

SHOW CAUSE VISIT REPORT

NORTHERN MARIANAS COLLEGE

**P.O. Box 501250
Saipan, MP 96950**

**A confidential report prepared for
The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Western Association of Schools and Colleges**

**This report represents the findings of the evaluation team
that visited**

Northern Marianas College

On

October 20 - 22, 2010

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Northern Marianas College Show Cause Visit Team Report

October 20-22, 2010

Introduction and Overview

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, at its June 2010 meeting, reviewed the Report from a Special Visit to the Northern Marianas College Midterm Report in April 2010. The Commission was compelled to issue an order of **Show Cause** because the college was out of compliance with a number of Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards. As stated in the Commission action letter of June 30, 2010:

Show Cause is ordered when the Commission finds that an institution is in substantial non-compliance with its Eligibility Requirements (ERs), Accreditation Standards, or policies or when the institution has not responded to the conditions imposed by the Commission. The Commission requires the institution to show cause why its accreditation should not be withdrawn. In such cases, the burden of proof will rest on the institution to demonstrate why its accreditation should be continued. The Show Cause is ordered for the following reasons: Northern Marianas College is not in compliance with Eligibility Requirements or Accreditation Standards in three key areas: institutional autonomy from outside interference, institutional financial management and integrity, and institutional governance and accountability. Specifically, the College is out of compliance with Eligibility Requirements 3, 4, 5, 17, 18 and 21 and significant parts of Standards I.A, I.B, II.A, II.B, III.A, III.D, and IV.B.

The same action letter further states “...the Show Cause Report should demonstrate that the College fully meets all of Standards I.A, I.B, II.A, II.B, III.D, and IV.B, fully meets Standards II.A.7a, and Standard II.B.3.f and has resolved the specific deficiencies referenced in all of the recommendations made by the April 2010 Special Visit team...”.

Accreditation History

Northern Marianas College's recent accreditation history is outlined to provide context to the April 2010 Special Visit Report. The college underwent a comprehensive evaluation in October, 2006. As a result of that evaluation, the Commission took action at its January 2007 meeting to impose **Probation** and to require the institution to correct several deficiencies. The college submitted a Progress Report in March 2007 and a second Progress Report in October 2007. The October report was followed by an evaluation team visit. At its meeting of January 2008, upon review of the college reports and the October 2007 evaluation team report, the Commission acted to impose **Show Cause** on Northern Marianas College. The Commission required the college to submit a Special Report in March 2008 on its actions to resolve some of the deficiencies identified by the accreditation teams. It was also required to submit a Show Cause Report, detailing why its accreditation should not be terminated, by October 15, 2008.

At its June 2008 meeting, the Commission acted to accept the Northern Marianas College March 2008 Special Report and continue the college on Show Cause. Because the institution had not addressed the findings of its external audit in a timely and effective manner, the college was also required to submit a Special Report on October 15, 2008, on its resolution of the 2007 fiscal year external audit findings. The report was to demonstrate that the college had resolved its recommendations on integrated planning and systematic program review (Recommendations 1 and 2). The report was followed by the November 2008 visit of Commission representatives.

At its January 2009 meeting, the Commission reviewed Northern Marianas College Show Cause Report of October 2008 and the report of the evaluation team which visited the college in November 2008. The Commission took action to accept Northern Marianas College Show Cause report, continue the college on Show Cause, and require the college to submit a Show Cause Report by April 1, 2009, with a visit of Commission representatives to follow.

At its June 2009 meeting, the Commission reviewed Northern Marianas College Show Cause Report of April 2009 and the report of the evaluation team that visited the college in April 2009. The Commission took action to accept the Northern Marianas College Show Cause report, **remove** the college from Show Cause and **reaffirm** the college's accreditation.

At its January 2010 meeting, the Commission reviewed the Northern Marianas College Mid-Term Report of October 2009 and the report of the evaluation team that visited the college in October 2009. The Commission took action to accept the mid-term report. Additional information received from Northern Marianas College and news reports from Saipan, the Commission also took action to require a Special Visit to determine whether the institution was still in compliance with the following Eligibility Requirements and Standards: ER 3 - Governing Board, ER 4 - Chief Executive Officer, ER 5 - Administrative Capacity, ER 21 -Relations with the Accrediting Commission, and Standards I.A, III.A and IV.A and B.

At its June 2010 meeting, the Commission reviewed the team report from the April 2010 Special Visit. The Commission took action to place the college on **Show Cause** and require a visit to determine whether the institution complied with Eligibility Requirements 3, 4, 5, 17, 18 and 21 and fully met Standards I.A, I.B, II.A, II.B, III.A, III.D, and IV.B, and specifically Standard II.A.7.a and Standard II.B.3.f and whether the institution had resolved the deficiencies referenced in all the recommendations of the April 2010 Visiting Team.

October 2010 Show Cause Visit

An evaluation team visit was conducted on October 20-22, 2010, by Dr. Douglas B. Houston, Team Chair, Superintendent/President of Lassen College; Dr. Louise Pagotto, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at Kapi'olani College, Dr. Nancy Quam-Wickham, Professor and Chair of the History Department at California State University,

Long Beach and Dr. Worku Negash, Vice President for Administrative Services at Mission College, Santa Clara.

NMC was prepared for the visit and the team room had all the necessary documentation. The team met with the Board of Regents, the interim College President, Dean of Academic Programs and Services, Dean of Student Services, Director of Institutional Effectiveness/ALO, Chief Financial & Administrative Officer, Human Resources Director, Budget Officer, Faculty Senate, ASNMC Student Government and the Staff Senate, and with members of the college's various governance committees. The team also received numerous unsolicited emails and personal visits from current and former employees as well as reviewed numerous articles in the local newspapers the Saipan Tribune and the Marianas Variety.

Noteworthy was the dedication and availability of the governing regents despite some individual personal emergencies. Also noteworthy was the accessibility and responsiveness of the Institutional Effectiveness staff. The Director of Institutional Effectiveness/ALO and his team provided outstanding support, enabling the evaluation team to conduct a great deal of inquiry in a short visit.

General Observations

The team noted that the campus climate is very different than that observed in the April visit. Regents, faculty, staff and students all indicated that the campus is more settled and gone were the confusion, fear and unrest previously observed. The institution had a sense of urgency regarding its accreditation status and the work necessary to secure it. Clear progress had been made on the all but one of the recommendations from the previous visit; however, while the institution has indeed made progress on the ten recommendations, it was only fully meeting three of them. Moreover, the work has generally been ad hoc in nature and the college has not yet restarted the various governance committees and processes that it had developed in response to previous accreditation recommendations.

The institution is commended for its aggressive response to the Commission's findings and recommendations from the April visit. However, although Northern Marianas College has made significant progress since the April visit, it is still not in compliance with Eligibility Requirements 3, 4, 17 and 18 and Standards of Accreditation I.B, II.A, III.D and IV.B in the same three key areas (Institutional Autonomy from Outside Interference, Institutional Financial Management and Integrity, and Institutional Governance and Accountability).

Institutional Autonomy from Outside Interference

Team's Evaluation of Institution's Response to Recommendation #1 (April 2010)

To meet the Eligibility Requirement and Standards the governing board should exercise its authority to govern the college and protect the college from undue influence by the Commonwealth government including the government's ability to line-item dictate the college budget. The governing board should act autonomously to govern the college free from indirect interference by Commonwealth governor or members of the legislature; this will defend the college from the vagaries of changes in political power. (ER 3, Standards IV.B.1.a, IV.B.1.c.)

The team confirmed that the board chair and interim president initiated meetings with various elements of the CNMI government, particularly the Governor and the Legislature, to apprise them of the role and needs of the college and to justify appropriations funding for the college. College regents and administrators have represented the college at numerous budget sessions, including a Senate budget session held on Tinian on September 3, 2010. As a result of these efforts, Senate action and a Governor's Executive Order exempted the college from the mandated government shutdown that resulted when the new fiscal year started without an adopted budget.

The Board of Regents and the interim president have aggressively responded to recent legislative attempts to interfere with the operations of the college and undermine its institutional autonomy. The institution is pursuing the development of a Memorandum of Agreement with the Commonwealth government that ensures the college's autonomy. This effort is commendable but until and unless brought to fruition, the effort will not ensure sustainable autonomy or fiscal stability. **This recommendation has been partially met.** The team is concerned that the solutions have been ad hoc; the institution has not shown that these strategies are sustained or sustainable.

Team Evaluation of Eligibility Requirements 3 & 17; Standard IV.B.1

The institution is pursuing a Memorandum of Agreement with the Commonwealth government to ensure the college's autonomy. However, the CNMI Constitution already mandates that the college Board of Regents "shall have autonomy in the administration of its affairs" and further that the college is to receive a base-level of funding equal to 1% of the Commonwealth's general revenues. It was not clear to the team why the institution determined it necessary to pursue an agreement to secure the very autonomy and funding guarantees that are already provided by the Commonwealth Constitution.

Moreover, despite this constitutional base-line funding guarantee, the institution regularly participates in legislative appropriations hearings to justify funding requests and staffing and operational plans. Under current practice, the institution is regularly exposed to governmental micro-management. The governing board and interim president have worked aggressively to educate various elements of the CNMI government, particularly the Governor and the Legislature, of the role and needs of the college. As a result of these efforts, Senate action and a Governor's Executive Order exempted the college from a recent mandated government shutdown.

The team is concerned that while these efforts have been successful, they are nevertheless reactionary and in response to the current political and fiscal climate; until and unless this college establishes a relationship with the Commonwealth government that recognizes the institution's autonomy in organizing to meet its mission, the college will continue to struggle with sustainable autonomy and fiscal stability. **The college partially meets Eligibility Requirements 3 and 17 and Standards IV.B.1.a and IV.B.1.c.**

Recommendation # 1 (formerly April 2010 Recommendation #1)

To meet the Eligibility Requirement and Standards, the team recommends that the governing board develop and implement policies or regulations that ensure its authority to govern the college free from direct and indirect influence by the Commonwealth government and assure the long-term fiscal stability of the institution. For example, the institution should secure commonwealth regulations that ensure formulaic appropriations consistent with the constitutional guarantees. (ER 3, ER 17, Standard IV.B.1.a, IV.B.1.c)

Team's Evaluation of Institution's Response to Recommendation # 2 (April 2010)

To meet the Eligibility Requirement, the team recommends that the college ensure that Commission policies are followed at all times and that the institution respond to Commission requests truthfully and accurately. (ER 21)

The team confirmed that the institution's Show Cause Report was developed broadly and collaboratively, which was chief among the concerns for this Eligibility Requirement in the previous visit. **This recommendation has been met.**

Team Evaluation of Eligibility Requirement 21

The team confirmed that the college has engaged faculty, staff, administrators, and the Board of Regents in a number of training sessions related to accreditation, both prior to and since the April visit. Interviews with regents, administrators, faculty and staff reveal that the college has a more effective understanding of the expectations and process for accreditation than was observed in the last visit. **The college meets Eligibility Requirement 21.** However, the team notes that the institution's response on several of the shortcomings identified in the April report still reflect a shallow understanding of the eligibility requirements and accreditation standards.

Institutional Financial Management and Integrity

Team's Evaluation of Institution's Response to Recommendation # 3 (April 2010)

To meet the Eligibility Requirement and Standard, the team recommends that the college integrate financial planning with institutional planning and ensure that fiscal resources are adequate to support student learning programs and institutional effectiveness so that financial stability is maintained. (ER 17, Standard III.D.1.a)

The institution is starting to again use its planning and budgeting systems; it has also recognized that there is a need for better integration of planning and budgeting. The college has previously made commendable progress in its program review process, completing its third cycle. With the successes in the program review arena, the college should now redirect its efforts to develop and strengthen the integration of institutional planning with program review and resource allocation. The planning, program review and resource allocation processes are disparately applied at this time. **This recommendation has been partially met.**

Team Evaluation of Eligibility Requirement 17; Standard III.D.1.

The college generates its revenues from four sources: government apportionment, tuition and fees, Federal grants and the college foundation. The college essentially secures its annual budget requirements on a year-to-year basis, garnering almost 40% of its total revenues from Commonwealth apportionment. For fiscal year 2011, the college worked aggressively within the economic and political climate to secure sufficient appropriations funding. This is especially significant given the austerity measures the government has applied to mitigate the severe economic downturn, including 16-hour work reduction and unpaid holidays.

The team reaffirmed at the time of the visit that the college had sufficient resources to carry out its mission. It had secured appropriations funding for FY-2011 and enrollments had increased by 25% compared to FY-2010. The team applauds these achievements, both for the outreach success and for and the associated revenues. To ensure fiscal stability, however, the college needs to pursue reliable and continuing funding. It should consider working with the Commonwealth government to secure a legislated formula-based funding model that implements the constitutional funding guarantee.

The Budget and Finance office administers timely expenditure of operating budgets, providing individual managers with budget-to-actual reports on a monthly basis. For consistent application and training purposes, the college budget development process should be documented and widely disseminated. **The college partially meets Eligibility Requirement 17; it meets Standard III.D.1.a.** The institution has demonstrated a funding base and financial resources sufficient for the current year; however the team found no evidence of long-term plans for financial development adequate to support student learning programs and services, to improve institutional effectiveness, and to assure financial stability.

Recommendation # 2 (formerly April 2010 Recommendation #3)

To meet the Standards, the team recommends that the college integrate financial planning and resource allocation with institutional planning to ensure that fiscal resources are adequate to support student learning programs and services. (ER 17)

Team's Evaluation of Institution's Response to Recommendation # 4 (April 2010)

To meet the Eligibility Requirement and Standards, the team recommends that the college assure the financial integrity and responsible use of its financial resources and ensure that the financial management system has appropriate control mechanisms and widely disseminates dependable and timely information for sound financial decision-making.

The college must also correct noted audit findings.

(ER 18, Standard III.D.2, III.D.2.a, d, e)

The college has made some progress to improve its financial management systems. The team has verified existence of draft control mechanisms and forms, but they are awaiting review by governance bodies and final approval by the Board of Regents. Over the years, the college has been cited with several audit findings, particularly in regards to federal program compliance requirements. The institution had not corrected the previously noted audit findings despite a September 30, 2010, self-imposed deadline.

This recommendation has not been met.

Team Evaluation of Eligibility Requirement 18; Standard III.D.2

Over the years, the college has been cited with several audit findings, particularly in regards to federal program compliance requirements. While some corrective action has been taken, despite a September 30, 2010, self-imposed deadline, the team was not able to verify or find evidence of corrective action on some audit findings (ex. Finding 2009-1, Finding 2009-3, Finding 2009-4). **The college meets Standards III.D.2.a, III.D.2.b and III.D.2.e; it does not meet Eligibility Requirement 18 and Standard III.D.2.d.**

The team recognizes the institution's aggressive efforts to secure appropriations funding for the current fiscal year, and for ensuring that Commonwealth austerity measures did not jeopardize institutional programs and services. That being said, the team is nevertheless concerned for the college's long-term fiscal stability because it is required to respond to annual legislative hearings and political pressures. Moreover, the federal audit findings have not yet been corrected.

Recommendation # 3 (formerly April 2010 Recommendation #4)

To meet the Eligibility Requirement and Standards, the team recommends that the college assure the financial integrity and responsible use of its financial resources and ensure that the financial management system has appropriate control mechanisms for sound financial decision-making. The college must also correct noted audit findings. (ER 18, Standard III.D.2.d)

Institutional Governance and Accountability

Team's Evaluation of Institution's Response to Recommendation # 5 (April 2010)

To meet the Eligibility Requirement and Standard, the team recommends that the governing board immediately initiate a search and hire a qualified chief executive officer (CEO) and ensure that the CEO has full-time responsibility to the institution and possesses the requisite authority to administer board policies. (ER 4, Standard IV.B.1.j)

The interim president continues in her position and does not appear to have responsibilities outside the office of the president. At the time of the visit, the search for the permanent president was still in progress and nearing completion with two candidates having been submitted to the Board of Regents for final consideration.

Even though the search process is progressing and is essentially on schedule, the institution still has an interim CEO. The team noted that the institution seems to have a general sense of inertia, many significant decisions and activities, including making numerous organizational structure and process design decisions, are awaiting the employment of the new president. **This recommendation has not been met.**

Team Evaluation of Eligibility Requirement 4; Standard IV.B.1.j.

The team affirmed that the governing board had been trained and understood the governing board's role as policy-making body and to hold the institution's chief executive accountable for institutional effectiveness and enforcement of policy. The regents understand their responsibilities to appoint a qualified CEO.

At the time of the visit, the college was in the final stages of completing its search for a new CEO. The procedures and policies are consistent with standards for the recruitment and hiring of college presidents: a search committee with membership from all campus constituencies was formed with approval of the Board of Regents; this committee evaluated applications and forwarded recommendations to the governing board for the final decision. **The college does not yet meet Eligibility Requirement 4 and Standard IV.B.1.j;** it will when a qualified CEO is hired and delegated the requisite authority to administer the institution.

Recommendation # 4 (formerly April 2010 Recommendation #5)

To meet the Eligibility Requirement and Standard, the team recommends that the governing board hire a qualified chief executive officer (CEO) with full-time responsibility to the institution and who possesses the requisite authority to administer board policies. (ER 4, Standard IV.B.1.j)

Team's Evaluation of Institution's Response to Recommendation # 6 (April 2010)

To meet the Eligibility Requirement and Standards, the team recommends that the college ensure that the administrative staff of the college has the appropriate preparation and experience to provide administrative services; this includes the college chief executive. The governing board should delegate the authority to college administration to operate

the college and hold the administration accountable for institutional effectiveness and for adhering to adopted policies and governance processes. (ER 5, Standards III.A.3.a, IV.B.1.j, IV.B.2.a, b, c, d, e)

The team observed that virtually all of the administrative positions have been staffed with only a few in an acting capacity. **This recommendation has been partially met** with the following qualification: as of the date of this report, the search is not yet concluded for the college president. Moreover, the team expresses concern that nearly all of the other administrators are new to their assignments; they are not yet fully trained nor have they been delegated full responsibilities for their positions.

Team Evaluation of Eligibility Requirement 5; Standards III.A.3.a, IV.B.1.j, IV.B.2.a-e
The institution has made significant progress in filling various full-time administrative positions. Two new deans (which were acting at the time of the last visit) are now full time: Dean of Academic Programs and Services and Dean of Student Services. The Nursing program has filled its position of Department Chair. Of nine Division Head positions, only two are “acting.” Of the six Department Chair positions, only one is “acting” and this due to the promotion of the former Chair to Dean of Academic Programs and Services. Of the fourteen Director positions, only three are “acting” and of those, two are serving in dual additional administrative capacities. Given these achievements in hiring, **The college meets Eligibility Requirement 5.** That having been said, in most cases the administrators and managers are new to their roles. The college could benefit from a formal mentorship program to train and retain its administrative staff. It might also consider the value of such a mentoring program in recruiting and promoting from within. Such a formal program would demonstrate the college’s commitment to ongoing professional development as well as its recognition of the need to develop some institutional stability within the ranks of its administration and staff, thereby allowing it to weather changes at the senior levels.

The team found evidence that the college has adhered to its hiring policies. Performance evaluation of all employees occurs on their anniversary date. The Human Resources Department furnishes appropriate training to employees on confidentiality in hiring, sexual harassment, FERPA regulations, and equal employment opportunity. Recruitment policies have changed as now all hiring recommendations go to Deans of respective departments before being forwarded to the president’s office. **The college meets Standard III.A.3.a.**

The members of the Board of Regents have undergone a series of formal trainings and has established an informal “Lunch Training Session.” In its Show Cause report the institution indicated that these Lunch Training Sessions are “bi-weekly” but session minutes of the sessions indicate that this schedule has not been met. In interviews, regents indicated that they more clearly understand their roles and are now committed to delegating to the CEO the authority to administer the college. Policies are being drafted that address the roles and responsibilities of the regents, including one that limits the authority of the Board, another that establishes training requirements and yet another for disciplinary action in the face of misconduct. The interim president reported that she has

occasionally reminded the regents that she is the one responsible for college administration and that their contact with college staff must be through her. As previously noted, **the college does not meet Standard IV.B.1.j; it meets Standard IV.B.2** although there are indications of the need for continued training and emphasis.

See Recommendation #4

Team's Evaluation of Institution's Response to Recommendation # 7 (April 2010)

To fully meet the Standards, the team recommends that the college restore ongoing, collegial, self-reflecting dialogue about the continuous improvement of institutional processes. The college should provide evidence that planning is broad based and offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies. (Standards I.B.4, I.B.6)

In the course of writing the Show Cause report, the institution has engaged in significant broad-based reflective dialog regarding questions of compliance with ACCJC standards. However, the team is concerned that this dialog has been episodic and that the institution has not yet engaged in self-reflective dialog about the continuous improvement of institutional processes. Rather, the team found no evidence that the college systematically reviews its institution processes. **This recommendation has been partially met.** While the college has developed considerable momentum in meeting these standards, there is no evidence of sustained efforts to systematize the planning, review and assessment cycle.

Team Evaluation of Standard I.B.4; I.B.6

During the previous visit, it was noted that the college was not using its various governance and decision-making processes as outlined in the *Institutional Excellence Guide*. Interviews with key administrators suggest that current practices still do not follow the institution's adopted decision-making systems. For example, the Institutional Excellence Guide indicates that decision making is to flow to and from the College Council through the central governance groups of Planning, Program Review and Outcome Assessment Committee (PROAC) and Budget and Finance Committee (BAFC) and from there to constituent groups. However, in current practice it is the "Management Team" (the president's Cabinet augmented with constituent representatives) that is initiating planning and budgeting decisions. By all accounts, the College Council, the institution's central governance group, has not met as frequently as members of the college community would like. The infrequency of College Council meetings has contributed to delays in the approval and implementation of the many policies drafted to resolve shortcomings cited in prior visits.

The college governance is implemented through a number of campus-wide bodies, standing committees and working groups, among them are: College Council, Academic Council, PROAC, BAFC, Management Team, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and the Associated Students of Northern Marianas College (ASNMC). Analysis of the membership in the major campus governance/advisory groups identified a high degree of overlapping membership.

The opportunity for input on all aspects of the college's endeavors is evident, as long as the key groups meet on a regular basis. Interviews revealed, however, that the overlapping of committee membership has led to numerous scheduling conflicts bringing meetings of these governance groups to a near halt. As a result, the institution has resorted to ad hoc meetings to ensure broad-based participation in decision-making. For example, the most recent planning efforts have included virtually the entire campus participating in a Planning Summit (172 attendees); on another occasion, all faculty, staff and student employees attended the Professional Development Day that included a discussion of accreditation concerns.

However, the team found no evidence of sustained processes for continued broad-based planning efforts, and more importantly, of systematic mechanisms for assessing, modifying, and improving these processes. Interviews with the Director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness confirmed that the college had not formally evaluated its planning or governance processes. Minutes of PROAC meetings reflect that there has been some discussion of the limitations of the current program review system and the number of programs completing both forms of the program review has decreased significantly with each successive cycle. These data indicated a need to re-assess the current process. The current separation of processes for assessing programs and for determining budget allocations may also have contributed to the low completion rates of program review. As a result, the institution is pursuing a mechanism to tie the budget allocation process to program review by modifying the program review forms that serve as a budget plan.

Inasmuch as it has developed strategies and processes to address the planning process, **the college partially meets Standard I.B.4.** That having been said, the college has developed a reliance on ad hoc processes to the detriment of documented planning and decision-making processes and standing campus governance bodies. The college should consider consolidating some of its governance structures to ensure a sustainable system of governance and planning. Moreover, the institution must systematically review its planning and resource allocations processes, improving as appropriate. Accordingly, **the college does not meet Standard I.B.6.**

Recommendation # 5 (formerly April 2010 Recommendation #7)

To fully meet the Standards, the team recommends that the college restore ongoing, collegial, self-reflecting dialogue that results in the institutionalization of college processes and ensures their continuous improvement. (Standards I.B.4, I.B.6)

Team's Evaluation of Institution's Response to Recommendation # 8 (April 2010)

To meet the Standard, the team recommends that the college ensure that faculty distinguish between personal conviction and professional views and that information is presented fairly and objectively. (Standard II.A.7.a)

Since the April visit, the institution has engaged in robust, campus-wide professional development regarding faculty duty to distinguish between personal conviction and

professional views. However, there has been no formative evaluation to determine whether the institution is ensuring that faculty practice what has been taught in this regard. The team was assured that these practices were no longer taking place.

The college's efforts in this regard have been episodic and seem to have been held primarily in response to the tensions generated by last year's events. Most individuals interviewed remarked on a campus climate of improved civility. However, in many interviews as well as in evidence submitted by the college, there are suggestions of persistent problems in this area. Particularly troubling are issues of comments made with interviews BOR members, some students, and selected staff, which point to continued tensions and "negativity" among campus community members.

This recommendation has been partially met. The institution needs to proactively verify that faculty are abiding by institutional policy in this regard.

Team Evaluation of Standard II.A.7.a.

Written policies governing the presentation of personal conviction exist, foremost in the Faculty Employment Contract: "Assiduously avoiding any exploitation of students, they present in their actions as in their persons examples of the highest standards of scholarly discipline." The team found evidence that some formal and informal presentations on this issue have occurred. Interviews indicated that, on at least one recent instance, a faculty member was disciplined for violating this policy. Yet at the same time, the institution indicated that regular and consistent training is needed. **The college partially meets Standard II.A.7.** The college should assess the effectiveness of its training and consider ongoing professional development in this area.

Recommendation # 6 (formerly April 2010 Recommendation #8)

To meet the Standard, the team recommends that the college assess to ensure that faculty, staff, administrators and regents, all distinguish between personal conviction and professional views and that information is presented fairly and objectively.
(Standard II.A.7.a)

Team's Evaluation of Institution's Response to Recommendation # 9 (April 2010)

To meet the Standard, the team recommends that the college maintain student records securely and confidentially and that it publish and follow established policies for release of student records. (Standard II.B.3.f)

The institution admits in its report that it was not possible to identify which employee had violated policy by releasing protected student records, staff are nevertheless to be commended for their aggressive response to this concern. There has been substantial training for associated faculty and staff and robust security protocols developed. **This recommendation has been met.**

Team Evaluation of Standard II.B.3.f

The team commends the exhaustive corrective actions taken on this item by the Student Services office. The team reviewed draft documents that address this recommendation. The work completed by the Student Services office is now awaiting review and endorsement by college governance bodies and final approval by the Board of Regents.

The Student Record Policies and Procedures Task Force has drafted revisions to the student record handling policies and procedures, prepared forms, secured signatures from permanent and part-time staff acknowledging confidentiality of student records and provided training to staff. **The college meets Standard II.B.3.f.**

Team's Evaluation of Institution's Response to Recommendation # 10 (April 2010)

To meet the Standard the team recommends that governing board engage training on the proper role and conduct of regents, general governing board relations and practice, college policy and Accreditation Standards and Commission Policy and adhere to its role in establishing policy and strategic-level decision-making; in accordance with its own policy. (Standards IV.B.1, IV.B.1.b, e, j, h)

The team found evidence that the regents are more articulate and more clearly understand the role of the governing board and their individual roles as regents. The Board also identified the need, in draft policy, for a commitment to new regent orientation and on-going training. **This recommendation has been met.**

Team Evaluation of Standard IV.B.1; IV.B.1.b,e,j,h.

The institution is to be commended for the depth of training it has provided to governing board regents. Moreover, the regents themselves are to be individually commended for their efforts to make themselves available to the team during the visit, three of whom attended in person or via technology systems despite family emergencies. The college response to this recommendation has been positive thus far. The governing board has undertaken substantial training; draft policies are currently being reviewed by legal counsel. **The college meets Standards IV.B.1, and IV.B.1.b,e,j,h.** but essentially on a one-time basis.. The team expressed concern that the governing board carry through the plans to revise college. Moreover the governing board could benefit from an assessment to verify that Regent training is sustained, ongoing and, more importantly, effective.