



**ACCREDITING
COMMISSION
for COMMUNITY and
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association
of Schools and Colleges*

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MEMO TO: Dr. Dennis Harkins, President
Orange Coast College
2701 Fairview Road
Costa Mesa, CA 92628

FROM: Barbara A. Beno, President

DATE: May 15, 2014

SUBJECT: Enclosed Report of the External Evaluation Team

Previously, the chairperson of the External Evaluation Team (Evaluation Team) that recently visited Orange Coast College sent you a draft External Evaluation Report (Report) affording you the opportunity to correct errors of fact. We assume you have responded to the Team Chair. The Commission now has received the final version of the Report, a copy of which is enclosed for you. Please examine the enclosed Report.

- If you believe that the Report contains inaccuracies, you are invited to call them to the attention of the Commission. To do so, you should submit a letter stating recommended corrections to the ACCJC President. The letter should arrive at the Commission office by noon **Tuesday, May 20, 2014**, in order to be included in Commission materials. The letter may also be sent electronically as a PDF attachment.
- If the institution also wishes to submit additional material on issues of substance and to any Accreditation Standard deficiencies noted in the report to the Commission, it should exercise care, keeping in mind the Commission cannot read and absorb large amounts of material on short notice. Material should arrive at the ACCJC office no later than noon **Tuesday, May 20, 2014**.
- ACCJC policy provides that, if desired, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) may request an appearance before the Commission to discuss the Report. The Commission requires that the institution notify the Commission office by noon **Tuesday, May 20, 2014**, or earlier, of its intent to attend the meeting. This enables the Commission to invite the Team Chair to attend. Any written materials must be handled as provided in the paragraph above. Materials will not be accepted after that date.

The next meeting of the Accrediting Commission will be held on **June 4-6, 2014**, at the Citizen Hotel, Sacramento, California. The enclosure, "Procedures for an Institutional Chief Executive Officer's Appearance Before the Commission," addresses the protocol of such appearances.

Please note that the Commission will not consider the institution as being indifferent if its CEO does not choose to appear before the Commission. If the institution does request to be heard at the Commission meeting, the chairperson of the Evaluation Team will also be asked to be present to explain the reasons for statements in the Report. Both parties will be allowed brief testimony before the Commission deliberates in private.

The enclosed Report should be considered confidential and not given general distribution until it has been acted upon by the Commission and you have been notified by letter of the action taken.

BAB/tl

Enclosure

cc: Dr. John Weispfenning, Accreditation Liaison Officer (w/o enclosure)



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Procedures for an Institutional Chief Executive Officer's
Appearance Before the Commission

The Commission considers institutional accreditation actions in January and June of each calendar year. ACCJC policy provides that when the Commission is deliberating or acting upon matters that concern an institution, it will invite the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the institution to meet with the Commission in Executive Session.¹ The appearance is for the purpose of discussing issues of substance and any Accreditation Standards deficiencies noted in the report. There is no requirement that the CEO attend the Commission meeting. If the Commission is considering institutional action as a result of an evaluation team visit, and if the CEO elects to attend the meeting, the Commission will also invite the Chair of the Evaluation Team (Team Chair) or designee to attend.

An institution must send written notification to the ACCJC office at least 15 working days before the scheduled Commission meeting if the CEO wishes to attend. The institution should bear in mind the evaluation of the institution is based upon the conditions at the institution at the time of the team visit.

At the meeting, the institutional CEO will be invited to make a brief presentation, followed by questions from the Commission. The CEO is expected to be the presenter, and should consult with Commission staff if there are plans to invite other representatives to join the CEO. On the day of the Commission meeting, ACCJC staff will escort the CEO (and additional representatives) to and from the designated waiting area to the meeting at the appropriate time. An institution's presentation should not exceed five (5) minutes. The Commission reserves the right to establish a different time limit on such presentations.

The Team Chair or designee will also attend the presentation, normally by conference call. The Commissioners may ask questions of the Team Chair after college representatives have exited. The Team Chair will then be excused, and the Commission will continue its deliberations in closed session.

The CEO will be notified in writing of the subsequent action taken by the Commission.

¹ Policies that are relevant to this process are the *Policy on Access to Commission Meetings*, *Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions*, *Policy on Commission Good Practice in Relations with Member Institutions*, and *Policy on the Rights and Responsibilities of ACCJC and Member Institutions*.

RECEIVED

MAY 15 2014

FOLLOW-UP VISIT REPORT

*Accrediting Commission for
Community and Junior Colleges*

ORANGE COAST COLLEGE

**2701 Fairview Road, P.O. Box 5005
Costa Mesa, CA 92628-5005**

**A Confidential Report Prepared for the
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges**

This report represents the findings of the evaluation team that visited

Orange Coast College

on April 8 and April 9, 2014

Mr. Anthony Cantu, President, Fresno City College

Ms. Cyndie Luna, Communication Instructor, Fresno City College

Dr. Arnulfo Cedillo, Trustee, Chabot-Las Positas Community College District

Dr. Jeanette Mann, Trustee, Pasadena City College

RECEIVED
MAY 1 2014
DATE: May 7, 2014

TO: Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

SUBJECT: Follow-Up Visit Report to Orange Coast College on April 8-9, 2014

INTRODUCTION

A comprehensive visit to Orange Coast College was conducted on March 19-21, 2013. At its meeting in June 2013, the Accrediting Commission took action to place the College on Warning status, with a requirement that the College complete a Follow-Up Report by March 15, 2014, followed by a visit of Commission representatives.

The visiting team, Mr. Anthony Cantu, Ms. Cyndie Luna, Dr. Arnulfo Cedilla, and Dr. Jeanette Mann, conducted a site visit to Orange Coast College on April 8-9, 2014. Team members received both a hard copy and an electronic copy of the Follow-Up Report. The team read the Follow-Up Report and reviewed the evidence provided with the electronic copy of the report. The team was at the College on April 8 and interviewed individuals who participated in the preparation of the responses to the recommendations: the college president, the vice president of instruction, a member of the Board of Trustees, the vice chancellor of educational services and technology, and faculty. The team met with the chancellor and the Board of Trustees at the District Office on April 9, 2014.

The purpose of the visit was to verify the accuracy of the statements made in the Follow-Up Report prepared by the College and to determine the College and District's compliance with Commission Standards by having adequately addressed the following recommendations:

District Recommendation 1

To meet the Standard, as recommended by the 2007 team, the team recommends that faculty and others directly responsible for student progress towards achieving state student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes. (Standard III.A.1.c)

Findings and Evidence

Although the Coast Community College District (District) and the Coast Federation of Teachers (CFE) are currently in collective bargaining negotiations, both recognize and agree on the need to include student learning outcomes (SLOs) as a component of faculty evaluations. Until a new bargaining contract is negotiated, there is evidence that the District and the CFE have agreed to include SLOs in the current Coast Community College District Administrator Evaluation of Faculty form used for the evaluation of full-time faculty.

Part-time faculty are represented by two different employee groups: CFE and the Coast Community College Association (CCA). Both employee groups and the District have agreed to

include SLOs as part of part-time faculty evaluation using the Faculty Evaluation Report forms for CFE unit members and the Part-Time Faculty Evaluation Form for CCA unit members.

The Coast District Management Association (CDMA) reached agreement with the District to include SLOs as part of management evaluation in the form of a question that specifically addresses the extent to which a manager “supports faculty and staff in the implementation of SLOs as a measure of student success and teaching excellence”.

The District recognizes the role that classified staff plays in supporting student learning. Management has assumed the responsibility of ensuring that classified staff receive training and have access to staff development opportunities to increase their knowledge and familiarity of student learning.

The team reviewed evaluations of members of the different employee groups and validated that SLOs are indeed included in evaluations.

Conclusion

Employee groups and the District have engaged in serious discussions regarding the inclusion of SLOs as part of the evaluation process. The team had access to evaluations and was able to validate that SLOs are being used as part of the evaluation process.

The District has fully addressed the recommendation and meets the Standard.

District Recommendation 2

To meet the Standards, and as recommended by the 2007 team, the team recommends that the Board and district follow their policies regarding the delegation of authority to the Chancellor for effective operations of the district and to the college presidents for the effective operation of the colleges. Further the team recommends that the district develop administrative procedures that effectively carry out delegation of authority to the chancellor and the college presidents. (Standards IV.B.1.j, IV.B.3.a, IV.B.3.g)

Findings and Evidence

In responding to this recommendation, the District followed the process outlined in Board Policy (BP) 2410 and Administrative Procedure (AP) 2410 for the review and revision of existing board policies and the corresponding administrative procedures and the creation of new ones, which it had approved in March 2012. Since that time, the Board of Trustees has continued to revise existing policies and, in some cases, created new policies and/or administrative procedures. The revision of BP 2430 and the creation of the corresponding administrative procedure AP 2430 both more clearly delineate authority to the chancellor and college presidents and identify the specific areas for which both are responsible. Of note is the creation of administrative procedures for delegating authority to the chief business officer for fiscal matters (AP 6100), designating

authorized signatures (AP 6150), authorizing bids and contracts (AP 6430), and authorizing contracts relating to construction (BP 2430). Additionally, Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 7110 delegate specified personnel matters to the chancellor. There was further evidence of the delegation of authority in the revision of BP 2200, which now includes the chancellor in the hiring and evaluation of the board secretary and the appointment and oversight of the district general counsel, district external auditor, and the district lobbyist. These functions were previously held exclusively by the board.

The team was able to validate that all of the board policies and administrative procedures relating to the delegation of authority have been approved by the Board of Trustees and are being implemented.

Interviews with the chancellor, presidents, and the Board of Trustees indicated that it is too soon to determine the effectiveness of these changes. However, they indicated that the necessary infrastructure is in place to allow for a continued shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Conclusion

Tremendous improvement in the operationalization of the policies was evidenced. Since the operationalization of these policies is relatively new, close monitoring is needed to ensure the smooth transition of the changes and to ensure college personnel understand the changes and work within agreed upon policies and procedures.

The District has fully addressed the recommendation and meets the Standards.

District Recommendation 3

To meet the Standard, the team recommends that the Board of Trustees follow its established process for self-evaluation of Board performance as published in its board policy. (Standard IV.B.1.g)

Findings and Evidence

A workgroup with representatives from the three colleges and the District Office was formed to draft a response to this recommendation. The workgroup for District Recommendation 3 included, Dr. Pedro Gutierrez, academic senate president, Coastline College, Wes Bryan, president, Golden West College.

The Board Revised Board Policy (BP) 2745 that resulted in better documentation of board discussions and clarification on the board self-evaluation process. The new board policy requires the Board to review and approve procedures and an evaluation instrument for Board self-evaluation during any regular board meeting in September of each odd numbered year. This BP was approved.

On August 7, 2013, the board discussed its current self-evaluation process and proposed changes to the process and tool based on their review of other districts, tools suggested by the Community College League of California (CCLC) and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT). Based on these reviews and discussions, the board developed a revised self-evaluation process and tools and approved the evaluation instruments on August 21, 2013. One survey tool was sent out to all faculty and staff in the District asking for feedback on board performance. This is the first time the board included all employees in this survey which had previously been a self-evaluation only. The second survey instrument was a Board of Trustees self-evaluation that was to be completed by board members only.

The board members completed the self-evaluation online and the board secretary prepared the report of the survey responded. The board then requested all employees of the CCCD to complete a board evaluation survey. These results of both surveys were presented to the board on October 2, 2013. A board special study session was held on October 16, 2013 to discuss the evaluation results. This review resulted in the board developing several goals and action plans for the board to improve their processes. The board analyzed the responses and identified the issue as one of communication with the campus community. The board developed a seven-point plan and, according to the board president, decided to concentrate on communication with district employees and meeting the requirements for accreditation. This plan will be evaluated, according to board policy, in October 2014. The board is to be commended for taking the extra step of publicizing the results from both their own self-evaluation and the employee survey including all written comments in an effort to be transparent to the public. It is evident that the board has taken the self-evaluation process very seriously and put in an extraordinary amount of work in an effort to improve their performance.

The board established a self-evaluation process that requires in September of odd number years a review of the self-evaluation process and approval of the self-evaluation instrument. This evaluation results in board goals and action plans to make improvements. In September of even-numbered years, the board has calendared a report in their annual log requiring a progress report on the board's goals and action plans.

Conclusion

The revised Board Policy 2745 regarding board self-evaluation is posted on the District website. The Board has been following the new Board Policy and conducted a self-evaluation as well as requesting input from all District employees. The Board developed a 2013 Board Self-Evaluation: Goals and Plan based on the self-evaluation.

The District has fully addressed the recommendation and meets the Standard.

District Recommendation 4

To meet the Standards and as recommended by the 2007 team, the team recommends that the board implement a process for the evaluation of its policies and procedures according to an identified timeline and revise the policies as necessary. (Standard IV.B.1.e)

Findings and Evidence

A workgroup with representatives from the three colleges and the District Office was formed to draft a response to this recommendation. The workgroup for District Recommendation 4 included, Denise Cabanel-Bleuer, academic senate president, Orange Coast College, Dr. Andrea Serban, vice chancellor, educational services and technology, Coast Community College District Office.

In February 2012, new Board Policy 2410 Board Policies and Administrative Procedures and associate Administrative Procedure 2410 were adopted and ratified by the Board of Trustees at the March 21, 2012 meeting. The new BP and AP 2410 provides for a regular review of all BP's and AP's during a four-year cycle. This new procedure clearly establishes responsibilities and procedures for updates to Board Policies (BP) and Administrative Procedures (AP). Any employee may suggest a change or revision to a Board Policy or Administrative Regulation through the appropriate governance structure. The Board of Trustees in consultation with the Board Secretary is responsible for policies and regulations related to the Board of Trustees and the District. The chancellor has overall responsibility for development or revision of board policies and administrative procedures related to the general institution. The chancellor may delegate this responsibility as appropriate.

In spring 2012, the board directed staff to realign the Board Policies and Administrative Procedures with the numbering system recommended by the Community College League of California (CCLC). The vice chancellor of educational services and technology led this effort with appropriate District Office staff. These recommended changes to BP's and AP's were reviewed by the District Consultation Council who in turn reviewed them with their various constituency groups on the college campuses. All Board Policies and Administrative Procedures were reviewed, revised or created between January 2013 and February 2013 except for a small number of human resources BP's and AR's that must go through the negotiation process. This remaining area will be completed by June 2014.

A four-year review cycle has been established so during each year a group of the BP's and AP's will be updated, reviewed, and approved for changes by the board after going through the consultation process. At the completion of each four-year cycle, all BP's and AP's will have been reviewed. This procedure set up a regular review process for all BP's and AP's as required by the standard.

During the interim years, the vice chancellor of educational services and technology is responsible for reviewing any CCLC recommendations for change and bringing them to the attention of the appropriate District or campus administrators who will then develop

recommendations. The new BP's and AP's will then go through the consultation process for approval with final approval required by the BOT.

Conclusion

The District updated all Board Policies and Administrative Procedures aligning them with the Community College League of California numbering structure. The District also developed a four-year review process during which time all Board Policies and Administrative Procedures will be reviewed during the cycle.

The District has fully addressed the recommendation and meets the Standard.

Commission Recommendation 1

To meet the Standards, the District needs to examine the role of the four board employees who report directly to the Board of Trustees to ensure there is no conflict with the delegation of authority of the Chancellor and the college presidents. (Standard IV.B.3.a, IV.B.3.b)

Findings and Evidence

As part of the chancellor's commitment to work with the Board of Trustees to address issues surrounding the delegation of authority, the role of the board secretary was thoroughly examined. (The other three employees referenced in this recommendation report to the board secretary, not directly to the Board of Trustees or the chancellor.) The most concrete changes resulting from this review occurred through a substantial revision to the job description for this position. The reporting relationship has been changed from reporting exclusively to the Board of Trustees to a dual reporting relationship to the Board of Trustees and the chancellor, with the assumption that the chancellor and the board will jointly hire and evaluate the employee in this position. Also, a number of job functions that would more appropriately be among the responsibilities of the chancellor (for example, "serve as a representative of the Board on strategic committees and task forces to advance the District mission, goals, and objectives," "direct the preparation and maintenance of Board Policies and Administrative Procedures," etc.) were either eliminated from the job description or revised to reflect a supporting role. All relevant board policies and administrative procedures have also been revised to reflect these changes.

Although team members found these changes positive in terms of supporting delegation of authority to the chancellor and moving away from a previous era when lack of trust in a former chancellor motivated the board to seek more direct authority over district administrative staff, interviews revealed a lack of clarity as to how the dual reporting relationship will actually work. For example, the board secretary (now officially called district director of the office of the board of trustees/secretary of the board) has yet to be evaluated under this new structure. Also, there were no specific examples of how the various changes in the functions of this position related to

the delegation of authority have affected board and District operations. However, it is quite possible that this is simply the result of the relatively brief time these changes have been in effect.

Conclusion: The District has responded substantively to this recommendation, but there has not yet been enough experience with the changes in the reporting relationship and the functions of this position to evaluate their effectiveness in addressing concerns regarding delegation of authority to the Chancellor.

The District has substantively addressed this recommendation and meets the Standards.

Commission Recommendation 2

While some online instructors have established regular and substantive contact with their students, these strategies are not being consistently applied in the online environment.

Findings and Evidence

When Orange Coast College received this recommendation in 2013 the College began to immediately address the issues through the Online Advisory Board (OAB). The OAB includes faculty, administration, and staff assigned to curriculum design and faculty training. In order to validate the evidence of the action taken, interviews were conducted with online faculty, members of the OAB, and students enrolled in both online and face to face classes. Instructor level access was also provided for all online classes and a sample of courses was reviewed for consistency.

The first step the OAB took was to ensure that the College's current Distance Education Guidelines sufficiently addressed regular and effective contact. The College determined that the guidelines were sufficient, and moved forward to ensure that faculty were aware and following them. The OAB surveyed online faculty to determine what methods of contact they were using in the online environment. The results indicated that while many faculty were initiating regular and effective contact with students, they were not using methods tracked and/or visible in the College's course management system (Blackboard). Campus interviews with several online faculty and members of the OAB determined that prior to the recommendation, the majority of faculty were using email for frequent and "quick" student feedback, and unfortunately email is not tracked in Blackboard, even when it is initiated through Blackboard. The OAB began a training program that was completed by 67 online faculty. The faculty had the option of completing the training online or on campus. A major component of the training was to raise faculty awareness of regular and effective contact, as well as differentiate contact that occurs within versus outside the Blackboard environment. After current online faculty received training it was incorporated into the College's Teaching and Learning Online (TLO) training program. It is mandatory that new online instructors complete the TLO. Therefore, all new online faculty will be trained on the College's expectations for regular and effective contact. In addition to the

TLO, the College offers “boot camp” and other workshops to support ongoing education for online faculty. Online teaching faculty also communicated a high level of support from administration.

In addition to training, the current online course addendum was revised to include means of regular and effective contact. All 198 online courses have completed the revision. The Distance Education Guidelines and the subsequent training also emphasize the importance of communicating means of instructor feedback in the syllabus, or other documents seen early in the semester such as course contracts and opening announcements. A sampling of online courses currently being offered indicated that this is occurring on a consistent basis. There is also a Distance Learning Faculty Evaluation Report that includes assessment of instructor initiated contact. Although not a required aspect of the evaluation report, it is available at the discretion of the evaluation committee. Finally, any faculty member wanting to teach online is required to present a complete course to the OAB. The OAB gives the faculty feedback and suggestions and makes a recommendation to the Curriculum Committee. The recommendation is strongly considered by the Curriculum Committee before approval. The Distance Education Guidelines also indicate sufficient methods of regular and effective contact. These include threaded discussions, announcements, timely feedback and other forms of communication. The sampling of online courses provided evidence that this happening consistently in the online environment. Now that faculty are aware of which communication is visible in the Blackboard system, the frequency of instructor-student contact has become evident. The faculty are using innovative technology to initiate contact and respond to students. Interviews with two current students enrolled in both online and face to face classes validated these findings.

Conclusion

The OAB is to be commended for its efforts in the areas of training and oversight. The training program for regular and effective contact program has evolved to be a fully integrated component of their online teacher training program. The OAB is proactive, hands-on, and a model for online course oversight.

Online faculty are also to be commended for their commitment to regular and effective contact. The classes are rich, and interaction is comparable to a face to face environment. The faculty embraced the recommendation and have used the opportunity to improve teaching.

The College, through the OAB and dedicated staff, has implemented training and course oversight to ensure that established standards for regular and effective contact are consistently met.

The College has fully addressed the recommendation and meets the Standards.