



ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR
COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

CORE INQUIRIES

Ventura College
4667 Telegraph Rd, Ventura, CA 93003

The Core Inquiries are based upon the findings of the peer review team that conducted Team ISER Review on March 24, 2023.

Dr. Brian King
Team Chair

Contents

Peer Review Team Roster..... 3
Summary of Team ISER Review..... 4
Core Inquiries..... 5

Ventura College

Peer Review Team Roster

Team ISER Review

March 24, 2023

Dr. Brian King, Team Chair Los Rios Community College District Chancellor	Dr. Lena Tran, Vice Chair Columbia College President
ACADEMIC MEMBERS	
Dr. Eve Castellanos Reedley College Faculty Coordinator	Dr. Dulce Gray West Valley College Instructor of English and Women's Studies
Dr. Rebecca Opsata Laney College Vice President of Instruction	Mr. Steve Schermerhorn San Joaquin Delta College Librarian
Mr. Jeff Stearns Honolulu Community College Professor of English and ALO	
ADMINISTRATIVE MEMBERS	
Dr. Tanisha Maxwell Los Medanos College Vice President of Student Services	Dr. Sheri Sterner Orange Coast College Dean, Research, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
Dr. Raymond West III Long Beach City College Vice President, Administrative and Business Services	
ACCJC STAFF LIAISON	
Dr. Catherine Webb, Vice President	

Summary of Team ISER Review

INSTITUTION: Ventura College

DATE OF TEAM ISER REVIEW: March 24, 2023

TEAM CHAIR: Dr. Brian King

A ten-member accreditation peer review team conducted Team ISER Review of Ventura College on March 24, 2023. The Team ISER Review is a one-day, off-site analysis of an institution's self-evaluation report. The peer review team received the college's institutional self-evaluation report (ISER) and related evidence several weeks prior to the Team ISER Review. Team members found the ISER to be a comprehensive, well written, document detailing the processes used by the College to address Eligibility Requirements, Commission Standards, and Commission Policies. The team confirmed that the ISER was developed through broad participation by the entire College community including faculty, staff, students, and administration. The team found that the College provided a thoughtful ISER containing several self-identified action plans for institutional improvement. The College also prepared a Quality Focus Essay.

In preparation for the Team ISER Review, the team chair attended a team chair training workshop on and held a pre-review meeting with the college CEO. The entire peer review team received team training provided by staff from ACCJC on February 9, 2023. Prior to the Team ISER Review, team members completed their team assignments, identified areas for further clarification, and provided a list of requests for additional evidence to be considered during Team ISER Review.

During the Team ISER Review, team members spent the morning discussing their initial observations and their preliminary review of the written materials and evidence provided by the College for the purpose of determining whether the College continues to meet Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and US ED regulations. In the afternoon, the team further synthesized their findings to validate the excellent work of the college and identified standards the college meets, as well as developed Core Inquiries to be pursued during the Focused Site Visit, which will occur the week beginning September 25, 2023.

Core Inquiries are a means for communicating potential areas of institutional noncompliance, improvement, or exemplary practice that arise during the Team ISER Review. They describe the areas of emphasis for the Focused Site Visit that the team will explore to further their analysis to determining whether standards are met and accordingly identify potential commendations or recommendations. The college should use the Core Inquiries and time leading up to the focused site visit as an opportunity to gather more evidence, collate information, and to strengthen or develop processes in the continuous improvement cycle. In the course of the Focused Site Visit, the ACCJC staff liaison will review new or emerging issues which might arise out of the discussions on Core Inquiries.

Core Inquiries

Based on the team's analysis during the Team ISER Review, the team identified the following core inquiries that relate to potential areas of clarification, improvement, or commendation.

College Core Inquiry 1: The team would like to better understand the coordination of professional development at the College.

Standards or Policies: III.A.14, III.A.12, and II.C.5

Description: The team noted in the ISER and evidence practices for PD such as Faculty Academy that seemed very strong. The team also observed evolving areas for improvements and would like to explore how the changes have been and will be implemented to gauge where the College is in this process.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. Faculty Academy
- b. Professional Development Coordinating Committee
- c. Distance Ed Certification
- d. Support for College DEIA goals

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. Counseling and Advising PD
- b. Classified Professional PD process and schedule

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Board members
- b. Chancellor
- c. Faculty and Staff Professional Development Leads

District Core Inquiry 1: The District Team noted the commitment of the Ventura Community College Board of Trustees to “working as an effective, transparent, and respectful entity.” The Team is interested in confirming that the Board of Trustees is translating the commitment into tangible progress on behalf of the students and employees of the Ventura Community College District.

Standards or Policies: IV.C.2, IV.C.7, IV.C.10

Description:

- a. The Team reviewed statements contained in the ISER and relevant Board Policies and minutes.
- b. A positive, supportive, healthy Board of Trustees is essential to the success of Ventura Community College District. The Team wants to confirm that the Ventura Board of Trustees has taken actions and is continuing to make progress in addressing past behaviors and practices that may have been detrimental.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. Working together as a unit to support outcomes, decisions, and Chancellor
- b. Adherence to board policies
- c. Practices for board trainings and retreats
- d. Results of board self-evaluations and how they are used in making improvements

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. Evidence related to board trainings
- b. Evidence related to board retreats
- c. Examples showing how board self-evaluations are used to improve Board effectiveness

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Governing Board members
- b. College CEOs
- c. Members of Chancellor’s senior staff/cabinet

District Core Inquiry 2: With a new Chancellor in place, the Team noted an opportunity for the Board of Trustees establish shared goals with the Chancellor, delegate appropriate responsibility, and evaluate the progress of the Board and Chancellor in achieving agreed upon goals. The ISER narrative indicated examples of interference by the Board in operational decisions and “bypassing the District participatory governance process.”

Standards or Policies: IV.C.12

Description:

- a. The ISER and supporting materials indicated past problems involving the Board’s inappropriate actions and behaviors, including the need for an outside consultant to address substantive issues.
- b. A positive, supportive, healthy Board of Trustees is essential to the success of Ventura Community College District. The Team wants to confirm that the Ventura Board of Trustees has taken actions and is continuing to make progress in addressing past behaviors and practices that may have been detrimental.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. Relationship between Board and its CEO
- b. Delegation from Board to CEO

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. Examples showing how delegation from Board to CEO works in practice
- b. Evidence from third session of Board training with Dr. Benjamin and results of the assessment related to delegation of authority

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Board members
- b. Chancellor
- c. College Presidents and other senior staff

District Core Inquiry 3: The team would like to understand how the college monitors compliance with completion of faculty and staff performance evaluations per District policy.

Standards or Policies: III.A.5

Description:

- a. In the ISER and evidence, the team observed sample evaluation templates, District BP/AP regarding evaluations, and cycles of evaluation with respect to job titles. The team would like to better understand what percentage of evaluations are currently complete and processes for ensuring completion.

Topics of discussion during interviews:

- a. Determining compliance with stated evaluation intervals
- b. Monitoring/tracking compliance/completion of evaluations for all constituencies

Request for Additional Information/Evidence:

- a. Tracking documents displaying completion of evaluations, if they exist
- b. Sample email notifications regarding which evaluations are due
- c. Written procedures/HR manuals showing annual workflows

Request for Observations/Interviews:

- a. Administrator(s) responsible for managing/tracking evaluation processes