



**ACCREDITING  
COMMISSION  
for COMMUNITY and  
JUNIOR COLLEGES**

*Western Association  
of Schools and Colleges*

10 COMMERCIAL BOULEVARD  
SUITE 204  
NOVATO, CA 94949  
TELEPHONE: (415) 506-0234  
FAX: (415) 506-0238  
E-MAIL: [accjc@accjc.org](mailto:accjc@accjc.org)  
[www.accjc.org](http://www.accjc.org)

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February 7, 2014

Dr. Sharon Hart, President  
Northern Marianas College  
P.O. Box 501250  
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear President Hart:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting January 8-10, 2014 reviewed the Show Cause Report submitted by Northern Marianas College, supplemental materials provided by the college, the statement by college representatives, and the report of the evaluation team which visited the College October 21-22, 2013. The purpose of this review was to determine whether Northern Marianas College (NMC) meets Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards at a level sufficient to remain accredited, and whether NMC has made changes and improvements required by the Commission action letter of February 11, 2013, which placed the College on Show Cause. The Commission also reviewed the College's Closure Report.

The Commission found that NMC has resolved the deficiencies that were identified in the February 11, 2013 action letter. The Commission acted to **remove Show Cause, and reaffirm accreditation**. The Commission also acted to require NMC to include in its **Midterm Report, due in October 2015**, information showing how the College has sustained the recent changes made (outlined below) to continue to meet accreditation standards.<sup>1</sup>

Accreditation is reaffirmed when the Commission finds an institution substantially meets or exceeds the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies. In its Midterm Report, NMC needs to demonstrate that the recently established policies, procedures and implementation activities remain in place and that compliance with Accreditation Standards has been sustained.

NMC made changes to meet the following Accreditation Standards: II.C.2, III.A.1, III.A.2, IV.A.2, IV.B.1.a, IV.B.1.j, IV.B.2, and IV.B.2.c as noted in Recommendations 2, 3, and 8 from the 2012 Evaluation Team Report. The College reported, and the team verified, that in the general area of governance and decision making, NMC had changed the composition of the Board of Regents by removing Honorary Regents; changed its governance

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structure from a shared governance model to a participatory governance structure which codifies the role of the president; and facilitated legislative changes that make the College mission a responsibility of the college, not the legislature.

The minimum qualifications of faculty have been established and utilized in the hiring process. Learning outcomes in information literacy have been established and assessed, and all administrative vacancies have been filled.

A responsibility of an accredited college is to adhere to all Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, and Commission policies at all times. Northern Marianas College has demonstrated that it currently meets those requirements, but many of the college practices and policies that have caused the institution to come into compliance with accreditation requirements were only recently established. **The Commission therefore requests that the College Midterm Report provide evidence that these changes have been sustained, and provide a college analysis of how well they are working.**

The Show Cause Team 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.

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

The Commission also requires that the College's Show Cause Report, the Show Cause Team Report, and this Commission action letter be made available to students and the public by placing a copy on the College website. *Please note that in response to public interest in disclosure, the Commission now requires institutions to post accreditation information on a page no more than one click from the institution's home page.*

On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express continuing interest in the institution's educational programs and services. Professional self-regulation is the most effective means of assuring integrity, effectiveness, and educational quality. Also on behalf of the Commission,

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I wish to congratulate the college on successful resolution of its (prior) deficiencies and encourage the college to maintain its quality through continuous self-assessment, and analysis, so that the new policies and practices become institutionalized at Northern Marianas College.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.  
President

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<sup>1</sup>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/college-reports-accjc>).