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**ACCREDITING
COMMISSION
for COMMUNITY and
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association
of Schools and Colleges*

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MEMO TO: Dr. Victor Jaime, Superintendent/President
Imperial Valley College
P. O. Box 158
Imperial, CA 92251

2014 MAY 14 PM 2 15

FROM: Barbara A. Beno, President *BARBARA A. BENO* PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

DATE: May 6, 2014

SUBJECT: Enclosed Report of the External Evaluation Team

Previously, the chairperson of the External Evaluation Team (Evaluation Team) that recently visited Imperial Valley College sent you a draft External Evaluation Report (Report) affording you the opportunity to correct errors of fact. We assume you have responded to the Team Chair. The Commission now has received the final version of the Report, a copy of which is enclosed for you. Please examine the enclosed Report.

- If you believe that the Report contains inaccuracies, you are invited to call them to the attention of the Commission. To do so, you should submit a letter stating recommended corrections to the ACCJC President. The letter should arrive at the Commission office by noon **Tuesday, May 20, 2014**, in order to be included in Commission materials. The letter may also be sent electronically as a PDF attachment.
- If the institution also wishes to submit additional material on issues of substance and to any Accreditation Standard deficiencies noted in the report to the Commission, it should exercise care, keeping in mind the Commission cannot read and absorb large amounts of material on short notice. Material should arrive at the ACCJC office no later than noon **Tuesday, May 20, 2014**.
- ACCJC policy provides that, if desired, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) may request an appearance before the Commission to discuss the Report. The Commission requires that the institution notify the Commission office by noon **Tuesday, May 20, 2014**, or earlier, of its intent to attend the meeting. This enables the Commission to invite the Team Chair to attend. Any written materials must be handled as provided in the paragraph above. Materials will not be accepted after that date.

The next meeting of the Accrediting Commission will be held on **June 4-6, 2014**, at the Citizen Hotel, Sacramento, California. The enclosure, "Procedures for an Institutional Chief Executive Officer's Appearance Before the Commission," addresses the protocol of such appearances.

Please note that the Commission will not consider the institution as being indifferent if its CEO does not choose to appear before the Commission. If the institution does request to be heard at the Commission meeting, the chairperson of the Evaluation Team will also be asked to be present to explain the reasons for statements in the Report. Both parties will be allowed brief testimony before the Commission deliberates in private.

The enclosed Report should be considered confidential and not given general distribution until it has been acted upon by the Commission and you have been notified by letter of the action taken.

BAB/tl

Enclosure

cc: Ms. Kathy Berry, Accreditation Liaison Officer (w/o enclosure)



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Procedures for an Institutional Chief Executive Officer's
Appearance Before the Commission

The Commission considers institutional accreditation actions in January and June of each calendar year. ACCJC policy provides that when the Commission is deliberating or acting upon matters that concern an institution, it will invite the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the institution to meet with the Commission in Executive Session.¹ The appearance is for the purpose of discussing issues of substance and any Accreditation Standards deficiencies noted in the report. There is no requirement that the CEO attend the Commission meeting. If the Commission is considering institutional action as a result of an evaluation team visit, and if the CEO elects to attend the meeting, the Commission will also invite the Chair of the Evaluation Team (Team Chair) or designee to attend.

An institution must send written notification to the ACCJC office at least 15 working days before the scheduled Commission meeting if the CEO wishes to attend. The institution should bear in mind the evaluation of the institution is based upon the conditions at the institution at the time of the team visit.

At the meeting, the institutional CEO will be invited to make a brief presentation, followed by questions from the Commission. The CEO is expected to be the presenter, and should consult with Commission staff if there are plans to invite other representatives to join the CEO. On the day of the Commission meeting, ACCJC staff will escort the CEO (and additional representatives) to and from the designated waiting area to the meeting at the appropriate time. An institution's presentation should not exceed five (5) minutes. The Commission reserves the right to establish a different time limit on such presentations.

The Team Chair or designee will also attend the presentation, normally by conference call. The Commissioners may ask questions of the Team Chair after college representatives have exited. The Team Chair will then be excused, and the Commission will continue its deliberations in closed session.

The CEO will be notified in writing of the subsequent action taken by the Commission.

¹ Policies that are relevant to this process are the *Policy on Access to Commission Meetings*, *Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions*, *Policy on Commission Good Practice in Relations with Members Institutions*, and *Policy on the Rights and Responsibilities of ACCJC and Member Institutions*.

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MAY 05 2014

Follow-Up Report

Imperial Valley College District

380 East Aten Road

Imperial, CA 92251

*Accrediting Commission for
Community and Junior Colleges*

This Report represents the findings of the External Evaluation Team that visited

Imperial Valley College on April 14, 2014

Submitted to:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges

Submitted by:

Randall C. Lawrence
Team Chair

Superintendent/President, Retired

College of the Siskiyous

Irene Graff

Director, Institutional Research

El Camino College

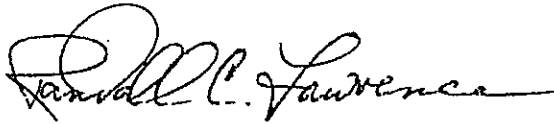
Scott Thomason

Vice-President, Administration & Technology

College of the Siskiyous

DATE: 4/30/14

FROM: Randall C. Lawrence, Team Chair



SUBJECT: Report of follow-up visit team to Imperial Valley College, April 14, 2014

Introduction:

An External Evaluation team visit was conducted at Imperial Valley College in March, 2013. At its meeting of June 5-7, 2013, the Commission acted to require Imperial Valley College to submit a Follow-Up Report followed by a visit. The visiting team, Irene Graff, Scott Thomason, and Randall Lawrence, conducted the site visit at Imperial Valley College on April 14, 2014. The purpose of the team visit was to verify, through examination of evidence, that the Follow-Up Report prepared by the College was accurate, to determine that the College demonstrates sustained, continuous, and positive improvements, and that the institution has addressed the Recommendations from 2013, resolved the deficiencies noted in those recommendations, and meets the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards and Commission policies.

The team found that the College had prepared well for the visit by arranging for meetings with individuals and groups agreed upon earlier with the team chair and by assembling appropriate documents in the meeting room used by the team. Indeed, the College bent over backwards to accommodate late requests from the team. Over the course of the day the team met with the President of the College, the Accreditation Liaison Officer, Vice-Presidents, the Academic Senate President, the Faculty Association President and members of the faculty and staff.

The Follow-Up Report and Visit were expected to document resolution of the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: In order to fully meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College consistently link the institutional goals and objectives detailed in the Educational Master Plan with operational plan goals and resource allocations, including technology resources, in order to assess progress toward meeting institutional goals. In addition, the College should establish a planning calendar that identifies all planning activities, committees, and the roles of various College plans, and includes institutional effectiveness assessment and improvement cycles. (I.B .3, II.C.1b, IV.A.5)

Recommendation 7: In order to meet the Standard the team recommends that faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving student learning outcomes, have as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those outcomes. (III.A.1.c)

Recommendation 8: In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College develop a financial strategy that will result in balanced budgets that have ongoing revenues to meet or exceed its ongoing expenditures without the use of reserves; maintain the minimum prudent reserve level; and address funding for its long-term financial commitments and its retiree health benefit costs. (III.D.1.a, III.D.3.a, and III.D.4, IV.B.1.c, IV.B.2.d)

College Responses to the 2013 External Evaluation Team Recommendation

Recommendation 1: In order to fully meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College consistently link the institutional goals and objectives detailed in the Educational Master Plan with operational plan goals and resource allocations, including technology resources, in order to assess progress toward meeting institutional goals. In addition, the College should establish a planning calendar that identifies all planning activities, committees, and the roles of various College plans, and includes institutional effectiveness assessment and improvement cycles. (I.B .3, II.C.1b, IV.A.5)

Findings & Evidence:

Integration of Institutional Goals in Planning

The College has made notable efforts to thoroughly address the recommendation to consistently link its institutional goals to operational plan goals and resource allocations. The College modified planning and program review templates to standardize processes and to make explicit the linkages from institutional goals to program goals and college budgeting. The new templates promote SMART goals (i.e., specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-limited) which contribute to their usability and measurability. The revised template also facilitates a smooth transition to the College's new planning tool (SPOL). Finally, the College developed a Program Review Handbook to reinforce the standardized process and to assist members of the college community in crafting quality program reviews.

The new program review template also asks planners to evaluate requests in light of their benefits to student success. Information from this section of the template is intended to support institutional improvements to benefit student success, the College's institutional goal 2, and one of the three institutional priorities set by the college beginning in 2014-15 (student success, financial stability, accreditation compliance).

Another enhancement made by the College to promote the integration of program review, planning and resource allocation is the adoption of a new online planning system called Strategic Planning On Line, or SPOL. This system has four integrated modules: Planning (including program review); Budgeting (budget planning); Assessment (learning outcomes); and Accreditation. If full implementation of SPOL is realized, program review, learning outcomes, planning and budgeting will be integrated to support forward movement on College goals and overall institutional effectiveness.

The College is currently piloting SPOL modules, with plans to provide training and to migrate all processes into the system by fall 2014. This would ensure that information and processes are merged in time for the 2015-16 fiscal year.

The College also revitalized its decision-making structure by reviewing the purpose statement and membership of collegial consultation and planning committees in light of the college mission, institutional goals and integrated planning process. Revised purpose statements now appear on resource planning committee agendas and minutes. An examination of six months of online meeting

minutes reveal, however, that attendance and participation at collegial consultation committee meetings could be broader and more robust.

Planning Calendar

Over the past year, the College developed a detailed, clear, and comprehensive planning calendar that describes all planning cycles in one document. The calendar's color coding identifies key components of the planning process throughout the year. The calendar is being utilized for the 2014-15 fiscal year in hybrid form, with full implementation planned for the 2015-16 fiscal year.

The new planning calendar indicates that institutional goals and objectives are evaluated near the end of the academic year to determine progress on each. However, this evaluation process is not described and does not seem to include an evaluation of outcomes from program linkages and resource allocations. A description of the process and scope of the evaluation would help determine if the institutional goals are being assessed with respect to improvements in institutional effectiveness and student success.

Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness

The new planning calendar states that progress on institutional goals will be assessed on a regular cycle. Work has begun in this area. The *Executive Summary of Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness* report, dated March 19, 2014, provides a summary of targeted accomplishments associated with each institutional goal and objective of the 2012-15 Educational Master Plan. However, a plan to track improvements in student achievement that may indicate a more direct measure of progress on institutional goals has not yet been developed.

According to the planning calendar, an assessment of institutional effectiveness is planned every two years, which does not seem to fit with either annual reviews or the 3-year educational master planning process.

The SPOL system appears to foster robust assessment of goals, objectives and resource allocations. For example, components of assessment include Intended Results (objectives), Actual Results (assessment), and Use of Results, to close the loop on the assessment cycle. There is great potential to utilize SPOL to facilitate the identification, recording, and use of assessments for institutional improvement.

Conclusion:

The College has made significant progress with this Recommendation and is largely compliant with the Standards on which it is based. Assessment of the current Institutional Goals and Objectives should occur as a part of the May EMPC meeting. In order to be fully compliant, the College needs to complete a cycle of assessment and show how the results were used in the next year's planning and allocation of resources. The continued setup and use of the SPOL instrument will help tremendously in accomplishing this goal.

Recommendation 7: In order to meet the Standard the team recommends that faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving student learning outcomes, have as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those outcomes. (III.A.1.c)

Findings & Evidence:

The team found evidence of a new evaluation template that includes a section on involvement with outcomes and assessment, as well as evidence that the first completed cycle of faculty that had been evaluated accordingly. It also found language in the Collective Bargaining Agreement that requires this process to continue into the future. The evaluation has been embraced by both employees and administration and was objective in nature to insure a lack of bias and the equal treatment of those evaluated.

Conclusion:

The College has resolved this Recommendation and meets the Standard.

Recommendation 8: In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College develop a financial strategy that will result in balanced budgets that have ongoing revenues to meet or exceed its ongoing expenditures without the use of reserves; maintain the minimum prudent reserve level; and address funding for its long-term financial commitments and its retiree health benefit costs. (III.D.1.a, III.D.3.a, and III.D.4, IV.B.1.c, IV.B.2.d)

Findings & Evidence

The College is clearly taking steps towards compliance with the affected Standards. It has implemented some of the 72 recommendations from the 2012 FCMAT Report. Some of the recommendations have been partially completed and others are being reviewed and may eventually be fully implanted. The current strategy is to complete the implementation of FCMAT Report recommendations that will allow the college to meet the Accreditation Standards over the next three to five years.

The College has negotiated adjustments for full-time overload and part-time hourly pay in the 2013-2015 faculty contracts to better align with comparative colleges identified by FCMAT.

The percentage that the College is above the Full-Time Faculty Obligation Number (FON) required by the state, has decreased from having exceeded the FON by more than 50%.

The College is aware of the unsustainability of the classified salary schedule based on current and future financial limitations. The College is in negotiations at this time and is in the "fact finding" process.

Negotiations for the 2013-2015 CTA (faculty) Contract have resulted in reductions in extended contract days for faculty who work as coordinators and counselors from 199 days to 194 days and resulted in corresponding budget savings.

A process is being developed to allocate a portion of the funds realized from budget savings at the end of each year towards the College's OPEB funding.

The College is in the process of implementing its newly acquired online planning system, SPOL, which is expected to greatly enhance planning, budget development, and budget monitoring.

The College has adopted a revised Budget Principles, Budget Guidelines, and Budget Planning Calendar. The Budget and Planning Calendar is to be fully initiated during the 2014-2015 Academic Year.

The College has also developed a plan to achieve a 16.6% reserve over the next 10 years.

The College currently is expecting to fully "restore" its FTES and also increase its FTES for FY 2013-2014 and to receive the approximately 1% growth funds available. IVC currently expects that this level of FTES will allow the college to end FY 2013-2014 with 5.68% Undesignated Reserve Balance. The College realizes that no longer being in "restoration" means that any increase in state funding tied to FTES will need to come from any growth funds that are included in future state budgets. In January 2014 the initial Budget Proposal for FY 2014-2015, proposed by Governor Brown, included 3% Enrollment Growth for the California Community Colleges. The College has utilized this number in its "best case projections" for cash flow for each of the next three years. In the College's multiple year cash projections this assumption would result in reserves that exceed the minimum prudent reserve of 5% for each of the next three years - through FY 2016-2017. However in the "worst case projections" (no Growth monies for the next three years) the reserves would gradually fall below 1%.

Conclusion

The College has made a tremendous effort addressing the FCMAT recommendations and to insuring that budget decisions are driven by planning and institutional effectiveness. However, the key to this recommendation is a "financial strategy" that results in "balanced budgets," "minimum prudent reserves" and "long-term financial commitments" to name a few.

At this point the financial strategy fails on two levels to resolve the recommendation and fully meet the Standards. First, it is based on revenue projections of 3% growth from the State for the next three years to achieve its goal. Further, should those projections not occur the College's own analysis shows it will have next to no reserves in three years. Second, many parts of the strategy are based on a 3-5 year timeline which will not put the college in compliance with the "2-year rule," which demands the strategy be completely implemented (the Recommendation met) by next March.

While the College is obviously working hard to resolve the recommendation and meet the Standards, it is clear to the team that it has only partially resolved the Recommendation and has little time to complete its task. The team recommends that the College accelerate its efforts and, if necessary, take drastic steps to come into full compliance in the next year.