Integrating Standards and Themes
Adapted from Guide to Evaluating Institutions Using ACCJC 2002 Standards, p. 5

The four Commission Standards work together in an integrated way and several themes thread throughout them. These themes can provide guidance and structure to self-reflective dialogue and evaluation of institutional effectiveness as the institution prepares its self study. The themes include:

- **Institutional commitments** to providing high quality education congruent with institutional mission, to focusing on student learning, and to periodic reflection on its mission statement

- **Evaluation, planning, and improvement** in an ongoing and systematic cycle that includes evaluation, goal setting, resource distribution, implementation, and reevaluation

- **Student learning outcomes** as the conscious and robust demonstration of the effectiveness of institutional efforts to produce and support student learning by developing student learning outcomes at the course, program, and degree level

- **Organization** demonstrated in having adequate staff, resources and organizational structure (communication and decision making structures) to identify and make public learning outcomes, to evaluate the effectiveness of programs in producing those outcomes, and to make improvements

- **Dialogue** as a means to ongoing participation in institutional self-reflection based on reliable information about the college’s programs and services and evidence on how well the institution is meeting student needs

- **Institutional integrity** demonstrated concern with honesty, truthfulness, and the manner in which it represents itself to all stakeholders, internal and external.

Preparation for a self study and a Self-Study Report under these integrated Standards requires that attention be given to weaving these themes with responses given to a specific Standard and its sub-parts. Those charged with the structuring of the process for doing the self study should be mindful of the importance of structuring working committees to address both the themes and the Standards in a coherent way that leads to assessment of institutional quality.