



**ACCREDITING  
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for COMMUNITY and  
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

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June 29, 2011

Mr. Jerry Patton  
Superintendent/President  
College of the Desert  
43-500 Monterey Avenue  
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Dear President Patton:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting on June 8-10, 2011, reviewed the institutional Self Study Report and the report of the evaluation team which visited College of the Desert Monday, March 14-Thursday, March 17, 2011. The Commission took action to reaffirm accreditation, with a requirement that the College complete a Follow-Up Report.

The Commission asks that the Follow-Up Report be submitted by **October 15, 2012**. The Follow-Up Report should demonstrate that the institution has addressed the recommendations 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 2:** In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the college establish clear written policies and procedures on program elimination or significant changes to program requirements to enable enrolled students to make appropriate arrangements to complete their education in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption (II.A.6.b).

**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.

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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).

**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).

**Recommendation 6:** In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the college continue to increase the diversity of its faculty, staff and administrators to reflect the diversity of the student body (III.4.2.b).

**Recommendation 7:** In order to improve communications, the team recommends that the district institute an educational program for all campus constituent groups that seeks to better inform stakeholders on the decision-making processes that are currently in place (IV.A.2).

**Recommendation 8:** In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the board regularly evaluate its policies and practices and revises them as necessary (IV.B.1.e; II.A.6.c).

**Commission Reminder:** The Commission expects that institutions meet standards that require the identification and assessment of student learning outcomes, and the use of assessment data to plan and implement improvements to educational quality, by fall 2012. The Commission reminds College of the Desert that it must be prepared to demonstrate that it meets these standards by fall 2012 (Standards I.B.1, II.A.2.e, II.A.2.f, II.B.4, II.C.2, and 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 action to terminate accreditation. College of the Desert must correct the deficiencies noted by **March 2013** or the Commission will be compelled to act.

The College conducted a comprehensive self study as part of its evaluation. The Commission suggests that the plans for improvement of the institution included in that document be taken into account in the continuing improvement of College of the Desert.

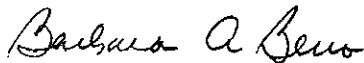
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The recommendations contained in the Evaluation Team Report represent the observations of the evaluation team at the time of the visit. The Commission reminds you that while an institution may concur or disagree with any part of the report, the College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

I have previously sent you a copy of the Evaluation Team Report. Additional copies may now be duplicated. The Commission requires you to give the Evaluation Team Report and this letter appropriate dissemination 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 Evaluation Team Report and the Self Study Report be made available to students and the public. Placing a copy on the college web site can accomplish this. Should you require an electronic copy of the report, please contact Commission staff.

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: Ms. Pamela LiCalsi, Accreditation Liaison Officer  
Board President, Desert Community College District  
Dr. Henry Shannon, Team Chair