
VVC expects positive results following accreditation review

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VICTORVILLE — Since Victor Valley College received full accreditation without sanction two years ago, its latest major review was held earlier this month and college officials expect the results will remain positive.

A visiting team from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges was on the local campus during the second week of March, evaluating VVC to make any recommendations for compliance.

Superintendent/President Roger Wagner said that while the actual report won't be released until early July, judging from the draft report — released to Wagner alone — he expects they'll "be pleased with the outcomes."

"We're probably going to see four recommendations for compliance-related issues ... None will be real difficult to address, I don't think," Wagner said.

Last time around, the compliance issues VVC faced were the college's long-term fiscal planning and ability to maintain student learning outcomes. Before then, VVC had struggled to stay off sanction with ACCJC, facing a much longer list of recommendations. But those have since been fully addressed, Wagner said, and the coming recommendations will likely be entirely new.

One of them will probably be met before ACCJC's report even comes in, Wagner said. This anticipated recommendation is for VVC to have a board-adopted transfer policy for students moving on to four-year institutions, which is something they can approve at the April board meeting.

Two other expected recommendations deal with the college needing a focus on assessing program outcomes, in addition to institutional and student outcomes.

"We need to review the impact of our funding decisions," Wagner said, noting that the assessment is for both academic and non-academic programs, including departments such as student services and financial aid. "We go through a pretty lengthy process when we allocate budgets for different programs. But what we haven't done is go back and say, 'Now that you awarded funds in this program, what worked or didn't work?' We'll be starting that immediately."

The last possible recommendation the college expects has to do with online courses and requiring "more regular and effective contact with students" in these, Wagner said.

VVC's Senate Distance Education Committee, which recommends academic and professional policies for online courses, has drafted a new plan with these goals in mind that it will soon present to the college's Academic Senate, Wagner said.

Wagner will attend an ACCJC hearing in the last part of June and will be given 10 minutes to appear before the board and explain VVC's progress since the visiting team left. The benefit of having the visit first is that the members on the team are administrators from other junior colleges, making it essentially a peer review, which Wagner said is very constructive.

"There's nobody that knows more about what we do and how we do it than people who are in the same field as we are," Wagner said. "It's really about coming in and helping us improve."

"Hopefully we'll narrow it down to just two possible recommendations," Wagner said, adding that he's pleased that out of the 142 total substandards that VVC is evaluated on, likely only four will be recommended to work on.

About 15 VVC employees representing all of the college's constituency groups make up an Accreditation Steering Committee that's been working year-round to prepare for the ACCJC review. A required Self-Evaluation Review was also released in January.

"I'd like to thank all the hard work that the employees did to make the outcome as good as it was," Wagner said. "Our writing teams and our Accreditation Steering Committee went above and beyond."

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