

Accreditation and the Role of Institutional Researcher

Jim Fillpot
Director of Institutional Research
Chaffey College

Dr. Ken Meehan
Director of Institutional Research
Fullerton College



Accreditation



Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)

- One of six regional associations in the U.S.
- Covers California, Hawaii, and Pacific territories, commonwealths, and federated states
- Accreditation is conducted by one of three commissions:
 - Accrediting Commission for Schools
 - Accrediting Commission for Community & Junior Colleges
 - Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges & Universities



Accreditation



Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC)

- 21 eligibility requirements that an institution must assess itself on prior to applying for Accreditation
- To be eligible for Accreditation, an institution must completely meet all eligibility requirements
- Compliance with criteria is expected to be continuous and will be periodically validated as part of an institution's self-study



Accreditation



Evolution of Accreditation – A Brief History

- Early 1960's – evidence that basic structures and processes were in place:
 - Mission Statement
 - President and Governing Board
 - Sufficient Full-Time Faculty
 - Sufficient Funds
 - Adequate Library
 - Process to Support:
 - ✓ Academic Freedom
 - ✓ Curriculum Development
 - ✓ Governance
 - ✓ Decision-Making



Accreditation



Evolution of Accreditation – A Brief History

- **1990's – evidence that students were moving through programs**
 - **Student Achievement Data:**
 - ✓ Course Completion Data
 - ✓ Persistence
 - ✓ Degrees & Certificates
 - ✓ Transfer
 - **Program & Services Review**
 - **Plans to Improve Education Being Developed and Implemented**



Accreditation



Evolution of Accreditation – A Brief History

- **2002 – focus on student learning outcomes; what students have learned as a result of attending college**
 - **Learning is the institution's core activity**
 - **Support and produce learning**
 - **Measure and assess that learning**
 - **Make changes to improve student learning**
 - **Increased emphasis on evidence!**



Accreditation



Evolution of Accreditation – A Brief History

- 1960's – *focused on processes* that institutions need to survive; not particularly education-oriented
- 1990's – *focused on students moving through the institution*, addressed the results of college efforts concerning student achievement
- 2002 – focused on what students have learned as a result of attending college – *student learning outcomes*



Accreditation



Self-Study Process:

- Exhaustive, rigorous self-study occurs every six years (formerly every ten years), with midterm report every third year (formerly fifth year)
- Visit by a team of peers selected for their expertise
- Recommendations for improvement, commendations for exemplary practices
- 19-member Commission determines accredited status of the institution



Accreditation



Why a Self-Study?

- Provides institutions an opportunity to self-evaluate in accordance with standards of good practice (i.e., ACCJC guidelines)
- Provides students, the public, and others with assurances of institutional integrity
- Encourages institutions to plan for institutional improvement in quality and effectiveness
- Cyclical peer review process



Accreditation



What's Included in the Self-Study:

- “The primary purpose of an ACCJC-accredited institution is to foster learning in its students.”
- “An effective institution ensures that its resources and processes support learning, *continuously assesses that learning*, and pursues institutional excellence and improvement.”
- “An effective institution maintains an ongoing, self-reflective dialogue about its quality and improvement.”

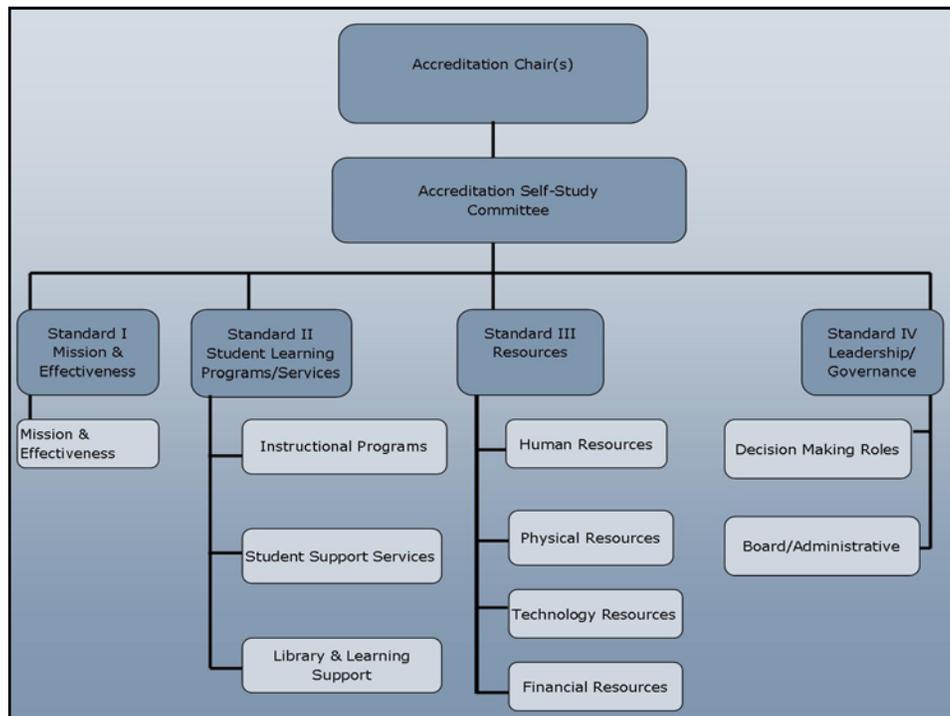


Accreditation



What's Included in the Self-Study:

- “An institution-wide dialogue must be at the heart of the self-evaluation process...”
- Four standards exist to frame this dialogue:
 - Institutional Mission and Effectiveness
 - Student Learning Programs & Services
 - Resources
 - Leadership & Governance





Accreditation



Standard I: Institutional Mission & Effectiveness

“The institution demonstrates strong commitment to a mission that emphasizes achievement of student learning and to communicating the mission internally and externally. The institution uses analyses of quantitative and qualitative data and analysis in an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, implementation, and re-evaluation to verify and improve the effectiveness by which the mission is accomplished.”



Accreditation



Standard II: Student Learning Program & Services

“The institution offers high-quality instructional programs, student support services, and library and learning support services that facilitate and demonstrate the achievement of stated student learning outcomes. The institution provides an environment that supports learning, enhances student understanding and appreciation of diversity, and encourages personal and civic responsibility as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all of its students.”



Accreditation



Standard III: Resources

“The institution effectively uses its human, physical, technology, and financial resources to achieve its board educational purposes, including stated student learning outcomes, and to improve institutional effectiveness.”



Accreditation



Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

“The institution recognizes and utilizes the contributions of leadership throughout the organization for continuous improvement of the institution. Governances roles are designed to facilitate decisions that support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness, while acknowledging the designated responsibilities of the governing board and the chief administrator.”



Accreditation



Themes:

- **“Several themes thread throughout (the) standards. These themes can provide guidance and structure to self-reflective dialogue and evaluation of institutional effectiveness.”**
 - Institutional Commitments
 - Evaluation, Planning, and Improvement
 - Student Learning Outcomes
 - Organization
 - Dialogue
 - Institutional Integrity



Accreditation



Evidence:

- **Student preparedness for college**
- **Student training and needs:**
 - Local employment training needs
 - Transfer Education
 - Basic Skills
- **Course completion data**
- **Term-to-term persistence**
- **Course level progression**
- **Program (major) completion**



Accreditation



Evidence:

- Graduation rates
- Transfer rates to four-year institutions
- Job placement rates
- Scores on licensure exams

- Student Learning Outcomes – mastery of the knowledge, skills, abilities, competencies, attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and values at the course, program, and degree levels



Accreditation

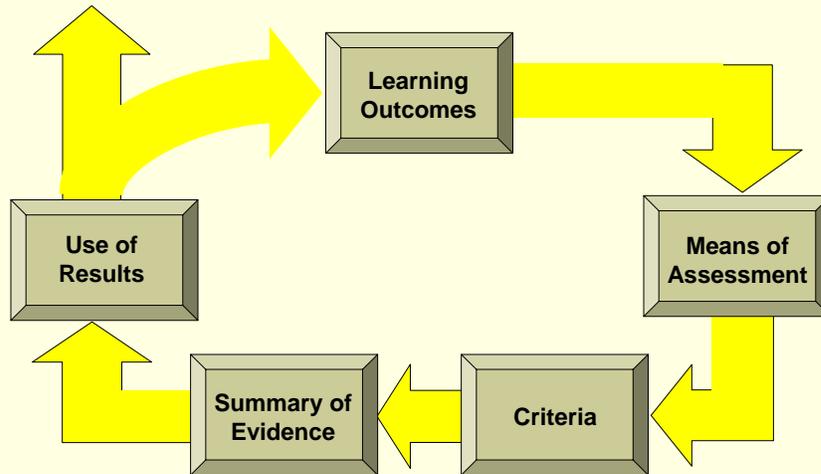


Evidence – Student Learning Outcomes:

- Data on student learning outcomes
- Samples of student work/performance
- Measurement and analysis of student attainment of student learning outcomes
- Evidence that student learning outcomes are being developed and disseminated
- Evidence that reflection is occurring and that the teaching/learning process is improving as a result



Accreditation



Accreditation



Format of the Self-Study:

- **Description**
 - What the institution/district has done since the last Accreditation self-report that responds to the components of the standard
- **Self-Evaluation**
 - Evidence that supports statements made in the description
- **Planning Agenda**
 - How the institution/district plans to continue to address standards and potential shortcomings that were identified in the self-study



Accreditation



Accreditation Actions:

- **Reaffirm Accreditation:**
 - Reaffirmed (no caveats)
 - With focused midterm report
 - With focused midterm report and visit
 - With request a progress report (1 or 2 year)
 - With progress report with visit
 - Defer decision
- **Sanctions:**
 - Issue warning
 - Impose probation
 - Order show cause
- **Terminate Accreditation**



Accreditation



DISCUSSION