

# Organization

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of the Institutional Self-Study

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The preparation of the self-study started in spring 2002 with the appointment of the coordinator. The coordinator spoke at the March 2002 faculty meeting to describe the process of accreditation and to announce the need for volunteers. That same week a form was sent to faculty, staff, students, and administrators requesting volunteers for the Standard Committees.

Each committee required a chair and a designated writer (two of each for the Educational Programs Committee), and volunteers were sought for those positions as well. The writers were offered flex time for their work since the process of compiling and writing the information needed for each standard entailed many hours of work in addition to the committee meetings.

The committee chairs were appointed by the coordinator in consultation with the Vice President of Instructional Services, and the committee members were selected from the lists of those who had volunteered via the form that was sent to both the Main Campus and the ACTC. Every effort was made to match committee members with a standard that they had requested on the volunteer form.

The chairs and writers went through two training sessions. The first was a meeting with the Associate Director of the Accrediting Commission in fall, 2002. The second meeting was held on campus in late January 2003. At this second meeting, the self-study coordinator gave a thorough review of the process and the timeline as well as a clear description of the type of writing expected by the Accrediting Commission. The chairs received all the necessary paperwork (instructions, standards, schedules, 1996 recommendations, and mid-term reports). The chairs were asked to schedule the first committee meetings in late February/early March and to finish their first draft before the end of the spring semester.

The coordinator edited the first drafts for consistency during the summer and did basic fact checking. The latter was necessary because major factors such as the community college budget picture, the threat of layoffs, and a proposed pay cut for faculty, staff, and administrators led to many changes in the information included in some of the standards. For example, several successful programs that had been in place during the spring semester (when the standards were written) were cut due to lack of funding. Ratios of part-time faculty to full-time faculty changed as the budget crisis made cuts in the number of classes offered a grim reality. No release time was available to continue to pay a faculty member to be in charge of Staff Development and so the day-to-day management of this vital offering was shifted. It was changes of this magnitude that kept the coordinator busy as the summer progressed.

The edited drafts were reviewed by faculty, staff, and administrators during the summer and early fall. These drafts were returned to their respective committees so that the committee members could review any changes. The process of sending the edited drafts back to the committees began in mid-October and continued until mid-November. The reason that this process took a month was that some standards required more editing and three of the standards were quite long.

Each committee was asked to review the drafts and any corrections that had been made. Committee members were encouraged to make corrections and/or additions since so many facets of campus life had changed over the summer and early fall. Committee members then voted on their respective standards. In some cases, votes were provisional pending a change to the standard. Each person requesting a change was contacted by the coordinator via either a phone call or email and each matter was resolved.

Senior management also reviewed each standard and the standards were then checked for language and grammar by members of the English, Credit ESL, and Speech departments. A draft copy of the ten standards was sent to the Board and senior management for review on December 5, 2003. The Board approved the self-study at its December 15 meeting.

Throughout the preparation of the self-study, the campus was kept apprised of the progress of the Accreditation Self-Study by reports from the

coordinator at monthly faculty meetings, through presentations made to groups such as division chairs and deans, and via updates available on the Accreditation Website. The ten standard committees were made up of 144 people representing a cross section of the campus including: 99 faculty, 17 administrators/classified managers, 18 classified staff, and 10 students. In addition to committee members, numerous others participated in supporting roles such as editing, reviewing, typing, graphic design and duplicating.