

## Outtakes from October 2011 Conferences

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### October 12 Conference:

- (1) European concerns and US concerns are similar
  - (a) Quality Assurance Agencies do not set absolute standards and focus.
  - (b) Agencies are not able to guarantee that an institution will conform to quality standards at all times.
  - (c) Agencies should function as a public policy tool to redirect institutional energies toward government goals.
  - (d) Quality assurance agencies face challenges convincing academics and government agencies that quality assurance processes are important and worth the effort.
  - (e) Some European governments are discussing student outcomes as a simpler and more direct measure of institutional quality, and are starting the debate on whether or not to use these outcomes as the sole measure of educational quality.
  - (f) Longstanding institutional ranking systems are preferred by some wanting a simpler measure of quality even though these rankings are not only based on educational outcomes.

The longstanding practice of accepting degrees from institutions without requiring certification of institutional quality through an accreditation process is slow to change.
- (2) Revisions applicable to Standard III.D
  - (a) Will require evidentiary documents used by visiting teams to evaluate institutional financial services to reflect new accounting requirements for other post-employment benefits and liabilities such as loans and bonds. The new documents will be used by all teams beginning with Spring 2012 evaluation visits and have been posted on the Commission's website, <http://www.accjc.org> on the "Publications and Policies page.
  - (b) Revisions to the "Guide to Evaluating Institutions" include additional questions about financial practices and quality, including OPEB is planned and funded. Also available from the Commission's website, , <http://www.accjc.org> on the "Publications and Policies page.
  - (c) ACCJC has developed a training program for Chief Business Officers to help them to become more informed about accreditation processes and to expand their participation in accreditation activities and visits. First offered at the California Association of Chief Business Officers meeting on October 25, 2011.
  - (d) Recommendations for revisions to Standard III.D, Financial Resources that will be submitted to the ACCJC's Policy Committee for further action.
- (3) Focus on Quality

- (a) There are growing expectations that achievement of mission be demonstrated by providing evidence of student success and student learning (Achieving the Dream).
    - (1) Degree Completion
    - (2) Completion of Basic Skills courses
    - (3) Transition through Basic Skills sequence
    - (4) Persistence from semester to semester
    - (5) Persistence from year to year
    - (6) Course Completion
  - (b) How Does A College Know That It is Doing Well?
    - (a) Benchmarking
      - (1) Like colleges - National Community College Benchmarking Project
      - (2) Own data
    - (b) Target
      - (1) Set two goals
        - a. Achievable
        - b. Stretch
  - (c) HI-PASS
- (4) Summary of New Accreditation Requirements
- (a) The institution must provide a description of any correspondence programs that the institution offers in which a student may earn 50 percent or more of a certificate or degree.
  - (b) The institution must provide a description of any distance education programs that the institution offers in which a student may earn 50 percent or more of a certificate, degree, or program.
  - (c) The institution must have in place policy and procedure that ensure the integrity of distance education and correspondence education to ensure that the student registered for a course is the student doing the work and receiving grades and credit for the course.
  - (d) The institution must establish a clear policy and procedure for award of credit which identifies the student work necessary to earn a credit hour. Institutions must adhere to their own policy in assigning credit to all courses, in all modes of delivery, including credits awarded for independent study, for service based learning, and for internships. Any institutional calculations for converting clock hours for the purpose of awarding credit in courses/programs where there may be requirements for students to complete hours on task for licensure or occupational purposes must comply with the federal formula conversion. (Section 602.16(a) and Section 668.8(k)(2)).
  - (e) The institution must make available to enrolled and prospective students the names of agencies that accredit, approve or license the institution and its programs, and the

procedures by which documents describing the activity of the accrediting, licensing, or approving may be reviewed. The institution must make available to any student or prospective student a copy of the documents that describe an institution's accreditation and its State, Federal or tribal approving and licensing. The institution must provide students with contact information for filing complaints with the institution's accreditor and licensing/approval agency. (Section 668.43)

(f) The accreditor has standards that effectively address success with respect to student achievement in relation to the institution's mission, including as appropriate consideration of course completion rate, licensure pass rates and job placement rates where available, and examine program certificate completion data and graduation data provided by the college.

(g) The accreditor must demonstrate that it applies a set of monitoring approaches that allow it to identify institutional strengths and stability. These approaches must include collection and analysis of key data, including fiscal information and measures of student achievement. (Section 602.19 and 602.16)

(5) "Building Capacity for Educational Excellence: Elements of Effective Program Review and Integrated Planning" February 2012 – Honolulu.

(6) Regional Workshops – "Good Practices in Outcome Assessment" and "Use of Assessment Results to Inform Institutional Decision Making" Fall 2012

October 27 Conference

(1) WASC Senior Assurance

(a) Benchmarking retention and graduation rates

(b) Next: benchmarking quality of learning (results, not process)

(1) Validation of proficiencies of graduates in key areas, consistent with at least two competencies identified in CFR 2.2

(a) Writing and Oral Communication

(b) Quantitative Skills

(c) Critical Thinking

(d) Information Literacy

(2) Validation of Standard of student performance or proficiency

(a) Calibrated through some external process

- (1) Collaborating Institutions
- (2) Accreditation Team Members
  
- (3) Comparisons /benchmarks for assessment findings
  - (a) Current students
  - (b) Previous graduates
  - (c) Students' progress from entry to exit
  - (d) Expectations based on standardized test scores
  - (f) Faculty ambitions for students
  - (g) Comparisons with actual and aspirational peers
  - (h) Expectations of community

3. WASC's Approach to Benchmarking

- (a) Standards of proficiency are defined by the institution
- (b) Assessment method is chosen by the institution
- (c) Institutions contextualize their results data/evidence relative to similar types of institutions and a larger universe.
- (d) WASC will evaluate whether the institutional presentation demonstrates an appropriate level of proficiency through a peer review process with specially trained peers.