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ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Policy on Evaluation of Institutions in Multi-College/Multi-Unit Districts or Systems

June 2022

Policy

The Commission assures the equitable evaluation of all institutions regardless of organizational structure and clarifies the Commission's expectations regarding the conduct and outcomes of comprehensive institutional evaluations and other reviews in multi-college districts/systems. In order for the Commission to evaluate institutions in single-college and multi-college organizations fairly, institutions must inform the Commission about their functional organization and involve district/system and college personnel responsible for the functions in accreditation activities. The expectations for the review of Multi-College Districts or Systems are delineated in Accreditation Standard IV.D.

The integrity of the district/system programs and services falls within the scope of the institution's accreditation. The district/system auxiliary programs and services are subject to review if the program or service is executed in the name of the district/system or institution, or if the district/system administers or the governing board authorizes the program or service. The delineation and distribution of responsibilities among the district/system and the institution must be articulated clearly.

While the Commission accredits individual institutions, the district/system holds a fundamental role and responsibility in the analysis and evaluation of district/system structures and how these structures assist the institutions to achieve and adhere to all the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies (together Commission's Standards) and gain and sustain accredited status.

Institutions have the responsibility to describe and delineate clearly the particular way functions are distributed in their unique multi-college organization. The distribution of these functions will be evaluated. There must be evidence of ongoing communication between the institution and the district/system regarding the distribution of these functions. The Commission will use this evidence to identify the locus of responsibility for the institution's ability to meet the Commission's Standards.

When serious inadequacies in a district/system function are verified, such deficiencies may jeopardize the accreditation of one, some, or all of the district/system institutions. Both the district/system and the impacted institution(s) are responsible for correcting the identified deficiencies.

The Commission reserves the right to initiate direct interaction with district/system chief executive officers regarding the ability of institutions to demonstrate that they meet or exceed the Accreditation Standards. When district/system officers are contacted regarding an institution, the institution(s) chief executive officer will receive the same communication.

Following the completion of the review of accredited status for an institution within the district/system, the Commission will send a copy of its action letter to the district or system chief executive officer.

A district/system may make a special request to evaluate the effectiveness of its central functions in conjunction with scheduled comprehensive reviews. This activity is limited to issues related to the ability of institutions to demonstrate that they meet or exceed the Accreditation Standards. The outcome of this activity does not result in any accredited status for the district/system.

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