



ACCREDITING COMMISSION for COMMUNITY and JUNIOR COLLEGES
Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Barbara A. Beno, President
Steven M. Kinsella, Chair

Date: April 15, 2016

Memo To: Chief Executive Officers, Accreditation Liaison Officers,
and Interested Others

From: Barbara A. Beno *Barbara A. Beno*

Subject: Amendment to March 23, 2016 Announcement of Commission Vacancies
and Request for Nominations and Applications

NOTE: This announcement adds one vacancy that has just occurred.

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) is seeking nominations and applications from individuals who wish to be considered for election as Commissioners to the ACCJC.

Commissioners are elected for a three-year term, and are eligible for re-election to a second three-year term. The composition of the Commission membership can be found in the ACCJC Bylaws, Article III, Section 1; the process for electing Commissioners can also be found in the ACCJC Bylaws, Sections 2 and 3. The ACCJC Bylaws are located on the ACCJC website at www.accjc.org. We also encourage you to review the Duties of Commissioners contained in the attached Commission Application.

The ACCJC is seeking nominations and applicants for the following positions:

One Commission member representing the Accrediting Commission for Schools.
This position is currently vacant.

Three Commission members representing the Public.
Two incumbents of this position, Mr. Chris Constantin and Mr. Charles Meng II, are both completing their second term on the Commission and are not eligible for re-election. The third open position is currently vacant.

One Commission member representing Academic (Faculty).
The incumbent of this position, Dr. Joseph Bielanski, is completing his second term on the Commission and is not eligible for re-election.

One Commission member representing Administration.
The incumbent, Dr. Steven Kinsella, is retiring and has resigned.

In addition, the ACCJC announces two other Commission positions, which have incumbents who are eligible for election to a second three-year term.

One Commission member representing the public.

The incumbent of this position, Dr. Ian Walton, is eligible for a second three-year term.

One Commission member representing the University of Hawai'i Community Colleges.

The incumbent of this position, Dr. John Morton, is eligible for a second three-year term.

This memorandum serves as the invitation for applications and nominations for the above noted Commission positions. Nominations may be sent via a letter that names the nominee, his or her contact information, and the specific Commission vacancy for which the individual is being nominated, and should be signed and dated by the individual making the nomination. Persons may self-nominate. **Nomination letters may be sent by postal mail, email scan, or fax and must arrive at the ACCJC office by April 25, 2016.**

All nominees will be contacted by the Commission, be asked to agree to be nominated, and asked to complete a Commissioner Application Background Data form.

The Nominating Committee of the ACCJC will meet in early May to nominate a slate of candidates for election to the Commission. After a slate is identified by the Nominating Committee, member college CEOs will be given the opportunity to nominate additional at-large candidates for the ballot. Ballots will be mailed to each institutional CEO in May, and the election results will be announced at the June 2016 Commission meeting.

The *Policy on Conflict of Interest for Commissioners, Evaluation Team Members, Consultants, Administrative Staff, and Other Commission Representatives* and *Policy on Professional and Ethical Responsibilities of Commission Members*, and a roster of current ACCJC Commissioners are attached to this memo.

BAB/cms

Attachments



COMMISSIONER APPLICATION INFORMATION

A person who is nominated or wishes to apply for consideration shall submit a letter of interest, a completed Commissioner Application Background Data Form (enclosed), a resume, and contact information for two references (see Commissioner Application Background Data Form); letters of recommendation are optional.

Applications or nominations should be submitted to the Commission office on or before **April 25, 2016** to receive consideration as per the Bylaws of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC).

Appointments will be effective November 1, 2016. The election results will be formally announced at the June 2016 meeting of the Commission. Commissioner appointments are for a three-year term. A Commissioner may normally serve a maximum of two three-year terms. It is the policy of the Commission to actively seek balanced membership on evaluation teams and on the Commission itself.

Definition of a Public Member:

A representative of the public means a person who is not (1) an employee, member of the governing board, owner, or shareholder of, or consultant to, an institution or program that either is accredited or pre-accredited by the ACCJC or has applied for accreditation or pre-accreditation; (2) a member of any trade association or membership organization related to, affiliated with, or associated with the agency; or (3) a spouse, parent, child, or sibling of an individual identified in (1) or (2) of this definition. Public Members must maintain this eligibility status throughout their term of office.

Duties of Commissioners:

Commissioners serve as board members of the ACCJC, which is a nonprofit organization established in California. They also serve on the decision-making body that determines the accredited status of member institutions. Commissioners will adopt and revise policies and standards, and will review monitoring data from member institutions. They may be asked to serve on evaluation teams or in other capacities.

Commissioners commit to being present at two 3-day Commission meetings per year, held in January and June, and to attending a 3-day Board Meeting and Development Workshop once per year in March. Commissioners may also serve on committees, such as the Substantive Change Committee, the Policy Committee, and the Evaluation and Planning Committee, which generally meet two to three times per year.

Commissioners are expected to have a general knowledge of higher education, and awareness of regional and national policy discussions related to higher education. Commissioners who are not members of the public or representatives from secondary institutions are expected to have a working knowledge across the operational areas of a college, as well as the ACCJC accreditation standards and processes.

Commissioners engage in the comprehensive reviews of at least two dozen institutions each year, and in 50 or more follow-up or special reviews. During the months of December and May, each commissioner must examine college reports and evidence, team reports, and other provided information for each review, comprising thousands of pages of electronic material. They must be able to use electronic technology for the review of voluminous electronic materials, able to access internet cloud files, and to work on shared electronic documents with other Commissioners. To support these tasks, Commissioners must have computer technological proficiency and adequate personal computer resources.

There are conflict of interest and ethical responsibilities for Commissioners. Please see the attached *Policy on Conflict of Interest for Commissioners, Evaluation Team Members, Consultants, Administrative Staff, and Other Commission Representatives* and *Policy on Professional and Ethical Responsibilities of Commission Members*. Candidates should note that if elected to the Commission, individuals might have to limit their roles with certain other organizations that may otherwise cause a conflict.

Commissioners serve without honorarium, although all necessary expense of participation is reimbursed.

Commissioner applications and nominations should be sent no later than **April 25, 2016** to:

ACCJC
10 Commercial Boulevard, Suite 204
Novato, CA 94949
Telephone: 415-506-0234
FAX: 415-506-0238
[Email: accjc@accjc.org](mailto:accjc@accjc.org)

BAB/cms

Attachments



COMMISSIONER APPLICATION BACKGROUND DATA FORM

- PPEC
- California Community Colleges' Chancellor's Office
- Public Administration
- Academic/Faculty
- Senior Colleges & Universities
- Independent Institutions
- Accrediting Commission for Schools

NAME: _____

Home Address: _____
Street City Zip

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Personal Email _____

Professional Employment:

Current Position: _____

Work Address: _____
Street City Zip

Work phone _____ FAX _____

Work Email _____

Previous Position(s):

Years	Position
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Describe your Institutional Evaluation Experience, if any:

Describe your Accreditation Experience if any:

Degrees and Institutions where earned:

Professional Recognitions (institutional, regional or state committees, etc.) or Professional Honors, if any:

Community Leadership Roles, including any experiences with Community or Two-Year Colleges:
(for Public Member applicants only)

References:

Name: _____

Address _____
Street City Zip

Phone _____ Cell _____ Email _____

Name: _____

Address _____
Street City Zip

Phone _____ Cell _____ Email _____

Signed _____ Date _____

DEADLINE: April 25, 2016

Please return this form accompanied by a letter of interest and resume to:

Dr. Barbara A. Beno, President
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
10 Commercial Blvd, Suite 204
Novato, CA 94949
Phone: 415-506-0234 Fax: 415-506-0238
accjc@accjc.org

Policy on Conflict of Interest for Commissioners, Evaluation Team Members, Consultants, Administrative Staff, and Other Commission Representatives

*(Adopted June 1997; Revised June 1999, March 2001; Edited June 2005;
Revised January 2006, January 2012; Edited August 2012;
Revised June 2013; October 2013)*

Purpose

The Commission seeks to assure that those who engage in accreditation activities make every effort to protect the integrity of accrediting processes and outcomes. The intent of the Commission is to:

- maintain the credibility of the accreditation process and confidence in its decisions;
- assure that decisions are made with fairness and impartiality;
- assure that allegations of undue influence; relationships which might bias deliberations, decisions, or actions; and situations which could inhibit an individual's capacity to make objective decisions are minimized;
- make all of its decisions in an atmosphere which avoids even the appearance of conflict of interest; and
- provide the means to disclose any existing or apparent conflict of interest.

Policy

A conflict of interest is any circumstance in which an individual's capacity to make an impartial and unbiased decision may be affected because of a prior, current, or anticipated institutional/district/system affiliation or other significant relationship(s) with an accredited institution/district/system or with an institution seeking initial accreditation, candidacy, or reaffirmation of accreditation.

The Commission seeks to assure that its decisions on institutions and on all other matters before the Commission are based solely on professional judgment and an objective application of its Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies (together Commission's Standards). Accordingly, the Commission takes all necessary measures to assure that conflicts of interest and the appearance of conflicts of interest on the part of Commissioners, evaluation team members, consultants, administrative staff, or other agency representatives are avoided.

The Commission expects that all individuals associated with the Commission, whether as Commissioners, evaluation team members, consultants, administrative staff or other agency representatives, will display personal and professional integrity and guard against conflicts of interest, or the appearance of conflicts of interest, by adhering to this Policy and by refusing any assignment where the potential for conflict of interest exists.

Policy Elements

Each Commissioner, evaluation team member, consultant, member of the Commission administrative staff, and other agency representative is asked to review this Policy and consider potential conflicts of interest in his/her proposed assignments.

The following interactions with an institution/district/system have been determined to be of the type that constitute a conflict of interest or the appearance thereof, normally within the last five years:

- a. current or prior employment at the institution/district/system being evaluated;
- b. candidacy for employment at the institution/district/system being evaluated;
- c. current or prior service as a paid consultant or other business relationship with the institution/district/system being evaluated;
- d. a written agreement with an institution/district/system that may create a conflict or the appearance of a conflict of interest with the institution/district/system;
- e. personal or financial interest in the ownership or operation of the institution/district/system;
- f. close personal or familial relationships with a member of the institution/district/system;
- g. other personal or professional connections that would create either a conflict or the appearance of a conflict of interest; or
- h. receipt of any remuneration, honoraria, honorary degrees, honors or other awards from the institution/district/system.

Notwithstanding the definition of a conflict of interest provided in this policy and in the above list of types of conflicts or potential conflicts of interest, a conflict of interest arising from one of these types of relationships does not go into perpetuity, but normally expires five years after the relationship ends. Nevertheless, the individual is expected to ask him/herself whether the existence of such relationship would in any way interfere with his/her objectivity, and, if the answer is in the affirmative, he/she is expected to refuse the assignment or recuse him/herself from the deliberations related to the issue that caused the conflict of interest.

The following interactions with an institution/district/system have been determined to be of the type that do not constitute a conflict of interest or the appearance thereof:

- a. attending meetings or cultural events on a campus;
- b. having infrequent social contact with members of institutions/districts/systems;
- c. making a presentation at an institution on a one-time, unpaid basis, with no sustained relationship with the institution; or
- d. fulfilling a professional assignment with members of an institution on an issue not related to the institution's accreditation.

Avoiding the Appearance of Conflict of Interest

To achieve the purposes of this policy, it is expected that Commission representatives will make every effort to avoid the appearance of conflict of interest, in both formal and informal interactions with members of the field and with the public. Commissioners and committee members should adhere to the Policy on Professional and Ethical Responsibilities of Commission Members when presented with inquiries or opportunities for public comment on member institutions, ACCJC business or accreditation practices.

Evaluation Team Members

The Commission will not knowingly invite or assign participation in the evaluation of an institution to anyone who has a conflict of interest or the appearance thereof. Team members are required to confirm in writing that they have reviewed this Policy when they are invited to serve on a team. In order to avoid an appearance of conflict to the public, immediate family members of Commissioners and Commission staff will not be invited or assigned to participate on an evaluation team.

Institutions being evaluated should review the prospective evaluation team members for potential conflict of interest. The Commission President should be notified immediately if there are conflicts of interest or any concerns that there might be conflicts of interest.

During the period in which the visit is occurring and Commission action is pending, evaluation team chairs and team members are expected to refrain from any of the above listed situations of potential conflicts of interest with an institution for which they have been an evaluation team member.

Commissioners

A Commissioner is expected to recuse him/herself from any deliberation or vote on decisions regarding individual institutions where any of the conflicts of interest listed above exist. A Commissioner who served on the most recent evaluation team of an institution being considered must recuse him/herself. Any such potential conflict of interest shall be reported to the Commission in advance of the deliberation and action and shall be recorded in the Commission minutes.

A Commissioner who is uncertain regarding a possible conflict of interest may recuse him/herself, or abstain from voting on decisions regarding the institution, in which case there is no requirement to disclose the nature of the contact(s) for review by the Commission. Alternatively, the Commissioner may disclose the nature of the potential conflict of interest for review by the Commission. The Commission shall then determine in all such cases by majority vote whether the situation raises a conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest. If the Commission determines that the situation raises a conflict, the affected Commissioner will be recused from the deliberations of the case that caused the conflict.

In the case where a Commissioner or the Commission President believes that a Commissioner may have a conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest that the Commissioner has not acted upon, that other Commissioner or the Commission President should bring the conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest to the attention of the Commissioner and give him/her an opportunity to recuse him/herself from the deliberations of the case that caused the conflict. If the matter is not resolved, the other Commissioner or the Commission President may bring the matter to the attention of the full Commission, which will then consider the matter and determine by majority vote on whether

the situation raises a conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest. If the Commission determines that the situation raises a conflict, the affected Commissioner will be recused from the deliberations of the case that caused the conflict.

Commission decisions regarding any issue raised relating to conflict of interest shall be noted in the minutes.

At no time during their appointment as Commissioners, should Commissioners consult with institutions on matters of accreditation for compensation.

Commission Staff and Consultants

During the period of Commission employment, Commission staff members, including consultants, are expected to refrain from connections and relationships with candidate or member institutions which could represent a conflict of interest. In the case where a Commissioner or another Commission staff believes that a Commission staff member may have a conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest that the staff member has not acted upon, that Commissioner or the other Commission staff should bring the conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest to the attention of the Commission President. The Commission President will determine whether the situation raises a conflict of interest or the appearance of conflict of interest. If the Commission President determines that the situation raises a conflict, Commission staff will be removed from the assignment that caused the conflict.

Commission staff may not engage in private consulting or employment with, nor accept honoraria, or honorary degrees from member institutions. Commission staff may engage in such arrangements with outside organizations or institutions other than member institutions only with the approval of the Commission President. The Commission President may engage in such arrangements only with the approval of the Commission Chair.

Suspension or Removal

When a conflict or apparent conflict of interest arises, the Commission President or Commission by majority vote may direct that the involved role or behavior of the affected individual (Commissioner, evaluation team member, consultant, administrative staff member, commission representative) shall cease immediately. When a conflict cannot be resolved by recusal or immediately ending the affected individual's role or behavior that created the conflict or perception of conflict, then:

- a. the Commission President, in case of an Evaluation Team Member, Consultant, Administrative Staff Member or other Commission Representative, may elect to suspend or remove the affected individual or take such other action as is deemed appropriate;
- b. or the Commission by majority vote, in the case of a Commissioner, may elect to suspend or remove the affected individual or take such other action as is deemed appropriate.

Policy on Professional and Ethical Responsibilities of Commission Members

(Adopted January 2001; Edited June 2001, June 2003, June 2005; Revised June 2013)

Purposes of the Commission

ACCJC Commissioners are expected to accept and subscribe to the defined purposes of accreditation, and to support and uphold the ACCJC's purposes, Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, Commission policies, and processes.

The purposes of accreditation shall be the evaluation of member institutions to assure the educational community, the general public, and other organizations and agencies that an institution has clearly defined objectives appropriate to higher education; has established conditions under which their achievement can reasonably be expected; appears in fact to be accomplishing them substantially; is so organized, staffed, and supported that it can be expected to continue to do so; and demonstrates that it meets Commission standards. The Commission encourages and supports institutional development and improvement through self evaluation and periodic evaluation by qualified peer professionals¹.

Commission Responsibilities

The Commission as a whole:

- Establishes and periodically reviews Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, policies, and practices for member institutions;
- Serves as the primary decision-maker on accredited status of member institutions;
- Evaluates institutions in terms of their own stated purposes;
- Strives for consistency in determining accredited status of institutions;
- Assists in explaining broad purposes of accreditation and its intended impact on educational quality to the public served by the Commission.

Professional Responsibilities of Commission Members

A Commissioner:

- Participates in all Commission meetings and attends them for their entire duration;
- Studies documents as assigned prior to the meetings;
- Serves as an in-depth reader of evaluation visit materials as assigned;
- Votes according to his or her best professional judgment in accordance with existing policy and standards;
- Participates on Commission committees and in activities representing the Commission's interests as assigned;

¹ ACCJC Bylaws

- Attends and actively participates in Commission activities such as evaluation team visits and workshops;
- Participates in self evaluation and evaluation of the Commission;
- Participates in Commission planning efforts;
- Ensures that all functions of the Commission are executed responsibly through the Commission President;
- Refers all inquiries or requests for information concerning ACCJC business, member institutions, and accreditation practices to the Commission President or Commission Chair who serve as the official spokespersons for the ACCJC;
- Speaks on behalf of the Commission only when designated to do so by the Commission President or Commission Chair;
- Participates in the evaluation of the Commission President;
- Notifies the Commission Chair or Commission President in a timely manner if the Commissioner's position or status changes during a term so that the Commissioner no longer meets the requirement for the category to which appointed.

Ethical Responsibilities of Commission Members

A Commissioner:

- Respects the confidentiality of relationships between the Commission and the institutions it accredits.
- Avoids conflicts of interest and the appearance of conflicts of interest, and subscribes to the Policy on Conflict of Interest for Commissioners, Evaluation Team Members, Consultants, Administrative Staff, and Other Commission Representatives.
- Is familiar with and adheres to established Commission bylaws and policies.
- Notifies the Commission President or Commission Chair if s/he is unable to perform the duties and carry out the responsibilities of a Commissioner.

Responsibilities of Commissioner Confidentiality in Reviewing Institutions

In reviewing institutions, a Commissioner will:

- Treat all institution-related documents as confidential unless they are explicitly identified to the contrary in writing, and refrain from discussing all such documents and related information except within their role as Commissioners with those who have a need for such information in the course of reviewing an institution.
- Protect all confidential documents provided to Commissioners in the course of ACCJC business, and refrain from discussing all such documents and related information except within their role as Commissioners and with those who have a need for such information in the courses of conducting Commission business.
- Take reasonable measures to assure the confidentiality of all documents in their possession by retaining those documents only on private electronic devices such as computers or ipads, or in private paper files.
- Return to the ACCJC or dispose of all documents, paper and electronic, when it is no longer necessary to retain them and when they are no longer needed for the matter

under consideration by destroying them, either by shredding them or permanently deleting them from all electronic files and devices.

- Adhere to the ACCJC “Statement On the Process for Preserving Confidentiality of Documents Related to Institutional Evaluations.”

Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges 2015-2016 Commissioner Roster

Commissioners

Membership Position

Dr. Steven Kinsella, Chair	Administration Member
Ms. Susan Kazama, Vice Chair	Academic Member (Faculty Representative)
Dr. Joseph J. Bielanski, Jr.	Academic Member (Faculty Representative)
Dr. Kevin Bontenbal	Academic Member (Faculty Representative)
Dr. Timothy C. Brown	Academic Member (Faculty Representative)
Dr. Sonya Christian	Administration Member
Mr. Chris Constantin	Public Member
Dr. Karolyn Hanna	Public Member
Dr. Richard Mahon	Academic Member (Faculty Representative)
Mr. Charles Meng	Public Member
Dr. John Morton	University of Hawai'i Community Colleges Representative Member
Dr. Mary Okada	Pacific Postsecondary Education Council Representative Member
Dr. Raúl Rodríguez	Administration Member
Dr. Eleanor Siebert	Senior Colleges and Universities Representative Member
Mr. Erik Skinner	CCC Chancellor's Office Representative Member
Dr. Ian Walton	Public Member
Mr. John Zimmerman	Independent Institutions Representative Member