



**ACCREDITING  
COMMISSION  
for COMMUNITY and  
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association  
of Schools and Colleges*

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February 11, 2013

Dr. Joel Kinnamon  
Superintendent/President  
College of the Desert  
43-500 Monterey Avenue  
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Dear President Kinnamon:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting January 9-11, 2013, reviewed the Follow-Up Report submitted by the College of the Desert. The Commission took action to require that the institution complete a **Follow-Up Report**.<sup>1</sup> The report will be followed by a visit by Commission representatives. The Commission also acted to request that the College of the Desert provide a **Special Report**<sup>1</sup>, also to be followed by a visit of Commission Representatives. The Commission requires that the Follow-Up and Special Reports be submitted by **April 1, 2013**.

The **Follow-Up Report** should demonstrate that the institution has addressed the recommendations provided by the Spring 2011 comprehensive evaluation team noted below, resolved the deficiencies, and now meets Accreditation Standards.

**Recommendation 1:**

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the college complete the implementation of the comprehensive planning process by responding to the analysis of assessment results to ensure improvement in student learning. Such a process integrates the various college plans; is informed by quantitative and qualitative data and analysis; systematically assesses outcomes within both instruction and non-instructional services; and provides for an ongoing and systematic cycle of goal setting, resource allocation, implementation, and evaluation. (I.B.1; I.B.2; I.B.6; I.B.7)

**Recommendation 3:**

In order to meet Standards, the team recommends that the college investigate and create a plan to increase student services and library, and learning support services for students in distance education and at off-site locations to ensure that they receive the same level and quality of services as students attending the main Palm Desert campus. The college must ensure equitable access to all of its students by providing appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable student, library, and learning support services regardless of location or means of delivery. This is especially important with regard to library services, including print resources, research assistance, and instruction. (II.B.3; II.B.3.a; II.C.1; II.C.1.c; III.C.1)

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College of the Desert  
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**Recommendation 4:**

In order to meet Standards, the college should improve the timely and effective completion of faculty and staff evaluations. (III.A.1.b)

**Recommendation 5:**

In order to meet Standards, the team recommends that the district develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures that incorporate effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes into the evaluation process of faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving student learning outcomes. (III.A.1.c)

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 adverse action. College of the Desert must fully resolve these deficiencies by **April 1, 2013**.

The Superintendent/President of the College notified the ACCJC in August that there were concerns about the integrity of state reporting of enrollments for purposes of apportionment, and that the College had requested the assistance of the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT). On November 28, 2012, the Superintendent/President notified the ACCJC that FCMAT had released the report on the College. Commission staff reviewed the FCMAT report and, based on that review, the College's FCMAT Report was included on the agenda of the Commission as a Special Concern. The Superintendent/President was notified that the Commission would be considering possible action on the basis of the FCMAT Report on College of the Desert.

The Commission reviewed the FCMAT Report entitled, "Desert Community College District, Extraordinary Audit, November 28, 2012", and acted to request that the College of the Desert provide a **Special Report** to the Commission by **April 1, 2013** to be followed by a visit of Commission Representatives. The **Special Report** should specify the actions College of the Desert is taking to ensure accuracy in its financial reporting system(s), and specifically address what the College is doing to create checks and balances to assure accurate apportionment reporting, award of credit, and attendance accounting and reporting. The College is also requested to provide the Commission with its budget plans that provide for institutional fiscal stability while undertaking the re-payment to the California Community Colleges for inappropriately claimed state apportionment funds.

The Follow-Up Report and the Special Report will both become part of the accreditation history of the College and should be used in preparing for the next comprehensive evaluation. The Commission requires that you give the institution's Follow Up Report, the Evaluation Team Report and this letter appropriate dissemination to your college staff and to those who were signatories of your college report. This group should include campus leadership and the Board of Trustees.

Dr. Joel Kinnamon  
College of the Desert  
February 11, 2013

The Commission also requires that all reports be made available to students and the public by placing a copy on the college website. *Please note that in response to public interest in disclosure, the Commission now requires institutions to post accreditation information on a page no farther than one click from the institution's home page.*

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 institutional integrity, effectiveness, and quality.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.  
President

BAB/cms

cc: Dr. James Berg, Accreditation Liaison Officer  
Board President, Desert Community College District

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<sup>1</sup> 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*. It contains the background, requirements, and format for each type of report and presents sample cover pages and certification pages. It is available on the ACCJC website under College Reports to ACCJC at: (<http://www.accjc.org/college-reports-accjc>).

