



# The Process of Reaffirming our Accreditation has Begun!

## Accreditation Newsletter

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### What is Accreditation?

Accreditation is a system of self-regulation developed by higher education institutions to evaluate overall institutional quality and encourage continual improvement. Colleges and universities form membership associations to set up an accrediting agency and work with that agency to establish the quality standards used to rigorously evaluate the institutions. Accreditation Standards represent the best practices in higher education and set a high expectation for quality.

### What is ACCJC?

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) is part of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) region. WASC operates in California, Hawai'i and the Pacific Region that includes Guam, American Samoa, the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands. ACCJC is the regional body that grants accreditation to Pasadena City College.

### How is the Accreditation Review Conducted?

There are four phases to the accreditation process involving internal evaluation, external evaluation by professional peers, Commission evaluation, and institutional self-improvement to meet evolving regional and federal standards. Every six years ACCJC members, including PCC, have agreed to undergo the comprehensive process to determine whether they are meeting their established Accreditation Standards and to develop ways to improve their future ability to serve students.

### What is the Self-Evaluation?

Every accreditation review starts with an internal evaluation. An institution engages in comparing itself to Accreditation Standards, writes an internal (i.e., self) evaluation report, develops its own plans for improvement where needed, and submits the written analysis to its accrediting agency for review.



### What are the Accreditation Standards?

The Accreditation Standards are the basic tool used by member institutions to gauge their success in providing high quality education and in continually improving. The Accreditation Standards focus a good deal on institutional practices that support student completion of certificates and degrees, and student learning. Accreditation helps assure that students get a sound and useful education that is of lifelong value.

#### Fall 2012

- Self-Study Coordinator selected

#### Fall 2013

- Writing Groups are formed and the writing of the Self-Study begins.

#### Summer & Fall 2014

- Comprehensive edit of Self-study submitted to ACCJC in December

#### Spring 2013

- Planning & Priorities begins serving as Accreditation Steering Committee
- Standards Committees are formed.

#### Spring 2014

- Writing of the Self-Study continues with final draft due by end of the semester.

#### Spring 2015

- Site Visit

## THERE ARE FOUR STANDARDS:

### Standard 1: Institutional Mission & Effectiveness

Standard 1 is comprised of two parts: the mission itself and the process of improving institutional effectiveness. Groups that examine this standard will look to see that the mission is central to PCC's processes of planning, decision-making, and resource allocation. Participants in Standard 1 will also examine how PCC demonstrates a conscious effort to produce and support student learning, measures that learning, assesses how well learning is occurring, and makes changes to improve student learning.

### Standards 2: Student Learning Programs & Services

This Standard requires that PCC delivers high-quality instructional programs, student support services, and library and learning support services, whenever and however they are offered. Standard 2 examines how PCC provides an environment that supports learning, enhances student understanding and appreciation of diversity, and encourages personal and civic responsibility as well as intellectual, aesthetic, and personal development for all students. Standard 2 examines Instructional programs, Student Support Services, and Library & Learning Support Services.



### Standard 3: Resources

Standard 3 examines how PCC effectively uses human, physical, technology, and financial resources to achieve its broad educational purposes, including stated student learning outcomes, and to improve institutional effectiveness.

### Standard 4: Leadership & Governance

This Standard assesses how PCC recognizes and utilizes the contributions of leadership throughout the organization for continuous improvement of the institution. This Standard has two key areas: Decision-Making-Roles & Processes and Board & Administrative Organization.

### Is PCC Expected to Meet all Standards all of the Time?

Yes. Institutions that seek ACCJC accreditation agree to adhere to the Accreditation Standards established by the member institutions at all times.



### Resources:

ACCJC. (2011, February). Twelve common questions and answers about Regional Accreditation. Retrieved from <http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/Feb-2011-special-edition.pdf>

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