



June 23, 2014

Harvey W. DuMarce, President
Sisseton Wahpeton College
P.O. Box 689; Old Agency
Sisseton, SD 57262

Dear President DuMarce:

This letter is formal notification of action taken concerning Sisseton Wahpeton College (“the College”) by the Higher Learning Commission Board of Trustees (“the Board”). At its meeting on June 12, 2014, the Board removed the sanction of Notice from the College. The Board determined that the removal of the sanction was warranted based on evidence provided by the College, including the Notice Report, the report of the visiting team, the staff analysis of the sanction, and the College’s responses to these reports. In addition, the Board maintained the placement of the College on the Standard Pathway.

The Board required that the College submit an interim report no later than February 2, 2015, clarifying its current academic program offerings and providing an update on its efforts to recruit sufficient numbers of qualified full-time faculty members for those programs. The College will host a comprehensive evaluation in 2016-17.

The Board based its action on the following findings made with regard to the College:

The College has demonstrated that it has addressed the Commission’s concerns related to 2005 Criterion One, “the institution operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, faculty, staff, and students,” particularly Core Component 1.d, “the institution’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission,” and Core Component 1.e, “the institution upholds and protects its integrity,” for the following reasons:

- the College Board of Trustees is actively engaged in appropriate Board governance and is aware of the needs and challenges of the College and its constituents (Core Component 1.d);
- the College Board of Trustees has a clear understanding of the distinction between the respective roles of the Board and of the senior administration of the College, its fiduciary responsibilities, and of the role of appropriate policies and procedures at the College (Core Component 1.d);
- the College has developed a robust orientation for new Board members and has engaged in regular Board development (Core Component 1.d);

- the College now demonstrates collaborative administrative processes and appropriate patterns of communication between the senior administration and the Board (Core Component 1.d); and
- the College has by-laws, policies, and procedures in place that include mechanisms of appropriate oversight and guard against nepotism, conflict of interest, and inappropriate interventions by the Board in the operations of the College (Core Component 1.e).

The College has demonstrated that it has addressed the Commission's concerns related to 2005 Criterion Two, "the institution's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities," particularly Core Component 2.a, "the institution realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends," Core Component 2.b, "the institution's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future," and Core Component 2.d, "all levels of planning align with the institution's mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission," for the following reasons:

- the College has engaged in a comprehensive strategic planning process that was grounded in the mission of the College; that clearly identified short- and long-term goals based on sound data and environmental scanning; and that identified the project resources necessary for implementation, ongoing support, and sustainability (Core Components 2.a and 2.d);
- institutional representatives, beyond the Presidential Advisory Committee that led the process, broadly demonstrated a deep familiarity with the strategic plan, ownership of their respective units' roles in its achievement and understanding of the centrality of academic needs to the planning process (Core Component 2.d) ;
- the strategic plan was appropriately informed by changes to the environment so that any outlay of resources would be appropriately justified through alignment to realities of enrollment, market demand, and available funding (Core Component 2.a);
- the College developed a Fiscal Management Plan and submitted monthly financial reports to the Board that reflected revenues, expenditures, Indian Student Count Funding, and enrollment so that the Board is knowledgeable about these factors and can address problems at the earliest opportunity (Core Component 2.b);
- the College has incorporated modest contingency funds into its actual and projected budgets (Core Component 2.b); and
- the College has established departmental budgets that allow for controlled spending and prioritization of limited revenues (Core Component 2.b).

The College has demonstrated compliance with 2005 Criteria One and Two and in so doing has fulfilled the requirements of 2013 Core Components 2.A, 5.A, 5.B, and 5.C; the College nevertheless must demonstrate progress in ensuring that it has sufficient full-time faculty members relative to the number of academic programs that it offers and that the College manages academic program offerings relative to student enrollment effectively.

The Board action resulted in changes to the affiliation of the College. These changes are reflected on the Statement of Affiliation Status. Some of the information from that document, such as the dates of the last and next comprehensive evaluation visits, will be posted to the Commission's

website along with information from the Organizational Profile. In addition, Commission Policy INST.G.10.010, Management of Commission Information, anticipates that the Commission will release to members of the public action letters related to the removal of a sanction. The Commission will do so by posting this action letter on the Commission website along with the Statement of Affiliation Status and Organizational Profile.

At this time, the Commission will reassign the College from its liaison Vice President Anthea Sweeney to Vice President Eric Martin. If you have any questions or concerns about the information in this letter, please contact Dr. Martin. Please be assured that Dr. Sweeney will work with Dr. Martin to assure a smooth transition.

Information about notifying the public of this action is available at <http://ncahlc.org/Information-for-Institutions/institutional-reporting-of-actions.html>. In addition, Commission policy COMM.A.10.010, Commission Public Notices and Statements, requires that the Commission prepare a summary of actions to be sent to appropriate state and federal agencies and accrediting associations, and published on its website. The summary will include the Commission Board action regarding the College. The College may choose to prepare a statement to its constituencies regarding this action; I ask that you copy Dr. Martin on any such communication.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I thank you and your associates for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Sylvia Manning
President

cc: Chair of the Board of Trustees, Sisseton Wahpeton College
Evaluation team members
Jeanette Gravdahl, VP of Academic Affairs, Business Instructor, Sisseton Wahpeton College
Anthea M. Sweeney, Vice President for Accreditation Relations, Higher Learning
Commission
Eric V. Martin, Vice President for Accreditation Relations and Director, AQIP Pathway,
Higher Learning Commission
Karen L. Solinski, Vice President for Legal and Governmental Affairs, Higher Learning
Commission
Herman Bounds, Director, Accreditation and State Liaison, Office of Postsecondary
Education, U.S. Department of Education