



**ACCREDITING
COMMISSION
for COMMUNITY and
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association
of Schools and Colleges*

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March 18, 2014

**To: Superintendents, Presidents, and Chancellors of ACCJC
Member Colleges**

From: Barbara A. Beno *Barbara A. Beno*

cc: Accreditation Liaison Officers

**Subject: Recent Commission Decisions: ACCJC Standards and
Processes**

As you are aware, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) is engaged in a review of its Accreditation Standards and Processes. That review has included many opportunities for input at Commission hearings, via email, and through discussions with small groupings of different constituencies of the member colleges. We have heard from more than 500 persons over the past two years. In January, the Commission approved new Accreditation Standards for first reading with the intention of accepting more input on the wording and content of those standards before a second reading and adoption in June 2014.

In addition, the ACCJC received many comments on its accreditation *practices*, and with that commentary, many very good ideas for changes to practice. The Commission will continue to consider a number of proposed changes to the accreditation process.

**I am pleased to inform you of several changes confirmed by the
Commission last week.**

1. The new Standards will be the basis for comprehensive institutional evaluations for reaffirmation of accreditation beginning spring 2016. All colleges going through the first semester of implementation will receive greater than usual support for the transition from the current standards, and the ACCJC will use the spring 2016 implementation as an opportunity to study implementation of the revised accreditation process and standards.
2. The new Standards will, for all other purposes, be effective upon adoption, and may be used by institutions wishing to develop a baccalaureate degree.
3. The ACCJC will adopt an accreditation cycle of 7 years, beginning with the institutions undergoing review in spring 2016. The ACCJC will adjust the comprehensive evaluation schedule of some institutions in the shift to the new cycle.

4. There will be several changes proposed to the Policy on Actions on Institutions, scheduled for a first reading in June 2014.

- The Commission has agreed in principle to adopt definitions for sanctions shared among the regional accreditors and proposed by the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC) after a study of practices across all regions.
- In addition, the Commission has agreed to work on a new definition of “reaffirmation of accreditation” that will distinguish the high performing institutions that meet and exceed standards.
- The Commission is considering a method to allow those institutions that have a small number of issues to come into compliance within one year while being reaffirmed.

There will be more changes to come, but I know you have been eager to hear about those noted above.

Please continue to participate in the ACCJC’s review process, and plan to offer comments via email and at public hearings scheduled on April 28 at Los Angeles Mission College and April 30, 2014 at MTI College. More information is available on the ACCJC website.

Thank you.