



**ACCREDITING
COMMISSION
for COMMUNITY and
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association
of Schools and Colleges*

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February 6, 2015

Dr. Thomas Fallo
Superintendent/President
El Camino College
16007 Crenshaw Boulevard
Torrance CA 90506

Dear President Fallo:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting on January 7-9, 2015, reviewed the Institutional Self Evaluation Report and the Report of the External Evaluation Team that visited El Camino College October 6-9 2014, and the letter of corrections of errors of facts submitted by the College on December 5, 2014.

College Accreditation Reaffirmed:

The Commission took action to **reaffirm accreditation** and require the College to submit a Follow-Up Report in October 2015. The Report will be followed by a visit of Commission representatives.

Reaffirmation is granted when the institution substantially meets or exceeds the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. Reaffirmation with a Follow-Up Report is required when there are deficiencies leading to noncompliance which do not create an immediate risk to the institution's quality and effectiveness. However, if they not addressed and fully resolved in a short time, they may further threaten quality and effectiveness, and lead to increased noncompliance.

El Camino College should submit the **Follow-Up Report by October 15, 2015.**¹ The Report should demonstrate that the College has addressed the recommendations noted below, resolved the deficiencies, and meets Standards.

Need to Resolve Deficiencies:

The Accreditation Standards, as an integrated whole, represent indicators of academic quality and institutional effectiveness. Deficiencies in any Standards will impact quality at an institution, and ultimately the educational environment and experiences of students. The Commission found El Camino College deficient in meeting the following Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards: ER 19, Standards I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.6, II.A.2.f, II.B.4, III.C.2, III.B.1.a, III.D.1.a, III.D.2, IV.A.1, IV.A.2.a, IV.A.3, IV.A.5, and IV.B.1.b.

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Recommendation 1: Institutional Effectiveness and Leadership and Governance

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College complete its integrated planning cycle by ensuring the planning process offers opportunities for purposeful dialogue in which stakeholders participate in the exchange of different points of view and reflections; clearly ties resource allocation to the planning goals; clarifies how priorities are decided and decisions are communicated to stakeholders, leading to genuine communication. The team recognizes that the College has done a great deal of work addressing the previous Recommendation (ER 19, I.B.3, I.B.4, I.B.6, II.A.2.f, II.B.4, III.C.2, III.B.1.a, III.D.1.a, IV.A.3).

The Commission found that El Camino College had fully addressed a prior recommendation from 2008 on matters related to institutional evaluation and planning, and that the deficiencies found in relationship to Recommendation 1, above, are in new areas of institutional practice. The Commission has changed the wording of this team recommendation to remove reference to the 2008 team recommendation.

Recommendation 2: Financial Resources

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that El Camino Compton Educational Center implement the fiscal management plan to assure financial integrity and disseminate dependable and timely information for sound financial decision making (III.D.2).

With regard to Recommendation 2, the Commission notes that the *Compton Center* is identified as the subject of the recommendation. While El Camino College asserts that the Center is implementing its plan, the Commission asks for the Follow Up report to provide information about further steps in the implementation.

Recommendation 3: Planning and Decision-Making Processes

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College implement the planning, governance and decision-making process outlined in board policies and “Making Decisions at El Camino College,” a document that explains to the College community the structures, relationships and philosophy for making inclusive, data-driven and well-communicated decisions through collegial consultation; regularly evaluate the process to ensure integrity and effectiveness; communicate the results of the evaluation; and utilize the results for improvement (I.B.4, I.B.6, IV.A.1, IV.A.2.a, IV.A.3, IV.A.5, IV.B.1.b).

Improvement of Institutional Effectiveness:

Recommendations 1-11 for Institutional Improvement have been made for El Camino College in order to improve institutional effectiveness. These recommendations can be found in the team report.

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Recommendations for improvement may be made to highlight areas for continuing or expanding excellent practices or to identify areas where additional levels of effort should be demonstrated in the future to sustain compliance. The College should plan to fully address all improvement recommendations in the Midterm Report.

The Commission determined that Recommendation 4 noted in the evaluation team report is more appropriately a recommendation to increase institutional effectiveness. Therefore, it has been renumbered as Recommendation for Institutional Improvement 10.

Recommendation for Institutional Improvement 10

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends the College implement a process for the evaluation of policies and procedures according to an identified timeline and the Board of Trustees revise the policies as necessary (II.B.2.a, II.B.2.b, II.B.2.c, II.B.2.d, IV.B.1.b, IV.B.1.e).

El Camino College conducted an educational quality and institutional effectiveness review as part of its self evaluation. The Commission suggests that the plans for improvement of the institution included in its self evaluation efforts be taken into account in the continuing improvement of the College.

The External Evaluation Report that was sent to the institution provides details of the team's findings with regard to each Eligibility Requirement and Accreditation Standard and should be read carefully and used to understand the team's findings.

The guidance and recommendations contained in the External Evaluation Report represent the best advice of the peer evaluation team at the time of the visit but may not describe all that is necessary for the College to come into compliance. The College's own self evaluation and responsive action is a vital part of a successful, voluntary, peer evaluation process. Institutions are expected to take all action necessary to continuously comply with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. The Commission wishes to remind you that while an institution may concur or disagree with any part of the Report, El Camino College is expected to use the External Evaluation Report to improve educational programs and services.

A **final** copy of the External Evaluation Report is attached. Additional copies may now be duplicated. The Commission requires that the College give the Institutional Self Evaluation Report, the External Evaluation Team Report, and this letter appropriate dissemination to College staff and to those who were signatories of the College Self Evaluation Report. This group should include the campus leadership and the Board of Trustees.

The Commission also requires that the College's Institutional Self Evaluation Report, the External Evaluation Team Report, and this Commission action letter be made available to students and the public by placing a copy on the College website.

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Please note that in response to public interest in disclosure, the Commission now requires institutions to post accreditation information on a page no more than one click from the institution's home page. If you would like an electronic copy of the External Evaluation Team Report, please contact Commission staff.

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 educational quality.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.
President

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¹Institutions 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*. It contains the background, requirements, and format for each type of report and presents sample cover pages and certification pages. It is available on the ACCJC website under College Reports to ACCJC at: (<http://www.accjc.org/college-reports-accjc>).