

June 29, 2020

Dr. Donald Wallace, Superintendent/President
Palo Verde College
One College Drive
Blythe, CA 92225

Dear Dr. Wallace:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting June 10-12, 2020, reviewed the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) and evidentiary materials submitted by Palo Verde College. The Commission also considered the Peer Review Team Report (Team Report) prepared by the peer review team that conducted its onsite visit to the College March 2-5, 2020. The Commission considered the written response to the Team Report that you submitted prior to the Commission meeting, your spoken testimony, and that of Dr. Scott Bauer, Accreditation Liaison Officer. The Commission found these additional perspectives to be helpful.

The purpose of this review was to determine whether the College continues to meet ACCJC's Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and Accreditation Standards (hereinafter, the Standards). Upon consideration of the written and oral information noted above, the Commission acted to **Reaffirm Accreditation for 18 months and require a Follow-Up Report, due no later than October 1, 2021, followed by a visit from a peer review team.**

Commendations

The Commission recognizes the exemplary performance of Palo Verde College in the following areas. Commendations signify practices for which the Commission believes the institution has exceeded standards.

Standard I.A.3 (Commendation 1): The Commission commends the institution for fulfilling its mission by innovatively aligning its education programs and support services to meet the needs of its distinctive student population.

Compliance Requirements

The Commission also determined that the College must demonstrate compliance with the following Standards, as identified in the requirements below. This demonstration must be addressed in the required Follow-Up Report.

ACCJC Policy on Student and Public Complaints Against Institutions

(Requirement 1): In order to meet the Commission's policy, the Commission requires

the institution widely communicate its formal student grievance process so that all students are aware of their rights and responsibilities.

ACCJC Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education

(Requirement 2): In order to meet the Commission’s policy, the Commission requires the institution establish a policy defining regular and substantive instructor-initiated contact with students for Distance Education courses. The college must provide professional development opportunities for faculty teaching online to ensure Distance Education courses include regular and substantive instructor-student interaction.

Standard I.B.2, I.B.4, II.A.3 (Requirement 3): In order to meet the Standards, the Commission requires the institution regularly assess student learning outcomes for course, program and institutional levels and use assessment data to support student learning and achievement.

Standard I.B.3 (Requirement 4): In order to meet the Standard, the Commission requires the institution consistently use institution-set standard data to address student achievement gaps.

Standard I.B.5, II.A.2, II.C.1 (Requirement 5): In order to meet the Standard, the Commission requires the institution assess accomplishment of its mission through program review by consistently and systematically evaluating programs and services.

In accordance with federal regulations, compliance requirements must be addressed and the institution must demonstrate that it aligns with Standards within two years¹.

Recommendations for Improving Institutional Effectiveness

None.

Next Steps

The Team Report provides details of the peer review team’s findings. The guidance and recommendations contained in the Report represent the best advice of the peer review team at the time of the visit but may not describe all that is necessary for the college to improve or to come into compliance. A final copy of the Team Report is attached.

The Commission requires that you disseminate the ISER, the Team Report, and this letter to those who were signatories of the ISER and that you make these documents available to all campus constituencies and the public by placing copies on the College website. Please note that in response to public interest in accreditation, the Commission requires institutions to post current accreditation information on a Web page no more than one click from the institution’s home page. In keeping with ACCJC policy, the Commission action will also be posted on the ACCJC website within 30 days of the date of the Commission’s action.

¹ For more information, refer to the Commission policy on “The Two-Year Rule and Extension for Good Cause” on the ACCJC website at <https://accjc.org/eligibility-requirements-standards-policies/>.

On behalf of the Commission, we wish to express appreciation for the diligent work and thoughtful reflection that Palo Verde College undertook to prepare for this evaluation. These efforts confirm that peer review can well serve the multiple constituencies of higher education by both ensuring and encouraging institutional quality and effectiveness.

If you have any questions about this letter or the Commission's action, please feel free to contact Dr. Stephanie Droker or the vice president assigned as liaison to your institution.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Droker, Ed.D.
ACCJC President



Ian Walton, Ph.D.
ACCJC Chair

cc: Dr. Scott Bauer, Accreditation Liaison Officer

Enclosure