



**ACCREDITING
COMMISSION
for COMMUNITY and
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association
of Schools and Colleges*

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July 3, 2014

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 4-6, 2014, reviewed the Follow-Up Report submitted by Orange Coast College and the Report of the Evaluation Team that visited Tuesday, April 8-Wednesday, April 9, 2014.

The Commission took action to **remove Warning and reaffirm accreditation** with a requirement that the College submit a **Follow-Up Report by March 15, 2015**.¹

The Follow-Up Report should demonstrate that the College has addressed District Recommendation 2, resolved the deficiencies, and meets Standards. These findings of deficiencies and team recommendations were made in 2013.

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 Orange Coast College remains deficient in meeting the following Accreditation Standards: IV.B.1.j, IV.B.3.a, IV.B.3.g from District recommendations.

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)

Dr. Dennis Harkins
Orange Coast College
July 3, 2014

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. Orange Coast College should fully resolve the remaining deficiencies by **March 2015**.

In its March 2014 Follow-Up Report, Orange Coast College has provided evidence, and the team verified, that it has addressed District Recommendations 1 (student learning outcomes and faculty evaluation), 3 (board self evaluation), and 4 (review of board policies) and Commission Recommendations 1 (board employees) and 2 (distance education), resolved the deficiencies, and meets Standards III.A.1.c; IV.B.1.e, and g; and IV.B.3.a and b, and the Commission Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education.

The Follow-Up Report submitted in March 2014 and the External Evaluation Report will become part of the accreditation history of the College. The Commission requires that you give the College Report, the External Evaluation Report and this letter appropriate dissemination to your College staff and to those who were signatories of your Follow-Up Report. This group should include the Chancellor, campus leadership, and the Board of Trustees.

The Commission also requires that the Follow-Up 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.*

Institutions are expected to meet Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies at all times during the six-year review cycle. Orange Coast College must demonstrate to the Commission at the time of the next regularly scheduled report that the recent changes implemented to resolve deficiencies and meet Eligibility Requirements, Standards, and policies have been sustained.

Dr. Dennis Harkins
Orange Coast College
July 3, 2014

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,



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*. 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>.