

AP 3200 Accreditation

Reference:

ACCJC Accreditation Eligibility Requirement 21;
ACCJC Accreditation Standards I.C.12 and 13 (formerly IV.B.1.i)
Title 5 Section 54016

TC Statement of Philosophy for the Self Evaluation Process: Dr. Eric Bérubé

We at Taft College view the accreditation process as an opportunity for reflection and self-examination, activities often neglected in the day-to-day pressures of meeting the needs of our students and community. Through reflection and self-examination, we hope to refine our programs and services, identify areas that need strengthening, and determine the future direction of the institution. If we are to fulfill these goals, we must conduct our self-evaluation honestly, openly, and objectively.

It has been our experience in the past that the self-evaluation process has tended to provide a sense of common purpose and unity to the campus. Staff from every sector of the campus work harmoniously together to create a document that reflects our best appraisal of where we are, where we want to go, and how to get there. The process by which we create a Self-Evaluation Report is, therefore, as valuable as the document it produces.

The Accreditation Steering Committee for the Self Evaluation

The Accreditation Self Evaluation is guided by a Steering Committee that is co-chaired by one faculty member and one administrator, usually but not necessarily the Institutional Research Coordinator (faculty) and the President (administrator). Subcommittees are identified that correspond to sections of the accreditation standards. Each subcommittee has a chairperson or co-chairs, depending on the size, complexity, and content of the accreditation standard. The Accreditation Steering Committee consists of the subcommittee chairs and co-chairs along with the Steering Committee co-chairs.

Prior to the start of the self evaluation process, each member of the Steering Committee should receive a folder containing a copy of the ACCJC standards, an ACCJC glossary, and the *Guide to Evaluating Institutions Using the ACCJC Standards*. Steering Committee members will also be furnished with copies of the previous Self-Evaluation Report, Midterm Report and Follow-Up Reports, the site visit team's reports, and the appropriate ACCJC response letters.

The Steering Committee should discuss the importance of honest inquiry, the nature of evidence, and the difference between the self-evaluation and the report of the self-evaluation. Members of the Steering Committee should attend a

training workshop offered by the ACCJC. The Steering Committee establishes the timeline for the self-evaluation, monitors the progress of the standard subcommittees, and decides how the final report of the self-evaluation will be written and edited. Regular meetings should be held to discuss progress on the self-evaluation and resolve any problems or questions that arise. In preparation for the self-evaluation, the Steering Committee may conduct a staff survey or a student survey based upon the accreditation standards and created by the standard subcommittees.

Standard Subcommittees for the Self-Evaluation

Subcommittees for each of the standard sections are formed to conduct the self-evaluation. Each subcommittee is chaired by a faculty member, a classified employee, or an administrator and contains an appropriate number of faculty, classified employees, administrators and students as appropriate. Subcommittees may have co-chairs, as noted earlier. Subcommittee size depends on the size and complexity of the standard, but it is recommended that the subcommittees not have fewer than five members.

Drafting the Report of the Self Evaluation

Using the format established by the ACCJC, each of the standard subcommittees is responsible for submitting to the Steering Committee co-chairs a report of its findings regarding, for each standard in their section, the descriptive summary of current status of that standard, a self-evaluation as to how Taft College meets the accreditation standard, and an actionable improvement plan for addressing issues raised during the self-evaluation in regards to that standard. These drafts are reviewed by the Steering Committee co-chairs for consistency in content and completeness and are then edited by an editing committee as determined by the Steering Committee for consistency in format, tone, and voice.

Process

Five semesters prior to the site visit, the Steering Committee Co-Chairs put out a call for volunteers to assist in the self-evaluation and are responsible for assuring there is appropriate representation on each subcommittee. Subcommittee chairs also recruit volunteers to serve on their subcommittees. Certain members of the staff may be specifically recruited because of their expertise in various areas. Other staff members may serve as resource persons to the subcommittees. Each standard subcommittee should be reviewed to reflect campus diversity. Every standard subcommittee should consider having a student member. Community members should also be asked to serve on standard subcommittees if appropriate. It is the responsibility of the standard subcommittee to identify appropriate evidence to determine how well Taft College has met the accreditation standard. Prior to the start of the accreditation self-evaluation and during the self-evaluation process, the president in-service general assemblies and other forums encourages

participation in and keeps the campus community informed of progress on the accreditation self-evaluation.

Clerical support must be provided for the Steering Committee. That person or persons also serve as a resource to the site visit team prior to and during the site visit. An appropriate, easily accessible space on campus must be available to the site visit team as a meeting room, which should be equipped with an appropriate number of computers and printers, have wireless access, privacy, security, a shredder, access to restrooms, and be provided with food and drinks. In addition, as much of the evidence as possible is provided to the site visit team and the public in a digital format available on the Taft College website.

Campus Communication

Communication with the campus community about the progress of the self-evaluation is critical. The Accreditation Liaison Officer and/or President make presentations to the Academic Senate, the Governance Council, the Board of Trustees, and the Division Chairs concerning the accreditation standards and process. Venues for additional communication, like newsletters or websites, should be identified by the Steering Committee. Drafts of the report of the self-evaluation as well as the results of any staff and student surveys should be made available on the intranet as well as in various administrative offices for campus comment. Open forums should be held to discuss the draft and the issues raised by the self-evaluation. A summary of the issues raised by the open forums is communicated to the campus community and to the Steering Committee. Based on feedback from the campus community, the Self-Evaluation Report will be amended as needed.

Visiting Team Findings

The findings of the ACCJC visiting team will be available to the campus at large. The Steering Committee should continue to meet to prepare the mid-term report as well as any interim reports that are required.

The Board of Trustees, Academic Senate, Strategic Planning Committee, Budget Committee, Governance Council and other appropriate campus committees and constituent groups should review the findings of the visiting team and identify institutional goals and implement activities to achieve those goals. Any actionable improvement plans in the Self Evaluation Report are addressed as appropriate in program review or by committees.