

Formative/Summative Comprehensive Review Process

Background

At its January 2019 meeting, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) approved a proposal submitted by staff to enhance and re-envision the Commission's comprehensive review process. ACCJC will add a formative component into the comprehensive review process in order to more effectively foster institutional improvement, a core value of ACCJC, for its member colleges.

Procedural Improvements to the Comprehensive Review

- The comprehensive review will be divided into two components: the Team ISER Review and the Focused Site Visit. The Team ISER Review will occur approximately six (6) months prior to the Focused Site Visit. The team will specify areas of operations where no concerns remain, and thus need not be addressed during the subsequent Focused Site Visit. The team will narrow the focus of the site visit by providing Core Inquiries that the team will pursue. The team will communicate the Core Inquiries to college leadership so that additional information can be provided or improvements can be made prior to the Focused Site Visit.
- Approximately six (6) months after the Team ISER Review, the college will prepare for the Focused Site Visit. At the time of the visit, the college will have produced additional supporting evidence, as specified by the Core Inquiries, and will have documented the continued maturation of its structures or processes in order to demonstrate alignment and compliance with ACCJC Standards and policies. The team's interviews while on campus are guided by the Core Inquiries. The team report to the Commission is based on the status of the institution at the time of the Focused Site Visit, reflecting any progress achieved in the interval following the Team ISER Review.
- The final team report is forwarded to the Commission to inform its decision about the college's alignment and compliance with the Standards, as well as Commission policies, recommendations for improvement, and commendations. All of these elements lead to the Commission's final action on the college's accredited status.

Formative/Summative Comprehensive Review Goals

1. To eliminate any element of fear or surprise on the part of the college that often accompanies a comprehensive review.
2. To underscore the importance of the comprehensive review as an occasion to foster and guide institutional improvement.
3. To structure the Focused Site Visit on core accreditation issues by having already confirmed alignment and compliance on operational matters demonstrated in the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER).
4. To more fully utilize the wisdom of the peer review team by providing time for an institution to consider and adopt the team's advice as an integral part of the comprehensive review – and while the issues are current and advice is relevant.

Visual Representation of the Process and Glossary



TEAM ISER REVIEW

The Team ISER Review is a one-day, off-site preliminary analysis of an institution's self-evaluation report. The team develops a series of Core Inquiries based on the provided narrative and evidence.

CORE INQUIRIES

Core Inquiries are a means for communicating questions and potential areas of institutional improvement that arise during the Team ISER Review. Core Inquiries fall into two categories: Additional Information Requests or Interview/Observation Requests. Additional Information Requests can be addressed immediately or during the Focused Site Visit. Interview/Observation Requests are intended to be addressed at the Focused Site Visit. Core Inquiries highlight areas in the ISER that require clarification or expansion and are used to develop both recommendations and commendations.

FOCUSED SITE VISIT

The team will gather additional information via interviews, data requests, and observation sessions to confirm progress made on the Core Inquiries during the Focused Site Visit. The Focused Site Visit is limited to only those issues directly related to the Core Inquiries as previously communicated to the institution – thus, the team is reduced in size as only those team members assigned to the specific Core Inquiries will attend the Focused Site Visit.

DRAFT TEAM REPORT

Teams develop an initial report based on the findings of both the Team ISER Review and the Focused Site Visit. This draft report is then presented to the institution.

ERRORS OF FACT

The institution has the opportunity to review the Draft Team Report and identify any errors of fact.

FINAL TEAM REPORT

The Final Team Report identifies commendations, compliance issues, and recommendations for improvement.

COMMISSION ACTION

The ACCJC meets to decide on the institution's accredited status. The decision is based upon the ISER, evidence, and Final Team Report.