



**ACCREDITING  
COMMISSION  
for COMMUNITY and  
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

10 COMMERCIAL BOULEVARD  
SUITE 204  
NOVATO, CA 94949  
TELEPHONE: (415) 506-0234  
FAX: (415) 506-0238  
E-MAIL: [accjc@accjc.org](mailto:accjc@accjc.org)  
[www.accjc.org](http://www.accjc.org)

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May 2, 2008

Dr. Ray Somera  
Accreditation Liaison Officer  
Guam Community College  
P. O. Box 23069 GMF  
Barrigada, Guam 96921

Dear Dr. Somera:

Thank you for clarifying the exact wording of the team report that we spoke about when I was at Guam CC last week. The language of the report, specifically the team report's discussion of Guam CC's governance system, uses the term "shared governance." I reiterate here what I said while visiting with you last week: The Commission does not require "shared governance" but instead, participation in governance. Standard IV.A.2 states: "The institution establishes and implements a written policy providing for faculty, staff, administrator and student participation in decision making processes."

Shared governance has a specific legal meaning in the California public colleges that is established by state law/regulation, and pertains only to public community colleges in the CA system of colleges. The California-specific definition of shared governance has been the subject of much controversy in California, and is at times interpreted or applied in ways that do not meet ACCJC standards for governance and for quality processes. Therefore, the Commission does not use the words "shared governance" in evaluating its institutions, and does its best to edit the words "shared governance" from team reports and to train team chairs not to use the language. It appears the Commission failed to catch the use of the phrase "shared governance" in the team report you cite, and it should have done so and edited that phrase out of the report.

The Commission uses the concept of participatory governance to convey its requirements that there be broad-based participation in decision making processes so that members of the college community can participate *as appropriate* in decision making processes. That is to say, for example, that students are not required to be part of decision making processes that would be inappropriate for students. The same principle holds true for other groups. You can see that part a. of Standard IV.A.2 begins to elaborate on the significant roles of faculty and administrators, and then says "students and (support) staff also have established mechanisms ....for providing input."

Dr. Ray Somera  
Accreditation Liaison Officer  
Guam Community College  
May 2, 2008

So, standards do not suggest that all participants be weighed equally, or included equally, in all decisions.

As noted above in Standard IV.A.2., Commission standards state that the policy for who participates in what decisions are written, so that it is clear.

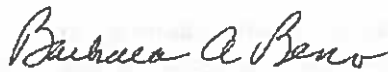
You can also see that Standard IV.A.2.b. states "the institution relies on faculty, its academic senate or other appropriate faculty structures, the curriculum committee and academic administrators for *recommendations* about student learning programs and services." The Standards do NOT specify that those groups have the responsibility to make all decisions; indeed, they imply that other bodies or individuals may be making some decisions.

The Commission requires an institution to delineate the governance structures, processes and practices (IV.A.3). But the main thrust of the standards is that decisions be evaluated in terms of their integrity and effectiveness (Standard IV.A.5) in enabling the institution to identify institutional values, set and achieve goals, learn and improve (Standard IV. Preamble). That is, the Commission evaluates decision making processes and structures on the basis of their outcomes, not who is included. The point of broad participation is to make the decision outcomes as effective as possible.

I hope this information is helpful to you and to Guam CC. Please feel free to write or call me if you have any additional questions.

Commissioner Floyd Takeuchi and I enjoyed visiting Guam CC last week and appreciate the time you and other took to meet with us.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.  
President

BAB/cg

Enclosures

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## **Standard IV: Leadership and Governance**

The institution recognizes and utilizes the contributions of leadership throughout the organization for continuous improvement of the institution. Governance roles are designed to facilitate decisions that support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness, while acknowledging the designated responsibilities of the governing board and the chief administrator.

### **A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes**

The institution recognizes that ethical and effective leadership throughout the organization enables the institution to identify institutional values, set and achieve goals, learn, and improve.

1. Institutional leaders create an environment for empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence. They encourage staff, faculty, administrators, and students, no matter what their official titles, to take initiative in improving the practices, programs, and services in which they are involved. When ideas for improvement have policy or significant institution-wide implications, systematic participative processes are used to assure effective discussion, planning, and implementation.
2. The institution establishes and implements a written policy providing for faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation in decision-making processes. The policy specifies the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas from their constituencies and work together on appropriate policy, planning, and special-purpose bodies.
  - a. Faculty and administrators have a substantive and clearly defined role in institutional governance and exercise a substantial voice in institutional policies, planning, and budget that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise. Students and staff also have established mechanisms or organizations for providing input into institutional decisions.

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- b. The institution relies on faculty, its academic senate or other appropriate faculty structures, the curriculum committee, and academic administrators for recommendations about student learning programs and services.
  3. Through established governance structures, processes, and practices, the governing board, administrators, faculty, staff, and students work together for the good of the institution. These processes facilitate discussion of ideas and effective communication among the institution's constituencies.
  4. The institution advocates and demonstrates honesty and integrity in its relationships with external agencies. It agrees to comply with Accrediting Commission standards, policies, and guidelines, and Commission requirements for public disclosure, self study and other reports, team visits, and prior approval of substantive changes. The institution moves expeditiously to respond to recommendations made by the Commission.
  5. The role of leadership and the institution's governance and decision-making structures and processes are regularly evaluated to assure their integrity and effectiveness. The institution widely communicates the results of these evaluations and uses them as the basis for improvement.

#### **B. Board and Administrative Organization**

In addition to the leadership of individuals and constituencies, institutions recognize the designated responsibilities of the governing board for setting policies and of the chief administrator for the effective operation of the institution. Multi-college districts/systems clearly define the organizational roles of the district/system and the colleges.

1. The institution has a governing board that is responsible for establishing policies to assure the quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution. The governing board adheres to a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the chief administrator for the college or the district/system.

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- a. The governing board is an independent policy-making body that reflects the public interest in board activities and decisions. Once the board reaches a decision, it acts as a whole. It advocates for and defends the institution and protects it from undue influence or pressure.
  - b. The governing board establishes policies consistent with the mission statement to ensure the quality, integrity, and improvement of student learning programs and services and the resources necessary to support them.
  - c. The governing board has ultimate responsibility for educational quality, legal matters, and financial integrity.
  - d. The institution or the governing board publishes the board bylaws and policies specifying the board's size, duties, responsibilities, structure, and operating procedures.
  - e. The governing board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws. The board regularly evaluates its policies and practices and revises them as necessary.
  - f. The governing board has a program for board development and new member orientation. It has a mechanism for providing for continuity of board membership and staggered terms of office.
  - g. The governing board's self-evaluation processes for assessing board performance are clearly defined, implemented, and published in its policies or bylaws.
  - h. The governing board has a code of ethics that includes a clearly defined policy for dealing with behavior that violates its code.
  - i. The governing board is informed about and involved in the accreditation process.
  - j. The governing board has the responsibility for selecting and evaluating the district/system chief administrator (most often known as the chancellor) in a multi-college district/system or the college chief administrator (most often known as the president) in the case of a single college. The governing board delegates full responsibility and authority to him/her to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds him/her accountable for the operation of the district/system or college, respectively.
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In multi-college districts/systems, the governing board establishes a clearly defined policy for selecting and evaluating the presidents of the colleges.

2. The president has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution he/she leads. He/she provides effective leadership in planning, organizing, budgeting, selecting and developing personnel, and assessing institutional effectiveness.
  - a. The president plans, oversees, and evaluates an administrative structure organized and staffed to reflect the institution's purposes, size, and complexity. He/she delegates authority to administrators and others consistent with their responsibilities, as appropriate.
  - b. The president guides institutional improvement of the teaching and learning environment by the following:
    - ☐ Establishing a collegial process that sets values, goals, and priorities.
    - ☐ Ensuring that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis on external and internal conditions.
    - ☐ Ensuring that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and distribution to achieve student learning outcomes.
    - ☐ Establishing procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts.
  - c. The president assures the implementation of statutes, regulations, and governing board policies and assures that institutional practices are consistent with institutional mission and policies.
  - d. The president effectively controls budget and expenditures.
  - e. The president works and communicates effectively with the communities served by the institution.

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3. In multi-college districts or systems, the district/system provides primary leadership in setting and communicating expectations of educational excellence and integrity throughout the district/system and assures support for the effective operation of the colleges. It establishes clearly defined roles of authority and responsibility between the colleges and the district/system and acts as the liaison between the colleges and the governing board.<sup>6</sup>
    - a. The district/system clearly delineates and communicates the operational responsibilities and functions of the district/system from those of the colleges and consistently adheres to this delineation in practice.
    - b. The district/system provides effective services that support the colleges in their missions and functions.
    - c. The district/system provides fair distribution of resources that are adequate to support the effective operations of the colleges.
    - d. The district/system effectively controls its expenditures.
    - e. The chancellor gives full responsibility and authority to the presidents of the colleges to implement and administer delegated district/system policies without his/her interference and holds them accountable for the operation of the colleges.
    - f. The district/system acts as the liaison between the colleges and the governing board. The district/system and the colleges use effective methods of communication, and they exchange information in a timely manner.
    - g. The district/system regularly evaluates district/system role delineation and governance and decision-making structures and processes to assure their integrity and effectiveness in assisting the colleges in meeting educational goals. The district/system widely communicates the results of these evaluations and uses them as the basis for improvement.

