

Summary of the Commission (ACCJC) Report

At its June 2009 meeting, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) reviewed PCC's Self Study Report and the evaluation report provided by the team that visited the college Monday, March 16–Thursday, March 19, 2009. The Commission agreed with the five recommendations from the visiting evaluation team and acted to issue a warning on recommendation

#1, which reads: “The team recommends that the college develop a systematic assessment of evaluation mechanisms, i.e., program review and planning processes, to determine their effectiveness in improving student learning programs and services and administrative services. Specifically, the college needs to implement a consistent data set for program review and process improvement (IB.6, IB.7).” The focus of this recommendation is that the college provide and utilize consistent data for all program reviews.

It is important to understand that PCC's accreditation is not in jeopardy. Our students' credits continue to be accepted by transfer institutions, and they remain eligible for financial aid while the institution works on the recommended improvements. As part of the accreditation process to reaffirm our accreditation and be removed from warning status, the college has to prepare two Follow-up reports for the Commission. The first report is due March 15, 2010, and must address the steps the college has taken to remediate the first recommendation. The college will be visited within 30 days of submitting the first Follow-up report to reassure the Commission that we are making satisfactory progress. It is the college's intention to meet the goals set for us by the Commission and to receive a Reaffirmation of our Accreditation. The second Follow-up report is due by October 15, 2010, and will need to address our progress on the remaining recommendations.

In the spring of 2009, ten California community colleges had accreditation reviews. Of those ten, seven were given warnings, and two were placed on probation. Such information tells us that community colleges across California are in transition, working to meet the new accrediting standards, redefining our accountability measures, and improving our program review processes. The Commission's recommendations for the most part mirrored our own recommendations for improvement, known as the planning agendas, that we included in our self study report. This alignment tells us that we are on the right track and that the accreditation self study and external review process are working as they are intended.

However, the Accreditation Commission determined that we needed to focus our progress in a few areas. Being placed on “warning” status is the least severe of the several sanctions the Commission might have applied, and it is issued when the Commission finds that an institution has a practice or procedure that raises a concern and warrants focused attention by the institution. In our case, the focused attention needs to be on our program review process.

The final evaluation and recommendation report has been placed on the PCC website. Please take the time to become familiar with the report and the recommendations. In the coming months, the college will be addressing each of the report's recommendations. Task Force Teams composed of PCC faculty, staff, and administrators with expertise pertaining to the cited recommendations will work together to develop the necessary processes and procedures needed to satisfy the recommendations.

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Commendation From the Evaluation Team

Commendations are bestowed for efforts that go above and beyond the ordinary. The site team that visited PCC offered several commendations confirming that PCC remains an excellent educational institution. Specifically, “the team commends Pasadena City College for consistently functioning at a high level of overall student support in teaching and learning. All Operational areas of the college perform effectively. The college has a long history of support of ‘programs, practices, and services that support and enhance student understanding and appreciation of diversity.’ Student Services and Student Affairs provide an especially nurturing and stimulating environment that encourages ‘intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all students’.”

Final Evaluation Report Recommendations

The following are the five recommendations put forth by the evaluation team in their final report.

Recommendation 1

The team recommends that the college develop a systematic assessment of evaluation mechanisms, i.e., program review and planning processes, to determine their effectiveness in improving student learning programs and services and administrative functions. Specifically, the college needs to implement a consistent data set for program review and process improvement. (IB.6, 1B.7)

Recommendation 2

The team recommends that the college expand its assessment of student learning outcomes to include all programs, degrees, and certificates, and, if applicable, learning and support service areas. The team further recommends that the student learning outcomes assessment be incorporated into the program review, program planning, and resource allocation processes. (IB, IIA.2.e, and IIA.2.f, IIB, IIC)

Recommendation 3

The team recommends that the college establish and implement policies and procedures that define and ensure the quality and integrity of the distance education offerings and make these policies widely available to faculty. The institution must also submit a Substantive Change Proposal to the Commission. (IIA.1, IIA.1b)

Recommendation 4

The team recommends that the college develop codes of ethics for management and classified employees. (IIIA.1.d)

Recommendation 5

The team recommends the college develop and implement formal processes for the regular evaluation of each component of its governance and decision-making structures and use the results for improvement as needed. (IVA.5)

Accreditation Response Timeline

September 2009	Accreditation Response Steering Committee convened
September 15 - September 30, 2009	Recommendation #1 Task Force Team formed
October 1 - October 15, 2009	Recommendations #2, 3, 4 and 5 Task Force Teams formed
January 2010	Final draft of Follow-up Report #1 completed
January 2010	Board receives Follow-up Report #1 for informational purposes
March 15, 2010	Follow-up Report #1 submitted to ACCJC
July 2010	Substantive Change Proposal submitted to ACCJC
July 2010	Final draft of Follow-Up Report #2 completed
August 2010	Board receives Follow-up Report #2 for informational purposes
September 2010	Follow-up Report #2 submitted to ACCJC
March 2012	Midterm Report due to ACCJC