Between agenda items 8 and 9, two guests spoke:

William McGinnis, Trustee of Butte-Glen Community College District. He introduced his remarks by talking about his service with the Community College League of California, the Campaign for College Opportunity and other work he has done that has given him contact with different community college boards. Governing boards need training in accreditation. They tend not to understand their role to lead, not micromanage. Board must hold institution accountable by having data that they can understand. They often don’t understand that it is their role to ask for data (and sometimes they are told that they are micromanaging when they do so). ACCJC needs to continue to be involved in the training of trustees. Trustees should be trained in how they can assure that students are achieving. In business, it is said that “nothing gets done unless you measure it.” Trustees need tools to turn around budgets that are spending too much on personnel. The speaker worked with the board of one college which had not conducted an annual audit, and the trustees had not known that this is required. McGinnis added that he was not asked by his organization to speak to ACCJC, but had come on his own.

In response to a question, McGinnis said that some boards do not improve after training because of rogue trustees, but most do.
Teeka James has supplied her remarks:

Before the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges Public Meeting
June 7, 2013
Testimony of Teeka James, President, AFT Local 1493 on behalf of the California
Federation of Teachers, AFT, AFL-CIO

Thank you for the opportunity to speak here today. Good afternoon. My name is Teeka
James. I am the President of AFT Local 1493, which represents the faculty of the San Mateo
County Community College District. I am speaking on behalf of the California Federation of
Teachers. I ask that my written comments, which I will provide to the Commission, be made
a part of the record of this proceeding.

ACCJC’s policies and actions impact faculty, students, and staff of the California community
colleges and the public at large. CFT’s concerns about ACCJC, expressed in its April 30th
and June 4th complaints, reflect those expressed by many educators over the last 10 years.
CFT feels, as do MANY others, that The Commission lacks transparency, fairness and
accountability.

First, visiting evaluation teams do not sufficiently reflect the constituent groups. Faculty,
who have the most direct responsibility for educating and serving our students, represent
75% of the college workforce, yet make up just 15% of the evaluation teams. Rarely are
faculty given leadership roles in these teams, even though they serve major leadership
functions on campus.

Second, the Commission often escalates the recommendation of the evaluation team without
accountability, explanation of its reasoning, or transparency. This practice of escalating
sanctions without explanation prevents institutions from responding to any additional
information that the Commission may be relying upon. Furthermore, by keeping the
Commission’s reasoning and evidence secret, it is impossible to tell whether these decisions
are being made properly or not.

ACCJC needs to recognize college students, faculty, board members, and employees as part
of their constituency, each having a legitimate interest in accreditation. The Commission
should provide information about its activities and about the colleges to each constituent
group at the same time that they provide such information to college CEOs.

Third, various policies of the Commission are not widely accepted by educators, nor by other
accrediting bodies. This contributes to the stunning disparity in the number of sanctions
imposed by the ACCJC when compared to those of other accreditors and, strongly suggests
the Commission relies on Standards that do not accurately reflect institutional performance or
excellence.

Fourth, The Commission responds to criticism defensively and without transparency. For
example, The Commission’s recent response to the CFT Complaint was unsigned and failed
to address its substance; and when the editor of AFT 1493’s newsletter contacted ACCJC just
two days ago, the Commission refused to identify who is on the Commission’s Executive
Committee nor who issued the Commission’s Response. This secrecy and lack of
accountability is unjustifiable for an accrediting body performing a public function, one
primarily funded by the State of California.

Between Agenda Item 8 & 9
p. 2
CFT has outlined several recommendations for reform. Among them are these:

**Timeliness and accountability:** ACCJC should provide visiting team action recommendations to an affected institution sufficiently in advance of Commission actions to allow the institution and its various constituencies to respond; and it should post proposed changes in its Policies and Procedures on its website at least 45 days prior to the Commission meeting to allow a similar opportunity for review and comment prior to Commission action.

**Fairness:** ACCJC’s visiting teams should proportionally reflect the various constituencies within the California community colleges. Members of the Commission and its staff should not be appointed to visiting teams. Absent unusual need, no more than two members from any institution should be appointed to a visiting team. And faculty should be appointed to chair teams and subgroups for various standards.

**Transparency:** ACCJC should assure that team action recommendations are signed and dated, and when the Commission increases sanction level above that recommended by a team, it should clearly explain the rationale and connect the findings to the decision. The ACCJC should appoint someone who is independent of the Commission staff and who reports directly to the Commission, to review ACCJC actions to assure consistency and compliance with ACCJC policies and procedures, including avoiding conflicts of interest.

And finally, ACCJC should abide by the standards of the Brown Act and the California Public Records Act.

ACCJC is the most controversial accrediting body in this country, and is unfortunately viewed with distrust, concern, and fear within the community colleges. Its integrity is open to question. There is good reason to doubt ACCJC’s reliability as an accreditor. This results not only from its actions, but also many of its overly prescriptive policies, and its failure to adhere to a culture of transparency.

To serve the students and people of California properly, ACCJC has to change or be delisted by the Department of Education; the time is now. Thank you for your time.

Find a sound recording of questions and comments from the commissioners at: http://soundcloud.com/fitzthereporter/2013-06-07-01-35-2
(15 minute sound recording. Start at 3:30 for questions and comments.)
DATE: June 7, 2013

MEMO TO: Commission

FROM: Dr. Marie B. Smith, Policy Committee Chair
Ms. Krista Johns, Vice President, Policy and Research

SUBJECT: Approval of Policies for First and Second Reading, Approval of Operational Policies, and Policy Elimination

Through Commission processes, the Policy Committee oversees the development of new policies and changes to existing policies. Commission procedures require that any proposed institutional policy changes and/or new policies be considered by the Commission in a two-meeting process. At the first meeting, new policies/policy changes are discussed and modifications are made as appropriate (i.e., "First Reading"). These policies are then circulated to ACCJC accredited institutions and other interested parties for review and comment before presentation at the next Commission meeting for second reading and adoption.

The Policy Committee met on April 17, 2013 to review institutional policies for first reading and second reading. Operational policies and documents were also reviewed for presentation to the Commission, along with edits to policies.

Changes to existing policies are noted in red italic and strikethrough. New policies are all italic. As a part of the ongoing policy review process, terminology has been changed in all reviewed policies as necessary to align with current usage of terms in the Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation. In addition, changes have been made to delete dated references to the Commission’s interactions with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), the association maintained by ACCJC with the Accrediting Commission for Colleges and Universities (ACSCU) and the Accrediting Commission for Schools (ACS).

1. The following policies are presented to the Commission for first reading and approval.

Upon approval, these will be circulated to the member institutions for review and comment.

- Policy on Monitoring Institutional Performance
  The new Policy on Monitoring Institutional Performance highlights the periodic (annual) monitoring of key indicators as required by USDE regulations. This area of accreditation practice and reporting by colleges will be more transparent to member institutions and interested others with the creation of a stand-alone policy on the subject.
• Policy on Credit for Prior Experiential Learning in Undergraduate Programs (Policy on Direct Assessment of Learning)
In the course of its ongoing review of Commission policies, the committee determined this policy had become out of date since its last revision in 2009. There has been a great deal of movement on this subject over the past several years, and the U.S. Department of Education recently clarified its expectations related to direct assessment programs, which may include prior experiential learning. The policy has been renamed and revised with these factors in mind.

It should be noted that several other Commission policies also address direct assessment programs, including the Policy on Substantive Change, Policy on Award of Credit, and Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits.

• Policy on the Rights and Responsibilities of the Commission and Member Institutions
This policy is returned for first reading consideration. During minor clean-up revisions to the Policy on Rights and Responsibilities of the Commission and Member Institutions, it was determined that a separate section on third party comment would be helpful to the member institutions and to the public. The section pulls materials that were previously found in several other policies and records them together in this section.

2. The following Policies are presented to the Commission for second reading and approval.
The Commission received no comments from the field on the first reading policies sent to the field in February 2013 which are presented today for second reading and approval.

• Policy on Substantive Change
Recommended revisions to the Policy on Substantive Change align policy language with recent USDE clarification of regulations. The new language states when the Commission may call for a site visit or comprehensive evaluation because of the institutional changes being made. Also being added is language related to committee membership and process that has been in the Substantive Change Manual.

• Policy on Institutional Integrity and Ethics
The revisions to the Policy on Institutional Integrity and Ethics add language from Eligibility Requirement 21 related to violations of integrity and ethics, and insert into an endnote citations to other Commission policies pertaining to integrity and ethics.

• Policy on the Award of Credit
The revisions to the Policy on Award of Credit will align the language with USDE regulations that include direct assessment programs.

• Policy on Representation of Accredited Status
The revisions to the Policy on Representation of Accredited Status add the requirement for institutions to include the citation of the ACCJC website in their information about filing complaints.

June 7, 2013
• **Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions**  
The minor revisions to the Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions delete dated references to Commission interactions with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

• **Policy on Review of Commission Actions**  
Recent examination of the Policy on Review of Commission Actions identified the need to clarify timelines and steps in the process for institutions. In addition, language was put into alignment with other Commission policies and USDE regulatory requirements.

• **Policy on Public Disclosure and Confidentiality in the Accreditation Process**  
  - Minor revisions to the Policy on Public Disclosure and Confidentiality in the Accreditation Process include an additional footnote referring to the new operational document, the Statement on the Process for Preserving Confidentiality of Documents Related to Institutional Evaluations.

• **Policy on Commission Good Practice in Relations with Member Institutions**  
  - This policy has been revised to more accurately describe some of the listed activities, and to more accurately reflect pertinent interactions, if any, with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). In addition, a footnote has been added to make reference to a new operational document, the Statement on the Process for Preserving Confidentiality of Documents Related to Institutional Evaluations.

• **Policy on Evaluation of Institutions in Multi-College/Multi-Unit Districts or Systems**  
Specific revisions have been identified to clarify the involvement of the district/system in addressing deficiencies and developing reports, the make-up of a district/system team, and debriefing with the CEO after the visit.

3. **The following Commission operational policies are presented to the Commission for review and approval.**  
Operational policies are not circulated to the field for comment prior to final approval. Upon approval, they are included in the Commission's report on Recent Commission Actions on Policy, and are posted online in the Accreditation Reference Handbook.

• **Statement on the Process for Preserving Confidentiality of Documents Related to Institutional Evaluations**  
The new Statement on the Process for Preserving Confidentiality of Documents Related to Institutional Evaluations provides procedural clarification for implementing the policy obligations of Commissioners, team members, and others related to institutional evaluations.

• **Policy on Professional and Ethical Responsibilities of Commission Members**
The Policy on Professional and Ethical Responsibilities of Commission Members has been revised to include a new section on responsibilities of commissioner confidentiality in reviewing institutions, and to clarify the communication role of Commissioners.

- **Policy on Conflict of Interest for Commissioners, Evaluation Team Members, Consultants, Administrative Staff, and Other Commission Representatives**

  The revised Policy on Conflict of Interest for Commissioners, Evaluation Team Members, Consultants, Administrative Staff, and Other Commission Representatives has two new sections: the first, on avoiding the appearance of conflict of interest; and the second, on suspension or removal of an individual for which the conflict of interest cannot be resolved.

- **ACCJC Bylaws—Report on Action Taken**

  The ACCJC Bylaws were amended on May 10, 2013 by the Commission via an electronic vote in accordance with Bylaws. The amendments clarified two items in the language of the Bylaws. First, the language concerning scope of accreditation was changed to specify that all certificate and degree credentials offered by a member institution are included in the ACCJC accreditation. Second, the description of the process for election of new commissioners was corrected to explain that notification to the member institutions about the process of election and the available openings is made by the Commission. These changes did not alter ACCJC practice, but instead provided clarity about the practices in Bylaws.

4. The following Commission policies were edited. They are included for approval as a part of the Policy Committee report.

   Edits to correct inputting errors, grammar, and punctuation may be completed at any time and are effective when made. Edits to improve readability and clarity without altering the meaning of policy language, and edits required for full compliance with federal or state regulations, will be effective upon approval of the Committee’s report and posting of the changes on the ACCJC website.

   The following edited policies are included with this Policy Committee report.

   - **Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions**
   - **Policy on Access to Commission Meetings**

June 7, 2013