Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges Accreditation Standards

June 2025

Standard 1: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness

The institution has a clearly defined mission that reflects its character, values, organizational structure, and unique student population. The mission outlines the institution's explicit commitment to achievement for all students and serves as a guiding principle for institutional planning, action, evaluation, improvement, and innovation.

1.1 The institution has established a clearly defined mission that appropriately reflects its character, values, structure, and unique student demographics. The institution's mission articulates its commitment to ensuring educational opportunities and successful outcomes for all students. (ER 6)

1.2 The institution establishes meaningful and ambitious goals for institutional improvement, innovation, and successful outcomes for all students.

1.3 The institution holds itself accountable for achieving its mission and goals and regularly reviews relevant, meaningfully disaggregated data to evaluate its progress and inform plans for continued improvement and innovation. (ER 3, ER 11)

1.4 The institution's mission directs resource allocation, innovation, and continuous quality improvement through ongoing systematic planning and evaluation of programs and services. (ER 19)

1.5 The institution regularly communicates progress toward achieving its mission and goals with internal and external stakeholders in order to promote understanding of institutional strengths, priorities, and areas for continued improvement. (ER 19)

Standard 2: Student Success

In alignment with its mission, the institution delivers high-quality academic and learning support programs that engage and support students through their unique educational journeys. Academic and learning support programs promote success for all students, and the institution evaluates student learning and achievement data to inform improvements and advance successful outcomes.

2.1 Academic programs at all locations and in all modes of delivery are offered in fields of study consistent with the institution's mission and reflect appropriate breadth, depth, and expected learning outcomes. (ER 3, ER 9, ER 12)

2.2 The institution, relying on faculty and other appropriate stakeholders, designs and delivers academic programs that reflect relevant discipline and industry standards and

support attainment of learning outcomes and achievement of educational goals for all students. (ER 3, ER 9, ER 11, ER 14)

2.3 All degree programs include a general education framework to ensure the development of broad knowledge, skills, and competencies related to communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, information literacy, civic responsibility, and the ability to engage with different viewpoints. (ER 12)

2.4 The institution communicates clear, accurate, and accessible information regarding programs, services, and resources that foster success in students' unique educational journeys. (ER 20)

2.5 The institution holds itself accountable for students' success by scheduling courses in a manner that ensures degree and certificate programs can be completed in the expected period of time. (ER 9)

2.6 The institution uses delivery modes and teaching methodologies that meet student and curricular needs and promote learning and achievement for all students.

2.7 The institution designs and delivers effective services and programs that support students in their unique educational journeys, address academic and non-academic needs, and maximize their potential for success. Such services include library and learning resources, academic counseling and support, and other services the institution identifies as appropriate for its mission and student needs. (ER 15, ER 17)

2.8 The institution fosters a sense of belonging and community with its students by providing multiple opportunities for engagement with the institution, programs, and peers. Such opportunities reflect the varied needs of the student population and effectively support students' unique educational journeys. (ER 15)

2.9 The institution conducts systematic review and assessment to ensure the quality of its academic, learning support, and student services programs and implement improvements and innovations in support of achievement for all students. (ER 11, ER 14)

Standard 3: Infrastructure and Resources

The institution supports its educational services and operational functions with effective infrastructure, qualified personnel, and stable finances. The institution organizes its staffing and allocates its physical, technological, and financial resources to improve its overall effectiveness and promote success for all students. The institution actively monitors and assesses resource capacity to inform improvements to infrastructure and ensure long-term health and stability.

3.1 The institution employs qualified faculty, staff, administrators, and other personnel to support and sustain educational services and improve student success. The institution

maintains appropriate policies and regularly assesses its employment practices to promote and improve mission fulfillment. (ER 8, ER 14)

3.2 The institution supports its employees with professional learning opportunities aligned with the mission and institutional goals. These opportunities are regularly evaluated for overall effectiveness in promoting success for all students and in meeting institutional and employee needs.

3.3 The institution evaluates its employees regularly, using clear criteria that align with professional responsibilities and reflect the institution's mission and goals.

3.4 The institution develops, maintains, and enhances its educational services and operational functions through the effective use of fiscal resources. Financial resources support and sustain the mission and promote achievement of success for all students. (ER 18)

3.5 The institution's mission and goals are the foundation for financial planning. Financial information is disseminated to support effective planning and decision-making and provide opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the development of plans and budgets.

3.6 The institution ensures the integrity and responsible use of its financial resources and regularly evaluates its fiscal outcomes and financial management practices to promote institutional mission fulfillment.

3.7 The institution ensures financial solvency. When making short-range financial plans, the institution considers its long-range financial priorities and future obligations to ensure sustained fiscal stability. (ER 18)

3.8 The institution constructs and maintains physical resources to support and sustain educational services and operational functions. The institution ensures safe and effective physical resources at all locations where it offers instruction, student services, and/or learning supports.

3.9 The institution implements, enhances, and secures its technology resources to support and sustain educational services and operational functions. The institution clearly communicates requirements for the safe and appropriate use of technology to students and employees and employs effective protocols for network and data security.

3.10 The institution has appropriate strategies for risk management and has policies and procedures in place to implement contingency plans in the event of financial, environmental, or technological emergencies and other unforeseen circumstances.

Standard 4: Governance and Decision-Making

The institution engages in clear and effective governance practices that support the achievement of its mission. Governance roles and responsibilities are delineated in widely

distributed policies, and institutional decision-making processes provide opportunities for meaningful participation by relevant stakeholders.

4.1 The institution upholds an explicit commitment to principles of academic freedom, academic integrity, and freedom of inquiry. (ER 13)

4.2 Roles, responsibilities, and authority for decision-making are clearly defined and communicated throughout the institution. The institution's structure for decision-making provides opportunities for stakeholder participation and ensures the consideration of relevant perspectives.

4.3 The institution's decision-making structures are used consistently and effectively. Institutional decision-making practices support a climate of collaboration and innovation that advances the mission and promotes successful outcomes for all students.

4.4 Acting through policy, the governing board takes responsibility for the overall quality and stability of the institution, and regularly monitors progress towards its goals and fiscal health. (ER 7)

4.5 The governing board selects and evaluates the institution's chief executive officer (CEO). The governing board gives the CEO full authority to implement board policies and ensure effective operations and fulfillment of the institutional mission.

4.6 The governing board functions effectively as a collective entity to promote the institution's values and mission and fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities. The governing board demonstrates an ability to self-govern in adherence to its bylaws and expectations for best practices in board governance. (ER 7)

For more information, access the full ACCJC accreditation standards document.