



## Looking Back: A Brief Overview of the Accreditation Process

Greetings ELAC community!

As you have heard, ELAC will be conducting its accreditation self-evaluation beginning in fall. This is an important process of self-reflection that asks us to identify how well we are doing at maintaining the quality of education provided to our students. Our accreditation efforts will culminate in a “team visit”

in 2016 by a team of peers from other community colleges.

Accreditation conjures up great emotions, however think of it as a check-up. Personally, I hate to go to the doctor but I do it to check my health so that I can continue healthy activities and implement new practices to remain healthy. When you go to the doctor, vital data is reviewed such as blood pressure, temperature, etc. Doctors especially look into previous problems to assure they do not re-surface. Going to the doctor is voluntary, but a good practice.

This is the first communication to better inform everyone about accreditation’s purpose, its requirements or standards and sanctions.

### ***The purpose of accreditation.***

Accreditation is a check-up on the health of an institution. Our “doctor” is the ACCJC WASC (Accrediting commission for community and junior Colleges – Western Association of Schools and Colleges). ACCJC is voluntary, peer-based and non-government regulated, although it is recognized under the Higher Education Act and Federal Department of Education. Only students who attend accredited schools may receive financial aid.

Accreditation could be considered a mark of clean health for the institution. Achieving accreditation sends a message to the community that the institution meets standards of quality. Degrees and credits earned are considered legitimate- and thus accepted for transfer and employment purposes. Accreditation Sanctions may cause negative backlash from the community. Loss of accreditation would in essence close the school or mean the school would need to be run by another institution such as El Camino’s oversight of Compton Community College.

Join Us  
YOUR ideas are  
Important

Accreditation Meeting of  
the whole – Tuesday  
September 30 1:30-3:00

Dialog Day – Thursday  
October 30 12:10-1:40

G1-301 AB

### ***What is a standard and who makes them?***

There are four main standards:

1. Institutional Mission and Effectiveness – How does the institution define itself AND How does the institution maintain effectiveness?
2. Student Learning Programs and Services – What Instructional Programs and Student Support services does the institution offer and how are they monitored?
3. Resources – How does the institution plan and monitor human, physical, technological, and budget planning.
4. Leadership and Governance – What are the decision-making roles and processes and how is the Board of Trustees and Administrators organized.

The accreditation standards are the activities and requirements that must be met in order to be considered a quality educational institution. Standards are derived from federal regulation AND what is considered to be best educational practices. While the ACCJC develops the standards, they are vetted throughout the states served by the Commission. Any educational professional or member of the community is able to provide input on the standards through a structured process. The current standards were approved in June 2014 following a year of vetting.

### ***What is a sanction?***

A sanction is an indication that the college is deficient on one or more standards.

There are three forms of sanction: warning, probation and show cause.

While the sanctions do indicate the severity of the deficiency, it is important to know that they do not represent progressive discipline. The college has two years to correct a deficiency from the time that the Commission identifies it. This is required regardless of the sanction. If the college is given a sanction, it will need to complete additional follow-up reports and may require additional visits. A full reaffirmation without sanction will result in no additional reports for three years.

Next communication will be about ELAC's accreditation history.

If you have further questions, please contact us.

Dr. Barbara Dunsheath  
Accreditation Faculty Chair  
[dunsheba@elac.edu](mailto:dunsheba@elac.edu) x 5026

Carol Kozeracki  
Accreditation Liason Officer  
[Kozeraca@elac.edu](mailto:Kozeraca@elac.edu) x5374

