

January 25, 2019

Mr. Brent Calvin, Superintendent/President
College of the Sequoias
915 South Mooney Boulevard
Visalia, CA 93277

Dear President Calvin:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting January 9-11, 2019, reviewed the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) and evidentiary materials submitted by College of the Sequoias. The Commission also considered the External Evaluation Team Report (Team Report) prepared by the peer review team that conducted its onsite visit to the College October 1-4, 2018. The Commission considered your spoken testimony and that of Dr. Jennifer Vega La Serna, Vice President of Academic Services. The Commission found these additional perspectives to be helpful.

The purpose of this review was to determine whether the College continues to meet ACCJC's Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and Accreditation Standards (hereinafter, the Standards). Upon consideration of the written and oral information noted above, the Commission acted to **Reaffirm Accreditation for seven years.**

Commendations

The Commission recognizes the exemplary performance of College of the Sequoias in the following areas. Commendations signify practices for which the Commission believes the institution has exceeded standards.

Commendation 1: The team commends the college for the development and implementation of the Student Success Program. The Program exceeds the standard for delivery of learning support services for disproportionately impacted groups. This shows deep commitment, supports learning and helps accomplish the mission of the institution. (II.C.1)

Commendation 2: The team commends the district for their implementation and engagement of the Hanford and Tulare Centers. These specialized yet comprehensive instructional centers also support all components of student services. The team also noted that both centers had impressive partnerships with their communities and area high schools. (II.C.3. and III.B.2.)

Commendation 3: The team commends the district for college-wide engagement in the planning and governance process. Over the past several years, the college clearly engaged all sectors and staffing levels across their three sites of the district in developing, understanding and effectively using their Model of Integrated Planning and the College

of Sequoias Participatory Governance Structure. Most notably, the Model is dependent upon the effective and collaborative governance structure that has been embraced by all faculty, staff, administrators, and board members. The Team noted a spirit of trust, accountability and genuine participation that exceeds the ACCJC Standard on Effective Planning and Implementation. (IV.A.1)

Compliance Requirements

None.

Modifications to Recommendations

In taking its action, the Commission added the following improvement recommendation as follows:

Recommendation 2 (Improvement): In order to improve institutional effectiveness, the commission recommends that the college (1) clarify its mission, values, and other supporting statements of purpose to more effectively articulate its educational purpose, its intended student population, the nature of its educational programs, and its commitment to student learning and achievement; and (2) ensure the mission review process follows the college's established decision-making protocol. (I.A.1, I.A.IV)

Recommendations for Improving Institutional Effectiveness

The Team Report Recommendation 1 and Commission-added Recommendation 2 are for improving institutional effectiveness. These recommendations do not identify current areas of deficiency in institutional practice, but consistent with its mission to foster continuous improvement through the peer review process, the Commission encourages institutions to give serious consideration to the advice contained in the peer reviewers' recommendations. The Commission anticipates that you will bring them and the team's full report to the attention of your institution for serious consideration. In the Midterm Report, the College will include actions taken in response to the peer review team's improvement recommendations.

Next Steps

The Team Report provides details of the peer review team's findings. The guidance and recommendations contained in the Report represent the best advice of the peer review team at the time of the visit but may not describe all that is necessary for the college to improve. A final copy of the Team Report is attached.

The Commission requires that you disseminate the ISER, the Team Report, and this letter to those who were signatories of the ISER and that you 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 current accreditation information on a Web page no more than one click from the institution's home page. In keeping with ACCJC policy, the Commission action will also be posted on the ACCJC website within 30 days of the date of the Commission's action.

The next report from the College will be the Midterm Report¹ due on October 17, 2022. The institution's next comprehensive review will occur in the fall term of 2025.

On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express appreciation for the diligent work and thoughtful reflection that College of the Sequoias undertook to prepare for this evaluation. These efforts confirm that peer review can well serve the multiple constituencies of higher education by both ensuring and encouraging institutional quality and effectiveness.

If you have any questions about this letter or the Commission's action, please feel free to contact me or the vice president that has been assigned as liaison to your institution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Winn", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Richard Winn, Ed.D.
President

RW/tl

cc: Dr. Jennifer Vega La Serna, Accreditation Liaison Officer

¹ Institutions preparing and submitting Midterm Reports, Follow-up Reports, and Special Reports to the Commission should review *Guidelines for the Preparing Institutional Reports to the Commission*, found on the ACCJC website at <https://accjc.org/publications/>.