

# Accreditation in U.S. Higher Education

Dr. Leroy M. Morishita  
President  
California State University, East Bay

January 9, 2014



CALIFORNIA STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
EAST BAY

## Introduction

This presentation covers five areas:

- 1 The History and Function of Accreditation
- 2 Accreditation Standards and Process
- 3 The Changing Landscape of Higher Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- 4 The Future of Accreditation



CALIFORNIA STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
EAST BAY

## History of Accreditation in the US

- Morrill-Wade Land Grant College Act of 1862
- The Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944 ("G.I. Bill")
- The Higher Education Act of 1965
  - Pell Grants and Educational Opportunity Grant (EOG)
  - Guaranteed Student Loan (GSL),
  - Work-study



## Rise of Accreditation Agencies

- Control of Higher Education Institutions
- Six Regional Accreditation Agencies
- Voluntary, External Review for Quality Assurance and Improvement
- Accredited Institutions Qualify for Federal Student Aid
- Cal State East Bay is a Member of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) Accreditation Agency



## Function of Accreditation Agencies

- Setting Minimum Institutional Standards
- Building Institutional Capacity
- Assuring Quality Assurance of Third Parties
- Providing Consumer Information to the Public



## Regional Accreditation Agency Standards

### **Federal Government Standards**

- Sufficiency of Financial Resources
- Sufficiency and Quality of the Faculty
- Technology Resources and Support
- Currency and Quality of Educational Programs
- Student Support Services
- Decision Making Processes
- Planning for the Future
- Institutional Data Collection and Analysis, and others.



## Regional Accreditation Agency Standards

### Western Association of Schools and Colleges

#### ■ Colleges and Universities Under Increasing Pressure:

1. Accountability for Student Academic Achievement
2. More Transparent in Reporting, and
3. Contributions to the Public Good.



## Regional Accreditation Agency Standards

### Western Association of Schools and Colleges

#### ■ New Core Commitments:

1. Student Learning and Success
2. Quality and Improvement, and
3. Institutional Integrity, Sustainability and Accountability.



# Regional Accreditation Agency Standards

## Western Association of Schools and Colleges

### ■ Standards:

1. Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives
2. Achieving Educational Objectives Through Core Functions
3. Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Sustainability
4. Creating an Organization Committed to Learning and Improvement



# Accreditation Process

- Reflective Self-study
- Peer Review
- Accreditation Team
- Report with Commendations and Recommendations
- Review Cycle



## Changing Landscape of U.S. Higher Education

- Growth of Online and For-Profit Colleges
- Student Demographic Shift
- Instruction Seven Days a Week, Twenty Four Hours a Day



## Implications for the Future of Accreditation

- How will accreditation agencies place primary emphasis on the outcomes of postsecondary education and identify which metrics or benchmarks are effective to assess learning?
- How will accreditation agencies use retention and graduation rates to assess institutions given the diversity of types of institutions reviewed, their missions, and student characteristics?
- How will accreditation agencies ensure that the process provides public accountability and transparency?





## Implications for the Future of Accreditation

- How will accreditation agencies assure the quality and integrity of all institutions, particularly for-profit, highly entrepreneurial institutions?
- How will new innovative, creative and effective learning systems developed by either traditional or non-traditional higher education providers be evaluated?
- Should there be greater direct federal oversight, or at least consideration of alternatives to the present accreditation construct?



CALIFORNIA STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
EAST BAY

13

## Conclusion and Questions

Dr. Leroy M. Morishita  
President  
California State University, East Bay



CALIFORNIA STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
EAST BAY