February 1, 2012

Dr. David Wain Coon
Superintendent/President
College of Marin
835 College Avenue
Kentfield, CA 94904

Dear President Coon:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting January 10-12, 2012, reviewed the Follow-Up Report submitted by College of Marin and the report of the evaluation team which visited Monday, October 31, 2011. The purpose of this review was to assure that the recommendations made by the evaluation team were addressed by the institution.

The Commission acted to issue Warning and to ask that College of Marin correct the deficiencies noted. The College is required to complete a Follow-Up Report. The report will be followed by a visit of Commission representatives.

Warning is issued when the Commission finds that an institution has pursued a course of action which deviates from the Commission’s Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, or policy to an extent that raises a concern regarding the ability of the institution to meet The Standards. The accredited status of the institution continues during the warning period. Warning is being issued at this time for deficiencies identified in the team report and associated with Recommendations 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 9.

The Commission requires that the Follow-Up Report be submitted by October 15, 2012. The Follow-Up Report should demonstrate that the institution has addressed the recommendations noted below, resolved the deficiencies, and now meets Accreditation Standards.

1 Institutions that will be preparing and submitting Midterm Reports, Follow-Up Reports, and Special Reports to the Commission will want to review the new publication Guidelines for the Preparation of Reports to the Commission. This publication 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: (www.accjc.org/college-reports-accjc).
Recommendation #1
In order to meet standards, the team recommends that the college regularly update all institutional plans and systematically evaluate the effectiveness of all planning and resource allocation processes. The college should communicate to all college stakeholders the results of these assessment activities, and implement identified improvements on a continuous basis to support and improve student learning. Additionally, the team recommends that the college ensure that planning is linked to budgeting for the effective use of its resources. (I.B; I.B.6; I.B.7; III.D.1.a; III.D.3)

Recommendation #2
In order to meet the Commission’s fall 2012 deadline, the team recommends that the college accelerate its efforts to identify and assess measurable student learning outcomes for every instructional, library and student support program. The team further recommends that the college incorporate student learning outcome assessment results into program planning and resource allocation for the improvement of student learning. (II.A.1.a; II.A.1.c; II.A.2.f; II.A.3.a, b; II.B.4; II.C.2)

Recommendation #3
In order to meet standards, the team recommends that the college allocate resources to create a sustainable infrastructure to support a distance education program that can deliver high quality curricula and support student access and success. (II.A.1.b; II.A.2.d; II.B.3.a; III.C.1)

Recommendation #5
In order to meet standards, the team recommends that the college remedy the lack of library services, learning resources and student support services for evening, Indian Valley Campus, and online students. (II.B.3.a; II.C.1.c, ER 14, ER 16)

Recommendation #7
In order to meet standard, the team recommends that the college develop a facilities master plan to ensure the effective utilization and quality of physical resources which are necessary to support its programs and services. (III.B.2.b)

Recommendation #8
In order to meet standards, the team recommends that the college establish and communicate a sustainable technology plan for the acquisition, maintenance and replacement of its infrastructure, equipment, support and training to meet institutional needs. The team further recommends regular evaluation of this plan for its effectiveness in prioritizing and funding current and projected long term technology needs. (III.C.1.a; III.C.1.b; III.C.1.c; III.C.1.d)

Recommendation #9
In order to meet standards, the team recommends that the board focus on developing policies that support the quality, integrity and effectiveness of student learning programs and services. The board should deliberate with due diligence and make timely decisions that are in the best interests of the institution.
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The board should act as a whole and adhere to board policy once a decision has been made, and support the superintendent/president’s authority in administering board policies and procedures. (IV.B.1; IV.B.1.a; IV.B.1.f; IV.B.1.j; IV.B.2; IV.B.2.c)

Recommendations #1, #7, #8, and #9, and the texts of the Evaluation Team Report related to these recommendations, identify issues with integrated planning and board governance. These issues have been subject to several Commission sanctions on College of Marin in the past decade. It is very important that College of Marin address these issues quickly and fully.

I wish to inform you that under U.S. Department of Education regulations, institutions out of compliance with Accreditation Standards or on sanction are expected to correct deficiencies within a two-year period or the Commission must take action to terminate accreditation. College of Marin must correct the deficiencies noted in Recommendations 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 9 by October 2012 or the Commission will be compelled to act.

I have previously sent you a copy of the Evaluation Team Report. Additional copies may now be duplicated. The Commission requires that you give the report and this letter appropriate dissemination to your College staff and to those who were signatories of your report. This group should include campus leadership and the Board of Trustees.

The Commission also requires that the College make all reports and action letters available to students and the public by placing them on the institution’s website. The Follow-Up Report will become part of the accreditation history of the College and should be used in preparing for the next comprehensive evaluation. Should you want an electronic copy of the report, please contact Commission staff.

Finally, ACCJC staff is available to assist the College with consultation and advice on the recommendations identified 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 institutional integrity, effectiveness, and quality.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.  
President

BAB/tl

cc: Dr. Chialin Hsieh, Accreditation Liaison Officer  
    Board President, Marin Community College District  
    Dr. Jose Ortiz, Team Chair