

# ACCREDITATION AND GOVERNING BOARD ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**October 16, 2021**

Dr. Gohar Momjian  
ACCJC Vice President



# Today's Topics

- Accreditation's Purposes, Processes and Standards
- Changes at ACCJC
- The Roles and Responsibilities of the Governing Board



# 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**.

In the **United States** we are fortunate that this is a **peer-review driven process**. In many other countries, colleges and universities are recognized by a government education agency, such as the Ministry of Education.



# Quality Assurance Purpose of Accreditation

- 7-year review cycle based on Standards **by the institution, and validated by peers**
  - Inform the US ED, students, and the public of results
- Monitor certain aspects of institutional quality per federal regulations
  - Fiscal Health
  - Headcount growth or decline
  - Substantive Changes
- Integrity in relation to students and the public





# Benefits of Accreditation

- Gives **credibility** to degrees and credentials awarded to students
- Stimulates **institutional innovation and improvement**
- Enables access to **Title IV (Federal Student Aid)**
- Provides **quality assurance** to students, the public, and other institutions that your Colleges are achieving their missions



# Institutions ACCJC Accredits

Community, junior, career, technical, and other colleges in:

- California
- Hawaii
- U.S. territories of Guam and American Samoa
- The Republic of Palau
- The Federated States of Micronesia
- The Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas
- The Republic of the Marshall Islands

Colleges with primary mission of granting associate degrees, but which may also award certificates and other credentials, not to exceed the bachelor degree level.



## Mission

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges **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

Integrity | Quality Assurance | Institutional Improvement  
Peer Review | Student Learning & Achievement | Collegiality

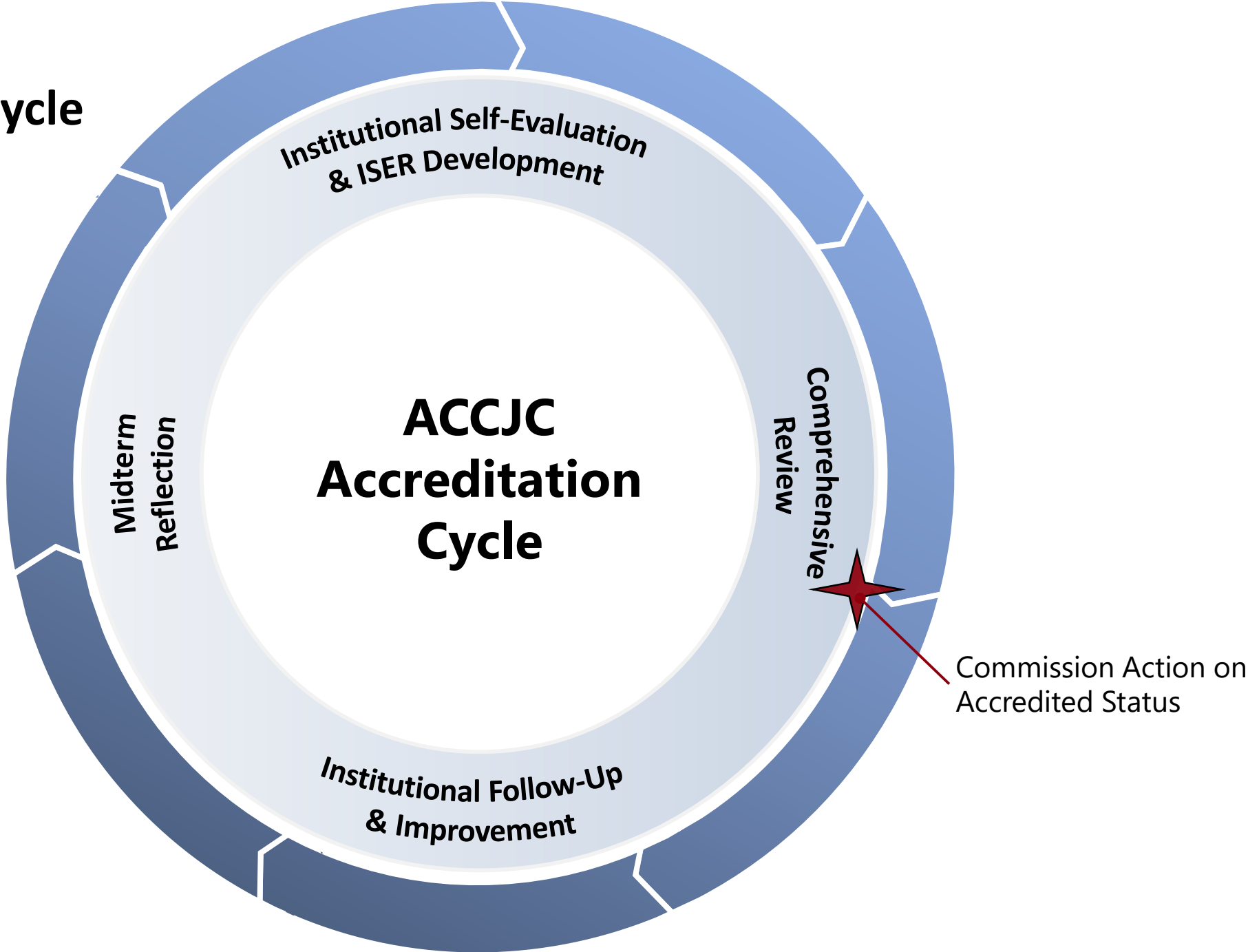
# ACCJC Mission & Values in Action

- VP Portfolio Model
- Improved Trainings and Support Resources
  - “Personalized” Trainings
  - Webinars & Video Trainings
  - Improved Guides & Manuals
- Streamlined Reporting Processes
- New processes for comprehensive review
- Review & Revision of Accreditation Standards





**At a Glance:  
Tasks in the Cycle**



# Elements of the Comprehensive Review

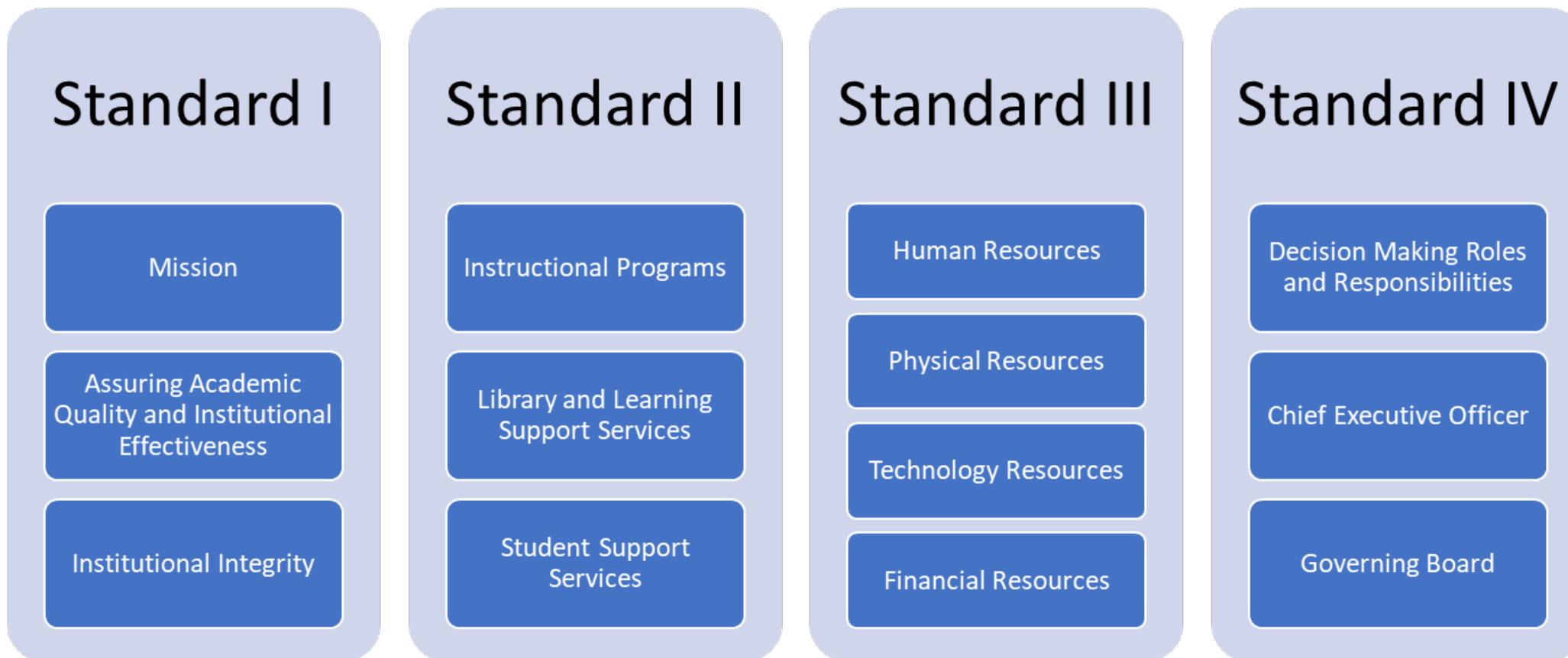
**Self-Reflection**  
(ISER)

**Peer Review**  
(Team ISER Review &  
Focused Site Visit)

**Affirmation**  
(ACCJC Action)

**Ongoing Commitment to Improvement & Educational Excellence**

# Four Interlocking Standards of Institutional Practice





# 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



# Comprehensive Peer Review

ISER IS DUE AUGUST 1, 2023

Fall 2023  
Formative  
Component

TEAM ISER REVIEW

CORE INQUIRIES

FOCUSED SITE VISIT

DRAFT TEAM REPORT

ERRORS OF FACT

COMPLETED TEAM REPORT

COMMISSION ACTION

Spring 2024  
Summative  
Component

## Benefit for Colleges:

- Reduce fear / eliminate surprise
- Time to consider team's feedback for planning and improvement
- Cost benefit

## Benefit for Membership:

- Promote collegiality
- Increase transparency and trust
- Emphasize institutional improvement



# Roles and Responsibilities of Trustees and Advice for Board Excellence



# Two Challenges for Governing Boards:

1. Mission-Directed Leadership (IV.C.1, IV.C.5)
2. High Performance of the Board and the District (IV.C.4, IV.C.10)

Establishing expectations of excellence and measuring performance linked to the District's goals will help meet both challenges. To perform well, Trustees must be accountable as well as hold others accountable.



# What Does Board Accountability Look Like?

- Policy leadership, representing the entire District and its stakeholders
- Establishing expectations for mission and vision fulfillment
- Delegating responsibility for implementation to the CEO
- Assuring that College/District goals are achieved
- **Focus on the “what” not the “how”**





# Ensuring Educational Quality: Seven Roles for Boards

1. Develop board capacity for ensuring educational quality.
2. Ensure that policies and practices promote educational quality.
3. Ensure that learning is assessed, data are used, and improvements tracked.
4. Approve and monitor necessary financial resources.
5. Develop an understanding of academic programs.
6. Focus on the total educational experience.
7. Understand accreditation.

Association of Governing Boards, *Overseeing Educational Quality*. 2014



# Accountability for Student Success

- How do you know that the mission and goals are being achieved?  
*(i.e., maintaining awareness of Strategic Plan)*
- How frequently do you receive data & analyses? When in the cycle?  
*(i.e., meaningful evidence for decision-making)*
- What types of data do you receive?  
*(i.e., institutional trends, lagging/leading indicators, program review, etc.)*
- How do you communicate your expectations for student success?  
*(i.e., clear and consistent communication with/through the Superintendent/President)*

# Expectation for Ongoing Board Improvement

- Ask: “What can I/we do...
  - ...to make our Board more effective?”
  - ...to help our CEO be successful?”
  - ...to help our Colleges be successful?”
- Then ask: “What can our Board do better?”





# Common Accreditor Concerns Regarding Boards

Is the Board:

- Balancing the budget, planning for ongoing fiscal stability?
- Staying at the “policy level” and not intruding into daily operations?
- Acting as a collective entity, free from undue influence?
- Acting consistently with its policies, bylaws, and code of ethics?
- Delegating appropriately to the District CEO?
- Remaining engaged in strategic, integrated planning?
- Maintaining awareness and accountability for student success?





# Fiduciary Responsibility: Representing the Public Trust

(B)oard members do not represent specific constituencies in the sense of taking board actions in favor of their interests. All governing board members, appointed or elected, have a fiduciary responsibility to the institution and are expected to bring to board deliberations a broad understanding of the college's role in serving all students and the institution's multiple stakeholders. There must be no implied obligation for any governing board member to serve the interests of a specific constituency over the interests of the broad mission of the college.

*ACCJC Guide to Accreditation for Governing Boards, p. 7*



# Resources

## **ACCJC's Accreditation Standards:**

[https://accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/Accreditation-Standards\\_-Adopted-June-2014.pdf](https://accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/Accreditation-Standards_-Adopted-June-2014.pdf)

## **ACCJC's Guide to Accreditation for Governing Boards:**

<https://accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/Guide-to-Accreditation-for-Governing-Boards-September-2020.pdf>

## **Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT):**

<https://www.acct.org/governance-basics>

## **Association of Governing Boards (AGB):**

<https://agb.org/knowledge-center/boardfundamentals/board-roles-responsibilities/>



Lingering Questions? Clarifications?

Thank You!!