President’s Weekly Briefing—February 8, 2012

College of Marin Receives Warning from Accrediting Agency
In a letter received by the College of Marin Superintendent/President’s Office on Feb. 6, 2012, Dr. Barbara Beno, president of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACCJC/WASC), issued a Warning sanction asking that the college correct deficiencies noted in commission's Follow-Up Report dated Oct. 31, 2011.

Dr. Beno also states that "the accredited status of the institution continues through the warning period."

College of Marin's accreditation was reaffirmed in Jan. 2011 by ACCJC/WASC. The reaffirmation was granted with the requirement that the college demonstrate resolution of nine recommendations by Oct. 15, 2011.

An accrediting team led by Dr. Jose M. Ortiz, superintendent/president of Allan Hancock Community College, visited the COM on Oct. 31, 2011 in order to assess progress towards completing the recommendations. The team's follow-up report found that while the college has made great progress towards resolution of the recommendations, more work is needed on Recommendations 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 9.

ACCJC/WASC is requiring that COM provide a Follow-Up Report demonstrating full resolution of all deficiencies that were identified in the Oct. 31, 2011 Accrediting Team Report. The Follow-Up Report must be submitted to the commission by Oct. 15, 2012.

While the college has made significant progress in meeting all of the accreditation standards, we acknowledge that there is more work to be done as outlined in ACCJC/WASC's recommendations. I believe the college is well on its way towards timely resolution. This will be the highest priority for the college over the next year.

The recent letter from Dr. Beno, the Evaluation Team Report, and other accreditation documents are available online at http://www.marin.edu/com/ODP/Accreditation.htm.

Sweeping Changes in Financial Aid Regulations Will Affect COM Students
New federal and state regulations will impact students applying for financial aid this year. Those who will be affected include: students who repeat courses, some Pell Grant recipients, adult students without a high school diploma or GED, and those who receive a Board of Governors Fee Waiver as part of their financial aid packets.

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These changes come at a time when College of Marin (COM) students are applying for and receiving financial aid in record numbers. Financial aid applications have nearly doubled in the past four years at COM from 2,037 applications in 2006-2007 to 4,026 in 2010-2011. In part due to an increase in need related to the ongoing bad economy, the number of financial aid applications is expected to increase again significantly this academic year. Mid-year applications have already topped 3500 in the third quarter with hundreds more expected in the fourth, fifth and sixth quarters.

The increase in the number of financial aid recipients also has resulted in an increase in the number of students who have been denied financial aid due to unsatisfactory academic progress. According to the College of Marin Financial Aid Office, the number of students who are being denied financial aid due to a lack of academic progress has almost quadrupled since fall 2008 from 103 to 390 students. Many of these students will not return to classes this spring due to a lack of funds.

Other financial aid changes have also gone into effect. Beginning this spring 2012 semester, students will not be allowed to repeat courses indefinitely and continue to receive financial aid. COM students now will receive federal financial aid funding for only one repetition of a previously passed course.

Pell Grant recipients will also be subject to new restrictions. In 2010-2011 approximately 2,100 COM students received $6.6 million in Federal Pell Grants. The House and Senate announced an agreement on December 12, 201 regarding fiscal year 2012 funding for the U.S. Department of Education as part of an omnibus spending bill that covers multiple federal agencies, and includes changes to the Pell Grant program. The agreement worked out by Republicans and Democrats in the omnibus bill maintains the maximum Pell Grant award of $5,550 per year, and includes changes to the program to offset the $1.3 billion funding shortfall left over from Fiscal Year 2011.

The major changes to the Pell Grant include:

- Elimination of the Ability to Benefit (ABT) provision to establish eligibility for Title IV funds, which means new financial aid applicants without a high school diploma or GED will be barred from the Pell Grant program.
- A reduction of the number of years a student can use Pell Grants from nine to six years;
- A reduction of the income allowable to qualify an applicant for a maximum grant under the “automatic zero” expected family contribution calculation from $30,000 to $20,000 a year.

In 2010-2011, nearly 500,000 California community college students received Pell Grants totaling $1.6 billion. Pell Grants are the largest source of financial aid for the state’s community college students. These grants enable the neediest students to obtain a college education. COM students who are receiving Pell Grants are cautioned to plan their academic progress according to the new time constraints. Students planning to transfer to a university and earn a baccalaureate or higher degree must pursue a focused course of study in order to be ensured eligibility for Pell Grants to help pay for their education. In an effort to provide greater support for student success, COM is implementing a number of changes, including stricter enforcement of prerequisites and encouraging students to work with counselors to set and achieve their goals in a timely manner. Other changes are also in place that students should be aware of.

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Students applying for loans should note that the interest subsidy during the six-month grace period has been eliminated for new Stafford Loans made on or after July 1, 2012, and before July 1, 2014. The repayment period still begins six months after the student is no longer enrolled at least half-time, but interest that accrues during this six-month period will be payable by the student rather than subsidized by the federal government.

Also, the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office recently announced an administrative change in the calculation of eligibility for Board of Governors Fee Waivers (BOGFW) for students filing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and qualifying on the basis of financial need. Currently, a student who demonstrates $1 of financial need qualifies for a fee waiver. According to the Chancellor’s Office the new formula will limit eligibility to students whose financial need is at least equal to the enrollment fees for a full-time student (12 units per term). For 2012-2013, minimum need is $1,104. Students will remain eligible for a BOGFW to cover any number of units as long as they demonstrate financial need equal to or greater than the minimum.

Students may apply for financial aid online at www.fafsa.gov using the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The priority deadline for applying is March 2, 2012.

**Data Dashboard Training Workshops Scheduled**

The Data Dashboard is a dynamic menu-driven system developed by the Office of Planning, Research, and Institutional Effectiveness (PRIE) that enables you to access live College of Marin data to research and study various student success factors including student achievement, enrollment, student demographics, cohort tracking for sequential classes, student persistence, course success, and degrees/certificates awarded. It’s available to all College of Marin faculty, staff, and administrators via the COM Intranet.

You’ll find the link to the Dashboard on the folder list on the left side of the Intranet First Page. Due to security issues, in most cases, the Dashboard can only be accessed on campus when you’re signed in to the Marin Domain (college network) on an office computer. If you have an Argos account, you can also open the Data Dashboard under the QuickLaunch tab when you’re logged into Argos. Although you’re free to explore the Dashboard on your own (just click around, you can’t break it!), you may wish to attend one of the training workshops scheduled in February or March. The first half hour of each workshop will be demonstration. The second half hour, you’ll be able to play on your own with PRIE staff available to answer your questions.

**Data Dashboard Training Workshop Schedule**

*No registration is necessary. Just bring your curious mind and your questions!*

*Open to all faculty and staff. Flex credit available.*

*All workshops will be held in BC 101 on the Kentfield Campus.*

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<tr>
<th>Date &amp; Time</th>
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<td>Wednesday Feb. 22, 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Wednesday, March 7, 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.</td>
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For more information feel free to contact PRIE Director Dr. Chialin Hsieh, Kathleen Kirkpatrick, Melody Creel, or Barbara David.
Book Display for Black History Month
In honor of Black History Month the College of Marin Library has a Black history book exhibit on display in the cases located just inside the library on the Kentfield Campus. The books will be on exhibited until the end of February.

Columbia University Admissions Presentation
Columbia University will be giving a free presentation Wednesday, February 8, from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the Learning Resources Center, room 53, Kentfield Campus. The presentation will cover highlights of the university and how some of their best and brightest students have come from College of Marin. Columbia University Admissions Representative Ivonne Rojas will discuss options in the School of General Studies for returning and nontraditional students and how COM students can transfer to one of America’s finest universities. This event is presented by the College of Marin Transfer and Career Center.

For more information, please contact Janice Austin, at (415) 485-9671 or at the Student Services Building, room 202. To speak directly with representative Ivonne Rojas, call (212) 854-2772 or visit www.gs.columbia.edu.

Kudos
College of Marin Social Sciences Professor Robert Ovetz, Ph.D. has been invited to be a blind peer reviewer for article submissions to the academic journal Critical Sociology. Peer reviewing involves evaluation of the articles to maintain publication standards and determine a submission’s suitability for publication.

Moodle Training
Spring Moodle Training sessions are listed below. Each session will comprise 30 minutes of instruction and 20 minutes of implementation. All trainings meet in the COM Library Computer Lab at the back of the Learning Resources Center.

If you are a faculty member, you have a Moodle shell associated with each of your spring 2012 courses, so you may wish to practice attaching documents and images during the training. You can also update your Moodle Profile and set up messaging. Please bring your MyCOM logon information and a flash drive with some of your materials; for example, you may wish to bring a headshot, a syllabus, and an assignment. RSVP to Alisa Klinger if you plan to attend.

Friday, February 10, 2012
Moodle Basics: 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Friday, February 10, 2012
Moodle Open Q & A Session: 11 a.m. to noon
Friday, February 24, 2012
Moodle Communications: 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Friday, March 2, 2012
Moodle Grade Book: 1 p.m. 2 p.m.
Friday, March 16, 2012
Moodle Open Q & A Session: 12:30 p.m.to 1:30 p.m.
Thursday, March 29, 2012
Moodle Basics: 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.
Watercolor Basics and Beyond Group Show
A group show featuring students from COM’s Watercolor Basics and Beyond class will be held on Sunday, Feb. 12, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the San Geronimo Valley Community Center, 6350 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, 94963.

This show came about after Marty Meade’s College of Marin class began to meet at the San Geronimo Valley Community Center. Surrounded by beautiful art each week in the Maurice del Mue Gallery, several of the students expressed a desire to exhibit their work, and so it evolved.

Participating in the exhibit are Cherie Daly, Sandy Dickson, Megan Isador, Holly Biedul, Karen Hooper, Jacqueline Haber, Natalie Sandell, Carrie Fisher-Coppola, Dorie Mohr, Sherri Ortegan, Janet Pigot, Marcelline Mansir, Jerry Richardson, Courtney Jensen, Marilee Rogers, and Marty Meade.

Coping with a Smoke-Free Campus—Updated Location
Bay Area Community Resources will be offering two workshops at the Kentfield Campus on coping with a smoke-free campus. The first workshop will be held Tuesday, Feb. 14, from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the Fine Arts Building, room 201. The second workshop will be held Wednesday, Feb. 15, from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. in Learning Resources Center, room 39. Both sessions will cover tips on getting through the day, resources for quitting, and explanations of how cessation medications work. Snacks and prizes will be provided. Contact Alissa Ralston at (415) 755-2331 or Alissa Ralston for more information.

COM Athletics
Men’s Basketball—Bay Valley Conference, Contra Costa College
Friday, Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m. in Kentfield

Women’s Basketball — Bay Valley Conference, Contra Costa College
Friday, Feb. 10, 5:30 p.m. in Kentfield

Baseball—College of the Sequoias Tournament
Friday and Saturday, Feb. 10 and 11, Times TBA in Visalia

Baseball vs. Reedley College
Friday, Feb. 10, 3 p.m. in Reedley

Baseball vs. College of the Sequoias
Saturday, Feb. 11, 1 p.m. in Visalia

Baseball vs. Monterey College
Tuesday, Feb. 14, 2 p.m. in Kentfield

Baseball vs. Cañada College
Wednesday, Feb. 15, 2 p.m. in Kentfield
Softball vs. Cabrillo College—double header  
Friday, Feb. 10, 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. in Kentfield

Softball vs. San Francisco City College—double header  
Saturday, Feb. 11, 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. in Kentfield

Swimming and Diving—Mariner Invitational  
Friday, Feb. 10, all day in Novato (IVC)

Have a great week!

David Wain Coon, Ed.D.  
Superintendent/President