



CLASSIFIED SENATE
COLLEGE OF THE CANYONS

Suggested Revisions:

DRAFT ACCJC ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

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Open Public Comments

Analysis By:
Classified Senate at College of the Canyons

Contact Information:
Michael Monsour
Classified Senate President
Michael.Monsour@canyons.edu



Standard 1

Area 3: The institution’s mission directs resource allocation, innovation, and continuous quality improvement through ongoing systematic planning and evaluation of programs and services.

A. Possible Review Criteria:

Original: “institutional systems for planning are designed to occur on a regular basis, include appropriate participation from institutional constituencies, and use valid sources of data and information.”

Suggested Revision: “institutional systems for planning are designed to occur on a regular basis, include ~~appropriate~~ equitable participation from ~~all~~ institutional constituencies, and use valid sources of data and information.”

Rationale: The term “appropriate” is vague in this context, as it is unclear who determines appropriate levels of participation. The College of the Canyons Classified Senate believes the term “equitable” better ensures all voices are reasonably considered in institutional systems planning.

B. Possible Sources of Evidence

New Suggested Bullet: “Evidence of heterogeneous stakeholder representation on planning committees, program plan design teams, and other planning platforms.”

Rationale: By ascertaining the breadth of authors and participants involved in institutional plans, ACCJC can better determine the diversity of stakeholder representation across college planning processes. Institutions with equitable levels of stakeholder-diversity will have more heterogeneous planning teams, and in turn, incorporate a broader range of institutional perspectives.

Area 5. The institution regularly communicates progress toward achieving its mission and goals with internal and external stakeholders ~~in order~~ to promote shared understanding of institutional strengths, priorities, and areas for continued improvement.

A. Possible Review Criteria

New Suggested Bullet: “The institution regularly solicits and incorporates the feedback of its stakeholder groups when developing its goals and determining the steps needed to achieve its mission.”

Rationale: This new bullet clarifies the expectation that communication is omnidirectional, and that institutional stakeholders play an active role in constructing the goals they are expected to help achieve. It also clarifies that perpetual feedback is a critical part of communication, because it informs the progress an institution is making toward fulfilling its mission.

B. Possible Sources of Evidence

New Suggested Bullet: “Examples that highlight the iterative development process of goal-setting documents and mission and philosophy statements, showcasing how constituency group participation and feedback are incorporated into the affiliated drafts.”

Rationale: This new bullet will ensure that institutions are actively involving a diversity of stakeholders when developing their goals and value statements. It will assist ACCJC’s understanding of how these items were authored, and the degree of collaboration that took place between the stakeholders. This is different from simply having procedures that allow for participation (as discussed in this area’s checklist), because it looks at direct evidence that participation occurred in a substantive way, rather than relying solely on the promise of stakeholder participation as described in procedures.

C. Checklist Items – Institutional Mission and Effectiveness, Bullet Two:

Original: “The institution’s procedures/practices for review and revision of mission/mission-related statements allow for participation of institutional stakeholders, as appropriate for the character and context of the institution”

Suggested Revision: “The institution’s procedures/practices for review and revision of mission/mission-related statements allow for **the equitable** participation of institutional stakeholders, as appropriate for the character and context of the institution”

Rationale: Adding the term “equitable participation,” helps to convey the message that ACCJC expects all stakeholders are given fair opportunities to contribute effectively.

Standard 2

7. The institution uses delivery modes and teaching methodologies that meet student and curricular needs and promote equitable student learning and achievement.

A. Possible Review Criteria

New Suggested Bullet: “The institution adapts to the needs and interests of students, faculty, and staff when determining the balance of in-person, online, and hybrid services and instruction”

Rationale: See rationale in B. next.

B. Possible Sources of Evidence

New Suggested bullet:

“The institution regularly surveys and solicits input from both its students and employee groups in order to make informed decisions about the balance of in-person and remote services and instruction.”

Rationale: Following the onset of the pandemic, it became clear that without ongoing outreach to both students and district employees, it is difficult to determine the best delivery methods for both student services and instruction. Institutions that are more flexible and adaptable to changing demands for online and in-person interactions, are more apt to serve the needs of their students. The experiences of the pandemic should inform the new ACCJC standards, by specifically looking at how institutions adapt to changing demands and use evidence-based practices to inform their offerings. Arguably, this new addition would also fit within Standard 2, area 8, since this newly updated section speaks to online, hybrid, and on-the-ground activities such as tutoring. However, section 8 looks mostly at the end products being offered, whereas this new bullet in area 7, would review how institutions came to decide the right levels of each of the modalities they offer across instruction and support services.

Standard 3

7. The institution’s decision-making structure and processes are clearly defined, aligned with the mission, and include opportunities for the participation of appropriate institutional stakeholders. Roles, responsibilities, and authority for decision-making are delineated as appropriate to the institution’s structure.

A. Suggested Revisions to Area 7 Statement:

7. The institution’s decision-making structure and processes are clearly defined, aligned with the mission, and include **equitable** opportunities for the participation of ~~appropriate~~ institutional stakeholders. Roles, responsibilities, and authority for decision-making are delineated as appropriate to the institution’s structure.

Rationale: Adding the term “equitable” clarifies that opportunities should be provided to stakeholders in a fair and balanced way. We also suggest removing “appropriate” in this statement, since AACJC does not provide guidance on which stakeholders are appropriate participants, nor who determines that one stakeholder is more appropriate than another.

8. The institution periodically reviews its decision-making structure and processes to ensure that they are being used consistently and effectively to advance the mission, ensure appropriate participation from institutional stakeholders, and promote equitable student success.

A. Possible Review Criteria

Suggested Revisions to Bullet One:

Original: “The institution reviews its decision-making structure and processes with a focus on effectiveness and improvement.”

Revision: “The institution **updates** and reviews its decision-making structure and processes **collaboratively with the stakeholder groups**, with a focus on effectiveness and improvement.”

Rationale: ACCJC needs to be clear that the development of the decision-making processes, guides, and institutional-level plans, not only need to speak to the involvement of stakeholders within the text, but also, need to exemplify themselves of collaboration and inclusivity while being drafted.

B. Possible Sources of Evidence

Suggested Revisions to Bullet Five:

Original: “Reports of regular evaluation of decision-making policies/procedures and documented result(s)/outcome(s)”

Revision: “Reports of regular evaluation of decision-making policies/procedures, **with documented participation from impacted constituencies, along** with documented result(s)/outcome(s)”

Rationale: By reviewing the process of how decision-making practices are created at institutions, ACCJC will be better positioned to judge the level of collegial consultation occurring. If decision-making practices are developed unilaterally, then, it is unlikely that the resulting implementation of those policies and procedures will afford equitable levels of stakeholder involvement. In short, it is not enough to know how often policies have been updated, unless it can first be established that those updates will be evaluated and developed in collaboration with the stakeholders that those policies impact.

C. Checklist Items – Governance and Decision-Making:

New Suggested Bullet: “The institution has clearly-defined policies/procedures for ensuring student governments, classified professional organizations, and faculty representative bodies are provided the resources to operate effectively within the collegial consultation framework, and with the autonomy to appointment representatives across institution activities.”

Rationale: The Checklist for this section currently only speaks to administrative and board processes and responsibilities. We believe the checklist should further indicate how other stakeholders (collegial consultation) will be supported and involved in the governance and decision-making processes.

Standard 4

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 equity, diversity, and mission fulfillment.

A. Possible Review Criteria

Suggested Revision to Bullet Seven:

Original: “The institution regularly reviews its policies and/or procedures for equitable hiring practices to ensure currency and relevancy.”

Suggested Revision: “The institution regularly reviews its policies and/or procedures for equitable hiring practices, to ensure currency, relevancy, and stakeholder participation in the prioritization of hiring positions and evaluating candidates.”

Rationale: Hiring practices should specifically include how institutions prioritize the hiring of new and vacant positions. Stakeholder participation in the review and development of these policies and procedures is essential, not only to ensure equitable hiring practices for applicants, but equitable stakeholder representation within the interview committees.

B. Possible Sources of Evidence

New Suggested Bullet:

Data indicating the length of position vacancies across both academic and non-academic departments, procedures that discuss the prioritization of hiring positions, and a review of the diversity of stakeholders participating in the hiring processes for the institution.

Rationale: This new statement will ensure ACCJC is provided with key data on the methods institutions employs to determine which positions receive priority to hire, and why. It also allows ACCJC to review the diversity of stakeholders involved in the hiring processes along with the responsiveness of institutions to fill key positions across instructional and non-instructional areas. This data will illuminate the institution's commitment level to including a diversity of stakeholders within the hiring process.

3. Employees are evaluated regularly, using clear criteria that align with their professional responsibilities and support the institution's mission and goals. Evaluation feedback supports employees' ongoing development and improvement.

A. Possible Review Criteria

Suggested New Bullet:

The institution provides development tools, trainings, and other opportunities for employees to grow professionally, and ensures equitable access to these resources.

Rationale: It is inadequate for institutions to merely offer evaluative feedback that instructs employees to continue to grow professionally (as alluded to in the area three statement). Institutions must simultaneously offer the development trainings, resources, and provide adequate time and access for employees to participate and grow. ACCJC should examine if institutions are providing equitable development opportunities for their employees, and review the balance of instruction and non-instructional development programs and opportunities.

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 equitable achievement of student success.

A. Possible Review Criteria:

Suggested Revisions to Bullet Three

Original: “The institution’s resource allocation process provides a means for setting priorities for funding.”

Revision: “The institution’s resource allocation process provides a means for setting priorities for funding, and with the regular input of the stakeholder groups and their representatives.”

Rationale: ACCJC should review if districts are prioritizing funding equitably while substantively incorporating the input of stakeholder groups in making these fiscal decisions.

End

Thank You For Your Consideration.

Sincerely, The Classified Senate Executive Board, College of the Canyons.