



**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

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February 6, 2015

Dr. John Weispfenning
President
Santiago Canyon College
8045 E. Chapman Avenue
Orange CA 92869-4512

Dear President Weispfenning:

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 presentation by College representatives, and the Report of the External Evaluation Team that visited Santiago Canyon College October 6-9, 2014.

College Accreditation Reaffirmed:

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

Reaffirmation is granted when the institution substantially meets or exceeds the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. Reaffirmation with a Follow-Up Report is required when there are deficiencies leading to noncompliance which do not create an immediate risk to the institution's quality and effectiveness. However, if they are not addressed and fully resolved in a short time, they may threaten quality and effectiveness, and lead to increased noncompliance.

Santiago Canyon College should submit its **Follow-Up Report by March 15, 2016.**¹ The Report should demonstrate that the College has resolved the deficiencies which led to noncompliance and that it meets the Standards. The Report should address the recommendations noted below.

Need to Resolve Deficiencies:

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.

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>).

Dr. John Weispfenning
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The Commission found Santiago Canyon College out of compliance with the following Accreditation Standards: I.B, I.B.3, I.B.6, II.A.1.c, II.A.2, II.A.2.b, II.A.2.d, III.C.1.b, III.D.4, IV.A.3, IV.B.2.b, IV.B.3.g.

Recommendation 1:

In order to meet the Commission's 2012 expectation for meeting student learning outcomes standards, the team recommends that the college strengthen its assessment of program student learning outcomes to guide improvement. The college should also identify and address outcomes assessment for community services (community education). (II.A.1.c, II.A.2, II.A.2.b)

Recommendation 2:

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the college establish formal systematic measures for periodically assessing, evaluating, and modifying its integrated planning and resource allocation processes at both the college and district. (I.B.6, III.D.4, IV.B.2.b)

Recommendation 3:

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the college develop a systematic method by which it assesses its evaluation processes as well as its progress toward achieving its stated goals. Results of these evaluations should be widely communicated and used as the basis for improvement of institutional effectiveness. (I.B, I.B.3)

Recommendation 4:

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the college design and implement regular and frequent evaluation processes for governance, with the results informing planning and action. (IV.A.3, IV.B.3.g)

Recommendation 5:

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the college fully integrate distance education into existing planning and program assessment processes to ensure the quality of distance education. (II.A.2.d, III.C.1.b)

The College has identified distance education as a way to serve a more diverse population and it needs to evaluate the instructional and support services offered to ensure they are comparable to face-to-face instruction and support services.

The Commission also noted that, at the time of the Follow-Up Report, Santiago Canyon College must demonstrate that it has eliminated the structural deficit in the budget as identified in the team report in section III.D and IV.B.

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Improvement of Institutional Effectiveness:

In its report, the team noted a recommendation for increasing institutional effectiveness. Recommendations for increasing institutional effectiveness do not identify current areas of deficiency in institutional practice, but do 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.

Recommendation 6, as contained in the External Evaluation Team Report, has been made for Santiago Canyon College to improve institutional effectiveness. The College should plan to fully address all improvement recommendations in the Midterm Report.

Additional Information

Under U. S. Department of Education enforcement regulations, the Commission is required to take immediate action to terminate 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, Santiago Canyon College is being provided with notice of the Standards for which it is out of compliance and is being provided time to meet the Standards.

A Commission change to the External Evaluation Report has 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 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.

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.

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

Dr. John Weispfenning
Santiago Canyon College
February 6, 2015

The Commission wishes to remind you that while an institution may concur or disagree with any part of the Report, Santiago Canyon College is expected to use the External Evaluation Report to improve educational programs and services.

A **final** copy of the External Evaluation Report is attached. Additional copies may now be duplicated. 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 Chancellor, campus leadership, 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. If you would like an electronic copy of the External Evaluation Team Report, please contact Commission staff.

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,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.
President

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