Accreditation 2012

Accrediting Commission Visiting Team Evaluation Report

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited City College of San Francisco from March 11 through March 15, 2012.

You can view, download or print the full report by clicking the link below.


Accreditation Decision Letter

The document below is the Accreditation Commission Decision letter dated July 2, 2012.

Accreditation Response Team Activities & Reports

Accreditation Workgroup Updates and Documents

Accreditation Updates

Accreditation Resources

Accreditation Self Study 2012

Accreditation Question & Comments

Outcomes & Assessment

Twelve Common Questions and Answers About Regional Accreditation

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), Western Association of Schools and Colleges created 12 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that will help us understand the Accreditation process. Click here for ACCJC 12 Common Questions and Answers about Regional Accreditation

CCSF Draft Special Report

Full report as of September 21, 2012

Attachment 1 Update to Draft Report
Recommendation 4 and 5

Attachment 2 Appendices (Updated September 27)

EXTERNAL REPORTS

Fiscal Crisis & Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) Report
RESPONSE TO ACCREDITATION COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES EVALUATION REPORT OF CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO

JULY 3, 2012

As Interim Chancellor of City College of San Francisco, I want to assure everyone that we take the concerns of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) very seriously. We take responsibility for addressing, in a timely and comprehensive manner, the 14 recommendations concerning fiscal and structural issues contained in the Commission’s report.

Despite very difficult current circumstances, CCSF’s commitment to its overall mission, to its students’ academic success, to diversity, inclusion, and the San Francisco community all remain undiminished and unquestioned. The report makes this clear.

The College has been deeply affected by shrinking levels of state support for community colleges. Years of budget cuts have taken a toll on the College’s finances and its physical and technology infrastructure. These realities were evident to the Commission, as they are to us, every day.

The report shows that clear, difficult choices must be made, immediately, and at a number of levels. The ultimate responsibility rests with the Trustees, administration, faculty and staff to reinvent City College so that it can continue to achieve its important mission, but in a more cost-effective and efficient way.

CCSF Trustees have approved a Tentative Budget for 2012-13 that takes important first steps. All of our union partners have tentatively agreed to changes in compensation agreements that achieve immediate savings in compensation. Other short-term savings will be achieved through attrition and reorganization, and by not purchasing needed supplies and equipment.

But there is a great deal left to do, even in the short term. This includes finding resources to raise financial reserves to a minimum 5% of overall budget, contributing to retiree health plans, funding a technology replacement plan, and filling key vacancies in classified and administrative positions. All were cited as serious concerns by the ACCJC as requiring immediate action.

Earlier this month, CCSF Trustees asked the state Chancellor of California Community Colleges for the assistance of the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT). In the next two months, FCMAT will assist CCSF in the development of a multi-year financial plan, with specific recommendations on revenues, expenditures, and overall strategies for achieving financial stability.

If California voters approve the Governor’s plan to increase state income and sales tax schedules, CCSF could still face a projected deficit of more than $14 million in FY 2013-
14. If these measures are not successful, automatic trigger cuts would once again be levied against community colleges. For CCSF, that would mean additional cuts this year of $10 million. Therefore, the College must make plans, as other Community Colleges have already done, for this potential outcome.

San Francisco voters will have the opportunity to vote on a parcel tax in November that would provide the College with an additional $14 million annually for the next eight years. These funds would mitigate many of the College’s immediate fiscal needs and could not be taken away by the state.

The CCSF community will need to implement dramatic systemic changes. CCSF’s currently spends 92 percent of its budget on personnel costs, placing it at the very highest end of the state’s community colleges. Reducing this number, to allow funding of the other critical needs identified in the Accreditation Report, is central to a meaningful resolution of the College’s fiscal crisis. Equally as important, the College will need to reexamine the effectiveness of its shared governance and decision-making process, including appropriate roles for Trustees, faculty, administration, staff, and students. Additionally, we will need to continue to improve our integrated planning and focus on student outcomes.

Next week, I will appoint an Accreditation Liaison Officer and will lead and convene an Accreditation Response Team comprised of CCSF administration, faculty, and staff. It will be charged with developing a specific and immediate plan of action for addressing the ACCJC’s 14 recommendations.

Although the challenge is great, I am confident that, working together, we can and will make the changes necessary to continue providing exemplary opportunities for our students and service to the people of San Francisco.

Dr. Pamila Fisher
Interim Chancellor
July 13, 2012

Dear Colleagues:

I have received a number of requests for a document that covers the important messages we are seeking to convey to our various constituents (students, donors, community members) during the accreditation crisis. You can help us convey accurate information by referring to this memo, and to documents mentioned below, in your discussions.

We must stress three key points:

1. The college is fully accredited and operating as usual.
2. The Accreditation Report cites more structural issues than fiscal issues that are in need of correction.
3. CCSF is taking responsibility for fixing the problems cited and the work has begun, led by the Chancellor’s Accreditation Response Team, which includes representation from all key constituencies.

Here is how I have been describing the current situation to put it in the proper context:

- CCSF’s accreditation remains intact as it has since 1935. We are NOT closing. We are not going to let that happen. City College is far too important to San Francisco and to our students.

- There has been speculation about a scenario where the college could close. Unfortunately, that kind of conjecture takes attention away from dealing with the very serious fiscal and structural issues that we must address between now and March.

- The ACCJC’s 14 recommendations focus on structure, process and governance not just fiscal issues. Therefore, we cannot blame all of CCSF’s problems on state budget cuts.

- Our current accreditation status is “Show Cause,” which is severe. It means we continue as an accredited institution but need to show significant progress toward resolution of the 14 recommendations by October 15 and achieved all of them by March 15, 2013.
• We have to change how we operate, including how we are structured. We will have to be even more efficient in our decision-making, be much more cost effective, and be able to provide evidence of student success.

• To successfully resolve our accreditation crisis, every CCSF employee will have to be a part of the solution.

What Are We Doing About It?

• Trustees have adopted a budget for fiscal year 2012-13 that contains further overall reductions of $8 million.

• CCSF has requested the state’s Financial Crisis Management Assistance Team (FCMAT), a panel of school finance specialists, to examine finances and processes and make specific recommendations for improvement. FCMAT has already started its work and will be on site in late July.

• The Board of Trustees placed a $79 parcel tax before San Francisco voters on the November ballot. If passed by the voters, it will raise $14 million/year in funding for City College.

• I appointed and am directing an Accreditation Response Team. This group includes trustees, administrators, staff, faculty, and student representatives. Smaller workgroups are focused on each of the 14 recommendations and charged with developing timely action plans. I have also appointed Gohar Momjian as our Accreditation Liaison Officer to accommodate this massive effort.

• If you or others would like key accreditation information and reports, consult www.ccsf.edu.
How Did We Get Here?

- It’s clear that as an institution, City College has always had a big heart. We have always put our students first. We made a lot of generous decisions when we could afford to do so. We just don’t have the resources, or the time, to do that any more.

- People can and will disagree on specific causes of our current situation, but blaming others will not move us forward. For the benefit of all of the City College community, we have to stay focused on the future, and what needs to happen between now and October 15, our first deadline to show meaningful progress to the ACCJC.

We have retained outside communications support. If the press contacts you, feel free to contact CCSF’s spokesperson, Larry Kamer who will be happy to assist you. He can be reached at lkamer@kamergroup.com or 415/290-7240.

I will do my very best to keep you informed of our progress. You have my sincere thanks for everything you do for City College.

Sincerely,

Dr. Pamila Fisher
Interim Chancellor