

# College of the Desert Accreditation Newsletter

Desert Community College District

October 4, 2016

Edition I, Volume I

## ***Statement on the Benefits of Accreditation***

Accreditation is the primary means by which colleges and universities in the United States assure and improve quality. Both accrediting bodies and the institutions they accredit must use the highest standards of professionalism to ensure that accreditation provides value to the institutions themselves, the students, the public, the government, and other institutions of higher education.

*Visit our Accreditation webpage to view the latest information and progress of meetings, schedule, and everything affiliated with Accreditation.*

<http://collegeofthedesert.edu/aboutus/Accreditation/Pages/default.aspx>

## ***Accreditation Site Visit***

Meeting the target

College of the Desert is scheduled for an Accreditation Site Visit in the Fall Semester 2017. The COD Accreditation Team was assembled to include campus-wide representation from various constituent groups. They meet regularly and are currently working in a collaborative effort to complete a draft of the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER), which is due for campus dissemination in September 2016. The College is committed to a process of accreditation that is transparent, collegial, and inclusive of all participants.

## **Accreditation Team**

### **Administrative Co-Chair**

Dr. Annabelle Nery (ALO)

### **Faculty Co-Chair**

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### **Administrative Support**

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### **Document Editor**

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### **Staff Representative**

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Dr. Courtney Doussett

### **Standard IIA**

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Donna Greene

### **Standard IIC**

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### **Standard IIIA**

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Dr. Chris Jones-Cage

### **Standard IIIB**

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### **Standard IIIC**

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## What's New in Accreditation

### Quality Focus Essay (QFE)

When an institution undertakes self-evaluation for accreditation, it may identify policies, procedures, or practices in need of change or student outcomes it wishes to improve. An institution may make some changes or improvements immediately before an evaluation team arrives. Other changes and strategies for improving outcomes will require a longer time to accomplish. These changes and strategies should be identified as the institution's plans for improvement (action plans), and should be integrated into the ongoing planning and decision making processes at the college with timelines for completion. Using the format of a Quality Focus Essay (QFE), an institution will identify two or three "action projects" for further study and action that have good potential for improving student outcomes. The projects should be related to Accreditation Standards, emerge from the institution's examination of its own effectiveness in accomplishing its mission in the context of student learning and student achievement, be based on the institution's analysis of data collected, and identify areas of needed change, development, and improvement. The Guide provides questions intended to stimulate discussion and assist the institution in selecting appropriate action projects for the QFE.

## Common Accreditation Acronyms and Definitions

- **WASC - Western Association of Schools and Colleges**

The Accrediting Commission for Schools (ACS) is a world-renowned accrediting association and WASC is one of the six regional accrediting agencies in the United States working closely with the Office of Overseas Schools under the U.S. Department of State. ACS WASC provides assistance to schools worldwide, primarily in California, Hawaii, Guam, Asia, the Pacific Region, the Middle East, Africa, and Europe.

- **ACCJC – Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges**

Accredits community colleges and other associate degree granting institutions in the Western region of the U.S. The ACCJC is one of seven regional accrediting commissions. The ACCJC is authorized to operate by the U.S. Department of Education through the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008.

- **ALO – Accreditation Liaison Officer**

Individual(s) who ensures compliance with accreditation requirements are incorporated into the planning and evaluation process of the institution.



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