



Looking Back: A Brief Overview of the History of ELAC's Accreditation

Greetings faculty!

Last communication I provided a brief overview of how Accreditation checks the health of an institution. This communication focuses more specifically about how the Accreditation process has impacted ELAC.

Benefits from Accreditation.

The standards promote best practices at ELAC including:

- Encouraging Innovation and excellence in teaching/learning,
- Protection of Academic Freedom,
- Sufficient facilities to promote the learning process,
- Rigorous curriculum,
- Data informed decision-making
- Shared governance decision-making including Administration, Faculty, Staff and Students.
- Much else see the full list of standards accjc.org.

What happened at the last ACCJC visit?

2009 Visit

The last time ELAC completed the process was 2009. At that time, the college received 12 commendations (good practices), six college recommendations and three district recommendations (areas needing improvement). Concerns from the 2009 visit included the need to:

- **Integrate planning** and linking decision-making and budgeting processes;
- Accelerate the completion of **Student Learning Outcomes** for courses and programs and using assessment results to improve instruction and student services;
- Ensure that the **program review process is transparent** and clearly communicated;
- Develop a formal, **written governance and decision-making policy**.

In 2009, ELAC received a **warning** by the ACCJC, the lowest level of sanction because it did not meet several areas of the "standards" as outlined by the ACCJC. In addition, ELAC had received prior recommendations in 2003 for similar deficiencies indicating a persistent problem of concern.

2010 ELAC Response

ELAC had less than one year (From July 2009– March 2010) to “fix” the problems identified by ACCJC. If you remember great effort campus-wide occurred that year to avoid progressive discipline by ACCJC such as:

- Writing of the *Shared Governance and Decision Making Handbook*,
- Renaming and restructuring of the Joint-Hires Committee into the *Hiring Prioritization Committee*,
- Implementation of a more thorough *Program Review* process that directly connected planning with budgeting.

While many of these changes should be viewed positively, it was a busy year fraught with a looming deadline. Instead of having six years to implement ACCJC standards, enormous efforts had to be condensed into a matter of months.

Next Meeting:

Steering Committee –
Nov. 10; Dec 8 3:10-4:30

Committee of the Whole –
Jan 27, 2015

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Student Learning Outcomes

One area that was not addressed by ELAC in 2010 was the area of SLOs. The ACCJC recognized that full implementation of the SLO process would take time and allowed every institution **TEN** years to reach proficiency in SLOs.

ELAC received ACCJC recommendations in both 2003 and 2009 to **accelerate the SLO process** but were allowed until 2012 to comply. **The 2009 Accreditation Evaluation Report** by the visiting team of 2009 stated,

“Program reviews and SLOs need to be widely adopted and, more importantly, they must be useful to the instructors in conducting courses and staff in delivering services to the college. Simple collecting the information ‘because you have to’ is a path to lost momentum.”

Next Steps: It is critical we pay attention to the standards and the previous recommendations. We as a campus have been monitoring SLO vitals. That’s why there has been much encouragement for all of us to work toward 100% completion of the cycle including engaging in dialogue and implementing appropriate changes.

Next Communication will be about recent changes in the 2014 Standards

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