Introduction to ACCJC
Self-Evaluation and Peer Review

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Agenda

- Background on Accreditation
- Standards, Policies, Requirements
- Organizing the Self-Evaluation Process
- Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER)
- Evaluation by Standards
- Timeline
- Standard IV: Leadership and Governance
Regional Accreditation

“Accreditation is both a **process** and a **status**. It is a process of review that ensures institutions provide quality programs and services to students, have sufficient quality resources to maintain those programs and services, and have structures and processes in place to provide continuous support for the programs, the services, and above all, student learning.”

- Voluntary
- Non-governmental
- Regional

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1 ACCJC Guide to Institutional Self-Evaluation, Improvement, and Peer Review
Purposes of Accreditation

- Promotes institutional improvement
- Assures institutional quality
- Certifies the value and legitimacy of student award

From Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)
Part of WASC (ACCJC +WSCUC)

Two Goals

- Ensure every member institution maintains **compliance** with accreditation **standards of quality**
- Encourage member institutions to strive for **continuous improvement of student achievement and success**

“ACCJC Standards describe the expectation of performance for high-quality education. They reflect good practices in higher education that all institutions should follow.”

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Accreditation Standards

Every accrediting agency in the United States is required to set standards of quality for its member institutions.

- 1960s accreditation standards required evidence that basic structures and processes were in place and essential resources were available.
- In the 1990s, accreditation added that colleges provide evidence that students had actually moved through college programs and were completing them.
Accreditation Standards

In 2002 the emphasis focused on the knowledge and skills students have gained as a result of attending college—student learning outcomes (SLOs).

In 2014, requires institutions to set and assess standards for student achievement.
Accreditation Standards: Standard I

- Standard I—Mission, Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness, and Integrity, which is organized around these themes:
  - Institutional Mission (I.A)
  - Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness (I.B)
  - Institutional Integrity (I.C)
Accreditation Standards: Standard II

- Standard II—Student Learning Programs and Services, which is organized around these themes:
  - Instructional Programs (II.A)
  - Library and Learning Support Services (II.B)
  - Student Support Services (II.C)
Accreditation Standards: Standard III

- Standard III—Resources, which is organized around these themes:
  - Human Resources (III.A)
  - Physical Resources (III.B)
  - Technology Resources (III.C)
  - Financial Resources (III.D)
Accreditation Standards: Standard IV

- Standard IV—Leadership and Governance, which is organized around these themes:
  - Decision-Making Roles and Processes (IV.A)
  - Chief Executive Officer (IV.B)
  - Governing Board (IV.C)
  - Multi-College Districts or Systems (IV.D)
Internal Self-Evaluation

- Self-evaluation against the standards of quality **in terms of** college’s stated mission and goals
  - Quality of programs and services
  - Effectiveness in supporting student learning and achievement
  - Level of meeting own expectations
  - A process, not an event
The External Evaluation

- ACCJC-appointed peers
- Evaluate and respond to the ISER
- Visits and interviews
- Responds with a Team Report
  - Commendations for excellent practice
  - Recommendations for compliance and improvement
Commission Review and Action

- Determines accredited status
- Action letter
- College response
  - Follow-Up report
  - Midterm report
Institutional Responsibility in Accreditation

- “...to comply with Accreditation Standards at all times”
- “...for staying informed about Accreditation Standards and Commission policies”
- “...for preparing an accurate, honest, evidence-supported Institutional Self-Evaluation”
- “...for implementing a process for continuous assessment and improvement”
Characteristics of an appropriate self-evaluation

- It is honest
- It is evidence-based
- It addresses the standards...and only the standards
- It is focused and concise
- It is collaborative
- It is not a bully pulpit nor is it Pollyanna
- It is ongoing
The Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER)

- Written analysis of strengths and weaknesses of educational quality and institutional effectiveness.
- Documented evidence that demonstrates the institution’s current and sustained compliance with Commission Standards.
“The Report will also include evidence of achieved results, evaluation of those results, and examples of improvements which are integrated into the institutional planning processes rather than only describing processes and/or intentions which are not supported by evidence of achievement.”

“At the same time, the Report should be clear and concise.”

4 ACCJC Guide to Institutional Self-Evaluation, Improvement, and Peer Review (Emphasis added)
Introduction: History, recent developments, student and community characteristics, enrollment data and trends

Student Achievement Data

Institution-set Standards

Organization of the self-evaluation process

Organizational charts

Compliance with eligibility requirements, commission policies, federal regulations

Institutional analysis of standards
Institutional Analysis of Standards - Four Components

1. Evidence of meeting the Standard
2. Analysis and evaluation
3. Conclusions
4. Improvement plan

“The Commission expects current and sustained compliance with Standards, focusing on accomplishments and outcomes that have been achieved and not just structures or processes used.”

5 ACCJC Guide to Institutional Self-Evaluation, Improvement, and Peer Review (emphasis added)
Timeline

- January 2019 - Board training; College Council retreat
- January-May 2019 - Evidence gathering, narrative drafting, improvement plans, reports to College Council
- Summer 2019 - drafts shared with, and refined by, College Council
- September 2019 - Final editing
- October-November 2019 - First and second readings at College Council and Faculty Senate; first reading at Board
- December 2019 - Second reading and approval at Board
- January 2020 - Submission of final document to ACCJC
- March 2020 - Site visit - “All hands on deck”
- June 2020 - Commission action
Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

- The institution recognizes and uses the contributions of leadership
- Governance roles are defined in policy...acknowledging the designated responsibilities of the governing board and the chief executive officer.
- The governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students work together for the good of the institution.”
Standard IV.C

IV.C.1 - The institution has a governing board that has authority over and responsibility for policies

IV.C.2 - The governing board acts as a collective entity

IV.C.3 - The governing board adheres to a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the CEO

IV.C.4 - The governing board is an independent, policy-making body that reflects the public interest

IV.C.5 - The governing board establishes policies consistent with the college mission

IV.C.6 - The institution or the governing board publishes the board bylaws and policies

IV.C.7 - The governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws
Standard IV.C

- IV.C.8 - The governing board regularly reviews key indicators of student learning and achievement and institutional plans for improving academic quality
- IV.C.9 - The governing board has an ongoing training program for board development, including new member orientation
- IV.C.10 - Board policies and/or bylaws clearly establish a process for board evaluation
- IV.C.11 - The governing board upholds a code of ethics and conflict of interest policy
- IV.C.12 - The governing board delegates full responsibility and authority to the CEO to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds the CEO accountable for the operation of the college
- IV.C.13 - The governing board is informed about ...the Accreditation Standards ...and supports through policy the college’s efforts to improve and excel
A last word...

“ACCJC processes are designed to support colleges in their efforts both to comply with Commission Standards and policies and to improve student outcomes and institutional effectiveness.”

6 ACCJC Guide to Institutional Self-Evaluation, Improvement, and Peer Review (Emphasis added)