ACCREDITATION AND
COLLEGE RESPONSIBILITIES

A Briefing for
City College of San Francisco

by

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TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

• The Purposes & Processes of Accreditation
• Elements of evaluation and improvement
• The Standards of Accreditation
• ACCJC Policies
• Federal Regulations
• Resources for Institutions
• Model for Effective Program Review and Integrated Planning
• Commission expectations
GROUND RULES

• Be on time (from breaks)
• Everyone participates
• Stay within the agreed-upon objectives/agenda
• No private conversations
• Listen for content before forming opinions (be open minded)
• Suspend judgment until after discussion and information
• Be specific when asking questions
• It’s okay to disagree, but be open to new ideas and don’t be caught up in your own visions
PURPOSES OF ACCREDITATION

• Provide quality assurance to the public, to students, to other institutions that an institution is achieving its stated mission

• Give credibility to degrees and credentials awarded to students

• Stimulate institutional improvement through evaluation, planning, implementation and evaluation again
CHEA STATEMENT ON THE VALUE OF ACCREDITATION

• “Accredited Status’ means that students and the public can expect that a school or program lives up to its promises. It means that students can have confidence that a degree or credential has value.”

• “Accreditation promotes accountability through ongoing external evaluation of an institution, with a finding that there is compliance with general expectations in higher education as reflected in Accreditation Standards.”
The accreditation process is designed to help institutions focus on helping students learn what they are supposed to learn; complete courses, certificates, and degrees; transfer; or get jobs.

The process builds institutional capacity for educational excellence and institutional effectiveness that produces desired forms of student success.
THE PROCESS FOR COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

- Institutional self-evaluation (summarize the ongoing, internal quality review)
- External evaluation by professional Peers
- Commission evaluation by the body of 19 Commissions who render a judgment on the accreditation status of the institution
- Institutional improvement
ELEMENTS FOR SELF-EVALUATION

• Good student outcome data (Student Achievement and SLO) disaggregated as appropriate

• Other good data

• Institutional research capacity for sound data analysis

• Institutional honesty, integrity, and objectivity in self analysis
EXTERNAL EVALUATION

• **Visiting Teams**: qualified, trained, and experienced individuals who serve as peer evaluators

• **Commission**: decision-making body that reviews all 134 institutions, is consistent, and trained
INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

• Effective research capacity, data analysis, program review, priority setting, planning, and resource allocation activities

• Implementation of improvement plans that arise from this process

• Evaluation of the effectiveness of improvement plans implemented as a result of this process
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

• Standard I: Mission and Institutional Effectiveness
  ▪ Data-driven assessment and improvement; focus on learning

• Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Services
  ▪ Instruction, student support, and learning support services; focus on learning

Continued
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS  Continued

• **Standard III: Resources**
  - Development of resources toward achievement of mission; focus on integrity

• **Standard IV: Leadership and Governance**
  - Leadership at all levels; focus on institutional mission and student success
IMPORTANT IDEAS EMBEDDED IN THE STANDARDS

- Focus on achieving educational mission, avoiding diversion to other purposes
- Integrity and honesty in institutional policies and actions
- Focus on student outcomes – completion of meaningful education, learning, demonstrable knowledge and skills
- Metrics and evidence used to assess institutional quality
- Ongoing internal Quality Assurance Practices
- Continuous improvement for high performance
ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

The Accreditation Standards inform member institutions what must be done to ensure educational quality and institutional effectiveness, but not how to do it. Each institution will find its own way to meet the Standards.
MERTICS: INSTITUTIONAL MEASURES

• Key metrics, or measures, must be identified by the institution to assess achievement of institutional mission
  ▪ These may be mission specific and related to the institution’s set of educational programs
  ▪ There should be data over five years prior to the Institutional Self Evaluation Report
  ▪ Institution should set targets, goals, or benchmarks
  ▪ Institutional performance on key metrics should be examined regularly and used for decision making
**METRICS: ACCJC MEASURES**

• Common measures of institutional effectiveness include:
  
  - Course completion
  - Enrollment in next course in sequence
  - Completion of course sequences, certificates, degrees
  - Graduation, transfer, job placement
  - Student learning of general skills and knowledge areas broadly applicable to life and work* -- degree SLOs
  - Student learning of specific skill sets* and knowledge associated with the area of study – program SLOs

*Federal and national pressures are strong in this area.
POLICIES EMBEDDED IN THE STANDARDS

• Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education
• Policy on Principles of Good Practice in Overseas International Education Programs for Non-U.S. Nationals
• Policy on Closing an Institution
• Policy on Transfer of Credit; Policy on Award of Credit
• Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations
• Policy and Procedures for the Evaluation of Institutions in Multi-College/Multi-Unit Districts or Systems
• Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status
OTHER POLICIES WHICH MUST BE SEPARATELY ADDRESSED BY INSTITUTIONS

- Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV
- Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits
- Policy on Integrity and Ethics
ARE INSTITUTIONS EXPECTED TO MEET ALL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AT ALL TIMES?

• Member institutions agree to adhere to Accreditation Standards at all times when they seek initial accreditation.

• Institutions should have ongoing internal quality review and quality improvement processes – program review, priority setting, planning, implementation of changes, assessment of learning outcomes, evaluation of institutional effectiveness

• Six-year cycle of accreditation checks on what should be ongoing institutional practices to review and improve quality
FEDERAL REGULATIONS: ONE OF SEVERAL REFERENCES TO DATA AND PROGRAM REVIEW

§602.16 Accreditation and pre-accreditation standards

(a) The agency must demonstrate that it has standards for accreditation, and pre-accreditation, if offered, that are sufficiently rigorous to ensure that the agency is a reliable authority regarding the quality of the education or training provided by the institutions or programs it accredits. The agency meets this requirement if --

(1) The agency’s accreditation standards effectively address the quality of the institution or program in the following areas:

   (i) Success with respect to student achievement in relation to the institution’s mission, including, as appropriate, consideration of data such as graduation rates, course completion, State licensing examination, and job placement rates.
FEDERAL CONCERNS: USE OF FINANCIAL AID FUNDS

“Accreditors accept the responsibility of demonstrating adequate rigor in accountability to assure that all accredited institutions meet reasonable standards of educational performance and that unacceptably weak institutions are not eligible for financial aid.”

Source: NACIQI Draft Final Report, February 8, 2012
FEDERAL REGULATIONS: 
THE TWO-YEAR RULE

§602.20 Enforcement of Standards

(a) If the agency’s review of an institution or program under any standard indicates that the institution or program is not in compliance with that standard, the agency must --

(1) Immediately initiate adverse action against the institution or program; or

(2) Require the institution or program to take appropriate action to bring itself into compliance with the agency’s standards within a time period that must not exceed:

(iii) Two years, if the program, or the longest program offered by the institution, is at least two years in length.
RESOURCES FOR MEMBER INSTITUTIONS

• Manuals and Guides
  ▪ Accreditation Reference Handbook
  ▪ Guide to Evaluating Institutions
  ▪ Guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education
  ▪ Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation
  ▪ Substantive Change Manual
RESOURCES continued

• ACCJC Website
  ▪ President’s Desk
  ▪ New on the Website
  ▪ ALO Discussion Board
  ▪ Accreditation Basics Course (online)
  ▪ Twelve Questions about Regional Accreditation

• ACCJC Newsletter (ACCJC News)

• Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness
CULTURE AND VALUES FOR INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

- Intellectual curiosity and commitment to student success
- Research capacity for data analysis
- Program review which yields valid and accurate data
- Integrated planning for improvement integrated with resource allocation
- Student outcomes (Learning and Achievement)

Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness, Parts I-III
KEY ELEMENTS IN INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

• Data-based decision making
• Planning for improvement
• Realistic priority setting
• Integration of plans into the decision-making process
• Reporting of results (institutional self knowledge)
• Link to resource allocation (money, time, people, energy, etc.)
MODEL OF AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INTEGRATED PLANNING PROCESS

An ongoing Internal Quality Assurance Process
Institutional Mission

Programmatic Mission

Identify Gaps

Design Program Changes

Allocate Needed Resources

Outcomes

Analysis of Outcomes

Assessment

Implement Program

Align Resources

Inputs

Process
Institutional Mission Defines

Institution’s Broad Purpose
The Intended Student Population
A Commitment to Student Learning

All programs and services must align with this mission
The mission is regularly reviewed and revised as needed
The mission is central to institutional planning and decision making
Institutional Mission

Programmatic Mission

Design Program Changes

Identify Gaps
Analysis of Outcomes
Measure Outcomes

Allocate Needed Resources

Outcomes
Inputs
Process

Align Resources
Implement Program

Measure Outcomes

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Institutional Mission

Programmatic Mission
Programmatic Mission

Program’s Purposes:
(E.g., workforce training, transfer, general education, pre-collegiate education, baccalaureate education, etc.)

Define Programmatic Student Learning Outcomes

The program’s mission must align with institutional mission
The mission is reviewed regularly and revised as needed
The mission is central to programmatic planning and decision making
OUTCOMES

Student Achievement

Student Learning
HOW ARE OUTCOMES ANALYZED?

• Analysis requires a judgment about whether the outcomes are “good enough”
  ▪ Benchmarks of performance of similar colleges
  ▪ Benchmarks of past institutional performance
    □ (e.g., 5% increase over previous year’s...)
  ▪ Externally imposed benchmarks – state governments, professional associations, employers, etc.
  ▪ Targets or goals established by the institution
  ▪ Others?

• Analysis requires valid data or information
Student Achievement Outcomes

- Course completion
- Retention term to term
- Progression to next course/level
- Program completion
- Degree/certificate completion
- Transfer
- Success/Scores on licensure exams
- Job placement

All data collected must be analyzed
Student Learning Outcomes

- Established by faculty at the course, program, degree, and certificate levels;
- Faculty, administrators, and trustees play a role;
- Authentic assessment designed to determine what students actually learn;

*Assessment data are collected and analyzed.*
RELATIONSHIP AMONG COURSE, PROGRAM, AND INSTITUTIONAL SLOs

Institutional Student Learning Outcomes: there is a broad set of SLOs which describe outcomes students have achieved when they complete their degree/certificate/program.

Program Student Learning Outcomes: a set of SLOs students have achieved upon completion of a sequence or cluster of courses in a program or major.

Course Student Learning Outcomes: these are agreed-upon outcomes students must achieve to complete the course.
DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Course Level: Discipline Faculty

Program Level: programmatic faculty in the disciplines and external clients (employers, transfer institutions, & the public)

Institutional Level: Faculty, Academic Administrators, Trustees
Through the Mission, Vision, and Values
INPUTS

Existing Resources

Students
Existing Resources

- **Staff**  
  (number and capacity)
- **Facilities**
- **Equipment**
- **Funding**

All continually aligned to course/program
Students

Who are they?
How well prepared are they?
What are their educational goals?
What are their program goals?
What are their support needs?
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Process: Pedagogy and Support Services

Course outlines

Course content, intended SLOs

Strategies for assessing student learning

Instructional support and services for students

Variable delivery modes & scheduling, etc.
**Ongoing Alignment of Resources**
(Human, Physical, Technology, & Financial)

- Sufficient and appropriate resources are provided to meet program and institutional needs
- Resource allocation through established processes is integrated with and informed by institutional evaluation and planning
Program Implementation

Scheduling and sequence of courses

Alignment with general education courses
Assessment

Gather meaningful student achievement data
Measure attainment of student learning outcomes
Data can be qualitative and quantitative
Data should be longitudinal where appropriate
Data should be continually collected and analyzed
Institutional Mission

Programmatic Mission

- Identify Gaps
- Analysis of Outcomes
- Design Program Changes
- Outcomes
- Inputs
- Process
- Allocate Needed Resources
- Align Resources
- Assessment
- Implement Program
- Resources
- Implement
- Align
- Allocate
- Design
- Identify
- Analysis
- Outcome
- Institutional
- Programmatic
Analysis of Outcomes

Understanding the meaning of the data collected

Judgments about what is good enough must be made

Institutional and system governance groups must be informed

Institutional researchers should assist in this analysis
Institutional Mission

Programmatic Mission

Outcomes

Inputs

Process

Align Resources

Allocate Needed Resources

Implement Program

Assessment

Analysis of Outcomes

Identify Gaps

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Allocate

Needed

Resources

Design

Program

Changes

Identify

Gaps

Analysis of Outcomes

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Identify Gaps

Comparison of actual outcomes with intended or targeted outcomes

What worked to attain intended outcomes?

What part(s) of the program need to be changed to attain intended outcomes?
Institutional Mission

Programmatic Mission

Outcomes

Inputs

Process

Align Resources

Allocate Needed Resources

Implement Program

Assessment

Analysis of Outcomes

Identify Gaps

Design Program Changes

Align Resources

Implement Program

Assessment

Analysis of Outcomes

Identify Gaps

Design Program Changes

Institutional Mission

Programmatic Mission
Design Program Changes

To program and course outcomes
To inputs and processes
To human, physical, technological and financial resources

Programmatic changes must be in line with mission

Planned changes must inform the process of budget allocation
(Re)Allocate Needed Resources

• Results of program review are clearly and consistently linked to the institutional planning and resource (re)allocation processes

  • Constituent groups on campus are involved in the decision-making processes

• Board governance decisions reflect institutional priorities identified through assessment
Reallocate Needed Resources

- Program review and planning inform/direct resource reallocation
- Program review and resulting decisions lead to meaningful improvements at the college
Institutional Mission

Programmatic Mission

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Identify Gaps
HOW DID WE GET HERE?

• Accreditation Standards have required program review and integrated planning since the 1990s

• To those requirements, there is an expectation that Student Achievement and SLO data become a part of the program review and planning processes (also in the Standards in the 1990s)
WHAT IS EXPECTED NOW?

• Accredited colleges are expected to be at the Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement Level on the Commission’s Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness – Parts I and II (Program Review and Planning)
WHAT IS EXPECTED IN THE FUTURE?

• Accredited colleges are expected to remain at the Sustainable Continuous Quality Improvement Level on the Commission’s Rubric for Evaluating Institutional Effectiveness – Parts I and II (Program Review and Planning)
WHAT IS EXPECTED IN THE FUTURE?

• By AY 2012-13, colleges are expected to be at the **Proficiency** Level on the Commission’s Rubric Part III – Student Learning Outcomes

• ACCJC has sent ALOs and CEOs the schedule and form to report on the status of SLO development in AY 2012-13
WHO BENEFITS FROM DATA-DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING?

- **Students** receive feedback on progress and attainment of expected outcomes
- **Faculty** receive feedback on student learning and achievement and improve courses and programs
- **Courses, Programs, and Departments** benefit from increased educational quality
- **The Institution** achieves its institutional mission and can provide evidence of the achievement
MISSION AND VISION
CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO

• City College of San Francisco values and fosters superior levels of educational participation and academic success among all students.

• The educational experience will feature successful learning.
ACTIVITIES
(As Time Permits)

• Exercise I – Mountain Shadows College
• Exercise II – Seashore Community College
• Questions to Take Away
Thank You