



ACCREDITATION 2016

CHANCELLOR EMPHASIZES IMPORTANCE OF ACCREDITATION

In recent years, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) has turned a careful eye to California's community colleges to ensure that they are adequately meeting educational standards. Community colleges are held to high standards of student success and institutional performance, and being accredited is an integral part of assuring quality and public trust.

At the Los Angeles Community College District, we are fully committed to meeting these high standards and view the accreditation process as both an opportunity to affirm what is going well and to improve where necessary.

LACCD's commitment to student success and excellence is recognized by the ACCJC. Our accreditation is a reflection of LACCD's continued tradition of providing quality instruction and support services that allow students to pursue and achieve their educational goals. Being accredited also means that our students can receive federal financial aid and

veteran benefits, and have the assurance that their course work will be accepted elsewhere when they transfer or enter the workforce.

LACCD has a proud history of serving the greater Los Angeles region and, as our graduates and current students attest, LACCD's faculty and staff are diligent in ensuring that students receive an outstanding educational experience and in making student success their top priority. It is this 'can-do' attitude and level of excellence that has helped propel tens of thousands of LACCD graduates to achieve their goals and dreams.

As we prepare for the 2016 districtwide accreditation, let's embrace the accreditation process and professional self-regulation as an opportunity to refine and improve our institutional processes, and ultimately the educational outcomes of our students. Our students and their success—there is no more important goal.

Thank you for your commitment to our students and to this district. Please receive my very best wishes for a strong start to the fall semester.

Gracias y un abrazo (thank you and a warm embrace),

Francisco C. Rodriguez Ph.D.
Chancellor, Los Angeles Community College District



MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT ACADEMIC SENATE PRESIDENT

DON GAUTHIER



Don Gauthier, DAS President

As you are already aware, all nine of our colleges and the District Educational Services Center will be participating in accreditation activities in the months leading up to the Spring 2016 visit by the ACCJC, our accrediting agency.

Our institutions are being held to new and more demanding standards and unprecedented levels of accountability by local, state and federal

agencies, as well as the ACCJC. All aspects of what we do from the classroom to the Board room are under scrutiny. Faculty involvement and active participation in accreditation processes is vital for successful

accreditation outcomes and public assurance of the quality and integrity of our programs.

Title 5 defined for faculty in the California community colleges certain roles and responsibilities as professionals in shared governance. Faculty are charged with oversight of policy development and implementation in the 10+1 “academic and professional matters.” One of the most important of these eleven areas includes “faculty roles and involvement in accreditation processes, including self-study and annual reports.”

As professional educators, we play a crucial role in the success of our students and our colleges. The accreditation process allows us to contemplate and consider what we are doing well and what we need to do to improve. Only through frank and honest assessment of our policies, practices, and procedures can we determine how to best serve our diverse students and communities. This means that faculty must be an integral part of the discussion, evaluation and assessment of our colleges. As professionals, we owe this to ourselves, our students and the communities we serve.

BIENNIAL STUDENT SURVEY UNDERWAY

In order to serve our students better, and as part of continuous quality improvement, the Los Angeles Community College District conducts a biennial student survey. The first Student Survey was conducted in 1996 and has been administered every two years since that time. As such, it is the LACCD’s largest collaborative effort between faculty, staff, and students at all nine colleges.

The Fall 2014 student survey will take place between September 29th and October 19th. Approximately 51,000 students will take the survey in 1,464 classes with the assistance of 1,256 faculty members. Under the able coordination of Dr. Moon Ko and in partnership with faculty from across the district, the survey is administered simultaneously at all nine colleges. Distance Education students will have the ability to complete the survey online and give their direct feedback as well.

Classes in which the survey is to be conducted are selected based on random sampling, which allows colleges to draw conclusions about the entire population based on survey results. Results are used by colleges and the ESC in support of decision making, program review and in the development of grant application proposals, among other activities.



Dr. Moon Ko prepares boxes of surveys for distribution

This year’s survey includes the following categories: Goals and Plans, Student Background, Financial Resources, College Services, College Facilities and Security, and Academic Experiences.

Although general topic areas remain consistent from survey to survey, individual questions and themes are revised regularly in order to ensure relevance to

current student interests and emerging needs.

This year, for the first time since the survey was initiated, survey questions are being mapped to ACCJC standards. The results of this mapping will be made available to all colleges in order to assist them in preparing their accreditation reports.

ESC BEGINS REVITALIZED PROGRAM REVIEW CYCLE

The Educational Services Center (ESC) itself, as well as all nine LACCD colleges, will be visited by the ACCJC in Spring 2016. In preparation for that event, the ESC has looked to updating its own program review processes as a first step.

In years past, the ESC has undergone a biennial process to update the District Office Service Outcomes (DOSOs), which are published in the District Governance Handbook. However, review indicated the need for more structure and the creation of individual Service Area Outcomes (SAOs) for each of the ESC's different units.



Dr. Matthew Lee with participants at ESC workshop, September 2, 2014

In response, Dr. Matthew Lee has been contracted to assist the ESC in developing and administering a new program review cycle prior to the 2016 visit.

The ESC's goals are to establish an initial set of SAOs, assess them via customer satisfaction surveys and internal metrics, set goals for improvement, and complete another program review cycle with improvements in place by the time of the 2016 visit.

On August 19, 2014, the ESC held the first in a series of workshops to assist senior staff in framing and understanding the process they would be undertaking over the next year. Many of the topics that Dr. Lee covered are applicable to any program review scenario, whether at a college or at the ESC.

The key themes that Dr. Lee discussed in the first workshop included the importance of language, and linkages between program review and outcomes assessment.

The Importance of Language

Dr. Lee emphasized the importance of using a common language to ensure that all members are on the same page. For example: "What are we referring to when we say program review? Is it the review of a program in a college, such as the review of curriculum, or the review of a discipline in a division? The expectation of the ACCJC is that all members of the institution speak the same language when describing the process."

Program Review and Outcomes Assessment

According to Dr. Lee, the benefits of integrated outcomes assessment and program review include:

- Demonstrating continuous improvement based on regular, evidence-based assessment,
- Ensuring that assessment and improvement are combined into a seamless process, and
- Helping focus resources on identified institutional priorities.

The second workshop took place on September 2, 2014. In preparation, Dr. Lee requested that participants apply what they had learned in the first workshop to prepare a draft program review, starting from an outcome and performance objective all the way through a preliminary improvement objective. Workshop participants then congregated in small groups to conduct peer review and offer one another feedback, with Dr. Lee's oversight.

ESC BEGINS REVITALIZED PROGRAM REVIEW CYCLE (CONTINUED)



*Workshop at Trade-Tech College,
September 18, 2014*

The third workshop took place on September 18, 2014, and was attended by over 50 employees from all divisions in the ESC. In this six-hour training, staff members, with assistance from senior staff who had participated in earlier workshops, learned how to formulate program review for their individual units by building on the framework that had been previously laid out.

Based on these three workshops, individual units within the ESC will now begin the hard work of finalizing and implementing their program reviews. Support will be provided by the Institutional Effectiveness team, under the guidance of Associate Vice Chancellor Maury Pearl.

WELCOME TO THE ACCREDITATION 2016 NEWSLETTER

We're kicking-off the 2016 LACCD accreditation cycle with a bi-monthly newsletter. This is the first issue, and we hope you find it useful.

In future issues, we'll report on District-wide accreditation activities as well profile individual college's teams and tactics. Please email any comments, suggestions or ideas for this newsletter to Kristen Van Hala at VanHalKM@email.laccd.edu. We look forward to hearing from you!



Finishing strong in 2016!

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