

Accreditation Basics



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Looking Backwards/Looking Forward



Sankofa is an Akan term that literally means, "to go back and get it."

- One taking from the past what is good and bringing it into the present in order to make positive progress through the benevolent use of knowledge.



Sankofa



- The Akan believe that the past illuminates the present and that the search for knowledge is a life-long process.
- The pictograph illustrates the quest for knowledge, while the proverb suggests the rightness of such a quest as long as it is based on knowledge of the past.



What is Accreditation?



- The system of accreditation used in the United States is a voluntary, peer-based, nongovernmental system of educational quality assurance.
- The US Department of Education recognizes regional accrediting commissions.
 - Accrediting commissions are non-governmental associations that establish eligibility requirements, accreditation standards, and commission policies.
 - Accreditation is required for students to receive federal financial aid.
 - The ACCJC is the accrediting body for California Community Colleges

Purpose of Accreditation



- Through accreditation, member institutions become involved in a data-driven continuous self-improvement process that serves to: (benevolent use of data)
 - Provide the necessary assurances to the public that the education provided by institutions meets acceptable levels of quality, and
 - Encourage and support institutions to **make continuous improvements** to educational quality and institutional effectiveness.
- The goal of the ACCJC is to use accreditation for the purpose of building institutional capacity for educational quality and institutional effectiveness among its member institutions.

Benefits for ELAC



- Reflective look at accomplishments/struggles over the past six years.
- Opportunity to assess measures of student learning and evaluate their meaning.
- Re-evaluate college mission, and align practices to match the mission.

Mission Statement



East Los Angeles College **empowers students** to achieve their educational goals, to expand their individual potential, and to successfully pursue their aspirations **for a better future** for themselves, their community and the world.

Why Learn About Accreditation?



- **Some advance knowledge on accreditation and the roles and responsibilities of those individuals involved make the process more efficient and useful.**
- **Understanding the standards can move institutions from compliance to a process of true self-evaluation and quality improvement.**

What are Standards?



- ACCJC Standards describe the expectation of performance for high-quality education.
- They reflect good practices in higher education that all institutions should follow. They may not be inclusive of every good practice in higher education or the standards of other groups that purport to establish best practice or quality.

Standards



- **Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness is comprised of two parts: the mission itself and processes for improving institutional effectiveness.**
- **Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Services requires that the institution deliver high-quality instructional programs, student support services, and library and learning support services, wherever and however they are offered.**

Standards



- **Standard III: Recognizes the need for quality personnel, an appropriate physical environment, technology, and a responsible fiscal policy.**
- **Standard IV: Institutions have appropriate leadership to steer the institution in the direction of continuous improvement of educational quality and institutional effectiveness. The institution has effective and defined decision-making roles and processes.**

Accreditation is for the Birds!



ELAC & Accreditation



- During the accreditation process, the external evaluation team must review evidence, provided by the institution, that supports the institution's claim that it meets eligibility requirements, Accreditation Standards, and commission policies.
- This evidence, gathered as part of the Self Evaluation of Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness process, may be presented in a variety of formats.

Broad Involvement



- **The self-evaluation focuses on what the campus is already doing**
 - Policies, Campus Plans, Processes to Allocate Resources, etc.
 - These components should be obvious to everyone on campus
 - Involvement of faculty, staff, administration and students ensures that the self-evaluation accurately reflects the college's efforts to create a cycle of continuous quality improvement

Accreditation Cycle



- **The Accreditation Process follows a six-year cycle.**
- **ELAC was last evaluated in 2009 –**
Recommendations:
 - 1. Mission IA
 - 2. Institutional Effectiveness – Integrate planning with decision making and budgeting IB
 - 3. Instructional Programs – SLOs IIA
 - 4. Program Review – transparent and fully communicated IIA
 - 5. Student Support – regularly evaluate staffing, programs IIB
 - 6. Formal written policy delineating government roles IV

District Recommendations 2009



- **1. Financial – Retirement Benefits**
- **2. Board and Administrative – Delineate resources**
- **3. Board and Administrative – Role delineation between college and district.**

College Recommendations 2007, 2009, 2012



- **Distance Education (DE)**
- **Eligibility Requirements (ER)**
- **Institutional Effectiveness**
- **Evaluation of Processes**
- **Institutional Mission**
- **Instructional Programs/Academic and Student Support Services**
- **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**
- **Planning**
- **Resources**
 - **Human**
 - **Physical**
 - **Technology**
 - **Financial**
- **Leadership and Governance**

Typical Examples



- Complete *a full cycle* of planning: include evaluation, planning, resource allocation, implementation, re-evaluate, and ties fiscal planning to college's strategic plan.
- Develop a systematic evaluation of decision making and budget development process and use it toward self-evaluation and improving instructional programs, student support services, the library and other learning support services.
- Document assessment of all levels of outcomes including administrative services, student services, as well as the Library and Learning Support Services and use results for improvement of student and institutional effectiveness.
- Review of governance committee structure and functions and communicate to all college constituents the results of this review.

ACCJC Reports



- Each year, the institution must provide the Commission with a formal **Annual Report**, an Annual Fiscal Report, and an annual audited financial report.
- In year 3 of the cycle, the college's **Midterm Report** is due. In this report, the institution is expected to provide narrative information and analysis .
- Plans for **substantive change** proposals or pending proposals.

Accreditation under Fire



Marty Hittelman

- From 2003 to 2008 the six United States regional accrediting bodies issued a total of 126 sanctions to community colleges in the United States. 112 of these were issued by the ACCJC under Beno's direction. ACCJC has continued to be out of step with the other accrediting agencies. Most recently, from June 2011 to June 2012 the ACCJC issued forty-eight of the seventy-five sanctions (64%) issued nationwide. The community colleges in California represent about 19% of the community colleges accredited nationally. In short, 19% of the colleges under ACCJC generated 64% of the sanctions. Clearly, **the ACCJC has become a rogue agency.**

Reasons for Sanction –ACCJC response



- Six colleges did not have adequate procedures and did not appropriately implement program review of instructional programs and services.
- Twenty colleges failed to meet requirements regarding the use of assessment results in integrated planning.
- Twenty colleges were sanctioned for deficiencies in governing board roles and responsibilities; seven of these were colleges in multi-college districts where the key deficiencies were in district governing board operations.
- Fourteen colleges lacked appropriate and sustainable financial management.

ELAC Timeframe



Summer 2013

- Committee members/chairs of 4 standards
- Creation of web site
- Data Gathering
- Encourage campus leaders to complete ACCJC's Accreditation Basics

Fall 2013

- Opening Day Kick off
- "New Blood"
- Organizational Charts
- Eligibility Requirement
- Response to Previous Recommendation
- Writing/Gathering data for Standards

ELAC Timeline 2014



Spring 2014

- Mid March, first Draft of Standards Due
- May 2014, 2nd Draft of Standards Due

Summer: June/July 2014 Edit

- Insert Photos/Graphics/Charts
- First Complete Draft

Fall 2014

- Open Forums/Campus Input
- Governance Input
- Revisions/ final Draft
- Board of Trustees Approval

ELAC Timeframe 2015



Count Down to Accreditation Team Visit

- **Team Welcome Packets**
- **Team Brochure**
- **Preparing the campus community**

How do You fit in?

