



**ACCREDITING
COMMISSION
for COMMUNITY and
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association
of Schools and Colleges*

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February 1, 2012

Dr. Utpal Goswami
Interim Superintendent/President
College of the Redwoods
7351 Tompkins Hill Road
Eureka, CA 95501

Dear President Goswami:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting January 10-12, 2012, reviewed the institutional Self Study Report and the report of the evaluation team which visited College of the Redwoods Monday, October 17-Thursday, October 20, 2011. The Commission also heard testimony presented by President Utpal Goswami. The Commission acted to place College of the Redwoods on **Show Cause** and to require that the College submit a Show Cause Report by **October 15, 2012**. The report will be followed by a visit of Commission representatives.

Show Cause is ordered when the Commission finds that an institution is 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. In these situations, the Commission will require the institution to Show Cause why its accreditation should not be withdrawn at the end of a stated period by demonstrating that it has corrected the deficiencies noted by the Commission and is in compliance with the Eligibility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, and Commission policies. In the case of a Show Cause action by the Commission, the burden of proof will rest on the institution to demonstrate why its accreditation should be continued.

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." College of the Redwoods underwent a comprehensive review in application for reaffirmation of accreditation; reaffirmation is delayed during the Show Cause order. The accredited status of the institution continues during the period of the Show Cause order.

Show Cause was ordered for College of the Redwoods for deficiencies associated with Recommendations 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 from the 2011 external evaluation team as noted below, and Recommendation 1 from 2008. These 2011 evaluation team recommendations incorporate recommendations from past evaluation teams that the college has not resolved, including recommendations made by the 2005 comprehensive evaluation team and one recommendation on planning made by the 1999 comprehensive evaluation team. College of the Redwoods has not demonstrated an ability to address evaluation team recommendations in a manner that is timely, complete and sustained, and has not demonstrated consistent and reliable compliance with Accreditation Standards.

The Show Cause Report of **October 15, 2012** should demonstrate the institution's compliance with all the requirements of Standard IB; Standards IIA, B and C; Standards III A, B, C and D; and Standard IVB; and Eligibility Requirement 10. The Report should provide explanation and evidence of how the institution meets the Standards noted above and what it has done to resolve the recommendations noted below. The failure of the College to demonstrate in its report full compliance with Commission Standards and Eligibility Requirements will require the Commission, at its January 2013 meeting, to take action to terminate accreditation.

Recommendation #1 – Student Learning Outcomes

In order to meet the standards and improve institutional effectiveness, the team recommends that the college: maintain an on-going, sustainable process of assessing student learning outcomes at the course, program, certificate, and degree levels; promote widespread dialogue on the results of the assessments; and use assessment results to improve programs and institutional processes including resource allocations. (IB.1, IIA.1.c, IIA.1.b, IIA.1.c, IIA.2.b, IIA.2.f, IIA.2.i, IIB.4, IIC.2, IIID.1, IIID.2.a, IIID.3)

- (a) In order to meet Standard IB.1, the team recommends that the college include student learning as one component in assessing institutional effectiveness.
- (b) In order to meet Standard IIA, the team recommends that the college fully and meaningfully assess all certificate and degree programs using student learning outcomes assessment to improve student learning and ensure that faculty and staff fully engage in the student learning outcomes assessment process. Additionally, the team recommends that the college develop a streamlined process and accountability measures for student learning outcomes assessment.
- (c) In order to meet Standard IIB.4, the team recommends that the college complete measurable student learning outcomes for all appropriate student services programs, utilize a variety of assessment methods, and use the results to improve the delivery of support services. Analyses of the actual student learning outcomes for students support services should be fully integrated with institutional planning and resource allocations.

Dr. Utpal Goswami
College of the Redwoods
February 1, 2012
Page Three

Recommendation #2 – Strategic Planning

In order to attain sustainable continuous quality improvement in institutional planning, the team recommends that the college: integrate its component plans into a comprehensive strategic plan to achieve broad educational purposes and improve institutional effectiveness; establish and assess measurable, actionable goals to improve institutional effectiveness; include educational effectiveness as a demonstrated priority in all planning structures and processes; and promote on-going, robust and pervasive dialogue about institutional effectiveness;. (IB.1-4, IIIA.6, IIIB.1.a, IIIB.2.a, IIIB.2.b, IIIC.2, IIID.1.a, IIID.2.g, IIID.3)

Recommendation #3 – Course Syllabi and Catalog

In order to meet the Standards and Eligibility Requirements, the team recommends that the college ensure that all students receive a course syllabus that specifies student learning outcomes and that program outcomes are published in the college catalog and other relevant college documents. (Standard IIA.6, Eligibility Requirement #10)

Recommendation #4 – Student Records

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the college complete the imaging of student records and assure that these records are secure and protected. (Standard IIB.3.f)

Recommendation #5 – Employee Evaluation

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the college consistently apply its policies on employee performance evaluation, ensure that all employees are evaluated at intervals stated in the policies, and include student learning outcomes as a component in evaluation of those working directly with students. (IIIA.1.b, IIIA.1.c)

Recommendation #6 – Strategic Hiring Plan

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the college develop and implement a strategic hiring plan which analyzes demographic data to address employee equity and diversity. (IIIA.4.b)

Recommendation #7 – Professional Development

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the college develop a comprehensive professional development program which is linked with the college mission and the strategic plan and which encourages opportunities for leadership growth within the college. The program should be regularly evaluated based on needs assessment data, outcomes, and relationship to mission. (IIIA.5.a, IIIA.5.b)

Dr. Utpal Goswami
College of the Redwoods
February 1, 2012
Page Four

Recommendation #8 – Board Actions and Communication; Holding President Accountable

In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the governing board act in a manner consistent with its policies and practices, regularly evaluate its policies and practices (emphasis added) revising them as necessary, and demonstrate and widely communicate its actions as being within the policy framework while seeking input on such practices. In addition, the governing board must hold the president accountable for the successful operation of the college within the Board policy and procedure framework. (IVB.1.b,e,j; IVB.2.b)

Recommendation 1 (2008)

The college should determine a template for student achievement data and related analyses that is to be included in all program reviews and should use the institutional research staff and others knowledgeable about data analyses to guide the faculty and ultimately the college in discussions of what these data show about student success; these discussions should become part of the culture and practice of the institution. (IIA.1a and c, IIA.2.a, IIA.2.e)

Since the loss of accreditation will likely cause College of the Redwoods to close, during the show cause period, the institution must make preparations for closure according to the Commission's "Policy on Closing and Institution." The Institution will be required to submit a Closure Plan with its Show Cause report on October 15, 2012.

I wish to inform you that under U.S. Department of Education regulations, institutions out of compliance with standards or on sanction are expected to correct deficiencies within a two-year period or the Commission must take action to terminate accreditation. College of the Redwoods has exceeded the two-year regulation of the U.S. Department of Education.

I have previously sent you a copy of the Evaluation Team Report. Additional copies may now be duplicated. The Commission requires you to disseminate the Evaluation Team Report and this letter to your College staff and to those who were signatories of your College Self Study Report. This group should include campus leadership and the Board of Trustees.

The Commission also requires that the College make the Evaluation Team Report, the Self Study Report and action letter available to students and the public by placing them on the institution's website. These reports will become part of the accreditation history of the College and should be used in preparing for the next comprehensive evaluation. Should you want an electronic copy of the report, please contact Commission staff.

The recommendations contained in the Evaluation Team Report represent the observations of the evaluation team at the time of the visit. The Commission reminds you that while an institution may concur or disagree with any part of the team report, the College is expected to use the report to improve the educational programs and services of the institution.

Dr. Utpal Goswami
College of the Redwoods
February 1, 2012
Page Five

Finally, ACCJC staff is available to assist the College with consultation and advice on the issues identified in the recommendations noted above. Staff recommends that the institutional leaders read the Evaluation Team Report and the College of the Redwoods Self Study Report very carefully, and also examine the Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions.

On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express continuing interest in the institution's educational quality and students' success. Professional self-regulation is the most effective means of assuring integrity, effectiveness and quality.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.
President

BAB/tl

cc: Board President, Redwoods Community College District
Dr. Jeff Cummings, Accreditation Liaison Officer
Dr. William Scroggins, Team Chair
Ms. Martina Fernandez-Rosario, U.S.D.E