



**ACCREDITING
COMMISSION
for COMMUNITY and
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association
of Schools and Colleges*

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July 3, 2014

Dr. Steven Kinsella
Superintendent/President
Gavilan College
5055 Santa Teresa Blvd
Gilroy, CA 95020

Dear President Kinsella:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting June 4-6, 2014, reviewed the Follow-Up Report submitted by Gavilan College, the Report of the Evaluation Team that visited Monday, April 21-Tuesday, April 22, 2014 and the presentation by College representatives.

The Commission took action to require Gavilan College submit a **Follow-Up Report** by **March 15, 2015** demonstrating full resolution of Recommendations 1 and 2 as noted below.

Improvement of Institutional Effectiveness

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 Gavilan College deficient in meeting the following Accreditation Standards: II.A.1.b, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a,b,d, II.A.3, II.B.3.a, II.A.6, II.B.1, II.C.2.

Recommendation 1

In order to meet Standards, the team recommends that the College develop and substantially implement an effective, systematic, and comprehensive institutional strategy closely integrating student learning outcomes with all planning and decision-making efforts and resource allocations. (II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, II.A.2.b, II.A.3, II.B.4, II.C.2) Specifically that strategy should include:

- A more effective approach to assessing student learning outcomes at the course, program, and institutional levels on a regular, continuous, and sustainable basis. This process must include outcome statements that clearly define learning expectations for students, define effective criteria for evaluating performance levels of students, utilize an effective means of documenting results, and the documentation of a robust dialogue that informs improvement of practices to promote and enhance student learning.

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- An approach that recognizes the central role of its faculty for establishing quality and improving instructional courses and programs. (II.A.2.a)
- Reliance on faculty expertise to identify competency levels and measureable student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, and programs, including general and vocations education, and degrees. (II.A.2.b) Use of documented assessment results to communicate matters of quality assurance to appropriate constituencies. (II.B.4)
- Engagement in the assessment of general education student learning outcomes. (II.A.3)

The College should incorporate changes in the student learning outcomes assessment as part of the institutional student learning outcomes cycle that currently includes an integrated planning process, and be expanded so that assessment data is used as a component of program planning processes already in place. As a major part of this strategy, a continuous, broad-based evaluative and improvement cycle must be prominent. All services, including instructional student services, fiscal, technological, physical and human resources should be considered and integrated.

With regard to Recommendation 1, the Commission notes that the remaining issue is to have more participants engaged in the assessment and improvement of learning processes that already exist. More and deeper campus-wide involvement in the process would increase its effectiveness and ensure its sustainability.

Recommendation 2

In order to assure the quality of its distance education program and to fully meet Standards, the team recommends that the College conduct research and analysis to ensure that learning support services for distance education are of comparable quality to those intended for students who attend the physical campus. (II.A.1.b, II.A.2.d, II.A.6, II.B.1, II.B.3.a)

With regard to Recommendation 2, the Commission notes that Gavilan College evaluates the success of its distance education students, and the topic is widely discussed by faculty in several venues. Distance education is intentionally included in the overall college assessment process. Learning support services for distance education students have also been reviewed, and, in some cases, changes have been made. In order to increase effectiveness, the College should include the results of assessment information into the planning, decision-making, and resource allocation process.

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The Follow-Up Report submitted in March 2014 will become part of the accreditation history of the College. The Commission requires that you give the Follow-Up Report, the External Evaluation Report, and this letter appropriate dissemination to your College staff and to those who were signatories of your Follow-Up Report. This group should include the campus leadership and the Board of Trustees.

The Commission also requires that the Follow-Up Report, the External Evaluation Report, and this Commission action letter be made available to students and the public by placing a copy on the College website. *Please note that in response to public interest in disclosure, the Commission now requires institutions to post accreditation information on a page no farther than one click from the institution's home page.*

Institutions are expected to meet Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies at all times during the six-year review cycle. Gavilan College must demonstrate to the Commission at the time of the next regularly scheduled report that the recent changes implemented to increase effectiveness and meet Accreditation Standards have been sustained.

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 institutional integrity, effectiveness, educational quality, and student success.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.
President

BAB/tl

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>.