

Discussion of the Annual Report on Accreditation by the COA to the Commission: Highlighting Successes May 2011

Overview of this Report

This agenda item begins the conversation about the concept of highlighting specific successes of California's accreditation system in this year's Annual Report on Accreditation by the COA to the Commission.

Staff Recommendation

This is an information item.

Background

Staff is beginning to draft the *Annual Report of the COA for 2010-11*. This document will be presented as an information at the June meeting and then for action at the August meeting. The item then goes to the Commission in the fall.

Over the past couple of years, the Annual Report has included the following sections:

Section I. Accomplishments of the Committee's Work Plan

Section II. Summary of Accreditation Activities

Section II. Proposed Work Plan for the Committee's Upcoming Year

These sections are further organized by the four purposes of accreditation as outlined in the *Accreditation Framework*. Appendix A includes a copy of the Table of Contents for last year's *Annual Report* for your reference.

To date, these three sections have served the Committee well to discuss the numerous activities of the accreditation system. They cover all aspects of accreditation – from Program Assessment, Biennial Reports, and Site Visits. The three sections also highlight new programs, those in transition, and those that have been placed on inactive status or have been withdrawn.

However, COA and staff have frequently expressed the desire to better communicate to the larger public, not only the accomplishments over the past year, but the transformational changes that have come about as a result of the Commission's accreditation system. This is a difficult challenge. A great deal of effort on the part of the program sponsors, the COA, and staff has taken place over the past few years to put in place a robust accreditation system. Staff would like to engage in a discussion with the COA about the possibility of including in this year's *Annual Report* a section that describe some of the changes taking place at institutions that can attest to California's accreditation system. Some examples might include:

- 1) Examples of improvements seen as a result of stipulations. The COA might consider highlighting some of the institutions that were given stipulations and documenting some of the changes that took place that resulted in the removal of stipulations. This could be done in a case study approach. The Annual Report has never highlighted particular

institutions and the actions they have taken, so this would be a departure from past practice, but could provide a testament to real changes taking place at the local level.

- 2) A closer look at specific standards and what the challenges have been for institutions in meeting the standards and what the Commission has done in response. For instance, Common Standard 2 – has the Commission seen more institutions meeting Common Standard 2 and can it be attributed in part due to the technical assistance activities that staff has been providing in recent years? Another example is with the Subject Specific Pedagogy standard which many smaller institutions or programs often have difficulty meeting. This year, the Commission sponsored technical assistance on this aspect of the standards. We could, in future years, look to see if this has been helpful to institutions.
- 3) Documenting changes between program assessment and the site visit and how that process has helped the institution make changes in their programs. An initial attempt at this activity was presented at the March 2011 COA meeting (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/coa-agendas/2011-03/2011-03-item-11.pdf>). Possibly staff could contact some institutions which hosted a site visit within the past two years and collect information on how the Program Assessment process and the feedback from the readers was used to prepare for the accreditation site visit.
- 4) Highlighting a few examples from the biennial reports where institutions, as a result of looking at their data, have made some real significant modifications to their programs. In this case, staff would contact some institutions and gather specific information that could be included in the annual report.

Staff would like to discuss with the COA some ideas about how the successes of the accreditation system can be better communicated in the *Annual Report*. The new section might be entitled, “Evidence of Transformational Changes” or “Improvements in Educator Preparation” for examples. Another topic of discussion needs to be the time to develop the new section of the report and if there is sufficient time to include it in the 2010-11 report.

Next Steps

If the COA believes that a section highlighting the impact of accreditation on institutional and/or program changes should be included in the *Annual Report* with particular examples, staff will begin drafting such a section to be presented at the same time as the draft Annual Report. Further development of this section would take place as the COA provides comments at the June meeting.

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