



November 28, 2012

Dr. Suzanne Laura Miles, Chancellor (Interim)
Pima County Community College District
4905C E. Broadway Blvd.
Tucson, AZ 85709-1005

Dear Chancellor Miles,

Earlier this year the Commission received complaints regarding the college from a group that characterizes itself as “faculty and staff at Pima Community College.” The Commission had also received complaints from another organization, the Coalition for Accountability, Integrity, Respect, and Responsibility (C-FAIRR) echoing some of the concerns articulated in the other complaint. You provided a detailed response to these complaints and to the accrediting concerns the Commission identified in its initial letter arising from these complaints. This response subsequently became public. The Commission then received both formal and informal communications challenging the truthfulness and accuracy of your response. The Commission was also contacted by several individuals who asked for an opportunity to provide additional information from their perspective about the situation at the college. This group included individuals who had identified themselves as victims of the sexual harassment alleged to have been conducted by the former president. I provided them with some time to prepare and submit a statement. In addition, there was an election for two trustees for the college in which there was considerable discussion about the former president of the college and some of the other issues that gave rise to the original complaints.

Commission policy allows the Commission to investigate through any appropriate mechanism any information that gives rise to a concern that the institution may not be in compliance with the Commission’s Criteria for Accreditation. As previously indicated, the allegations regarding the former president as well as other senior administrators and the Board of Trustees are relevant to the institution’s compliance with Criterion One regarding mission and integrity, and specifically to Core Component 1.d regarding governance and administration as well as Core Component 1.e regarding integrity. The allegations are also relevant to the institution’s compliance with Criterion Two, preparing for the future, and specifically the expectations outlined in Core Component 2.b that the institution uses human resources effectively. Finally, the more recent allegation that your response did not candidly and accurately explain the recent circumstances at the college raises additional questions about the institution’s compliance with Core Component 1.e., regarding integrity.

I have asked Dr. Kathleen Nelson to conduct a fact-finding visit to the college to investigate further the issues identified in the complaint. Dr. Nelson is a long-time peer reviewer

for the Higher Learning Commission who is assisting the Commission in an adjunct capacity subsequent to her retirement from Lake Superior College where she was president for many years. Dr. Nelson will be accompanied by an additional member of the fact-finding team. Once that person has been identified, we will provide you with further information. The visit will take place in early 2013; Dr. Nelson has tentatively targeted the week of January 21 for the visit. Dr. Nelson will contact you to discuss the visit dates and plan for the visit. The visit should take place when students and faculty are on campus, and the Board of Trustees is available to meet with the team. Dr. Nelson will prepare a report of her findings with regard to issues identified in this letter. You will receive a copy of the report. This report will advise the Commission on the situation at the College to assist the Commission in determining whether to call for further monitoring through progress or monitoring reports or a focused evaluation and the timing of such monitoring or take other action provided for in Commission policy. Requiring monitoring over the next few years on these or other issues would require approval by the Commission's Institutional Actions Council.

The Commission is in the process of contacting the individuals who provided statements to the Commission to determine whether we have their permission to forward copies to you. Some of them were submitted in confidence, and it is unlikely that they will be willing to have their statement forwarded to the College. For those statements, the Commission will seek permission to prepare a summary of the statement omitting any details of a personal or confidential nature that would identify the individual or raise privacy concerns.

If there is any additional documentation you believe it would be helpful for the team to have regarding the issues at the College that resulted in the complaint, please provide that information to the Commission office no later than January 4, 2013.

Thank you for your cooperation in this review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen L. Solinski (cfe)".

Karen L. Solinski
Vice President for Legal and Governmental Affairs

cc: Kathleen Nelson, Fact-finding Visit Team Chair, Higher Learning Commission
Mary Ann Martinez Sanchez, Vice President, Pima County Community College District
Karen J. Solomon, Vice President for Accreditation Relations, Higher Learning
Commission