



An ACCJC Update

Trustees and Accreditation: Data, Trends, Developments at ACCJC

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What is accreditation?

- Peer review: Educational professionals trained to evaluate an institution's self-review report prepared under recognized statements of good practice.
- Features:
 - Arose from the academy rather than descended from the government
 - One of the few U.S. sectors to enjoy a self-governing accountability processes
 - Recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as gatekeepers for federal student aid (>\$170 billion/year)
- ACCJC is . . .
 - Regional: Works with a geographical scope (CA, HI, Pacific Islands)
 - Institutional: Reviews the entire institution, not its individual disciplines



ACCJC's Philosophy of Accreditation

Core principles that permeate the accreditation process to achieve its purposes:

- **Collaboration:** Commissioners and staff view themselves as partnering with member institutions in pursuit of a shared goal of quality improvement.
- **Safety:** Create and sustain an environment that promotes candor, self-reflection, and honest engagement to identify and address needed improvements.
- **Education:** Enduring change happens when there is a shared and deep understanding of the quality principles embodied in the Standards.
- **Relationships:** Available, consistent, accurate, trusting engagement among Commission, staff, and institutions is essential when dealing with such consequential matters.
- **Integrity:** Every action and decision must be marked with the highest levels of professional practice.



Key ACCJC developments since 2017

- In the “Portfolio Model,” a Vice President . . .
 - Is assigned as liaison for each member institution
 - Gets to know each institution’s character, issues, people, and history
 - Conducts onsite ISER training; selects and trains the peer review team
 - Provides consistent interpretation / application of standards, approach
 - Accompanies the site team as “advocates for the *process*”
 - Guides the report through the Commission’s review and action
 - Is available to interpret and apply the Commission’s action in following years



Key Developments – 2

- Core focus: “Take the fear out of the process”
 - Revised and improved Chair and Team training to reduce uncertainties, play down the “gotcha” fears
 - ACCJC Conference (biennial) to increase contact, flow of information; enhance a *learning community*
 - Collaborative, collegial relationships with staff, teams, Commission
 - More reliance on education, less on sanctions, to effect enduring change (see table)



Key Developments – 3

Core value: “Lighten the burden”

- Shorter self-evaluation reports (From >600 pages to +/- 200 pages)
- Simplified annual reports
- Minimal annual dues increases
 - After 5 years of 10%/year, no increase in 2018-19; 2% in 2019-20
 - Discontinued “Special Assessment”
- No charges for VP visits, team VP support, conference pre-sessions
- Fewer Substantive Change requirements
- Smaller peer review teams (>14 to about 10)



ACCJC's Core Functions:

As an accrediting agency, ACCJC has four broad areas of influence:

- 1. Compliance:** Ensuring institutional quality, integrity, sustainability, and achievement of mission; assuring quality to stakeholders
- 2. Education:** Imparting insightful support for the principles of quality improvement through team reports, Commission action letters, workshops, publications, and training events
- 3. Convening:** Creating a region-wide learning community through use of peer reviewers and through conferences to share good practices
- 4. Advocacy:** Speaking on behalf of community colleges, impacting the national conversation and legislative community on their key role

Which of these areas is most important to Trustees?

Recent issues of concern for the Commission

Year	Number: Colleges on Sanction	Areas of Deficiency				
		Program Review	Planning	Internal Governance	Board Concerns	Financial Stability or Management
2009	24	17	22	11	11	13
2010	19	13	17	8	11	11
2011	21	4	15	5	14	13
2012	28	6	20	5	20	14
2013	25	7	16	5	17	13
2014	16	6	14	5	6	8
2015	8	4	6	2	5	4
2016	4	0	2	0	2	2
2017	1	1	1	1	1	1
2018	0	0	0	0	0	0



Trustees and Sanctions: What do you think?

- Are sanctions hurtful, beneficial, necessary, or . . . ? What is their intended purpose?
- What are the most frequent issues prompting either sanctions or compliance recommendations under “Board Concerns”? What’s the difference between a sanction and a compliance recommendation?
- How could the Board have helped to avoid these sanctions?
- Why do you think there has been a reduction in the number of sanctions since 2012?



Possible Reasons for fewer Sanctions

Which of these may apply to your college or district?

1. Commission's relaxing a too-stringent application of the two-year rule. ("Solve the problem within 2 years or federal policy requires the accreditor to take an adverse action.") Thus, less need to sanction.
2. Institutions have been prompted to take Commission concerns more seriously – Board, leaders, and faculty galvanized into action.
3. ACCJC's educational input, training, has imparted deeper and clearer appreciation for the principles embedded in the Standards
4. Collective cultural shifts: "Maybe integrated planning and SLOs really do serve our goals."
5. Other?



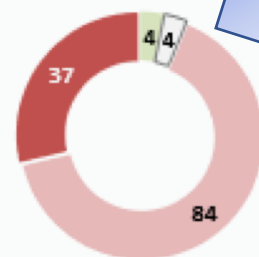
Trustees and Data

- Institutional performance: A core board responsibility
- Key distinctions about student performance:
 - Student Achievement: Quantitative measures such as graduation/transfer rates, retention, credentials awarded. Useful for setting goals, disaggregating by sub-groups, informing stakeholders
 - Student Learning: Typically qualitative measures aligned with student learning outcomes. Course- or program- specific. Some measures such as licensure pass rates can be a proxy for learning. Useful for program review and instructional improvement.
- How should trustees review either type of data?

The Recent Federal Accreditor Dashboard:

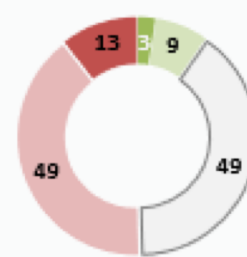
ACCJC:

Graduation & Earnings
 Green = good outcomes
 Red = bad outcomes



Institutions by graduation rate

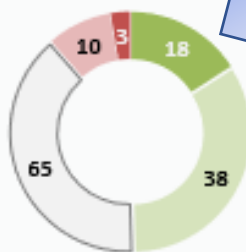
94% underperform



Institutions by median earnings

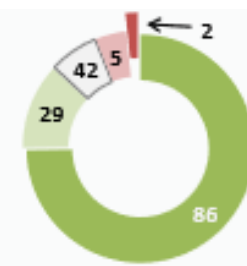
WSCUC:

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Institutions by graduation rate

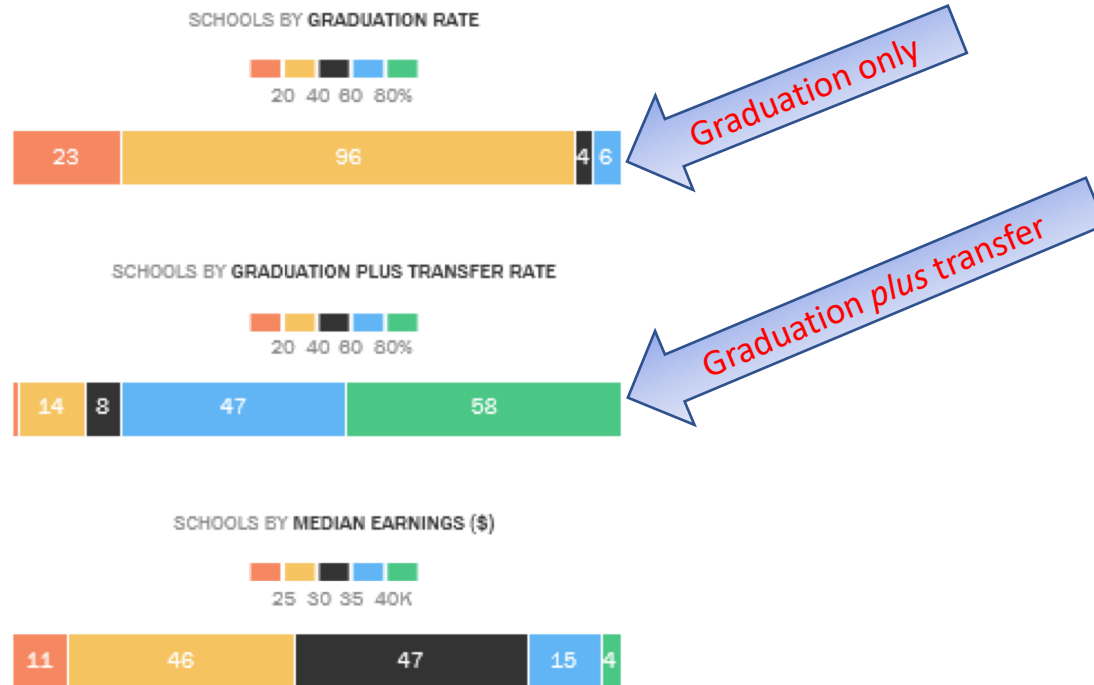
9% underperform



Institutions by median earnings

How a Revised IPEDS Dataset looks for ACCJC

Graduation & Earnings



CCC Examples

Large Urban College (~25,000)

- Federal scorecard outcome: **15%**
 - Represents 16% of entering students
- CCC scorecard outcome: **46%**
- Part-time students: 78%
- Pell recipients: 34%
- Promise grant (BOG): 68%

Small Rural College (~5,000)

- Federal scorecard outcome: **9%**
 - Represents 17% of entering students
- CCC scorecard outcome: **37%**
- Part-time students: 69%
- Pell recipients: 49%
- Promise grant (BOG): 78%

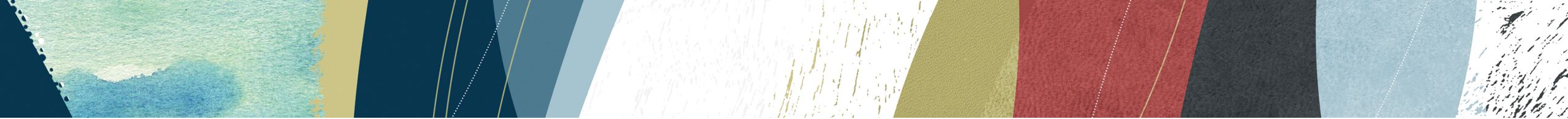


The Trustees' Responsibilities in ACCJC Standards

- IV. C. 1 Board has authority over policies that ensure quality, integrity, effectiveness, student learning
- IV. C. 2 Board is a collective entity; once made, decisions are supported by all members; none speak as individuals
- IV. C. 3 Board adheres to its policy in selecting, evaluating the CEO
- IV. C. 4 Board is independent, reflecting the public's interest; protects from political pressure.
- IV. C. 5 Board is responsible for fiscal integrity and stability; collaborates with district
- IV. C. 6 Board/institution publishes bylaws related to its operations
- IV. C. 7 Board's actions are consistent with bylaws, policies, which are reviewed regularly

The Trustees' Responsibilities in ACCJC Standards - 2

- IV. C. 8 Board reviews key indicators of student learning and achievement
- IV. C. 9 Board engages in regular training and development
- IV. C. 10 Board has policies, processes for self-evaluation of practices; uses review for its improvement
- IV. C. 11 Board upholds code of ethics; conflict of interest procedures
- IV. C. 12 Board delegates operational authority to CEO; holds CEO accountable; CEO is its only employee
- IV. C. 13 Board is informed about ACCJC expectations, requirements; participates in its reviews



Elected trustees have secured their position by garnering the support of a constituency that is often defined by a geographical region, by interested organizations, or both. Trustees, once elected, must ensure their allegiance is to the college and not to any constituent person or organization.

Trustees do not *represent* specific constituencies in the sense of taking board actions in favor of their interests. Elected trustees are expected to bring to board deliberations a broad understanding of the college's role in serving their entire region and its multiple stakeholders. There must be no implied obligation for a trustee to serve the interests of a specific constituency over the interests of the broad mission of the college.

– *ACCJC's Guide to Accreditation for Governing Boards, p. 7.*



Common accreditation-related board challenges

- Not becoming familiar with ACCJC Standards, especially Standard 4
- Failing to establish a collaborative relationship with the CEO
- Seeking to micro-manage operations; going around the CEO
- Taking actions that suggest loyalty to an electoral base rather than to the college as a whole
- “Kicking the can down the road” to a later board to balance the budget and meet other financial obligations
- Failing to present a united front on board actions (e.g. going public with a minority position)