Dear LACCD Colleagues:
The dates for the Spring 2016 accreditation visit are set: March 7 – 10, 2016. During this week, we expect over 100 community college colleagues from the state and other western regions to visit all nine colleges and District office. Community colleges are held to high standards of student success and institutional performance, and being accredited is an integral part of assuring quality and public trust. The visits are intended to ensure that each college is adequately meeting educational standards. At LACCD, we are fully committed to meeting these high standards and view the accreditation process as an opportunity to affirm what is going well and an opportunity to improve. Our accreditation serves a reflection of LACCD’s continued tradition of providing quality instruction and support services that allow students to pursue and achieve their educational goals. Being accredited also means that our students can receive federal financial aid and veteran benefits, and have the assurance that their course work will be accepted elsewhere when they transfer or enter the workforce. LACCD has a proud history of serving the greater Los Angeles region and as our graduates and current students attest, LACCD’s faculty and staff are diligent in ensuring that students receive an outstanding education.

Chancellor
Rodriguez

Well, the time for self-studies and data collection is fast drawing to a close. Reports need to be completed and submitted to the Board this fall, and new members of the IE&SS Committee should be pulling up onto our campuses soon. This is also the time for town hall meetings and campus discussions focused on our self-studies along with a healthy dose of self-criticism and some well-deserved accolades for the blood, sweat and tears expended over the past year or two. Hopefully, we’ve found the large gaps (as they say in the UK, “Mind the gap!”) between what we say we do and what we actually do. Those are things we can still work to address and close as we wind down. The ACCJC may have taken some hits lately, but they are still the accreditation agency of record, and their visiting team (120 or so members) will be descending upon our colleges and the district office on March 7 through March 10, 2016. After all this narcissistic self-reflection, I hope we can put our focus quickly back onto our primary mission of educating students, no matter the outcome of the visit.

In conclusion, thanks to all of those faculty members and administrators who have toiled in the dry, vast fields of evidence and the mountains of documentation on the way to your (and our) collective goals. You all deserve special commendations and kudos for your hard work and dedication.
Message from the Chancellor (continued from page 1)

As we prepare for the 2016 districtwide accreditation, let’s embrace the accreditation process and professional self-regulation as an opportunity to refine and improve our institutional processes, and ultimately the educational outcomes of our students. There is no more important goal than the success of our students.

Thank you for your commitment to our students and to this district. Please receive my very best wishes for a strong start to the fall semester.

Gracias y un abrazo (thank you and a warm embrace),

Francisco C. Rodriguez Ph.D.
Chancellor

DPAC Undertakes Review of Strategic Plan, Updates to Planning and Governance Handbook

The District Planning and Accreditation Committee (DPAC) is setting an ambitious pace for the upcoming year. At their June 25, 2015 meeting, the committee reviewed and approved changes to its charter, expanded leadership by designating the District Academic Senate as the co-chair, and expanded membership to include representatives from shared governance and other District-level committees including the District Administrative Council, CSSOs, CIOs, and Student Success.

In addition, the DPAC took a leadership role in setting and maintaining a yearly review calendar for all LACCD governance committees and establishing an annual work plan, including the review and update of the LACCD strategic plan, Vision 2017, in response to the goals and requirements of the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Institutional Effectiveness Division. All of these activities are in support of accreditation for LACCD.
Message from the Chancellor

The reaccreditation requirements are the vehicles through which our colleges showcase their commitment to, and fulfillment of, the standards of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC).

The process for reaccreditation is intense and I commend those at the colleges and District office who are working tirelessly to ensure that we not only meet the standards, but exceed them.

At LACCD, our administrators, faculty and staff are crafting robust self-evaluation reports, as we prepare to host concurrent site visits from peer evaluators representing ACCJC in spring 2016.

I encourage us to use the writing of these reports as an opportunity to improve, and through widespread campus dialogue, create the infrastructure necessary for sustained and continuous quality improvement.

Sincerely,

Francisco C. Rodriguez, Ph.D.
Chancellor

Message from the District Academic Senate President

“You can’t cram accreditation”

I overheard this curious statement passing through a crowd of attendees at last year’s Accreditation Institute. The phrase stuck with me. In part, I think that it resonated strongly with what I had learned about accreditation from the experience of Cuesta College, our sister college up the beautiful central coast. Those of us active in the Academic Senate during those years were witness to the difficult and painful struggles of Cuesta through its decline and eventual resurrection as an accredited college. The turn-around there came about, not from the efforts of ALOs or administrators or faculty alone, but from the efforts of an entire campus to meet the challenges posed by the accreditation standards. In fact, in a discussion over lunch with some of the Cuesta faculty and their administrators, all were quick to point out that one of the most significant challenges was bringing every constituency on campus into the process and learning to work together.

It has been said that, “Anything that doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.” Out of their shared experience, Cuesta College folks gained a new appreciation for their role in the success of their community college. Faculty

(Continued on page 2)
In recent years, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) has turned a careful eye to California’s community colleges to ensure that they are adequately meeting educational standards. Community colleges are held to high standards of student success and institutional performance, and being accredited is an integral part of assuring quality and public trust.

At the Los Angeles Community College District, we are fully committed to meeting these high standards and view the accreditation process as both an opportunity to affirm what is going well and to improve where necessary.

LACCD’s commitment to student success and excellence is recognized by the ACCJC. Our accreditation is a reflection of LACCD’s continued tradition of providing quality instruction and support services that allow students to pursue and achieve their educational goals. Being accredited also means that our students can receive federal financial aid and veteran benefits, and have the assurance that their course work will be accepted elsewhere when they transfer or enter the workforce.

LACCD has a proud history of serving the greater Los Angeles region and, as our graduates and current students attest, LACCD’s faculty and staff are diligent in ensuring that students receive an outstanding educational experience and in making student success their top priority. It is this “can-do” attitude and level of excellence that has helped propel tens of thousands of LACCD graduates to achieve their goals and dreams.

As we prepare for the 2016 districtwide accreditation, let’s embrace the accreditation process and professional self-regulation as an opportunity to refine and improve our institutional processes, and ultimately the educational outcomes of our students. Our students and their success—there is no more important goal.

Thank you for your commitment to our students and to this district. Please receive my very best wishes for a strong start to the fall semester.

*Gracias y un abrazo* (thank you and a warm embrace),

Francisco C. Rodriguez Ph.D.,
Chancellor, Los Angeles Community College District