



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

Barbara A. Beno, President
Susan S. Kazama, Chair

July 8, 2016

Dr. Patrick Tellei
President
Palau Community College
P.O. Box 9
Koror, Republic of Palau 96940

Dear President Tellei:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting June 8-10, 2016, reviewed the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) submitted by Palau Community College, evidentiary materials also submitted, and the Report prepared by the evaluation team that visited on February 29 to March 3, 2016. College leadership, including the chairperson of the governing board and the College president, certified the Report, which was submitted in application for reaffirmation of accreditation. The purpose of the Commission's review was to determine whether the College continues to meet Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies (hereafter called Standards).

The Commission also considered the written response to the evaluation team report that the College submitted prior to the Commission meeting. The Commission listened to testimony that President Tellei and the team chair, Dr. Melinda Nish, provided in closed session. The Commission found the written response and the testimony helpful for its deliberations.

After considering all of the written and oral material noted above, the Commission acted to **reaffirm accreditation for eighteen months** and to require a Follow-Up Report.¹ Reaffirmation for eighteen months indicates that the Commission has determined that the institution is in substantial compliance with the Accreditation Standards. Palau Community College is required to submit its Follow-Up Report by **October 15, 2017**. The report should demonstrate that the College has resolved all deficiencies and meets accreditation Standards.

The Commission finds Palau Community College out of compliance with the following: Standard I.B.3 (Recommendation 2); I.C.12 (Recommendation 4); and IV.C.10 (Recommendation 5).

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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 give guidance for how the institution may come into compliance with Standards.

Recommendation 2

In order to meet the Standards, the team recommends the College complete its planned schedule of assessment for the institution-set standards and publish the results. (I.B.3, ER11)

Recommendation 4

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College provide opportunity for third party comments prior to site visits in accordance with the Commission's policy on Rights and Responsibility of Commission and Member Institutions. (I.C.12)

Recommendation 5

In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the Governing Board implement a mechanism to make public the results of its performance evaluation. (IV.C.10)

Improving Institutional Effectiveness

The team report identified Recommendations 6-12 for improving institutional effectiveness (improvement recommendations). In addition, the Commission determined that Recommendation 3 was more appropriately a recommendation for improvement. These recommendations do not identify current areas of deficiency in institutional practice, but highlight areas of practice for which College attention is needed. Consistent with its policy to foster continuous improvement through the peer accreditation process, the Commission expects that institutions will consider the advice for improvement offered during the peer evaluation process and report on actions taken in response to the team's recommendations, if any. Failure of an institution to act on these recommendations will not itself constitute a deficiency in meeting standards or requirements of the Commission. However, in the Commission's experience, failure to take note of areas of practice pointed out in improvement recommendations may lead to future conditions which limit the college's ability to meet standards. As such, we highly recommend the team's improvement recommendations for your attention.

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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, Palau Community 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.

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.

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). While an institution may concur or disagree with any part of the Report, Palau Community 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 this Commission action.

A **final** copy of the External Evaluation Report is attached. Commission changes to the Report are noted on a separate page for inclusion with the team report. The College may now duplicate and post copies of the enclosed team report, with this added page. The Commission requires that you give the ISER, 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.

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On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express appreciation for the work that Palau Community 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 institutions and the ACCJC work together to encourage continuous quality improvement in higher education. Thank you for sharing the values and the work of accreditation.

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 would be glad to help you.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.
President

BAB/tl

Attachment

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>.