ABOUT THE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE NOTICE

What is a Public Disclosure Notice (PDN)?
Federal regulations require that accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education provide to the public a brief statement summarizing the reasons an accreditor has taken action to impose Probation, order Show Cause, or terminate accreditation. The regulations also require the accreditor to provide to the public the institution’s official comments, if any, in response to the Commission’s action. The Commission is required to provide this notice regardless of whether the public, or any member thereof, requests the information. These regulations went into effect July 1, 2010 and apply to all Commission actions since that date.1 In collaboration with the other regional accrediting commissions, the Commission is using a PDN format that is relatively consistent across all accrediting regions.

How is the Public Disclosure Notice made available to the public?
The Commission makes the Public Disclosure Notice available to the public by posting it with the institution’s entry in the online ACCJC Directory of Accredited Institutions located at www.accjc.org. If an institution provides a response to the PDN, that response is also posted in the same location. All Notices and institutional responses will be removed from the online ACCJC Directory when an institution is removed from Probation or Show Cause or one year after the institution’s accreditation has been terminated.

When must the institution provide its Response to the Public Disclosure Notice?
The Public Disclosure Notice and the institution’s response must be posted no later than 60 days following the Commission action. In order to achieve this deadline, the institution’s response must be received by February 28 for January Commission Meeting actions and by July 31 for June Commission Meeting actions. If the institution wishes to make an official response to the Public Disclosure Notice, the response should be sent by email attachment to accjc@accjc.org, or mailed to ACCJC, 10 Commercial Blvd. Suite 204, Novato, CA 94949.

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1 The U.S. Department of Education regulatory reference for public notification of accrediting agency actions on an institution’s accreditation status can be found at 34 C.F.R. § 602.26.
Public Disclosure Notice
for
Hartnell College

July 3, 2013

This Notice has been developed for use in responding to public inquiries about accreditation status, consistent with the Commission’s policies on public disclosure. It should be read in conjunction with the Statement of Accredited Status for Hartnell College. This Notice has been reviewed by Hartnell College and the institution has been notified of the opportunity to submit a response to this notice. If the College has responded to the Public Disclosure Notice, an electronic link to the institutional response will be found on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org in the Directory of Accredited Institution, with the information for Hartnell College.

Accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (the Commission or ACCJC) certifies that a college has been found to meet rigorous requirements for quality and that there are reasonable grounds for believing it will continue to meet them. The Commission’s requirements can be found on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Eligibility Requirements & Standards (or click here). The accreditation process requires an institution to open itself to examination by a group of professionals who evaluate the degree to which an institution meets the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. The Standards set requirements for quality that cover many aspects of the college, including: instruction, student support services, library and learning resources, physical environment, technology services, financial management, institutional governance, institutional integrity and honesty, and achievement of institutional mission. Accreditation is awarded only after an institution demonstrates that it complies with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards and Commission policies. The Commission reviews the overall quality of each institution every six years. If an institution is found to need improvement, it may be required to undergo additional reviews and monitoring by the Commission.

Summary of Recent Commission Actions

The Commission imposed Probation on Hartnell College when the Commission, at its June 5-7, 2013 meeting, reviewed the institution’s adherence to the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies as part of a comprehensive Educational Quality and Institutional Effectiveness Review. The institution remains accredited during this
period and is required to make improvements to address the Commission's findings of non-compliance.

**Probation** is imposed when an institution deviates significantly from the Commission's Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies, but not to such an extent as to warrant a Show Cause order or the termination of accreditation, or fails to respond to conditions imposed upon it by the Commission, including a warning, the institution may be placed on probation. The Commission will specify the time within which the institution must resolve deficiencies. If probation is imposed as a result of the institution's comprehensive review, reaffirmation of accreditation is delayed during the period of probation. The accredited status of the institution continues during the probation period.

The Commission took this action because it determined that **Hartnell College** is out of compliance with elements of the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies described below. The full text of the Eligibility Requirements and Standards can be found on the ACCJC website at: [www.accjc.org](http://www.accjc.org) under Eligibility Requirements & Standards (or click here).

**Eligibility Requirement 5, Administrative Capacity.** "The institution has sufficient staff, with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support its mission and purpose."

**Eligibility Requirement 10, Student Learning and Achievement.** "The institution defines and publishes for each program the program's expected student learning and achievement outcomes. Through regular and systematic assessment, it demonstrates that students who complete programs, no matter where or how they are offered, achieve these outcomes."

**Eligibility Requirement 19, Institutional Planning and Evaluation.** "The institution systematically evaluates and makes public how well and in what ways it is accomplishing its purposes, including assessment of student learning outcomes. The institution provides evidence of planning for improvement of institutional structures and processes, student achievement of educational goals, and student learning. The institution assesses progress toward achieving its stated goals and makes decisions regarding improvement through an ongoing and systematic cycle of evaluation, integrated planning, resource allocation, implementation, and re-evaluation."

**Standard IA, Mission.** "The institution has a statement of mission that defines the institution's broad educational purposes, its intended student population, and its commitment to achieving student learning."

**Standard IB, Improving Institutional Effectiveness.** "The institution demonstrates a conscious effort to produce and support student learning, measures that learning, assesses how well learning is occurring, and makes changes to improve student learning. The institution also organizes its key processes and allocates its resources to effectively support student learning. The institution demonstrates its effectiveness by providing 1) evidence of the achievement of student learning outcomes, and 2) evidence of institution and program performance. The
institution uses ongoing and systematic evaluation and planning to refine its key processes and improve student learning.”

**Standard IIA.1.c, Instructional Programs.** “The institution identifies student learning outcomes for courses, programs, certificates, and degrees; assesses student achievement of those outcomes; and uses assessment results to make improvements.”

**Standard IIA.2.a, Instructional Programs.** “The institution uses established procedures to design, identify learning outcomes for, approve, administer, deliver, and evaluate courses and programs. The institution recognizes the central role of its faculty for establishing quality and improving instructional courses and programs.”

**Standard IIA.2.b, Instructional Programs.** “The institution relies on faculty expertise and the assistance of advisory committees when appropriate to identify competency levels and measurable student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution regularly assesses student progress towards achieving those outcomes.”

**Standard IIA.2.e, Instructional Programs.** “The institution evaluates all courses and programs through an on-going systematic review of their relevance, appropriateness, achievement of learning outcomes, currency, and future needs and plans.”

**Standard IIA.2.f, Instructional Programs.** “The institution engages in ongoing, systematic evaluation and integrated planning to assure currency and measure achievement of its stated student learning outcomes for courses, certificates, programs including general and vocational education, and degrees. The institution systematically strives to improve those outcomes and makes the results available to appropriate constituencies.”

**Standard IIA.2.g, Instructional Programs.** “If an institution uses departmental course and/or program examinations, it validates their effectiveness in measuring student learning and minimizes test biases.”

**Standard IIA.2.h, Instructional Programs.** “The institution awards credit based on student achievement of the course’s stated learning outcomes. Units of credit awarded are consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally accepted norms or equivalencies in higher education.”

**Standard IIA.2.i, Instructional Programs.** “The institution awards degrees and certificates based on student achievement of a program’s stated learning outcomes.”

**Standard IIA.3, Instructional Programs.** “The institution requires of all academic and vocational degree programs a component of general education based on a carefully considered philosophy that is clearly stated in its catalog. The institution, relying on the expertise of its faculty, determines the appropriateness of each course for inclusion in the general education curriculum by examining the stated learning outcomes for the course.”
Standard IIB.1, Student Support Services. “The institution assures the quality of student support services and demonstrates that these services, regardless of location or means of delivery, support student learning and enhance achievement of the mission of the institution.”

Standard IIB.3, Student Support Services. “The institution researches and identifies the learning support needs of its student population and provides appropriate services and programs to address those needs.”

Standard IIB.4, Student Support Services. “The institution evaluates student support services to assure their adequacy in meeting identified student needs. Evaluation of these services provides evidence that they contribute to the achievement of student learning outcomes. The institution uses the results of these evaluations as the basis for improvement.”

Standard IIC, Library and Learning Support Services. “Library and other learning support services for students are sufficient to support the institution’s instructional programs and intellectual, aesthetic, and cultural activities in whatever format and wherever they are offered. Such services include library services and collections, tutoring, learning centers, computer laboratories, and learning technology development and training. The institution provides access and training to students so that library and other learning support services may be used effectively and efficiently. The institution systematically assesses these services using student learning outcomes, faculty input, and other appropriate measures in order to improve the effectiveness of the services.”

Standard IIIA.1.b, Human Resources. “The institution assures the effectiveness of its human resources by evaluating all personnel systematically and at stated intervals. The institution establishes written criteria for evaluating all personnel, including performance of assigned duties and participation in institutional responsibilities and other activities appropriate to their expertise. Evaluation processes seek to assess effectiveness of personnel and encourage improvement. Actions taken following evaluations are formal, timely, and documented.”

Standard IIIA.1.c, Human Resources. “Faculty and others directly responsible for student progress toward achieving stated student learning outcomes have, as a component of their evaluation, effectiveness in producing those learning outcomes.”

Standard IIIA.2, Human Resources. “The institution maintains a sufficient number of qualified faculty with full-time responsibility to the institution. The institution has a sufficient number of staff and administrators with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support the institution’s mission and purposes.”

Standard IIIA.3.a, Human Resources. “The institution establishes and adheres to written policies ensuring fairness in all employment procedures.”

Standard IIIA.5.a, Human Resources. “The institution plans professional development activities to meet the needs of its personnel.”
Standard III A.6, Human Resources. “Human resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of human resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.”

Standard III B.2.b, Physical Resources. “Physical resource planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of physical resources and uses the results of the evaluation as the basis for improvement.”

Standard III C.2, Technology Resources. “Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources and uses the results of evaluation as the basis for improvement.”

Standard III D, Financial Resources. “Financial resources are sufficient to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. The distribution of resources supports the development, maintenance, and enhancement of programs and services. The institution plans and manages its financial affairs with integrity and in a manner that ensures financial stability. The level of financial resources provides a reasonable expectation of both short-term and long-term financial solvency. Financial resources planning is integrated with institutional planning at both college and district/system levels in multi-college systems.”

Standard IV A.2, Decision-Making Roles and Processes. “The institution establishes and implements a written policy providing for faculty, staff, administrator, and student participation in decision-making processes. The policy specifies the manner in which individuals bring forward ideas from their constituencies and work together on appropriate policy, planning, and special-purpose bodies.”

Standard IV B, Board and Administrative Organization. “In addition to the leadership of individuals and constituencies, institutions recognize the designated responsibilities of the governing board for setting policies and of the chief administrator for the effective operation of the institution. Multi-college districts/systems clearly define the organizational roles of the district/system and the colleges.”

Additional Information in Understanding this Notice

An accreditation team of professional peers has evaluated Hartnell College, written a report summarizing its findings, and provided recommendations to the institution to meet Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards. This report and the action letter from the Commission, which specifies the next steps the institution must take, provide a detailed description of the reasons for Probation. All institutions are required to make the evaluation team reports and the action letters available to the public. This is usually accomplished by placing these documents on the college website, and the public is directed to seek these documents from the institution directly. Colleges are invited to prepare a response to this notice, and this information will be posted on the ACCJC website and may be posted on the college website.
Current Status and Expected Accreditation Activities

Hartnell College will be monitored by the Commission and is required to submit two Follow-Up Reports to the Commission, one in March 2014, and the other in March 2015. The Commission will conduct team visits to assess the institution’s compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies. The Commission will review the 2014 institutional report and team report at its meeting in June 2014. If the Commission determines that Hartnell College has demonstrated sufficient compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies, the Commission may act to remove Probation. If the Commission determines that sufficient progress to demonstrate compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or Commission policies has not been made, the Commission may take further action as permitted under the Commission’s “Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions.” The Commission policies can be found in the Accreditation Reference Handbook which is located on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Publications and Policies / All Commission Publications and Policies (or click here).

Helpful Resources for Understanding this Notice

The following resources provide additional information that may be helpful in understanding the Commission’s actions and the accreditation status of Hartnell College:

- A “Statement of Accreditation Status” for Hartnell College is available upon request from the Commission office.

- The Commission’s Accreditation Standards can be found on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Eligibility Requirements & Standards (or click here).


- The “Policy on Commission Actions on Institutions” lists the actions the Commission may apply to institutions under review. It is available in the Accreditation Reference Handbook which is located on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Publications and Policies / All Commission Publications and Policies (or click here).

- The “Policy on Public Disclosure and Confidentiality in the Accreditation Process” describes the Commission’s policy and procedures for making information available to the public. It is available in the Accreditation Reference Handbook which is located on the ACCJC website at: www.accjc.org under Publications and Policies / All Commission Publications and Policies (or click here).