



January 11, 2017

Dr. Robert Vela, Jr.
President
San Antonio College
1819 North Main Avenue
San Antonio, TX 78212

Dear Dr. Vela:

The following action regarding your institution was taken by the Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges during its meeting held on December 4, 2016:

The SACSCOC Board of Trustees continued accreditation, denied reaffirmation, and placed the institution on Warning for 12 months for failure to comply with Comprehensive Standard 3.2.6 (Board/administrative distinction), Comprehensive Standard 3.4.4 (Acceptance of academic credit), Comprehensive Standard 3.4.5 (Academic policies), Comprehensive Standard 3.4.10 (Responsibility for curriculum), Comprehensive Standard 3.13 (Policy compliance: "Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports"), and Federal Requirement 4.7 (Title IV program responsibilities) of the *Principles of Accreditation*. This action followed a June 2016 decision to defer action on reaffirmation pending the receipt and review of a monitoring report and a Special Committee Report on issues regarding institutional autonomy.

The Commission did not authorize a second Special Committee to visit the institution.

The Commission requested that the institution submit a report due **September 8, 2017**, addressing the visiting committee's recommendations applicable to the following referenced standards of the *Principles of Accreditation*:

CS 3.2.6 (Board/administrative distinction)

This standard expects an institution to have a clear and appropriate distinction, in writing and practice, between the policy-making functions of the governing board and the responsibility of the administration and faculty to administer and implement policy.

The institution failed to provide evidence that there is a clear and appropriate distinction between the policy-making functions of the Board and the operational implementation of policy by the institution's administration and faculty. It appears that the Board, in some instances, has been overly specific in operational areas, such as curriculum and employment practices.



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CS 3.4.4 (Acceptance of academic credit), Special Committee Recommendation 1 and Reaffirmation Committee Recommendation 6

This standard expects an institution to publish policies that include criteria for evaluating, awarding, and accepting credit for transfer, experiential learning, credit by examination, advanced placement, and professional certificates that is consistent with its mission and ensures that course work and learning outcomes are at the collegiate level and comparable to the institution's own degree programs. It expects the institution to assume responsibility for the academic quality of any course work or credit recorded on the institution's transcript.

The institution failed to provide sufficient evidence that the Service Agreement between the institution and the Center for Student Information (CSI) had been fully implemented. It appears that course work or credit recorded on the institution transcript had not been reviewed by the appropriate faculty in the discipline area for equivalency.

While the revised process should improve the ability for the institution to control the quality of coursework accepted for transfer credit, no documentation of the new process was provided.

CS 3.4.5 (Academic policies), Special Committee Recommendations 2 and 3

This standard expects an institution to publish academic policies that adhere to principles of good educational practice and that are disseminated to students, faculty, and other interested parties through publications that accurately represent the programs and services of the institution.

The institution failed to provide sufficient evidence that the transfer agreement with Alamo District Colleges (dated August 29, 2016) stating that courses from other Alamo District Colleges be recorded as transfer credit (not institutional credit) had been fully implemented.

While the new Transcripts Standards Agreement (dated October 10, 2016) provides for identifying transfer credit from outside the District, transfer credit from within the District, and institutional credit, the institution only provided a sample test student transcript for review.

The institution failed to provide evidence that a true institutional GPA was calculated and used in the determination of academic standing, honors for graduation, degree GPA, and federal financial aid.



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CS 3.4.10 (Responsibility for curriculum), Special Committee Recommendation 4
This standard expects an institution to place primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of the curriculum with its faculty.

The institution failed to provide sufficient evidence that the faculty has primary responsibility for curriculum.

It appears that the Board of the Alamo Community College District, in Board Policy B. 9. 1., has been overly specific in their requirement that certain course content be included in the institution's curriculum. See also Comprehensive Standard 3.2.6 (Board/administration distinction).

CS 3.13 (Policy compliance: "Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports"), Special Committee Recommendations 5 and 6 and Reaffirmation Committee Recommendation 9

This standard expects an institution to comply with the following policies of the Commission on Colleges.

The institution failed to provide sufficient evidence that the institution, as a separately accredited entity, has authority for the appointment and employment of all institutional personnel. It appears that the Board of the Alamo Community College District, in Board Policy D. 2. 5., has delegated these authorities to the Chancellor of the system.

The institution failed to provide sufficient evidence that it represents itself as a separately accredited entity as exemplified in institutional materials, such as the College Catalog, websites, marketing materials, and other documents. It also is unclear whether the institution represents itself as a single institution (Alamo Colleges) with multiple campuses, or multiple independent institutions (San Antonio College) with the U. S. Department of Education.

FR 4.7 (Title IV program responsibilities), Special Committee Recommendation 7
This standard expects an institution to be in compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of the most recent Higher Education Act as amended.

The institution failed to provide clear evidence that the institution, as a separately accredited entity, is in compliance with the awarding of Title IV funds.

The institution, as a separately accredited entity, should clarify its role ensuring compliance Title IV program responsibilities.



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Guidelines for the monitoring report are enclosed. Because it is essential that institutions follow these guidelines, **please make certain that those responsible for preparing the report receive the document. If there are any questions about the format, contact the Commission staff member assigned to your institution.** When submitting your report, please send **five copies** to your Commission staff member.

Because your institution has been placed on Warning, the Commission calls to your attention the enclosed policy entitled "Sanctions, Denial of Reaffirmation, and Removal from Membership."

Please note that Federal regulations and Commission policy stipulate that an institution must demonstrate compliance with all the standards and requirements of the *Principles of Accreditation* within two years following SACSCOC Board of Trustees' initial action on the institution. At the end of that two-year period, if the institution does not comply with all the standards and requirements of the *Principles*, representatives from the institution may be required to appear before SACSCOC Board of Trustees, or one of its standing committees, to answer questions as to why the institution should not be removed from membership. If the Board of Trustees determines good cause at that time and the institution has not been on Probation for both years during the two-year monitoring period, the Board may extend the period for coming into compliance for a minimum of six months and a maximum of two years and must place the institution on Probation. If the Board of Trustees does not determine good cause, removal from accreditation is mandatory. (See enclosed Commission policy "Sanctions, Denial of Reaffirmation, and Removal from Membership.")

If you have any questions regarding this letter or the process, please contact your Commission staff member.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Belle S. Wheelan".

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.
President

BSW:ch

Enclosures

cc: Dr. Patricia L. Donat
Dr. Bruce Leslie, Chancellor, The Alamo Colleges District
Dr. Yvonne Katz, Chair, Board of Trustees