



**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
SHERRILL L. AMADOR
Public Member

Vice Chairperson
STEVEN KINSELLA
Administration

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

June 29, 2015

Dr. Joi Lin Blake
President
College of Alameda
555 Ralph Appezato Memorial Parkway
Alameda, CA 94501

Dear President Blake:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting on June 3-5, 2015, reviewed the Institutional Self Evaluation Report, the Report of the External Evaluation Team that visited College of Alameda March 9-12, 2015, and considered the opening testimony provided by President Blake and representatives of the Peralta Community College District. The Commission appreciates the joint commitment to working together toward improvement that College and District representatives spoke about.

The Commission took action to **impose Probation** and require the College to submit a Follow-Up Report in October 2016. The Report will be followed by a visit of an external evaluation team. Probation is imposed when an institution deviates significantly from the Commission's Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies, but not to such an extent as to warrant a Show Cause order or the termination of accreditation. When Probation is imposed as a result of the institution's educational quality and institutional effectiveness review, reaffirmation is delayed, but the accredited status of the institution continues during the probation period. Probation is imposed due to District and College deficiencies.

College of Alameda should submit the Follow-Up Report by **October 1, 2016**.¹ The Follow-Up Report should demonstrate that the College has resolved the deficiencies which led to noncompliance and that it meets the Eligibility Requirements and Standards. The Report should address the college and district recommendations and the Commission Concern noted below.

Need to Resolve Deficiencies:

The Accreditation Standards represent practices that lead to 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.

Dr. Joi Lin Blake
College of Alameda
June 29, 2015

The Commission found College of Alameda out of compliance with the following Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards: Eligibility Requirements 2, 10, 19, and 21, and Standards I.A.2, I.A.3, I.A.4, I.B.1-7, II.A.1.a, II.A.2, II.A.2.b, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, II.B.1, II.C.1.a, II.C.1.c, III.A.1, III.A.1.b, III.A.2, III.A.6, III.B.1, III.B.1.a, III.B.2, III.B.2.a, III.C.2, III.D.1, III.D.1.a, III.D.1.b, III.D.1.c, III.D.1.h, III.D.2.a, III.D.2.b, III.D.3.b, III.D.3.c, III.D.3.f, III.D.3.h, III.D.4, IV.A.3, IV.A.4, IV.A.5, IV.B.1, IV.B.1.a, IV.B.1.e, IV.B.1.j, IV.B.2, IV.B.3, IV.B.3.b, IV.B.3.c, IV.B.3.g. The 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. College Recommendations 1 through 6, 8 through 12, 15 through 17, 19 and 20, District Recommendations 1 through 8, and Commission Concern provide guidance for coming into compliance.

College Recommendation 1

In order to meet the Standards and the Eligibility Requirement, the team recommends that the College develop a process for regular and systematic review of its Mission statement through appropriate college governance processes, receive board approval of the Mission statement, and display it prominently in all college documentation, including the College website. (I.A.2, I.A.3, IV.A.3; ER 2)

College Recommendation 2

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the college ensure that the College mission and goals drive the planning and resource prioritization processes. (I.A.4, III.A.1, III.B.1, III.D.1)

College Recommendation 3

In order to meet the Standards and U.S. Department of Education requirements, the team recommends the College adopt institutional-set standards that will adequately measure satisfactory performance of student achievement. The team also recommends that the College's governance process be involved in the determination of these standards and the methodology used to set the standards be explained to justify reasonableness of these standards. When the College falls below these standards, the team recommends institution-wide discussion of action, and documentation of such, to be taken to improve performance. (I.B.1-6, IV.A.3)

College Recommendation 4

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that formal processes be put into place to document the discussion of student learning. (I.B.1)

Dr. Joi Lin Blake
College of Alameda
June 29, 2015

College Recommendation 5

In order to meet the Standards and the Eligibility Requirement, the team recommends that the College assess its planning and program review processes to ensure an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, re-evaluation, and continuous improvement. (I.B.6, I.B.7, II.A.2.f; ER 19)

College Recommendation 6

In order to meet the Standards and the Eligibility Requirement, the team recommends that the College document the systematic assessment of course-level, program-level, and institutional learning outcomes and use this assessment to direct college and program improvement. (I.B.1, II.A.2.b, II.A.2.e, III.A.1.b, III.D.4; ER 10)

College Recommendation 8

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the College incorporate consistent and current data into the planning processes. (I.B.6, III.A.6)

College Recommendation 9

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the College develop and implement a process for regular and ongoing evaluation and assessment of its governance and decision-making structures and process, and use the results to broaden employee participation and improve institutional effectiveness. (I.B.1, IV.A.5)

College Recommendation 10

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the College develop, implement, and assess a comprehensive enrollment management strategy based on qualitative and quantitative information that allows the College to clarify its identity while meeting its mission and the varied educational needs of its students, as well as ensuring that resources are allocated in a manner that effectively supports the direction of the College. (I.B.1, I.B.2, I.B.3, II.A.1.a, II.A.2)

College Recommendation 11

In order to meet the Standard, the College should develop online tutoring for its distance education students. (II.B.1, II.C.1.a, II.C.1.c)

College Recommendation 12

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that all personnel performance evaluations be made current according to the approved cycles. (III.A.1.b)

Dr. Joi Lin Blake
College of Alameda
June 29, 2015

College Recommendation 15

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College comply with the recommendation in the Department of Education Program Review dated January 5, 2015 in response to audit findings on data submitted to the NSLDS. (III.D.2.a, III.D.2.b, III.D.3.b, III.D.3.f)

College Recommendation 16

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the Budget Allocation Model be assessed for effectiveness to provide fair distribution of resources that are adequate to support the effective operations of the College. (III.D.2.a, IV.B.3.c)

College Recommendation 17

In order to meet the Standards and the Eligibility Requirement and to comply with the ACCJC Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education and the Policy on Substantive Change, the team recommends that the College submit substantive change reports to the Commission as soon as possible and receive approval to offer its programs through distance education and at the off-site science and laboratory building. (IV.A.4, ER 21)

College Recommendation 19

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the College president establish a collegial process that sets values, goals, and priorities; ensure that evaluation and planning rely on high quality research and analysis of external and internal conditions; ensure that educational planning is integrated with resource planning and distribution to achieve student learning outcomes; establish procedures to evaluate overall institutional planning and implementation efforts; and effectively control budget and expenditures. (IV.B.2)

College Recommendation 20

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College and the District collaborate to clearly delineate and communicate the operational responsibilities and functions of the District from those of the College and consistently adhere to this delineation in practice; and regularly assess and evaluate District role delineation and governance and decision-making structures and processes to assure their integrity and effectiveness in assisting the College in meeting educational goals. (IV.B.3)

With regard to College Recommendation 20, the Commission notes that the recommendation requires the College to work collaboratively with the District to resolve the issue noted here and in District Recommendation 6.

District Recommendation 1

In order to meet the Standard, the Team recommends that the District follow the 2014 audit recommendations and develop an action plan to fund its Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) liabilities, including the associated debt service. (III.D.1.c, III.D.3.c, III.D.1.c)

Dr. Joi Lin Blake
College of Alameda
June 29, 2015

District Recommendation 2

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the District resolve comprehensively and in a timely manner the ongoing deficiencies identified in the 2013 and 2014 external audit findings. (III.D.2.b, III.D.1.h)

Commission Concern 1

Regarding District Recommendations 1 and 2, the Commission carefully reviewed the team report and the District's external audit and found that the District must provide the documented, long-term planning necessary for the continued financial stability of the District.

This must include attention to obligations coming due in the future such as the postemployment health care benefits, the annual line of credit repayment, and the appropriate resolution to audit findings from 2013 and 2014 which impact the District both at the operating fund level and the entity-wide financial statement level. (III.D.1.c, III.D.2.b, III.D.3.c, III.D.3.h)

District Recommendation 3

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that District General Services (DGS) work with college personnel to implement a plan to address total cost of ownership for new facilities and equipment, including undertaking critical deferred maintenance and preventive maintenance needs at the college in order to assure safe and sufficient physical resources for students, faculty and staff. (III.B.1, III.B.1.a, III.B.2.a)

District Recommendation 4

In order to meet the Standards, the District should clearly identify the structures, roles, responsibilities and document the processes used to integrate human, facilities, technology planning, and fiscal planning in support of student learning and achievement and regularly evaluate the process in order to fairly allocate resources to support the planning priorities. (III.A.6, III.B.2, III.C.2, III.D.4, IV.B.3.g)

District Recommendation 5

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the district ensure retention of key leadership positions and that adequate staffing capacity is available to address the demands of three critical areas reflected in the accreditation standards: institutional effectiveness and leadership, institutional research, and financial accountability and management. (III.A.2, III.A.6)

District Recommendation 6

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the district clearly delineate and communicate the operational responsibilities and functions of the district from those of the colleges and consistently adheres to this delineation in practice; and regularly assesses and evaluates district role delineation and governance and decision-making structures and processes to assure their integrity and effectiveness in assisting the colleges in meeting educational goals. (IV.B.3)

Dr. Joi Lin Blake
College of Alameda
June 29, 2015

District Recommendation 7

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends the Governing Board adhere to its appropriate role. The Board must allow the chancellor to take full responsibility and authority for the areas assigned to district oversight. (IV.B.1, IV.B.1a, IV.B.1.e, IV.B.1.j)

District Recommendation 8

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the District systematically evaluate the equitable distribution of resources and the sufficiency and effectiveness of district-provided services in supporting effective operations of the colleges. (IV.B.3.b, IV.B.3.c, III.D.1.a, III.D.1.b, III.D.1.h)

Improving Institutional Effectiveness:

In its report, the team noted College Recommendations 7, 13, and 18 for increasing institutional effectiveness. These recommendations do not identify current areas of deficiency in institutional practice, but highlight areas of practice for which College attention is needed. The Commission requires that institutions address recommendations for increasing institutional effectiveness as an aspect of maintaining compliance with Standards and continuous quality improvement. College of Alameda will include its response to Recommendations 7 and 18 in the Midterm Report.

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, College of Alameda is being provided with notice of the Standards for which it is out of compliance and is being provided time to meet the Standards.

In addition to the above deficiencies, the Commission also noted that College of Alameda is out of compliance with federal regulations regarding public notification of an evaluation visit, institution-set standards for student achievement, transfer policies, distance education, and Title IV compliance as indicated in the team report.

In its self evaluation process, College of Alameda also identified improvement plans it intends to undertake. These improvement plans should be linked to College of Alameda's ongoing evaluation and improvement work.

Dr. Joi Lin Blake
College of Alameda
June 29, 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 of Alameda to come into compliance. While an institution may concur or disagree with any part of the Report, College of Alameda is expected to use the External Evaluation 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 the Commission action.

A **final** copy of the External Evaluation Team Report is attached. Commission changes to the External Evaluation Report have been noted on a separate page for inclusion with the team report, 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 and the Board of Trustees. The Commission also requires that these documents 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.*

Public Disclosure Notice and Institutional Response

Federal regulations require the Commission to post a Public Disclosure Notice (PDN) for institutions placed on Probation. The PDN is used to inform the public of the reasons for such a sanction. Attached you will find a sheet entitled About the Public Disclosure Notice, as well as the proposed PDN for College of Alameda.

The Commission will post the PDN on the College's entry in the Directory of Accredited Institutions online at www.accjc.org. The institution is permitted to post a response to the PDN, and your comments are invited. Please provide the College's response for posting, if any, by **July 31, 2015**.

On behalf of the Commission, I wish to encourage your continued work to ensure College of Alameda's educational quality and to support students' success. Professional self-regulation is the responsibility of an accredited college and the accreditor. Thank you for sharing in that responsibility.

Dr. Joi Lin Blake
College of Alameda
June 29, 2015

If you should have any questions concerning this letter or the Commission action, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

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

Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.
President

BAB/tl

cc: Dr. José Ortiz, Chancellor

Enclosures:
About the Public Disclosure Notice
College of Alameda Public Disclosure Notice

¹Institutions 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>).