



November 14, 2017

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dr. Ann Rondeau, President
College of DuPage
425 Fawell Blvd.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

Dear President Rondeau:

This letter is formal notification of action taken by the Higher Learning Commission (“HLC” or “the Commission”) Board of Trustees (“the Board”) concerning College of DuPage (“the College” or “the institution”). At its meeting on November 2-3, 2017, the Board voted to remove the sanction of Probation from the College. This action is effective as of the date action was taken. The Board determined that removal of the sanction was warranted based on materials from the College’s most recent comprehensive evaluation including, but not limited to: the Assurance Filing the College submitted, the report from the comprehensive evaluation team, the report of the Institutional Actions Council (“IAC”) Hearing Committee, the institution’s responses to these reports, and other materials relevant to the evaluation.

The Board required that the College submit an Interim Report no later than May 15, 2018, on the following topics:

- A description of consistent process and practice that demonstrates adherence to the course outcomes as listed in the Active Course File by full-time and part-time faculty.
- A description of consistent process and practice demonstrating adherence to the course outcomes as listed in the Active Course File, regardless of course delivery format.
- A description of clear policy for awarding credit that addresses all delivery formats employed by the College, including an explanation of how credit hours are calculated for distance learning formats.
- Detailed information regarding any findings of noncompliance with rules related to participation in the National Junior College Athletic Association (“NJCAA”).

The Board further required that the College host a focused visit no later than September 2019, specifically addressing the following:

- Core Components 2.A and 5.B:
 - Documented evidence of the application of new and revised Board of Trustees policies and procedures.
 - Documented evidence of compliance with open meeting laws per Illinois statute.
 - Documented evidence of continued training for board members on matters of ethics, open meetings laws, and fiduciary responsibilities.
 - Documented evidence of continued professional relationships within the board and between board members and college employees.

- Documented evidence that the College is using results from an anonymous climate survey of College employees to improve the campus climate and reduce perceptions of fear and mistrust.
- Core Component 4.B:
 - Documented evidence that all career and technical programs have developed assessment plans, are assessing program learning outcomes, and are using assessment data to inform decisions.
 - Documented evidence that student learning outcomes are communicated and are available to all constituents.
 - Documented evidence that aggregated results of the assessment of general education informs curricular change.
 - Documented evidence of processes and assessments that demonstrate how co-curricular activities support and enhance the educational objectives of the College.
- Core Components 4.C and 5.D:
 - Documented evidence of how data and metrics inform decisions and initiatives adopted by the College.
 - Documented evidence that the College is setting internal targets of performance for operational areas of the College and is using data to measure success in those areas, especially regarding program targets for persistence and completion.
 - Documented evidence of infrastructure to support data collection and usage for accreditation purposes.

The Board placed the College on the Standard Pathway with its next comprehensive evaluation for reaffirmation of accreditation in 2021-22.

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

The College has demonstrated that it now meets Criterion Two, Core Component 2.A “the institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff,” and Criterion Five, Core Component 5.B, “the institution’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission,” but with concerns for the following reasons:

- While new policies and procedures were developed to resolve ethical and related concerns, and College Board members have participated in training related to the new policies and procedures, the effects of these changes cannot yet be determined because too little time has passed since the policy changes were implemented; and
- While the College is working to rebuild the morale of College employees and has anecdotal evidence of improvement, it has not yet systematized its identification and resolution of challenges related to employee morale.

The College has demonstrated that it meets Criterion Three, Core Component 3.A, “the institution’s degree programs are appropriate to higher education,” but with concerns because greater clarity was needed for how academic credit is awarded, and student learning outcomes were not defined and documented consistently across courses.

The College has demonstrated that it meets Criterion Four, Core Component 4.A, “the institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs,” but with concerns because the policy on awarding credit was inadequate in addressing all course delivery modalities.

The College has demonstrated that it meets Criterion Four, Core Component 4.B, “the institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning,” but with concerns for the following reasons:

- While the College has in place a comprehensive regular annual review process for academic programs, there is no process in place to conduct reviews across all non-instructional areas;
- The annual assessment of student learning outcomes was inconsistently implemented by departments, and it was unclear how data were reviewed and utilized to improve programs and student learning; and
- Co-curricular activities have not been assessed; therefore, there is no evidence of how the data were used to make improvements.

The College has demonstrated that it meets Criterion Four, Core Component 4.C, “the institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs,” but with concerns because, although the College has good data on retention, persistence and completion and regularly reviews it, the College has not identified clear goals for improvement nor was it clear how data was utilized to make improvements.

The College has demonstrated that it meets Criterion Five, Core Component 5.D, “the institution works systematically to improve its performance,” but with concerns because the College is at present more focused on compliance than on institutional effectiveness, and data was often not appropriately utilized to inform decisions and operational and academic improvements.

The College has demonstrated that it now meets Criterion One, Core Component 1.D “the institution’s mission demonstrates commitment to the public good,” for the following reasons:

- The College Board was appropriately oriented to the responsibilities of decision-making with regard to fiscal stewardship and accountability, preservation of institutional assets, long-range planning, aligning budgets with strategic plans, focusing on outcomes, and good use of public resources;
- Attention by the Board to institutional matters focused on the public good was demonstrated;
- The Strategic Long-Range Plan articulated nine objectives to increase partnerships in the immediate region; and
- Outreach activities strengthening the connection to the community were documented.

The College has demonstrated that it is otherwise in compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation, Assumed Practices and Federal Compliance requirements.

The Board action resulted in changes to the affiliation of the College. These changes are reflected on the Institutional Status and Requirements Report. Some of the information on that document, such as the dates of the last and next comprehensive evaluation visits, will be posted to the HLC website.

Information is provided to members of the public and to other constituents in several ways. Commission policy INST.G.10.010, Management of Commission Information, anticipates that HLC will release action letters to members of the public. The Commission will do so by posting this action letter to its website. Also, the enclosed Public Disclosure Notice will be posted to HLC's website not more than 24 hours after this letter is sent to you.

In addition, Commission policy COMM.A.10.010, Commission Public Notices and Statements, requires that HLC 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 HLC Board action regarding the College.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I thank you and your associates for your cooperation. Please contact your HLC Staff Liaison, Dr. Barbara Johnson, if you have questions about any of the information in this letter.

Sincerely,



Barbara Gellman-Danley
President

Enclosure: Public Disclosure Notice

Cc: Chair of the Board of Trustees, College of DuPage
James Bente, Vice President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness, College of DuPage
Evaluation team chair
Institutional Actions Council Hearing Committee chair
Stephanie Bernoteit, Senior Associate Director, Academic Affairs, Illinois Board of Higher Education
Barbara Johnson, Vice President for Accreditation Relations, Higher Learning Commission
Karen Peterson Solinski, Executive Vice President for Legal and Governmental Affairs, Higher Learning Commission