

# COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION ACCREDITATION

## RECOGNITION DECISION SUMMARY

### ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES (ACCJC)

### WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

In accordance with the [2019 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures](#), Paragraph 39, this summary describes the formal status of an accrediting organization in relation to recognition by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

#### **Profile of Accrediting Organization**

Type of Accreditor: Institutional

Number of institutions: 132

#### **Current CHEA-Recognized Scope of Accreditation**

*Associate degree-granting institutions, with authorization to approve a first career or technically oriented baccalaureate degree, in colleges in California, Hawaii, the Territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. (2017)*

#### **CHEA Recognition Information**

History: Recognized by CHEA in January 2003; September 2016

#### **Most Recent Recognition Action**

Date: CHEA Board of Directors Meeting, September 25-26, 2017

Decision: Approval of change in the CHEA-recognized scope of accreditation

#### **Prior Actions on ACCJC's Application for Recognition**

CHEA Board of Directors Meeting September 28, 2016: The CHEA Board of Directors accepted the CHEA Committee on Recognition's recommendation to grant the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) Western Association of Schools and Colleges recognition for up to four years with a report in one year. The review was based on the six CHEA recognition standards that require an accrediting organization to show that its accreditation process advances academic quality, demonstrates accountability, encourages self-scrutiny and planning, employs fair and appropriate procedures and demonstrates ongoing review of practice, and that it possesses sufficient resources to carry out its accreditation processes (*2010 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures*, Paragraphs 12A-12F, pp. 5-8).

ACCJC demonstrated that it meets these standards and that its accreditation process is consistent with the quality improvement and accountability expectations that CHEA has established.

#### **Additional Determination**

ACCJC is required to provide a progress report, due in one year, that it sustains ongoing critical self-review of its accrediting practices, including an examination of the accreditor's impact on institutions and responsiveness to the broader accreditation and higher education community as outlined in Standard 12E(1-4) (*2010 CHEA Recognition of Accrediting Organizations Policy and Procedures*).

The CHEA recognition policy requires that an accrediting organization undergo a recognition review at least every 10 years and submit two interim reports. The Board of Directors recognized ACCJC for four years and required that ACCJC undergo a full recognition review by CHEA prior to the end of that period.

CHEA Board of Directors Meeting September 28-29, 2015: The CHEA Committee on Recognition and the Board of Directors reviewed the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The review was based on the six CHEA recognition standards that require an accrediting organization to show that its accreditation process advances academic quality, demonstrates accountability, encourages self-scrutiny and planning, employs fair and appropriate procedures and demonstrates ongoing review of practice, and that it possesses sufficient resources to carry out its accreditation processes (*2010 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures*, Paragraphs 12A-12F, pp. 5-8).

The Board of Directors acted to return the matter to the CHEA Committee on Recognition for further review and consideration based on additional information received and not available to the Committee at its June 2015 review.

CHEA Board of Directors Meeting September 29-30, 2014: The CHEA Committee on Recognition and the Board of Directors reviewed the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The review was based on the six CHEA recognition standards that require an accrediting organization to show that its accreditation process advances academic quality, demonstrates accountability, encourages self-scrutiny and planning, employs fair and appropriate procedures and demonstrates ongoing review of practice, and that it possesses sufficient resources to carry out its accreditation processes (*2010 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures*, Paragraphs 12A-12F, pp. 5-8).

The Board of Directors deferred recognition and requested additional information with regard to ACCJC's meeting CHEA Standards 12E1-4 (*2010 CHEA Recognition Policy and Procedures*). These standards address the organization's sustaining (1) ongoing critical self-review (12E.1), (2) initiatives to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of services to institutions (12E.2), (3) review of the value of the accrediting organization to the institution and to the higher education community (12E.3) and (4) review of the impact of its standards and procedures on institutions (12E.4).

ACCJC is required to report on its self-examination and actions taken as a result of self-reflection and how this can enhance the balance between judgments about accredited status and assistance to institutions to strengthen academic quality and improve. Specifically, the board is seeking information about how ACCJC, based on this self-evaluation, will conduct its operation in the future with regard to the flexibility and responsiveness in its relationships with institutions and the public, how ACCJC will further enhance services and value to institutions and, overall, how ACCJC is examining its impact on institutions, the accreditation and higher education communities and the public, as called for in Standards 12E1-4.