



Outcomes | Innovation | Improvement

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR  
COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

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## **CORE INQUIRIES**

Foothill College  
12345 El Monte Road  
Los Altos Hills, California 94022

The Core Inquiries are based upon the findings of the peer review team that conducted Team ISER Review on March 19, 2024.

Dr. Brenda Thames  
Team Chair

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# Peer Review Team Roster

## Team ISER Review

March 19, 2024

<b>CHAIRS</b>	
Dr. Brenda Thames, Team Chair El Camino College Superintendent/President	Dr. Ashanti Hands, Vice Chair San Diego Mesa College President
<b>ACADEMIC MEMBERS</b>	
Mr. Antonio Alarcón Southwestern College Dean Languages & Literature	Dr. Kelli Goya Kapiolani Community College Associate Professor; Title III Project Director
Dr. Tiffany Sarkisian Fresno City College Communication Arts Instructor & Program Review Coordinator	
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE MEMBERS</b>	
Dr. Nicole Albo-Lopez Los Angeles Community College District Vice Chancellor, Educational Programs & Institutional Effectiveness	Ms. Brianna Hays Cuyamaca College Interim Vice President of Student Services
Ms. Primavera Monarrez Porterville College Vice President, Student Services	Mr. Michael Strong Crafton Hills College Vice President of Administrative Services
<b>ACCJC STAFF LIAISON</b>	
Dr. Kevin Bontenbal ACCJC Vice President	

# Summary of Team ISER Review

INSTITUTION: Foothill College

DATE OF TEAM ISER REVIEW: Tuesday, March 19, 2024

TEAM CHAIR: Dr. Brenda Thames

A nine-member accreditation peer review team conducted Team ISER Review of Foothill College on Tuesday, March 19, 2024. The Team ISER Review is a one-day, off-site analysis of an institution's self-evaluation report and supporting evidence. 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 report to be a comprehensive document detailing the college's alignment to the 2014 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.

In preparation for the Team ISER Review, the team chair attended a team chairs workshop on December 5, 2023 and held a pre-review meeting with the college CEO on January 12, 2024. The entire peer review team participated in a team workshop provided by staff from ACCJC on February 1, 2024. Prior to the Team ISER Review, team members completed their assessment of the college's alignment to the Accreditation Standards and policies, 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 meets Accreditation Standards, Eligibility Requirements, and Commission policies. In the afternoon, the team further synthesized their findings to validate the excellent work of the college and developed Core Inquiries to be pursued during the Focused Site Visit, which will occur the week of September 30<sup>th</sup> in Spring 2024.

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. During the Focused Site Visit, the team will tour the facilities, conduct scheduled meetings and an open forum, gather additional information to further their analysis to determine whether all standards are met, and accordingly finalize their Peer Review Team Report which will identify 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.

## College 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.

<b>Core Inquiry 1:</b> The Team would like to verify the College’s process for ensuring the regular assessment of student learning outcomes.
<b>Standards or Policies:</b> II.A.3
<b>Description:</b> The Team determined that Foothill College had a procedure for identifying student learning outcomes for courses and that faculty are evaluated on their participation in the assessment process. It is clear the college is invested in continuously improving by creating a campus culture of inquiry and assessment, evidenced by the newly rebranded assessment program “Foothill Inquires”. The team reviewed SLO assessment reports, the faculty evaluation document, Canvas SLO examples, and the SLO presentation. The Team would like to know more about how this process is being implemented, the preliminary outcomes of these changes, and what the cycle of assessment will look like moving forward.
<b>Topics of discussion during interviews:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the length of the new cycle of assessment (e.g., how frequently will outcomes be assessed)?</li><li>• How is the new process ensuring the regular assessment of student learning outcomes?</li><li>• Is the assessment cycle aligned or integrated with any other planning process?</li></ul>
<b>Request for Additional Information/Evidence:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communication plan and accountability measures related to cycle of assessment</li><li>• Documentation of the new Foothill Inquires assessment process and initial outcomes of the updated process.</li></ul>
<b>Request for Observations/Interviews:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Faculty SLO Coordinators</li><li>• Faculty who have participated in new assessment process</li><li>• Members of the Academic Senate</li></ul>
<b>Core Inquiry 2:</b> The team seeks clarification on the College’s process for ensuring regular and substantive interaction in all its distance education courses.
<b>Standards or Policies:</b> Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education

**Description:**

The team reviewed the College's professional development, resource materials, and guidance related to regular and substantive interaction. The team also reviewed 31 of the College's distance education courses from Fall 2023. The evidence suggests that the College is in the process of developing a means of assessing and ensuring regular and substantive interaction is occurring in distance education courses. In reviewing the random sample of distance education courses, less than half of the courses met the Commission's Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education. The team seeks clarification on how the College's new process to ensure regular and substantive interaction in all its distance education courses is working.

**Topics of discussion during interviews:**

- How are expectations of regular and substantive interaction broadly communicated to faculty teaching distance education courses?
- How are the college's RSI guide and RSI overview communicated to faculty and are they embedded in the distance education training?
- How does the new process for verifying and ensuring regular and substantive interaction in distance education courses work?
- How have the new process and policies on DE aligned with the Commission's Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education?
- How is the college ensuring regular and substantive interaction is occurring in its DE courses?

**Request for Additional Information/Evidence:**

- Documentation demonstrating communication to faculty regarding regular and substantive interaction
- Additional sampling of distance education courses from Spring 2024.
- Documentation, templates, and training on the new regular and substantive interaction 3-year assessment cycle and process.

**Request for Observations/Interviews:**

- Committee on Online Learning (COOL) Co-Chairs
- Distance Education Coordinator (or equivalent)
- Online Learning Office team
- A small but representative group of faculty members (both full-time and part-time) who teach online.

## District 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.

**Core Inquiry 1:**

The Team seeks to understand how the board regularly reviews and updates its policies for their effectiveness in fulfilling the District's mission.

**Standards or Policies:**

IV.C.7

**Description:**

The Institutional Self Evaluation Report indicates that the Board began a comprehensive review of all policies in 2013, and that as of 2017, review had occurred only for Chapter 1 and 2, and half of Chapter 3. The documentation provided in the ISER further indicated the district intended, beginning in 2017, to renew efforts for a cyclical review process, starting with the review of Chapter 1 upon completion of Chapter 7. Through a review of Board Policies on the District's website, the team was unable to determine the process for the regular review and update of Board policies, as several policies appear not to have been updated in ten or more years.

**Topics of discussion during interviews:**

- How does the Board regularly review and update its policies?
- Does the District prioritize the order in which policies are reviewed and updated?

**Request for Additional Information/Evidence:**

- Documentation outlining how the regular review of Board policies is occurring, including a schedule and description of processes by which this work will be conducted.
- Documentation of progress that has occurred related to the regular review of Board policies.

**Request for Observations/Interviews:**

- Chancellor
- Individuals involved in the process for reviewing and updating board policies