



ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR
COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

CORE INQUIRIES

City College of San Francisco
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San Francisco, CA 94112

The Core Inquiries are based upon the findings of the peer review team that conducted Team ISER Review on March 22, 2023

Erika Endrijonas, Ph.D., Team Chair
Team Chair

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City College of San Francisco

Peer Review Team Roster

Team ISER Review

March 22, 2023

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Dr. Kevin Bontenbal Vice President ACCJC	

Summary of Team ISER Review

INSTITUTION: City College of San Francisco

DATE OF TEAM ISER REVIEW: March 22, 2023

TEAM CHAIR: Erika Endrijonas, Ph.D.

A seven-member accreditation peer review team conducted Team ISER Review of City College of San Francisco on March 22, 2023. Two peer review team members were unable to attend the in-person meeting near LAX due to illness and travel challenges. The Team ISER Review is a one-day, off-site analysis of an institution's self-evaluation report. The peer review team received the college's institutional self-evaluation report (ISER) and related evidence several weeks prior to the Team ISER Review. Team members found the ISER to be a comprehensive, well written, document detailing the processes used by the College to address Eligibility Requirements, Commission Standards, and Commission Policies, although the team did find reviewing the evidence cited in the ISER challenging due to numerous broken links and the lack of access to the ISER on CCSF's website without a password. The team confirmed that the ISER was developed through broad participation by the entire College community including faculty, staff, students, and administration. The team found that the College provided a thoughtful ISER containing several self-identified action plans for institutional improvement. The College also prepared a Quality Focus Essay.

In preparation for the Team ISER Review, the team chair attended a team chair training workshop on December 1, 2022, and held a pre-review meeting with the college CEO on January 19, 2023. The entire peer review team received team training provided by staff from ACCJC on February 7, 2023. Prior to the Team ISER Review, team members completed their team assignments, identified areas for further clarification, and provided a list of requests for additional evidence to be considered during Team ISER Review.

During the Team ISER Review, team members spent the morning discussing their initial observations and their preliminary review of the written materials and evidence provided by the College for the purpose of determining whether the College continues to meet Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and US ED regulations. In the afternoon, the team further synthesized their findings to validate the excellent work of the college and identified standards the college meets, as well as developed Core Inquiries to be pursued during the Focused Site Visit, which will occur the week of October 2, 2023.

Core Inquiries are a means for communicating potential areas of institutional noncompliance, improvement, or exemplary practice that arise during the Team ISER Review. They describe the areas of emphasis for the Focused Site Visit that the team will explore to further their analysis to determining whether standards are met and accordingly identify potential commendations or recommendations. The college should use the Core Inquiries and time leading up to the focused site visit as an opportunity to gather more evidence, collate information, and to strengthen or develop processes in the continuous improvement cycle. In the course of the Focused Site Visit,

the ACCJC staff liaison will review new or emerging issues which might arise out of the discussions on Core Inquiries.

Core Inquiries

Based on the team's analysis during the Team ISER Review, the team identified the following core inquiries that relate to potential areas of clarification, improvement, or commendation.

<p>Core Inquiry 1:</p> <p>The team seeks to better understand how the college utilizes and implements the evaluation of governance processes and program review to systematically improve institutional effectiveness and academic quality.</p>
<p>Standards or Policies: I.B.7</p>
<p>Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The college reviews policies and procedures following an articulated, inclusive process.b. Evidence of the inclusive and robust governance processes can be found in section 4 of the 'The Roles, Responsibilities, and Processes (RRP) Handbook' which outlines processes to review and update policies and procedures.c. However, it is unclear how evaluation of governance processes and program review leads to system improvements to better support and continually improve institutional effectiveness and academic quality.
<p>Topics of discussion during interviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. How does evaluation of governance processes and program review <i>lead</i> to system improvements?
<p>Request for Additional Information/Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Evidence showing how assessment of governance processes and program review has led to system improvements.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Academic Senate President
- b. Vice Chancellor of Academic & Institutional Affairs
- c. Vice Chancellor of Institutional Advancement & Effectiveness
- d. Committee(s)/Members responsible for conducting/evaluating assessments

Core Inquiry 2:

The team seeks to review and verify a current and updated BP/AP Review and Accountability Schedule.

Standards or Policies: I.C.5 and IV.C.7

Description:

- a. CCSF has structures and processes in place for reviewing board policies and administrative procedures
- b. The college acknowledges that “keeping up with a five-year cycle for review has been challenging, particularly given senior leadership transitions over the past few years.”
- c. The college addressed this issue by developing a BP/AP Review and Accountability Schedule.
- d. In the Schedule provided as evidence, a number of ‘next revision’ dates are missing or were due to be reviewed in Fall 2021.
- e. Given the college’s own concern with sustaining this process, the team would like to assess how the college is progressing with its scheduled review.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. What is the status of the current BP/AP review and accountability schedule?
- b. How does the college plan to sustain the ongoing review of BP/APs?
- c. Who will be responsible for ensuring the college is accountable to its BP/AP review schedule?

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. Current, updated BP/AP Review and Accountability Schedule.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Individuals responsible for the five-year cycle of review of all Board Policies and Administrative Procedures.

Core Inquiry 3:

The team seeks to verify that the college is following its evaluation processes and timelines for all employees.

Standards or Policies: III.A.5 and III.A.8

Description:

- a. The team did not find evidence for a systematic evaluation process or timelines to ensure that evaluations for all full-time and part-time faculty and staff are occurring.
- b. The team was also unable to verify through evidence that actions taken based on the evaluation of faculty and staff are documented.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. Explain how evaluations are occurring systematically and according to published timelines.
- b. How are actions taken based on the evaluation of personnel timely and documented.

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. Any evidence of the timeline/process being published and communicated to faculty and staff.
- b. Documentation of actions taken based on evaluations.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Vice Chancellor of Human Resources & Employee Relations
- b. Vice Chancellor of Academic & Institutional Affairs
- c. Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs
- d. Deans who oversee instructional and non-instructional faculty and staff.

Core Inquiry 4:

The team seeks to learn more about how the college maintains, upgrades, and evaluates its facilities and sites to ensure they adequately support instructional services and student needs.

Standards or Policies: III.B.2 and III.B.3

Description:

- a. The team verified that the college has multiple sites located throughout its service area.
- b. The college noted in its ISER a need to assess the college's footprint.
- c. The team verified that the college has a custodial handbook establishing processes and procedures for cleaning and maintenance standards.
- d. The team verified that the college utilizes the SchoolDude program to identify immediate physical resource needs. The college noted that it is seeking to upgrade to a more proactive system.
- e. It is unclear to the team how the college adequately supports the Total Cost of Ownership for all sites.
- f. It is unclear to the team that the program review process supports instructional and student support service needs across all sites.
- g. The team would like to learn more about how facilities at all sites are maintained and that issues are addressed on a regular basis.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. How does the college ensure proper maintenance of all of its sites?
- b. Is the college reviewing or updating its custodial handbook?
- c. How does the college assess the cost-benefit analysis of its sites?
- d. How does the college evaluate the need for all its sites?

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. Documentation demonstrating process or plans of site assessment.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Vice Chancellor of Finance & Administration
- b. Associate Vice Chancellor of Facilities

Core Inquiry 5:

The team seeks to verify the college's plans for ensuring it has sufficient financial resources to support and sustain instructional and student support programs, and that the college's fiscal and operational planning is based on a realistic assessment of available financial resources.

Standards or Policies: III.D.1, III.D.4, and III.D.9

Description:

- a. The team verified that the college has experienced a pattern of deficit spending over many years, utilizing one-time transfers to support ongoing operations.
- b. The team verified that the college has experienced a significant decline in enrollment, which is critical to long-term resource availability.
- c. The team verified that the college operates many sites across its service area, creating a large and costly operational footprint.
- d. The team has reviewed evidence demonstrating that the college relies on program review to identify learning and student support needs.

- e. The team would like to learn more about the college’s multiyear budget and enrollment plan to acknowledge and address its fiscal stability, and how the college has begun to take actions to align expenditures with available resources.
- f. The team would like to learn more about how the college is able to support critical learning and student support needs identified through program review.
- g. The team would like to learn more about how the college continues to update and refine its multiyear budget planning based on current information which includes implementation timelines.
- h. The team would like to learn more about how the college is ensuring its cashflow and reserves are sufficient and consistent with its approved budget.
- i. The team would like to learn more about how the college plans to avoid deficits in special funds (e.g., the Self-Insurance Fund).

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. Is there ongoing planning to address long-term financial conditions?
- b. What is the college doing to ensure that deficit spending will not re-emerge?
- c. Are the college’s expenditure and resource estimates realistic?
- d. Are the current budget tracking estimates approved in the adopted budget?

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. Evidence of updated multiyear planning.
- b. Agendas and/or minutes demonstrating college communication and engagement on long-term fiscal issues.
- c. Current year revenue and expenditure data, such as the 2nd quarter 311 report.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Vice Chancellor of Finance & Administration
- b. Individuals involved with fiscal planning and leadership

Core Inquiry 6:

The team seeks to verify that the college is planning for and allocating resources to meet its long-term obligations, particularly its OPEB liability.

Standards or Policies: III.D.12

Description:

- a. The team has reviewed evidence demonstrating that the college withdrew over \$21 million from its OPEB fund to help balance its general fund budget in the 2020-21 fiscal year.
- b. The team has reviewed evidence that college has contributed \$8 million to its OPEB fund over the 2021-22 and 2022-23 fiscal years.
- c. The team has reviewed evidence demonstrating that the college's OPEB liability is \$118 million.
- d. The team would like to learn more about how the college plans to address its long-term OPEB liability in a permanent manner.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. What is the college's plan to address its OPEB liability?
- b. How will the college ensure that transfers from the OPEB fund to the college's general fund will not re-emerge as a budget strategy?
- c. Does the college intend to develop policies and procedures to protect the OPEB fund from immediate budget needs?

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. Documentation demonstrating the college's plan to reduce the OPEB liability.
- b. Evidence of policy development that protects the OPEB fund from immediate budget needs.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Vice Chancellor of Finance & Administration
- b. Individuals responsible for OPEB management and planning.

Core Inquiry 7:

The team seeks to verify that that the college has appropriate policies and procedures relating to debt management.

Standards or Policies: III.D.13 and III.D.14

Description:

- a. The team has verified that the college owes a debt to the Chancellor's Office related to the repayment for disallowed FTES in prior years.
- b. The team has verified that college has renegotiated the payment plan in recent years and has accounted for the repayment in its long-term planning.
- c. The team has verified that the college has voter-approved debt in the form of general obligation bonds.
- d. The team has not been able to verify that the college has an approved policy for managing debt.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. How does the college manage debt?
- b. Is there a policy in place outlining parameters for debt management, or are such policies in development?

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. Approved policies relating to debt management.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Vice Chancellor of Finance & Administration
- b. Individuals responsible for debt management

Core Inquiry 8:

The team seeks to verify that the governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws.

Standards or Policies: IV.C.7

Description:

- a. The team verified that board policies and procedures document how the governing board acts in a manner consistent with its approved policies and by-laws.
- b. The team was unable to verify through the evidence provided how the board regularly assesses the effectiveness of its policies and by-laws.
- c. The team was unable to verify through the evidence provided how the board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and by-laws

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. What are some examples of how the governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws.
- b. What are some examples of how the board regularly assesses its policies and by laws for their effectiveness.
- c. How is assessment data used to inform policy effectiveness?

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. Updated timeline and progress for review of Board policies and bylaws
- b. Meeting agendas/minutes/documents that demonstrates how the regular assessment of board policies and procedures are used to inform the Board's effectiveness

- c. Evidence from the Board’s self-evaluation that demonstrates how they operate within the Board’s policies and bylaws

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Chancellor
- b. Board of Trustees Chair

Core Inquiry 9:

The team seeks to verify how the board empowers the Chancellor to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds the Chancellor accountable for the operation of the district/college.

Standards or Policies: IV.C.12

Description:

- a. The team verified board policies are in place that delegate the executive responsibility for administering the policies adopted by the Board to the Chancellor.
- b. However, the team seeks to verify how the board holds the Chancellor accountable and how the Board delegates full responsibility to implement policies without interference from the Board.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. What are some examples of how the Board holds the Chancellor accountable and how the board delegates full responsibility to implement policies without interference from the board.

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. Documentation demonstrating how the Board holds the Chancellor accountable for the operation of the district and college.
- b. Documentation demonstrating how the Board delegates full responsibility to the Chancellor to implement policies without interference.

- c. Any documentation that the Board follows its process for evaluating the Chancellor.

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Chancellor
- b. Board of Trustee Chair