



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

The Portfolio Model: What We Are Learning

In November 2017 you received a letter introducing you to our new Portfolio Model in which each ACCJC vice president is assigned to a portfolio of our member institutions. As your liaison, the vice president is closely engaged with your institution through on-site preparatory visits, team training, prompt responses to your questions, and presence during comprehensive visits.

This initiative has garnered positive support from our members and has gone a long way toward creating a consistent, informed, and personal relationship between the agency and its key constituency.

At the same time, we have been learning and evolving with the concept in several important ways. We want to keep you current on aspects of our planning that matter to you. Here are some key developments:

- In our November 2017 letter, we said, “Direct costs for the liaison to accompany the peer review team will be included in the final team visit invoice to the institution.” The Commission, during its January 2018 session, determined these costs should **not** be an additional charge to the institution. If you have experienced a comprehensive visit this past semester, you may have noticed that your vice president’s costs **were not included** in the final invoice.
- Similarly, when your liaison comes to your institution to provide Advanced ISER training, you are not invoiced for the VP’s travel and logistics costs.
- When we review a multi-college district, we may increase the number of vice presidents who accompany the teams with the goal of ensuring each institution in the district enjoys a similar level of support.
- We are finding that teams value the presence of the liaison throughout the site visit, even up to the concluding moments when commendations and recommendations are being considered and the actual wording is being crafted. Framing an appropriately-stated – and evidence-supported – recommendation that can guide institutional efforts for some time to come is something of a learned art form. While protecting the protocol that the findings are those of the peer reviewers and not of staff, a liaison’s editorial eye can add value to the final report.
- Historically, peer reviewers on a site visit were expected to pay their hotel costs and then include a receipt for reimbursement from ACCJC following the visit. We are now advising the ALOs from the colleges to take advantage of relationships they may have with local hotels, set up a group rate master account for the team, and provide for direct billing from the hotel. This reduces the costs members would otherwise carry on their credit cards. The liaison will help to clarify details of these arrangements both prior to and during the visit.
- Should you need a reminder about which vice president is your assigned liaison, go to our website at: <https://accjc.org/find-your-institutions-staff-liason/>

We will send additional updates as they become operational. Meanwhile, please feel free to provide feedback to us about this important initiative.

Richard Winn
President