



**ACCREDITING  
COMMISSION  
for COMMUNITY and  
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association  
of Schools and Colleges*

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July 30, 2014

Dr. Robert Agrella, Special Trustee  
Dr. Arthur Q. Tyler, Chancellor  
City College of San Francisco  
50 Phelan Avenue, Box E200  
San Francisco, CA 94112

Dear Drs. Agrella and Tyler:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACCJC) received from City College of San Francisco (CCSF) a letter dated July 28, 2014, with its request for restoration status, along with the July 28, 2014 Eligibility Report. On July 30, 2014, CCSF submitted an amended Eligibility Report, responding to input from Commission staff about a small number of items that needed further clarification in order for the Eligibility Report to be complete.

The updated Eligibility Report has been reviewed by Commission staff. The staff review determined that CCSF has addressed all elements of the Eligibility Requirements, setting forth CCSF's compliance with those requirements. The CCSF application for restoration status has been accepted.

Verification of the facts and evidence within the Eligibility Report will be undertaken as a part of the on-site comprehensive restoration status evaluation. In your preparation for the upcoming comprehensive restoration status evaluation, we offer this advice concerning submitted evidence:

- The evaluation team will need to have citations to specific references in documents or on websites which provide evidence of the relevant facts being offered. For example, general links to the state chancellor's and the college's curriculum websites, will not be sufficient for team verification of relevant evidence related to program requirements. There should be links which point to the specific sections referenced.
- Use of appropriate quotes in the report narrative will be more beneficial than general links to whole websites and lengthy reports. For example, quotes in the report narrative from sources related to faculty qualifications, with appropriate citation, are preferred over unspecified attachment of the faculty union contract or the state chancellor's minimum qualifications document.
- Overall, links to electronic sources of evidence can be very helpful, but they need to remain unbroken and be in a format that opens reliably.

There were several questions raised by CCSF in the July 28 letter of application for restoration status:

- Is the college accredited now, during the review of the submitted letter of application for restoration status?  
Yes, during the review of the application for restoration status, which occurred prior to the July 31, 2014 termination effective date set by the Commission, the college was accredited, on show cause. With the acceptance of CCSF's application for restoration status noted in this letter, the termination effective date is rescinded, and termination implementation is suspended until the upcoming comprehensive restoration status evaluation is completed; the college is accredited, pending termination. Upon a successful completion of the comprehensive restoration status evaluation, the college will be accredited, on restoration status.
- Given this is a new policy, what is restoration status?  
Restoration status is a status that can be awarded to an accredited institution. Restoration status is of limited duration (two years), during which a member institution seeks to achieve and demonstrate compliance with standards. The designation of the college during restoration status will be accredited, on restoration status.
- What are the standards with which CCSF must be in compliance?  
The 2014 standards are a revised version of the 2002 standards. The standards were reorganized in response to significant member input, but in most respects hold intact the language of the 2002 standards. All member institutions were notified in writing when the 2014 standards would be used in comprehensive evaluations. This information is also posted on the ACCJC website. As CCSF leaders were previously notified, the comprehensive evaluation of CCSF to take place in fall 2014 will utilize the 2002 Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards. In the event that restoration status is awarded, then the comprehensive evaluation two years later will utilize the 2014 Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards. Member institutions are also required to maintain currency with policies of the Commission. Notifications of policy changes are distributed to the field, generally twice per year. Commission Actions on Policy are posted on the accjc.org website, as is the Accreditation Reference Handbook- updated annually- which contains the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, ACCJC Bylaws, and Commission policies.

There were also several concerns raised in the July 28 letter:

- Standard of review:  
The standard of review for CCSF, compliance with standards, is not different from the standard applied to institutions that are on Show Cause (the status of CCSF prior to the acceptance of its application for restoration status). This measure of compliance also applies to institutions seeking candidacy. The ACCJC evaluation teams and Commission are experienced in assessing an institution's compliance with standards, as this is part of the ongoing work of accreditation. Compliance with standards means that an institution meets or exceeds the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. By comparison, substantial compliance with standards (the standard for colleges in good accreditation standing to attain reaffirmation of accreditation) means that an institution meets or exceeds the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies but for a few deficiencies which can be fully resolved in a short period, generally six to twelve months. In either case, the Commission is assessing an institution's compliance with standards.

- Reactivating termination without additional opportunity of appeal:  
The restoration status, like review of Commission action and administrative appeal, is a remedy afforded to a qualified institution as part of a termination action that has happened. The college has already availed itself of the review of Commission action and the appeal procedure for the termination action; thus, no additional review and appeal are granted during the restoration process. However, the normal due process that applies to any comprehensive evaluation will apply, including the ability to review the draft team report for errors of fact, the ability to respond in writing to the final report, and to address the Commission in person prior to its action.
- There are three months remaining for finalization of the college's self evaluation report: CCSF completed its last comprehensive evaluation in 2012, for which it completed a self evaluation report. This report was used by the college in preparing a Show Cause report in 2013. In January 2014, Dr. Tyler stated to the Commission that a CCSF self evaluation was already underway, and that the self evaluation report could be completed during spring, 2014. After the May 20-21, 2014 appeal hearing, before the June 2014 Commission meeting, Dr. Agrella stated that the college could produce a self study report as needed for a comprehensive evaluation, as it was something CCSF was currently working on. Moreover, the college has issued monthly updates and other statements to the public concerning its compliance with standards. The restoration status is a remedy that falls within a short window of time, and the self evaluation report must be finalized in the allotted period.
- The existence of a Special Trustee with Extraordinary Powers (SWEP):  
As previously confirmed in writing, the existence of a duly-appointed SWEP will not disqualify an institution from meeting Eligibility Requirement 3. Of course, the SWEP must demonstrate compliance with standards. Moreover, as the SWEP is inherently a temporary position, compliance with standards during any transition of power to an elected governing board in the restoration period will be important for the college to demonstrate.
- Resource material for the comprehensive restoration status evaluation:  
There is a great deal of resource material concerning comprehensive evaluation teams, reports, and visits currently available to member institutions and the public on the ACCJC website, including the Manual for Institutional Self Evaluation and the Guide to Evaluating Institutions, among other publications. The initial restoration status comprehensive evaluation will differ somewhat in that the purpose is to evaluate both the college's current compliance with standards, and its ability to achieve and/or maintain compliance with the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies within a two year restoration period. A short manual describing differences in process particular to restoration status comprehensive evaluations will be prepared and presented to CCSF in the next few weeks.

During the June 24, 2014 meeting at the ACCJC offices, you specifically requested, in the event of an application for restoration status by CCSF, that the comprehensive restoration status evaluation take place during the week of November 16, 2014, and that the due date for the self evaluation report be four weeks rather than the usual six weeks prior to the evaluation visit. The ACCJC agreed to the week of November 16, 2014 for the comprehensive evaluation visit, and to an October 15, 2014 due date for the self evaluation report. We will proceed with this schedule for the comprehensive restoration status evaluation.

We are pleased that CCSF has taken this decisive step along the pathway of restoring its compliance with standards, and hope this will lead to the college's achievement of restoration status and as the ultimate outcome, reaffirmation of accreditation. Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions as they arise.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara A. Beno".

Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.

*BAB/cms*