July 10, 2017

James Lorenson, President
Gogebic Community College
E4946 Jackson Rd.
Ironwood, MI 49938

Dear President Lorenson:

This letter is formal notification of action taken by the Higher Learning Commission (“HLC” or “the Commission”) Board of Trustees (“the Board”) concerning Gogebic Community College (“the College” or “the institution”). At its meeting on June 29, 2017, the Board voted to continue the accreditation of the College and scheduled the institution for monitoring. This action is effective as of the date action was taken. In taking this action, the Board considered materials from the College’s recent Focused Visit, including but not limited to: the report the College submitted; the report from the evaluation team; the report of the Institutional Actions Council Hearing Committee; the institution’s responses to these reports; and other materials relevant to the evaluation.

The Board required that the College host a focused visit no later than July 1, 2019, specifically addressing the following:

- Progress on the continued implementation of the assessment plan;
- The usage of data for improving the quality of student learning, programs, and outcomes at the course, program, and institutional levels;
- Where appropriate, documented changes made to curricular programs and the general education program based on a review of data gathered through assessment processes; and
- Progress on at least two years of using data for improvement in the above-mentioned areas and reports of progress in assessment and quality improvement to the College’s Board of Trustees.

The Board maintained the College on the AQIP Pathway with the next Comprehensive Quality Review for Reaffirmation of Accreditation in 2022-23.

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

The College 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 because:

- Four Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) were approved in 2015 by the College’s Board of Trustees, and, as noted in the focus team report, these four ILOs significantly defined the assessment direction for the college because they were both relevant and measurable. But, the IAC Hearing Committee was furnished no evidence that these had been implemented across the institution in any consistent way;
- To track outcomes and data results, the institution developed an assessment database, but, as noted in the team report and verified through discussion with the institutional team by the IAC Hearing Committee, the reporting system is still under development and reports available are limited;
• The institution is currently determining where the ILOs are aligned with course outcomes. This is being accomplished through a review of information entered into an assessment database, but is still incomplete;

• The institution has not yet reviewed student learning of the institutional learning outcomes (ILOs), but during the next year, the plan is to review the data associated with the global consciousness outcome that aligns with the state multicultural expectation;

• The Board of Trustees has passed an expectation that program and institutional specific goals must be shared with the board on a yearly basis, and any subsequent review should be able to produce evidence to that effect through Board minutes or other documentation;

• The IAC Hearing team’s discussions with Gogebic administrators indicated a clear commitment to providing financial and personnel resources to the continuing development and implementation of the assessment plan for general education, programs, and at the institutional level, but resources are still constrained with respect to funding assessment activities; and

• Although the IAC Hearing Committee believed the institution has the capacity to support the plans in place, the college’s “leisurely and spotty progress” in developing a culture of assessment and continuous improvement through regular and robust analysis of data require further monitoring to ensure full compliance.

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.

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. Jeffrey Rosen, if you have questions about any of the information in this letter.

Sincerely,

Barbara Gellman-Danley
President

cc: Chair of the Board of Trustees, Gogebic Community College
    Maria Sokol, Math/Science Faculty, Gogebic Community College
    Evaluation team chair
    Institutional Actions Council Hearing Committee chair
    Jeffrey Rosen, Vice President for Accreditation Relations and Director of the Open Pathway, Higher Learning Commission
    Karen Peterson Solinski, Executive Vice President for Legal and Governmental Affairs, Higher Learning Commission