

College of the Desert Accreditation Newsletter

Desert Community College District

September 11, 2024

Volume I, Edition III

Statement on the Benefits of Accreditation

Accreditation is the primary means by which colleges and universities in the United States assure institutional effectiveness. 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. However, perhaps the most important benefit of receiving an accredited status from an institutional accreditor enables an institution to qualify for federal grants and contracts, to distribute federal financial aid to its students, and for students' credits to be more easily transferred to other accredited institutions.

Visit our Accreditation webpage to view the latest information, upcoming meetings, schedule, and other affiliated Accreditation topics.

<https://www.collegeofthedesert.edu/about-us/accreditation/2025-2032-accreditation.php>

Summary of College of the Desert's Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) Review

A ten-member accreditation peer review team completed their one-day off-site analysis of our ISER and supporting evidence on March 20, 2024. The Team's process included discussion of initial observations and preliminary review of the written materials and evidence provided by the College. Next, they synthesized their findings and found the report to be a comprehensive document detailing COD's accordance with Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, and Commission policies. The College provided a thoughtful report, reflecting on the institution's transformational processes, equitable student outcomes, and planning for continuing institutional improvement. Additionally, the Team developed Core Inquiries to be addressed during the Focus Site Visit scheduled during the week of **September 23, 2024**.

<https://www.collegeofthedesert.edu/web-items/documents/pdf-files/accreditation/core-inquiries-cod.pdf>



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What are Core Inquiries?

From the Team's review of our ISER, Core Inquiries were determined as a means for communicating potential areas of the College of the Desert's noncompliance, improvement, or exemplary practice. Additionally, Core Inquiries describe the areas of emphasis for the Focused Site Visit which will also include tours of our facilities, scheduled meetings, an open forum, and the gathering of additional information. After completion of the Focused Site Visit, the Team will convene and finalize the Peer Review Team Report which will identify commendations or recommendations.

The following are the Core Inquiries College of the Desert addressed in preparation for the Focused Site Visit:

Core Inquiry 1

The Team seeks to better understand Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) analysis linked to long-range capital planning.

Core Inquiry 2

The Team seeks to better understand the process, timeline, and results used to regularly evaluate decision-making policies, procedures, and processes to ensure their integrity and effectiveness. What practices are used to widely communicate results of these evaluations?

Core Inquiry 3

The team seeks to better understand how the board acts in a collective entity, including once a decision is reached all members act in support of the decision.

Core Inquiry 4

The team seeks to better understand the effectiveness and implementation of the College's adopted seven-year review cycle for board policies and administrative procedures.

For our responses to the Core Inquiries, please visit the link below:

https://www.collegeofthedesert.edu/about-us/accreditation/cod_core_inquiries_response_09062024.pdf

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