July 2, 2012

Dr. Jack Daniels, III
President
Los Angeles Southwest College
1600 West Imperial Highway
Los Angeles, CA 90047

Dear President Daniels:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting June 6-8, 2012, considered the institutional Self Study Report, the report of the evaluation team which visited Los Angeles Southwest College Monday, March 12-Thursday, March 15, 2012, and the additional material submitted by the College. The Commission acted to impose Probation effective immediately and to require that Los Angeles Southwest College submit a Follow-Up Report by March 15, 2013. The report will be followed by a visit of Commission representatives.¹

Probation is imposed when the Commission finds that an institution has deviated significantly from Commission Eligibility Requirements. Accreditation Standards or Commission policies, or has failed to respond to conditions imposed upon it by the Commission, including warning. The Commission will specify a time within which the institution must resolve deficiencies and may subject the institution to required reports and evaluation visits. During the probation period, reaffirmation is delayed, but the institution remains accredited and will be reaffirmed when the issues giving rise to the probation are fully resolved and the institution is removed from sanction.

The Commission wishes to convey its concern that the Los Angeles Community College District is out of compliance with Eligibility Requirements 17 and 18 as noted in the recommendations below. The Commission urges the District and the colleges to rectify these issues that are related to the financial planning and distribution of resources of the District and its ability to resolve continuing concerns expressed in the District’s audit. These issues are ongoing and place the District’s colleges at risk.
The Commission is also concerned about the six College recommendations from the 2012 evaluation team. Recommendation 1 addressed the need for regular implementation of the planning process. Recommendation 2 focused on the need of the college website to facilitate communication. Recommendation 3 is directed at the need for services to students, especially those in distance education. Recommendation 4 focused on the need to update library collections. Recommendation 5 is directed at the need for staff development that addresses strategies to meet the diverse learning styles of the students. Recommendation 6 addressed the need for wide and clear communication of the governance structure decisions across constituencies.

The Follow-Up Report should demonstrate that the institution has addressed the recommendations noted below, resolved the deficiencies, and now meets the Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards cited.

**College Recommendation 1**
In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the college validate the current planning model by formally assessing the effectiveness of the process with qualitative and quantitative data. Further, the team recommends the College be attentive to the regular and consecutive implementation of the annual process and document the results for dissemination to the college constituency for the purpose of program improvement. *(IB.3, IB.4, IB.6)*

*The 2006 Recommendation 3 read: The team has found that there is a divergence between plans and subsequent action. Therefore, the team recommends that the college focus greater attention on assessing the currency and effectiveness of all programs and services with particular emphasis on the following areas: a) staff development; b) distance learning; c) technology; d) enrollment management and e) occupational education. The team further recommends that the college incorporate the identified needs and adopted action plans into the Integrated College Operational Plan. (Standards 1A.1, IB.3, IB.7, IIA.1a, IIA.1b, IIA.2b, IIA.2c, IIA.2f, IIA.3, IIA.5, IIC.1a, IIC.2, IIB.3, IIC.1, IIC.2)*

**College Recommendation 2**
In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends that the College maintains a functional website to encourage communication, particularly in the following areas: 1) information on programs and services for students, and 2) information and documentation on governance and other committee activities. *(IIA.2.b, IIA.2.h, IIA.2.i, IIA.6.c)*
College Recommendation 3
In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College review the availability of appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to all students. In particularly, the team urges the College to review the parity of services provided to students in distance education as compared to students on campus. \(IIIB.3.a\)

Recommendation 4 from the 2006 Comprehensive Evaluation read: There is no clear evidence that the college has developed specific strategies to meet the educational needs of the changing demographics of its community. The team recommends that the college intensify its efforts to identify service area needs. The team further recommends that the college develop and implement plans for programs, courses, and services to address identified needs. (Standards \(IA.1, IIA.1a, IB.3a, II.B.4, III.B.1, III.B.2, IIIID.1\))

College Recommendation 4
In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the library regularly update its print and online collections in consultation with discipline faculty. \(IIC.1.a\) The team further recommends that, to meet the stated Institutional Student Learning Outcome in Information Competency, the College implement a cycle of instruction, assessment, and program improvement through the appropriate learning resource and instructional areas of the College. \(IIC.1.b\) Finally, the team recommends that a sustainable funding source be identified for the acquisition and maintenance of learning resource materials. \(IIC.1, IIC.2, IIIID.1.a\)

College Recommendation 5
In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College reviews all aspects of professional development, including key elements of peer review, self-reflection, and continuous review of appropriate pedagogy for the student population. In particular, the completion of faculty evaluations systematically and at stated intervals; engagement in dialogue addressing staff and faculty professional development on various teaching pedagogies and strategies to meet the diverse learning styles of its diverse student population. \(III.A.1.a\)

College Recommendation 6
In order to meet the Standard, the team recommends the College fully utilize the established consultative committee structure by documenting actions and recommendations in agendas, minutes, and other official tools to ensure that dialogues and decisions affecting the College are communicated widely and clearly across the campus constituencies. \(IVA.3\)
District Recommendation 1
In order to meet the Standards and Eligibility Requirements, the teams recommend that the district actively and regularly review the effectiveness of the construction bond oversight structure and the progress in the planned lifting of the moratorium to ensure the financial integrity of the bond programs, and the educational quality of its institutions as affected by the delays of the planned facilities projects. (III.B.1.a, III.C, III.D.2.a, IV.B.1.c, Eligibility Requirements 17 and 18)

District Recommendation 2
In order to ensure the financial integrity of the district and the colleges, and to meet the Standards and Eligibility Requirements, the teams recommend the resolution of the material weaknesses and significant deficiencies cited in the 2010 financial audit be fully effected by the completion of next year’s audit, and appropriate systems be implemented and maintained to prevent future audit exceptions. (III.D.2.a, IV.B.1.c, Eligibility Requirements 17 and 18)

District Recommendation 4
To fully respond to the recommendation first tendered by the Comprehensive Evaluation Team in 2006, and to reflect a realistic assessment of financial resources, financial stability, and the effectiveness of short- and long-term financial planning for the district and the colleges, and in order to meet the Standards and Eligibility Requirements, the teams recommend that the district adopt and fully implement as soon as is practicable an allocation model for its constituent colleges that addresses the size, economies of scale, and the stated mission of the individual colleges. (III.D.1.b, III.D.1.c, III.D.2.c, IV.B.3.c, Eligibility Requirements 17 and 18)

The recommendation for implementing and assessing the impact of an allocation model was first given to the District in 2006, as part of the comprehensive evaluation reports for Los Angeles Southwest College, Los Angeles Harbor College, and West Los Angeles College. Subsequent Commission Concerns for colleges in the district have raised issues connected with Standard III.D. Financial Resources about the effectiveness of short- and long-term financial planning for the district and the colleges. The need to adopt and implement an allocation model is a district recommendation again, as articulated in District Recommendation 4 to Los Angeles Southwest College, Los Angeles Harbor College, and West Los Angeles College from their comprehensive evaluations.

District Recommendation 5
To meet the Standard, the teams recommend that the Board of Trustees make visible, in behavior and in decision-making, their policy role and their responsibility to act as a whole in the public’s interest. Further, the teams recommend continuing professional development for the Board of Trustees to ensure a fuller understanding of its role in policy governance and the importance of using official channels of communication through the chancellor or his designee. (IV.B.1.a)
Dr. Jack Daniels, III  
Los Angeles Southwest College  
July 2, 2012

It should be noted that District Recommendation 4 above reprises an issue that had been raised with the College and District in previous evaluation reviews. I wish to inform you that under U.S. Department of Education regulations, institutions are expected to resolve deficiencies within a two-year period or the Commission must take action to terminate accreditation. The Commission’s Policy and Procedures for the Evaluation of Institutions in Multi-College Districts or Systems clarifies that the integrity of the district falls within the scope of the institution’s accreditation. Los Angeles Southwest College must demonstrate full resolution of District Recommendation 4 and resolve the deficiencies noted by March 2013 or the Commission will be compelled to act. It is imperative that the Los Angeles Community College District cooperate with the College in responding to this deficiency in order to ensure the College can demonstrate its ongoing and sustained compliance with the Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards.

Further, as noted above with the listing of recommendations, College Recommendations 1 and 3 continue recommendations previously given to the college in 2006 recommendations 3 and 4. While Interim Reports and visits indicated the College had addressed the recommendations, the current evaluation team concluded that the College has not continued to meet the Accreditation Standards and reports the deficiencies again in 2012. Los Angeles Southwest College must correct the deficiencies by March 2013 or the Commission will be compelled to act.

Enclosed with this action letter is the proposed Public Disclosure Notice (PDN) for Los Angeles Southwest College. Your comments on it are invited. Federal regulations require the Commission to post a PDN for institutions placed on Probation or Show Cause, or when accreditation is terminated. The PDN is used to inform the public of the reasons for such a severe action. The Commission will post the PDN on the College’s entry in the Directory of Accredited Institutions online at www.accjc.org. The institution is permitted to post a response to the PDN. Please provide the College’s response for posting, if any, by July 31, 2012.

The Evaluation Report that was sent to the institution provides details of the team’s findings with regard to each Eligibility Requirement and Accreditation Standard and should be read carefully and used to understand the team’s findings. The recommendations contained in the Evaluation Report represent the best advice of the peer evaluation team at the time of the visit but may not describe all that is necessary to come into compliance. Institutions are expected to take all action necessary to comply with Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. The Commission wishes to remind you that while an institution may concur or disagree with any part of the team report, Los Angeles Southwest College is expected to use the Evaluation Report to improve the educational programs and services and to resolve issues identified by the Commission.
Dr. Jack Daniels, III  
Los Angeles Southwest College  
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I have previously sent you a copy of the Evaluation Report. Additional copies may now be duplicated. The Commission requires you to give the Evaluation Report and the Commission action letter dissemination to your College staff and to those who were signatories of your College Self Study Report. This group should include the Chancellor, campus leadership, and the Board of Trustees. The Commission also requires that the Evaluation Report, the Self Study Report, and the Commission action letter be made available to students and the public. Placing a copy on the College website can accomplish this.

The College conducted a comprehensive self study as part of its evaluation. The Commission suggests that the plans for improvement of the institution included in its self study efforts be used to support the continuing improvement of Los Angeles Southwest College.

Finally, ACCJC staff is available to assist the College with consultation and advice on the issues identified in the recommendations noted above.

On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express continuing interest in the institution’s educational quality and students’ success. Professional self-regulation is the most effective means of assuring integrity, effectiveness and quality.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.  
President

BAB/tl

cc: Dr. Daniel LaVista, Chancellor, Los Angeles Community College District  
Dr. Daniel Walden, Accreditation Liaison Officer  
Board President, Los Angeles Community College District  
Dr. Pam Eddinger, President, Moorpark College, Team Chair

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1 Institutions preparing and submitting Midterm Reports, Follow-Up Reports, and Special Reports to the Commission should review Guidelines for the Preparation of Reports to the Commission. It contains the background, requirements, and format for each type of report and presents sample cover pages and certification pages. It is available on the ACCJC website under College Reports to ACCJC at: (http://www.accjc.org-reports-accjc).