





**ACCREDITING
COMMISSION
for COMMUNITY and
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

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June 28, 2005

Dr. Anthony Tricoli
President
West Hills College Coalinga
300 Cherry Lane
Coalinga, CA 93210

Dear President Tricoli:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting on June 8-10, 2005, reviewed the institutional self study report and the report of the evaluation team which visited West Hills College Coalinga on Tuesday, March 22-Thursday, March 24, 2005. The Commission acted to issue a **Warning** and to ask that West Hills College Coalinga correct the deficiencies noted. The college is required to complete a Progress Report by **March 15, 2006**. That report will be followed by a visit of Commission representatives.

A warning is issued when the Commission finds that an institution has pursued a course of action which deviates from the Commission's eligibility criteria, standards of accreditation, or policy to an extent that raises a concern regarding the ability of the institution to meet accreditation standards. The accredited status of the institution continues during the warning period. However, the institution's accreditation will not be reaffirmed until the conditions which warranted the warning are removed.

I also wish to inform you that under U.S. Department of Education regulations, institutions on sanction are expected to correct deficiencies within a two-year period or the Commission must take action to terminate accreditation.

The Progress Report of March 15, 2006 should focus on demonstrating that the college meets **Eligibility Requirements 17 and 20** and respond to the recommendations and concerns listed below:

Recommendation 2. The team recommends that the college identify those academic programs that it is no longer offering due to a lack of resources, and either develop the resources needed to provide the programs or remove them from the college catalog and other college sources of information provided to potential students (Standard II.A.1.).

Recommendation 3. The team recommends that the college complete an assessment of the accessibility of its online services – especially initial application to the college and availability of the college catalog and

Dr. Anthony Tricoli
West Hills College Coalinga
June 28, 2005
Page Two

schedule of classes – in view of the varying levels of computer literacy and availability of computer resources within the service communities of the college. (Standard II.B.3.e)

Recommendation 5. The team recommends that the Board of Trustees and the chancellor, in consultation with the leadership of the college campuses, develop a transparent process for resolving some of the remaining significant issues raised by the decision to become a multi-college district; namely

- The clarification and delineation, in both policy and practice, of the roles and responsibilities of the chancellor and the college president in decision-making which directly affects college operations (Standard IV.B.3 and IV.B.3.g),
- The development and implementation of an appropriate and clearly communicated process for allocating faculty and staff positions between the college campuses (Standard III.A.2, Standard IV.B.3.c),
- The development and implementation of a clearly communicated process for regularly reviewing the appropriateness of the assignment of various functions and staff to the district office or to the college campuses (Standard IV.B.3.a and IV.B.3.g),
- The development and implementation of an appropriate and clearly communicated process for distributing fiscal resources among the college campuses and the district office (Standard IV.B.3.c),
- The development and implementation of a formal and regularly evaluated district strategic planning process that both acknowledges input from the college campuses and serves as a guide for the strategic planning at the college level (Standard I.B.3 and Standard IV.B.3.g).

Recommendation 6. The team recommends that the Board of Trustees, the chancellor, and the college president work together to address the concern, identified in the self study and validated through numerous team interviews, that a significant portion of the campus community is unclear regarding the reasoning behind decisions made by the Board and the Chancellor's Cabinet that affect programming, staffing, and resources at the college level. Participation by each of the three parties in an appropriate training program may prove beneficial (Standard IV.B.3.f).

Dr. Anthony Tricoli
West Hills College Coalinga
June 28, 2005
Page Three

The visiting team noted and the Commission is concerned that the college offers only nine of the twenty programs of study as published in the catalog. Some courses have not been offered in more than ten years. The Commission requires an accredited institution to ensure that its communications to students accurately portray the college, and requires West Hills College Coalinga to update its catalogue in order to insure its integrity, as per Recommendation 2, above (ER 20 and Standard II.A.6.c, II.B.2, 2.a).

Enclosed is a **revised, final team report**. Additional copies may now be duplicated. The Commission requires you to give the self study report, the team report and this letter dissemination to your college staff and to those who were signatories of your college self study. This group should include the Chancellor, campus leadership, and the Board of Trustees. The Commission also requires that the team report and the self study report be made available to the public. Placing copies in the college library can accomplish this. Should you want the report electronically to place on your web site or for some other purpose, please contact Commission staff.

The recommendations contained in the evaluation team report represent the observations of the evaluation team at the time of the visit. The Commission reminds you that while an institution may concur or disagree with any part of the team report, the college is expected to use the report to improve the educational programs and services of the institution.

All colleges are required to file a Midterm Report in the third year after each comprehensive evaluation. West Hills College Coalinga should submit the Midterm Report by **March 15, 2008**. Midterm Reports indicate progress toward meeting the evaluation team's recommendations and forecast where the college expects to be by the time of the next comprehensive evaluation. The college also includes a summary of progress on college-identified concerns as expressed in the self study.

The college conducted a comprehensive self study as part of its evaluation. The Commission suggests that the plans for improvement of the institution included in that document be taken into account in the continuing development of West Hills Community College. The next comprehensive evaluation of the college will occur during **Spring 2011**.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to remind you that federal legislation affecting accrediting agencies requires that accredited colleges conduct systematic assessment of educational outcomes (see especially Standards One and Two). A further requirement is that accrediting agencies pay close attention to student loan default rates.

Dr. Anthony Tricoli
West Hills Community College
June 28, 2005
Page Four

On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express continuing interest in the institution's educational programs and services. Professional self-regulation is the most effective means of assuring integrity, effectiveness and quality.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Beno
Executive Director

BAB/tl

Enclosure: Revised Final Team Report

cc: Dr. Frank Gornick, Chancellor, West Hills CCD
Ms. Faye Mendenhall, Accreditation Liaison Officer
Board President, West Hills CCD
Dr. James Kossler, Team Chair
Evaluation Team Members
Ms. Linda Henderson, U.S. DOE