audits and financial planning and amortize the obligation by funding it annually.

The Task Force will be developing a training workshop for CBOs to ensure a thorough understanding of accreditation requirements and documents and processes associated with GASB 45. This training workshop will be held at the Fall Conference of the California Community Colleges Chief Business Officers. More information about the workshop will be available in due course.

The three Task Forces will continue to serve as advisory groups to Commission staff. ♦

Federal Updates

Since mid 2010 ACCJC has kept its readers up-to-date regarding new federal regulations. These regulations have included the federal definition of credit hour and the role of accreditors in assessing the credit hours awarded by institutions; the roles of states in authorizing postsecondary institutions to operate and to provide consumer protection; and gainful employment of graduates from career and technical training programs. All quoted regulations finally took effect on July 1, 2011.

CREDIT HOUR

The U.S. Department of Education released a 'Dear Colleague' letter on March 18, 2011, advising institutions and accreditors on how it intends to enforce new regulations on the Credit Hour that it adopted in October 2010. The 'Dear Colleague' letter signaled the Department's intention to go forward with the regulations despite efforts of institutions and higher education organizations to delay implementation.

The new regulations include a definition of the credit hour under 34 CFR 600.2 for both an institution's determination of student work for purposes of Title IV student financial assistance programs as well as for purposes of the evaluation activities of the accrediting bodies that are recognized by the Department of Education and serve as a gatekeeper for Title IV eligibility. The federal definition of credit hour has been linked to the definition of a Carnegie Unit, long used by American higher education institutions as a standard for the assignment of credits to a course. The federal government is allowing an "institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates some minimum amount of student work reflective of the amount of work expected in a Carnegie Unit" to be used by institutions that wish to offer education through a variety of delivery modalities. More information can be found on pages 1 and 2 of the 'Dear Colleague' letter.

Institutions are required to establish a policy that describes how the institution will award credit for all types of courses in accordance with the federal definition of a credit hour. Institutions are required to ensure that their policy is applied to all courses and types of courses that the institution offers. More information is available at the bottom of page 2 and the top of page 3 of the 'Dear Colleague' letter.

The regulations also require the accrediting agencies to conduct a review and evaluation of the reliability and accuracy of the institution's assignment of credit hours used for Federal program purposes. The accrediting agency must review the institution's policy and procedures for determining the credit hours and must also review the institution's application of its policies and procedures. The accrediting agency must make a reasonable determination of whether the institution's assignment of credit hours conforms to commonly accepted practice in higher education. The accrediting agency must review the institution's policies and practices during comprehensive evaluation visits, and may sample the assignment of credits rather than examine the credits assigned to each course. If an accrediting agency determines that an institution's assignment does not meet the accreditor's requirements, the accrediting agency must take appropriate action.

The 'Dear Colleague' letter states that although the deadline for compliance is July 1, 2011, the Department will accept good faith efforts by institutions and accrediting agencies to comply until July 1, 2012.

The Commission has been developing its policy on Institutional Degrees and Credit since the regulations on credit hour were published in October 2010. Due to the continuous provision of additional information from the U.S Department of Education, the Commission's Policy Committee has had to make adjustments to former versions of the policy. At its June 2011 meeting, the Commission therefore approved the policy for renewed first reading and it was sent to the field for comment early July. The Commission expects to adopt the policy at its January 2012 meeting unless recent initiatives to repeal the legislation are successful. For more information about the repeal of the Credit Hour regulations, see below under State Authorization.

STATE AUTHORIZATION

The regulations on State Authorization do not directly impact the ACCJC accreditation process, but they impact the Commission's member institutions.



Federal Updates, continued from page 5

In the spring, after the latest information from the U.S. Department of Education had been issued, the ACCJC/WASC and the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities (ACSCU/WASC) met with representatives of the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education in California to discuss how the Bureau will interpret and implement the WASC exemption that is included in the legislation authorizing the Bureau, AB 48. The outcomes of the meeting are:

First, the Bureau will still consider WASC accredited higher education institutions to be exempt from its regulatory oversight. Second, the U.S. Department of Education's 'Dear Colleague' letter issued on March 17, 2011, regarding State Authorization maintains that states may "use a variety of means to establish a postsecondary institution" (Answer to Question 1, on page 2 of the letter). For California, the establishment of an institution through incorporation, which might apply to private ACCJC member institutions, of the institution by name as an educational entity in California would serve as the state authorization for purposes of the regulations as this would comply with the federal government's definition of "other action issued by an appropriate State agency," as contained in the answer to Question 3 of the 'Dear Colleague' letter. The end of Answer 10 of the 'Dear Colleague' letter identifies the incorporation documents of the institution as a potential means of satisfying the federal requirement of evidence of state authorization. It is therefore essential that private institutions incorporated in California examine their articles of incorporation; if those name the institution and indicate it was incorporated as an educational entity, the articles will be the institution's proof of state authorization. The State Authorization regulations also require all distance education programs to be authorized in every state where students are enrolled.

In recent months a number of events that may affect the implementation of the regulations have taken place. On June 3, 2011, Ms. Virginia Foxx, Chair of the House Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training, introduced a bill (House Bill H.R. 2117) in Congress to repeal federal regulations on State Authorization and on Credit Hour. On June 15, 2011, the House Education and Workforce Committee passed the bill in a bipartisan vote. The legislation will now be considered by the full House of Representatives. Identical legislation was introduced in the Senate on June 29. The American Council on Education on March 10, 2011, submitted to Chairwoman Ms. Virginia Foxx a letter expressing concerns about the regulations to establish a federal definition of 'credit hour' and expand state authorization requirements. ACCJC together with numerous higher education organizations were a co-signatory of the letter.

On July 12, 2011, the United States District Court for the District of Columbia struck down the distance education portion of the U.S. Department of Education's 'state authorization regulations'. The decision comes as a result of a lawsuit brought by the Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities. The complete ruling is available on the court's website: https://ecf.dcd.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/show_public_doc?2011cv0138-28. The 'state authorization' section starts on page 35.

The Commission will continue to keep its members informed about the developments of the State Authorization and Credit Hour regulations through ACCJC President Dr. Barbara Beno's letters to the field, its website, and this newsletter.

GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

The U.S. Department of Education has published two sets of final regulations covering gainful employment, as part of the larger rulemaking package on program integrity and student aid. Both sets of regulations were proposed on June 18, 2010. The first set of regulations was finalized on October 29, 2010. These regulations address additional program reporting requirements, but do not affect eligibility for student aid. The regulations take effect on July 1, 2011. The second set of regulations proposing to establish measures for determining whether certain postsecondary education programs lead to gainful employment in recognized occupations and the conditions under which these programs remain eligible for federal financial assistance was finalized on June 2, 2011, and therefore only goes into effect on July 1, 2012. This second set of regulations attracted considerable attention by higher education organizations and the final rules have changed significantly since the proposed regulations were released.

The Department has stated that "a program would be considered to lead to gainful employment if it meets at least one of the following three metrics: at least 35 percent of former students are repaying their loans (defined as reducing the loan balance by at least \$1); the estimated annual loan payment of a typical graduate does not exceed 30 percent of his or her discretionary income; or the estimated annual loan payment of a typical graduate does not exceed 12 percent of his or her total earnings." Under this rule, no program will lose eligibility until 2015.

The Department defines "all non-degree educational programs offered by public and nonprofit institutions and virtually all programs - degree and non-degree - offered by proprietary institutions" as gainful employment programs and notes that even public or nonprofit institutions that predominantly offer degrees are likely to have one or more gainful employment programs.

For more information and details about the federal regulations see www.accjc.org on the President's Desk page. ♦

Trends in Deficiencies Leading to Sanction

Since 2009, ACCJC has collected data regarding the deficiencies that lead to colleges being placed on a sanction. The deficiencies are reported every year in the Commission's Spring newsletter. The information is also available on the ACCJC website: www.accjc.org on the President's Desk page.

The main deficiencies for sanction are related to Program Review, Planning, Board Roles, Internal Governance, and Financial Management and Stability. Over the three years from January 2009 to January 2011, the number of colleges on sanction has not gone down, but the reasons for placing colleges on sanction differ. The colleges placed on a sanction also differ from year to year as some colleges have made improvements and are removed from sanction.

Colleges on Sanction January 2009 - January 2011

Top Deficiencies Causing Sanctions

COLLEGES ON SANCTION	PROGRAM REVIEW	PLANNING	INTERNAL GOVERNANCE	BOARD	FINANCIAL
2009 SANCTIONS (N=24)	71% (17)	92% (22)	46% (11)	46% (11)	54% (13)
2010 SANCTIONS (N=19)	68% (13)	89% (17)	42% (8)	58% (11)	58% (11)
2011 SANCTIONS (N=21)	19% (4)	71% (15)	24% (5)	67% (14)	62% (13)

Please note categories increasing in frequency in table above

Program Review as a reason for imposing a sanction has decreased considerably from 71% in 2009 to 19% in 2011 which may be an effect of the current Accreditation Standards' focus on Program Review and colleges having had time to develop, test and improve their approaches to Program Review.

One would expect that the positive trends in the conduct and use of Program Review would have a positive effect on planning. Although noted as a more frequent reason for sanction in 2009, planning deficiencies continue to be important reasons for sanction in 2011.

Deficiencies due to weak board governance, which is a critical factor for the effective performance of an institution, is increasing, whereas issues related to internal governance have decreased as a reason for sanction from 46% in 2009 to 24% in 2011.

Last but not least, the data show deficiencies in financial management and stability are increasing causes for sanction. Due to the current economic climate it will be interesting to follow the development in this area. ♦

June 2011 Commission Actions on Institutions

At its meeting, June 8-10, 2011, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, took the following actions on institutional accreditation:

REAFFIRMED ACCREDITATION

College of the Desert
Deep Springs College
Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising
West Hills College Coalinga
West Hills College Lemoore

REMOVED FROM WARNING

Glendale Community College
Los Angeles Trade-Technical College
Palau Community College
Palomar College

REMOVED FROM PROBATION

Southwestern College

CONTINUED ON WARNING

College of the Siskiyous

PLACED ON WARNING

Berkeley City College
College of Alameda
Cypress College
Fullerton College
Laney College
Merced College
Merritt College
San Joaquin Delta College

PLACED ON PROBATION

College of Micronesia-FSM
MiraCosta College
Northern Marianas College
Victor Valley College



All of the Actions on Institutions, policy and substantive change are posted on the ACCJC website under Recent Commission Actions.

June 2011 Commission Actions on Policies

At its meeting June 8-10, 2011, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges took the following actions:

Adopted Policies and Statements

- ❖ Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education
- ❖ Policy on Insider Trading
- ❖ Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV
- ❖ Policy on Institutional Integrity and Ethics
- ❖ Policy and Procedure for the Evaluation of Institutions in Multi-College/Multi-Unit Districts or Systems
- ❖ Policy on the Rights and Responsibilities of ACCJC Member Institutions in the Accrediting Process
- ❖ Policy on Substantive Change

Policies Approved for First Reading

- ❖ **Policy on Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Programs (CTP) for Students with Intellectual Disabilities.** This is a new policy that is required in order to bring the Commission into compliance with Title IV of the Higher Education Act.
- ❖ **Policy on Conflict of Interest for Commissioners, Evaluation Team Members, Administrative Staff, and Other Agency Representatives.** The policy has been revised to better reflect all possible scenarios for identifying and addressing conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest.
- ❖ **Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status.** The policy has been revised to emphasize the federal requirements on misrepresentation which were published in November 2010 and will come into effect in July 2011.
- ❖ **Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits.** The policy has been developed to reflect new federal regulations on credit hour published in November 2010, and the Department of Education's 'Dear Colleague' letter of March 2011.
- ❖ **Policy on Public Disclosure.** The policy has been revised to comply with federal regulations CFR 34 §602.26 that require an accrediting agency to provide public disclosure notices when it places institutions on probation or show cause or takes adverse action.
- ❖ **Policy on Relations with Government Agencies.** This policy has been revised to align with the Policy on Public Disclosure.
- ❖ **Policy on Rights and Responsibilities of the Commission and Member Institutions and the Accrediting Process.** The language has been revised for clarity in particular with respect to the presentation of the responsibilities of the Commission and the member institutions respectively.

Eliminated Policies

- ❖ **Policy on Disclosure and Confidentiality of Information.** The information provided in this policy was outdated and has been incorporated into the Policy on Public Disclosure.

All first reading policies have been sent to the field for comment.

All policies, except first reading policies, are available on the ACCJC website in the Accreditation Reference Handbook under Publications and Policies and under Recent Commission Actions/Actions on Policy.

FOCUS ON QUALITY

SHARING ON ASPECTS OF EDUCATIONAL QUALITY

ACCJC staff presented three workshop sessions: Increased Effectiveness through Program Review, Integrated Planning and Resource Allocation; Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education; and an Accreditation Liaison Officers' (ALO) Workshop at the annual **Academic Resource Conference (ARC)** in April. In addition to the ACCJC workshops, 16 ACCJC member institutions presented sessions on various topics including assessment reports, integrating assessment to promote learning, serving underprepared students, strategies for improving academic success, institutional case studies for a green economy, and planning.

ACCJC staff also facilitated a Special Interest Group Luncheon (SIG) in which participants shared ideas around the meaning of capacity building and, in particular, the challenges faced by Accreditation Liaison Officers (ALOs). The group defined capacity building as:

- having a program review and planning process/system that is ongoing and not bound by accreditation dates or reports,
- sustaining and supporting quality assurance and institutional effectiveness efforts all the time regardless of administrative turnover, and
- using the institution's existing committee infrastructure and processes that have been built over the years to sustain quality assurance and institutional effectiveness activities.



The challenges faced by ALOs include:

- working with a campus culture that expects reassigned time or overload to do the work related to accreditation, and
- having to carry out accreditation activities when some on campus are not fully engaged in the process.
- building an infrastructure for accreditation so that past experiences are effectively passed on to new ALOs.

Participants expressed an interest in having ACCJC conduct more ALO trainings and provide a timeline for the revision of Accreditation Standards. ACCJC has acted on this suggestion and will be offering a special ALO training workshop in September 2011. For more information see 'Upcoming Events' on page 12 and the Events page on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org.

EFFECTIVE PROGRAM REVIEW FOR INTEGRATED PLANNING

The third ACCJC Regional Workshop was hosted by West Valley College in April. Sixty-four college representatives from 14 member institutions attended the workshop. The program included presentations from ACCJC staff on the philosophy and components of program review and integrated planning. Participating institutions, represented by Mr. Randal Lawson, Executive Vice President at Santa Monica College, and a team from the College of San Mateo led by Mr. Michael Clair, President, offered successful approaches used by these two ACCJC member institutions. Each group shared effective processes for program review and integrated planning, how their processes were refined during several iterations, and how the processes enabled the colleges to implement improvements to programs and services that benefited students. Mr. Terrence Willett, Director of Analytic Applications, represented Cal-PASS and presented the Cal-PASS Smart Tool for data collection for program review and integrated planning. In the afternoon, participants engaged in discussion groups in which they shared good practices and challenges from their respective colleges.

The day highlighted the colleges' journey to develop and later refine planning processes and generated a number of core principles for effective program review and integrated planning. These included:

- Planning is for the benefit of students as solid planning processes impact the quality of education positively.
- Assessment should cover all instructional programs and educational support services.
- Planning should be embedded in policy and be supported by good governance.
- Collaboration about the development of planning processes and outcomes by all constituent groups on campus creates ownership and leads to sharing of information.
- Planning and program review should be supported by broad data analysis.
- It may be useful to use tools to manage evidence/information streams.
- A clear allocation of responsibilities in the planning process drives the process and ensures that action will be taken.
- Setting timelines and milestones will help ensure that action is taken.

The PowerPoint presentations and other materials from this and other regional workshops are available on the ACCJC website under Other Resources / ACCJC Conference Presentations and Other Materials.

Upcoming Regional Workshops are scheduled for September 9 and November 4, 2011. See "Upcoming Events" on page 12 in this Newsletter.

THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA ANNUAL TRUSTEES CONFERENCE

The ACCJC conducted two workshops for governing board members at the April 30 conference. In a workshop entitled "What Trustees Need to Know About Accreditation", Commission representatives Barbara Beno and Jack Pond, Mt. San Antonio College President John Nixon and San Bernardino Community College Trustee Don Singer spoke about the purposes of accreditation and the basic processes of quality review, including the self evaluation process and the external evaluation process. Commission representatives emphasized the increased use of metrics of student achievement and provided some examples of how trustees might use metrics to track their own institution's performance. Mr. Singer described his own accreditation team experience and urged trustees to get more involved in assuring institutional quality.

A second workshop, "Student Learning Outcomes and College Quality," helped trustees understand the institutional practices now required to address student learning - outcomes definition, assessment of learning, analysis of assessment results, and efforts to improve learning. The Commission staff discussed the kinds of questions that trustees might ask about institutional work on learning outcomes and the related shift from a focus on teaching to a focus on student learning. The trustees were given some examples of programmatic and course learning outcomes, an explanation of the mapping used to align learning outcomes across an institution, and other examples of the academic work and products related to student learning outcomes they might expect to see at their campuses.

Trustees asked for more specific direction from the ACCJC on their appropriate roles in assuring institutional quality and compliance with accreditation standards, and in supporting student success. The Commission is working on new print materials that will respond to this request, and expects to make these materials available in spring 2012. ♦

Upcoming Events

ACCJC REGIONAL WORKSHOPS 2011 - 2012

ACCJC is offering two regional workshops in the fall 2011. College of the Canyons will host a workshop on September 9, 2011, and Modesto Junior College will host one on November 4, 2011. The topic of both workshops is, as it has also been at previous regional workshops, 'Capacity Building for Educational Excellence through Program Review and Integrated Institutional Planning.' It is a characteristic of the regional workshops that they offer opportunities for the sharing of practices through presentations and group discussions and the participating institutions are invited to send small groups of 4 to 5 participants.

ACCJC will be offering regional workshops through 2012 at which time all member institutions will have had the opportunity to attend a workshop.

A list of previous workshops is available on the ACCJC website: www.accjc.org/events and presentations and other resources are available on the ACCJC website: www.accjc.org/other-resources under ACCJC Conference Presentations and Other Materials.



ACCREDITATION LIAISON OFFICER TRAINING

ACCJC will conduct a workshop for new and experienced Accreditation Liaison Officers (ALOs) on September 23, 2011, at Norco College. The workshop, which will be held from 10:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m., will cover the ALO's leadership and communication responsibilities in promoting educational quality and institutional effectiveness. The first half of the workshop will be a briefing on recent developments at ACCJC and at the federal level, such as changes to the ACCJC Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness, Accreditation Standards and manuals, the roll out of an ALO Discussion Board, and an update on changes in federal legislation that will affect accreditors and institutions of higher education. The second half of the workshop will be training for ALOs who are new in their roles. Experienced ALOs are invited to share what they have learned, and all ALOs are encouraged to ask questions in a "lessons learned from the field" segment.

TRAINING OF CHIEF BUSINESS OFFICERS

The ACCJC will hold a training session for Chief Business Officers (CBOs) in conjunction with the Fall Conference of the California Community Colleges Chief Business Officers. More information will be forth-coming and more information about the training workshop can be found in this newsletter in the article 'ACCJC Task Forces'.

ASSESSMENT RETREATS

As in previous years, ACCJC is co-sponsoring two assessment retreats with the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities (ACSCU/WASC). Topics for the Retreat on Assessment Essentials (replaces Assessment Retreat Level I) include:

- assessing general education
- assessing the Major
- assessing the co-curriculum
- developing and applying rubrics
- analyzing student learning
- improving curriculum and pedagogy

Upcoming Events, continued on page 13

Upcoming Events, continued from page 12

At the conclusion of the program, teams return home with campus implementation plans.

The Retreat on Assessment Essentials will be held September 22-23, 2011, at the Renaissance Hotel, Long Beach, California.

The Retreat on Assessment Practice (replaces Assessment Retreat Level II) provides participants with presentations from institutions with broad assessment systems in place that have successfully closed the loop based on assessment findings. Each participating team will share two promising practices from its own campus experience. Topics include:

- adapting the campus infrastructure to support the culture of evidence
- successful strategies for engaging faculty and other campus professionals in assessment
- a specific assessment study, including description of data collection, data analysis, and the impact of the study
- incorporating student learning outcomes into program reviews
- assuring the quality of campus assessment

The Retreat on Assessment Practice will be held October 27-29, 2011, at: The DoubleTree by Hilton, Berkeley-Marina, Berkeley, California.

Both retreats will be led by nationally acclaimed facilitators Mary Allen and Amy Driscoll. More information is available at: <http://www.wascsenior.org>.

STRENGTHENING STUDENT SUCCESS CONFERENCE

October 12-14, 2011, at the San Francisco Airport Marriott, Burlingame, CA. The theme of the conference is “Emerging Issues in Assessment and Learning”. The conference is sponsored by the Research and Planning Group in collaboration with ACCJC, the Career Ladders Project, and LearningWorks. This conference provides a unique opportunity for a wide cross-section of educators to meet and brainstorm ways to strengthen institutional effectiveness and student learning. It will focus on helping practitioners link emerging issues in assessment and learning into action. ACCJC will be presenting workshops that relate to the conference theme and to accreditation in order to support institutions in building capacity for educational quality. More information about the conference is available at: www.rpgroup.org/events.

WCET ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 23rd WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET) Annual Conference will be held in Denver, Colorado on October 26-29, 2011. WICHE is the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education and this WCET Conference is aimed to attract e-learning experts, practitioners and advocates. Dr. Barbara Beno, President of the ACCJC, will participate in a panel discussion on Accreditation led by executives of the regional accrediting commissions. The session will be held on Thursday, October 27. More information is available at: www.wcetconference.wiche.edu/index.php.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE

The theme of the November 17-19, 2011, conference is “Mission Possible: Success—Equity—Access.” ACCJC will organize a panel to present and discuss developments on the national scene regarding federal regulations, issued by the U.S. Department of Education, and their present and future impact on accreditation for two-year colleges. The workshop will be held on Friday, November 18. The conference will be held at the San Jose Fairmont. More information can be found on the CCLC website at: www.ccleague.org. ♦

Information about these and other events can be found on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org/events.

Future Comprehensive Visits

Under current U.S. Department of Education regulations, ACCJC must provide opportunity for third-party comment regarding the institutional qualifications for accreditation. The institutions noted below are scheduled to undergo comprehensive visits in the fall of 2011, the spring of 2012, and the fall of 2012 and review by the Commission at its January 2012, June 2012 and January 2013 meetings. Third-party comment on these institutions should be made to the ACCJC President, Dr. Barbara A. Beno, at 10 Commercial Blvd. Suite 204, Novato, CA 94949. For consideration, such comment must be made in writing, signed, accompanied by return address and telephone number, and received no later than five weeks before the scheduled Commission meeting.

FALL 2011

(for January 2012 Commission Review)

College of the Redwoods
Columbia College
DeAnza College
Foothill College
Fresno City College
Lake Tahoe Community College
Modesto Junior College
Mt. San Jacinto College
Reedley College
Shasta College
Solano Community College
Willow International Center
of Reedley College*

*Candidacy

SPRING 2012

(for June 2012 Commission Review)

Barstow College
City College of San Francisco
Defense Language Institute
Feather River College
Guam Community College
Hawai'i Tokai International College
Los Angeles Harbor College
Los Angeles Southwest College
West Los Angeles College

FALL 2012

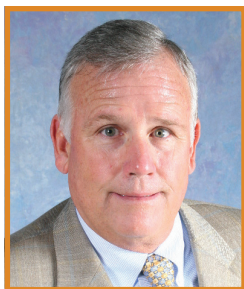
(for January 2013 Commission Review)

Bakersfield College
Cerro Coso Community College
College of the Sequoias
Hawai'i Community College
Heald College (12 campuses)
Honolulu Community College
Kapi'olani Community College
Kaua'i Community College
Leeward Community College
Northern Marianas College
Porterville College
Windward Community College
Woodland Community College
Yuba Community College



Changes in Commissioners

New Commissioners (Term Beginning July 1, 2011)



DR. TIMOTHY BROWN — Dr. Brown was elected to serve as a faculty member of the Commission. Dr. Brown has been an Associate Professor Reading, at Riverside City College California since 2000, and part-time faculty, Reading, at California State University. He has an Ed.D. in Institutional Management from Pepperdine University, Malibu, California, a Master of Science in Education Reading from California State University, Fullerton, a M.Ed. in Physical Education from Pan American University, Edinburg, Texas, and a Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education from Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona.



DR. RAUL RODRIGUEZ — Dr. Rodriguez was elected to serve as an administrative member of the Commission. He has been Chancellor of Rancho Santiago Community College District since 2010. Prior to that appointment he was Superintendent/President of San Joaquin Delta College. Dr. Rodriguez has a Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of California, Santa Cruz, a Master of Arts in School and Applied Psychology from Fairfield University, and a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies from Bowling Green State University.



DR. BARRY RUSSELL — Dr. Russell was elected to serve on the Commission representing the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges where he serves as Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. Prior to his current position, he was Vice President of Instruction at College of the Siskiyous. Dr. Russell has a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Texas, and a Master of Music and a Bachelor of Music from East Texas State University.



DR. ELEANOR SIEBERT — Dr. Siebert was elected to serve on the Commission as the representative of the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of WASC. She is Provost and Academic Vice President, a position she has held since 2005, and Accreditation Liaison Officer at Mount St. Mary's College. Dr. Siebert has a Ph.D. in Chemistry from the University of California and a Bachelor of Arts of Chemistry from Duke University.



MR. JOHN ZIMMERMAN — Mr. Zimmerman was elected to serve on the Commission as a representative of independent institutions. He is currently the President of MTI College, a position he has held since 1986. Mr. Zimmerman has a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from California State University, Sacramento.

Re-Elected Commissioners

DR. PATRICK TELLEI — Dr. Tellei, representing the Pacific Postsecondary Education Council, was elected to serve a second term on the Commission.

DR. SHARON WHITEHURST-PAYNE — Dr. Whitehurst-Payne, a public member of the Commission, was elected to serve a second term on the Commission.

Changes in Commissioners, continued on page 16

Changes in Commissioners

Commissioners' Terms Expired

MR. STEVEN BRUCKMAN — Mr. Bruckman served two terms on the Commission beginning July 1, 2005. He was the representative of the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges. Mr. Bruckman served on the Policy Committee since 2005, on the ACCJC and WASC Audit Committees since 2006, and as Chair of the ACCJC Audit Committee since 2010.

MS. LURELEAN B. GAINES — Ms. Gaines was appointed to the Commission on July 1, 2001, and served as Commission Chair from 2008 to 2010. She has served on the Substantive Change Committee since 2002 and chaired the Committee since 2007, on the ad hoc Sub-Committee on General Education since 2007, on the Budget and Personnel Committee since 2007 and on the WASC Board of Directors from 2008 to 2010.

DR. LOUANNE KENNEDY — Dr. Kennedy served two terms on the Commission beginning July 1, 2005. She was the representative of the Accrediting Commission of Senior Colleges and Universities, WASC. Dr. Kennedy served on the Substantive Change Committee since 2006, the Evaluation and Planning Committee also since 2006, and on the ad hoc Sub-Committee on General Education since 2007, a Committee which she chaired from 2008-2010.

DR. JOHN NIXON — Dr. Nixon served one term on the Commission beginning July 1, 2008, as an administrative representative. During this term he served on the Substantive Change Committee and the ad hoc Sub-Committee on General Education. Dr. Nixon has also chaired several comprehensive and follow-up teams. ♦

Staff Changes in the Commission

MS. DORTE KRISTOFFERSEN, Vice President for Policy and Research, left the Commission on July 1, 2011, to return to Melbourne, Australia where her husband's job has required him to relocate.

DR. LILY OWYANG retired from the Commission in May 2011. ♦

Commission Seeks Applicants for Vice President of Policy & Research

The Commission is seeking an individual to serve in the position of **Vice President for Policy and Research**. The Vice President supports the work of the Commission's Policy Committee and the Evaluation and Planning Committee; supports institutional training for self evaluation and peer evaluator training for team service; advises member institutions on Commission policy and Accreditation Standards; and is responsible for analyzing data and preparing reports for the Commission on a variety of aspects of member institutions, including annual report data and annual fiscal report data. The Vice President provides staff support to the Commission's periodic External Review and prepares the Commission's applications for recognition to the U.S. Department of Education.

The ACCJC is a private, non-profit organization. It provides a generous remuneration package, including retirement and health benefits to its employees. A full job description with a list of minimum qualifications can be downloaded on the Commission's website at: www.accjc.org. Review of applications begins September 20, 2011, and will continue until the position is filled. ♦

New ACCJC Manuals

The Commission has developed a new and comprehensive **Manual for Self Evaluation of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness** (Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation for short). It replaces the former *Self Study Manual*. Colleges with comprehensive visits in the fall 2012 and beyond are required to use the new Manual.

The revisions have been driven by feedback from member institutions as well as from the Commission that the Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation could be clarified to help promote more effective institutional improvement and self evaluation processes and reports. The Manual also includes more information about requirements related to U.S. Department of Education regulations.

The major changes to the Manual include:

- Instructions on the presentation of data on student achievement at the institutional level, and requirements that it be disaggregated in some cases to examine student outcomes among different groups of students or among students receiving education through different delivery modes or sites.
- All evidentiary information included in the Institutional Self Evaluation Report must be presented with the various Accreditation Standards and sub-sections, where reference to the information is relevant.
- A requirement for institutions to address how they meet Commission policies that are not integrated into the Standards in a separate section of the institutional Self Evaluation Report.
- Explication of the roles of the CEO and the ALO in institutional self evaluation and ongoing quality assurance.
- More examples to assist institutions in presenting the delineation of college and district functions in multi-college districts/ systems.

The Manual also introduces several new key terms to more accurately describe processes and documents in the self evaluation process. These are:

KEY TERMS

Previous Term	New Term
Comprehensive Institutional Review	Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness Review
Self Study Manual	Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation
Self Study Process	Institutional Self Evaluation process
Self Study Report	Self Evaluation Report of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness Short version: Institutional Self Evaluation Report
Self Study Training	Self Evaluation Training
Team	Evaluation Team
Team Evaluation Process	External Evaluation Process
Team Report	External Evaluation Report of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness Short version: External Evaluation Report
Team Training	Peer Evaluator Training
Team Visit	Site Visit

The **Team Evaluator Manual** will undergo a major revision in 2012 to reflect the changes made to the Self Evaluation Manual.

The **Substantive Change Manual** has been revised to include the current U.S. Department of Education's new regulations for substantive changes that came into effect in July 2010 as well as clarifying the subsequent required elements of a Substantive Change Proposal. The Manual describes the principles and rationale underlying substantive change, provides a list of changes the Commission considers substantive with examples and key considerations, and outlines the steps in the review and approval process. It also includes the particular elements for inclusion in substantive change reviews for a new campus or additional location, a new educational program or instructional delivery mode, i.e., distance or correspondence education.

The changes the Commission considers substantive are:

- Change in mission, objectives, scope or name of the institution
- Change in the degree level from the two-year associate degree, e.g., a four-year baccalaureate degree
- A change in the intended student population
- The closure of an institution
- Change in the location or geographic area served
- Establishing an additional location geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers at least 50% of an educational program
- Closing a location geographically apart from the main campus at which students were able to complete at least 50% of an educational program
- Change in control of the institution
- The acquisition of another institution, or any program or location of another institution
- Contracting the delivery of courses or programs in the name of the institution with a non-regionally accredited organization
- A change by a parent institution for one of its off-campus sites into a separate institution
- Change in courses or programs or their mode of delivery that represents a significant departure from current practice—new programs, degrees or certificates or the addition of courses that constitute 50% or more of a program offered through distance, electronic, or correspondence education
- A change in credit awarded—a change from clock hours to credit hours or the reverse
- Any other significant change that represents a significant departure from the previous reaffirmation of accreditation.

The Substantive Change Manual will be effective for substantive change reviews beginning fall 2011.

The July version of the *Accreditation Reference Handbook* (ARH) is available on the ACCJC website under Publications and Policies. Please refer to this version of the ARH for the ACCJC Eligibility Requirements and Commission policies.

All manuals are available on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org on the Publications and Policies page.

Substantive Change: 2011-2012

The new federal requirements related to substantive change are presented in the June 2011 ACCJC Substantive Change Manual, available on the ACCJC website under Publications and Policies. Scheduled meetings for the ACCJC Committee on Substantive Change are November 14-15, 2011, March 12-13, 2012 and May 10-11, 2012.

A NOTE TO CALIFORNIA PUBLIC COLLEGES REGARDING SB 1440

The same substantive change review elements apply to changes in degrees related to this legislation. In other words, institutions should take steps, as appropriate, to notify Commission staff of potential changes so that it can be determined if a substantive change review is required. Generally, if the change is a repackaging or restructuring of a curriculum already offered by the college, it will not require a Substantive Change Proposal. However, if a significant number of courses are new to the college's curriculum, the required elements for submitting a Substantive Change Proposal apply.

The first step in the substantive change review process is to communicate to the Commission's staff (via email or U.S. Postal Service) a description of the proposed change, the need for the change, and the anticipated effects. Early notification enables staff to provide information and advice about the proposed change and if required, assist the college in preparing a complete proposal. ACCJC staff assigned to facilitate the substantive change process is Vice President Dr. Susan B. Clifford, sclifford@accjc.org. ♦

Improvements to the ACCJC Website

Over the past year, several aspects of the ACCJC website have been improved. All revisions and improvements to the site have been made primarily taking the needs of the users of the site into consideration and responding to requests made by our membership to provide institutions with particular information.

The main improvements are:

- A 'New on the Website' functionality on the index page that allows the user an easy insight into recent changes to the website and where new information is posted.
- The President's page contains a section on updates on federal regulations and in some cases memos from the Commission President, Barbara Beno, on the consequences of the regulations for the Commission and member institutions.
- The Events page now includes information about all ACCJC events, including regional workshops.
- PowerPoint presentations and reference materials from ACCJC workshops or sessions performed by ACCJC staff at conferences are available on the Other Resources page under ACCJC Conference Presentations and Other Materials.
- A glossary of key terms related to higher education and accreditation is available on the Other Resources page. The glossary will be expanded gradually.
- Member institutions have been required to submit their Annual Fiscal Report and Annual Report electronically since 2010. Some improvements and changes were made to the system this year, and the Commission received more than 2/3 of Annual Reports and Annual Fiscal Reports, including audit reports, by the June 1, 2011 deadline.

Online Accreditation Basics Course

ACCJC is pleased to announce the launch of its online 'Accreditation Basics' course. The course is required for individuals who have been invited to serve on external evaluation teams for the first time, for those who are going to be involved in accreditation at their institutions and wish to learn more about the process, and for those who want to brush up their understanding of the basic principles of accreditation. The 90-minute course focuses on the purposes of accreditation, the process used to accredit institutions, and the particular Standards used by the ACCJC to measure the educational quality and institutional effectiveness of member institutions. At the end of the course, users should be able to:

- Describe the role of the federal government and the U.S. Department of Education in higher education accreditation
- Explain the organization of regional accrediting commissions across the United States
- Identify resource documents published by the ACCJC
- Describe the Accreditation Standards of the ACCJC
- Define evidence reliance as it relates to the evaluation of ACCJC member institutions
- Describe the steps in the accreditation process and team member responsibilities.



You can access and register for the course on the ACCJC website (www.accjc.org) on the Events page under ACCJC Accreditation Training. The course can be paused at any time and resumed to fit the scheduling needs of users. Quizzes will assess the user's progress through the course at regular intervals, and an end-of-course exam should be completed at 90% mastery in order to be successful in the course. A certificate will be issued to all who qualify. In the future it will be a requirement for new evaluation team members to take the course prior to serving on an evaluation team. ♦



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