



Welcome! 😊

Institutional Self-Evaluation Training

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Topics for Today

Broader Context for Accreditation

- Accreditation & Its Purposes
- ACCJC & Its Processes
- Approaching the Process: Mindset & Timeline



Nuts & Bolts

- Interpreting the Standards for Self-Evaluation
- Developing the Report (aka, the ISER): Tips & Resources



Learning Outcomes for Today's Training

- **Understand what accreditation is (for new folks)**
- **Understand the ISER in context** of the accreditation process
- **Engage in the self-evaluation process as an opportunity** to document and establish goals for continuous improvement
- **Interpret Standards and apply them** to your policies and practices
- **Write a concise, clear, and evidence-based ISER**

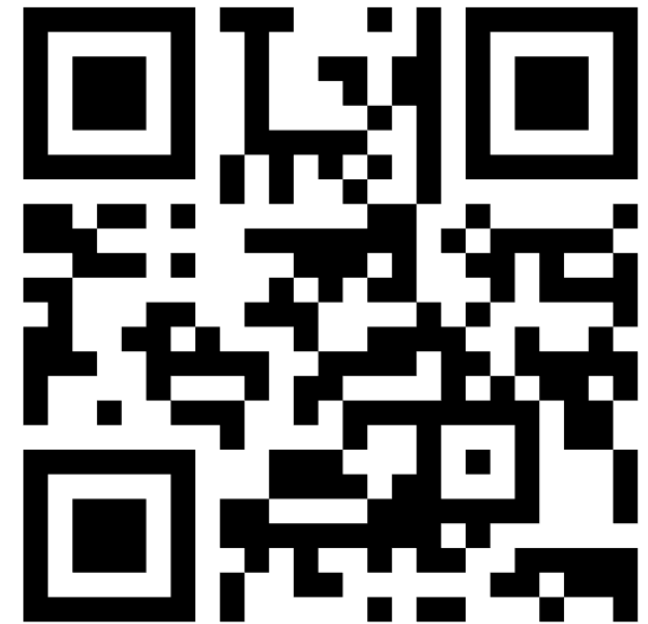


Broader Context for Accreditation

Your Thoughts:

First three words that spring to mind when you hear the word “accreditation”?

_____ ? _____ ? _____ ?



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What do you think of when you hear the word "accreditation"?



What is Accreditation?

Accreditation is a **practice** of academic quality control

- **Promotes** institutional excellence through application of standards
- **Advances** meaningful and effective **student learning and achievement**
- **Provides** assurance to students, general public, & others of quality of educational offerings

Accreditation is a **process** characterized by a commitment to peer review

- Practitioner-based form of self-regulation unique to United States higher education
- Institutions evaluated against consistent Standards, through the lens of their own mission
- Allows for consistent expectations within varying types of institutions



Your Thoughts:

What are the benefits of accreditation? Why do we engage in this work?

_____ ? _____ ? _____ ?



<https://www.menti.com/h92rr4qccj>

What are the benefits of accreditation?



What are the Benefits?

- Gives **credibility to degrees and credentials** awarded to students
(e.g., for transfer, employment, etc.)
- Enables access to **Title IV (Federal Student Aid)**
- Stimulates **institutional reflection, innovation, and improvement**
- Provides **assurance** to students, the public, and others
(e.g., quality and stability of services, mission fulfillment, etc.)



ACCJC's Mission & Values

Outcomes ✦ *Innovation* ✦ *Improvement*

Mission Statement:

ACCJC supports its member institutions to advance educational quality and student learning and achievement. This collaboration fosters institutional excellence and continuous improvement through innovation, self-analysis, peer review, and application of standards.

Core Values:

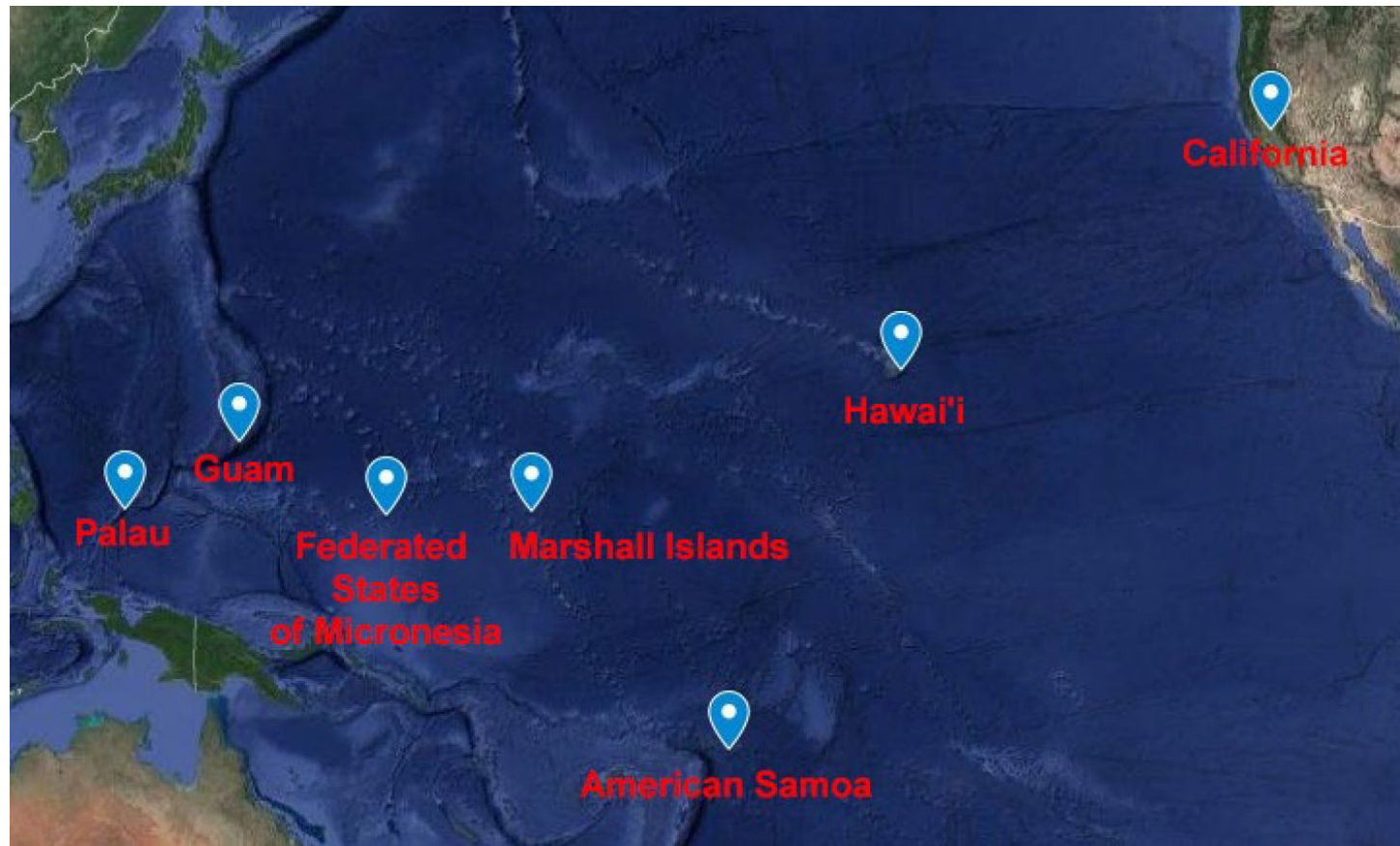


Who are ACCJC's Members?

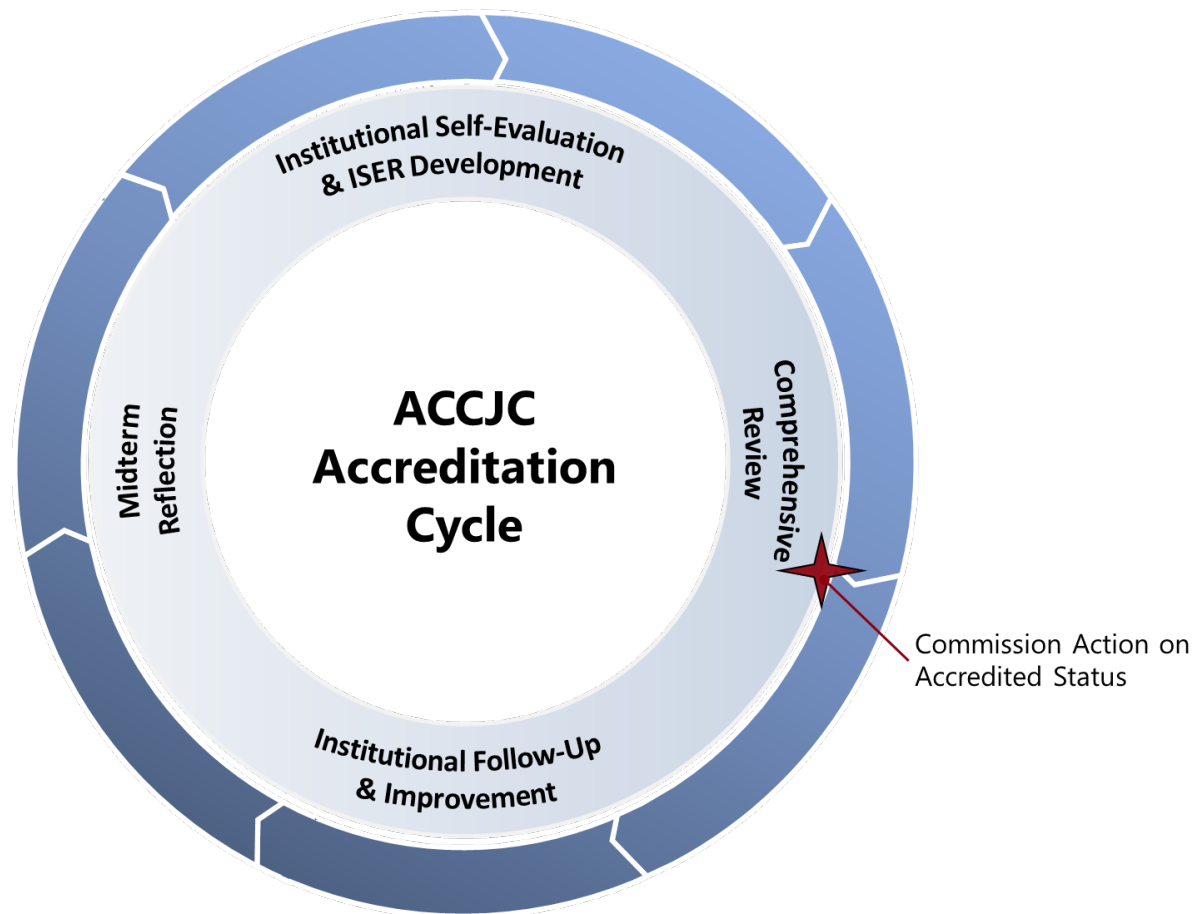
Primary mission centered on granting **associate degrees**

Diverse Structures & Cultures

- Public & private
- Non-profit & for-profit
- Parochial & vocational
- Urban & rural
- Range of sizes



ACCJC's Accreditation Cycle & Reports



Reports at a Glance:

- Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER)
(Required for all members every 7 years)
- Follow-Up Reports
(Only when required by the Commission)
- Midterm Reports
(Required for all members 4th year after comp review)
- Annual Report and Annual Fiscal Report
(Required for all members on an annual basis)
- Substantive Change
(Required for all members under specific circumstances)

Based on Four Interconnected Standards

Standard I

Mission, Academic Quality & Institutional Effectiveness, & Integrity

Mission

Assuring Academic Quality & Institutional Effectiveness

Institutional Integrity

Standard II

Student Learning Programs & Services

Instructional Programs

Library & Learning Support Services

Student Support Services

Standard III

Resources

Human Resources

Physical Resources

Technology Resources

Financial Resources

Standard IV

Leadership & Governance

Decision-Making Roles & Responsibilities

Chief Executive Officer

Governing Board

Multi-College Systems or Districts

Key Concepts Woven Throughout Standards

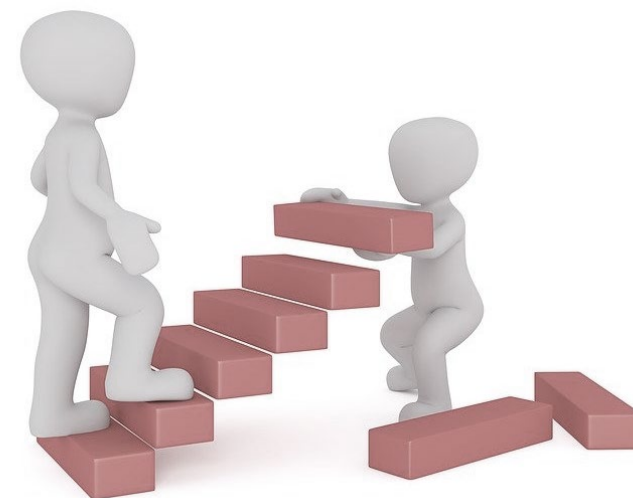
- Focus on achieving institutional mission
- Integrity and honesty in institutional policies and actions
- Focus on student outcomes
 - **Student achievement:** Completion of meaningful educational goals
 - **Student learning:** Attainment of demonstrable knowledge and skills
- Metrics and evidence used to assess institutional quality
- Ongoing internal quality assurance practices
- Continuous improvement for high performance

Overview: Comprehensive Review Process



Timeline for the Comprehensive Review

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| NOW: | ISER development begins |
| Dec 15, 2023: | ISER Due to ACCJC |
| Feb/Mar 2024: | Team ISER Review <i>Formative Feedback via Core Inquiries</i> |
| Sept/Oct 2024: | Focused Site Visit <i>Summative Feedback via Team Report</i> |
| January 2025: | Commission Action |



Throughout the process: ACCJC training & support

Intended Outcome for the Self-Evaluation

The goal is an Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) that:

- Reflects an authentic, collaborative, and mission-focused self-evaluation
- Demonstrates how LTCC:
 - Aligns with Standards
 - Exemplifies academic quality
 - Continues to learn and improve
- Serves as a framework for fostering ongoing institutional excellence and student success



Mindset Matters!

Institutions with a learning-focused approach to self-evaluation:

- Honestly evaluate alignment with Standards
- Base conclusions on evidence and analysis
- Focus on outcomes rather than processes
- Celebrate, appreciate, and build on what works
- Lean into opportunities for improvement
- Value internal accountability
- Think holistically across institutional systems
- Mindful of institutional mission and goals



Mindset Matters for Your Team, Too

Approach (mindset) for Review

- Starts with **trusting** the ISER and evidence
 - Seek to **understand** the college in the context of its mission
 - Practice **appreciative inquiry**
 - **Respect / Appreciate** college processes, practices and culture
- Validation and affirmation (**alignment** with Standards)
 - **Not** hunting for deficiencies (not playing gotcha game)
 - **Not** reviewing against other regulations or requirements of other groups/entities
 - **Triangulate** all evidence and findings
- **Goal:** assist college with improving educational quality and student learning
- **Outcome:** team report – help the college to improve, and celebrate good practice

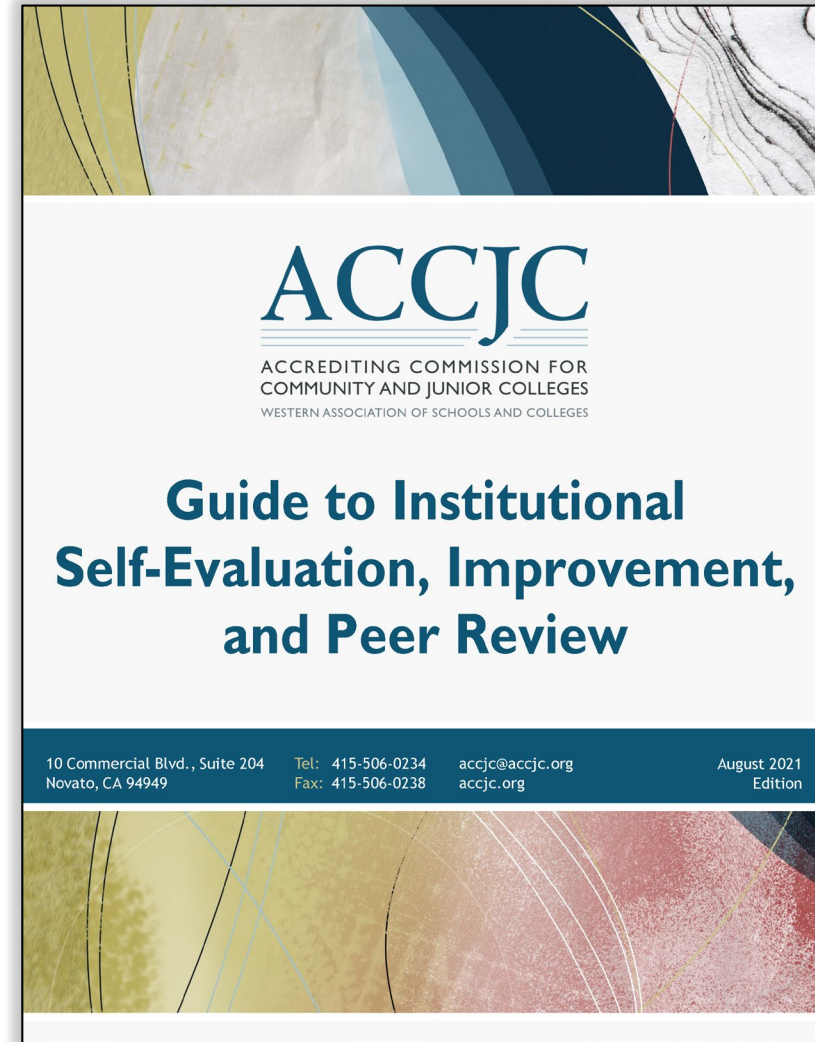




Nuts and Bolts: Interpreting the Standards for Self Evaluation

Key Resource:

- *Guide to Institutional Self-Evaluation, Improvement, and Peer Review*
 - September 2021 Edition
 - Guidance, process suggestions, evidence suggestions, review criteria, etc.
 - For use by college AND teams
- Available on ACCJC website – [Resources > Guides & Manuals](#)





Good Practices for the Self-Evaluation

- Suggested process outlined in *Guide to Institutional Self-Evaluation*
- Plan backward, and build in “slip time”
- Keep the mission in mind (it is the lens for the evaluation)
- Discuss the Standard, gather the evidence, **then** write
- Address gaps and areas for improvement as soon as you find them
- Include as many people as possible in some aspect of the reflection
- Communicate, communicate, communicate...and communicate again

Start with the Standards

Standard I

Mission, Academic Quality & Institutional Effectiveness, & Integrity

Mission

Assuring Academic Quality & Institutional Effectiveness

Institutional Integrity

Standard II

Student Learning Programs & Services

Instructional Programs

Library & Learning Support Services

Student Support Services

Standard III

Resources

Human Resources

Physical Resources

Technology Resources

Financial Resources

Standard IV

Leadership & Governance

Decision-Making Roles & Responsibilities

Chief Executive Officer

Governing Board

Multi-College Systems or Districts

Interpreting Individual Standards

Step 1: Use the outline structure to focus in on the general topic

Standard II.A.1:

Standard II

**Student Learning
Programs &
Services**

**Instructional
Programs**



Interpreting Individual Standards

Step 2: Isolate the basic components of each sentence
(i.e., subject, verb, direct object)

Standard II.A.1:

All instructional programs, regardless of location or means of delivery, including distance education and correspondence education, are offered in fields of study consistent with the institution's mission, are appropriate to higher education, and culminate in student attainment of identified student learning outcomes, and achievement of degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer to other higher education programs.

Breakout Activity - Interpreting Standards

Goals:

- Discuss varying perspectives on specific standards
- Identify differences between similar or related standards
- Identify evidence that demonstrates alignment
- Begin to norm interpretations and expectations



Breakout Activity - Interpreting Standards

Instructions:

1. Join your breakout room
2. Read through the Standards assigned to your small group
3. Discuss the Reflection Questions
4. Be prepared to share insights with the full group

**Don't forget to take notes! 😊*





Reflection:

What are some of the key takeaways from your group?

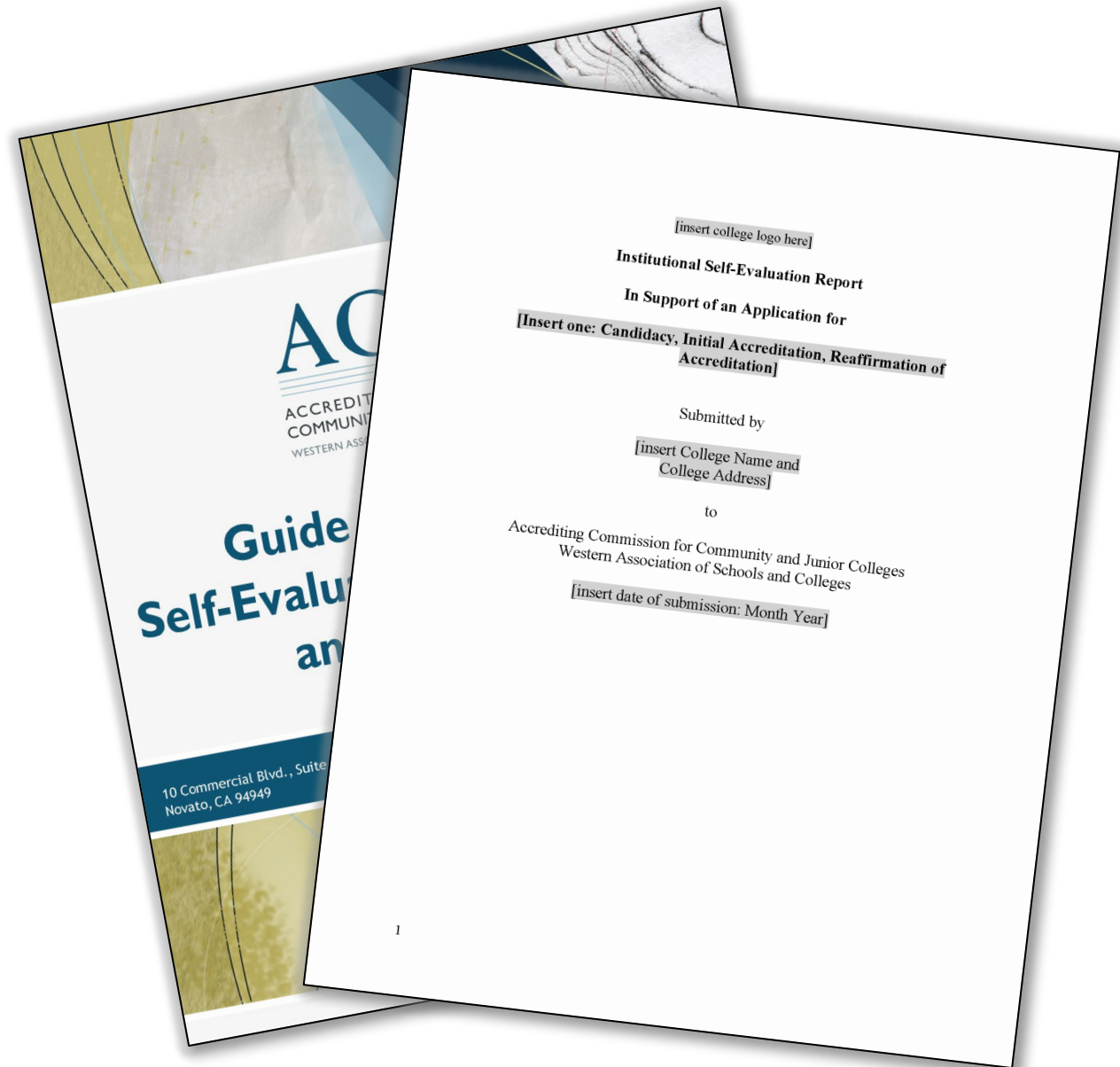




Nuts and Bolts: Preparing the Institutional Self- Evaluation Report

Key Resources:

- *Guide to Institutional Self-Evaluation, Improvement, and Peer Review*
 - Required contents, formatting/structure suggestions, submission instructions, additional protocols, etc.
- ISER Template
 - Word document with embedded formatting, structure, links to the *Guide*, etc.
- Available on ACCJC website – [Resources > Guides & Manuals](#)





Good Practices for Evidence

- Gather your evidence *before* you begin writing
- More evidence is not necessarily better
- Provide representative samples showing results of institutional processes
- Use evidence to demonstrate how processes/cycles are institutionalized
- Call out relevant sections of large documents (highlights, excerpts, etc.)
- Compare your evidence with suggestions in the *Guide*

Good Practices for Approaching the Report

- Discuss the Standard, gather the evidence, **then** write
- Use the ISER template (available on ACCJC website)
- Refer to the *Guide to Institutional Self-Evaluation* frequently
- Keep the narrative clear, direct, and focused – use active voice
- Use introductory sections to set the context and tone
- Complete ERs 1-5 & Commission Policies with related Standards
- Format as an electronic document from the start
- “Freeze” evidence from websites in a PDF or screenshot



Guidance Based on Recent Reviews

- **Evidence should show your processes and practices in action**
 - Think “case studies”, not just process handbooks
 - Balance examples across different areas of the institution
- **Tell the whole story of complex processes**
 - Outline multi-step/integrated processes with clear description or visuals
 - Include “case studies” showing how steps fit together
- **Check your cycles (e.g., assessment, evaluations, BP review)**
 - Are you on schedule and at expected completion percentages?
 - If you’ve slipped (pandemics happen!), have a plan to get back on track



Structuring the Institutional Analysis

Evidence of Meeting the Standard

- Indicates **WHAT** specific evidence demonstrates alignment with the Standard

Analysis and Evaluation

- Analyzes **HOW** the evidence demonstrates alignment with the Standard
- Evaluates the effectiveness of the policy, procedure, or practice, if needed

Conclusions on Standard X (at the end of each major section)

- Summarizes the effectiveness of the College's efforts towards Standard
- Includes improvements the College determines would strengthen alignment



Improvement Plans and the QFE

Self-Identified Improvement Plans (i.e., planning agendas)

- Plans to strengthen alignment to specific standards
- Connected to specific Standards or across multiple Standards
- Report on progress in the Midterm Report

Quality Focus Essay (QFE)

- Long-term plans to ***improve student learning and achievement***
- Include measurable and achievable outcomes, timeline, responsible parties
- Report on results in the Midterm Report

Heads Up: Federal-Level Changes to DE

- In Sept. 2020, US Dept. of Education (ED) issued final rule re: Distance Education & Innovation under the Higher Education Act
- In June 2021, ACCJC adopted policy revisions to align with new ruling (See [Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education](#))
- Colleges should plan to be in alignment with new policy by June 2022

Changes to note:

- Modified definitions for distance education and correspondence education
- Definition of regular and substantive interaction

Other Helpful Resources

- **Your ACCJC staff liaison**
- Other resources on the ACCJC website (accjc.org):
 - [Eligibility Requirements](#), [Accreditation Standards](#), and [Commission policies](#)
 - [Educational Series](#)
 - [Webinars](#) and other [ongoing training events](#)
 - News and Communications
 - [Announcements](#)
 - ACCJC Connect ([subscribe](#) to or visit accjc.org/accjc-connect/)
 - [Recent Commission Actions](#)



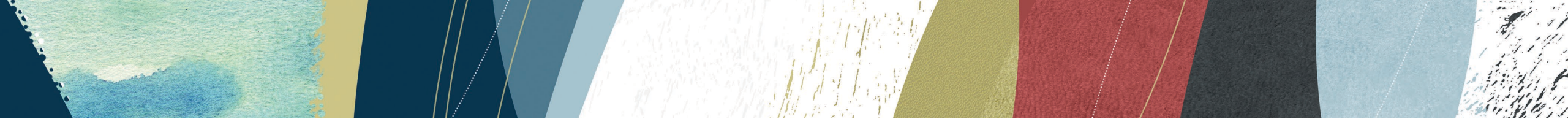
Guides and
Manuals



Educational Series



Standards &
Policies



Checking in:

Remaining questions? Comments to share?





Thank you!!