



**ACCREDITING  
COMMISSION  
for COMMUNITY and  
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association  
of Schools and Colleges*

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July 3, 2013

Dr. Dennis Harkins  
President  
Orange Coast College  
2701 Fairview Road  
Costa Mesa, CA 92628

Dear President Harkins:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting June 5-7, 2013, reviewed the Institutional Self Evaluation Report and the report of the External Evaluation Team that visited Orange Coast College March 18-21, 2013.

The Commission acted to issue **Warning** and require Orange Coast College to correct the deficiencies noted. The College is required to complete a **Follow-Up Report by March 15, 2014** demonstrating resolution of the deficiencies noted in the 2013 Evaluation Report: District Recommendations 1, 2, 3, and 4, the Commission Recommendation 1, and College Recommendations 1 and 2. The Report will be followed by a visit of Commission representatives.<sup>1</sup>

Warning is issued when the Commission finds that an institution has pursued a course deviating from the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards or Commission policies to an extent that gives concern to the Commission. The Commission may require an institution to correct its deficiencies, refrain from certain activities, or initiate certain activities. The Commission will specify the time within which the institution must resolve deficiencies, and may require additional reports and evaluation visits. During the warning period, reaffirmation is delayed, but the institution remains accredited and will be reaffirmed when the issues giving rise to the warning are fully resolved and the institution is removed from warning.

The Follow-Up Report of March 2014 should demonstrate that the institution has fully addressed the recommendations noted below, resolved the deficiencies, and now meets all Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and recommendations identified in the External Evaluation Team Report.

Dr. Dennis Harkins  
Orange Coast College  
July 3, 2013

**District Recommendation 1:** To meet the Standard, and as recommended by the 2007 team, the team recommends that faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes. (Standard III.A.1.c)

**District Recommendation 2:** To meet the Standards, and as recommended by the 2007 team, the team recommends that the Board and district follow their policies regarding the delegation of authority to the Chancellor for effective operation of the district and to the college presidents for the effective operation of the colleges. Further, the team recommends that the district develop administrative procedures that effectively carry out delegation of authority to the Chancellor and the college presidents. (Standards IV.B.1.j, IV.B.3.a, IV.B.3.g)

**District Recommendation 3:** To meet the Standard, the team recommends that the Board of Trustees follow its established process for self-evaluation of Board performance as published in its board policy. (Standard IV.B.1.g)

**District Recommendation 4:** To meet the Standards, and as recommended by the 2007 team, the team recommends that the Board implement a process for the evaluation of its policies and procedures according to an identified timeline and revise the policies as necessary. (Standard IV.B.1.e)

**Commission Recommendation 1:** To meet the Standards, the District needs to examine the role of the four board employees who report directly to the Board of Trustees to ensure there is no conflict with the delegation of authority of the Chancellor and the college presidents. (Standard IV.B.3.a, IV.B.3.b)

**Commission Recommendation 2:** While some online instructors have established regular and substantive contact with their students, these strategies are not being consistently applied in the online environment.

**Commission Recommendation 3:** The inclusion of financial planning in the Educational Master Plan 2011-15 was not evident during the visit. The Educational Master Plan lists Goal 10 in the area of Stewardship. The goal states that the College will implement comprehensive and deliberate long-term planning to be strategically and financially responsible. However, this is the only discussion of the goal; there is not any discussion of how it will be achieved and assessed or the fiscal ability to meet the goal.

Dr. Dennis Harkins  
Orange Coast College  
July 3, 2013

I wish to inform you that under U.S. Department of Education regulations, institutions out of compliance with Standards or on sanction are expected to correct deficiencies within a two-year period or the Commission must take action to terminate accreditation. Orange Coast College must correct the deficiencies noted in recommendations above no later than March 15, 2015, or the Commission will be required to take adverse action.

The External Evaluation Report 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. The recommendations contained in the External Evaluation Team 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 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, the College is expected to use the External Evaluation Report to improve educational programs and services and to resolve issues identified by the Commission.

The College conducted an educational quality and institutional effectiveness review as part of its self evaluation. The Commission suggests that the plans for improvement of the institution included in its Self Evaluation Report be used to support the continuing improvement of Orange Coast College.

A **final** copy of the External Evaluation Report is enclosed. Additional copies may now be duplicated. The Commission requires you to give the Evaluation Report and this letter dissemination to your College staff and to those who were signatories of your College Self Evaluation Report. This group should include the campus leadership, the Chancellor, and the Board of Trustees.

The Commission also requires that the 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 farther than one click from the institution's home page.* If you would like an electronic copy of the External Evaluation Report, please contact Commission staff.

Dr. Dennis Harkins  
Orange Coast College  
July 3, 2013

Finally, ACCJC staff is available to assist the College with consultation and advice on the recommendations identified above. Please do not hesitate to contact us.

On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express continuing interest in the institution's educational quality and students' success. Professional self-regulation is the most effective means of assuring integrity, effectiveness and educational quality.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.  
President

cc: Dr. John Weispfenning, Accreditation Liaison Officer  
Dr. Andrew C. Jones, Chancellor, Coast Community College District  
President, Board of Trustees  
Mr. Anthony D. Cantu, President, Fresno City College, Team Chair

Enclosure

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<sup>1</sup> 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. The Guidelines contain the background, requirements, and format for each type of report and presents sample cover pages and certification pages. The Guidelines are available on the ACCJC website under College Reports to ACCJC at: (<http://www.accjc.org/college-reports-accjc>).