



**ACCREDITING
COMMISSION
for COMMUNITY and
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

10 COMMERCIAL BOULEVARD
SUITE 204
NOVATO, CA 94949
TELEPHONE: (415) 506-0234
FAX: (415) 506-0238
E-MAIL: accjc@accjc.org
www.accjc.org

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January 31, 2008

Dr. Richard McCullough
President
Saddleback College
28000 Marguerite Parkway
Mission Viejo, CA 92692

Dear President McCullough:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting on January 9-11, 2008, reviewed the Focused Midterm Report submitted by Saddleback College and the report of the evaluation team which visited on November 29, 2007. The purpose of this review was to assure that the recommendations made by the evaluation team were addressed by the institution and that the college has also addressed the self-identified plans for improvement which were included in the institutional self study.

The Commission took action to accept the Focused Midterm Report with the requirement that the college complete a Progress Report. The Commission asks that the report be submitted by **October 15, 2008**. The Progress Report should demonstrate the institution's resolution of the recommendations and concerns as noted below:

College Recommendation 3: The team recommends that the college develop and implement student learning outcomes across the college by:

- A. Developing measurable learning outcomes for all courses, degrees, certificates, programs, and services (Standards I.B.1, I.B.2, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, and II.A.2.b);
- B. Defining and instituting research procedures for measuring, assessing, and tracking learning outcomes (Standards I.B.2, I.B.3, II.A.1.c, II.A.2.a, and II.A.2.b); and
- C. Creating a staff development program to educate and train all pertinent faculty and staff members in the identification, assessment, and evaluation of student learning outcomes. (Standards IB.4, II.A.2.d, III.A.5).

District Recommendation 5: The Board of Trustees cease their involvement in college and district operations and delegate all non-policy issues, including policy implementation, at the district level to the chancellor and at the college level to the president. To achieve this end, the Board of Trustees, district leadership, and college leadership are encouraged to:

- A. Define their respective roles in decision making and clearly delineate the areas and scope of responsibility for each constituent group (Standards I.B.1, IV.A.1, and IV.A.2);
- B. Identify the roles and scope of authority of district and college committees in the decision-making process (Standards I.B.1, IV.A.1, and IV.A.2);
- C. Involve all constituent groups in a meaningful and collaborative manner in the decision-making process (Standards I.B.1, IV.A.1, and IV.A.2); and,
- D. Publicize the roles and responsibilities of each group through college publications and procedures (Standards I.B.1, IV.A.1, and IV.A.2).

District Recommendation 6: Representatives of all formally recognized constituent groups (trustees, chancellor, presidents, other administrators and managers, faculty senates and unions, classified senates and unions, and students) come together and take measures to reduce the hostility, cynicism, despair, and fear that continue to plague the college by:

- A. Developing a positive and in-depth dialogue on essential issues (e.g., evaluation, planning and research, student learning outcomes, decision making roles and responsibilities, etc.) that will ultimately lead to strengthening student learning and success at the college (Standards I.A.3, I.B.1,);
- B. Creating an environment which ensures greater administrative stability and empowerment at the college (Standards IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.B.1, IV.B.2, and IV.B.3); and,
- C. Enhancing the college and district communication structure so that it is clear to everyone who the responsible party is for making decisions and how those decisions are or will be made (Standards IV.A.1, IV.A.2, IV.B.1, IV.B.2, and IV.B.3).

I also 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. Since the abovementioned recommendations were first noted by the Commission in January 2005 (as a result of the October 2004 comprehensive team visit), the college has lapsed significantly beyond the Department's two-year rule and needs to ensure that these recommendations are completely resolved at the time of the October 2008 report.

The Commission has extended the time permitted for good cause because the college and the district have done significant work and have sought and received advice from expert consultants. What remains now is for the institution's members (District and College levels) to move forward in implementing good practice in governance that they have learned about, renew their commitment to professionalism and to the values of higher education, set aside the hard feelings of the past, and work together to maximize student success and institutional effectiveness.

Dr. Richard McCullough
Saddleback College
January 31, 2008
Page Three

I have previously sent you a copy of the evaluation team report. Additional copies may now be duplicated. The Commission requires that you give the report and this letter appropriate dissemination to your college staff and to those who were signatories of your college report. This group should include the Chancellor, campus leadership, and the Board of Trustees. The Commission also requires that all reports be made available to students and the public. Placing copies in the college library can accomplish this. The Focused Midterm Report will become part of the accreditation history of the college and should be used in preparing for the next comprehensive evaluation.

Please note that the next comprehensive evaluation of Saddleback College will occur in **Fall 2010**. All recommendations of the 2004 comprehensive team should be fully resolved by the time of the evaluation.

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

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.
President

BAB/tl

cc: Dr. Raghu Mathur, Chancellor, South Orange County CCD
Dr. Rajen Vurdien, Accreditation Liaison Officer
Board President, South Orange County CCD
Dr. Raul Rodriguez, Team Chair
Evaluation Team Members