



**ACCREDITING COMMISSION for COMMUNITY and JUNIOR COLLEGES**  
*Western Association of Schools and Colleges*

Richard Winn, Interim President  
Raúl Rodríguez, Chair

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February 3, 2017

Dr. Kevin Walthers  
Superintendent/President  
Allan Hancock College  
800 South College Drive  
Santa Maria, CA 93454

Dear President Walthers:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting January 11-13, 2017, reviewed evidentiary materials and the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report (ISER) submitted by Allan Hancock College, the presentation made by the College president at the Commission meeting, and the External Evaluation Team Report (Team Report) prepared by the evaluation team that visited September 26-29, 2016. 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 **reaffirm accreditation for 18 months and to require a Follow-Up Report** on the issues identified in the team's findings of noncompliance at the College.<sup>1</sup> Reaffirmation for 18 months indicates that the Commission has determined that the institution is in substantial compliance with Standards.

The Commission recognizes the College has accomplished much to resolve deficiencies since the team visit. The College may submit the Follow-Up Report sooner than 18 months at its discretion.

The Commission finds Allan Hancock College out of compliance with the following Standards: II.A.2, II.A.3, and II.A.16 (Recommendation 2); II.A.2, II.A.7, II.A.16, and the Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education (Recommendation 3); and III.A.5 (Recommendation 6).

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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: [www.accjc.org/college-reports-accjc](http://www.accjc.org/college-reports-accjc).

Dr. Kevin Walthers  
Allan Hancock College  
February 3, 2017

#### Recommendation 2

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends the College review, modify, and implement the curriculum approval and tracking process of course outlines, including distance education, to ensure accuracy, currency, and systematic evaluation. (Standards II.A.2, II.A.3, and II.A.16)

#### Recommendation 3

In order to meet the Standards and policy on DE and CE, the team recommends the College ensure courses taught through distance education include regular and substantive contact initiated by the instructor. (Standards II.A.2, II.A.7, and II.A.16 and the policy on DE and CE).

#### Recommendation 6

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends the College continue the progress made on updating evaluations and ensure that performance evaluations are regularly and consistently completed for all employees. (Standard III.A.5)

#### Need to Resolve Deficiencies

Standards represent practices that lead to academic quality and institutional effectiveness and sustainability. Deficiencies in institutional policies, practices, procedures, and outcomes which lead to non-compliance with any Standard will impact institutional quality and, ultimately, the educational environment and experience of students. The evaluation team has provided recommendations that give guidance for how the institution may come into compliance with Standards.

#### Improving Institutional Effectiveness

The Team Report noted Recommendations 1, 4, and 5 for improving institutional effectiveness (improvement recommendations). The Commission has changed Recommendation 7 to a recommendation to improve 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.

#### Two-Year Rule

Under U.S. Department of Education enforcement regulations, the Commission is required to take immediate action to terminate the accreditation of an institution which is out of compliance with any Standards, or, alternatively, may provide an 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 non-compliance. With this letter, Alan Hancock 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.

Dr. Kevin Walthers  
Allan Hancock College  
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Next Steps

A **final copy** of the Team Report is attached. Commission changes to the Team 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 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 Allan Hancock College 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 don't hesitate to contact me or one of the ACCJC Vice Presidents. We would be glad to help you.

Sincerely,



Richard Winn, Ed.D.  
Interim President

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Attachment