



**ACCREDITING  
COMMISSION  
for COMMUNITY and  
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association  
of Schools and Colleges*

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July 2, 2012

Dr. Christopher O'Hearn  
Superintendent/President  
Victor Valley College  
18422 Bear Valley Road  
Victorville, CA 92395

Dear President O'Hearn:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting June 6-8, 2012, considered the Follow-Up Report submitted by the Victor Valley College, the report of the evaluation team which visited the College on Thursday, April 19, 2012, and President O'Hearn's testimony provided at the Commission meeting. The Commission took action to continue **Probation** and require the College to complete a Follow-Up Report by **October 15, 2012**. That report will be followed by a visit of Commission representatives.<sup>1</sup>

The Follow-Up Report should demonstrate that the institution has addressed all of the recommendations noted below, fully resolved the deficiencies, and meets Accreditation Standards and Eligibility Requirements. The Commission notes that some of the issues and deficiencies noted in the current recommendations were noted by previous evaluation teams dating back to 1993, and the Commission warns that if conditions that place Victor Valley College out of compliance with Accreditation Standards are not fully resolved by October 15, 2012, the Commission will be obliged to consider whether the institution should remain accredited.

The Commission also notes that Recommendation 2 embodies several parts and references to the required processes of assessment and program review, planning, budgeting, funding and implementing improvements, all of which have been required by Commission Standards for many years. The Team Follow-Up Report notes that the College has spent a good deal of energy designing and refining its program review process, but that "the visiting team could find little evidence that more than a few programs have actually completed a cycle of assessment and improvement." (Team Follow-Up Report, page 6) The Commission understands that the College plans to conduct program reviews on a six year cycle; if this is the case, it will be unable to demonstrate compliance within the required timelines for correction of institutional deficiencies.

Dr. Christopher O'Hearn  
Victor Valley College  
July 2, 2012

**Recommendation 1:** In order to meet the Standards, the College should revise its planning documents to reflect the current mission so that the mission is central to institutional planning and decision making. Furthermore, the College should adhere to its policy of annually reviewing its mission statement and update its Educational Master Plan using its current mission statement. (I.A.3, I.A.4).

**Recommendation 2:** As noted in recommendations 1 and 6 of the 2005 Accreditation Evaluation Report, and in recommendations from the reports of 1993 and 1999, and in order to meet the Standards and the Eligibility Requirements, the College should establish and maintain an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes. (I.B.1, E.R. 19) This process should include:

- Goals to improve effectiveness that are stated in measurable terms so that the degree to which they are achieved can be determined and widely discussed. (I.B.2)
- An evaluation of all programs throughout the College so that it assesses progress toward those goals and ensures that participation is broad-based throughout the College. (I.B.3, I.B.4)
- Documented assessment results for all courses, programs, and the institution. (I.B.5, II.A.1.a, II.B.4)
- Formal processes to evaluate the effectiveness of its ongoing planning and resource allocation processes. (I.B.6, I.B.7)
- Integration of planning with decision-making and budgeting processes to ensure that decisions to allocate staff, equipment, resources, and facilities throughout the College are based on identified strategic priorities and to ensure a continuous cycle of evaluation and improvement based upon data. (I.B.2, I.B.3, I.B.6, III.C.2, IV.B.2.b)
- An integration of the total cost of facilities ownership in both the short and long term planning processes. (III.B.1.c)
- An assessment of physical resource planning with the involvement of the campus community. (III.B.1.a, III.B.2.a, III.B.2.b)
- A systematic assessment of the effective use of financial resources, with particular regard to meeting the needs of Library materials and technological resources, and the use of the results of this assessment as the basis for improvement. (II.C.1, II.C.2, III.D.3)

**Recommendation 3:** As noted in recommendation 2 of the 2005 Accreditation Evaluation Report, and in order to meet the Standards and the Eligibility Requirements, the College should complete the development of student learning outcomes for all programs and ensure that student learning outcomes found on course syllabi are the same as the student learning outcomes found on the approved course outlines of record. The institution must accelerate its efforts to assess all student learning outcomes for every course, instructional and student support program, and incorporate analysis of student learning outcomes into course and program improvements.

Dr. Christopher O'Hearn  
Victor Valley College  
July 2, 2012

This effort must be accomplished by fall 2012 as a result of broad-based dialogue with administrative, institutional and research support. Student learning outcomes need to become an integral part of the program review process, including incorporating detailed documented analysis from SLO assessments and data based research. Additionally, faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated learning outcomes should have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes. (I.B.1-7, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a-b, II.A.2.e-f, II.B.4, II.C.2, III.A.1.c, E.R. 10)

**Recommendation 4:** As noted in recommendation 6 of the 2005 Accreditation Evaluation Report, and in order to meet the Standards, the College should cultivate a campus environment of empowerment, innovation, and institutional excellence by creating a culture of respect, civility, dialogue and trust. (I.B.1, I.B.4, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.b, II.C.1.a, III.A, III.A.1.d, III.A.4.c, IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.3, IV.A.5, IV.B.2.b [emphasis on “collegial process”])

**Recommendation 5:** In order to meet the Standards, the College should examine and provide evidence that appropriate leadership ensures the accessibility, quality and eligibility of online and hybrid courses and programs, and that such programs demonstrate that all services, regardless of location or means of delivery, support student learning and enhance achievement of the mission of the institution. (II.A, II.B, IV.A.1)

**Recommendation 6:** In order to meet the Standards, the College should develop long-term fiscal plans that support student learning programs and services that will not rely on using unrestricted reserves to cover deficits. Additionally, the College should provide timely, accurate and comprehensive financial data and budget projections for review and discussion throughout the institution. (III.D, III.D.1.a, III.D.1.c, III.D.2.b, III.D.2.c, E.R. 17)

**Recommendation 7:** In order to meet the standards, the team recommends that the College build and maintain a system for effective, stable and sustainable leadership, to include:

- Creating a process for succession planning in order to avoid gaps in leadership.
- Assisting all employees and students to grow professionally by developing their leadership skills and encouraging their participation in governance groups.
- Addressing leadership needs in the key campus areas of student services and distance learning. (IV.A, IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.A.2.a, IV.A.2.b, IV.A.3, IV.A.5, IV.B.1, IV.B.1.j, IV.B.2, IV.B.2.a)

**Recommendation 8:** In order to meet the Standards, members of the Board of Trustees must limit their role in governing the College to those responsibilities established in Board Policy, including delegating power and authority to the Superintendent/President to lead the district and to make administrative decisions regarding the effective implementation of Board Policies without Board interference.

Dr. Christopher O'Hearn  
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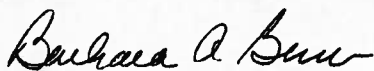
Trustees must avoid micromanaging institutional operations including their participation in campus committees and governance groups. Additionally, the Board must establish and follow a specific, regular time interval for evaluating its performance. (IV.B, IV.B.1, IV.B.1.a-e, IV.B.1.g, IV.B.1.j, IV.B.2, IV.B.2.a-e)

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. Victor Valley College has exceeded the two years for coming into compliance on some areas, and must complete the needed work by **October 15, 2012**.

The Follow-Up Report will become part of the accreditation history of the College and should be used in preparing for the next comprehensive evaluation. I have previously sent you a copy of the Evaluation Team Follow-Up Report. Additional copies may now be duplicated. The Commission requires that you give the report and this letter appropriate dissemination to your College staff and to those who were signatories of your College report. This group should include the campus leadership and the Board of Trustees. The Commission also requires that The Follow-Up Report, the Team Follow-Up Report and this Commission action letter be made available to students and the public. Placing a copy on the College website can accomplish this.

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 institutional integrity, effectiveness, and quality.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.  
President

BAB/tl

cc: Mr. Peter Allan, Accreditation Liaison Officer  
President, Board of Trustees, Victor Valley Community College District  
Mr. Michael Carley, Team Chair

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<sup>1</sup> Institutions that will be 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>).