EL CAMINO COLLEGE COMPTON CENTER CONVOCATION

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Compton, California

THE 2014 ACCREDITATION STANDARDS: A FOCUS ON QUALITY AND IMPROVEMENT

Quality is defined as institutional characteristics and processes that support and improve student learning and student achievement so that institutional mission is achieved

WHY DO WE CARE ABOUT ACCREDITATION?

- Fundamentally, we care about students and learning, and accreditation focuses an institution on those elements of institutional operations

- Accreditation holds us to high standards for our work and our institution's outcomes

- Successful accreditation review validates the hard work we do to educate students

PURPOSES OF ACCREDITATION

- Provide quality assurance to the public and students, as well as to federal and state governments

- Provide impetus for institutional improvement and support for educational excellence

- Help higher education become more effective

ORGANIZATION OF ACCREDITATION

- Institutions formed membership organizations, accrediting agencies, as membership entities, with requirements of "members"

- Accreditors that evaluated the whole institution formed membership entities in geographic regions – hence, *Western* Association, Southern Association, etc.

- Accreditation is non-governmental, *peer* review

- Accreditation is *voluntary*-institutions voluntarily submit to requirements, evaluators are volunteers

MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF QA

- Accreditors apply standards and evaluations honestly and carefully to each institution in the context of its mission

- Institutions have in place their own ongoing QA systems and use them to self assess, and to maintain and improve quality

- Institutions use the feedback from evaluation teams and the Commission to make improvements, to meet standards and to excel in producing educated students

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

- Standard I: Mission, Institutional Effectiveness and **Integrity (new)**

- Standard II: Educational Programs – Instruction, Library and Learning Services, and Student Support Services

- Standard III: Institutional Resources – Human Resources, Physical Resources, Technology and Financial Resources

- Standard IV: Leadership and Decision Making, and Governance

SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO THE STANDARDS

Simplified format

Reduced redundancies and clarified language

Linked with Eligibility Requirements

New emphasis on results (Student Achievement)

Improvement throughout the institution

New Section in Standard I on Institutional Integrity (I.C)

NEW PRACTICES

- Seven-Year Cycle with Midterm in year 4

- Quality Focus Essay

- Actionable Improvements Plans (coming from the institution's comprehensive self evaluation). should be incorporated into existing institutional planning processes; Improvements made should be noted;

Continued

NEW PRACTICES – 2

- New Midterm Report format
  - ✓ Analysis of data trends from Annual Reports and Annual Fiscal Reports
  - ✓ Improvement recommendations
  - ✓ Status of 2-3 significant quality improvement projects described in Quality Focus Essay

Continued

NEW PRACTICES – 3

- Individual College Monitoring and Follow-Up of Data Indicators in **Annual Reports**

  √ ACCJC provides the templates in the Annual Report which carry over to the Midterm

  √ Institution is asked to describe any additional institution-set standards (data elements)

  √ Practice is required by USDE

NEW PRACTICES – 4

- Compliance vs Improvement recommendations

  - √ Separated in action letters
  - √ Standards are either met or not met (no "partial" compliance)
  - √ Non-compliance must be addressed before the Midterm Report; improvement efforts will continue throughout the 7-year cycle

CHANGES TO POLICY

- Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions
  - √ Reaffirmation for one year (new option)
  - √ Requirement of compliance within two years (federal two-year rule)
  - √ Changed timeline for Commission follow-up (generally 18 months)
  - √ Common definitions for sanctions across all all regional accreditors

CHANGES TO TRAININGS

- Spring 2015 Symposium

- ACCJC Annual Conference (October 2016)

  - Conference session on Developing a Self Evaluation Report *one year before* evaluation visit

  - Conference sharing session on "What Happens After the Evaluation Visit"

STANDARD I: MISSION, ACADEMIC QUALITY AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, AND INTEGRITY

1: QUALITY

- The word "quality" appears 9 times in Standard I, in the title of the standard, the title of I.B, and in I.B.1, I.B.7, I.B.9, I.C.3, I.C.14

- "temperament, character, disposition," from Old French *qualite "quality, nature, characteristic"*

- What *quality* is your college known for?

- What local processes have led to improvements in institutional quality?

2: MISSION

- The word "mission" appears 8 times in Standard I, in chapter and heading titles and in I.B.3, I.B.5, I.B.7, I.B.9, I.C.1, & I.C.5

- *If* mission drives planning, can a college's mission be defined so broadly that it provides no guidance in planning? How are parts of mission defined so they can be assessed?

3: DATA (PL.)

- The word "data" appears 5 times, in the Standard I Introduction and I.A.2, I.B.4, I.B.5 & I.C.9

- "Using analysis of *quantitative* and *qualitative* data, the institution continuously and systematically *evaluates*..." II.A.2): the relationship of quantitative & qualitative data

4: INSTITUTION SET STANDARDS

- "The institution establishes institution-set standards…"

- Colleges were notified in January 2013 of new Federal requirement (the ACCJC did not invent this new requirement)

- Standards must be set for *institutional* student achievement (e.g., completion, job placement, transfer) and for *programs*, including CTE

5: DISAGGREGATES

- "The institution disaggregates and analyzes learning outcomes and achievement for subpopulations of students. When the institution identifies performance gaps, it implements strategies..." I.B.6

- An institution selects which subpopulations are critical to examine in order to understand whether it is achieving its mission

6: "BROADLY COMMUNICATES"

- "The institution broadly communicates the results of all of its assessment and evaluation activities…"

- Assessment data is provided to the public

- What amount of data would be too little?

- What amount of data would be too much?

STANDARD II: STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

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II.A – Instructional Programs

II.B – Library and Learning Support Services

II.C – Student Support Services

II.A. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

II.A.1: All instructional programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, including distance education and correspondence education are offered in fields of study consistent with the institution's mission, are appropriate to higher education, and **culminate in student attainment** of identified student learning outcomes *and* **achievement of** degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer. (ACCJC Eligibility Requirement ER 9 and ER 11)

o **New emphasis on student attainment and achievement, rather than SLOs existing and programs qualifying for degrees, certifications, employment or transfer.**

II.A.2. Faculty**, including full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty** ensure that the content and methods of instruction meet generally accepted academic and professional standards and expectations. **Faculty and others responsible act to continuously improve instructional courses**, programs and directly related services through systematic evaluation to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and promote student success.

- o **New emphasis identifies the actors instead of generally stating "the institution"**
- o **New emphasis on continuous improvement (rather than episodic activities)**

II.A.4. If the institution offers pre-collegiate level curriculum, it distinguishes that curriculum from college level curriculum and directly supports students in learning the knowledge and skills necessary to advance to and succeed in college level curriculum.

- o **Pulls out pre-collegiate curriculum for emphasis**
- o **Expresses the expectation that pre-collegiate curriculum is distinguished from the college level curriculum**
- o **Identifies the need for pre-collegiate curriculum to support student advancement to college level curriculum.**

II.A.5. The institution's degrees and programs follow practices common to American higher education, including appropriate length, breadth, depth, rigor, course sequencing, time to completion, and synthesis of learning. The institution ensures that minimum degree requirements **are 60 semester credits or equivalent at the associate level, and 120 credits or equivalent at the baccalaureate level**. (ER 12)

- **All of the Accreditation Standards apply to baccalaureate degrees, but there are some specific references in the 2014 standards**
- **The ACCJC is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education for approving a baccalaureate degree at a member institution through substantive change. Substantive change criteria give additional information to institutions about the review of a proposed BA.**

6. The institution schedules courses in a manner that allows students to complete certificate and degree programs within a period of time consistent with established expectations in higher education. (ER 9)

- o **New standard**

II.A.9. The institution awards course credit, degrees and certificates based on student attainment of learning outcomes. Units of credit awarded are consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education. **If the institution offers courses based on clock hours, it follows Federal standards for clock-to-credit-hour conversions**. (ER 10)

- o **This requirement, which has existed previously in policy, and in federal regulations, has now been added to the standards.**

II.A.11. The **institution includes in all of its programs, student learning outcomes, appropriate to the program level**, in communication competency, information competency, quantitative competency, analytic inquiry skills, ethical reasoning, the ability to engage diverse perspectives, and other program-specific learning outcomes.

- o **This standard discusses learning outcomes that are for students at the institution in programs of any type or length.**

- o **Of note is the phrase "appropriate to the program level." These will look very different in a short term program versus an AA or BA degree.**

- o **For many institutions, these outcomes are contained in identified institutional learning outcomes (ILOs).**

II.A.12. The institution requires of all of its degree programs a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy **for both associate and baccalaureate degrees** that is clearly stated in its catalog. The institution, relying on faculty expertise, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum, **based upon student learning outcomes and competencies appropriate to the degree level**. The learning outcomes include a student's preparation for and acceptance of responsible participation in civil society, skills for lifelong learning and application of learning and a broad comprehension of the development of knowledge, practice, and interpretive approaches in the arts and humanities, the sciences, mathematics, and social sciences.

II.A.13. All degree programs include a focused study in at least one area of inquiry or in an established interdisciplinary core. **The identification of specialized courses** in an area of inquiry or interdisciplinary **core is based upon student learning outcomes and competencies, and include mastery, at the appropriate degree level, of key theories and practices within the field of study**.

- o **Student learning outcomes at the degree level represent higher order learning and competencies than do the outcomes in shorter length programs.**

- o **The concept of mastery, appropriate to the degree level, is about *depth* of learning in key areas related to the degree discipline. as well as attaining the skills for mastery of particular practices and knowledge.**

II.A.14. Graduates completing **career-technical certificates and degrees** demonstrate technical and professional competencies that meet employment standards and other applicable standards and preparation for external licensure and certification.

- o **CTE programs are charged with ensuring their students demonstrate certain technical and professional competencies, either within or in addition to the SLOs discussed in Standards II.A.11,12 and 13.**

II.A.16. The institution **regularly evaluates and improves the quality and currency of all instructional programs** offered in the name of the institution, including collegiate, pre-collegiate, career-technical, and **continuing and community education courses and programs regardless of delivery mode or location**. The institution systematically strives to improve programs and courses to enhance learning outcomes and achievement of students.

- o **Not new, but notice the specific reference to continuing and community education courses.**
- o **The assessment and evaluation in some types of courses or programs may look different from that used for most instructional programs.**

II.B. Library and Learning Support Services

1. The institution supports student learning and achievement by providing library, and other learning support services to students and to personnel responsible student learning and support. **These services are sufficient in quantity, currency, depth, and variety to support educational programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, including distance education and correspondence education**. Learning support services include, but are not limited to, library collections, tutoring learning centers, computer laboratories, learning technology, and ongoing instruction for uses of library and other learning support services. (ER 17)

II.B.4. When the institution relies on or collaborates with other institutions or other sources for library and other learning support services for its instructional programs, it documents that formal agreements exist and that such resources and services are adequate for the institution's intended purposes, are easily accessible and utilized. **The institution takes responsibility for and assures the security, maintenance, and reliability of services provided either directly or through contractual arrangement.** The institution regularly evaluates these services to ensure their effectiveness. (ER 17)

II.C. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

II.C.2. The institution identifies and assesses learning support outcomes for its student population and provides appropriate student support services and programs to achieve those outcomes. **The institution uses assessment data to continuously improve student support programs and services**.

II.C.3. The institution **assures equitable access** to all of its students by providing appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to students regardless of service location or delivery method. (ER 15)

II.C.4. Co-curricular programs and athletic programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the social and cultural dimensions of the educational experience of its students. If the institution offers co-curricular or athletic programs, they are conducted with sound educational policy and standards of integrity. The institution has responsibility for the control of these programs, including their finances.

- **A new standard.**
- **Note the linkage of co-curricular programs and athletics programs to the institution's mission.**

II.C.5. The institution provides counseling and/or academic advising programs to support student development and success and prepares faculty and other personnel responsible for the advising function. **Counseling and advising programs orient students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful, and accurate information about relevant academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies.**

II.C.6. The institution has adopted and adheres to admission policies consistent with its mission that specify the qualifications of students appropriate for its programs. The institution defines and advises students on clear pathways to complete degrees, certificates, and transfer goals.

- o **This is a new standard.**
- o **Be sure to include baccalaureate degrees, if offered.**

STANDARD III: RESOURCES

STANDARD III
THEMES OF CHANGES

- Improve clarity

- Improve planning
  - Recognize role and importance of part time and adjunct faulty in processes
  - Expand recognition of comprehensive nature of planning considerations (TCO)

- Reorganize and restructure (especially III.D)

III.A: HUMAN RESOURCES

- III.A.5: The institution assures the effectiveness of its human resources by **evaluating all personnel systematically and at stated interval**s. …. Evaluation processes seek to assess **effectiveness** of personnel and encourage improvement. Actions taken following evaluations are **formal, timely, and documented**.

- III.A.6 (formerly III.A.1.c): The evaluation of faculty, academic administrators, and other personnel directly responsible for student learning includes, **as a component of that evaluation,** consideration of how these employees use the **results of the assessment of learning outcomes to improve teaching and learning.** [reworded for clarity]

III.B: PHYSICAL RESOURCES

- III.B.1: The institution assures **safe and sufficient physical resources at all locations** where it offers courses, programs, and learning support services.

- III.B.2: The institution plans, **acquires or builds**, maintains, and upgrades or replaces its physical resources, including facilities, equipment, land, and other assets, in a manner that **assures effective utilization and the continuing quality** necessary to support its programs and services and achieve its mission. [*regardless of manner in which physical assets are acquired by institution.*]

- III.B.4: Long-range capital plans support institutional improvement goals and reflect projections of the **total cost of ownership of new facilities and equipment**. [What are the components of TCO? Includes technology noted in III.C.]

III.C: TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

- III.C.1: **Technology** services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software are **appropriate and adequate** to support the institution's management and **operational functions, academic programs, teaching and learning, and support services.**

- III.C.2: The institution continuously **plans for, updates and replaces** technology to ensure its technological **infrastructure, quality and capacity** are adequate to support its mission, operations, programs, and services.

- III.C.3: The institution assures that **technology resources at all locations** where it offers courses, programs, and services are implemented and maintained to assure reliable access, safety, and security.

- III.C.4: The institution provides **appropriate instruction** and support for faculty, staff, students, and administrators, in the **effective use of technology** and technology systems related to its programs, services, and institutional operations.

- III.C.5: The institution has policies and procedures that guide the **appropriate use of technology** in the teaching and learning processes.

III.D: FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- III.D.1: ….. The institution plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that **ensures financial stability. (ER 18)**

- III.D.2: The institution's mission and goals are the foundation for financial planning, and financial planning is integrated with and supports all institutional planning. ….

- III.D.4: Institutional planning **reflects a realistic assessment of financial resource availability**, development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditure requirements.

- III.D.9: The institution has sufficient cash flow **and reserves to maintain stability**, support strategies for appropriate risk management, and, when necessary, **implement contingency plans** to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.

- III.D.11: The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of both **short-term and long-term financial solvency**. When making short-range financial plans, the institution considers its long-range financial priorities to assure financial stability. The institution clearly identifies, plans, and **allocates resources for payment of liabilities and future obligations**.

- III.D.12: The institution plans for and **allocates appropriate resources** for the payment of liabilities and future obligations, including **Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB)**, compensated absences, and other employee related obligations. The **actuarial plan** to determine Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) is current and prepared as required by appropriate accounting standards.

- III.D.15: The institution **monitors and manages student loan default rates**, revenue streams, and assets to **ensure compliance with federal requirements**, including **Title IV** of the Higher Education Act, and comes into compliance when the federal government identifies deficiencies.

STANDARD IV:
LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

IV.A: DECISION MAKING ROLES AND PROCESSES

- IV.A.1: Leaders create and **encourage innovation** leading to excellence.

- IV.A.4: Faculty and **academic administrators**, through policy and procedures, and through well-defined structures, have **responsibility for recommendations about curriculum and student learning** programs and services.

- IV.A.6 (**NEW**): The **processes** for decision-making and the **resulting decisions** are **documented** and widely **communicated** across the institution.

- IV.A.7: Leadership **roles** and the institution's governance and decision-making policies, procedures, and processes are **regularly evaluated** to assure their integrity and effectiveness. The institution widely communicates the results of these evaluations and **uses them as the basis for improvement.**

IV.B: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

- IV.B.1: The institutional chief executive officer **(CEO) has primary responsibility** for the quality of the institution.

- IV.B.3: Through established policies and procedures, the CEO guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by:

  - Ensuring college sets Institutional Performance Standards
  - Integrating Institutional educational planning with resource planning and allocations
  - Evaluating institutional planning and implementation

- IV.B.4:(**NEW**) The **CEO has the primary leadership role for accreditation**, ensuring that the institution **meets or exceeds** Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission **policies at all times**. **Faculty, staff, and administrative leaders** of the institution **also have responsibility** for assuring compliance with accreditation requirements.

IV.C: GOVERNING BOARD

- IV.C.1: The institution has a governing board that has **authority over and responsibility** for policies to assure the **academic quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learnin**g programs and services and the **financial stability** of the institution. **(ER 7)**

- IV.C.2: The governing board acts as a **collective entity**. Once the board reaches a decision, all board members **act in support of the decision**.

- IV.B.8: To ensure the institution is accomplishing its goals for student success, the governing **board regularly reviews key indicators of student learning and achievement** and institutional plans for **improving academic quality**. **(NEW)**

- IV.B.10: Board policies and/or bylaws clearly establish a process **for board evaluation**. …. The **results are used to improve board performance, academic quality, and institutional effectiveness**.