



**ACCREDITING
COMMISSION
for COMMUNITY and
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association
of Schools and Colleges*

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July 3, 2014

Dr. Paul Parnell
President
Norco College
2001 Third Street
Norco, CA 92860

Dear President Parnell:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting on June 4-6, 2014, reviewed the Institutional Self Evaluation Report, the Report of the External Evaluation Team that visited Norco College March 3-6, 2014, and the presentation by College representatives.

The Commission took action to reaffirm accreditation and require a **Follow-Up Report** to be submitted by **October 15, 2015**. The Report will be followed by a visit by Commission representatives.¹

Reaffirmation with a Follow-Up Report with visit is granted when an institution is found to substantially meet or exceed the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies, but has recommendations on a small number of issues which should be resolved in a short period of time. The Report should demonstrate, and the visiting team will verify, that the institution has addressed the recommendations noted below, resolved the deficiencies, and now meets Accreditation Standards.

Need to Resolve Deficiencies:

The Accreditation Standards, as an integrated whole, represent indicators of academic quality and institutional effectiveness. Deficiencies in any Standards will impact quality at an institution, and ultimately the educational environment and experiences of students. The Commission found Norco College deficient in meeting the following Accreditation Standards: I.B. 3; I.B.6; I.B.7; II.A.1.a; II.A.1.b; II.A.1.c; II.A.2.e; II.A.2.f; II.A.2.h; II.A.2.i; III.B.2.a; III.B.2.b; III.C.1.c; III.C.2; III.D.3.c; and IV.A.5 from College and District recommendations written to meet Standards.

Dr. Paul Parnell
Norco College
July 3, 2014

College Recommendation 1

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the College consistently evaluate all parts of the planning and resource allocation cycle; develop a standard assessment instrument for all participatory governance committees; develop a process to assess the evaluation mechanisms used in integrated planning and resource allocation to ensure that those evaluations are effective in improving programs, processes, and decision-making structures; and develop strategies to broadly communicate the results of these evaluations to the entire College community. (Standards I.B.6; I.B.7; IV.A.5)

College Recommendation 2

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the College create a system to ensure consistency in transferring student learning outcomes on official course outlines of record to course syllabi; implement more direct assessment of student learning at the program level; complete its cycle of evaluation for all general education outcomes; and, develop, implement, and assess an evaluative mechanism to review all parts of the student learning outcomes process in an ongoing and systematic way. (Standards I.B.6, II.A.1.a; II.A.1.b; II.A.1.c, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f; II.A.2.h; II.A.2.i)

College Recommendation 3

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that service area outcomes are systematically assessed for all areas in Business Services and the results of the evaluation are used to make improvements. (Standards I.B.3; III.B.2.b)

College Recommendation 4

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the College systematically plan for the replacement of technology infrastructure and equipment, reflect projections of total cost of ownership for new equipment, systematically assess the effective use of technology resources and use the results of evaluation as the basis for improvement. (Standards III.B.2.a, III.C.1.c, III.C.2)

District Recommendation 1

In order to meet Standards, compile the various completed elements of technology planning into an integrated, comprehensive district technology plan that is accessible and transparent, including a disaster recovery plan and a plan to refresh aging and outdated technologies. Insure that the district technology plan is based on input from the colleges and is in alignment with college planning processes. (Standards I.B.6 and III.C.2)

District Recommendation 2

In order to meet the Standard, implement a plan to fund contributions to the District's other post-employment benefits (OPEB) obligation. (Standard III.D.3.c)

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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 standard. In the alternative, the Commission can provide the 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 noncompliance.

In exceptional situations, if the institution has done all within its authority to reach compliance on any standard but remains out of compliance, the Commission is permitted by regulations to allocate a one-time, short-term “good cause extension” for the college to reach compliance prior to acting on the institution’s termination. However, continued noncompliance with multiple standards would diminish the appropriateness of such an extension.

The Commission notes that the deficiencies cited in College Recommendations 1-4 and District Recommendations 1-2 were first identified in June 2014. Norco College should fully resolve the noted deficiencies by **October 2015**.

During its institutional self evaluation, Norco College identified improvement plans for advancing its continuous improvement efforts. The Commission suggests that those plans for improvement be taken into account as the College continues into the next accreditation cycle. In its Midterm report, the College should address steps undertaken in those improvement areas.

The final External Evaluation Report that was sent to the institution provides details of the team’s findings with regard to each Eligibility Requirement and Accreditation Standard and should be read carefully and used to understand the team’s findings. Additional copies may now be duplicated.

The 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 to come into compliance. Institutions are expected to take all actions necessary to continuously comply with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. The Commission wishes to remind you that while an institution may concur or disagree with any part of the Report, Norco College is expected to use the External Evaluation Report to improve educational programs and services and to resolve issues identified by the Commission.

The Commission requires that the College give the Institutional Self Evaluation Report, the External Evaluation Report, and this letter appropriate dissemination to College staff and to those who were signatories of the College Self Evaluation Report. This group should include the Chancellor, campus leadership, and the Board of Trustees.

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Norco College
July 3, 2014

The Commission also requires that the College's Institutional Self Evaluation Report, the External Evaluation Report, and this Commission action letter be made available to students and the public by placing a copy on the College website. *Please note that in response to public interest in disclosure, the Commission now 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 continuing interest in the institution's educational programs and services. Professional self-regulation is the most effective means of assuring institutional integrity, effectiveness, educational quality, and student success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara A. Beno".

Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.
President

BAB/tl

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*. It contains the background, requirements, and format for each type of report and presents sample cover pages and certification pages. It is available on the ACCJC website under College Reports to ACCJC at: (<http://www.accjc.org/college-reports-accjc>).