

Accreditation NOTES

Summer 2005

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Accreditation Q&A

This issue initiates a new feature of Accreditation Notes, Accreditation Q & A. In subsequent issues, ACCJC staff will assist the region with particular topics relevant to institutional accreditation. In this issue, Dr. Lily Owyang, Commission Associate Vice President, answers commonly asked questions about the Substantive Change process.

Q. What is the purpose of the Commission's Substantive Change Policy?

A. ACCJC's Substantive Change Policy is long-standing, first adopted in 1972 and revised several times since then. Many of those revisions have been motivated by the changes to the Education (USDE) regulations; others have been developed through the Commission's policy review procedures. In the last few years, the Commission has developed and circulated a *Substantive Change Manual* designed to inform member institutions of the process in seeking substantive change approval.

The area of substantive change is of particular concern to the USDE which sets the requirements of recognized accreditors and of institutions that participate in federal financial aid programs. The USDE regulations are often driven by concerns that have emerged with particular kinds of institutions, and in the case of substantive change, it is fair to say the USDE's concerns stem from those institutions that have (in the past) rapidly developed new programs of questionable quality, and then closed those programs abruptly or even become insolvent due to the costs of such new programs relative to the revenue these programs generated. The USDE has steadily expanded its requirements of accreditors regarding substantive change review as a result of

the emerging concerns and the subsequent impact on students.

Q. What are the kinds of institutional changes that require the approval of the ACCJC Substantive Change Committee?

A. The *Substantive Change Manual*, available online at www.accjc.org under Core Documents and Publications, clearly details the kinds of institutional changes that will require prior approval by the Substantive Change Committee. These include: a change in the mission, scope, or name of the institution (including change in degree level offered); a change in the nature of the constituency served (including closure); a change in the location or geographical area served (including establishing or closing an additional location or center); a change in the control of the institution (including merger with another institution or a change by a parent institution of one of its off-campus sites or centers into a separate institution); a change in credit awarded; a change in courses or programs or their mode of delivery that represent a significant departure from current practice (including addition of new courses/programs); as well as other significant changes.

Q. What if a particular institutional change is not covered by the criteria set forth in the Manual?

A. Should an institution discover that a projected change is not described in the examples above or in the Manual, it should contact ACCJC staff for clarification. (Dr. Owyang can be reached at lowyang@comcast.net). Institutions should remember that institutional accreditation is extended to the institution, and not to a particular program. Consequently,

everything conducted under the name of the institution is subject to the Standards of Accreditation.

Q. How often does the Committee meet, and how can institutions participate in the review of its application?

A. In the past two years with the increase of substantive change proposals, the Committee has tried to adhere to a schedule of monthly meetings. Institutions are urged to contact the Substantive Change staff for scheduling the application. When applications are complete, the staff member will provide the list of names and addresses of Committee members where applications should be sent. Completed applications with supporting documentation need to be received by Committee members no later than one month before the scheduled review.

Normally, when an institutional substantive change is scheduled for review, the institutional representatives will be contacted by the ACCJC staff member about the date and time of the review. Institutional representatives are invited to participate in a telephone conference call with members of the Committee to respond to any questions or needs for clarification that the Committee might have. Since these conference calls are limited in time, institutions are urged to select those representatives who can speak directly to the specifics of the application and its content.

Q. How long does the approval process take from submission of the substantive change proposal application until Committee review and action?

A. The Commission has given the Substantive Change Committee, a committee of Commissioners, the authority to act on its behalf for requests that require the approval for substantive change. Normally, after a substantive change proposal has been reviewed, staff will inform the institution via e-mail within 48 hours of the Committee's action. A formal letter follows within 2-4 weeks. There will be instances when the Committee might wish to defer its decision for full Commission action. In that event, final action will take place at the next scheduled meeting of the Commission. The institution will be informed in every case. A list of the Substantive Change Committee meeting dates and deadlines for submission of documentation is provided in this newsletter and on the ACCJC website.

Q. Are there particular kinds of applications that receive favorable Committee action more than others?

A. There is no one kind of application that will receive favorable Committee action over any others. In general, the Committee makes its decision based on the specifics of the institutional change that is being proposed and the accompanying information submitted with the application. It is important to stress that complete proposals with sufficient supporting data and documentation are less likely to experience a delay in Committee review and action. When an application is incomplete or lacks sufficient data and documentation, the Committee will seek additional information and table its decision until the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

Q. Are there ways by which institutions can assure that applications submitted are sufficiently complete?

A. The staff member responsible for facilitating the substantive change process will review drafts of the proposal prior to the actual submission of the application if contacted early enough in the process. Applications should be mailed to the Committee members at least one month prior to the Committee meeting (see below). Consequently, if drafts need to be reviewed prior to the meeting, institutions are requested to plan accordingly. In every case, the institution remains responsible for the information submitted in the application.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

Institutions seeking substantive change must submit complete documents to the Commission office one month before the Committee meeting. Results of the Committee action will be transmitted first via email notification to the Accreditation Liaison Officer and second via formal letter from the ACCJC President.

<u>Fall 2005</u>	<u>Spring 2006</u>
August 19	February 17
September 16	March 17
October 21	April 21
November 18	May 19
December 16 (tentative)	Summer as needed

Update on the Higher Education Reauthorization Act (HERA)

Over the past two years, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges/WASC has been working with the other regional accrediting agencies to try to influence the course of this legislation. The other regional accrediting agencies include the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities/WASC, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

The U.S. Congress now appears to be working with some speed to complete the Higher Education Reauthorization Act (HERA), which regulates higher education and accrediting agencies, sometime this coming fall. This past July, both branches of Congress worked to complete draft legislation. In early July, the ACCJC sent an electronic letter to all its member institutions to inform them about some proposed amendments, including some on the topic of “due process” that would significantly affect the peer-based accreditation system.

The House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce has recently released a mark-up bill for the HERA, HR 609, which reflects much of the language proposed by the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC which consists of the Executive Directors/Presidents of the seven regional commissions), and which avoids imposing onerous new requirements around due process. C-RAC was successful in working with Congressmen and their staffs, with other higher education agencies, and the national accrediting agencies to help avoid legislative language that accreditors and institutions would find unduly burdensome or not particularly useful. The C-RAC proposals have had the support of some of the national accrediting agencies as well.

The language C-RAC proposed for the bill for the most part reflects current ACCJC policy and practice. Therefore, not all of the new legislative requirements require change in ACCJC practice or change in the accreditation-related practices of its member institutions. Proposed changes to the due process afforded institutions whose accreditation is terminated or denied are, for the most part, already part of ACCJC policy and

WASC appeals policy. The proposed new language on transfer of credit has already been largely addressed by the ACCJC’s new Transfer of Credit policy, adopted in January 2005. While our institutions have not adopted the new practices required by the policy, the proposed legislative language is adequately addressed by the ACCJC policy. The proposed requirement of an institutional summary of student learning outcomes is in line with new ACCJC accreditation standards and reporting requirements.

Two new requirements that will impact the ACCJC are (1) a requirement that an accrediting commission publish a list of all evaluators who have served on any team over the course of the previous academic year (their assignment does not have to be revealed) and (2) a requirement that an accrediting commission require an institution to have and demonstrate a process that ensures academic honesty so that registered distance education students are unable to submit work done by other individuals.

The Senate proposal is different from the House bill. It also reflects the language that C-RAC has proposed. However, SB 1614 would add requirements that accreditors monitor institutional growth and require accreditors to make the “probation” sanction appealable.

Both HR 609 and SB 1614 will be revised further when they are considered by the whole Congress. Both were intended to be passed this fall as part of the Budget Reconciliation process, but at this point, Congress’ efforts to address needs created by hurricane damage may delay Reconciliation and the HEA Act.

There remain issues of concern to higher education institutions, particularly to community colleges, outside of accreditation issues. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) is your best source of information about these issues. Please refer to their website at www.aacc.nche.edu.

The real work on a final bill will take place in September or later when the House and the Senate develop a reconciled bill. It is also possible that some of the new requirements that are contained in HR 609 or SB 1614 will be reduced or eliminated in the final version of the bill.

A copy of HR 609 can be found on the ACCJC Website at www.accjc.org on the Executive Director’s Desk.

Changes in Commissioners

Commissioners Ending Terms on the Commission:

Dr. Martha G. Romero leaves the Commission after serving two three-year terms. Dr. Romero joined the Commission in 1999 while President of College of the Siskiyous. She has a long history of service in higher education including teaching, working with the Western Interstate Commission of Higher Education, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education and serving as the Chief Instructional Officer of Pikes Peak Community College in Colorado. She served with distinction as the Executive Director of the Community College Leadership Development Initiative of the Claremont Graduate University which provided leadership training and development activities for literally hundreds of two-year college faculty and administrators thereby increasing her sphere of influence in the field. Dr. Romero has continually expressed a firm belief in the value of accreditation noting that the Commission is a driving factor in “institutional self-improvement and rebirth.” Dr. Romero served as Commission Chair in 2003-2004.



Dr. Thomas M. McFadden also served two terms on the Commission beginning in 1999. As President of Marymount College since 1992, Dr. McFadden represented the independent colleges on the Commission. Dr. McFadden has served higher education for over thirty-five years as faculty, dean, research associate, and chief academic officer at many prestigious colleges and universities such as St. John Fisher College in New York and Saint Joseph’s University in Pennsylvania. He is also credited with advancing higher education improvement efforts in New York, New Jersey, and California. Dr. McFadden also served as a research associate with the University of Colorado Institute of Behavioral Sci-



ences. Noting that “American colleges and universities constitute a wonderfully strong and diverse educational system,” Dr. McFadden has participated broadly in accreditation activities and is widely published.

Dr. Larry N. Vanderhoef served two years on our Commission as the representative of the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities (ACSCU). Dr. Vanderhoef serves as the Chancellor of the University of California, Davis and was a member of the ACSCU from 1997 to 2003.



Newly-selected Commissioners:

Dr. Holly Beernink comes to the Commission with a long history in both public and private institutions. Currently the Director of Academic Affairs and Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) at Western Career College in Sacramento, Dr. Beernink has served as faculty at Sacramento City College, Dean/Director of Education at San Joaquin Valley College’s Visalia and Fresno campuses, Campus director and ALO at Federico College in Fresno, and Dean of Health Education at Bay City College in Sacramento. She is an experienced evaluator who has long held a keen interest in accreditation.



Dr. Steven Bruckman was selected to represent the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office where he has served as Interim Executive Vice Chancellor/General Counsel since November, 2004. Prior to moving to the Chancellor’s Office in February, 2004, Dr. Bruckman was the General Counsel for the Los Rios



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Community College District in Sacramento, California for ten years. Previous to his service with the Los Rios District, he has nearly ten years of service as an attorney in California. Dr. Bruckman began his term on the Commission July 1, 2005.

Commissioners Selected for a Second Term:

Dr. Victoria Morrow was selected to serve a second term on the Commission as an administrative member. Currently the President of Skyline College in San Bruno, California, Dr. Morrow has served the Commission with distinction as ALO from Chabot College and member and chair of visiting teams to both public and private colleges in California and Hawai'i with responsibility for standards related to educational programs, governance and administration, library and learning resources, and institutional staffing. During her tenure on the Commission, Dr. Morrow has served on several important committees including the Policy Committee. Prior to taking her position at Skyline College, she has been faculty, division chair, Associate Dean, and Vice President for Academic Services at Chabot College; Vice Chancellor for Educational Services, and Executive Vice Chancellor for the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.



Commissioner Vacancy:

Commission members representing the public and the ACSCU

ACCJC Commissioner Selection Committee will meet in October, 2005 to select individuals for these two vacant seats.

Pacific Colleges – Updates

Hawaii Community Colleges

Enrollment for the community colleges experienced a slight decline. In spring 2005, total enrollment in the seven colleges (four on Oahu and 3 on the neighbor islands) fell from 24, 424 in the spring 2004 to 24, 297 for a loss of 0.5%.

The University of Hawaii Board of Regents (BOR) approved a tuition increase proposed to begin in the fall 2006 and run through spring 2012 bringing resident and non-resident tuition into alignment with WICHE averages over the six-year period. Per credit resident tuition at the University of Hawaii Community Colleges, currently at \$47, will increase to \$97 per credit in the 2011-2012 academic year. Non-resident tuition will increase from \$242 per credit to \$290 per credit during the same period. In order to protect access for low-income students, the proposal includes a commitment to significantly increase need-based financial aid. Currently, \$4.8 million of need-based aid is awarded as tuition waivers. By 2011-2012, \$20.7 million would be set aside to meet the financial need of students.

The University, State of Hawaii, and the faculty union approved a new faculty salary agreement that covers a six-year period. This agreement calls for increases of 1 and 3% retroactively for 2003 and 2004, a 2% increase in July, 2005, a 5% increase in July 2006, a 9% increase in July 2007, and an 11% increase in July 2008.

Western Pacific Colleges

Presidents and governing board members of the Western Pacific Colleges attended a three-day workshop on Guam in April 2005 conducted by ACCJC President, Barbara Beno; former ACCJC Executive Director, David Wolf; and Legal Counsel, Robert Henry. Topics covered included: Accreditation Matters, What is a Regent?, What Does Accreditation Require of a Regent?, Governing Board Responsibilities to the Public, The College CEO and the Board, and Board Self Evaluation. A Pacific Postsecondary Education Council (PPEC) board meeting was held concurrently during which a draft paper "Higher Education Quality in the Pacific: Challenges Facing WASC-Accredited Institutions" was discussed.

GUAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE (GCC) – The college will launch its Practical Nursing Certificate Program this fall. It will be operated by MOU with the University of Guam and Guam Memorial Hospital. GCC is unique in that it is responsible for all vocational education in Guam, including programs in the public high schools.

NORTHERN MARIANAS COLLEGE (NMC) – Through the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges, more than 80 NMC faculty, staff, and administrators were able to participate in a three-day Learning Assessment Workshop. The workshop was designed to enhance greater understanding about student learning outcomes and program review as well as how to develop specific strategies and tools to promote dialogue and assessment practices that will help ensure that improvement of student learning becomes a college-wide endeavor. * NMC launched its new student e-mail system this past spring. For the first time, all students at NMC received a free NMC e-mail account upon registration. The system will also serve as a supplemental means for instructors and College staff to communicate regularly with students. * An NMC committee of faculty and staff produced a ten-minute DVD about the history of NMC and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas. The presentation was designed to provide basic information about NMC and its cultural and historic setting and is already being used as a promotional tool for college personnel attending off-island events.

PALAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE (PCC) – In February, PCC signed an MOU with officials from San Diego State University to officially enroll a cohort of 29 students from the Ministry of Education and other governmental agencies in the online Bachelor of Arts Degree Program in Liberal Arts. Other SDSU online programs offered through PCC include the Bachelor's in Vocational Education and the Master's in Educational Leadership. * PCC Japanese language students took second place in the group category at the Nihongo Taikai (Japanese Language Competition). This was the first time PCC students had participated in the event. * In March, 2005, the Dean of Academic Affairs conducted a Student Learning Outcome seminar for the entire PCC faculty during which effective strategies for implementing various SLO models and evaluation of student learning were presented.

COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA—FSM (COM—FSM) – The Chairman of the Board of Trustees, the COM-FSM President, and the Director of Maintenance presented a proposal for the leaders of the nation to set aside annually for the College %5 of the Compact II funds earmarked for infrastructure construction and development in the FSM. A resolution to that effect was approved by the leadership which could result in approximately \$1 million per year for the College for infrastructure development. * Although efforts have been made to improve the facilities at the Chuuk Campus, it was determined that the current site does not provide an adequate learning environment for students. As a result, the Board of Regents approved that the Chuuk Campus be temporarily closed until adequate learning facilities have been constructed to meet the instructional and student support services programs' needs.

AMERICAN SAMOA COMMUNITY COLLEGE (ASCC) – ASCC President, Dr. Adele Satele-Galea'i, and members of the Board of Higher Education attended the National Legislative Summit sponsored by the Assn. of Community College Trustees (ACCT) in Washington D.C. in February. While there, the President had the opportunity to visit with such dignitaries as Department of the Interior David Cohen, Prince George Community College President, Ron Williams, conference Keynote speaker First Lady Laura Bush, and former President Bill Clinton. * The ASCC Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) doubled its membership with the induction of 15 new members in March and paid tribute to its advisor, Mr. James Sutherland, who has served the Alpha Epsilon Mu Chapter for the past 25 years. * It is estimated that 40% of ASCC faculty now incorporates Service Learning into their classes. Twenty copies of a volume of data produced as part of a service learning project last year was requested by the U.S. Center for Disease Control * Long known for the musical and artistic talents of its students, ASCC recently staged a successful production of the musical "The Wiz" which was a collaboration between the acting, art, and music classes of the Fine Arts Department. * ASCC hosts the Faleula O Fatua'iupu Samoan Language Conference this summer. The conference will bring together teachers, writers and cultural authorities on the Samoan language from around the world. Several hundred guests are expected to attend.

ACCJC WORKSHOPS

Fall 2005 Team Training Workshops

September 15: Los Angeles
September 16: Los Angeles
September 23: Oakland

Fall 2005 Self Study Workshops

September 2: Honolulu, Hawaii
September 8: Southern California
September 9: Southern California
September 20: Northern California
September 28: Northern California
September 29: Northern California

Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) Workshop

A workshop for Accreditation Liaison Officers (ALOs) will be held as a Partner Conference session in conjunction with the Community College League of California's 2005 Annual Convention at the San Francisco Airport Marriott Hotel on Thursday, November 17, 2005 from 1:15 p.m. until 4:15 p.m. This workshop will provide advanced training for ALOs on the 2002 Standards, the new approaches to evaluating institutions using the *Guide to Evaluating Institutions*, and the ALOs' leadership responsibility in building a college culture and practice in which student learning is the focus of attention, thought, and institutional action. ALOs who missed prior introductory workshops will be supplied with written materials on the basic responsibilities of an ALO. All Accreditation Liaison Officers are encouraged to attend. There is no charge for this workshop which is only open to ALOs. Registration information is available on the CCLC website at www.ccleague.org.

Accreditation and Executive Leadership: What College Executives Need to Know

Also offered as a Partner Conference session in conjunction with the CCLC's Annual Convention at the San Francisco Airport Marriott Hotel on November 17, this workshop is designed to help college presidents and senior leaders prepare for the accreditation review of their colleges. It outlines the Commission's expectations for ongoing institutional self-assessment and improvement, particularly the role of the senior executive; necessary college preparation

for the Self Study and its supporting evidence; and the approach the team will take in conducting the comprehensive review of the institution. The workshop will provide an update on Commission policy changes and on the Higher Education Reauthorization Act. This workshop is especially recommended for new and aspiring presidents and interested Trustees.

Assessment Workshops

The very popular and productive Assessment Workshops, formerly offered in partnership with American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) which is now closed, will be offered again under arrangements currently being developed between WASC leaders Dr. Barbara A. Beno, President of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, and Dr. Ralph Wolf, Executive Director of the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities. Future newsletters and our website will keep the field advised of developments.

Comprehensive Visits

Under current U.S. Department of Education regulations, ACCJC must provide opportunity for third-party comment regarding institutional qualifications for accreditation. The institutions noted below are scheduled to undergo a comprehensive visit in the fall of 2005, spring 2006, fall 2006, or spring 2007 and a review by the Commission at its January 2006, June 2006, January 2007, or June 2007 meetings. Third-party comment on these institutions should be made to the ACCJC President, Barbara A. Beno, at 10 Commercial Blvd. Suite 204, Novato, CA 94949. For consideration, such comment must be submitted in writing, signed, accompanied by return address and telephone number, and received no later than five weeks before the scheduled Commission meeting.

Fall 2005
(for Jan. 2006)
College of the Redwoods
Columbia College
DeAnza College
Foothill College
Fresno City College
Modesto Junior College
Mt. San Jacinto College

Spring 2006
(for June 2006)
Barstow College
City College of San Francisco
Defense Language Institute
Feather River College
Guam Community College
Heald College (12 campuses)
Lake Tahoe Community College

Fall 2005 (cont.)

Queen of the Holy Rosary College
 Reedley College
 Santiago Canyon College
 Shasta College
 Solano Community College
 Yuba College

Spring 2006 (cont.)

Los Angeles Harbor College
 Los Angeles Southwest College
 Hawaii Tokai International College
 West Hills College Lemoore
 West Los Angeles College

Fall 2006

(for Jan. 2007)

Bakersfield College
 Cerro Coso Community College
 College of the Sequoias
 Hawaii Community College
 Honolulu Community College
 Kapiolani Community College
 Kauai Community College
 Leeward Community College
 Maui Community College
 Northern Marianas College
 Porterville College
 Windward Community College

Spring 2007

(for June 2007)

Coastline College
 Copper Mountain College
 Gavilan College
 Golden West College
 Hartnell College
 Imperial Valley College
 L.A. County College of Nursing &
 Allied Health
 Los Angeles Mission College
 Los Angeles Pierce College
 Los Angeles Valley College
 Orange Coast College
 San Joaquin Valley College
 Western Career College

Accepted Progress Report

Butte College
 Don Bosco Technical Institute
 Palomar College
 Sierra College
 Taft College
 Ventura College

Progress Report Not Accepted

Oxnard College

Extended Show Cause

College of the Marshall Islands
 Salvation Army Crestmont College

Accepted System Report with Visit

University of Hawai'i Community
 College System

Accepted Focused Midterm Report

El Camino College
 Lassen College
 Los Medanos College
 Mendocino College
 Palo Verde College

Accepted Midterm Report

Cerritos College
 Contra Costa College
 Diablo Valley College
 TransPacific Hawaii College
 San Joaquin Delta College

Accreditation Terminated

Compton Community College, accreditation terminated on August 19, 2005. Accreditation continues pending resolution of any review and appeal.

June 2005**Commission Actions on Institutions****Reaffirmed Accreditation**

College of the Desert
 Cypress College
 Deep Springs College
 Fashion Institute of Design
 and Merchandising
 Fullerton College
 Victor Valley

Removed from Warning

College of Micronesia-FSM
 Kapi'olani Community College
 Kauai Community College
 Leeward Community College
 Maui Community College
 Merced College

Continued on Warning

College of Marin
 Honolulu Community College
 Windward Community College
 Evergreen Valley College
 San Jose City College

Placed on Warning

West Hills College Coalinga
 Hawaii Community College

Removed from Probation

Brooks College

Accepted Progress Report

Folsom Lake College
 Imperial Valley College
 Santa Monica College

Approved Substantive Changes

Canada College: Medical Assisting program, transferred from the College of San Mateo
 Cosumnes River College: establish 1) On-Line Dietetic Technician Program, 2) On-Line Health Information Technology Certificate and Associate degree program
 Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising: establish one baccalaureate degree Program in Business Administration
 Guam Community College: add certificate of Practical Nursing program
 MTI College: establish a Paralegal Studies Certificate program
 National Polytechnic College of Engineering and Oceanering: establish 1) Associate Degree program in Hyberbaric Medical Technology with an orthopedic option, 2) Associate Degree program in Respiratory Therapy
 Northern Marianas College: establish the Associate

Degree program in Natural Resources Management

San Joaquin Valley College: establish 1) Criminal Justice Administration On-Line Program, 2) Human Resources Administration On-Line Certificate and Associate Degree program, 3) Industrial Technology Certificate program, 4) Criminal Justice Corrections program at the Modesto campus, 5) Respiratory Therapy On-Line program, 6) new site in Sacramento, 7) Medical Office Administration program at Hanford extension, and the sites in Fresno, Visalia, Bakersfield, and Rancho Cucamonga, 8) A.S. Degree completion program for the Hanford extension, and the sites in Fresno, Rancho Cucamonga, Visalia, Bakersfield, Modesto, Aviation, and Sacramento

Santiago Canyon College: change location of the Continuing Education Division.

June 2005 Commission Actions on Policies

Adopted after Second Reading:

Policy on Distance Learning Including Electronically Mediated Learning

This policy, which includes a definition of distance learning and electronically mediated learning, asserts the expectation that distance learning is characterized by the same concerns for quality, integrity, and effectiveness that apply to more traditional modes of instruction. The policy was revised to eliminate guidelines for implementation, questions to aid the self study, and a glossary.

Policy on Refund of Student Charges

Since 1976, federal law has required that all institutions receiving federal student-aid funds have equitable refund policies. This policy summarizes elements of fair and equitable refund of tuition, room, board and other charges for students who withdraw from their studies or otherwise discontinue their use of an institution's services before the end of an academic term. Overall, it requires institutions to ensure that their students' rights to fair and equitable treatment are fully recognized.

Edited:

Approved for First Reading: Commission procedures require that any proposed policy changes be considered by the Commission in a two-meeting process. These policies have been circulated to member institutions for review and comment preparatory to a second reading by the Commission at the January 2006 meeting.

1. Policy on Access to Commission Meetings (revision)
2. Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions (revision)
3. Policy on Commission Good Practice in Relations with Member Institutions (revision)
4. Policy on Conflict of Interest for Commissioners, Evaluators, Consultants, Administrative Staff, and Other Agency Representatives (revision)
5. Policy on Public Disclosure (revision)
6. Policy on Review of Commission Actions (revision)

Eliminated (replaced by new ACCJC Policies): The following policy was adopted at the June meeting: Policy on Refund of Student Charges. Consistent with Commission procedure, with the adoption of a new ACCJC policy on this topic, the nationally developed policy listed below has been approved for elimination.

Self Regulation Initiatives: Guidelines for Colleges and Universities Policy Guidelines for Refund of Student Charges.

Commission News

During the summer months, Commission staff have been working to redesign the ACCJC web site with a goal to making it more user-friendly and helpful. The plan calls for a revised toolbar and menu buttons including a link to resources that will feature recent publications, other web sites of interest, and workshops and conferences (other than those sponsored, co-sponsored or presented by ACCJC) that may be of interest to our member institutions.

The Commission recently acted to change the title of the Executive Director to President to be in line with other regional accreditors. The title changes have been extended to support staff as well; Associate Directors

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are now known as Vice Presidents, and the Staff Associate is now known as Associate Vice President.

The Commission has printed new versions of several manuals. The *Accreditation Reference Handbook* contains the policies that have been adopted or revised in the last year. The *Team Evaluator Manual*, *Self Study Manual*, *Distance Learning Manual*, and the

Guide to Evaluating Institutions have undergone edits and reflect the policy changes. All new publications are dated August 2005 on the covers, and will soon be sent to Accreditation Liaison Officers and placed on the web site.

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