



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

Barbara A. Beno, President
Steven M. Kinsella, Chair

February 5, 2016

Dr. Geraldine Perri
Superintendent/President
Citrus College
1000 West Foothill Boulevard
Glendora, CA 91741

Dear President Perri:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting on January 6-8, 2016, reviewed the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) and evidentiary materials submitted by Citrus College and the Report prepared by the External Evaluation Team that visited on September 28 to October 1, 2015. College leadership, including the governing board and the college president, certified the ISER, which was submitted in application for reaffirmation of accreditation. The purpose of the Commission's review is to determine whether the college continues to meet Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards and Commission policies (hereafter called standards).

After considering all of the written materials noted above, the Commission acted to **reaffirm accreditation for eighteen months** and to require a Follow-Up Report.¹ Reaffirmation of accreditation for eighteen months indicates that the institution is in substantial compliance with the Commission's Standards. Citrus College is required to submit its Follow-Up Report by **March 15, 2017**. The report should demonstrate that the College has resolved all deficiencies and meets standards. The Commission finds Citrus College out of compliance with the following: ER 20, ER 21, Standards I.A.3, I.B.3, II.B.2.c, IV.A.4. The Report should also respond to the two Commission concerns identified below.

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 provide guidance for how the institution may come into compliance with standards.

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Recommendation #1 Integrity in Communications with the Public:

In order to meet the Eligibility Requirement and the Standard, and to comply with federal regulations, the team recommends the college include precise, accurate, and current information concerning grievance and complaint procedures and sexual harassment in its print or electronic catalog for its constituencies (ER 20, II.B.2.c).

Recommendation #2 Integrity in its Relations with the Accrediting Commission:

In order to meet the Eligibility Requirement and the Standards, the team recommends the college comply with Commission requests, directives, decisions and policies, and make complete, accurate, and honest disclosure (ER 21, I.A.3, I.B.3, IV.A.4).

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. While your institution may concur or disagree with any part of the External Evaluation Report, the accreditation process intends that an institution will use the Report and its own Institutional Self Evaluation Report to assess its practices, assure compliance with standards, and to improve its institutional effectiveness and to excel.

Additional Commission Concerns

Commission Concern 1:

The Institutional Self Evaluation Report was disappointing, particularly with respect to providing access to evidence and including all of the required information in the team report. The Commission notes that evaluation team also stated that Citrus College did not provide the evidence of its own excellent performance with respect to some of the Standards, and therefore the College may not have developed an accurate assessment of its own quality, as is the purpose of the self-evaluation process. The Commission urges Citrus College to develop a different approach to its next report to the commission – one that provides for broader college input, more careful attention to presenting the factual evidence of the College's performance with respect to standards, and more careful review of the report before finalizing it.

Commission Concern 2:

The Commission discussed the institution-set standards established by Citrus College, and like the team, believes that they are set low. The College should review and consider resetting those standards to a more rigorous level. (Standard I.B.2)

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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, Citrus 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.

In its self evaluation process, Citrus College also identified improvement plans it intends to undertake. These improvement plans should be linked to the College's ongoing evaluation and improvement work.

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). Whether or not it agrees or disagrees with any part of the Report, Citrus 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 the Commission action.

I have previously sent you a copy of the External Evaluation Team Report. The Commission requires that you give the Institutional Self Evaluation Report, 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 work that Citrus College 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 the college and the ACCJC work together to encourage continuous quality improvement in higher education. Thank you for sharing the values and the work of accreditation.

Dr. Geraldine Perri
Citrus College
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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'd be glad to help you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara A. Beno".

Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.
President

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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: (<http://www.accjc.org/college-reports-accjc>).