

Accreditation Workshop: Presented to the University of Hawaii Boards of Regents

*By Barbara Beno
Executive Director, ACCJC*

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Agenda: What We'll Cover

- About the ACCJC and WASC
- About Accreditation in American Higher Education
- The Three-Part Accreditation Process
- The ACCJC Standards
 - How they were developed and changed over time
- The important roles in quality assurance for Governing Boards : the annotated E.R.'s and Standards
- Some sample team findings on Boards : an exercise
- Any item of concern to the Board

About the ACCJC and WASC

The ACCJC and WASC

- WASC is a corporate entity with three divisions.
- One of three accrediting commissions that comprise WASC. Others are:
 - The Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities (ACSCU), and
 - The Accrediting Commission for Schools (ACS).
- ACCJC/WASC operates in the *Western Region*: California, Hawaii, Palau, Guam, Saipan, Micronesia, The Marshall Islands, and American Samoa.

Schools Accredited by the ACCJC

- 7 U.H. Community Colleges
 - Kauai
 - Windward
 - Hawaii
 - Leeward
 - Maui
 - Kapiolani
 - Honolulu
- Heald College, Honolulu
- Hawaii Transpacific College
- Hawaii-Tokai International College
- Six Public Colleges in the Pacific :
 - Palau C.C.
 - Northern Marianas College
 - American Samoa C.C.
 - College of the Marshall Islands
 - Guam C.C.
 - College of Micronesia

The ACCJC

- A *regional* accrediting commission that accredits *institutions* in the Western Region that offer the associate degree.
- ACCJC membership includes institutions that are public and private, non-profit and for-profit, secular and faith based or affiliated, with broad missions and very specific missions.
- ACCJC is recognized by the U.S. Dept. of Education and by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

The ACCJC Commissioners

- Nineteen Commissioners selected for three year terms, renewable for one year. *They make the decisions.*
- Commissioners selected by a Commissioner Selection Committee after application.
- Commissioner slots:
 - 5 for faculty
 - 5 for public members
 - 3 administrators, and
 - 1 each from California College System, Hawaii College System, Pacific Colleges Association, Private Institutions and two WASC sister commissions.

Accreditation and American Higher Education

Accreditation in American Higher Education

- Its purpose is to provide quality assurance to the public and to promote institutional improvement as well as improvement in higher education practice.
- A compliance function is to prevent abuse of federal aid monies.
- It is a *voluntary*, peer based evaluation process... well, voluntary to a degree! (see previous bullet)

Accreditation and American Higher Education

- Accreditation is based in the critical values of American higher education, including:
 - Service to students
 - Academic freedom
 - Importance of Diversity
 - Learning and improvement
 - Professionalism and openness
 - Pursuit of new knowledge

US DOE-Recognized Accrediting Agencies

- Accreditation has been in place for over 100 years; New England was the first region to develop an accrediting agency.
- There are 7 “regional” accrediting agencies, and 11 “national” accrediting agencies that together accredit some 6,300 *institutions*.
- There are more than 60 programmatic accreditors who accredit some 17,500 *programs*.

The Three-Part Accreditation Evaluation

The Three-Part Accreditation Evaluation

- It is accomplished through a process of institutional self study, peer review, and a Commission review, all set against standards of good practice defined by the ACCJC.
 - Institutions are expected to evaluate themselves using the standards.
 - A team of professional peers, selected by the Commission, visits and evaluates the institution.
 - The Commission evaluates the institution and makes the decision.

The ACCJC Standards of Accreditation

The ACCJC Standards

- The Standards of the Commission, as well as its accreditation policies and procedures, are developed by the Commission and representatives of member institutions. They are also guided by federal regulations.
- These Standards are reviewed periodically by the membership and the commission, and changed.
- The Standards are reviewed by the US Department of Education and by CHEA.

The ACCJC Standards

Accreditation Standards:

- must be written to apply broadly to diverse institutions,
- reflect best practice in higher education, not common practice, and
- must be necessary conditions for high quality education.

More on the ACCJC Standards

Standards are NOT:

- Meant to represent the “standards” of other groups that purport to establish best practice or quality.
- Necessarily inclusive of *every* good practice in higher education.
- Representative of State/system/government regulations or requirements or used to enforce those regulations or requirements.

The ACCJC Standards Evolved

- Initial accreditation (early 1960's) required basic structures and processes to be in place and minimal resources to be available.
- Beginning in the 1990's, accreditation added a requirement that colleges provide *student achievement data* (course completion, persistence semester to semester, degree and certificate completion, graduation rates, transfer, employment) and evidence of program review and development/ implementation of plans to improve education

The ACCJC Standards Evolved

- To the previous standards, the 2002 Standards add the focus on what students have learned as a result of attending college---*student learning outcomes. (SLO's)*

The important roles in quality assurance for Governing Boards

A review of the standards

The ER's, Standards and Policies

- Eligibility Requirements are the essential criteria that any institution wishing to begin an accreditation process must meet;
- Standards are the additional criteria an institution that achieves accreditation must meet.
- Accredited institutions must demonstrate they meet both, as well as adhere to all Commission policies in the *Accreditation Reference Handbook*.

ER's Definition of Board Role

- Responsible for the quality, integrity and financial stability of the institution, and for insuring the institution's mission is being carried out.
- The board is an independent, policy-making body capable of reflecting constituent and public interest in board activities and decisions.
- The board adheres to a conflict of interest policy that assures duty to the institution.

Standards and the Roles of the Board

- Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness: Specific References to the Board
 - Board reviews and approves the institution's mission statement.
 - Board (and others) make the mission central to planning and decision-making.

Standards and the Roles of the Board

- Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Services.
 - Board is responsible for institutional quality, so it must assure the institution meets these standards.
 - At the heart of educational quality, this standard requires institutions to provide quality education, to collect and assess data on the quality of education and on student learning, and to use this assessment to improve. (all of Std. II)
 - Board Policies assure academic integrity. (II.A.7.)

Standards and the Roles of the Board

- Standard III: Resources
 - Standard describes requirements for the adequacy of human, technical, financial and physical resources, and processes for establishing and distributing them.
 - Standards require decisions on the use of resources to be linked to efforts to assess institutional effectiveness and be used to support institutional improvements. (all of Std. III)

Standards and the Roles of the Board

- Standard III, Resources
 - The institution develops personnel policies and adheres to them. (Std. III, A, 3).
 - Boards are ultimately responsible for oversight to insure fiscal stability and integrity (Standard III, D, all).

Standards and the Roles of the Board

- Standard IV: Leadership and Governance
 - The Board establishes a policy for institutional governance (Std. IV.A.1 - 3).
 - Std. IV. B describes the Board's role in establishing policy in detail.
 - Item J: (p.25) The governing board selects and evaluates the CEO in a multi-college system. The Board delegates full responsibility and authority to the CEO to implement and administer board policies without board interference.
 - In multi-college systems, the board defines a policy for selecting and evaluating campus presidents.

Standards and the Roles of the Board

- Standard IV: Leadership and Governance
 - Standard IV, B, 2 defines the responsibilities of the campus chancellors. This should guide and be included in some form into job descriptions and evaluations for campus chancellors.

The Board's Role in Helping Colleges Meet the New Standards

What Boards Can Do to Support the New Emphasis on Student Learning

- Board-Approved mission and goals
- Policies on planning, resource allocation and budgeting strategies – inclusive of analysis of impact on student learning.
- Policies on faculty and staff evaluations – inclusive of information on SLO's.
- Practice of setting expectations and reviewing institutional progress through reports to the board.
- Support of the faculty and academic staff work necessary to implement SLO's, to evaluate learning and to improve institutional and pedagogical practice.

Any Other Concerns of the Board

The End Thank You!

ACCJC
10 Commercial Blvd. Suite 204
Novato, CA 94949
Barbara Beno's email : accjbb@pacbell.net
ACCJC Web site: www.accjc.org
415-506-0234