

VVC now fully accredited

ACCJC lifts sanctions on college after long process

By Charity Lindsey
Staff writer

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VICTORVILLE — Victor Valley College received its long-awaited confirmation of full accreditation without sanction from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges on Monday evening. College officials released the news on Tuesday morning. On and off sanction since 2011, VVC was once facing a long list of ACCJC recommendations. To finally get off the ACCJC's list, the college had to address two critical issues: the college's long-term fiscal planning and student learning outcomes.

ACCJC President Barbara Beno said in the letter VVC received Monday that "the Commission took action to remove Probation."

"When we comply with accreditation standards, it tells us we are doing things intended to serve students and serve them well,"

Superintendent/President Roger Wagner said Tuesday.

Upon placing the college on sanction in July 2014, the ACCJC required VVC to produce a follow-up report to confirm fulfillment of the Commission's recommendations, followed by a site visit by an external evaluation team.

Dr. Beno shared that based on the reports and evidence submitted, the Commission found VVC has addressed the remaining issues and resolved deficiencies in college policies.

A team composed of VVC staff and administration, the College's Accreditation Steering Committee, or ASC, has been meeting the past year to discuss ways to address the ACCJC recommendations. Wagner said that the recommendation regarding student learning outcomes was tackled by working with faculty to make sure they included the outcomes in their evaluations.

"All faculty, staff and administration worked together to showcase the college as an organization where all stakeholders worked tirelessly to promote student success," said Patricia Golder, a VVC English instructor of 26 years and ASC member.

Wagner said the Commission recommendation toward fiscal planning was "the big one," as it addressed VVC's continual budget deficit, and that ASC worked on developing solutions for it.

"I could see as a business person what the structural deficit was 60 days after I was appointed as a trustee, and it was as real then as it is today," board President Joseph W. Brady said. "Almost every community college has somewhat of a structural deficit based on how we receive our funding."

Wagner said that through putting together budget cuts, realignments and a retirement incentive offered to all classifications of staff, the college was able to submit a plan to the state with a balanced budget.

"Poor leadership over a course of time put us in this position," Brady said, explaining that this changed upon Wagner's arrival. "Dr. Wagner was really clear to us that we owned this problem."

As the party most directly affected by the status of accreditation, VVC students were at the very least relieved, as they are now assured their credits are transferable and that VVC will remain viable for the foreseeable future.

"It makes me happy to know accreditation was passed because now my future is promised," VVC liberal arts student Chantel Picon said.

"VVC goes the extra mile for student success through affordable education and excelling in all extracurricular activities," Associated Student Body Council Vice President Jazmin Gailey said. "The college has a bright future ahead, and has the right people in charge."

The next review from the Commission will take place in spring 2017. It will be a comprehensive evaluation to determine if the college's accreditation will be reaffirmed for another seven years.

"I think the board of trustees owes it to the taxpayers, students, and all of our partners that we will never ever put the college in this position again," Brady said.

According to Wagner and ASC members, planning is already underway in preparation for the next big review.

"It's great to have the sanction behind us so that we can focus on preparing for the 2017 reaffirmation," Wagner said.