

IMPROVING ACCJC STRUCTURE, FUNCTION, AND RELATIONS

**A REPORT PREPARED FOR THE
CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OFFICERS OF THE CALIFORNIA
COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

September 15, 2017

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1. INTRODUCTION

On April 21, 2016, Workgroup I held its first meeting to fulfill its charge as established by the Chief Executive Officers of California Community Colleges: work with ACCJC commissioners to immediately undertake significant improvements in the structure and functioning of the Commission to address long-standing concerns of its members, giving special attention to the concerns noted by the U.S. Department of Education requiring compliance by October 2016.

The Workgroup's charge was clearly articulated — to institute changes for improvement.

The responsibilities of the Workgroup follow.

1. Develop a plan, with timeline and measurable outcomes, to be submitted to the ACCJC Commission for action at its June 2016 meeting;
2. Lead and monitor ongoing implementation of changes; and
3. Provide regular updates of the group's activities and progress to ACCJC members and the CEOCCC Board, as well as formal quarterly progress reports.

Several whole group and sub-group meetings were held in 2016 and 2017 by phone and in person as the group developed and refined its recommendations. The Workgroup met six times with ACCJC's Policy and the Evaluation and Planning Committees and/or with Commission representatives to clarify the recommendations and to monitor ACCJC's implementation of these recommendations. In addition, members of the Workgroup made presentations at statewide meetings (ACCCA, Academic Senate, CEO Annual Symposium) on its work on the ACCJC reform efforts and developed strong working relationships with the members of the Commission, CEO, and staff.

The group organized its work around five areas of focus: (1) Training and Selection, (2) Communication, (3) Evaluation, (4) Process and Structure of Visits, and (5) Commission Operations. The purpose of this report is to share the progress of the Workgroup in fulfilling the responsibilities established for completion within the first year of formation.

The timeline lists activities undertaken by the CEO Board and the State Chancellor's Office in their joint and respective efforts in bringing change to the Commission. The specific status for each recommendation is addressed within each of the five areas of focus.

The Commission has been cooperatively engaged in the entire process. It has implemented many of the recommendations with quite a few in progress. The Commission has asked that the Workgroup continue to monitor the implementation of the recommendations and to serve as an advisory group to the Commission. Much has been achieved in a short period of time. Individually, the members of this Workgroup have undertaken their responsibilities in an impressive and collegial manner and, collectively, have contributed greatly to the success of the project.

2. Area of Focus I – Visiting Team Chair Training, Team Member Selection, Composition, and Training

2.1 Visiting Team Chair Training

Twelve recommendations were made in the area of visiting team training and selection. The Commission has addressed three of these recommendations. Eight are In Progress, none are outstanding, and one was declined. Overall, the Commission has implemented many of the recommendations in one form or another. Clearly, this is a culture change requiring several years to implement and gain momentum.

The first set of the recommendations deals with timely and effective team chair assignments. The major consideration is ensuring the Commission uses technology for calendaring and tracking chairs and evaluators. Another major consideration is ensuring that two CEOs are on each team and the visits are used as training for future chairs. These two areas are In Progress with a positive response from the Commission.

The next group of recommendations deals with educational programming and online educational tools. Again, the Commission is adopting the recommendations and has formed power teams, one of which is focused on educational programming. There has been progress made in the areas of content, tone, and timing of trainings.

Recommendations related to topics and strategies for chair training are addressed or in the process of implementation. Chair training is under redesign with the assistance of experienced chairs and will be conducted in August by a Commission staff member and an experienced chair. The ACCJC distributed a survey to experienced chairs in early May 2017. Results will be used to improve the training sessions. The recommendation related to shadowing an experienced chair is addressed and is an ongoing practice.

Of the 12 recommendations including sub-recommendations, one was declined. It related to sending the final report and action letter to the teams. The group agreed the intent of this recommendation could be achieved by the team chairs sending a copy of the final report to the teams after the “ACCJC Report of Institutional Actions” is published. ACCJC staff and the Workgroup members agreed this should be included in the Chair Training.

2.1.1 Recommendation 1:

Staff visiting teams start preparations at least eight weeks prior to the visit.

In Progress –

- A. *Development has begun of a two-year master calendar that incorporates training dates, site visit dates, etc.*
- B. *A new project workflow has been developed and implemented for team staffing. A timeline for team staffing is being followed. Teams for fall 2017 are fully staffed as of May 2017, and team chair staffing has already started for spring 2018 visits. Additionally, ACCJC staff now works with team chairs to help connect to potential team members.*
- C. *New database platform must be implemented so that information stays current on potential evaluators, as well as the ability to run queries. ACCJC has received bids from vendors and collaborated with Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Sr., who has developed such a platform. ACCJC has allocated resources to modify its current database to address the concern, as a new platform will take time to adopt and implement. The modifications will be completed by the*

end of summer 2017. These modifications will allow queries to be run and filters to be used in order to staff teams.

2.1.2 Recommendation 2:

Whenever feasible, assign two CEOs to each team, one to serve as chair and another to shadow and serve as back up in case of emergency. Make mentoring the new CEO a team chair responsibility.

Addressed – *This has now occurred for two evaluation team cycles. ACCJC has incorporated this practice into its structure.*

2.1.3 Recommendation 3:

Develop toolkits and online training modules, including a crosswalk regarding United States Department of Education (USDE) financial responsibilities and samples of well-written sections for reference.

In Progress – *ACCJC has begun working with an advisory committee comprised of experienced CEO chairs, Accreditation Liaison Officers (ALOs), and evaluation team members to redesign educational programming to:*

- A. Implement online platform to support learning resources and modules.*
- B. Improve peer review process.*
- C. Showcase best practices for all report sections.*

2.1.4 Recommendation 4:

Require visiting team members to complete online course modules on the accreditation basics similar to those developed by The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACSCOC). Topics should include changes to standards; eligibility requirements; Commission policies; USDE checklist; institutional effectiveness; instruction and instructional support services; human, technology, physical, and financial resources; and leadership and governance, etc.

In Progress – *This work is aligned with the redesign of educational programming.*

2.1.5 Recommendation 5

Distribute training documents to chairs three to four weeks prior to training so chairs can review the documents and prepare questions for the training session.

In Progress – *This will be implemented with the next chair training - scheduled for August 2017.*

Training documents were distributed to chairs prior to chair training.

2.1.6 Recommendation 6:

Give chairs an assignment, requiring no more than 30 to 60 minutes to complete, due ahead of chair training. This could be as simple as drafting an assignment of duties plan for team members based on their bios or responding in writing on how the chair would handle a difficult scenario during the team visit. Discussion of the assignment will become a training exercise.

***In Progress** – A survey for team chairs is being developed to further investigate this recommendation, along with content revisions to team chair training. Survey was distributed in May 2017. The Educational Programming Steering Committee will review results and incorporate information gleaned from those results into its improvement plan.*

Chair training content focused on discussion and best practices on handling different difficult scenarios that could arise during a site visit.

2.1.7 Recommendation 7:

Require new visiting team chairs to attend a two-day training with experienced visiting team chairs joining on the second day for more focused and interactive training. This training should be co-taught by an experienced team chair and an ACCJC Commissioner or staff member.

***In Progress** – Current discussion of the educational programming advisory group is to have new chairs attend a one-day training prior to joining experienced chairs at the team chair training.*

Chair training is still one-day, but an experienced chair co-facilitated the training with staff. Experienced chairs were encouraged to mentor new chairs during the training.

2.1.8 Recommendation 8:

Include the following topics/strategies in the training:

- *Philosophy of accreditation with an emphasis on providing assistance to colleges in need of improvement relative to that area;*

***In Progress** – This philosophy has been included in all trainings, including presentation at the recent ACCJC conference. Extending beyond presentations, it is expected that all ACCJC staff demonstrate this philosophy in communications and actions with all member institutions. New job descriptions for all ACCJC staff now have this philosophy articulated as a required responsibility.*

- Active engagement that involves the visiting team chairs in the complete sequence of the visit using examples of letters and forms (hard copy and electronic format) that visiting team chairs must complete;

***In Progress** – The team chair manual is being reviewed for quality of content, ease of use, etc. ACCJC staff is working with educational programming advisory committee to develop best practice examples and resources for team chairs. Experienced chairs are contributing resources that will be available to all chairs. The ACCJC website will have a resource area specifically designated for chairs.*

- Well written external evaluation reports to include samples of excellent external evaluation reports, and Quality Focus Essays, including organization and components required;

***In Progress** – ACCJC is starting to collect examples from the field for distribution. This was done at the ACCJC conference and the practice will improve with further development of the new website.*

- Case studies demonstrating how to:
 - (a) Handle team personnel issues, such as a non-responsive team member;

***In Progress** – New team chair outline includes discussions regarding team personnel issues. Implemented in August chair training.*

- (b) Handle on-campus conflicts that occur during the visit;

***In Progress** – To be included in the revised team chair training. Implemented in August chair training.*

- (c) Analyze standards and link evidence to standards;

***In Progress** – More in-depth discussions on evidence will be facilitated for team chairs, institutions, visiting teams, and ALOs, in all educational programs. Implemented at team training in January 2017 and will continue to be a part of that training.*

- (d) Work with the CEO, board members, union leadership, Academic Senate, and others at the college to be visited, in addition to utilizing the self-evaluation and other college materials in conducting the visit;

***In Progress** – This inclusive communication aligns with ACCJC’s philosophy that accreditation exists to help colleges, not hinder or punish them. Practices are being discussed to further include all groups in a constructive dialogue during the site visit. This has been included in chair training. ACCJC is working with the Academic Senate on their accreditation institute. This topic will be included in sessions.*

- (e) Utilize the self-evaluation and other college materials in conducting the visit;

***Addressed** – This practice has been incorporated into team chair training and team evaluator training.*

- (f) Hold team members accountable for their respective work product;

***In Progress** – Improvement plans for low performing team members is a focus of the educational programming advisory committee.*

- (g) Divide the labor among team members;

***In Progress** – Examples of division of work documents have been collected from experienced chairs and will be provided to all chairs as resources.*

- (h) Use the questions and exercises linked to each Standard in the ACCJC 2015 *Guide to Evaluating and Improving Institutions* (Guide). Effective use ensures “inter-rater reliability” tied to evidence so that the results would be similar regardless of team makeup or chair.

***In Progress** – The questions in the Guide have been replaced by criteria. Evidence: Guide to Evaluating and Improving Institutions, January 2017. Improvements for the manual are ongoing. ALOs from the field have been contacted to work with ACCJC staff to improve this manual.*

2.1.9 Recommendation 9:

Include in the training a session in which experienced team chairs meet with one to two newer team chairs in small groups to provide space for conversations on lessons learned from their prior experiences.

***In Progress** – Break-out sessions will be designed in this format. ACCJC has now used this similar format for ALO training and ISER training. Implemented in August chair training.*

2.1.10 Recommendation 10:

Following the training, assign new chairs to “shadow” experienced chairs prior to a college visit.

***Addressed** – This is now an ongoing practice.*

2.1.11 Recommendation 11:

Pending acceptance of the recommendation to share the approved report with the visiting chair (Area of Focus IV: Process and Structure), the chairs would be trained relative to follow-up communications with the visiting team, including what worked and did not work.

Addressed – ACCJC maintains that the final report must come from the agency, and not team chairs. However, it was agreed that the intent of this recommendation could be achieved by having the team chairs send a copy of the final report to the teams after the “ACCJC Report of Institutional Actions” is published. ACCJC staff and the Workgroup members agreed that this should be included in the Chair Training.

2.1.12 Recommendation 12:

This sequence of training for visiting team chairs is repeated every fourth visit to ensure the visiting team chairs are up-to-date on the Commission’s standards and philosophy.

Declined – To abide by federal criteria, ACCJC will continue its practice to provide team chair training prior to every evaluation cycle for consistency, provide updated information and resources, etc., as CEOs will often have a year or two between chairing site visits.

2.2 Team Member Selection, Team Composition, and Team Member Training

Twelve recommendations were developed in this area. The Commission addressed two, eight are In Progress, none are outstanding, two are new, and none were declined. Overall, the Commission has implemented most of the recommendations in one form or another. Many of the recommendations will require more time to implement fully.

The first set of recommendations deals with the team member selection and suggests that more standardization is needed as well as transparency in the team selection process. It was also recommended the Commission implement a mechanism for volunteers to sign up. The first recommendation is In Progress and the voluntary sign up is in place.

The next group of recommendations focuses on the training prior to the face-to-face training. The recommendation includes using an online training module to include only areas relevant to the team members. The Commission is working through the mixed response and feedback on this recommendation and has referred it for further development by the educational programs and services power team.

The final group of recommendations involves using experienced chairs and ALOs to conduct training in conjunction with ACCJC staff. Adapting exercises to the particular colleges and relevant issues was recommended along with a focus on the standards. Other recommendations were to provide samples of good evidence, site protocol training, and provide exercises to ensure “inter-rater reliability”. The last two recommendations related to using a best practices model from experienced team chairs and team members, as well as breaking the trainings into smaller groups. All the recommendations are In Progress with one completed.

2.2.1 Team Member Selection

2.2.2 Recommendation 1:

Standardize the selection of team members by ACCJC for consistency and to improve transparency. Provide guidelines to the field and especially the CEOs for recommending college faculty and administrators for ACCJC assignments.

In Progress – ACCJC has a team selection protocol, which is followed for every team. CEOs are encouraged to forward anyone to ACCJC for team experience. Additionally, ACCJC has developed a self-nomination process for team evaluators. ACCJC will continue its practice to communicate with CEOs and ALOs informing them which of their personnel are in the ACCJC database, as well as solicit additional names for team service.

2.2.3 Recommendation 2:

Create a mechanism whereby volunteers sign up online. Outline the criteria for service as a peer evaluator.

Addressed – A mechanism for volunteers to sign up online has been established.

2.2.4 Team Composition

2.2.5 Recommendation 1:

Develop a standard composition format for comprehensive and follow-up visits based on: multi-college or single college status; size of the district; and status of accreditation (reaffirmed or sanctions).

In Progress – The Commission is currently investigating revising its team composition protocol based upon these recommended criteria.

2.2.6 Recommendation 2:

Ensure adequate attention to team representation, including two CEO's; four Faculty; Chief Instructional Officer; Chief Student Services Officer; Chief Business Officer; Librarian; and Researcher.

In Progress – Current team composition protocol requires that a CIO, CSSO, Librarian, and Researcher are on every team. Additionally, at least 3 faculty, or more, serve on each team.

2.3 Prior to Face-to-Face Training

2.3.1 Recommendation 1:

Require visiting team members to complete online course modules on the accreditation basics similar to those developed by SACSCOC. Modules should be developed based on Areas of Focus, and peer evaluators required to complete only those applicable to their assignment and those required for all team members. Areas of focus should include institutional effectiveness; academic; student services; human resources, technology, finance; governance; the Quality Focus Essay; etc.

In Progress – There have been mixed responses to this recommendation. Some prefer more face- to-face time during team training, while others want online training modules with less face-to-face time. The intention is to further develop both – online modules AND improved face-to-face training so that training time is effective and valuable. This is included in the work of the educational programming advisory committee.

2.4 Face-to-Face Training

2.4.1 Recommendation 1:

Include CEOs and ALOs who are experienced team leads and team members as presenters at the training sessions along with ACCJC personnel.

In Progress – Experienced CEOs facilitated team chair training with the ACCJC president in August 2017. Experienced ALOs facilitated new ALO training with ACCJC staff at the conference. ACCJC is committed to using this structure for all educational programming. Currently, team training is being revised. An experienced CEO/Team Chair (who is also a Commissioner) and an experienced evaluator are working with staff on the revision. This team will facilitate the revised fall team training. Additionally, chair training is being revised. An experienced team chair is working with staff on this revision. The experienced chair will facilitate staff training this summer. While not part of this specific recommendation, this practice is also being applied to Institutional Self Evaluation Report training for institutions that are starting their comprehensive review process. Two experienced ALOs are working with staff on this revision. They will facilitate the ISER trainings together, in the fall.

2.4.2 Recommendation 2:

Use training time more effectively by allowing time for teams to do specific exercises in preparation for the visit. Provide focused training on each standard with examples, and make the training available online. Emphasize the need for team members to recognize that colleges can meet the standards in a variety of ways, not that they must conform to any particular way of meeting the standards.

In Progress – Team training has been redesigned to have teams use their respective ISER as the case study, which allows teams more time to discuss how their college aligns with the standards. Evaluations from team training show this practice has helped teams to triangulate information and have robust discussion that leads to a stronger understanding of the college and the standards.

2.4.3 Recommendation 3:

Include samples of evidence that demonstrate meeting/not meeting standards. Use standards that appear to be a problem for most colleges.

In Progress – ACCJC has produced working papers for the field on standards IB3 (institution set-standards), IB6 (disaggregation of SLOs), and IIA6 (SLOs and faculty evaluations). A session on difficult standards was also conducted at the conference. Working papers will continue to be developed and revised based upon the ongoing dialogue of quality improvement within the region.

2.4.4 Recommendation 4:

Include site protocol training regarding self-conduct as a team member, including the time commitment before, during and after the visit.

In Progress – Spring 2017 team training focused on unintentional bias, interviewing and observational techniques (including awareness of body language and non-verbal cues), and the realistic commitment of evaluators. This continues to be a component of team training. Evaluations of the trainings will be used for improvements.

2.4.5 Recommendation 5:

Provide exercises to ensure “inter-rater reliability” so that the results would be at least very similar regardless of team makeup (or chair).

In Progress – This continues to be a component of chair training. Exercises have been added to team training to help inter-rater reliability among teams.

2.4.6 Recommendation 6:

Include tips from experienced chairs and team members about the work that can (and should) be completed prior to the visit so the visit is successful.

In Progress – Experienced CEOs, ALOs, and team evaluators will continue to help facilitate all trainings. See recommendation 1 of this section.

2.4.7 Recommendation 7:

Conduct face-to-face training in smaller groups. This may require an increase in staff capacity and/or the use of experienced team chairs as trainers to ensure more training opportunity.

Addressed – Team training has been extended. Only four teams per day will be trained which will provide more direct facilitation with teams, experienced team chairs, and staff.

3. Area of Focus II - Communication

3.1 COMMUNICATION

The Commission has responded well to the ten major recommendations which focused on the broad area of communication. Emphasis is on improving communication between the Commission and its member institutions. Demonstrable improvement includes an enhancement in the tone and quality of all communications, and a successful conference with huge attendance from the membership. Members are being used as resources to the Commission based on their areas of expertise, thereby strengthening collaboration between the Commission and its member institutions. The majority of the recommendations in this area are in progress and time is needed for institutionalization. Monitoring will continue.

3.1.1 Recommendation 1:

Create more collegial formal communication – recognition of effort, particularly of faculty and staff.

In Progress – Significant progress has been made in the last few months. New leadership within the staff have quickly and appropriately addressed this recommendation. Communication from the Commission has improved greatly over the past several months, as staff now understand their role as accreditor in a way that conveys a sense of shared purpose. While this issue falls into the “addressed” category, institutionalized change requires time to ensure that collegial communication is ongoing.

3.1.2 Recommendation 2:

Provide time for the field to review documents.

Addressed – More time has been provided for the field to review documents. The field appreciates the flexibility in having time to respond to documents (e.g., draft team reports).

3.1.3 Recommendation 3:

Avoid sending out multiple notices in short timeframes. Provide systematic summary of correspondence (quarterly or semi-annually)

Addressed – Correspondence has been significantly streamlined.

3.1.4 Recommendation 4:

Provide regular (at least semi-annually) summaries of correspondence.

Addressed – Enhancements to the newsletter support this recommendation.

3.1.5 Recommendation 5:

Improve ACCJC website to ensure transparency.

Addressed – A new website has been developed and provides greater transparency. The new ACCJC website is a huge leap forward and the Commission’s new approach to the newsletter that includes information/columns from member institutions will support future efforts.

3.1.6 Recommendation 6:

Provide support for institutions seeking guidance on meeting the standards.

In Progress – Some actions have been taken in this area: the conference and the ACCJC staff “office hour.” ACCJC is considering a “portfolio approach” to institutional support. With this approach, a specific staff person would be assigned specific colleges to administer “consistency of care.” It benefits the institution to have a consistent staff person who is deeply familiar with the college needs, its personnel, and its distinct culture/environment.

3.1.7 Recommendation 7:

Develop and publish a strategic plan or standing rules to provide transparency for the Commission and give the field a chance to be involved in the future direction of the Commission.

In Progress – The Commission began working on a strategic plan in March 2017, addressing both short-term (1 - 3 years) and long-term (5 years) strategic directions and goals. The five areas of focus developed by Workgroup I serve as the framework for the short-term direction and goals. This will be the key step in developing an accreditation process that demonstrates accountability and a commitment to collegiality. A component of the strategic plan will be to conduct townhall sessions and surveys to collect feedback from constituency groups. These data will provide additional information to drive the strategic directions of the agency.

3.1.8 Recommendation 8:

Allow for face-to-face meetings on issues of significance to member institutions.

In Progress – ACCJC has recently begun to “take the show on the road.” ACCJC staff collaborates with constituency groups to present at conferences and other venues to increase accessibility to accreditation information and to strengthen relationships across the region.

3.1.9 Recommendation 9:

Sponsor an annual conference for all constituencies and, among other presentations, provide training on federal entities, and others, that impact Commission operations, such as the U.S. Department of Education. Such sessions would aid in educating the membership, removing barriers to communication and creating a more supportive and collegial environment.

Addressed – In April 2017, the first conference was convened, well attended, relevant and appreciated by the field. Planning for future conferences is under consideration. There was enthusiasm and robust discussion of many issues. This is tangible evidence of a new way of doing business, and the ACCJC staff should be commended for staging such a large event in a professional manner.

3.1.10 Recommendation 10:

Improve communication with institutions through the following mechanisms: (a) membership surveys on services; (b) trends impacting regional accreditation; (c) quarterly newsletters, including best practice examples; (d) regional discussions about higher education and accreditation; and (e) increased contact between the ACCJC President and VP/Liaisons and institutional CEOs and ALOs.

In Progress – Implementation of these recommendations is underway and will take time. Specifically designed surveys to improve team visits have been conducted of visiting team chairs and team members. Meetings with team ALOs as well as other commissions are being conducted by the staff and commissioners as well. Member institutions are part of this solution too. When member colleges invite Commission staff to college workshops, discussions or other technical training, opportunities for regional collaboration will be advanced.

4. Area of Focus III – Evaluation

4.1 EVALUATION

The ACCJC Policy Committee is responsible for developing the policy for a comprehensive evaluation process. Member institutions have not been involved in evaluating Commission operations, services or staff, although periodic input from them has been solicited on particular issues relative to revising standards.

The Evaluation section has one major recommendation with two parts: to create a comprehensive process for evaluation of the Commission; and to use the evaluative results to strengthen the Commission. The depth and breadth of this recommendation require reasonable time for it to be fully implemented, although some pieces are now in place.

4.1.1 Recommendation 1:

Create a comprehensive process for evaluation of the Commission.

In Progress – Member surveys on educational programming and other areas are being developed with input from advisory groups. The ACCJC Policy Committee is developing a policy on evaluation.

4.1.2 Recommendation 2:

Use evaluation findings for the following purposes:

A. Update/revise Commission’s policies, procedures, and templates.

Outstanding – No Commission response. The recommendation was discussed and clarified at the April 2017 Workgroup meeting.

B. Develop/implement Commission’s strategic plan.

In Progress – The Commission undertook the strategic plan at its retreat in April 2017. The first draft is being developed and will be distributed for review by the field. Listening session/focus groups will also be conducted to collect further input from the field.

C. Inform the work of various committees.

Outstanding – The evaluation system needs to be in place for this to happen.

D. Plan Commission staff and other retreats as well as staff and Commission meetings.

Outstanding – Retreats and meetings are being held, but it is not clear whether evaluation results are used to plan such meetings.

E. Develop the annual budget.

In Progress – The budget was presented to the membership in attendance at the conference; however, those members not in attendance have not received the information.

F. Inform annual evaluation of the Commission president and commission staff.

Outstanding – Commission self-evaluation will be added to the new ACCJC website. At the April 2017 workgroup meeting, ACCJC acknowledged the Commission does not have a clear organizational chart that identifies the reporting relationships, or who would be responsible for evaluations. A process is expected to be proposed by July 1.

G. Modify/enhance training and professional development activities offered by the Commission.

In Progress – Educational programs are being completely redesigned. An advisory committee comprised of experienced team chairs, team evaluators, and ALOs is working with ACCJC staff to improve all levels of training.

H. Share evaluation results as appropriate.

In Progress – ACCJC is expanding its communication distribution lists to reach all constituency groups. Further, the ACCJC website has been redesigned for ease of use and accessibility of resources. These mechanisms can be used as appropriate in sharing evaluation results.

5. Area of Focus IV – Process and Structure of Visit

5.1 Institutional Self-Evaluation Report

Seven recommendations are presented for improvement of the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER), the document that demonstrates college compliance with the Standards. The first three recommendations are specifically about the ISER and the last four pertain to training, which the Commission has referred to its educational programming power team. At the time of this writing, the Commission has not addressed the training recommendations specifically, although it has demonstrated a willingness to move toward implementation of these recommendations. The Commission is in the process of revising the ISER requirements and providing more guidance; additionally, training sessions are planned for fall 2017 with input from the field. Monitoring will continue until completion.

5.1.1 Recommendation 1:

Examine the format, content and length of the ISER.

In Progress – The Commission agrees that ISERs are unreasonably long and burdensome to produce. Therefore, the Commission is developing a template to reduce both the length of ISERs and the amount of time and resources colleges spend on them. The new template will assist colleges in targeting their responses. No guidance about changing the ISER has yet been given to the field, although trainings are planned for September 2017.

5.1.2 Recommendation 2:

Provide clear guidelines and technical assistance to assist colleges in preparing the ISER with the necessary evidence for the visiting team. Include additional guidelines for multi-college districts.

In Progress – The Commission reported that it has developed advanced ISER training for colleges in the middle of the process and has circulated working papers about specific standards, such as I.B.3 (Institution-set standards), I.B.6 (Disaggregation of SLOs), and III.A.6 (SLOs as a component of performance evaluations). In addition, the Commission will convene an advisory group to revise the resource manuals. This advisory group has already started revising the *Guide to Evaluating and Improving Institutions* and the *Manual for Institutional Self-Evaluation*. The advisory group is comprised of current ALOs from the field, an ACCJC staff member, a former Commissioner, and an experienced faculty/team evaluator. Drafts of the resources will be disseminated to the field for input and feedback.

The Commission acknowledged that current resource manuals are confusing and not particularly helpful to the field. Reform of the ISER is a critical issue for WGI. While some training has taken place and some standards have been clarified, WGI will continue to monitor progress on development of guidelines, manuals and other resources. The Commission will also ensure that college employee groups are included in the process.

5.1.3 Recommendation 3:

Reevaluate the focus and name of the ISER to align with supporting institutional commitment and improvements.

In Progress – The Commission reported that it has not made progress on renaming the ISER. It has been re-examining the focus in conjunction with the length and format, as well as having discussions about “prioritizing” the standards – in other words, clarifying for the field which standards are more critical than

others. It has also distributed examples of *Quality Focus Essays* and plans to put examples of other reports on its redesigned website.

5.1.4 Recommendation 4:

Require CEOs to participate in accreditation training two years prior to visiting the institution for which they serve as CEO.

Outstanding – This recommendation has been referred to the Commission's educational programming power team.

5.1.5 Recommendation 5:

Appoint CEOs to serve in a secondary role on a visiting team at least once in their first three years as CEO; if successful in that role, they will assume chair position within the next three years as CEO.

Outstanding – This recommendation has been referred to the Commission's educational programming power team.

5.1.6 Recommendation 6:

Provide one-day training annually for newly elected trustees in December or January and for all trustees two years prior to a visit to the college for which they serve as trustees.

Outstanding – This recommendation has been referred to the Commission's educational programming power team.

5.1.7 Recommendation 7:

Require training for ALOs with a focus on the development of the ISER and require ALOs to serve as a peer evaluator.

Outstanding – This recommendation has been referred to the Commission's educational programming power team.

5.2 Pre-Visit

The intent of the five recommendations is to make the pre-visit more timely and meaningful by identifying potential problems early so the institution has time to start an initial response. Altering the pre-visit process will allow the team more time to review the institution prior to the formal visit. In short, the request is for the Commission to review the pre-visit practices of other Commissions. The goals of the pre-visit will be accomplished by making minor changes to existing processes coupled with a change in philosophical focus that emphasizes formative and summative approaches to peer review.

5.2.1 Recommendation 1:

Ensure that all teams are staffed and that the team chair has thoroughly reviewed the ISER prior to the visit.

In Progress – The Commission provided information which demonstrates that significant progress has been made in designing the systems infrastructure necessary to address the recommendation. For example, as of May 19, 2017, all evaluation teams are fully staffed for fall visits.

5.2.2 Recommendation 2:

Expand the “intended outcomes” to include a substantive review of the ISER. The review could result in a discussion of questions raised about the study and areas of improvement from the visiting team’s the point of view. The team should give prompt preliminary feedback, usually a few weeks after the pre-visit which provides sufficient time for the institution to respond to major deficiencies and sends a positive message about the intentions of the team.

In Progress - The Commission has questioned the utility of a pre-visit and whether a pre-visit is even necessary. Additional dialog occurred at the April 26 meeting. The representatives present from WorkGroup I felt that a pre-visit is still desirable and that the pre-visit meeting should be expanded beyond the present discussion of logistics. Content has been added to chair training to encourage and empower chairs to have on-going communication with the college CEO about the team findings and to use the pre-visit to have a more robust discussion about the evaluation. A major substantive review prior to the visit may not be necessary given ACCJC’s commitment to improve other related processes.

5.2.3 Recommendation 3:

Give the chair flexibility to include other team members on the pre-visit, especially a team member who has concerns about weaknesses in the report.

In Progress - This recommendation is related to Recommendation 2 above. A major substantive review which includes inviting additional team members to the pre-visit may not be necessary given ACCJC’s commitment to improve other related processes.

5.2.4 Recommendation 4:

ACCJC staff should thoroughly prepare the college for the visit so that each entity knows what to expect at every stage of the process.

In Progress – ACCJC staff has provided advanced ISER training and will continue to make this training available. Furthermore, ACCJC Staff and Commissioners have developed working papers on standards that have been difficult to interpret. ACCJC staff noted they are reviewing and updating many publications to improve clarity and understanding. ACCJC staff have taken positive steps to improve training and provide guidance in specific areas.

5.2.5 Recommendation 5:

Consider adopting pre-visit practices from other Commissions allowing the colleges more flexibility, assistance, and time for focusing on weightier issues that make a difference in student learning.

In Progress – This recommendation represents a major change to the nature and the level of work required during the pre-visit. The Commission continues to discuss a formative and summative approach to peer review. (See Recommendation #3 above.)

5.3 Site-Visit

Five recommendations were proposed regarding the site visits performed by Accreditation Visiting Teams. According to the Commission, these five recommendations are in various stages of progress with a variety of strategies and practices

designed to address some or all components of the recommendations. Although one recommendation has been completed, the remaining four are in various stages of implementation, with the majority still outstanding. Although the Commission is making some progress, evidence of change is still required. Monitoring will continue.

5.3.1 Recommendation 1:

Simplify the site visit. The present structure requires the team to “prove” that the college meets every standard and substandard. Consider using a structure similar to other accreditors: one virtual or in-person pre-visit focused on compliance issues; and another pre-visit focused on improvement.

In Progress – The Commission states they are working on this recommendation by reviewing the approach to the pre-visit, specifically the ISER. Their position is that the team training prior to the visit is focused on each team’s report, including case studies and standard interpretations applied to the team’s college ISER. The Commission is discussing a formative and summative approach to peer review with input from member institutions. It points out that member institutions are concerned about potential rising costs of the pre-visit. This remains a high priority item for Workgroup I with corroboration from the field.

According to staff, ACCJC has adopted a new philosophy of peer review, in which teams are there to celebrate the college’s achievements and help them to demonstrate that they meet the standards. Team and ISER trainings have been redesigned with this new philosophy. A summative/formative approach will require a policy change, and that is still being investigated. Further, team training is now focusing on the review of each team’s ISER rather than just case studies. This approach allows for the team to have face-to-face experiential time that supports the time spent on campus. The ACCJC will evaluate these practices for effectiveness.

5.3.2 Recommendation 2:

Apprise the chair of all oral presentations that have to be made and provide talking points or a script so remarks are consistent and the chair says only what is appropriate. Oral presentations include opening remarks at the beginning of the visit, to commence the open forum, as well as remarks made at the exit interview report.

Addressed – Scripts have been developed.

5.3.3 Recommendation 3:

Consider increasing the team visit by one day so the team has time to deliberate and the opportunity for discussions with the CEO and other college personnel regarding the findings.

Declined – This recommendation cannot be implemented, according to the Commission, because the CEOs assert incursion of significant costs to the college. The Commission is investigating improving communication between the visiting team chair and CEO as an alternative. The intent of this recommendation is to improve communication and may be addressed in other ways. If other recommendations are implemented, such as Site Visit Recommendation 1 or Pre-visit Recommendation 2, the teams would give preliminary feedback to the institution regarding areas needing improvement. Time during visit may then become available for deeper discussion.

Response - WGI reasserts that the discussions between the team and the college personnel regarding the findings are critical for improvement. Improving the communication and further clarifying the role of the

team chair as a collegial resource to the college CEO has been added to the content of chair training as well as ISER training.

5.3.4 Recommendation 4:

Add a formal collegial exit meeting with the leadership team of the college or district to discuss preliminary findings so the college is aware of deficiencies while the team is there and given an opportunity to clear up any issues.

Declined – The Commission states they are attempting to change the nature of the exit meeting by facilitating collegial dialogue and inquiry between the team chair and the CEO. The Commission has revised the sample letter in the team chair manual, and it has included a component on this issue in its training that is led by an experienced CEO and ACCJC staff. The strategies implemented by the Commission only affect the team chair and CEO.

Response – The recommendation is directed at a formal collegial exit meeting with the leadership team of the college or district, not just the CEO.

5.3.5 Recommendation 5:

Carefully review practices of other Commissions, and consider adopting practices that would improve effectiveness of ACCJC practices.

In Progress – Evidence of progress on this recommendation is the attendance of the Commission’s president, vice president, staff and directors at C-RAC and CHEA conferences and C-RAC weekly conference calls with regional presidents where commission practices are shared. However, there is still a need for regular review and implementation consideration of best practices from other commissions. Completion of this recommendation would require the development and implementation of procedures and processes that govern when and how best practices are reviewed and considered for implementation by the Commission. In other words, the Commission must put a process in place that ensures that it regularly and transparently reviews best practices for accreditation, considers the value that the practices may bring to the organization and its members, and implements the practices, when necessary.

5.4 Post Visit

Seven recommendations concerning the post-visit were made. The focus on these recommendations is to allow as much dialogue as possible among the team chair, the institution CEO, and when necessary, ACCJC staff to ensure the team report is correct before the Commission considers it. The amount of post-visit discussion has varied considerably and there has been some confusion in the field regarding the amount and type of post-visit discussion allowed. Of the seven recommendations for improving the post visit, five have been addressed, one is in progress and one remains outstanding. Progress has been made, and monitoring will continue.

5.4.1 Recommendation 1:

Provide an opportunity for dialogue and discussion by the college under review beyond the limit set forth by the “errors of fact” review of the document.

Addressed – The Commission has altered chair training to focus on improving the dialogue between the chair and the CEO. Commission representatives and staff present at the April 26, 2017 meeting affirmed that college CEOs and team chairs should not feel restricted in their conversations in the period following the site visit.

5.4.2 Recommendation 2:

Provide the opportunity for discussion together among the team chair, ACCJC staff, and the college CEO or ALO throughout the process rather than only at particular points.

Addressed – The Commission has altered chair training to focus on improving the dialogue between the chair and the CEO. Commission representatives and staff present at the April 26, 2017 meeting affirmed that college CEOs and team chairs should not feel restricted in their conversations in the period following the site visit.

5.4.3 Recommendation 3:

Share the final Commission-approved report and the ACCJC action letter with the visiting team chair for distribution and discussion with the visiting team to close the visiting loop.

Addressed – The team report and action letter are made available on each college website. Representatives from both WGI and the Commission agreed that the team chair can notify team members when the final team report and action letter are available.

5.4.4 Recommendation 4:

Share the rationale with the chair for any changes to the team’s recommendations.

Addressed – The Commission stated that this was implemented in the last academic year. The rationales for any changes are shared with the chair during the review of the draft team report and must be made by the chair. If the Commission changes a report, the changes are identified and included in a preface to the report.

5.4.5 Recommendation 5:

Provide an opportunity for the team chair, the institution’s leadership team, and ACCJC staff to review and discuss the final decision of the Commission.

Declined – The Commission responded that the open session of the Commission meeting has been scheduled prior to the closed session. This allows a CEO or designee to address the Commission before action is taken on an institution. ACCJC staff are assigned to each college’s review. The CEO is encouraged to contact the staff for assistance. Further, the CEO has the opportunity to provide information to the Commission for review before it takes action.

Response – The intent of the recommendation is to ensure that the team chair, the ACCJC staff member assigned to the institution, and the institution’s CEO have an opportunity to discuss the team report and preliminary recommendations prior to review by the Commission. This is particularly important if there are disagreements with respect to the interpretation of the standards. It is helpful that CEOs and team chairs are encouraged to continue their dialogue after the team visit. However, a process should be put in place to allow for a full discussion with the team chair and the assigned ACCJC staff if the CEO is concerned about the team report and/or recommendations.

5.4.6 Recommendation 6:

Provide verbal or written feedback to the team chair on his/her performance and the performance of the team in the spirit of continuous improvement.

In Progress – The Commission states that evaluations for team chairs and team evaluators are being revised to provide members with opportunities for growth. This recommendation has been forwarded to the Commission’s Evaluation and Planning Committee. The Commission is taking steps to address the recommendation.

5.4.7 Recommendation 7:

Give CEOs and college personnel sufficient time at the Commission meeting to provide a response to the team report. (Commissioners need to be mindful of their tone with members who address the Commission).

Addressed – The open session of the Commission meeting now precedes the closed session. This will allow CEOs or their designee sufficient time to address the Commission.

5.5 Substantive Change Reports

Colleges were spending inordinate amounts of time of accreditation reporting requirements, especially on substantive change reports. Only one recommendation was made on this report, and the Commission is in the process of addressing the major related issues.

5.5.1 Recommendation 1:

Streamline preparation of Substantive Change Reports by limiting information requested and providing a template developed with input from the users and a review of the approaches used by other Commissions.

Outstanding – The Commission is re-examining federal requirements for Substantive Change Reports and intimated that it would no longer require reports for certain changes. The first step in this change will be policy revision, followed by a review by the field and then distribution. Therefore, revision of the report itself is being delayed until the policy revision is complete. At present, no change to Substantive Change reports has been communicated to the field. However, WGI supports the policy revision effort and will monitor its progress. An advisory committee of experienced ALOs is working with ACCJC staff on the draft policy and revisions to the substantive change manual.

5.6 Annual Report/Workload

The Commission has fully addressed the one recommendation on the Annual Report by revising the report format.

5.6.1 Recommendation 1:

Limit annual reporting to basic data and provide an electronic reporting system.

Addressed – In early spring 2017, the Commission worked with CIO/ALO representatives to eliminate roughly half the questions from the report and clarify others. In March, colleges completed a much less time-intensive report. The Commission plans to gather feedback on the new format, potentially make revisions, and communicate those revisions to the field before the next reporting period. Comments from the field indicate the new Annual Report has been well received and has decreased workload at member institutions. WGI will support the Commission in gathering feedback for any further revisions.

6. Area of Focus V – Commission Operations

Regularly identifying areas of strength and weakness ensures continuous operational improvement. Therefore, evaluation and feedback of the Commission's operations must be ongoing to work more effectively with member institutions.

Commission Operations is divided into three parts: Financial Transparency, Commission Size and Composition, and the Nominating Committee. Nine recommendations relative to each part were proposed to improve the functions of the Commission and provide better services to members. These recommendations offer institutions a greater sense of inclusion and trust in the Commission.

6.1 Financial Transparency

The Commission, in light of dues increases without explanation over the last few years, responded favorably to the recommendation for greater transparency regarding its finances.

6.1.1 Recommendation 1:

In conjunction with ACCJC's Annual Conference (beginning 2017), ACCJC will schedule a CEO Forum open to all members. The meeting will include a presentation on ACCJC's finances, present and planned, without disadvantaging it in its legal or confidential matters. The goal of the meeting is to provide clear information for the CEOs to use in their campus planning, budgeting, and communication needs. The meeting will also allow for questions from the audience. Additionally, providing this information will improve the financial transparency of the Commission.

Addressed – Significant progress has been made in this area since convening the first annual conference in April 2016. Financial information was shared at the annual meeting by the chair of the Budget Committee. Additionally, a standing item on ACCJC's budget has been added to each Open Session agenda at the beginning of Commission meetings. Members not in attendance at the conference need to be informed, although at present no communication process for this is in place. The Commission indicated it would send financial information to the colleges in June 2017, but that did not occur. The Workgroup encourages the Commission to post the information on its website. Further, ACCJC is looking to develop an annual report which would be disseminated to all member institutions and other interested parties.

6.2 Commission Size and Composition

After a careful review of the current size and composition of the Commission compared to other commissions, three recommendations were made. Only one was accepted, to add a CFO category. The other two were declined, involving making the ACSCU/WASC position ex-officio and replacing commissioners who transition away from the original category in which they were selected.

6.2.1 Recommendation 1:

Shift the ACSCU/WASC Commissioner position to ex officio non-voting status and have that position serve as a liaison to the Senior Commission, providing reports and communication to the Commission. Further, the Commission should request any reports from ACSCU/WASC to be delivered as part of the public session of ACCJC meetings.

Declined – The Commission declined this recommendation regarding membership status but agreed to continue the liaison and reporting role for this Commissioner. The Commission noted that standing reports from ACSCU/WASC are delivered in open session.

Response - The Workgroup encourages the Commission to continue examining and refining its membership to ensure effectiveness of the Commission.

6.2.2 Recommendation 2:

Maintain the Commission at 19 voting members; one additional member and the three deleted constituency seats will be reallocated as follows: Create a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) category, with a minimum of two allocated Commissioners, active or retired. Allocate any remaining seats among existing constituencies.

Addressed – The Commission has added one CFO position to the Commission.

6.2.3 Recommendation 3:

Replace Commissioners who transition away from the category in which they were elected if there is more than one year remaining in the term. If timing prevents the Commission from including that vacancy in the upcoming election, a special election will be held to fill the vacancy with an individual who meets the qualifications. This will require a change to the bylaws.

Declined – The Commission will retain its current practice of allowing Commissioners to remain on the Commission if their status changes while serving. The reasoning is that Commissioners who no longer work in the category for which they were elected retain their value to the Commission. Commissioners bring expertise; they do not represent stakeholders. So, for example, a Commissioner with faculty experience will be able to discern the meaning and substance of a team report that describes how a college plans and provides professional development for part-time faculty members. That knowledge base does not go away should that Commissioner take on a Dean's role.

Response – The Workgroup maintains that a Commissioner who later changes his/her status by taking another position or retiring must be replaced. The Commission's concern for continuity is understandable, however, replacements of this type are made regularly at the Commission's member colleges when even longer standing CEOs, other managers, or faculty members retire or change positions.

6.3 Nominating Committee

Five recommendations were proposed to make the nominating and selection process fair and transparent. Four of the five are in the process of being addressed and one has been addressed.

6.3.1 Recommendation 1:

A clear charge and statement of procedures for the Nominating Committee are essential.

Selection and operating procedures for the Nominating Committee needs to be clearly delineated. Desired criteria for the member institution representatives should be explicit: regions to be represented; size and type of institution, whether single-college or multi-college district. This recommendation requires 2 changes to the bylaws.

In Progress – The composition of the nominating committee has been enhanced to be more inclusive. The Commission has assigned this recommendation to its Policy Commission for review and bylaws revision.

6.3.2 Recommendation 2:

The selection and review process of Commissioners also must be clearly presented. The desired qualifications, preparation and expertise of the candidate slate should be transparent.

Addressed – In the first election since the recommendation was made, the Commission reports that qualifications and expertise were posted to the field as follows: <http://accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/Announcement-of-2017-Nominating-Committee-Members.pdf>

6.3.3 Recommendation 3:

ACCJC and the Nominating Committee should take an active role in promotion and marketing. Individuals should be able to self-nominate through an online process.

In progress – As communication protocols have been broadened, information was distributed more broadly. Information was sent to the state-wide Academic Senate and widely distributed to the field as indicated in above link. Marketing was more evident in the last election cycle. Commission staff will continue this process.

6.3.4 Recommendation 4:

Marketing materials should be developed that provide Commissioner expectations, length of term, number of meetings per year, and time commitment. Potential applicants in the field are not clear about the required time commitment to become a Commissioner.

In Progress – Marketing materials that incorporated many of the suggestions of the Workgroup were developed for the last election cycle. Commission staff will continue this practice. Here is the link to the marketing materials: <http://accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/Commissioner-Application-Information-and-Form.pdf>

6.3.5 Recommendation 5:

The number of individuals who count the electoral ballots should be specified and should include one Commissioner, at minimum. Implementing this recommendation requires a change in bylaws Section 5. Counting the Ballots.

In Progress – The Commission determined this was not a policy issue, but a matter of practice. The Workgroup requests a reexamination of this decision to ensure practices continue to align with the bylaws. For the most recent election, a Commissioner was present for counting the ballots. However, the Commission continues to look at ways of addressing ballot counting in the presence of executive staff, as an alternative to having a Commissioner present. The Workgroup understands the logistical challenges, but encourages the Commission to consider having at least one qualified non-staff member present for ballot counting. For example, a member of the Commission's audit firm could provide external assurance to candidates and others that appropriate procedures were followed.

7. California Community Colleges Chief Executive Officers Accreditation Reform Timeline 2009 - 2017

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) and CEO Board (CEOCCC) Activities	
2009-2010	CCCCO Accreditation Task Force 1.0* convened by Jack Scott, Chancellor Jan 2010 – Memo with 7 recommendations presented to ACCJC
2010-2012	Numerous CEO Board discussions regarding concerns about accreditation and ACCJC's high rates of sanctions and lack of transparency, collegiality, and consistency
2013	CCCCO Accreditation Task Force 2.0* convened by Brice Harris, Chancellor Work inconclusive; report not released
March 2014	2 Joint CEO/ACCJC Meetings - Northern (Los Rios CCD)/Southern (West Los Angeles College) 40 CEOs met with Commissioners Amador, Rodriguez, Gornick and President Beno to discuss concerns and recommendations.
April 2014	CEO Letter to ACCJC re: City College of San Francisco, urging two-year accreditation extension, with 76 CEO signatures
June 2014	CEO letter to ACCJC Commission outlining 10 recommendations in 3 major areas of concern: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. collaboration and communication 2. professional development (improve institution/chair/team training) 3. reaffirmation/accreditation (improve processes/shift from sanction to prevention)
January 2015	CCCCO Board of Governors (BOG) Action: Revised Title V regulations to remove specific mention of ACCJC [NOTE: CA Ed Code requires BOG to define accreditation conditions for colleges to receive state funding. Title V regulations require each college to be accredited by an accreditor recognized by US Secretary of ED, that is recommended by State Chancellor and approved by BOG]
2015	CCCCO Accreditation Task Force 3.0* convened by Brice Harris, Chancellor Meetings beginning January 2015, reviewed broad research, constituent feedback, prior reports. August 2015 Report: CCCCO Task Force on Accreditation included crosswalk of recommendations to ACCJC from 2009-2014, ACCJC actions 2005-2015, ideal accreditor attributes, and recommended establishing a new accrediting model for California community colleges.
November 2015	CCCCO Board of Governors (BOG) Meeting: Agenda Item: Accreditation Task Force Report BOG Action: BOG accepted Task Force recommendations and passed the following resolution: <i>"The current structure of ACCJC, along with its lack of credibility as perceived by its peers and the public, no longer meet the current and anticipated needs of California community colleges."</i> BOG directed system Chancellor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share the report with USDE for review of ACCJC's recognition status ▪ Work through the system's consultation process to bring to BOG March 2016 meeting: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A recommendation for action to establish a new model for an accrediting agency

	<p>2. An implementation plan, along with timeline.</p>
<p>December 2015 – February 2016</p>	<p>CCCCO Accreditation Implementation Task Force 4.0* (expanded membership of TF3.0 with additional CEOs, trustees) convened by Brice Harris, Chancellor</p> <p>Meeting w/ACCJC staff, Commissioners to discuss Task Force report, BOG actions, and next steps.</p> <p>Meeting w/WASC Senior Commission staff, board members regarding options for collaboration.</p> <p>Prepared draft plan for CCCCCO Consultation Council review.</p> <p>CEO Board committed to a taking a stronger role in accreditation focused on what colleges need in an accreditor to meet needs of colleges, students, communities, and the workforce, with four goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Address changing reality of higher education ▪ Respect our culture of collegial consultation ▪ Encourage risk-taking and innovation ▪ Drive change through collaboration and respect

March 14 -
20, 2016

Statewide CEO Symposium (Yosemite)

More than 80 CEOs participated in 3-hour session on accreditation, focused on the history and role of CEOs in accreditation, review of Task Force 3.0 report, and future of accreditation for the region. Following small and full-group discussions, participants responded to the following survey:

Accreditation Feedback Form

It is time for the CEOs to come together to lead this effort.

Please check the option you prefer. If neither appeals to you, write your own Option 3. If you choose Options 1 or 2, but desire to change the language, please insert your changes.

Option 1

I believe that the current accreditor for California community colleges, ACCJC, is doing an effective job and represents the appropriate model of accreditation for our colleges moving forward. ACCJC is on the right track, and has implemented effective reforms in response to challenges and changes.

Option 2

I believe that there should be fundamental changes made to our accreditation processes and structures. During any exploration of change, all colleges must maintain their current status, terms, and cycle for accreditation with the ACCJC. A parallel approach should be followed which includes

- *making improvements in the existing processes and culture of ACCJC, and*
- *at the same time, exploring alternative structures for a regional accreditor, which will take many years to develop.*

To pursue changes, the member organizations should immediately form two representative planning groups to

- *develop and recommend improvements regarding the ACCJC, and*
- *facilitate communication leading to the long-range goal of California's community colleges participating in a structure for regional accreditation that aligns all segments of higher education.*

These two planning groups should include representatives from the California community colleges, the University of Hawaii community colleges, the Western Pacific community colleges and the ACCJC, and, where appropriate, other regional accreditors.

Option 3 (enter your own option, if desired)

Following the meeting, the survey was also emailed to all CEOs in the state who were unable to attend, inviting them to respond.

March 20 - results distributed to all CEOs:

# Participants	Support Option 1: No change	Support Option 2: 2-prong change	Support Option 3: Other change	None Selected
99	5	78	10	6

Of the overall 136 California community college CEOs, 99 (73%) responded to the survey. 89% opted for change (Option 2/3); 5% opted for no change (Option 1).

March 2016	<p>CEO Board (CCCCEO) Meeting</p> <p>Action Taken: CEO Board established two CEO Workgroups (w/representatives from 11 CA regions):</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Workgroup I: Improving ACCJC Structure, Function, and Relations</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Workgroup II: Western Region Higher Education Accrediting Model Long-Range</p>
March 21, 2016	<p>CCCCO Board of Governors (BOG) Action Item New Model of Accreditation for CCCs</p> <p>BOG accepted the recommendation and directed the system Chancellor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify ACCJC of BOG support for CEOCCC plan • Participate with CEOs in coordinating 2 workgroups: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recommend immediate changes to improve existing processes and culture of ACCJC 2. Pursue a model for regional accreditation that aligns all segments of higher education in the Western region. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report back to BOG beginning July 2016
<p>WORKGROUP I: Improving ACCJC Structure, Function, and Relations</p> <p>WORKGROUP II: Western Region Higher Education Accrediting Model</p>	
February 9, 2016	<p>Workgroup I Representatives from five Areas of Focus meeting with ACCJC Commissioners</p> <p>Four hour meeting with members of the ACCJC Policy Committee and Planning and Evaluation committee to monitor implementation of WGI recommendations.</p>
March 18, 2016	<p>ACCJC Commission Development Workshop, Claremont Hotel, Berkeley, CA</p> <p>CEOs Brian King, Helen Benjamin meeting with ACCJC President Beno, and Commissioners Rodriguez, Kinsella, and Christian prior to meeting; discuss proposed membership, goals of WG I, BOG resolution</p>
March - April 2016	<p>Conference calls/emails to establish members, arrange meetings dates/agendas</p> <p>CEO representatives identified by each of 11 CEOCCC region, plus California public/private CEOs</p> <p>WG I includes 2 Academic Senate, 2 ALOs, 2 ACCJC Commissioners</p> <p>WG II includes Hawaii CEO, WSCUC president/commission chair and ACCJC commission vice chair</p>
April 21, 2016	<p>Workgroup I - Southern California meeting - Chaffey College</p> <p>Review of ACCJC By-laws and CEO Areas of Focus discussed</p>
April 27, 2016	<p>Workgroup I - Northern California meeting held at Peralta CCCD</p> <p>Steering Committee with 5 Areas of Focus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chair & Team Training-Kindred Murrillo (chair/CEO), Debbie DiThomas (CEO), Lori Bennett (ALO) 2. Communication - Kevin Walthers (chair/CEO), Victor Jaime (CEO), Kathy Hart (CEO) 3. Member Evaluation of the Commission/Staff Leadership Assessment - David Wayne Coon (chair/CEO), David Morse (Academic Senate), Kathryn Jeffery (CEO) 4. Process and Structure of College Evaluation Reports, Team Reports and Visits - Michael Claire (chair/CEO), Meredith Randall (ALO), Julie Bruno (Academic Senate) 5. Commission Operations - John Weispfenning, (chair/CEO), John Zimmerman (private colleges/ACCJC commission), Marvin Martinez (CEO)

April 28, 2016	Workgroup I - survey issued to 2015 team chairs, team members and CEOs of institutions recently evaluated/visited
May 1, 2016	Workgroup I - teams begin work on their respective Areas of Focus
May 16, 2016	Workgroup I - draft report due to the Steering Committee
May 19, 2016	Workgroup II Meeting – Los Rios CCD 4-hour workshop; 14 members reviewed and discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ History and purpose of accreditation ▪ National structure and climate of accreditation ▪ Reports comparing size, structure, history of sanctions, boards of 7 regional accreditors ▪ USDE/Congress demands for more public information on student achievement, completion rates, college costs, loan default rates, colleges “at risk” of accreditation sanction ▪ Work plan: (1) How higher education “alignment” works in other commissions, (2) Elements of model higher education accrediting system for the Western Region
May 23, 2016	Workgroup I - conference calls scheduled to review, discuss and edit the draft report
May 25, 2016	Workgroup I - draft report shared with CEO’s
May - June 2016	Member research and survey: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Structure and alignment in other regions/commissions in each region. ▪ Elements of model higher education accrediting system for Western Region.
June 1, 2016	Workgroup I - Final Report issued CEO’s
June 8, 2016	ACCJC Commission Meeting Closed Session , San Jose, CA, Doubletree Hotel CEOs Helen Benjamin and Brian King present Workgroup I preliminary report to the ACCJC Commission: Improving ACCJC Structure, Function and Relations
June 10, 2016	ACCJC Commission Meeting Open Session WG I Convener Helen Benjamin presents final report overview
July 14, 2016	Workgroup II Meeting – Coast CCD 4-hour workshop with 14 members (California public/private CEOs, WSCUC president/commission chair): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reviewed team research on models of higher education alignment in other regions ▪ Identified key elements for a model accrediting system ▪ Developed options for alignment of higher education accreditation in the Western Region: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Stronger relationship between ACCJC and WASC Senior (WSCUC) 2) Two-year colleges can choose accreditor (ACCJC or WSCUC) 3) Single accreditor for Western region 4) Relationship with another accreditor (not WSCUC)
July 18, 2016	Update to CCCCO Board of Governors: Accreditation Update – CEO Workgroups I & II
July 20, 2016	Workgroup II Meeting – Teleconference

	1.5 hour meeting with 6 members (California public/private CEOs) unable to attend July 14 meeting
August 16, 2016	ACCJC memo from Susan Kazama, Commission Chair and Barbara Beno, President ACCJC Preliminary Response to the Recommendations of Workgroup I
September 9, 2016	Workgroup I meeting with ACCJC Commissioners – Oakland Airport Hilton
September 20, 2016	Update to CCCCO Board of Governors: Accreditation Update CEO Workgroups I & II Workgroup I update by Helen Benjamin; Workgroup II update by Cindy Miles
October 11, 2016	Workgroup I meeting with ACCJC Commissioners – Oakland Airport Hilton Three tasks: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Prioritize recommendations 2) Develop survey for Fall 2016 team chairs, team members, CEOs of evaluated/visited colleges 3) Review progress by ACCJC on WG1 recommendations
October 25, 2016	Teleconference with US Department of Education (USDE) Workgroup II Convener Cindy Miles with Under Secretary Ted Mitchell, Deputy Asst. Secretary Lynn Mahaffie, Senior Policy Advisor Philip Martin USDE is very aware of CCCCEO workgroup activities, applauds focus on alignment It is important to think about the future of our community colleges and ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>What will CCs look like 10-20 years from now? More bachelor's degrees, growth of multiple missions, increased short-term certificates, more focus on post-graduate employment?</i> ▪ <i>What accreditation system is needed for this future? What peers would you need?</i> Re: Question of process for colleges to seek a change in accreditors if desired: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choice is not USDE's decision; this is accreditor's concern. • Accreditor receiving request would examine its existing scope as to how well it aligns with the institution(s) making the request; would apply to USDE for change of scope, if needed. • Geography is part of scope, so applying to another region would require accreditor to change its scope [USDE does not take regional view; regions were designated by regional accreditors] • Any institution seeking to change accreditor must be in good standing with current accreditor; exception is possible if accepting accreditor submits justification to USDE
October 28, 2016	Workgroup II Meeting – Chabot College 5 hour workshop; 13 members (California public/private CEOs, WSCUC president and commission chair, ACCJC commission vice chair): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update from ACCJC and Workgroup I ▪ Reviewed research comparing relations between community and senior colleges in Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), Higher Learning Commission (HLC), WSCUC ▪ Briefing on higher education policy, workings of US Dept. of Education & NACIQI by Jamiene Studley, National Policy Advisor, Beyond 12; Former Deputy Under Secretary, NACIQI Chair, USDE ▪ Clarified WSCUC's and ACCJC's interests:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reviewed four options identified in July regarding model for long-term future of higher education accreditation in the Western region. Members reached unanimous agreement on long-range goal: A SINGLE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION FOR THE WESTERN REGION [Noted that this would take a number of years (up to 10)]
November 8, 2016	<p>Workgroup II Meeting – Teleconference</p> <p>1.5 hour meeting with 3 members (California public/private CEOs) unable to attend Oct 28 meeting (plus individual call w/others). All confirmed their agreement with the recommendation.</p>
November 17, 2016	<p>Accreditation Update at Statewide CEO Meeting: CEO Workgroups I & II Workgroup I update by Helen Benjamin; Workgroup II update by Cindy Miles</p>
December 6, 2016	<p>Survey issued to fall 2016 team chairs, team members and CEOs of evaluated/visited</p>
January 17, 2017	<p>Workgroup II Meeting – San Diego CCD</p> <p>4-hour workshop; 14 members (California public/private CEOs, WSCUC president and commission chair, ACCJC commission chair and interim president):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update from ACCJC and Workgroup I ▪ Update from Statewide CEO Meeting ▪ Draft Framework: Communicating to ACCJC Members and key constituents ▪ Develop White Paper – criteria, rationale, timeline, steps to help with discussions, decision-making over coming months
February 2, 2017	<p>Workgroup II Meeting – Teleconference</p> <p>1.5 hour meeting with 5 members (California public/private CEOs) unable to attend Jan 17 meeting.</p>
February 8, 2017	<p>Workgroup II Meeting – Teleconference</p> <p>1.5 hour meeting with 2 members (California public/private CEOs) unable to attend Jan 17 meeting</p>
February 18, 2017	<p>Accreditation Panel Presentation – CA Academic Senate Accreditation Institute (Napa)</p> <p>Workgroup I & II Conveners Benjamin, Miles provide update with ACCJC interim CEO at closing session of California Statewide Academic Senate Accreditation Institute</p>
February 24, 2017	<p>Workgroup I Convener Panel Presentation – Anaheim</p> <p>Benjamin provides update with ACCJC Interim CEO at closing session of ACCCA annual meeting</p>
February 26, 2017	<p>Workgroups I and II Presentations at CA CEO Symposium– Solvang</p> <p>2.5 hour progress report and discussion with CEOs at Annual Symposium regarding progress of workgroups</p>
April 11, 2017	<p>Workgroup II Meeting – Teleconference</p> <p>1.0 hour meeting with 16 members (California public/private CEOs, WSCUC president, ACCJC commission chair and interim president):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update from Statewide CEO Symposium, ACCJC Conference, and PPEC ▪ Two separate levels of decisions needed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Conceptual 2) Implementation ▪ Develop Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document, with potential pathways, and communication strategy

April 17, 2017	<p>Workgroup II Meeting – Teleconference</p> <p>1.0 hour meeting with 5 members (California public/private CEOs) unable to participate on April 11 teleconference</p>
April 27, 2017	<p>Workgroup I Meeting – Oakland</p> <p>4 hour meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organize and coordinate a meeting with ACCJC representatives to check progress on implementation of WG1 recommendations ▪ Begin process of writing report on progress for presentation to the CEO Board and BOG
May 11, 2017	<p>Workgroup II Meeting – Los Rios CCD</p> <p>4.5 hour meeting with 13 members (California public/private CEOs, WSCUC president and chair, ACCJC interim president):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and implementation timeline ▪ Develop communication strategy
May 22, 2017	<p>Workgroup I Conference Call</p> <p>1 hour conference call to review individual reports, finalize June 22 meeting details, finalize draft letter to the Commission, and discuss other business of the workgroup</p>
May 25, 2017	<p>Workgroup II Meeting – Teleconference</p> <p>1.5 hour meeting with 5 members (California public/private CEOs) unable to participate on May 11 meeting</p>
June 22, 2017	<p>Workgroups I and II Joint Meeting – West Los Angeles College</p> <p>3 hour meeting with Commission staff and Commission chair to review progress to date and resolve remaining issues</p>
June 23, 2017	<p>Workgroup II Meeting – San Diego Community College District</p> <p>4 hour meeting with 10 members (California public/private CEOs, WSCUC president, ACCJC commission chair and interim president)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Update from Workgroup I and II Joint Meeting ▪ Reviewed and revised draft summary report (to include FAQs) and communication strategy
July 20, 2017	<p>Workgroup II Meeting – Teleconference</p> <p>1.5 hour meeting with 5 members (California public/private CEOs) unable to participate on June 23 meeting</p>
August – Sept. 2017	<p>Workgroups finalize reports for presentation to CEO Board and Board of Governors*</p>
September 15, 2017	<p>Workgroups I and II make presentations to CEO Board</p>
September 18, 2017	<p>Workgroups I and II make presentations to Board of Governors</p>

*The Community College League of California (CCLC) and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) have jointly collected a number of documents tracing the history, documentation, and evolution of accreditation reform activities from 2009 to 2017, which are posted on the CCLC website under [Accreditation Resources](#), including a chronology of activities leading to the formation of the two CEO Workgroups, updates on workgroup activities, and links to publications and reports, including the final reports of both Workgroups I & II.