



**ACCREDITING
COMMISSION
for COMMUNITY and
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association
of Schools and Colleges*

10 COMMERCIAL BOULEVARD
SUITE 204
NOVATO, CA 94949
TELEPHONE: (415) 506-0234
FAX: (415) 506-0238
E-MAIL: accjc@accjc.org
www.accjc.org

Chairperson
STEVEN KINSELLA
Administrative Member

Vice Chairperson
SUSAN KAZAMA
Academic Member

President
BARBARA A. BENO

Vice President
SUSAN B. CLIFFORD

Vice President
KRISTA JOHNS

Vice President
GARMAN JACK POND

Associate Vice President
JOHN NIXON

Associate Vice President
NORVAL WELLSFRY

February 6, 2015

Dr. Gloria Fisher
Interim President
San Bernardino Valley College
701 South Mount Vernon Avenue
San Bernardino CA 92410

Dear President Fisher:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting on January 7-9, 2015, reviewed the Institutional Self Evaluation Report, the Report of the External Evaluation Team that visited San Bernardino Valley College September 29-October 2, 2014, supplemental information provided by the College in advance of the Commission meeting, and the presentation by a College representative at the Commission meeting. The Commission also reviewed a matter raised through Third Party Comment.

The Commission took action to **Issue Warning** and to require the College to submit a Follow-Up Report in March, 2016.

Warning is issued when the Commission finds that an institution has deficiencies which lead to noncompliance with the Commission's Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies to an extent that gives concern to the Commission. When Warning is issued as a result of the institution's comprehensive external review of educational quality and instructional effectiveness, reaffirmation is delayed, but the accredited status of the institution continues during the period of warning.

In its review of Third Party Comment, the Commission took action to issue a Commission Recommendation and to require the College to address the issues and demonstrate actions to resolve the noted deficiencies in the March, 2016 Follow-Up Report.

San Bernardino Valley College should submit its **Follow-Up Report by March 15, 2016.**¹ The Report will be followed by a visit of Commission representatives. The Report should demonstrate that the College and District have resolved the deficiencies which led to noncompliance and that they meet the standards, and the Report should address the recommendations noted below.

¹Institutions preparing and submitting Follow-Up 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>).

Need to Resolve Deficiencies from Comprehensive External Evaluation:

The Accreditation Standards, as an integrated whole, represent indicators of academic quality and institutional effectiveness. Deficiencies in institutional policies, procedures, practices and outcomes which lead to noncompliance with any Standards will impact quality at an institution, and ultimately the educational environment and experiences of students.

In its review of the comprehensive evaluation, the Commission determined that the remaining previous College and District recommendations from 2008 and 2009 had been fully addressed and the prior deficiencies which led to noncompliance were resolved. The Commission also found San Bernardino Valley College out of compliance with the following Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards from College Recommendation 1 and District Recommendation 1, 2, and 3: I.B.1, II.A.2.f, III.A, III.A.1, III.A.1.b, III.A.1.c, III.A.3, III.A.3.a, III.A.5, III.A.6, III.D, III.D.1.a, III.D.1.b, III.D.1.d, III.D.3, III.D.4, IV.A.2, IV.B.1.e, IV.B.1.j, IV.B.3.b, IV.B.3.c, and Eligibility Requirement 5 and 20.

College Recommendation 1

In order to meet standards, the team recommends that all program student learning outcomes be assessed on a regular basis as part of a sustainable cycle of continuous quality improvement (Eligibility Requirement 20, Standards I.B.1, II.A.2.f).

District Recommendation 1

In order to meet standards, the team recommends that the Board of Trustees examine its role in the development of policies and ensure that it acts in a manner consistent with its approved policies and bylaws. The team further recommends that the Board of Trustees take steps to ensure that all policies are developed or revised within the framework of the established input and participation process (III.A.3, III.A.3.a, III.D.3, IV.A.2, IV.B.1.e, IV.B.1.j).

District Recommendation 2

In order to meet standards, the team recommends that the Board of Trustees, and the chancellor, in consultation with the leadership of the college campuses, develop a strategy for addressing significant issues to improve the effectiveness of district human resources services that support the colleges in their missions and functions. These issues include:

- Reliable data from the Human Resources Department to support position control and other human resources functions;
- Timeliness of employee evaluations;
- Responsiveness and improved timelines for employee hiring;
- Consistent policy interpretation and guidance; and
- Completion of the faculty evaluation instrument to include work on Student Learning Outcomes.

(III.A, III.A.1, III.A.1.b, III.A.1.c, III.A.5, IV.B.3.b)

Dr. Gloria Fisher
San Bernardino Valley College
February 6, 2015

District Recommendation 3

In order to meet standards, the team recommends that the District follow their Resource Allocation Model focusing on transparency and inclusiveness, supported by a comprehensive district-wide Enrollment Management Plan and a Human Resource/Staffing Plan integrated with other district-wide programs and financial plans, broadly communicated to the colleges (III.A.6, III.D, III.D.1.a, III.D.1b, III.D.1.d, III.D.4, IV.B.3.c).

Need to Resolve Deficiencies from Third Party Comment:

The Commission received Third Party Comment noting that the College's President holds a single higher education degree, which is from an institution that was not accredited by a recognized U.S. accrediting agency at the time the degree was conferred. The College and District were provided with the opportunity to respond to the Third Party Comment, and the Commission reviewed the information provided in its determination of noncompliance with standards.

The California State Chancellor previously determined that an equivalency existed for purposes of state minimum qualifications to teach at the community college level. However, the College President does not have a degree from a college recognized by a U.S. accrediting agency as is required for institutional compliance with ACCJC Accrediting Standards. The Commission also found the College's catalog does not contain information of all degrees, and the institutions from which those degrees were earned, for administrators and faculty. In its review of Third Party Comment, the Commission found San Bernardino Valley College out of compliance with the following Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards from Commission Recommendation 1: II.B.2.A, III.A.1.a, and Eligibility Requirements 5 and 20. San Bernardino Valley College should include this matter in its Follow-Up Report in March, 2016.

Commission Recommendation 1: In order to meet standards, the college must ensure that the President holds an appropriate degree from an institution accredited by a recognized U.S. accrediting agency at the time the degree was awarded. Furthermore, the college should ensure that the college catalog contain precise, accurate, and current information with the names and degrees of all administrators and faculty (II.B.2.a, III.A.1.a, and ER 5 and 20).

Improvement of Institutional Effectiveness:

In its comprehensive external evaluation report, the team noted College Recommendations 2, 3, 4, and 5, and District Recommendation 4, for increasing institutional effectiveness. These recommendations do not identify current areas of deficiency in institutional practice, but do highlight areas of practice for which College and District attention are needed.

Dr. Gloria Fisher
San Bernardino Valley College
February 6, 2015

The Commission expects that institutions address recommendations for increasing institutional effectiveness as an aspect of maintaining compliance with standards and continuous quality improvement. The College should plan to fully address all improvement recommendations in the Midterm Report.

San Bernardino Valley College conducted an educational quality and institutional effectiveness review as part of its self evaluation. College-identified improvement plans are another important outcome of the comprehensive self-evaluation process. These plans provide a way for the institution to link its self-evaluation to the regular ongoing evaluation of institutional plans and processes, and to integrate accreditation self-evaluation into the ongoing planning and improvement efforts at the institution. The college will want to track and document changes coming out of its self-identified improvement plans for reporting during the accreditation cycle.

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 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. With this letter, San Bernardino Valley College is being given notice of the standards for which it is out of compliance and is being provided time to meet the standards.

Commission changes to the External Evaluation Report have been noted on a separate page for inclusion with the team report,² which is enclosed. Copies of the enclosed team report, with this added page, may now be duplicated and posted.

The Commission requires that the College give the Institutional Self Evaluation Report, the External Evaluation Team 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 campus leadership, the Chancellor, and the Board of Trustees.

The Commission also requires that the College's Institutional Self Evaluation Report, the External Evaluation Team 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.*

² The External Evaluation Team chair has concurred with the Commission revisions to the Team Report.

Dr. Gloria Fisher
San Bernardino Valley College
February 6, 2015

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. The College's own self evaluation and responsive action is a vital part of a successful voluntary peer evaluation process. Institutions are expected to take all action 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, San Bernardino Valley College is expected to use the External Evaluation Report to improve programs and services and to resolve issues identified by the Commission.

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 integrity, effectiveness, and educational quality.

Sincerely,

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

Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.
President

BAB/tl