



## Agenda Item Details

Meeting	Jan 13, 2021 - Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Category	8. REPORTS
Subject	8.14 Accreditation Midterm Report
Access	Public
Type	Information

## Public Content

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## OVERVIEW

This information report outlines aspects of accreditation, including the current Midterm Report on the Board's Agenda.

### What is accreditation?

Accreditation is a system of self-regulation developed to evaluate overall educational quality and institutional effectiveness. Accreditation is a data-driven continuous self-improvement process that serves to:

- Provide the necessary assurances to the public that the education provided by institutions meets acceptable levels of quality, and
- Encourage and support institutions to make continuous improvements to educational quality and institutional effectiveness.

### What does accreditation do?

Accreditation helps to advance educational quality and student learning and achievement by fostering institutional excellence and continuous improvement through innovation, self-analysis, peer review, and application of Standards. Being accredited establishes that the College is adhering to the accreditation Standards.

Accredited status is a signal to the public that an institution satisfies all accreditation Standards, therefore, institutions must always remain in compliance. Being an accredited college proves our public credibility and legitimacy of our courses, degrees, and certifies and their transferability. Being accredited also allows the College to qualify to offer our students financial aid (Title IV funds) and federal/state grants.

The College is and has always been fully accredited which means that it continues to meet or exceed the accreditation Standards. This is the highest standing that any college may achieve.

### Which body accredits Mt. SAC?

Mt. SAC is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and the U.S. Department of Education. The primary purpose of our accreditation with ACCJC is to foster learning in our students. The College ensures that its resources and processes support student learning, continuously assesses that learning, and pursues institutional excellence and improvement. As we are an effective accredited College, we maintain an ongoing, self-reflective dialogue about our quality and improvement.

### Do some academic programs have additional accreditation requirements?

In addition to reviews that evaluate the effectiveness of the College as a whole, Mt. SAC offers several programs overseen by professional bodies with the same commitment to quality service and instruction as relates to several specialty programs (e.g., nursing) offered by Mt. SAC. More information about the programmatic accreditation may be found at [https://www.mtsac.edu/accreditation/college\\_accreditation/2021/programmatic-accreditation.html](https://www.mtsac.edu/accreditation/college_accreditation/2021/programmatic-accreditation.html)

### What is the purpose of the Midterm Report?

In Spring 2017, Mt. SAC hosted a Visiting Team of its peers who evaluated the College's Institutional Self-Evaluation Report and made recommendations to ACCJC. In July 2017, Mt. SAC received a letter from ACCJC stating the College achieved full accreditation, the highest award possible. Because the College received full accreditation, the next requirement in the seven-year cycle is to provide a Midterm Report no later than March 15, 2021.

In March 2020, the Mt. SAC Accreditation Steering Committee (ASC), a governance committee that guides the process used for campus-wide involvement in accreditation, proposed and approved a timeline and process for preparing the 2021 Midterm Report. This timeline and process was then approved by the President's Advisory Council.

There were many steps in the process that supplied intentional opportunities for constituency leaders to inform their members about the report, review it, and give feedback, thus allowing the campus to address questions and give input for the 2021 Midterm Report. The Faculty Accreditation Coordinator led the process and worked collaboratively with ASC to secure input from College employees. In addition, the campus community was given direct access to a public webpage for their feedback.

This Midterm Report describes and provides evidence for the plans arising from the self-evaluation process, including the Qualify Focus Essay, and describes Mt. SAC's response to the External Evaluation Team recommendations meant to enhance institutional improvements and effectiveness, most specifically the team's recommendations regarding Standards II.A.3, II.A.8, and IV.A.7. The College was judged to be meeting these Standards which is why enhancement recommendations were supplied to highlight areas of practice which may need our attention for improvement. In addition, this Midterm Report includes the ACCJC 2020 Annual Report on student achievement and the 2020 Annual Fiscal Report.

President's Cabinet, President's Advisory Council, and Academic Senate reviewed the Midterm Report draft and supplied input. In December 2020, ASC completed the Midterm Report, Academic Senate and President's Cabinet approved it, and it is being submitted in January and February 2021 to the Board of Trustees for its review and consideration for approval. The approved copy will be sent to ACCJC in early March 2021.

#### What are the next steps?

Every seven years, California community colleges are evaluated through accreditation Standards outlined by ACCJC. As part of this process, the College must undergo periodic evaluation. The main aspect of this obligation is the creation of a thorough Institutional Self-Evaluation Report.

In fall 2020, ASC began its discussions about our next accreditation cycle requirement: Institutional Self-Evaluation Report. In fall, ASC invited the College's ACCJC Liaison, Ms. Gohar Momjian, Vice President to their meeting. Ms. Momjian outlined the new accreditation process for the next report.

In spring 2021, ASC will complete a timeline and list of activities to meet the College's major accreditation mandate which is to submit a final Institutional Self-Evaluation Report in December 2023 and host the ACCJC Visiting Team members in March 2024. While building the timeline, ASC members will secure feedback from their constituency members and President's Advisory Council.

Also, in spring 2021, ASC will train themselves on the new accreditation process, understanding the over 100 accreditation Standards. In fall 2021, it is expected that ASC will launch, campus-wide, its training process, ask ACCJC to train ASC and the College, and begin writing its Institutional Self-Evaluation Report.

Early fall 2023, the College will submit to the Board its fully developed draft of the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report and send it to ACCJC. The Visiting Team members will review it and provide the College feedback for improvement. As Ms. Momjian discussed with ASC, providing the College with formative feedback is a new ACCJC process. The Team Members use this draft of the report to decide which members need to visit the College in spring 2024; only those areas of focus that need further examination will require a Visiting Team member. As such, it is important that the College's early fall 2023 draft is a true and final reflection of the excellent work of the College.

In late fall 2023, the College will work to address those improvements offered by the Visiting Team and submit the final report to the Board for approval, followed by submission to ACCJC. In March 2024, MT. SAC will host the sub-set of Visiting Team members of our peers to evaluate the College's Institutional Self-Evaluation Report and its operations and make recommendations to ACCJC for our accreditation status.

Based on this work, ACCJC will review the Team's report and in July 2024, Mt. SAC will receive a letter from ACCJC showing the College's accreditation standing for the next seven years. We expect this outcome to be full accreditation as the College is excellent at meeting and/or exceeding the ACCJC accreditation Standards! Anticipating that, the College will receive full accreditation, the next requirement in the seven-year process is to provide a Midterm Report no later than March 15, 2028.

Mt. SAC is clearly highly invested in the quality of its work for its students, employees, and its community. Excellence and distinction are Mt. SAC's way of operating and thus our pathway to accreditation.