

De Anza Senate Resolution on New Accreditor for California Community Colleges (draft, 11/22/16)

For second reading at 11/28/16 meeting

Whereas, the structure of accreditation in this region under the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) no longer meets the current and anticipated needs of De Anza College, the Foothill-De Anza Community College District, and the California Community College system;

Whereas, the ACCJC has consistently failed to meet expectations that the accreditor for the California Community Colleges (CCC) would

- a) emphasize improvement rather than compliance;
- b) demonstrate collegiality and consistency in all of its interactions with member institutions and constituent groups;
- c) produce accreditation reports indicating deficiencies that include clear expectations for correction and allow reasonable opportunities for improvement (e.g., the ACCJC has often criticized and sanctioned colleges without making clear what issues are essential to eliminating the sanction and which are merely recommendations, and the ACCJC is often unclear what it expects colleges to do to address an issue);
- d) be as transparent as possible throughout the accrediting process, including when actions and decisions are taken with respect to member institutions;
- e) demonstrate and maintain consistency with federal accreditation mandates and with regional accreditor peers;
- f) provide quality training to commissioners, visiting team members, and member institutions that is inclusive of all groups involved in the accreditation process;
- g) be responsive to and collaborative with CCC constituent groups;
- h) respect the roles and responsibilities of college and system constituent groups; and
- i) ensure member institutions have a formal process for periodic evaluation of the accreditor;

Whereas, on several occasions the ACCJC has promised changes and has offered reports detailing their efforts to address concerns, but these promises and reports have led to few significant improvements;

Whereas, The California Community College system, its member institutions, and community college constituency groups have lost confidence in the ACCJC;

Whereas, the De Anza Academic Senate wants the California Community College system to continue on the path toward a new accreditor rather than settle for a reformed ACCJC since the ACCJC has not demonstrated the ability to reform itself;

Whereas, California Community Colleges are in a holding pattern regarding ongoing accreditation work;

Be it resolved, that the De Anza Academic Senate requests the Chancellor's Office to, in a thorough yet expeditious manner, investigate all available avenues for establishing a new model for accreditation under a single higher education accrediting commission with California's

community colleges included along with four year colleges and universities. The WASC Senior College and University Commission would be a likely option, but if necessary, the Chancellor's Office should identify other regional accreditors that could also better serve the California Community Colleges.

Be it resolved, that De Anza College seeks direction from the Chancellor's office if possible about when a decision would come on an accreditor, and, if it is to start up with a new accreditor, when cycles with the new agency would likely begin.