

June 23, 2017

Ms. Brenda Thames  
President  
West Hills College Coalinga  
300 Cherry Lane  
Coalinga, CA 93210

Dear President Thames:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting June 7-9, 2017, reviewed the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) and evidentiary documents submitted by West Hills College Coalinga, and the External Evaluation Team Report (Team Report) prepared by the evaluation team that visited March 6-9, 2017. College leadership, including the president of the governing board and the College president, certified the College's report, which was submitted in application for reaffirmation of accreditation. The purpose of the Commission's review was to determine whether the College continues to meet Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies (hereafter called Standards).

After considering the material noted above, the Commission acted to **delay reaffirmation of accreditation, issue a Warning, and require a Follow-Up Report** on the issues identified in the College team's findings of non-compliance. West Hills College Coalinga is required to submit its Follow-Up report by **October 1, 2018**.<sup>1</sup> The report should demonstrate that the College has resolved all deficiencies and meets Standards. The Report will be followed with a visit by Commission representatives.

The Commission finds the College out of compliance with Standards I.B.3 and II.A.1 (Recommendation 4); I.B.1, II.A.1, II.A.2, II.A.3, II.A.6, II.A.11, and II.A.16 (Recommendation 9), II.A.3 (Recommendation 10); III.A.5 (Recommendation 12); IV.A.7 (Recommendation 14); and IV.C.7 (District Recommendation 2).

**College Recommendation 4 (Compliance)** In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the College publish institution-set standards for student achievement, appropriate to its mission, assesses how well it is achieving them in pursuit of continuous improvement, and has a sustained and collegial dialogue about this information. (I.B.3, II.A.1)

**College Recommendation 9 (Compliance)** In order to meet Standards, the team recommends that the College maintain an on-going, sustainable process of assessing student learning outcomes at the course, program, certificate, and degree levels; promote widespread dialogue on

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<sup>1</sup> 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 found on the ACCJC website at: <http://accjc.org/college-reports-to-accjc/>.

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the results of the assessments; and use assessment results to improve programs and institutional processes including resource allocations. (II.A.3, II.A.11) Additionally, the team recommends that the College:

- include student learning as one component in assessing institutional effectiveness; (I.B.1)
- fully and meaningfully assess all courses, certificate and degree programs using student learning outcomes assessment to improve student learning and ensure that faculty and staff fully engage in the student learning outcomes assessment process; (II.A.1, II.A.2, II.A.3, II.A.11, II.A.16)
- develop a streamlined process and accountability measures for student learning outcomes assessment. (II.A.1, II.A.3, II.A.6, II.A.11)

**College Recommendation 10 (Compliance)** In order to meet Standards, the team recommends that the College ensure that all course syllabi include the approved student learning outcomes and that the officially approved course outlines contain student learning outcomes. (II.A.3)

**College Recommendation 12 (Compliance)** In order to meet Standards, the team recommends that all personnel are systematically evaluated at stated intervals in accordance with the collective bargaining agreements and board policies. (III.A.5)

**College Recommendation 14 (Compliance)** In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends that the College, as it notes in its QFE, evaluate the governance and decision making procedures and processes, including the *Participatory Governance and Integrated Planning Manual 2014*, to assure their effectiveness. (IV.A.7)

**District Recommendation 2 (Compliance)** In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the Board establish a long-term plan for the systematic review and revision of all policies and establish a formal process for documenting the review of policies in which no revisions are made. (IV.C.7)

#### Improving Institutional Effectiveness

The Team Report noted Recommendations 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, and 8 and District Recommendation 1 for improving institutional effectiveness (improvement recommendations). The Commission acted to change Recommendations 3 and 11 to recommendations to increase institutional effectiveness. These recommendations do not identify current areas of deficiency in institutional practice but highlight areas of practice for which College attention may be needed. Consistent with its policy to foster continuous improvement through the peer-review process, the Commission expects institutions to consider the advice for improvement offered.

In the Midterm Report, the College will include any actions taken in response to the evaluation team's improvement recommendations.

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Next Steps

The Team Report provides details of the team's findings with regard to the College's work to meet the standards. The guidance and recommendations contained in the Team Report represent the best advice of the evaluation team at the time of the visit but may not describe all that is necessary for the College to come into compliance (or to improve).

All colleges are required to file a Midterm Report in the fourth year after each comprehensive evaluation. West Hills College Coalinga will submit the Midterm Report by **March 15, 2021**. The Midterm Report describes resolution of any team recommendations made for improvement, includes a summary of progress on College-identified plans for improvement as expressed in the ISER, and forecasts where the College will be at the time of the next comprehensive evaluation.

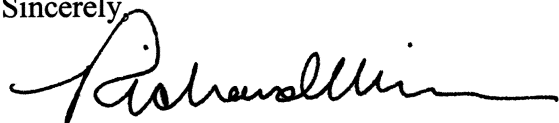
A **final copy** of the Team Report is attached. Commission changes to the Report are noted on a separate page for inclusion with the Team Report. The College may now duplicate and post copies of the enclosed Team Report with this added page.

The Commission requires that the College give the ISER, the Team Report, and this letter appropriate dissemination to those who were signatories of the ISER and to make these documents available to all campus constituencies and the public by posting them on the College website. Please note that in response to public interest in accreditation, the Commission requires institutions to post accreditation information on a page no more than one click from the institution's home page.

On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express appreciation for the collaborative work that West Hills College Coalinga undertook to prepare for institutional self-evaluation and to support the work of the external evaluation team. Thank you for sharing the values and the work of accreditation to ensure educational quality and to support student success. Accreditation and peer review are most effective when the College and the ACCJC work together to focus on student outcomes and continuous quality improvement in higher education.

If you should have any questions concerning this letter or the Commission action, please contact me or one of the ACCJC Vice Presidents. We would be glad to help you.

Sincerely,



Richard Winn, Ed.D.  
Interim President

RW/tl

Cc: Dr. Frank Gornick, Chancellor, West Hills Community College District

Attachment