

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES
Western Association of Schools and Colleges



Public Disclosure Notice

for

College of the Sequoias

February 11, 2013

*This Notice has been developed for use in responding to public inquiries about accreditation status, consistent with the Commission's policies on public disclosure. It should be read in conjunction with the Statement of Accredited Status for **College of the Sequoias**. This Notice has been reviewed by **College of the Sequoias**, and the institution has been notified of the opportunity to submit a response to this notice. If the College has responded to the Public Disclosure Notice, an electronic link to the institutional response will be found on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org in the Directory of Accredited Institution, with the information for **College of the Sequoias**.*

Accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (the Commission or ACCJC) certifies that a college has been found to meet rigorous requirements for quality and that there are reasonable grounds for believing it will continue to meet them. The Commission's requirements can be found on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Eligibility Requirements & Standards (or [click here](#)). The accreditation process requires an institution to open itself to examination by a group of professionals who evaluate the degree to which an institution meets the Standards. The Standards set requirements for quality that cover many aspects of the college, including: instruction, student support services, library and learning resources, physical environment, technology services, financial management, institutional governance, institutional integrity and honesty, and achievement of institutional mission. Accreditation is awarded only after an institution demonstrates that it complies with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. The Commission reviews the overall quality of each institution every six years. If an institution is found to need improvements, it may be required to undergo additional reviews and monitoring by the Commission.

Summary of Recent Commission Actions

The Commission ordered **Show Cause** for **College of the Sequoias** when the Commission, at its January 9-11, 2013 meeting, reviewed the institution's adherence to the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies as part of a comprehensive Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness Review. The institution remains accredited during this period and is required to make improvements to address the Commission's findings of non-compliance.

Show Cause is issued when an institution is determined to be in substantial non-compliance with its Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies, or when the institution has not responded to the conditions imposed by the Commission, the Commission will require the institution to Show Cause why its accreditation should not be withdrawn at the end of a stated period by demonstrating that it has corrected the deficiencies noted by the Commission and is in compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards or Commission policies. The Commission will specify the time within which the institution must resolve deficiencies. If the loss of accreditation will likely cause an institution to close, then during the Show Cause period, the institution must make preparations for closure according to the Commission's "Policy on Closing an Institution." The accredited status of the institution continues during the period of the Show Cause order.

The Commission took this action because it determined that **College of the Sequoias** is out of compliance with elements of the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies described below. The full text of the Eligibility Requirements and Standards can be found on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Eligibility Requirements & Standards (or [click here](#)).

Eligibility Requirement 10 Student Learning and Achievement: "The institution defines and publishes for each program the program's expected student learning and achievement outcomes. Through regular and systematic assessment, it demonstrates that students who complete programs, no matter where or how they are offered, achieve these outcomes."

Eligibility Requirement 13 Faculty: "The institution has a substantial core of qualified faculty with full-time responsibility to the institution. The core is sufficient in size and experience to support all of the institution's educational programs. A clear statement of faculty responsibilities must include development and review of curriculum as well as assessment of learning."

Eligibility Requirement 19 Institutional Planning and Evaluation: "The institution systematically evaluates and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes, including assessment of student learning outcomes. The institution provides evidence of planning for improvement of institutional structures and processes, student achievement of educational goals, and student learning. The institution assesses progress toward achieving its stated goals and makes decisions regarding improvement through an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation."

Eligibility Requirement 21 Integrity in Relations with the Accrediting Commission: "The institution provides assurance that it adheres to the Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards and policies of the Commission, describes itself in identical terms to all its accrediting agencies, communicates any changes in its accredited status, and agrees to disclose information required by the Commission to carry out its accrediting responsibilities. The institution will comply with Commission requests, directives, decisions and policies, and will make complete, accurate, and honest disclosure. Failure to do so is sufficient reason, in and of itself, for the Commission to impose a sanction, or to deny or revoke candidacy or accreditation."

I.A Institutional Mission: “The institution has a statement of mission that defines the institution’s broad educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to achieving student learning.”

I.B Improving Institutional Effectiveness: “The institution demonstrates a conscious effort to produce and support student learning, measures that learning, assesses how well learning is occurring, and makes changes to improve student learning. The institution also organizes its key processes and allocates its resources to effectively support student learning. The institution demonstrates its effectiveness by providing 1) evidence of the achievement of student learning outcomes and 2) evidence of institution and program performance. The institution uses ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning.”

II.A Instructional Programs: “The institution offers high-quality instructional programs in recognized and emerging fields of study that culminate in identified student outcomes leading to degrees, certificates, employment, or transfer to other higher education institutions or programs consistent with its mission. Instructional programs are systematically assessed in order to assure currency, improve teaching and learning strategies, and achieve stated student learning outcomes. The provisions of this standard are broadly applicable to all instructional activities offered in the name of the institution.”

II.B Student Support Services: “The institution recruits and admits diverse students who are able to benefit from its programs, consistent with its mission. Student support services address the identified needs of students and enhance a supportive learning environment. The entire student pathway through the institutional experience is characterized by a concern for student access, progress, learning, and success. The institution systematically assesses student support services using student learning outcomes, faculty and staff input, and other appropriate measures in order to improve the effectiveness of these services.”

II.C.1 Library and Learning Support Services: “The institution supports the quality of its instructional programs by providing library and other learning support services that are sufficient in quantity, currency, depth, and variety to facilitate educational offerings, regardless of location or means of delivery.”

III.A Human Resources: “The institution employs qualified personnel to support student learning programs and services wherever offered and by whatever means delivered, and to improve institutional effectiveness. Personnel are treated equitably, are evaluated regularly and systematically, and are provided opportunities for professional development. Consistent with its mission, the institution demonstrates its commitment to the significant educational role played by persons of diverse backgrounds by making positive efforts to encourage such diversity. Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning.”

III.D Financial Resources: “Financial resources are sufficient to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. The distribution of resources supports the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. The institution plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of both

short-term and long-term financial solvency. Financial resources planning is integrated with institutional planning at both college and district/system levels in multi-college systems.”

IV.A Decision-Making Roles and Processes: “The institution recognizes that ethical and effective leadership throughout the organization enables the institution to identify institutional values, set and achieve goals, learn, and improve.”

IV.B.2 Board and Administrative Organization: “The president has primary responsibility for the quality of the institution he/she leads. He/she provides effective leadership in planning, organizing, budgeting, selecting and developing personnel, and assessing institutional effectiveness.”

Additional Information in Understanding this Notice

An accreditation team of professional educators has evaluated **College of the Sequoias**, written a report summarizing its findings, and provided recommendations to the institution to meet Eligibility Requirements and Standards. This report and the action letter from the Commission, which specifies the next steps the institution must take, provide a detailed description of the reasons for Show Cause. All institutions are required to make the evaluation team reports and the action letters available to the public. This is usually accomplished by placing these documents on the college website, and the public is directed to seek these documents from the institution directly. Colleges are invited to prepare a response to this notice, and this information may be posted on the college website.

Current Status and Expected Accreditation Activities

College of the Sequoias will be monitored by the Commission and required to submit a **Show Cause Report** to the Commission in **October 2013**. The Commission will conduct a team visit to assess the institution’s compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies. The Commission will review both reports at its meeting in January 2014. If the Commission determines that **College of the Sequoias** has demonstrated sufficient compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies, the Commission may act to remove Show Cause. If the Commission determines that sufficient progress to demonstrate compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies has not been made, the Commission may take further action as permitted under the Commission’s “Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions.” The Commission policies can be found in the *Accreditation Reference Handbook* that is located on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Publications and Policies / All Commission Publications and Policies (or [click here](#)).

Helpful Resources for Understanding this Notice

The following resources provide additional information that may be helpful in understanding the Commission’s actions and the accreditation status of **College of the Sequoias**:

- A “Statement of Accreditation Status” for **College of the Sequoias** is available upon request from the Commission office.

- The Commission’s Accreditation Standards can be found on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Eligibility Requirements & Standards (or [click here](#)).
- “Informing the Public About Accreditation,” published by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, provides additional information on the nature and value of accreditation. It is available at (http://www.chea.org/public_info/index.asp).
- The “Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions” lists the actions the Commission may apply to institutions under review. It is available in the *Accreditation Reference Handbook* that is located on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Publications and Policies / All Commission Publications and Policies (or [click here](#)).
- The “Policy on Public Disclosure and Confidentiality in the Accreditation Process” describes the Commission’s policy and procedures for making information available to the public. It is available in the *Accreditation Reference Handbook* that is located on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Publications and Policies / All Commission Publications and Policies (or [click here](#)).