

July 20, 2015

Dr. Diane Carnahan  
President  
Teachers College of San Joaquin  
PO Box 213030  
Stockton, CA 95213-9030

RE: WSCUC Interim Report, Spring 2015

Dear President Carnahan:

At its meeting by conference call on July 16, 2015, a panel of the Interim Report Committee (IRC) convened to consider the Interim Report submitted by Teachers College of San Joaquin (TCSJ) on March 1, 2015. The panel reviewed your Interim Report, the Commission letter of March 7, 2014, and the report of the Special Visit team that conducted an on-site review October 1-4, 2013.

The panel appreciated the opportunity to discuss the report with you; ALO/Director of Institutional Research Sylvia Turner; Assistant Superintendent Jane Steinkamp; Advisor in Graduate Studies Crescentia Thomas; and Board Member Gary Dei Rossi. The conversation was very informative and helped the panelists better understand the progress the institution has made in addressing the areas cited in the Commission letter.

The panel found TCSJ's Interim Report to be well structured, clearly focused, and detailed. The panel praised the considerable improvement that has taken place since the Special Visit in 2013. In particular, the panel commended TCSJ for hiring a new president within the scheduled timeframe; for its ongoing work with a consultant from the Association of Governing Boards (AGB); and for its participation in AGB activities and conferences. The panel also praised TCSJ for its genuine commitment to the development of a higher education culture. While the college is making progress, the panel encouraged TCSJ to continue its efforts to engage with other institutions and organizations of higher education to keep abreast of current trends and issues.

The March 7, 2014 Commission letter identified several areas that required attention and further development by TCSJ: board governance; appointment of a new president; and projected budget for implementing the initiatives in the strategic plan. The Interim Report Committee noted significant and meaningful progress in each of these areas.

- a. Board governance.** TCSJ provided good evidence of the activities undertaken related to board governance to meet the Commission's expectations. The panel appreciated the detailed information about the changes TCSJ has undertaken to reconstitute and strengthen the governing board. The new bylaws are clear; the board minutes are detailed and extensive; and board committees have been formed. The panel especially commended TCSJ for its plans to create a Trustee Handbook. The panel also made several recommendations for strengthening the board including adding new members with higher education expertise; separating the audit and finance committees; revisiting the WSCUC Policy on Independent Governing Boards to clarify the distinctions between independent vs. interested parties and revising board bylaws as necessary to reflect these distinctions; and incorporating into the Trustee Handbook or board bylaws the specific roles and responsibilities of board committee members and the expectations for orientation, training and development of all board members. (CFR 3.9, Policy on Independent Governing Boards)
- b. New president.** While the roles and responsibilities of the president, as stated in the job description, are not as comprehensive as a typical college president, the panel understood the unique relationship between TCSJ and the San Joaquin County Office of Education (SJCOE). The panel encouraged the new president to seek established programs offered by higher education institutions or organizations that can be helpful to newly appointed college presidents. (CFR 3.8)
- c. Budget for strategic plan initiatives.** TCSJ submitted a summary of a projected 3-year budget for its strategic plan initiatives. The panel appreciated the budget computations and description of expenses, and encouraged

TCSJ to provide an update on the implementation of the strategic plan as part of its institutional report for the next comprehensive review. (CFRs 4.5, 4.6, 4.7)

After discussion of the significant progress that has been made by TCSJ in addressing areas cited by the Commission, the panel acted to:

1. Receive the Interim Report.
2. Require no further interaction with WSCUC until the time of TCSJ's comprehensive review (Offsite Review scheduled for fall 2016; Accreditation Visit scheduled for spring 2017).
3. Recommend that TCSJ include in its institutional report for its comprehensive review an update on:
  - a. Governance (CFR 3.9 and Policy on Independent Governing Boards)
    - i. A copy of the bylaws confirming alignment with CFR 3.9 and WSCUC Policy on Independent Governing Boards, particularly with respect to independent vs. interested parties
    - ii. A copy of the Trustee Handbook
    - iii. Names and brief biographies of all current board members
    - iv. List of board committees, with the charge of each committee and a description of the roles and responsibilities of the committee members
    - v. Membership (names, affiliations, dates of terms) of board committees: audit; finance; academic affairs; governance; and any other committee established by the TCSJ board
    - vi. Copies of minutes of board meetings for academic year 2015-2016
    - vii. Copies of minutes of committee meetings for academic year 2015-2016
    - viii. Information about the orientation, training and development of board members
  - b. Strategic plan (CFRs 4.5, 4.6, 4.7)
    - i. Progress in implementing the initiatives in the strategic plan

In preparing its institutional report for comprehensive review, TCSJ will want to provide more than just descriptive information as it accounts for its transition from a K-12 to a higher education institution. For instance, in addition to documenting the facts of training and socializing new board members and board committees into their appropriate roles and responsibilities within the context of higher education, TCSJ is expected to reflect on what was successful, what didn't work, and what was learned. The panel recommends that TCSJ demonstrate greater self-reflection and analysis on the impact, value, and meaning of the college's changes, as well as the challenges or creative tensions that may naturally surface as a result of these significant changes.

The panel, again, reaffirms the hard work and important steps that TCSJ has taken to address the issues that were the focus of the Commission letter. The Interim Report Committee looks forward to the institution's continued progress.

I am available to help in any way that I can. If I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Barbara Gross Davis, Ph.D.  
Vice President

cc: Sylvia Turner, ALO  
Members of the Interim Report Committee