ACCJC NEWS

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Summer 2012

Accreditation and Governing Board Roles and Responsibilities

> *"THE GOVERNING BOARD IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE (EDUCATIONAL) QUALITY, INTEGRITY, AND FINANCIAL STABILITY OF THE INSTITUTION AND FOR ENSURING THAT THE INSTITUTION'S MISSION IS BEING CARRIED OUT."*
>
> SOURCE: ACCJC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT 3

Institutional effectiveness and educational quality start with the administrators, staff and especially faculty, but depends upon the quality of the governing board. Excellent institutional performance requires well-defined roles and high performance from an institution's governing board. In recent years, many external events have created challenge for colleges; funding reductions, changing public policy, turnover due to retirements, changing student populations and needs, and the accountability movement are among them. These are challenging times, and it is the job of a governing board to assure that an institution finds the way to adjust to the external and internal pressures without compromising educational quality and financial integrity. Strong and effective governing boards are critically important to institutional success and survival.

However, the ACCJC's analyses show that governing board dysfunctions are increasing among member institutions, and that governing board difficulties provide opportunities for other organizational deficiencies to emerge or to go unaddressed, negatively impacting an institution's adherence to good practices and likelihood of maintaining educational quality or even fiscal viability.

The Commission regularly examines trends in institutional performance with regard to the Accreditation Standards. Each summer, the ACCJC publishes "Top Deficiencies Causing Sanctions,"[1] which describes trends at the institutions the ACCJC has sanctioned over the last few years. This year's report shows that between 2009 and 2012, the percentage of institutions on sanction that had deficiencies in governing board performance rose from 46% to 71%. The data also show that institutions with governing board difficulties always have additional challenges, most often in financial management and stability, and in institutional assessment, planning and effectiveness. In fact, no institution that has been sanctioned for board issues identified by an accreditation team has only governing board problems!

The ACCJC presents below some things that governing boards can do to help prevent or remediate governing board deficiencies (and related institutional deficiencies) most commonly seen by the ACCJC evaluation teams:

GET EARLY TRAINING, AND REGULAR RE-TRAINING, FOR EVERY BOARD MEMBER. The initial training should have sufficient breadth to provide a solid foundation in the fundamental roles and responsibilities of governing board members. Standard IV.B.1 states, "The governing board is responsible for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services, and the financial stability of the institution."

All new board members should receive an early training to help them understand policy governance and the

[1] See the data chart on page 11

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elements of good policy, the meaning and content of financial reports and budgets, and the metrics used to assess institutional effectiveness. All board members should receive at least annual training that will allow the board members to fully understand budgets, audit reports, associated financial terminology, and reports that indicate educational effectiveness on topics such as student achievement data, student learning outcomes data, and other forms of ongoing institutional assessment. Training at venues where other institutions' governing board members are present allows a board member to gain access to expert advice, as well as perspective on alternative ways of understanding important topics or alternative governing board solutions to policy issues. Board members should be required to participate in a regular program for development, and individual board members should escape this important responsibility to build their own capacity to be good board members. (*Standard IV.B.1.f.*)

Get Clear on the Policy Role of Governing Board Members. The board exercises its control over the institution's quality and integrity by adopting policies to guide the actions of institutional members. These policies should be regularly evaluated and updated to remain useful. But governing board members are not practicing education experts; they are largely lay members of the public. If governing boards stick to their policy role and avoid becoming involved in college operations, they will be able to exercise the appropriate oversight of those operations by expecting, and reviewing, key reports and data analyses on institutional performance. Board members should not apply their own knowledge or skill to addressing operational issues. If there is a weakness or vacuum in the performances of key administrative staff, governing board members should assure that the vacuum is addressed with improved or new staff. Remember, the Board hires and evaluates the CEO, and delegates all operations and responsibility for implementing policy and institutional operations to that CEO. (*Standard IV.B.1.j.*)

Pay Serious Attention to External Financial and Accreditation Reports. Boards should be vigilant in expecting that external audit reports be completed on time every year, that the institutional staff respond fully and quickly to any audit findings and explain what they have done to the Board, and that the institution changes auditing firms every few years. Boards should be especially concerned if external audit findings go unaddressed for multiple years – this could be a neon alert to difficulties with the financial management system of the institution or worse. Boards should also read carefully and understand Accreditation Standards, ACCJC action letters and evaluation team reports. These documents frame the basic requirements for quality institutional practices. Boards should expect the institutional CEO to ensure that there is a full report to the board on any Commission action on the institution, and that the institution is timely in its resolution of any deficiencies identified by the ACCJC. Boards should be aware that the ACCJC, responding to federal regulations, announced in 2007 that there is a two-year time limit for institutions to resolve deficiencies or face possible loss of accreditation. Since the governing board's role is to assure educational quality and fiscal integrity, governing boards are among those held accountable when institutions fail to address financial and accreditation concerns. (*Standard I.B.1.C.*)

Adopt and Enforce Strong Policies on Ethics and Conflict of Interest. "The governing board has a code of ethics that includes a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that violated that code." (*Standard IV.B.1.h.*) The policy should have clear statements about conflict or potential conflict of interest that recuse board members from decisions where they have a conflict of interest. Most importantly, an ethics code is not useful if it is only voluntary. The board policy should define how governing board members who violate the code will be addressed. A suggested sequence is: new trustee training and mentoring, prompt feedback when violations occur, individual coaching, board warning, board censorship, legal action. Ethics violations by board members can threaten the integrity of an institution's financial or educational processes and quality, and often also disrupt productive board functioning, leading to the inability of a governing board to perform its important and appropriate functions.

Remember an Institutional Governing Board is Not a City Council. Many of the ACCJC-accredited institutions have elected governing board members. The political process provides a good deal of information to a board candidate on what the electorate desires and hopes for. However, once placed on a governing board, the board member must operate with the following bottom line: "The governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the public interest in board activities and interests. Once the board reaches a decision, it acts as a whole." (*Standard IV.B.1.a.*)

Independence means the board member operates in the best interest of the overall institution, not in response to constituencies or special pleaders if those interests are not aligned with the basic mission, direction and resources of the institution, with the full board's direction, and with the institution's priorities that come from assessment and planning activities. City Councils often act to dole out "rewards" to their electorate; a college governing board member's job is to focus on achieving educational effectiveness within the bounds of the institution's mission and available resources. Finally, remember, no single board member has authority; the board as a body has authority. No trustee should be roaming a campus, giving direction to or attempting to influence college employees or governance committees. Trustees should not use their role on a college governing board to advance their own political careers and pet projects. A college board member

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should be a careful steward of higher education quality and integrity, and champion of student achievement and student learning.

Actively Review and Adapt the Institutional Mission Statement, and then require the institution to focus its efforts and resources on achieving that mission. "The institution's educational mission is clearly defined, adopted and published by its governing board, and is appropriate to a degree granting institution of higher education and the constituency it seeks to serve. The mission statement defines institutional commitment to student learning." (*Eligibility Requirement* 2) The mission statement should be reviewed on a regular basis. (*Standard I.A.3.*) That review should ensure that the institution examines the effectiveness of the educational learning programs and services the mission statement promises to provide, and wisely use, its resources in achieving that mission. Board policies should require that the institution has a defined process with valid metrics for ongoing assessments of educational effectiveness - an internal quality assurance process that requires data driven program review, analyses, priority setting, planning and implementation. Governing boards should receive annual reports on the institution's educational effectiveness, goals, and priorities for improvement set through the institution's planning processes. Governing boards should participate in setting targets and goals for improving educational performance. Finally, governing boards should beware of the tendency for college constituencies to hope their college can be "all things to all people." It cannot, and in the current fiscal environment, every governing board should be identifying the core educational mission for their institution and avoiding commitments to other activities. Resources stretched too thin result in poor educational quality. The governing board is responsible for ensuring that the financial resources of the institution are used to provide sound educational programs, and these require adequate funding.

Think Short Range and Long Range in Adopting the Institution's Fiscal Plans. Each year, the governing board adopts an institutional annual budget that reflects the ongoing commitments, priorities, and planned new expenditures for the institution. It is important that the board examine the budget proposed by the CEO with careful attention to short-term (current year) and longer-term (multiple out-years) consequences of expenditure plans and projected accelerating costs (e.g., planned salary or benefits costs, collective bargaining agreement costs, loan costs, possible revenue declines). In the area of contract negotiations alone, too often difficult discussions lead to a willingness to delay dealing with potential cost challenges until later, in "future years." That 'just kicks the can down the road.' Certain kinds of borrowing vehicles have been enticing to boards of colleges that wish to spend now and pay later. Governing boards have a responsibility to assure the fiscal integrity, short- and long-term, for the colleges they govern. The region and the country have experienced a significant financial downturn since 2008, and current federal projects suggest "recovery" will not really happen for another 5 or 6 years.

In the view of many, higher education is undergoing a significant restructuring that will last. Wise boards ensure resources match programming.

The ACCJC provides regular training on accreditation matters for governing board members every year at the California Community College Trustees annual conference, the Pacific Postsecondary Education Council's events, and at individual or regional governing board workshops to which it is invited. The ACCJC is developing a new guide for governing board members, and a draft of it is available on the ACCJC's website at www.accjc.org. ✦

Update on the Review of Accreditation Standards and Practices

The current review of Accreditation Standards and practices was launched with a letter to the field on November 9, 2011. The Commission invited input from the field by:

- ✓ Posting the suggestion form online at: www.accjc.org;
- ✓ Sending letters to the field encouraging input;
- ✓ Holding public hearings: March 14, Huntington Beach, for southern California colleges and members of the public including business leaders; June 6, Burlingame, for northern California colleges and members of the public including business leaders; and
- ✓ Seeking targeted input from the Financial Task Force, Distance Education Task Force, and the Accreditation Liaison Officer workshop.

More than 100 members of the field have attended the scheduled activities, and 20 have provided written or oral testimony.

Active input-gathering will continue through the end of September, 2012. A public hearing will take place September 24 in Hawai□i for Pacific island colleges and members of the public including business leaders. Targeted input will be sought from the Student Learning Outcomes Task Force and at an upcoming Accreditation Liaison Officer workshop. Additional written comments from interested individuals across the region are invited.

Incremental Accreditation Practice Changes From Review

Disaggregated Data. The need for increased availability and use of data and research has been highlighted during the Review of Accreditation Standards and Practices. As the culture of assessment and continuous improvement becomes established, colleges in the region look for ways to ensure data-based decision-making. Indicators of student success need to be sufficiently disaggregated to pinpoint areas where improvement is needed. When used for internal quality assurance processes, data and data analysis need to focus on improvement efforts for institutional effectiveness.

Beginning fall 2012, colleges undergoing comprehensive self evaluation will report statistical data related to student success in a disaggregated form. Data for success measures will be disaggregated by age, gender, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and by other relevant subpopulations identified by the institution. In addition, data will be disaggregated by instructional delivery site (including centers and other off-campus locations) and delivery mode (specifically including distance education and correspondence education).

Additional Financial Monitoring. Regulations and changes in the higher education environment have highlighted the need for increased monitoring and attention to institutional fiscal conditions. More than ever, institutional quality and sustainability are dependent upon effective financial planning and practices. Effective monitoring includes the correlation of the annual financial data collected from member institutions with known indicators of fiscal health. The 2012-2013 Annual Fiscal Report will ask for additional financial information that will enhance the monitoring of fiscal health required by federal regulations.

At its June 2012 meeting, the Commission approved an enhanced monitoring process for fiscal data. Data received from colleges in the annual fiscal report and in the audited financial statements are given a risk assessment. Colleges identified at higher levels of risk are referred to a Financial Review Group for a closer examination of the data submitted. At the next Commission meeting, a report will be made by the Financial Review Group to the Commission. If warranted for a particular college, the Commission may request a special report, with or without a visit, on the financial condition of the institution. ✦

Federal Updates

The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) recently lost two court battles dealing with regulations affecting higher education institutions. The decisions were based primarily on the process used to adopt the regulations in question. The decisions affirmed the need for the USDE to ensure its negotiated rulemaking processes are followed to provide adequate opportunity for comment from the field and also to provide a basis for establishing regulatory parameters. It is likely the USDE will revisit regulations in the areas addressed by the court.

State Authorization

USDE regulations require, as one element of qualification for participation in Title IV programs (including federal financial aid), that higher education institutions be authorized to operate in the state[1] where they are located. In 2010, federal regulations were amended to include language pertaining to state authorization for colleges offering distance education:

> If an institution is offering postsecondary education through distance or correspondence education to students in a State in which it is not physically located or in which it is otherwise subject to State jurisdiction as determined by the State, the institution must meet any State requirements for it to be legally offering postsecondary distance or correspondence education in that State. An institution must be able to document to the Secretary the State's approval upon request. 34 C.F.R. § 600.9(c).

The implications for colleges which might have students across many states in their online courses and correspondence courses raised consternation and concerns. In addition, many state agencies found they were not adequately staffed to handle authorization applications from multiple institutions across the country, and may not have addressed circumstances where an institution may have one or two students from the state in an institution's online or correspondence program.

The deadline for institutions to fully comply with this regulation was extended to July 1, 2014 in an April 20, 2011 Dear Colleague letter.[2] In July 2011, the United States District Court for the District of Columbia struck down this new language because of inadequate opportunity for the field to comment on the proposed regulation. On June 5, 2012, the United States Court of Appeals released its decision upholding the lower court ruling. The USDE is still assessing its next steps on the issue.

Despite the uncertainty about USDE regulations in this regard, institutions are still charged with addressing state authorization requirements in states where they may have students participating in online or correspondence education. The involvement of the State Higher Education Officers Association (SHEOA) in preparing for implementation of the federal requirement created awareness at the state level of the need to deal with out-of-state providers of distance and correspondence education. That organization has created a listing of higher education authorizing agencies, which can be accessed at: http://www.sheeo.org/stateauth/stateauth-agency.htm.

[1] "State" as defined in higher education regulations includes: any state in the United States, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, Guam, the Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau. The latter three are also known as the Freely Associated States. 34 C.F.R. § 600.2.

[2] This Dear Colleague letter and other materials dealing with state authorization for distance education and correspondence education can be found on our website at: www.accjc.org, on the President's Desk page under "State Authorization and Credit Hour." Institutions may also want to monitor the USDE website for financial aid professionals, http://www.ifap.ed.gov/ifap/, for information about next steps at the federal level related to state authorization.

Federal Updates, ***continued on page 7***

Federal Updates, ***continued from page 6***

Gainful Employment

In June 2010, federal regulations were amended to include requirements for higher education institutions offering programs related to career-technical preparation.[3] These took effect on July 1, 2011. To qualify for federal aid, the law required that certificate programs at public and non-profit institutions, and most programs at for-profit institutions, must prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation. Under the regulations, a program would be considered to lead to gainful employment if first, the program prepared students for a recognized occupation, and second, met at least one of the following three metrics related to federal student loans: at least 35% of former students are repaying their loans; 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% of his or her total earnings.

The regulations also required institutions to report to the USDE and make available to the public certain data about gainful employment programs, including information about the number of students in the program, the median debt load incurred by students completing the program, the number of students who transferred into a higher program, on-time graduation rates, and placement rates. 34 C.F.R. § 668.6(a).

On June 30, 2012, the United States District Court for the District of Columbia struck down that portion of the regulation defining the metrics for determining gainful employment. Specifically, the court found the metric "at least 35% of former students are repaying their loans" to be arbitrary and capricious, and not having any supporting factual basis. Because the three student loan metrics were intertwined, this finding resulted in all three metrics being vacated.

Without having in place the second element of determining whether a program leads to gainful employment, the status of the gainful employment regulations is in question. In a response to the court ruling, the USDE noted "the Court's decision vacated the gainful employment reporting requirements in 34 CFR 668.6(a). Therefore, institutions are not required to submit gainful employment reports for the just ended 2011-2012 award year."[4] Further guidance from the USDE is expected soon; it will be posted online at: http://www.ifap.ed.gov/GainfulEmploymentInfo/index.html. ✦

[3] The USDE Dear Colleague letter discussing the regulations, and other resource materials on gainful employment can be accessed on our website at: www.accjc.org, on the President's Desk page under "Gainful Employment."

[4] Gainful Employment Electronic Announcement #39 - Status of Gainful Employment Regulations, posted at: http://www.ifap.ed.gov/ifap/ under "Gainful Employment Information."

National and International Discussions on Quality Assurance

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (ACE)

The ACE Board of Directors recently approved a resolution endorsing the Guidelines for Assessment and Accountability in Higher Education presented by the New Leadership Alliance for Student Learning and Accountability. The guidelines include four principles that ACE supports: the importance of 1) articulating specific goals for student learning and prominently announcing them to various stakeholders and the public, 2) developing processes to gather evidence of student learning, 3) using that evidence to improve quality in student learning, and 4) reporting to internal and external constituents the evidence and results of student learning. ✦

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION (INQAAHE)

This spring, INQAAHE held a Member's Forum on "The Future of External Quality Assurance" in Melbourne, Australia. Quality assurance agencies vary across the world and few are truly peer developed and peer based. The discussions at the conference were centered on the topics of government control, external vs. internal quality assurance, and the research on the impact of quality assurance agencies. There is a shared phenomenon that governments increasingly see higher education as critical to economic development/growth/sustainability, and so are increasingly interested in the quality of student learning outcomes. ✦

NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY AND INTEGRITY (NACIQI)

In March, NACIQI issued its final Report on Accreditation and recommendations for future legislation to the Secretary of Education. The report discussed the "triad of actors in educational quality assurance"—federal, state and accreditor. It recommended further clarity and understanding about the responsibility of each member of the triad, increased coordination and communication, and encouragement of states' engagement. The report had more than 20 recommendations, and after careful consideration, it argued that the link between accreditation and federal student aid should be retained. ✦

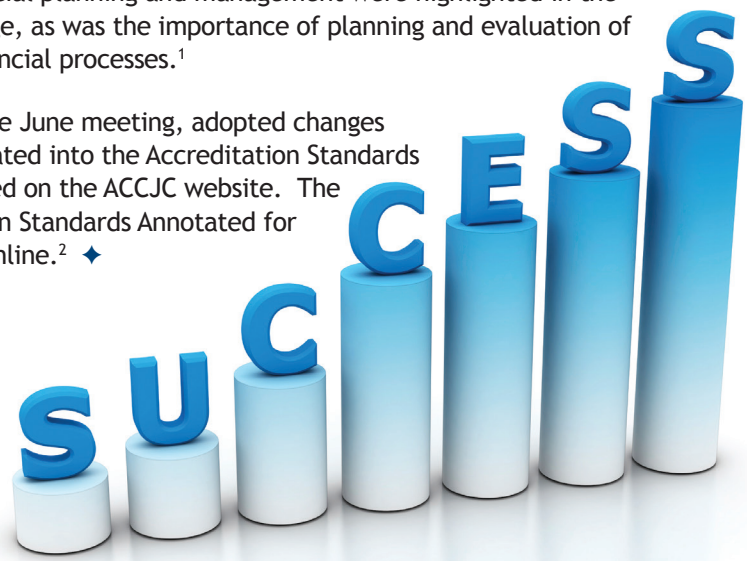
Revised Accreditation Standards Available

The Commission adopted revisions to Standard III at the public session of its June 2012 meeting. The adoption followed a first reading in January 2012 and a two-month comment period for the field to offer suggestions and input on the proposed revisions. The adopted revision contained language suggested during the comment period.

The opening paragraph of Standard III, Resources was changed to clarify that when an accredited college is in a multi-college system or district, and responsibility for resources and allocation of resources rests with the system or district, then the system or district is responsible for meeting the Standards on behalf of the accredited colleges.

Standard III.D., Financial Resources, was reorganized for clarity, and language was added to reinforce the importance of healthy fiscal practices and allocation of financial resources that reflected the college mission and supported student success. Accuracy of documents and processes, timeliness in providing financial information throughout the institution, and inclusion of funds from all sources—including short and long term debt instruments, and post-employment health benefits -- into financial planning and management were highlighted in the new language, as was the importance of planning and evaluation of internal financial processes.[1]

Following the June meeting, adopted changes were integrated into the Accreditation Standards and published on the ACCJC website. The Accreditation Standards Annotated for CQI and SLOs has also been updated and posted online.[2] ✦



[1] The revised Standard III is posted on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org, on the "Recent Commission Actions, Actions on Policy" page.

[2] The updated Accreditation Standards is posted on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org, on the "Eligibility Requirements & Standards" page. The updated Annotated Standards can also be found at the ACCJC website on the "Publications & Policies" page.

FOCUS ON QUALITY

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

ACCJC staff made a number of presentations on several topics important to the field. In April 2012, a workshop on the Basics of Program Review for Integrated Planning was presented to approximately 25 faculty and staff at Napa Valley College. In San Francisco, staff also presented a session for 18 representatives of the Ministry of Education from Kabul, Afghanistan who were interested in learning more about regional accreditation and ACCJC processes. In April, staff opened the "Improving Student Success through Planning" workshop to 150 Cerritos College faculty, staff, and administrators.

On March 30 2012, ACCJC staff offered the second Regional Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) Workshop at Diablo Valley College for 54 participants. Staff presented and facilitated the interactive scenarios and exercises for each of the sessions, particularly noting new federal regulations, substantive change and distance education requirements. ALOs were also given the opportunity to provide input for the Accreditation Standards Review.

The ACCJC again offered workshops for governing board members in partnership with the California Community Colleges Trustees association (CCCT) in May. Dr. Barbara Beno participated in an interesting and very diverse panel discussion on leadership during times of sustained crisis with representatives from the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges, the Education Management and Assistance Corporation (EDMAC), the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT), and the Community College League of California. Several important themes arose – building institutional leadership cadres that have the wisdom and courage to restructure institutions, and use reduced resources in a way that is innovative and achieves better focus on student outcomes. Later, ACCJC staff conducted a workshop on board governance with new training materials and the first draft of a manual for governing boards. Staff will continue to refine the manual for governing boards, and publish a final version by November 2012, and distribute it to the field. **The materials from this workshop, including the draft manual, can be accessed at:** www.accjc.org. ✦

ACCJC REGIONAL WORKSHOPS 2012

ACCJC has also continued with its successful Regional Workshop on Capacity Building for Educational Excellence through Program Review and Integrated Institutional Planning at San Diego Mesa College in March and again at Carrington College California in April. A total of 108 individuals from 34 institutions attended these two workshops. Barstow College, Rancho Santiago Community College District (Santa Ana College and Santiago Canyon College), MTI College and Los Rios Community College District (American River College, Cosumnes River College, Folsom Lake College, and Sacramento City College) made presentations of models that have worked at their institutions.

To date ACCJC has developed and implemented seven Regional Workshops serving 114 colleges and 483 participants. Two final workshops on this topic are planned for fall 2012. ✦

DISTANCE EDUCATION TASK FORCE AND WEBINAR

The Distance Education Task Force held a second meeting in Oakland in May. The group discussed what evidence peer evaluation teams should look for to determine the quality and effectiveness of distance education offered in our regional institutions. They also reviewed the current and pending federal regulations that impact distance education, and gave input for the review of Accreditation Standards and Commission practices.

On May 9, ACCJC sponsored and staff presented at the first-ever webinar event, "Distance Education on the Front Burner – New Regulations, New Challenges, and Accreditation." The webinar reached over 220 participants from member institutions including almost 30 participants from outside California. The presentation and list of questions submitted from participants is available on the ACCJC website at:
www.accjc.org, on the "Other Resources" 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, Internal Governance, Board, and Financial Stability or Management. Over the four years from January 2009 to January 2012, the number of colleges on sanction has not diminished, 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 2012

Top Deficiencies Causing Sanctions

Colleges on Sanction	Program Review	Planning	Internal Governance	Board	Financial Stability or Management
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)
2012 Sanctions (n=28)	21% (6)	71% (20)	18% (5)	71% (20)	50% (14)

- The proportion of institutions with deficiencies in program review work has decreased considerably from 71% of those on sanction in 2009 to 19% of those on sanction in 2012.
- The proportion of institutions with deficiencies in planning practices has decreased somewhat from 92% of those on sanction in 2009 to 71% of those on sanction in 2012.
- Internal governance deficiencies have decreased from 46% of those institutions on sanction in 2009 to 18 % of those on sanction in 2011.
- Of most concern, the proportion of institutions with deficiencies in governing board practices has increased sharply from 46% of those in sanction in 2009 to 71% of those on sanction in 2012.
- The proportion of institutions on sanction with deficiencies in financial stability or management has remained at or slightly above 50% since 2009.

June 2012 Commission Actions on Institutions

CORRECTED AUGUST 13, 2012

At its meeting, June 6-8, 2012, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, took the following actions on institutional accreditation:

REAFFIRMED ACCREDITATION
Defense Language Institute- FLC
Feather River College
Guam Community College
College of the Siskiyous
Cypress College
Fullerton College
San Joaquin Delta College
MiraCosta College

ISSUED WARNING
Barstow College
Hawai'i Tokai International College
West Los Angeles College

IMPOSED PROBATION
Los Angeles Harbor College
Los Angeles Southwest College

CONTINUED ON WARNING
Berkeley City College
College of Alameda
Laney College
Merritt College
Merced College

CONTINUED ON PROBATION
College of Micronesia-FSM
Moorpark College
Oxnard College
Palo Verde College
Ventura College
Victor Valley College

ORDERED SHOW CAUSE
City College of San Francisco

June 2012 Commission Actions on Policies

At its meeting, June 6-8, 2012, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, took the following actions:

REVISIONS TO ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND ADOPTED POLICIES

- **Accreditation Standard III, III.D**
- **Policy on Award of Credit**
- **Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV**
- **Policy and Procedures on the Joint Accreditation Process between ACCJC and ACSCU of WASC**
- **Policy on Public Disclosure and Confidentiality in the Accrediting Process**
- **Policy on the Rights and Responsibilities of the Commission and Member Institutions**
- **Policy on the Role of Accreditation Liaison Officers**

POLICIES APPROVED FOR FIRST READING

- **Policy on Review of Accreditation Standards**. This policy was initially adopted in June 1996, and was last edited in 2007. The revision provides language required in federal regulations concerning timelines for making needed changes to Accreditation Standards. Language is also added to detail the process for a review, for changes to Accreditation Standards, and for development and approval of new Accreditation Standards.
- **Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions**. This policy was initially adopted in 1972, and was last edited in 2007. It has been reorganized to clarify for complainants and member institutions the steps, sequence, and timing of the complaint process.

All first reading policies have been sent to the field for comment and can be accessed on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org.

Upcoming Events

ACCJC REGIONAL WORKSHOPS 2012

ACCJC is offering two Regional Workshops on "Capacity Building for Educational Excellence through Program Review and Integrated Planning" in fall 2012. Santa Rosa Junior College will host a workshop on September 21, and Ventura Community College will host another workshop on October 19. Attendance at the workshops is by invitation. The regional workshops offer opportunities for participants to share best practices through presentations by member institutions representing both single- and multi-college districts and to engage in group discussions. Each participating institution is asked to send eight staff and bring copies of the institution's program review and integrated planning documents to share. Copies of presentation materials can be found on the ACCJC website on the Other Resources page at: http://www.accjc.org/other-resources.

With these two workshops, the Commission will have invited every member institution to a regional workshop on program review and integrated planning. The Commission will begin offering regional workshops on using assessment of student outcomes to plan and improve institutional quality in spring 2013. ✦

REVIEW OF COMMISSION STANDARDS AND PRACTICES

The Commission launched a review of its Accreditation Standards and practices in November 2011. The 2011-2013 Review will help the Commission determine if changes to the Standards and practices are needed to maintain alignment with the new higher education environment (federal regulation and public expectations of quality, accountability, and transparency). A final public hearing to gather input from the field will be held for the Pacific island colleges on September 24, 2012, as part of the Pacific Postsecondary Education Council Conference. The Commission has received input from the Distance Education Task Force, the Financial Review Task Force, and Accreditation Liaison Officers. The Commission has scheduled a time for input from the Student Learning Outcomes Task Force on August 23, 2012. To date, more than 100 individuals have participated in this review process. For more details, please refer to the ACCJC website (www.accjc.org) and the article "Update on the Review of Accreditation Standards and Practices" on page 5 in this newsletter. ✦

ANNUAL TRUSTEES CONFERENCE, COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA

November 15-17, 2012, at the Millennium Biltmore in Los Angeles. The theme of this conference is "Singing in the Rain: A Positive Perspective in a Difficult Climate." ACCJC President Dr. Barbara Beno and ACCJC Associate Vice President Dr. John Nixon will introduce the new Guide to Accreditation for Governing Boards, developed as a guide for understanding the roles and responsibilities of trustees. In addition, the session will explore the board's responsibility for assuring institutional effectiveness, to have and uphold practices that assure board excellence, and avoid problems with accreditation. (Also see the article New Guide to Accreditation for Governing Boards on page 17 in this newsletter.) More information about the CCLC conference can be found on the Events page of the Community College League of California's website at: www.ccleague.org. ✦

Upcoming Events, ***continued on page 15***

Upcoming Events, *continued from page 14*

STRENGTHENING STUDENT SUCCESS CONFERENCE

October 3-5, 2012, at the Hilton Costa Mesa Hotel. The theme of the conference is "Embracing and Leading Change." The conference will provide a unique opportunity for a cross-section of California community college professionals—including faculty, deans, program directors, student services staff, professional development and SLO leadership, researchers, and planners—to engage each other in discussions about strategies for building institutional effectiveness and student learning.

ACCJC Will Present Three Sessions:

1) **Federal Regulations and National Conversations Impacting Accreditation Practices and Policies (October 3)**—ACCJC President Dr. Barbara Beno will provide current information from the U.S. Department of Education's regulations on incentive compensation, misrepresentation, gainful employment, the credit hour, state authorization, distance education, and the two-year rule. Pressures from national dialog on changes in accreditation will also be discussed including the need for greater transparency, public disclosure, focus on student outcomes, and other emerging topics.

2) **Saying it all in 250 Words or Less: Tackling the Narrative Responses in the ACCJC's College Status Report on SLO Implementation (October 4)**—ACCJC Vice President Dr. Susan Clifford, Anu Khanna (De Anza College), Sarah McLemore (Glendale Community College), and Donna Matsumoto (Leeward Community College) will report on the types of questions SLO coordinators, ALOs, and other interested parties have been asking about the College Status Report on SLO Implementation. The presenters and participants will engage in an interactive discussion of what these questions mean in terms of prioritizing the content of the narrative responses and balancing the quantitative and qualitative evidence to be included. Participants will have the opportunity to examine hypothetical campus situations and develop criteria for what to include in the narrative analyses and table of evidence. This session will close with a discussion on what other colleges are identifying as areas for improvement to meet the Accreditation Standards on student learning outcomes.

3) **Developing Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (October 4)**. This session will offer three case studies of how California community colleges are articulating and assessing institutional learning outcomes (ILOs), as well as how they are engaging faculty in discussions about the outcomes and assessment results. Attendees will leave with ideas for how colleges can use ILOs to inform institutional improvement efforts.

4) **SLO Proficiency into Practice (October 5)**—ACCJC staff will detail the Commission's expectations and instructions for reporting Proficiency on the ACCJC Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness for Program Review, Integrated Planning, and Student Learning Outcomes. Marcy Alancraig (Cabrillo College) and Karen Wong (Skyline College) will serve as "coaches" to participants as they work together to develop successful practices and strategies. This session has been designed to promote interaction among participants, build connections among peers from across the state, and provide opportunities to hear perspectives from other disciplines. The conference is sponsored by the Research and Planning Group in collaboration with ACCJC, the California Community Colleges Success Network, the Career Ladders Project, and Learning Works with in-kind support provided by Mt. San Antonio College. ✦

Reminder About College SLO Status Report

Colleges are reminded that a College Status Report on SLO Implementation is due from each institution during 2012-2013. The forms, resource documents, and lists of colleges reporting by October 15, 2012, and by March 15, 2013, were distributed to chief executive officers and ALOs this spring in hard copy (April 5) and electronic format (April 9).

Colleges must submit the completed report form by e-mail to the ACCJC, and also must submit the full report with attached evidence on CD/DVD to the ACCJC. Although evidence cited may include links to college web resources, the Commission requires actual copies (electronic files) of the evidence for its records.

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 2012, the spring of 2013, and the fall of 2013 and review by the Commission at its January 2013, June 2013, and January 2014 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 2012
(for January 2013 Commission Review)

Bakersfield College
Cerro Coso Community College
College of the Sequoias
Hawai'i Community College
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

Spring 2013
(for June 2013 Commission Review)

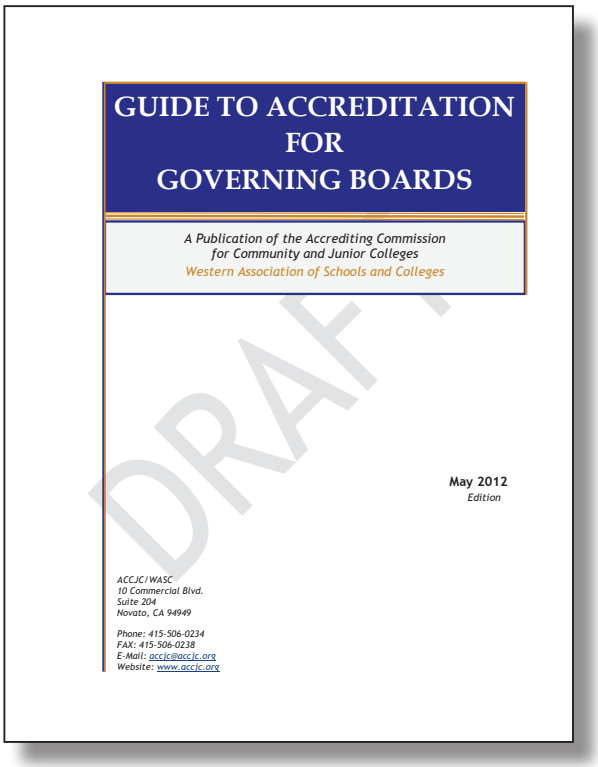
Coastline College
Copper Mountain College
Gavilan College
Golden West College
Hartnell College
Imperial Valley College
Los Angeles County College of Nursing and Allied Health
Los Angeles Mission College
Los Angeles Pierce College
Los Angeles Valley College
Orange Coast College
San Joaquin Valley College
Carrington College of California

Fall 2013
(for January 2014 Commission Review)

Cabrillo College
Canada College
College of San Mateo
Cuyamaca College
Grossmont College
MTI College
Salvation Army Crestmont College
Sierra College
Skyline College

New Guide to Accreditation for Governing Boards

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) is publishing a *Guide to Accreditation for Governing Boards*, designed for use by college governing board members as an introduction to regional accreditation and the ACCJC. The *Guide* has been developed in response to increased interest by governing boards in accreditation, and specifically their roles in the processes. Noting that evaluation team recommendations related to board governance have increased in recent years, the ACCJC intends the *Guide* to assist governing boards on their roles and responsibilities in accreditation, focusing on expectations for effective governance as defined through the ACCJC's Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, and Commission policies.



GUIDE TO ACCREDITATION FOR GOVERNING BOARDS

A Publication of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

DRAFT

May 2012
Edition

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The *Guide* describes the governing boards' leadership responsibilities related to the college mission, institutional quality and improvement, integrity, and, ultimately, student success. The *Guide* offers guidance on defining the policy role of governing boards and distinguishing that role from the delegated role of institutional operations in accordance with Accreditation Standards. A section of the *Guide* provides questions and answers (Q&A) on effective practices for governing boards.

Publication and distribution of the *Guide* is scheduled for November 2012. A draft of the *Guide* is currently available on the ACCJC website on the President's Desk page at: www.accjc.org/presidents-desk (under Other Messages from the President). The Commission welcomes input from the field on the draft. Comments and suggestions should be sent to accjc@accjc.org.

The *Guide* will be introduced at the Annual Trustees Conference at the Community College League of California in November (see the article Upcoming Events on page 14 in this newsletter). ✦

Reminder About ACCJC Publications

The ACCJC retains materials from model college practices and program review and planning on its website's "Other Resources" page via the "ACCJC Conference Presentations and Other Materials" link.

650 People Already Know; Do You?

Six hundred fifty individuals from across the Western region have completed the free **Accreditation Basics Course**, available online, and received their certificates. The course is useful for people new to accreditation as well as for people who may already know something about accreditation and want a refresher. Some institutions have reported requiring the course for all members of the college faculty and college/district staff, for those who are serving on committees to prepare various reports to the Commission, and for members of boards of trustees. The 90-minute course can be started and stopped at any time and is repeatable. When completed, users should be able to:

- Describe the role of the federal government and the U.S. Department of Education with regard to accrediting colleges;
- Explain the organization of accrediting commissions in the United States;
- Explain the organization and purposes of the ACCJC;
- Identify resource documents published by the ACCJC;
- Describe the Accreditation Standards;
- Explain the importance of evidence in the accreditation process;
- Describe the steps in the accreditation process; and
- Describe the responsibilities of external evaluation team members.

Accreditation Basics is available on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under "New on the Website." ✦

Webinar on Distance Education Draws Wide Audience

The ACCJC offered a webinar on May 9, 2012, entitled: **ACCJC Special Event: DE on the Front Burner - New Regulations, New Challenges and Accreditation**. Barbara Beno and Patricia James co-hosted the program. The seven presenters participated live from five locations across three time zones, bringing their expertise and current information into a format that was accessible and cost effective for the participants from member colleges. Technical support and e-event management were provided by @One, using the CCC Confer training site.

A record 224 individuals participated in this ACCJC training, representing a wide geographic area. There were participants from Palau, Guam, the Marshall Islands, and Micronesia. Four Hawai'i community colleges were represented, along with many of the California community colleges and the State Chancellor's office. State universities from Colorado to California had participants, as did private 2-year and 4-year colleges.

The webinar addressed current issues in distance education and the accreditation response. Among the subjects presented were: state authorization; student authentication; last day of attendance; categorizing online courses as distance education or correspondence; and other challenges and concerns on the horizon. Barbara Beno and the ACCJC Vice Presidents answered questions and offered the accrediting agency's perspective to the discussion.

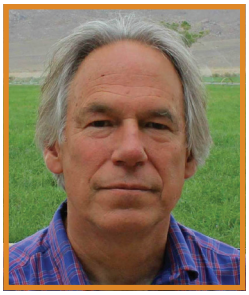
The complete webinar, answers to participant questions, and presentation slides have been archived and are available at: http://www.onefortraining.org/accjcwebinar. As of June, there have been 1,967 visits to that site, and 348 have viewed the webinar. The webinar presentation can also be seen in a portable format on YouTube at: http://youtu.be/phb-VrFUte8. ✦

Changes in Commissioners

HOW ARE NEW COMMISSIONERS ELECTED?

- The 19 Commissioners are elected by member institutions for staggered, three-year terms. Each sitting Commissioner may be elected to a second three-year term.
- At its meeting each January, the Commission announces the identities of departing Commissioners, the names of Commissioners seeking a second term, and the types of Commissioner positions that are becoming vacant and to which individuals may be elected or sitting Commissioners may be elected to a second term.
- In February, the Commission sends a letter to the field and posts a notice on its website announcing the Commissioner positions becoming vacant and inviting applications and nominations.
- A Nominating Committee of four Commissioners and four persons representing member institutions reviews applications and creates a slate of candidates for the vacant Commissioner positions.
- The Presidents/Chancellors of each institution accredited by the ACCJC review the slate and may nominate alternative candidates.
- Each May, a ballot containing the slate and the appropriately nominated alternative candidates is voted upon by the CEO of each member institution.
- Each June, the results of the election are announced at the Commission's meeting, on the Commission's website and in its summer ACCJC News.
- New Commissioner terms begin on July 1 of each year.

NEW COMMISSIONERS (Term Beginning July 1, 2012)



DR. RICHARD MAHON — Dr. Mahon was elected to serve as a faculty member of the Commission. Dr. Mahon has been a Professor of Humanities at Riverside City College since 1997. He has also served as a visiting professor at Deep Springs College, Lecturer at UC Santa Cruz, an Associate Faculty member at West Valley College, an Adjunct Faculty member at Cabrillo College, and an Instructor at Diablo Valley College. He has a Ph.D. in History of Consciousness (History and Politics) from University of California, Santa Cruz, a BA in History and Religious Studies from Cowell College (University of Santa Cruz), and an AA from West Valley College.

COMMISSIONERS RE-ELECTED (Beginning July 1, 2012)

DR. FRANK GORNICK — Dr. Gornick, representing Administration, was elected to serve a second term on the Commission.

MS. VIRGINIA MAY — Ms. May, representing Faculty, was elected to serve a second term on the Commission.

Changes in Commission Staff

Ms. Cheri Sixbey joined the Commission staff on July 19, 2012 as the Executive Assistant and Business Officer. She will serve as lead assistant to the President as well as providing financial administrative services and administrative support to ACCJC. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Sociology from Eastern Michigan University, a Master's in Educational Psychology from the University of Michigan, and a Master's in Counseling Psychology from John F. Kennedy University in California. Cheri also holds a Certified Meeting Planner credential from the Convention and Industry Council.

ACCREDITING COMMISSION
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JUNIOR COLLEGES

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