



ACCREDITING COMMISSION for COMMUNITY and JUNIOR COLLEGES
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Barbara A. Beno, President
Susan S. Kazama, Chair

July 8, 2016

Memo to: Member Institutions: Chief Executive Officers, Chancellors, Accreditation Liaison Officers

Copy: Interested Others: Accreditors, Governmental Agencies, and Other Organizations

From: Norv Wellsfry, Vice President

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Subject: Commission Actions on Policy taken at the June 2016 Meeting

We request that you publicize this information on recent policy changes approved by the ACCJC at your institution.

The Policy Committee is a standing committee of the Commission. Through Commission processes, the Policy Committee oversees the ongoing review and updating of Commission policy. Commission procedures require that proposed institutional policy changes and/or new policies be considered by the Commission in a two-meeting process. At the first meeting, new policies and policy changes are discussed and modifications are made as appropriate (i.e., "First Reading"). These policies are then circulated to ACCJC accredited institutions via email, and to other interested parties via the online posting of Recent Commission Actions, for review and comment before presentation at the next Commission meeting for second reading and adoption.

When policy changes are needed in order to align with federal regulations or guidelines, they must be made expeditiously; these changes can be made by the Commission without the normal First Reading/Second Reading process for institutional policies. If these changes are made by Commission action between regular meetings, then the changes are reported to the field at the next Commission meeting.

New or revised operational policies of the ACCJC are adopted by a vote of the Commission in Open Session. Amendments to ACCJC Bylaws are made in accordance with Bylaws requirements.

The institutional policies and operational policies of the Commission are published annually in the *Accreditation Reference Handbook (ARH)* along with Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards. The publication is completed after the June Commission meeting each year. The ARH is available online at www.accjc.org.

1. The following revised institutional policy was presented for second reading, after consideration of comments received by the Commission, and adopted by the Commission.

- **Policy on Substantive Change**

The Policy was restructured to improve the clarity of the various kinds of institutional changes that constitute a substantive change, and to add the list of actions the Substantive Change Committee or the Commission may take on an application for approval of substantive change.

2. The following new policy was presented for second reading, after consideration of comments received by the Commission, and adopted by the Commission.

- **Policy on Accreditation of Baccalaureate Degrees**

This new policy sets forth the general requirements for accreditation of baccalaureate degrees, in accordance with advice from the U.S. Department of Education staff, as part of the ACCJC recognition review and application for scope to accredit community college baccalaureate degrees. Included are general requirements and the citations of Commission standards and evaluation criteria related to the accreditation of baccalaureate degrees through substantive change approval (initial approval) and thereafter the review of such degrees during the comprehensive evaluation of an institution which offers a baccalaureate degree.

3. The ACCJC Bylaws are presented for information to the public on recent amendments.

- **ACCJC Bylaws—Report on Action Taken**

The Bylaws were amended to provide clarifying language that all categories of commissioners are elected through the commissioner election process, to change the time in the academic calendar when the commissioners complete the election of commission officers, and to make provision for commissioners elected as academic faculty members to be able to complete their term if their employment status changes from faculty to another academic position. The Bylaws also added a footnote with the definition of academic members of the Commission.