

# The core problem

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## [Steve Williams, Opinion Page Editor](#)

A letter to the editor today from Diana Carloni seems to us to emphasize the core problem at Victor Valley College, which as most of the valley by now knows has been in the throes of overcoming accreditation probation for at least the past two years.

That “core problem,” in our view — and apparently Ms. Carloni’s — is a lack of transparency about what the college’s Board of Trustees and the current VVC president are up to. That lack of transparency — OK, the practice of secrecy — reared its head again this week, when college officials (specifically, Acting President Peter Allan) refused to post a video of a special meeting held last Friday by the trustees. Ms. Carloni notes that Mr. Allan originally agreed to put the video online at vvc.edu for public access, but then reneged.

A couple of weeks ago (May 12) we published an Op-Ed written by Mr. Allan in which he detailed VVC’s efforts to achieve full accreditation. He noted that on July 1, 2011, the Accrediting Commission for Junior and Community Colleges (ACCJC) had made nine recommendations the school needed to complete before it could be removed from probation. Only three, according to Mr. Allan, are still to be met. But nowhere in the nine recommendations are any concerning how the college interacts with the public.

Too bad. We think the ACCJC folks should demand that just about everything the college does, from board meetings and actions to class schedules to grading to courses offered should be public knowledge. We also think the trustees and school officials should be bending over backward to make the public aware of everything going on there, particularly right now.

According to Ms. Carloni, one of the people at VVC who was asked why the video wasn’t posted said there were some “legal” questions that had to be resolved first. Legal questions? How can that be, when at least one trustee (Joseph Brady) in a letter published in the Daily Press, asked members of the public to attend the special meeting so they could judge for themselves what the school was doing and how the trustees conducted themselves in pursuit of achieving full accreditation. Surely if the meeting was open to the public (and we’re told several members of the public attended), there can be no reason for resisting posting a video transcript online.

We say post the video. We also say it’s about time VVC’s trustees and administrative officials straightened up and started flying right. Otherwise, the public perception that not only is there something wrong at the school but that its leaders don’t know how to fix it will persist. Or get worse.

In Mr. Allan’s Op-Ed he said things were rapidly improving at VVC because “there has been a significant culture change within the ranks at VVC, and the faculty and staff have embraced the benefits of proper planning and proper assessment.”

We’d like to see some evidence of that, and so would the public — particularly those paying the taxes that keep VVC’s doors open.