



PREPARING FOR INSTITUTIONAL SELF EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

SPRING 2016

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES,
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES (ACCJC)

www.ACCJC.org

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GROUND RULES

- This is a learning environment: all questions welcome.
- ACCJC staff are not evaluators. That is the role of evaluation teams and of the Commission.



WHO'S HERE?

- How many of you have served on Self Study teams at your institution in the past? How many are serving for the first time?
- How many of you have served on an external evaluation team?
- How many of you have completed the Accreditation Basics Course?
- How many attended the New Evaluator Training?



EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Identify the 2 purposes of Accreditation
- Name the 3 primary resources from ACCJC for preparing the Institutional Self Evaluation Report and where to find them
- Explain the purpose of The Checklist
- Name examples of evidence a college would present for:
 - √ Program Review
 - √ Student Achievement
 - √ SLOs
- Describe the Quality Focus Essay:
 - √ what it is
 - √ its purpose
 - √ its component parts
 - √ how it is used in the Midterm Report



PURPOSES OF ACCREDITATION

- Quality Assurance.
- Continuous Improvement.



The Self Evaluation Process and The Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER)



PURPOSES OF THE SELF EVALUATION PROCESS

- Honest analysis of the institution's strengths and weaknesses
- Continuous self evaluation, and quality improvement activities
- To be reflective, analytical, and forward-looking

Continued



PURPOSES OF THE SELF EVALUATION PROCESS *CONTINUED*

- Information and evidence of meeting accreditation requirements for the college, the team, and the Commission
- Areas at the institution needing improvement (actionable improvement plans and the QFE)
- The institution's ability to assure and improve its own quality and effectiveness



PURPOSES OF THE INSTITUTIONAL SELF EVALUATION REPORT (ISER)

- Describe and provide evidence that the institution meets its mission.
- Present evidence of student achievement and learning [results, analysis of the results, use of results for improvement at the course, program, and institutional levels].
- Demonstrate that ERs, Standards, Commission policies and federal regulations are met



ORGANIZING THE COLLEGE FOR INSTITUTIONAL SELF EVALUATION



INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES FOR SELF EVALUATION

WHAT DO YOU HAVE AT YOUR INSTITUTION?

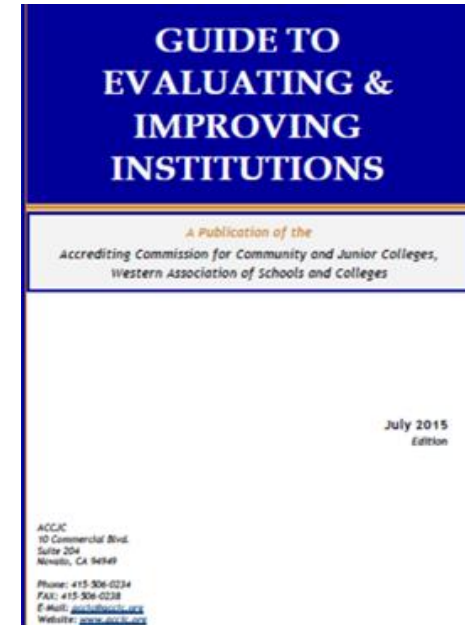
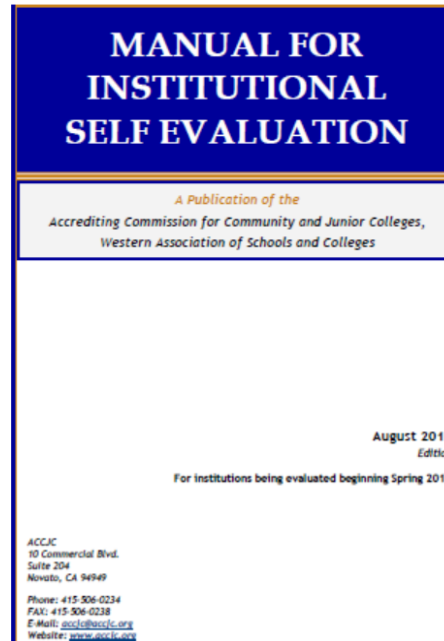
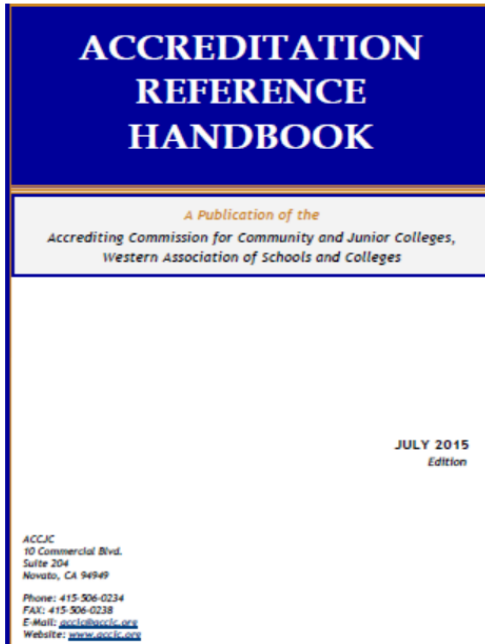


ACCJC RESOURCES FOR SELF EVALUATION

(Available on ACCJC.org website)



3 PRIMARY ACCJC PUBLICATIONS TO SUPPORT THE SELF EVALUATION PROCESS





Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges Western Association of Schools and Colleges

[ALO/CIO Discussion Board](#)

[Home](#)

[Substantive Change](#)

[Eligibility Requirements & Standards](#)

[Publications & Policies](#)

[Complaint Process](#)



[ACCJC Directory of Accredited Institutions](#)

[Bylaws of the ACCJC and of WASC](#)

[College Reports to ACCJC](#)

[Contacting the ACCJC](#)

[Events](#)

[For the Public](#)

[Future Comprehensive External Evaluation Visits](#)

[Newsletter](#)

[Other Resources](#)

Publications & Policies

This page provides access to each of the Commission published manuals. The Accreditation Reference Handbook provides readers with the Eligibility Requirements, the Accreditation Standards, and all policies of the ACCJC. Quick access to individual policies is provided by using the Table of Contents in the Accreditation Reference Handbook. For current and past issues of the Accreditation newsletter, *ACCJC NEWS*, please see the Newsletter menu button.

Accreditation Reference Handbook

This *Handbook* contains the Eligibility Requirements for initial accreditation and reaffirmation of accreditation, the ACCJC Accreditation Standards, and all Commission policies.

[Accreditation Reference Handbook](#)



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE SELF EVALUATION PROCESS

- Guidelines for Review of Financial Resources
(handout)
- C-RAC Student Learning: Principles for Good Practices
(handout)
- C-RAC Regional Accreditation and Student Learning: A Guide for Institutions and Evaluators
(handout)
- Accreditation Basics – Online course *(under revision)*



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES CONTINUED

NEW: CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REGULATIONS AND COMMISSION POLICIES

- Covers evaluation of items related to federal regulations and Commission policies (*Appendix K in Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation*)

[Discussed later in training.]



OTHER ACCJC DOCUMENTS TO SUPPORT THE SELF EVALUATION PROCESS

- Selected Evaluation Team Responsibilities for Compliance with U.S. Department of Education Regulations (*Appendix H in Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation*)
- Protocol for Creating and Submitting Evidence (*Appendix J*)



THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS



FACT OR MYTH?

“We should be safe if we copy those short paragraphs we used before about our compliance with the Eligibility Requirements.”



FACT OR MYTH?

“Have you heard? We don’t even need to write a section on each of the Eligibility Requirements!”



ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS (ERs) EVALUATION UNDER 2014 STANDARDS

- The first 5 criteria must be separately addressed in the ISER. The others are woven into the institution's narrative and evidence on the Standards.
 - ✓ ER 1: Authority
 - ✓ ER 2: Operational Status
 - ✓ ER 3: Degrees
 - ✓ ER 4: Chief Executive Officer
 - ✓ ER 5: Financial Accountability

See Accreditation Reference Handbook



ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS (ERs) EVALUATION UNDER 2014 STANDARDS

CONTINUED

For Example:

- Standard I.A.1 and I.A.6 cross reference ER 6
- Standard I.B.2 and I.B.3 cross reference ER 11
- Standard I.B.9 cross references ER 19



ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS (ERs) EVALUATION UNDER NEW STANDARDS

CONTINUED

- Compliance with ERs must be continuous and is verified periodically, usually during the external evaluation process.



REMEMBER:

- Narrative responses should be supported by the associated evidence.

(See Appendix F Self Evaluation Manual)



THE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS



ACCREDITATION STANDARDS:

- State necessary conditions for academic quality, institutional effectiveness, and integrity
- Reflect excellent practices in higher education
- Apply equally to diverse institutions with varied missions
- Articulate thresholds of performance which must be met or exceeded at all times



ACCREDITATION STANDARDS DO NOT:

- Include *every* excellent practice in higher education
- Represent or enforce state or system regulations or requirements
- Cover all requirements in federal law and regulations that may pertain to a member institution (financial aid, grants, etc.)
- Represent the “standards” of other groups that promulgate best practices or expectations (such as standards set by professional organizations or by programmatic accreditors).



ACTIVITY 1

Discovering the Standards



STANDARD I: MISSION, ACADEMIC QUALITY AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, AND INTEGRITY

- A. Mission
- B. Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness
- C. Institutional Integrity



STANDARD II: STUDENT LEARNING PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

- A. Instructional Programs
- B. Library and Learning Support Services
- C. Student Support Services



STANDARD III: RESOURCES

- A. Human Resources
- B. Physical Resources
- C. Technology Resources
- D. Financial Resources
 - *Planning*
 - *Fiscal Responsibility and Stability*
 - *Liabilities*
 - *Contractual Agreements*



FACT OR MYTH?

This portion of the standards is more about operations than it is about student learning and achievement.

[Don't we only need the HR, Tech, Facilities, and Finance "gurus" on these sections?]



STANDARD IV: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

- A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes
- B. Chief Executive Officer
- C. Governing Board
- D. Multi-College Districts or Systems



THE REQUIREMENTS FOR EVIDENCE IN THE ISER

REFER TO THE *GUIDE FOR EVALUATING AND
IMPROVING INSTITUTIONS*



EVIDENCE FOR EVALUATION

Evidence can be selected from the data an institution uses to provide verification of a particular action or existing condition

- Data: information, in qualitative or quantitative form, organized for analysis or used as the basis for a decision
- Data and data analysis are both referenced in the report narrative and included as source material in evidence

Continued



EVIDENCE FOR EVALUATION *(CONTINUED)*

- **Documentation:** policies, operational documents, minutes, reports, research and analysis, screen captures from websites, and other sources of information
- **Electronic Presentation:** All evidence available to the ACCJC and evaluation teams in electronic format (on a USB Memory Stick)



DATA IN THE ISER

- Accurate, up-to-date, reliable, and tested for validity and significance
- Qualitative and/or quantitative presented in data tables, charts and graphs or in documentary form **with analysis**
- Longitudinal, where appropriate
- Disaggregated by relevant sub-populations defined by the institution



DATA IN THE ISER SHOULD INCLUDE DATA ON

- Service Area
- Incoming Students
- Characteristics of Enrolled Students



DATA ABOUT ENROLLED STUDENTS MUST INCLUDE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

- Course completion rates
- Degree/Certificates awarded (numbers or rates)
- Transfer to four-year institutions (numbers or rates)
- For CTE program completers, licensure/certification exam pass rates
- For CTE and other terminating credential completers, job placement data



EXAMPLES OF PROGRAM REVIEW EVIDENCE

- Policies on curriculum review and completed program reviews
- Evaluation and evidence of student learning outcomes
- Review elements, cycles/timelines, connection and correlation of program review with institutional planning
- Usage of program review data at all levels and across multiple cycles
- Actions taken (improvements) on the basis of program review

Guide to Evaluating and Improving Institutions



EXAMPLES OF STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES EVIDENCE

- Program reviews
- Student satisfaction/follow-up surveys
- Records of student use of support services
- Student loan default rates
- Student support services planning documents

Guide to Evaluating and Improving Institutions



STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES EVIDENCE *CONTINUED*

- Descriptions of student services
- Student policies
- Availability of student support services off-campus and online



THE TEAM EVALUATES IF THE COLLEGE:

- Routinely and systematically gathers data
- Analyzes data and reflects upon the data and the analysis
- Publishes the data and analyses and shares them widely with constituent groups (in research reports, fact books)
- Uses them to plan and implement program improvements
- Uses them to plan and implement institutional improvements
- Evaluates the effectiveness of its improvements



DISCUSSION QUESTION 1:

What evidence would an institution provide for

Student Learning Outcomes?



EVIDENCE ON *STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES*:

- Course outlines/syllabi with SLOs, catalog descriptions of program level outcomes, examples of assessment methods used (rubrics, portfolios, others), mapping, documented cycle. Institutional, general education, and specialization area outcomes in program outcomes/assessment
- Summary assessment data on SLO attainment
- Information about the level of participation in SLO assessment in all programs of the institution
- Information about how SLOs and results assessment are made known to students and the public
- Evidence of how SLO assessment results are communicated across the college and used for planning, resource allocation, and improvement at the course/program levels as well as at the institutional level

What else would you include?



ACTIVITY 2

Evidence



SUGGESTIONS FROM TEAMS AND COMMISSIONERS ABOUT EVIDENCE

- Commissioners and teams look at evidence; therefore, it should all be available on memory stick
- Password protected information is not helpful if given to the team at the last minute
- Evidence should be carefully selected and relevant
- Evidence should describe the institution up to the point of the team visit

Continued



SUGGESTIONS FROM TEAMS AND COMMISSIONERS ABOUT EVIDENCE

- Report narrative and evidence on a memory stick with hyperlinks
- Relevant, specific portions within large documents should be highlighted
- Evidence that arrives to the Commission after the team's visit cannot be verified by on-sight observation



DISCUSSION QUESTION 2 :

Identifying Gaps in Meeting Standards or in Providing Evidence

1. What should be done if the self evaluation process reveals an area where the college isn't meeting a particular accreditation requirement?
2. What should be done if there is no evidence of the college practice in meeting a particular Standard?



INSTITUTION-SET STANDARDS

THE INSTITUTION MUST DEMONSTRATE THAT IT:

- Establishes standards for its own performance in student achievement (Institution-set standards) for **course completion, job placement, & licensure exam pass rates**
- Analyzes how well it is meeting its own standards

Standard I.B.3 and ER 11

Section 3.3 in *Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation*





INSTITUTION-SET STANDARDS CONTINUED

THE INSTITUTION MUST DEMONSTRATE THAT IT:

- Makes results available to all constituent groups
- Plans to improve in areas where its own performance is less than adequate

Standard I.B.3 and ER 11

Section 3.3 in *Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation*





INSTITUTION-SET STANDARDS *CONTINUED*

EXTERNAL EVALUATION TEAMS WILL:

- Identify the institution-set standards for student achievement
- Evaluate the appropriateness of these standards
- Consider these standards in relation to college mission
- Review and describe the data and analyze the college's performance
- Describe the institution's overall performance
- Determine whether the college is meeting its standards



ACTIVITY 3

Institution-set Standards



COMMISSION POLICIES AND U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (USDE) REGULATIONS

The Checklist



USDE REGULATIONS/COMMISSION POLICIES

Evaluation Teams have Responsibility for Checking
Institutional Compliance with USDE Regulations &
Commission Policies

The Commission policies should be addressed in a separate section of the ISER following the ERs but before Standard I

- Notification of evaluation visit and third party comment in Policy on Rights and Responsibilities of the Commission and Member Institutions
- Institution-set standards and performance with respect to student achievement in Standards I.A.2, I.B.3 and ER 11



USDE REGULATIONS/COMMISSION POLICIES

CONTINUED

- **Credits, program length, and tuition** (clock to credit hour conversion – see *Appendix I Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation*) and *Policy on Institutional Degrees and Credits*.
- **Transfer Policies** in *Policy on Transfer of Credit*
- **Distance Education and Correspondence Education** in *Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education*.
- **Student Complaints** in *Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions*



USDE REGULATIONS/COMMISSION POLICIES

CONTINUED

- **Institutional Disclosure , Advertising, and Recruitment Materials** in *Policy on Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment, and Representation of Accredited Status*
- **Title IV Compliance** in *Policy on Contractual Relationships with Non-Regionally Accredited Organizations* and *Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV*



FACT OR MYTH?

The list of Commission policies we just reviewed covers all the policies a college needs to know about and follow.



FORMAT OF THE ISER AND THE SITE VISIT



FORMAT FOR THE REPORT

- Cover Sheet [*Appendix D*]*
- Certification of the Report [*Appendix B*]*
- Table of Contents
- Introduction (*history*, demographic information, location of off-site campuses, major developments since the last comprehensive review)
- Presentation of student achievement data and institution-set standards
- Organization of the self evaluation process

**See Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation*

Continued



FORMAT FOR THE REPORT

- Institutional Organization (organizational chart, functional map, list of off-campus sites, DE/CE)
- Eligibility Requirements (1-5)
- Commission policies and Federal regulations
- Accreditation Standards:
 - Evidence of Meeting the Standard
 - Analysis and Evaluation (Whether or not, and to what degree does evidence demonstrate that the institution meets each Standard? How has the institution reached this conclusion?)
 - Actionable Improvement Plans (see note next slide)

Continued



FORMAT FOR THE REPORT

INSTITUTIONAL SELF EVALUATION USING THE ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

- The institution should describe changes it made during the process of self evaluation to meet Standards/ERs/Policies/Regulations, improve educational quality, or increase institutional effectiveness
- Actionable Improvement Plans: Plans for future action made to meet requirements or to improve
- Quality Focus Essay (see next slides)



QUALITY FOCUS ESSAY

- In the Quality Focus Essay (QFE), the college will discuss, in essay format, two or three areas it has identified for further study to **improve student learning and achievement**
- The QFE topics (action projects) are selected during the college's self evaluation process.

*See Self Evaluation Manual and
Guide to Evaluating and Improving Institutions*

Continued



QUALITY FOCUS ESSAY (QFE)

- Is related to the Accreditation Standards
- Is realistic, coming out of data and reflected in the self evaluation process and ISER
- Has a 5,000 word limit
- Sets multi-year, long-term direction(s) for the college
- Demonstrates institutional commitment to **increasing student learning and achievement**

Continued



COMPONENTS OF THE QFE

- Identification of action projects
- Desired Goals/Measurable Outcomes
- Action Steps for implementation
- Timeline
- Responsible parties
- Resources needed
- Assessment plan to evaluate outcomes



QUALITY FOCUS ESSAY

The Midterm Report will be an update on the quality improvement efforts (action projects), and an analysis of trend data (AR/AFR, etc.) related to institutional performance.

See *ACCJC News* article:

“Accreditation Asks for a Focus beyond Compliance to Quality Improvement”



ACTIVITY 4

The Quality Focus Essay



TOP 4 INDICATORS THE SELF EVALUATION HAS VEERED OFF TRACK

4. The writers have decided to leave it to the visiting team to ask questions if there are any gaps in the narrative or the evidence provided.
3. There are disputes over the facts that remain unresolved.
2. The evidence is a deluge of material; not selected for its value in demonstrating how the college itself assesses/conducts its practice in a particular area.
1. The self evaluation process is not integrated with institutional practices as a part of ongoing evaluation.



SUBMISSION OF THE ISER

- To the ACCJC: One electronic copy (with evidence) in Microsoft Word plus one printed copy; electronic copies and 1 printed copy of the catalog and schedule of classes (if available in print format) **60 days** prior to visit
- To each Evaluation Team Member: One electronic copy (with evidence in on memory stick), including catalog and class schedule. Special accommodation for disabilities may call for additional print copies.



THE SITE VISIT

- Pre-visit by team chair
- Evidence for the team
- Team room and other facilities
- Open meetings
- Availability of key personnel
- Classroom and off-site visits
- Access to distance education
- Exit report



Read the ERs,
Accreditation Standards,
and Commission policies

Be familiar with the
ACCJC website
(www.accjc.org)

Read the previous
evaluation team
and college reports

Organize the
college community for
self evaluation and
reflection

Use the ACCJC's
Manuals, Guides, and
other publications

Collect and
analyze evidence

Identify action
projects for QFE



OPEN DISCUSSION

What questions do you have about the ERs or Standards, the self evaluation process, the ISER, Commission Policies, The Checklist, Quality Focus Essay, federal regulations, external evaluation visit, or what happens after the visit ?



THANK YOU



ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

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