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ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR
COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

Policy on Complaints Against the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

January 2024

Policy
The Commission is committed to reviewing in a timely, fair, and equitable manner any complaint against itself. The Commission applies unbiased judgment to said complaints and takes follow-up action, as appropriate, based on the results of its review. [1] Individuals may file a complaint against the Commission if they believe the Commission is out of compliance with its own published Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies (together Commission's Standards), with federal regulations, or with accreditation procedures.

In order to be considered a formal complaint against the ACCJC, a complaint must involve issues broader in scope than a concern about a specific institutional action or a specific evaluation team.

Criteria for Review of a Complaint

- Complaint should identify the Commission's Standards or procedures in question.
- Complaint should include substantial evidence to support the allegations.
- Complainant should submit the complaint within 18 months from the date of the alleged occurrence(s) indicating noncompliance with Commission's Standards, federal regulations, or procedures.
- Complaint should be written and submitted through ACCJC's online complaint form https://accjc.org/forms/complaints-against-the-accjc/, or mailed in hard copy to the Commission at ACCJC, 428 J Street, Suite 400, Sacramento, CA 95814. ACCJC staff will assist complainants by phone and email to document and submit their complaint for review.
- Complaint should include complainant name, reply address, and signature.
- Complainant must acknowledge awareness that ACCJC may send a copy of the complaint to the ACCJC President and/or other staff. The complainant may request their personally identifiable information to remain confidential.
- Anonymous complaints will be reviewed only if there is sufficient information and evidence to support ACCJC noncompliance with its own published Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies (together Commission's Standards), with federal regulations, and or with accreditation procedures.

[1] § 602.23 (c)(3)

Complaints ACCJC Will Not Review

- ACCJC does not review complaints seeking to substitute Commission judgements or team recommendations related to institutional reviews or those raising matters about which a member institution has due process procedures as a part of accreditation reviews.[2]

- An accreditation action not in accord with a complainant's expectation is not in and of itself cause for review of a complaint against ACCJC.[3]

- ACCJC does not review complaints indicating disagreement with accreditation standards, or those concerning the accredited status of a member institution.

Should a complaint require Commission consideration and action, ACCJC will notify the complainant of the timing of the Commission's review.

ACCJC may elect to consider complaints together if they concern the same circumstances, complainants, or periods of time. The ACCJC does not accept amendments to a complaint.

Procedures

The President, on behalf of the ACCJC, responds to each complaint made against the ACCJC within 30 working days of receipt of the complaint. If more time than this is required to complete its review, ACCJC will notify the complainant within the initial 30 days. Based on the review, ACCJC implements corrective action where appropriate or makes recommendations to the Commission to implement the corrections. The President shall report all complaints to the Commission's Executive Committee.

If the President cannot resolve a complaint filed against the ACCJC, or if the President is a direct subject of the complaint, the Commission Chair shall review the complaint to ensure an unbiased and equitable process and to determine whether corrective action is needed and offer recommendations for improvement. The Commission shall review the Chair's report and the Chair shall notify the complainant and the President of its response.

Any persons involved in the review of complaints must abide by the Commission's *Policy on Conflict of Interest for Commissioners, Evaluation Team Members, Consultants, Administrative Staff, and Other Commission Representatives*.

ACCJC's disposition of complaints under this policy is final. Complainants do not have a right to appeal the disposition of a complaint.

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[2] *Policy on Rights, Responsibilities, and Good Practice in Relations with Member Institutions*

[3] Please refer to the forms for Third Party Comment, Complaints Against Member Institutions, and for submitting comment on policies and standards (*Policy on Review of Accreditation Standards*) for these kinds of communication.

Timetable for Complaints Against ACCJC

Time	Responsible Party	Action
Within 18 months of occurrence	Complainant	Submit information pertaining to non-compliance
Within 30 working days of receipt	ACCJC President or Commission Chair (if issues of noncompliance pertains to the President)	Responds to complainant; if more time is required to respond, will notify complainant regarding additional time, take corrective action if applicable and notify complainant

Adopted January 1999; Edited August 2007, August 2012; Revised June 2014, June 2017; Edited June 2022; Revised January 2024

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