



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

Barbara A. Beno, President
Susan S. Kazama, Chair

July 8, 2016

Dr. Kathleen Burke
President
Los Angeles Pierce College
6201 Winnetka Avenue
Woodland Hills, CA 91371

Dear President Burke:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting June 8-10, 2016, reviewed the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) submitted by Los Angeles Pierce College, evidentiary materials also submitted, and the Report prepared by the evaluation team that visited March 7-10, 2016. College leadership, including the president of the governing board, the chancellor, and the College president, certified the 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).

The Commission also considered the written response to the evaluation team report that the College submitted prior to the Commission meeting. The Commission listened to testimony that President Kathleen Burke, Chancellor Francisco Rodriguez, and team chair Dr. Joel Kinnamon provided in closed session. The Commission found the written response and the testimony helpful for its deliberations.

After considering all of the written and oral material noted above, the Commission acted to **reaffirm accreditation for eighteen months, and to require a Follow-Up Report** on the issues identified in the college and district team's findings of noncompliance at the College and the District.¹ Reaffirmation for eighteen months indicates that the Commission has determined that the institution is in substantial compliance with Accreditation Standards.

The Commission finds Los Angeles Pierce College and the Los Angeles Community College District out of compliance with the following Standards: III.C.2 (College Recommendation 7); and III.C.1 and III.C.4 (College Recommendation 8); III.A.1 (District Recommendation 1); III.A.5 (District Recommendation 2); III.A.6 (District Recommendation 3); III.C.3 (District Recommendation 4); III.D.7 (District Recommendation 6); III.D.12 (District Recommendation

¹ 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.

Dr. Kathleen Burke
Los Angeles Pierce College
July 8, 2016

8); IV.C.3 (District Recommendation 10); and IV.C.7 (District Recommendation 11). Los Angeles Pierce College is required to submit its Follow-Up Report by **October 1, 2017**. The report should demonstrate that the College and District have resolved all deficiencies and meet Accreditation Standards.

Need to Resolve Deficiencies

Accreditation 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.

College Recommendation 7 (Compliance): In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College allocate appropriate fiscal resources and adopt a lifecycle plan for the ongoing refresh and replacement of technology to ensure that its technological infrastructure quality and capacity are adequate to support its mission, operations, programs, and services. (III.C.2)

College Recommendation 8 (Compliance): In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College achieve an adequate level of professional support for students and staff to address service gaps in the information technology department and to fully support technology needs directly related to local instructional and student support services, as well as institutional operations. (III.C.1, III.C.4)

District Recommendation 1 (Compliance): In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the District ensure consistent and uniform guidelines for the search and selection of adjunct faculty. (III.A.1)

With regard to District Recommendation 1, the Commission requires the College presidents to demonstrate, through evidence, that they are consistently implementing the policies and procedures regarding the search and selection of adjunct faculty.

District Recommendation 2 (Compliance): In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the District ensure all personnel are systematically evaluated at stated intervals in accordance with the bargaining agreements and Board policies. (III.A.5)

With regard to District Recommendation 2, the Commission requires the District and Colleges to resolve the issue of low completion rates of performance evaluations at some Colleges and demonstrate, through evidence, that all performance evaluations are up to date.

Dr. Kathleen Burke
Los Angeles Pierce College
July 8, 2016

District Recommendation 3 (Compliance): In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the District update the performance evaluations of academic administrators to include using the results of the assessment of learning outcomes to improve teaching and learning. (III.A.6)

With regard to District Recommendation 3, the Commission requires the District to demonstrate, through evidence, that academic administrators have, as part of their performance evaluations, responsibility for using results of assessment of learning outcomes to improve teaching and learning.

District Recommendation 4 (Compliance): In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the District and colleges develop a comprehensive business continuity/disaster recovery plan to ensure reliable access, safety, and security. (III.C.3)

With regard to District Recommendation 4, the Commission found that there are varying levels of security for locally supported systems of disaster recovery and business continuity and requires that the District and all colleges develop and implement disaster recovery and business continuity plans that will provide reliable, safe, and secure technology resources at each location.

District Recommendation 6 (Compliance): In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the District comprehensively responds to the recurring audit findings concerning: 1) the internal control weakness in information technology controls over the areas of security and change management; and 2) the state compliance exceptions related to “To Be Arranged” (TBA) hours attendance documentation and course classifications. (III.D.7)

District Recommendation 8 (Compliance): In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the District develop a process to capture the full impact of the District’s liability for load banking and to record the liability in the District’s financial statements. (III.D.12)

District Recommendation 10 (Compliance): In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the Board adopt policies that clearly define the process for the selection and evaluation of the chancellor. (IV.C.3)

District Recommendation 11 (Compliance): In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the Board establish a formal process for approving the review of policies in which no revisions are made and to regularly assess the effectiveness of all policies in fulfilling the District mission. (IV.C.7)

Dr. Kathleen Burke
Los Angeles Pierce College
July 8, 2016

Improving Institutional Effectiveness

The team report noted College Recommendations 1-6, 9 and District Recommendations 5, 7, 9 and 12 for improving institutional effectiveness (improvement recommendations). These recommendations do not identify current areas of deficiency in institutional practice, but highlight areas of practice for which College attention is needed. Consistent with its policy to foster continuous improvement through the peer accreditation process, the Commission expects that institutions will consider the advice for improvement offered during the peer evaluation process and report on actions taken in response to the team's recommendations, if any. Failure of an institution to act on these recommendations will not itself constitute a deficiency in meeting standards or requirements of the Commission. However, in the Commission's experience, failure to take note of areas of practice pointed out in improvement recommendations may lead to future conditions which limit the college's ability to meet standards. As such, we highly recommend the team's improvement recommendations for your attention.

Additional Information

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, Los Angeles Pierce 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.

The External Evaluation Report provides details of the team's findings with regard to the College's work to meet the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. I advise you to read the Report carefully to understand the team's findings and recommendations.

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 (or to improve). While an institution may concur or disagree with any part of the Report, Los Angeles Pierce College is expected to use the Report to improve educational programs and services. In addition, the College has the responsibility to accept the Commission's action and to uphold the integrity of the accreditation process by accurately portraying it and helping institutional constituencies to understand the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies pertinent to this Commission action.

A **final** copy of the External Evaluation Team Report is attached. Commission changes to the 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.

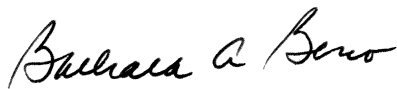
Dr. Kathleen Burke
Los Angeles Pierce College
July 8, 2016

The Commission requires that you give the ISER, the External Evaluation 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 placing copies 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 Los Angeles Pierce College and the Los Angeles Community College District undertook to prepare for institutional self-evaluation, and to support the work of the external evaluation team. The Commission encourages the College's continued work to ensure educational quality and to support student success. Accreditation and peer review are most effective when institutions and the ACCJC work together to focus on student outcomes and continuous quality improvement in higher education. Thank you for sharing the values and the work of accreditation.

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,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.
President

BAB/tl

cc: Dr. Francisco Rodriguez, Chancellor, Los Angeles Community College District

Attachment