

TO: BOARD OF TRUSTEES
FROM: SUPERINTENDENT

COMMUNICATION NO. 174-2009/10-S
Prepared by the Office of the Superintendent
for Presentation to the Board of Trustees
April 12, 2010

SUBJECT: ACCREDITATION - DISCUSSION OF ACCREDITATION STANDARDS IV.B.1.h.
and IV.B.1.i.

A. Background

At the April 22, 2009, retreat, the Board of Trustees recommended that specific accreditation standards related to the Board be discussed at each regular meeting.

The text of accreditation standards IV.B.1.h. and IV.B.1.i. Leadership and Governance, Board and Administrative Organization, have been included in the attachment. Also included are the district policies related to the standards, relevant questions from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges' (ACCJC) *Guide to Evaluating Institutions*, as well as the Community College League of California's *Resources for Governing Board on Codes of Ethics*.

B. Budget Implications

None.

C. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Trustees provide input regarding how well the district is meeting accreditation standards IV.B.1.h. and IV.B.1.i. and recommend changes to or reaffirm the board policy related to the standard.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie L. Fisher, Sr.
Superintendent/President

Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

The institution recognizes and utilizes the contributions of leadership throughout the organization for continuous improvement of the institution. Governance roles are designed to facilitate decisions that support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness, while acknowledging the designated responsibilities of the governing board and the chief administrator.

B. Board and Administrative Organization

In addition to the leadership of individuals and constituencies, institutions recognize the designated responsibilities of the governing board for setting policies and of the chief administrator for the effective operation of the institution. Multi-college districts/systems clearly define the organizational roles of the district/system and the colleges.

1. The institution has a governing board that is responsible for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution. The governing board adheres to a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the chief administrator for the college or the district/system.

- h. The governing board has a code of ethics that includes a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that violates its code.**
 - i. The governing board is informed about and involved in the accreditation process.**

ACCJC Guide to Evaluating Institutions

Questions for Standard IV.B.1.h.

- What is the board's stated process for dealing with board behavior that is unethical? Is there any track record of the board implementing this process? What was the result? (*BP 2715 Reference - Dr. Beno's training workshop, CCLC's Board Ethics Resource Guide.*)

Questions for Standard IV.B.1.i.

- What kinds of training are provided to the board about the accreditation process, and Commission standards?
- How does the board participate appropriately in institutional self-study and planning efforts? (*BP/AP 3200*)
- How do board actions, including planning and resource allocation, indicate a commitment to improvements planned as part of institutional self-evaluation and accreditation processes?
- How do board actions reflect the commitment to supporting and improving student learning outcomes as reflected in the accreditation standards and expectations for institutional improvement? Is the board informed of institutional reports due to the Commission, and of Commission recommendations to the institution?
- Is the board knowledgeable about accreditation standards, including those that apply to the board?
- Does the board assess its own performance using accreditation standards? (*BP 2745*)

BP 2715 Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice

Reference:

Accreditation Standard IV.B.1.a, e, & h

The Board maintains high standards of ethical conduct for its members. Members of the Board are responsible for:

- Acting only in the best interests of the entire community.
- Ensuring public input into board deliberations; adhering to the law and spirit of the open meeting laws and regulations.
- Preventing conflicts of interest and the perception of conflicts of interest.
- Exercising authority only as a board.
- Using appropriate channels of communication.
- Respecting others; acting with civility.
- Being informed about the district, educational issues, and responsibilities of trusteeship.
- Devoting adequate time to board work.
- Maintaining confidentiality of closed sessions.

If a trustee violates or thinks he or she has violated any provision of the Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice, or if a trustee observes, learns of, or in good faith believes it is possible that another trustee has violated any such provision, that trustee must immediately report the actual or suspected violation to the Board as a whole. The Board has an obligation to investigate and address within a mutually agreed upon time frame all reported violations of this Code of Ethics/Standards of Practice.

Adopted: 7/5/05

Revised: 11/7/05

BP 2745 Board Self-Evaluation

Reference:

Accreditation Standard IV.B.1.e & g

The Board is committed to assessing its own performance as a board in order to identify its strengths and areas in which it may improve its functioning.

To that end, the Board has established the following processes:

Annual Evaluation

The five publicly elected members of the Board shall accomplish an annual evaluation of the Board of Trustees using an acceptable self-evaluation method. It is preferred that the evaluation be conducted during the spring semester.

Objectives

- a. Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of Board operation.
- b. Formulate ways for improving Board operation.

In reaching the above objectives, each trustee/participant shall be expected to refrain from defaming or ridiculing a fellow trustee. Suggestions for improvement shall be kept on a positive professional basis, and the suggestions shall be noted in a subsequent evaluation.

Evaluation Chairperson

The president of the Board may serve as chairperson of the evaluation meeting(s) or may assign the chair responsibilities to another trustee.

Adopted: 7/5/05

BP 3200 Accreditation

Reference:

Accreditation Eligibility Requirement 20, Standard IV.B.1.I

The Superintendent/President shall ensure the District complies with the accreditation process and standards of the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges and of other District programs that seek special accreditation.

The Superintendent/President shall keep the Board informed of approved accrediting organizations and the status of accreditations.

The Superintendent/President shall ensure that the Board is involved in any accreditation process in which Board participation is required.

The Superintendent/President shall provide the Board with a summary of any accreditation report and any actions taken or to be taken in response to recommendations in an accreditation report.

See Administrative Procedure #3200

Adopted: 11/7/05

AP 3200 Accreditation

Reference:

Accreditation Eligibility Requirement 20, Standard IV.B.1.I

Organizational Process for the Self Study

AVC Statement of Philosophy for the Self Study Process:

Dr. Bryan Cooper

We at Antelope Valley College view the accreditation process as an opportunity for reflection and self-examination, activities often neglected in the day-to-day pressures of meeting the needs of our students and community. Through reflection and self-examination, we hope to refine our programs and services, identify areas that need strengthening and determine the future direction of the institution. If we are to fulfill these goals, we must conduct our self-examination honestly, openly, and objectively.

It has been our experience in the past that the self-study process has tended to provide a sense of common purpose and unity to the campus. Staff from every sector of the campus work harmoniously together to create a document that reflects our best appraisal of where we are, where we want to go, and how to get there. The process by which we create a self-study report is, therefore, as valuable as the document it produces.

The Steering Committee for the Self Study

The Accreditation Self Study is guided by a Steering Committee that is co chaired by the Faculty Coordinator, and the Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO), and consists of the co chairs of each standard committee, the presidents of the Academic Senate and the Associated Student Body, the presidents of the faculty and classified unions, a board member, a community member, and self study editor(s). The Institutional Researcher serves in an *ex officio* capacity. Each member of the steering committee should receive a notebook containing a copy of the ACCJC standards, an ACCJC glossary, and the *Guide to Evaluating Institutions Using the ACCJC Standards*.

The committee should discuss the importance of honest inquiry, the nature of evidence, and the difference between the self-study and the report of the self-study. Members of the Steering Committee should attend training workshops offered by the ACCJC if possible. The Steering Committee establishes the timeline for the self-study, monitors the progress of the standards committees, and decides how the final report of the self-study will be written and edited. Regular meetings should be held to discuss progress on the self-study and resolve any problems or questions that arise. In preparation for the self-study, the Steering Committee conducts a staff survey and a student survey based upon the accreditation standards and created by the standards committees.

The Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO), the Vice-President of Academic Affairs, will work collegially with the Faculty Coordinator for the Self-Study. The Academic Senate calls for applications for the position of Faculty Coordinator for the Self-Study no less than two years before the scheduled visit. Applicants must submit a letter of interest and qualifications to the Executive Board of the Senate who interviews the candidates and makes the appointment.

Standards Committees for the Self-Study

Committees for each of the standards are formed to conduct the self-study. Each committee is co chaired by a faculty member or a classified employee and an administrator. The Faculty Accreditation Coordinator puts out a call for the co-chairs for the Standards Committees of the self-study. The Accreditation Liaison Officer is responsible for assuring that there is an administrator serving as a co-chair on each standards committee. Each pair of co chairs invites the campus community to participate in the study. Certain members of the staff may be particularly recruited because of their expertise in various areas. Other staff members may serve as resource persons to the committees. Each standard committee should be reviewed to reflect campus diversity. Every standard committee should have a student member. Community members should also be recruited to serve on each standard committee. It is the responsibility of the standard committee along with the Faculty Accreditation Coordinator to collect data to measure how well Antelope Valley College has met accreditation standards.

Clerical support as well as an Accreditation Office must be provided for the Steering Committee. The office serves as a repository for the documents collected for the Self-Study as well as a meeting room.

Drafting the Report of the Self Study

Generally, each of the standards committees submits a report of its findings using the format established by the ACCJC regarding the analysis of current status, evaluation and plans for addressing issues raised during the self-study. These drafts are then edited by an individual or editing committee as determined by the Steering Committee for consistency in format, tone, and voice.

Campus Communication

Communication with the campus community about the progress of the self-study is critical. The Faculty Accreditation Coordinator and the Accreditation Liaison Officer make presentations to the Academic Senate, the Associated Student Body, the Administrative Council, the College Coordinating Council, the Board of Trustees and other shared governance committees concerning the accreditation standards and process. Venues for additional communication, like newsletters or websites, should be created by the Steering Committee. Drafts of the report of the self-study as well as the results of the staff and student survey should be made available on the intranet and on reserve in the library as well as in various administrative offices for campus comment. Campus forums should be held to discuss the draft and the issues raised by the self-study. A summary of the issues raised by the open forums is communicated to the campus community and to the Steering Committee. Based on feedback from the campus community, the self-study will be amended as needed.

Visiting Team Findings

The findings of the ACCJC visiting team will be available to the campus at large. The Steering Committee should continue to meet to prepare the mid-term report as well as any interim reports that are required.

The Board of Trustees, Academic Senate, Strategic Planning and Budget Committee, Administrative Council and other appropriate campus committees and constituent groups should review the findings of the visiting team and develop institutional goals to implement those findings.

11/7/05