



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

Barbara A. Beno, President
Susan S. Kazama, Chair

July 8, 2016

Mr. Scott Thomason
Superintendent/President
College of the Siskiyous
800 College Avenue
Weed, CA 96094

Dear President Thomason:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting June 8-10, 2016, reviewed the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) submitted by College of the Siskiyous, evidentiary materials also submitted, and the Report prepared by the evaluation team that visited on February 29-March 3, 2016. College leadership, including the president of the governing board and the College president, certified the Report, which was submitted in application for reaffirmation of accreditation. The purpose of the Commission's review was to determine whether the College continues to meet Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies (hereafter called Standards).

The Commission also considered the written response to the evaluation team report that the College submitted prior to the Commission meeting. The Commission found the written response helpful for its deliberations.

After considering all of the written material noted above, the Commission acted to issue **Warning** and require a Follow-Up Report in eighteen months.¹ The Commission also acted to require an evaluation team to visit the college to evaluate the institution's work to meet Standards. Warning indicates that the Commission has determined that the institution is out of compliance with Accreditation Standards and must correct the deficiencies and meet Standards.

College of the Siskiyous is required to submit its Follow-Up Report by **October 1, 2017**. The report should demonstrate that the College has resolved all deficiencies and meets Accreditation Standards. The Commission finds the College of the Siskiyous out of compliance with the following: Standards I.B.2, I.B.3, IV.B.3 (Recommendation 1); I.B.1, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.9, III.C.2, IV.B.3, Eligibility Requirement 19 (Recommendation 2); I.C.12 (Recommendation 4); II.A.3 (Recommendation 5); II.A.3 (Recommendation 6) II.A.15 (Recommendation 7); II.A.6 (Recommendation 8), and III.A.12 (Recommendation 9).

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Need to Resolve Deficiencies

Accreditation Standards represent practices that lead to academic quality and institutional effectiveness and sustainability. Deficiencies in institutional policies, practices, procedures, and outcomes which lead to non-compliance with any Standard will impact institutional quality and ultimately, the educational environment and experience of students. The evaluation team has provided recommendations that give guidance for how the institution may come into compliance with Standards.

Recommendation 1

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the College review the appropriateness of its institution-set standards, assess student achievement and student learning relative to those standards, and address performance gaps in pursuit of continuous improvement. (I.B.2, I.B.3, IV.B.3)

Recommendation 2

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the College engage in integrated and sustained assessment, dialog, planning, and resource allocation, informed by data that has been disaggregated appropriate to the College community, leading to continuous improvement in student learning and student achievement. The team also recommends that, as a part of this planning process, a Technology Plan be completed, based on appropriate data, assessment, and dialog. (I.B.1, I.B.4, I.B.5, I.B.6, I.B.9, III.C.2, IV.B.3, ER19)

Recommendation 4

In order to meet the Standard, the College should file a Substantive Change Report regarding its Instructional Service Agreements for the FIELD and SFPA programs. (IC12)

Recommendation 5

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College develop a mechanism to ensure that all faculty include the College's approved student learning outcomes in course syllabi. (II.A.3)

Recommendation 6

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College develop mechanisms to ensure that student learning outcomes assessment and program review take place for the FIELD and SFPA programs. (IIA3)

Recommendation 7

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that Administrative Procedure 4021 provide guidance on program elimination to ensure appropriate arrangements are made for students enrolled in the program to complete their education goal in a timely manner. (II.A.15)

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Recommendation 8

In order to meet the Standard, the College must include consideration of how employees are using the results of the assessment of learning outcomes to improve teaching and learning in the evaluations of regular faculty, part-time faculty, and managers who are directly responsible for student learning (III.A.6).

Recommendation 9

In order to meet the Standard, the College must demonstrate that it creates and maintains appropriate programs, practices, and services that support its diverse personnel and regularly assess its record in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission (III.A.12).

Improving Institutional Effectiveness

The team report noted Recommendations 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 for improving institutional effectiveness (improvement recommendations). These recommendations do not identify current areas of deficiency in institutional practice, but highlight areas of practice for which College attention is needed. Consistent with its policy to foster continuous improvement through the peer accreditation process, the Commission expects that institutions will consider the advice for improvement offered during the peer evaluation process and report on actions taken in response to the team's recommendations, if any. Failure of an institution to act on these recommendations will not itself constitute a deficiency in meeting standards or requirements of the Commission. However, in the Commission's experience, failure to take note of areas of practice pointed out in improvement recommendations may lead to future conditions which limit the college's ability to meet standards. As such, we highly recommend the team's improvement recommendations for your attention.

Additional Information

Under U.S. Department of Education enforcement regulations, the Commission is required to take immediate action to terminate the accreditation of an institution which is out of compliance with any standards, or, alternatively, may provide an institution with additional notice and a deadline for coming into compliance that is no later than two years from when the institution was first informed of the non-compliance. With this letter, College of the Siskiyous is being provided with notice of the Standards for which it is out of compliance, and is being provided time to meet the Standards.

The External Evaluation Report provides details of the team's findings with regard to the College's work to meet the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. I advise you to read the Report carefully to understand the team's findings and recommendations.

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The guidance and recommendations contained in the External Evaluation Report represent the best advice of the peer evaluation team at the time of the visit but may not describe all that is necessary for the College to come into compliance (or to improve). While an institution may concur or disagree with any part of the Report, College of the Siskiyous is expected to use the Report to improve educational programs and services. In addition, the College has the responsibility to accept the Commission's action and to uphold the integrity of the accreditation process by accurately portraying it and helping institutional constituencies to understand the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies pertinent to this Commission action.

I have previously sent you a copy of the External Evaluation Report. The College may now duplicate and post copies of the report. The Commission requires that you give the ISER, the External Evaluation Team Report, and this letter appropriate dissemination to those who were signatories of the ISER and to make these documents available to all campus constituencies and the public by placing copies on the College website. Please note that in response to public interest in accreditation, the Commission requires institutions to post accreditation information on a page no more than one click from the institution's home page.

On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express appreciation for the collaborative work that College of the Siskiyous undertook to prepare for institutional self-evaluation, and to support the work of the external evaluation team. The Commission encourages the College's continued work to ensure educational quality and to support student success. Accreditation and peer review are most effective when institutions and the ACCJC work together to focus on student outcomes and continuous quality improvement in higher education. Thank you for sharing the values and the work of accreditation.

If you should have any questions concerning this letter or the Commission action, please don't hesitate to contact me or one of the ACCJC Vice Presidents. We would be glad to help you.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.
President

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¹ Institutions preparing and submitting Midterm Reports, Follow-Up Reports and Special Reports to the Commission should review, *Guidelines for the Preparation of Reports to the Commission*, found on the ACCJC website at: <http://www.accjc.org/college-reports-accjc>.