



**ACCREDITING
COMMISSION
for COMMUNITY and
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association
of Schools and Colleges*

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February 11, 2013

Ms. Katherine Smith
President
College of the Redwoods
7351 Tompkins Hill Road
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear President Smith:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting January 9-11, 2013, reviewed the Show Cause Report submitted by College of the Redwoods, the additional material and presentation by college representatives, and the report of the evaluation team which visited November 5-6, 2012. The purpose of this review was to determine whether College of the Redwoods meets Accreditation Standards at a level sufficient to remain accredited, and whether College of the Redwoods has made changes and improvements required by the Commission action letter of February 1, 2012, which placed the College on Show Cause.

The Commission found that College of the Redwoods has resolved many of the deficiencies that were identified in the February 1, 2012 action letter, but has important areas of non-compliance not resolved or fully demonstrated. The Commission acted to **remove Show Cause and impose Probation** and require the College of the Redwoods to submit a **Follow-Up Report by October 15, 2013**.¹ The report will be followed by a visit of Commission representatives. The Commission also received College of the Redwood's Closure Report.

Probation is issued when the Commission finds that an institution deviates significantly from the Commission's Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or policies or fails to respond to conditions imposed upon it by the Commission. The accredited status of the institution continues during the probation period. The College's deadline for resolving deficiencies and meeting all Standards has been extended for good cause.

The Follow-Up Report should demonstrate that the institution fully resolved the deficiencies associated with Recommendations 6 and 7, meets the requirements of Eligibility Requirement 17 and Standards III.D.1.b and III.D.2.c., has implemented and sustained its new program review, budgeting and planning processes (Recommendations 1, 2, and 2008 Recommendation 1), and now meets all Accreditation Standards.

Ms. Katherine Smith
College of the Redwoods
February 11, 2013

Recommendation 6: Strategic Hiring Plan

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the College develop and implement a strategic hiring plan which analyzes demographic data to address employee equity and diversity. (IIIA.4.b)

With regard to Recommendation 6 above, the College has developed its Strategic Equity in Hiring Plan and an Equal Employment Opportunity Plan by analyzing demographic data and outlining action steps based on the analysis. The College has implemented the first element of the plan and has confirmed the schedule for the completion of the remaining elements of implementation.

Recommendation 7: Professional Development

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the College develop a comprehensive professional development program which is linked with the College mission and the strategic plan and which encourages opportunities for leadership growth within the College. The program should be regularly evaluated based on needs assessment data, outcomes, and relationship to mission. (IIIA.5.a, IIIA.5.b)

With regard to Recommendation 7 above, the College established a comprehensive professional development program based on needs assessments. By linking professional development activities more closely with Strategic Plan goals and objectives, the College can complete the work necessary to fully meet the Standards.

Eligibility Requirement 17:

The institution documents a funding base, financial resources, and plans for financial development adequate to support student learning programs and services, to improve institutional effectiveness, and to assure financial stability.

Standard III.D.1.b.:

Institutional planning reflects realistic assessment of financial resource availability, development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditures requirements.

Standard III.D.2.c.:

The institution has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability, strategies for appropriate risk management, and realistic plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences.

The institution's Show Cause Report documents the College's partial compliance with Standards III.D.1.b and III.D.2.c., and notes that the institution is working to develop realistic plans to maintain financial stability, to increase revenues and reduce expenditures.

Ms. Katherine Smith
College of the Redwoods
February 11, 2013

The College has used the State Chancellor's Office "Sound Fiscal Management Self-Assessment Checklist" to identify areas of financial management and stability that still need improvement. The College should complete the work necessary to come into compliance with ER 17, and Standards III.D.1.b and 2.c.

The Commission also discussed the considerable work the College has accomplished by meeting the Eligibility Requirements and Standards related to integrated planning, the listing of student learning outcomes on syllabi and in the catalog, the imaging of student records, employee evaluations, and board behavior. (Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8)

The Commission has determined that the College is now in compliance with Standards I.A, I.B, II.A, II.B, II.C, III.B, and III.C, portions of III.D, Standards IV.A and IV.B, and Eligibility Requirement 10. The task will be to sustain the new processes and practices, and demonstrate that the institution's complies with all of the requirements of accreditation.

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. College of the Redwoods should fully resolve the deficiencies noted by **October 2013** or the Commission will be compelled to take an adverse action. The institution's accreditation has been extended for good cause.

I have previously sent you a copy of the Show Cause Evaluation Team Report. Additional copies may now be duplicated. The Commission requires that you give the report and this action letter appropriate dissemination to your college staff and to those who were signatories of your college report. This group should include campus leadership and the Board of Trustees.

The Commission also requires that the College's Show Cause Report, the Show Cause Evaluation Team Report, and this 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 Show Cause Evaluation Team Report, please contact Commission staff.

Federal regulations require the Commission to post a Public Disclosure Notice (PDN) for institutions placed on Probation or Show Cause, or when accreditation is terminated. The PDN is used to inform the public of the reasons for such a severe sanction. 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. Enclosed find the proposed notice for College of the Redwoods with this action letter, and your comments on it are invited. Please provide the College's response for posting, if any, by March 11, 2013.

Ms. Katherine Smith
College of the Redwoods
February 11, 2013

Finally, ACCJC staff is available to assist the College with consultation and advice on the recommendations identified above.

On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express my 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/cms

cc: Dr. Utpal Goswami, Accreditation Liaison Officer
Board President, Redwoods Community College District
Dr. William T. Scroggins, Team Chair
Ms. Martina Fernandez-Rosario, U.S.D.E.

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>).

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES
Western Association of Schools and Colleges



Public Disclosure Notice

for

College of the Redwoods

February 11, 2013

*This Notice has been developed for use in responding to public inquiries about accreditation status, consistent with the Commission's policies on public disclosure. It should be read in conjunction with the Statement of Accredited Status for **College of the Redwoods**. This Notice has been reviewed by **College of the Redwoods**, and the institution has been notified of the opportunity to submit a response to this notice. If the College has responded to the Public Disclosure Notice, an electronic link to the institutional response will be found on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org in the Directory of Accredited Institution, with the information for **College of the Redwoods**.*

Accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (the Commission or ACCJC) certifies that a college has been found to meet rigorous requirements for quality and that there are reasonable grounds for believing it will continue to meet them. The Commission's requirements can be found on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Eligibility Requirements & Standards (or [click here](#)). The accreditation process requires an institution to open itself to examination by a group of professionals who evaluate the degree to which an institution meets the Standards. The Standards set requirements for quality that cover many aspects of the college, including: instruction, student support services, library and learning resources, physical environment, technology services, financial management, institutional governance, institutional integrity and honesty, and achievement of institutional mission. Accreditation is awarded only after an institution demonstrates that it complies with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. The Commission reviews the overall quality of each institution every six years. If an institution is found to need improvements, it may be required to undergo additional reviews and monitoring by the Commission.

Summary of Recent Commission Actions

The Commission removed Show Cause and imposed **Probation** for **College of the Redwoods** when the Commission, at its January 9-11, 2013 meeting, reviewed the institution's adherence to the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies as part of a Show Cause review. The institution remains accredited during this period and is required to make improvements to address the Commission's findings of non-compliance.

Probation is issued 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, or fails to respond to conditions imposed upon it by the Commission, including a warning, the institution may be placed on probation. The Commission will specify the time within which the institution must resolve deficiencies. If probation is imposed as a result of the institution's comprehensive review, reaffirmation of accreditation is delayed during the period of probation. The accredited status of the institution continues during the probation period.

The Commission took this action because it determined that **College of the Redwoods** is out of compliance with elements of the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies described below. The Commission found the College had resolved many of the deficiencies that resulted in the order of Show Cause, January 2012, but important areas of deficiency remain. The full text of the Eligibility Requirements and Standards can be found on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Eligibility Requirements & Standards (or [click here](#)).

Eligibility Requirement 17 Financial Resources: "The institution documents a funding base, financial resources, and plans for financial development adequate to support student learning programs and services, to improve institutional effectiveness, and to assure financial stability."

III.A.4.b Human Resources: "The institution regularly assesses its record in employment equity and diversity consistent with its mission."

III.A.5 Human Resources: "The institution provides all personnel with appropriate opportunities for continued professional development, consistent with the institutional mission and based on identified teaching and learning needs."

III.D.1.b Financial Resources: "Institutional planning reflects realistic assessment of financial resource availability, development of financial resources, partnerships, and expenditures requirements."

III.D.2.c Financial Resources: "The institution has sufficient cash flow and reserves to maintain stability, strategies for appropriate risk management, and realistic plans to meet financial emergencies and unforeseen occurrences."

Additional Information in Understanding this Notice

An accreditation team of professional educators has evaluated **College of the Redwoods**, written a report summarizing its findings, and provided recommendations to the institution to meet Eligibility Requirements and Standards. This report and the action letter from the Commission, which specifies the next steps the institution must take, provide a detailed description of the reasons for Probation. All institutions are required to make the evaluation team reports and the action letters available to the public. This is usually accomplished by placing these documents on the college website, and the public is directed to seek these documents from the institution directly. Colleges are invited to prepare a response to this notice, and this information may be posted on the college website.

Current Status and Expected Accreditation Activities

College of the Redwoods will be monitored by the Commission and required to submit a **Follow-Up Report** to the Commission by **October 15 2013**. The Commission will conduct a team visit to assess the institution's compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies. The Commission will review both reports at its meeting in January 2014. If the Commission determines that **College of the Redwoods** has demonstrated sufficient compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies, the Commission may act to remove Probation. If the Commission determines that sufficient progress to demonstrate compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies has not been made, the Commission may take further action as permitted under the Commission's "Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions." The Commission policies can be found in the *Accreditation Reference Handbook* that is located on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Publications and Policies / All Commission Publications and Policies (or [click here](#)).

Helpful Resources for Understanding this Notice

The following resources provide additional information that may be helpful in understanding the Commission's actions and the accreditation status of **College of the Redwoods**:

- A "Statement of Accreditation Status" for **College of the Redwoods** is available upon request from the Commission office.
- The Commission's Accreditation Standards can be found on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Eligibility Requirements & Standards (or [click here](#)).
- "Informing the Public About Accreditation," published by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, provides additional information on the nature and value of accreditation. It is available at (http://www.chea.org/public_info/index.asp).
- The "Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions" lists the actions the Commission may apply to institutions under review. It is available in the *Accreditation Reference Handbook* that is located on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Publications and Policies / All Commission Publications and Policies (or [click here](#)).
- The "Policy on Public Disclosure and Confidentiality in the Accreditation Process" describes the Commission's policy and procedures for making information available to the public. It is available in the *Accreditation Reference Handbook* that is located on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Publications and Policies / All Commission Publications and Policies (or [click here](#)).