DISTRICT ACCREDITATION COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Retreat on November 2, 2007 (9:00 AM – 2:00 PM)

Ethan Way Center 205

✦ MEETING NOTES ✦

1 9:15 AM   Welcome/Introductions

The following faculty co-chairs, accreditation liaison officers, representatives, and resource persons attended this first meeting of the District Accreditation Coordination Committee:

Cathy Chenu-Campbell (SCC), Chris Hawken (CRC), Gordon Lam (FLC), Anne Licciardi (SCC *in lieu*, Nell Moffett), Sue Lorimer (FLC), Kathie Read (ARC), Norv Wellsfry (CRC), Kelly Irwin (Classified Senate), Bill Karns (District), Jane de Leon (District Academic Senate).

Resources: Judy Beachler, Betty Glyer-Culver, Susie Williams

Excused: Tony Barcellos (ARC), Nell Moffett (SCC)

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2   Adjustment of the Agenda

Three new discussion topics were added to the agenda:
- New item 4: The Colleges' Efforts, to date
- New item 5: Reassigned Time for Faculty Co-Chairs, Standards Chairs
- New second bullet under now-item 6: Potential Changes to the Standards

3   Role of the District Accreditation Coordination Committee / How the Committee Should Function (including frequency of meetings)

Members of the committee suggested these ways in which this committee could support the colleges' accreditation efforts:
- Provide opportunities for discussing the questions and challenges faced at the colleges; provide opportunities for sharing where the colleges are in the accreditation preparation process and identify ways to help and learn from each other [Norv]
- Attend, as appropriate, to mapping and collecting the descriptions from the District services (e.g., HR, IT); set up the meeting schedules for standards chairs to meet with District services rep [Bill, Sue]
- Share helpful Websites and links so colleges do not repeat efforts [Kathie]
- Share e-mail addresses of the standards chairs, co-chairs from all the colleges [Norv]
- Create mini self-studies of the District offices' roles [Judy]
- Post resource documents available from District office, e.g., "related policies matrix for Standard 4" designed as an information resource can be revised to become a document providing evidence [Bill].

4 The Colleges' Efforts, to date [added item]

Concerning the accreditation efforts at each of the colleges, the following information was shared:

College	Organization of Standards Committees & Work Completed, to date
FLC	- Have organized into six teams, with Standards 2 & 3 divided into aspects of the standards - Faculty co-chairs are appointed - Classified and student representatives are included - First draft will be completed by the end of spring 2008 - Standards teams will submit ideas in bullet form, and one writer will produce the draft of the self-study - If themes will become part of the self-study, the writer will abstract the themes from the draft of the self-study - The document will be straightforward, with clear and relevant recommendations
ARC	- Governance leaders met last June to determine the number of standards teams (nine, with one team each for Standards 1 & 4, and Standards 3 & 4 divided for easier manageability) and to complete the "gap analysis" - Chairs for the standards teams are now being recruited - A new faculty chair and an interim ALO have been appointed to replace the original holders of these positions who left to take on new responsibilities (the previous ALO has left the District, and the previous faculty co-chair has been appointed as the District Academic Senate's faculty co-chair)
SCC	- The decision on how to structure the approach to the standards will be made next week by the Executive Council; the concern is that breaking up the standards for manageability may undermine the sense of integration achieved from adhering to organization by the four standards - The desire is to condense the self-study work into one semester: a first draft prepared by the end of fall 2008 would be reviewed by constituency groups in spring 2009 and then finalized
CRC	- The college has four standards committees and a tri-chair arrangement; Standards 2 & 3 are split, with subcommittee chairs for each part; the standards committees are responsible for integrating the draft addressing each standard - Standards chairs will serve as the committee to extract the themes from the draft, and the themes will be presented in the introduction - Staffing is complete for the managers & chairs, and faculty are being recruited - Training for the chairs occurs on 9 November - Timeline: Spring 08 for research & data gathering; Fall 08 for writing by the committees; December 08 draft to the self-study steering committee, which will consolidate the draft and achieve the "one voice" - One member of the steering committee is completing the audit of what information is needed - One concern is the storage of data: committees want data before meeting - Currently being prepared is a Website for showing the planning structure (a separate planning document was published for the last accreditation)

5   Reassigned time for Faculty Co-Chairs, Standards Chairs [added discussion item]

Jane reported that the District Academic Senate will next week present to Bill a proposal requesting more reassigned time for the faculty co-chairs than was provided for the last accreditation effort. The proposal will also suggest that faculty co-chairs have flexibility for how they will allocate and use the amount of reassigned time; i.e., while the value of the reassigned time will be the same, each faculty co-chair will determine the allocation of his or her time for each semester. Also, the proposal will request that faculty members serving as chairs or co-chairs for the standards teams be given some consideration for their time and effort.

Bill reported that the District provided 0.5 and 0.5 to faculty co-chairs for the semesters during which the self-studies were prepared, and at individual colleges, these amounts may have been supplemented by additional increments of reassigned time from the college presidents.

6   Lessons Learned from Accreditation Experiences of Committee Members

- ▪ Three members of the committee participated in accreditation site visits this term, and one had participated last spring. Their reflections:

- Some accreditation teams have several first-time team members. The team's training, accomplished during this difficult period of the ACCJC's being audited by the Department of Education, can result in a different emphasis**:** rather than looking at the college, some team members may look for something wrong (JB). **Lesson learned: because of the shortage of available managers and faculty available for serving on accreditation teams, we should anticipate that a high proportion of first-timers could comprise the teams coming to our colleges**

- Team members can expect to have a special concern for finding evidence of dialogue and the form in which that evidence is presented. Some colleges present the evidence primarily in paper form filed in "milk carton crates", with public evidence available on the college's Website and sensitive information made available through a portal during the visit [AL]. **Lesson learned: provide more complete evidence of dialogue, including complete sets of minutes so that not only the actual decision meeting but the sequence of meetings resulting in the decision comprise the evidence. Also appropriate might be the inclusion of information on Distance Ed and on SLOs, especially because the ACCJC will expect greater progress on SLOS by the time of the site visits.** The District is completing a District view of Distance Ed that is intended to help the colleges[BGC].

- Besides having several first-time team members, some accreditation teams may not include significant representatives -- e.g., only one faculty member may be assigned and a chief financial officer may not be included (SL). **Lesson learned: 1) Given these potential deficits in team coverage, the colleges must guide team members to what they need to find; 2) because the team will look**

carefully at past recommendations, all past recommendations <u>must</u> be attended to; e.g., the District-wide recommendation on the centers; 3) for problem areas, a resource subgroup involving research and the appropriate dean should be set up [SL]. The District has been working on the District recommendation from the previous accreditation and has sent information to the ACCJC; further, Distance Ed is a topic for the District Research Council (DRC) [SW]. **4) We should expect rookies on our accreditation teams because service on teams for the Los Rios colleges provides good learning opportunities** [NW].

- Although the ACCJC's training for Los Rios last September specifically stated that a college would be sanctioned if program review is not at the "fourth level," this sanction did not occur for a college and district visited last month. Also, the quality of the accreditation experience depends on the quality of the chair [WK]. **Question posed:** in light of the shortage of presidents/superintendents to serve as team leaders, is the ACCJC considering appointing VPIs as chairs? [CCC]; response: yes (NW). **Lesson learned: our emphasis in completing the self-study should be to help the colleges–not the team–to discover our problems; we should watch for any "imposing" by team leaders or members**.

▪ **Potential Changes to the Standards [added discussion item]**

ACCJC Commissioner Norv reported that the Department of Education's audit of WASC/ACCJC may result in potential changes to the standards; e.g., the recently-completed first level audit results call for more public disclosure

The next level of review has identified five issues:
- Financial issues, especially student loan defaults
- Beyond the mid-term report, the increased need for annual monitoring – e.g., the report on student learning outcomes submitted last spring and the annual fiscal report
- Adverse actions: institutions out of compliance should immediately be issued adverse actions
- Good cause: the audit is asking why colleges should be allowed to exist beyond the two years after an adverse action has been taken; the Department of Education suggests that the sanction be immediate and colleges be given only two years to correct their problems
- Due process: the Higher Education Act may or may not be pushed to 2008.

Concerning the SLOs reports submitted last April: ACCJC's analysis of reports show the following findings:
- 47 percent course of the colleges have completed SLOs for the course, program, and general ed levels
- 10 percent of the colleges may be using SLOs to drive planning

The challenge for Los Rios:
- ACCJC will expect significant progress on the SLOs, so we should be ready for recommendations
- We must be careful about what we mean by SLOs: some course outlines include objectives rather than SLOs, and objectives are not SLOs; further, the Los Rios curriculum management program makes it easy for accreditation teams to see significant variability in SLOs progress.

The committee's suggestions emerging from this report concerning the ACCJC include:
- District-level conversations for establishing a definition of SLOs should begin very soon so that colleges will know the definitions and can apply these definitions consistently [SL].
- Because a subgroup of the accreditation teams will spend time visiting the District office on the first day of the accreditation visits, the colleges must provide evidence that they are working with the District; any recommendations that result from the perception that the colleges are not working with the District will be made against the colleges [JB, CH]. If coordination between a college and the District office is an issue, consideration should be given to proactively preparing a planning agenda to solve for the coordination problem [JB]
- Adhering to the culture of evidence: colleges should begin now to build the repositories of documents containing evidence of the culture of dialogue [CH] and to preparea system for storing "those small pieces of paper that may seem insignificant now" so that they can be accessed when they are needed for the accreditation team's site visit [WK]

- **Local Experience concerning Electronic Repositories**
  The college representatives shared the discussions that have occurred, to date, within their planning groups concerning electronic repositories. All agreed on the importance of creating the "culture of evidence gathering and storing."

College	Perspective on Electronic Repositories
FLC	- Will create one Web page for each standard, and documents in PDF will go on those pages - Requests that Board minutes be set up on the District Website by standard; whatever the District sets up should be an enhancement and consistent with what is at the college sites, including consistency of drop menus [GL]. It was pointed out that: ✓ The four colleges' organization of Web sites should be similar so that the District's enhancement and consistency can occur. Organization by standards is a potential way to ensure consistency among the colleges. Also, double links are possible [BGC] ✓ Redundancy should be included for the electronic repositories [NW] ✓ All documents should be scanned to electronic form [WK] ✓ Sensitive documents should be stored in a common place, perhaps in already-protected sites; this concern should be discussed with District IT and District Research

College	*Perspective on Electronic Repositories*
SCC	- Is experimenting with eligibility requirements for documents showing that the college meets eligibility - Is looking at a page of links as a test bed to see how easy or difficult accessing the links will be - Is determining how much of the supporting documentation should be electronic [CCC]
ARC	Is looking at *SharePoint*, a program used by Riverside; preliminary review shows that the program has some disadvantages: e.g., it is not easily searchable because of the organization by document topic or function, requires *Word 2007*, and can only be accessed from campus. However, Sierra College used *SharePoint* for its recent accreditation effort and was pleased [KR] The question to address to IT: what advantage would commercial programs have over what the District can create? [WK]
CRC	- Working so far on the SLO side, CRC has not yet decided on document storage, though likely that storage will be on the Web and linked up - Web sites for committees are already established, and accumulation of documents has begun though is not yet organized for accreditation - Rather than storage in one place, a linked process may be preferable

7   District Support for the Accreditation Process

- **Research Needs: surveying / statistics needed**
  The District Research Council (DRC) will administer Web-based employee-satisfaction and student-satisfaction surveys. Using the same survey as last time will allow opportunities to see data trends. However, a few additions can be made to factor in, for example, the compressed calendar; also, the DRC continues to monitor student success, persistence, and GPAs in light of the compressed calendar [SW].

  Suggestion as "homework" for members of the committee: consider what information would be desirable to add to the surveys. The accreditation groups for each college can share their concerns with the DRC, and the DRC can bring the survey instrument to this group for further discussion [WK].

  Also discussed in the exchange concerning research data:

  - The Website that lists the survey instruments used by all colleges will be forwarded by Betty for including as an addendum to these minutes
  - Input is needed for the Distance Ed survey that will analyze the success rate of the Distance Ed population across the District [SW]. This caution was suggested: Distance Ed students comprise two distinct group: a) students taking a mixed load of on-ground and on-line coursework and b) students taking exclusively on-line coursework; an important question for the second group concerns whether they are obtaining necessary services [CCC]. The DRC will use the Distance Ed population categories defined by the Ed Tech Committee, and these categories will include delivery on-line and TV delivery formats [BGC]; it is also recommended that the DRC coordinate with the college committees [JB]

- The results and analysis from the Noel Levitz student satisfaction survey will be available by early May
- Regarding the Noel Levitz survey and students who enroll at the centers: it was requested that the DRC break out the data for the population of students who enroll only at the centers and the population of students who enroll at both the centers and the main colleges; a sample from each center would be desirable [CCC]

- **Training Needs**
  Concerning the self-studies' three-part response to each standard – i.e., the description, the analysis / self-evaluation, and the planning agenda – it was agreed that this committee should talk about and agree on common expectations for what comprises each of the three parts, and these common expectations can be shared with the colleges' planning/steering committees.

  Norv's offer to make available the ACCJC's *PowerPoint* presentations concerning general training and distance education was gratefully accepted by this committee.

- **District / College Function Mapping: models, process [J. Beachler]**
  Organized by standard, the format used by Cañada College for its district map has the advantage of being easy to follow and being an effective way of introducing the self-study. This format would be even more effective a) if more analysis were included concerning how to help colleges reach their goals and mission and) if a district organization chart were also included [JB].   It was further noted that the Cañada model also allows for better understanding of mapping terminology and can enable better dialogue about the functions [SL].

  These suggestions for mapping emerged from the discussion::
  a) **Using the Cañada model, this committee should complete the mapping** [JB, SW, WK]
  b) **For accuracy of response, the District-level survey should target the individuals who actually use the service** [CCC]**; lead individuals at each college should be consulted to verify that the survey is accurately targeted** [SL]
  c) **A template such as that created for relating Standard 4 to Los Rios** *Policies and Regs* **should also be created for all of the standards** [WK]**; Bill will facilitate this work.**

8   Lunch
As lunch concluded, this committee agreed to set meetings times for once monthly on the first Fridays from 9:00 to 11:00 AM (venues to be arranged). A monthly meeting can be cancelled if communication can be handled appropriately by e-mail.

9 **District Services "Descriptive Summaries":**

Concerning the District service providers – e.g., HR, IT – from whom descriptions of services will be requested: it was agreed that these services will be asked to draft the descriptions, analysis/self-evaluations, and planning agenda for their service areas, and these drafts will be used as resource information for the colleges in preparing their self-studies. Bill will compile the working list of the standards that require attention by the District service providers. It was also suggested that the dialogue between the colleges and the service areas include the governance structures as well as the District-wide operating groups [SL]: e.g., the District Budget Committee and the VPAs should be included in the dialogue for Finance. The result of this dialogue will be a draft of the description, analysis/self-evaluation, and planning agenda that is both universal and peer-reviewed.

- **Obtaining the Drafts of the Written Descriptions**
  At next week's meeting of the managers, Bill will introduce the request for the descriptions, analysis / self-evaluation, and planning agenda, as specified above.

- **Supporting Discussions with District Representatives**
  This committee will facilitate the meeting schedules between the standards chairs and the appropriate representatives from the District office.

- **District Accreditation Website [added]**
  This topic will be addressed in further detail at the next meeting.

10 **Coordination / Storage of Evidence: [M. Holsclaw]**
  Mick was unable to attend this meeting, so this topic will be placed on the agenda for the December meeting.

The December meeting will be on 7 December (9:00 AM – 11:00 AM, venue to be arranged).

This retreat adjourned at 1:43 PM.