Colleagues,

I am pleased to announce that the College today submitted its Self-Study Report to the Higher Learning Commission, reaching a milestone in our activities to request continued accreditation with the HLC.

The report documents the Institutional Self-Study, a comprehensive, evidence-based review of all facets of the College including processes, policies and goals. More than 300 employees, students and community members have worked for over a year on this critical project, which the HLC directed us to undertake when it placed PCC on probation in April 2013.

The Self-Study Report is available online on the College’s website. You can read it here.

A College-wide effort
I want to thank all those who worked on one of the many committees and Fast Action Teams that contributed to the Institutional Self Study. Your examination of our operations is critical to creating the culture of continuous improvement taking hold at the College. Also, in May, we posted a draft of the report online, inviting the public to share insights through an accompanying online survey. A total of 64 comments were received. Undoubtedly, many came from employees, and I thank those employees for taking the time and effort to comment, make suggestions and help us produce the best-possible report.

I want to extend a special thanks to the members of the HLC Project Management Team. In April 2013, Interim Chancellor Dr. Zelema Harris directed the Provost’s Office to take the lead in our efforts to reaffirm accreditation. The Project Management Team – Dr. Erica Holmes, Dr. Mary Ann Martinez Sanchez, Dr. Michael Parker, Dr. Dolores Durán-Cerda, Kate Schmidt, Terry Hawkins, Rachelle Howell, Dr. Nicola Richmond, Michael Peel and Carl Englander – was charged with piloting the College through an extremely complex, multifaceted Self-Study process. A typical Self-Study is conducted over a two- to three-year period; ours was done in about 15 months. We owe the team a debt of gratitude for their tireless work in this important endeavor.

What’s next
The College’s work to reaffirm accreditation is far from complete, however. As you know, on Sept. 15-17, a team from the HLC will visit the College. We are eager to share the findings of the Self-Study Report with the HLC’s representatives, and to demonstrate we deserve the HLC’s and the public’s highest degree of confidence. You can learn more about upcoming activities related to the HLC team visit during All College Day, August 22.

In October, the HLC will provide a site visit report to the College, and in November PCC will submit a response to the site visit report, to correct errors of fact only. In December, we will send
a team to attend a hearing of the HLC’s Institutional Actions Council. In February 2015, the College will receive formal notification of its status from the HLC.

Throughout the Self-Study process, I have been struck by our employees’ dedication to giving students the best opportunities to achieve their personal goals through the promise inherent in education. We recognize that our mission, to develop our community through learning, requires a commitment to student success, consistent engagement and diversity. By honoring and meeting the needs of individual students, we are significantly contributing to the progress of our city, our state and our nation. The Self-Study Report documents the progress we are making toward our goal of making PCC one of the United States’ premier community colleges.

Lee D. Lambert,
Chancellor