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for COMMUNITY and
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June 30, 2009

Corrected Letter

Dr. Robert Adams
President
Merritt College
12500 Campus Drive
Oakland, CA 94619

Dear President Adams:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting June 9-11, 2009, reviewed the institutional Self Study Report and the report of the evaluation team which visited Merritt College Monday, March 9-Thursday, March 12, 2009. The Commission acted to issue a Warning and to ask that Merritt College correct the deficiencies noted. The College is required to complete two Follow-Up Reports. The first report is due by March 15, 2010. That report will be followed by a visit of Commission representatives. The second report, due by March 15, 2011 will also be followed by a visit.

A Warning is issued when the Commission finds that an institution has pursued a course of action which deviates from the Commission's eligibility criteria, standards of accreditation, or policies to an extent that raises a concern regarding the ability of the institution to meet accreditation standards. The accredited status of the institution continues during the warning period. However, the institution's accreditation will not be reaffirmed until the conditions which warranted the warning are resolved. The Warning is based on Recommendations 2 and 4 as described below. Please note that Recommendation 4 was originally noted by the 2003 evaluation team.

The Follow-Up Report of March 15, 2010 should demonstrate the institution's resolution of Recommendations 2, 4, and 8 and provide the Commission with the status toward resolution of Recommendations 6 and 7 as noted below.

Recommendation 2: Program Review

The team recommends that the college further refine its program review, planning, and resource allocation processes so that they are more clearly based on an analysis of quality, effectiveness, and student learning. Furthermore, the college must develop a systematic means to evaluate those processes and assess whether its plans actually lead to improvements in programs and services (I.B.3, I.B.6, I.B.7).

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Recommendation 4: *Performance Evaluations*

In order to increase effectiveness, the team recommends that the college develop a plan to complete all outstanding performance evaluations expeditiously. This was also a recommendation of the 2003 visiting team (III.A.1b).

Recommendation 8: *Board and District Administration*

The team recommends that district assess the overall effectiveness of its service to the college and provide clear delineation of functional responsibilities and develop clear processes for decision making (IV.B.1, IV.B.3.a,b,c,f,g).

Recommendation 6: *Management Systems*

The team recommends that the district immediately resolve the functional issues associated with the implementation of the districtwide-adopted software management systems for student, human resources, and financial aid administration (III.C.1a, III.C.1.c, III.C.1.d, IV.B.3b).

Recommendation 7: *Financial Resources and Technology*

The team recommends that the district take immediate corrective action to implement all appropriate controls and necessary MIS system modifications to achieve access to a fully integrated computer information management system, including modules for student, financial aid, human resources, and finance, in order to assure financial integrity and accountability. All corrective action and system testing should be completed within two years and the governing board should receive regular implementation progress reports until project completion (III.D.1.a, III.D.1.b, III.D.2.a).

The Follow-Up Report of March 2011 should demonstrate resolution of the recommendations as noted below:

Recommendation 6: *Management Systems*

The team recommends that the district immediately resolve the functional issues associated with the implementation of the districtwide-adopted software management systems for student, human resources, and financial aid administration (II.B.1, III.C.1a, IV.B.3b).

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Recommendation 7: *Financial Resources and Technology*

The team recommends that the district take immediate corrective action to implement all appropriate controls and necessary MIS system modifications to achieve access to a fully integrated computer information management system, including modules for student, financial aid, human resources, and finance, in order to assure financial integrity and accountability. All corrective action and system testing should be completed within two years and the governing board should receive regular implementation progress reports until project completion (III.C.1, III.D.1a, III.D.2).

I wish to inform you that under U.S. Department of Education regulations, institutions out of compliance with standards or on sanction are expected to correct deficiencies within a two-year period or the Commission must take action to terminate accreditation. Merritt College must correct the deficiencies noted by June 2011 or the Commission will be compelled to act.

All colleges are required to file a Midterm Report in the third year after each comprehensive evaluation. Merritt College should submit the Midterm Report by March 15, 2012. The Midterm Report describes resolution of any team recommendations made for improvement, includes a summary of progress on College-identified plans for improvement as expressed in the Self Study Report, and forecasts where the College expects to be by the time of the next comprehensive evaluation.

The recommendations contained in the Evaluation Team Report represent the observations of the evaluation team at the time of the visit. The Commission reminds you that while an institution may concur or disagree with any part of the report, the College is expected to use the Evaluation Team Report to improve the educational programs and services of the institution.

The College conducted a comprehensive self study as part of its evaluation. The Commission requires that the plans for improvement of the institution included in its self study efforts be used to support the continuing improvement of Merritt College. The next comprehensive evaluation of the College will occur during Spring 2015.

A final copy of the Evaluation Team Report is attached. Please disregard any earlier versions you may have. Additional copies may now be duplicated. The Commission requires you to give the Evaluation Team Report and this letter dissemination to your College staff and to those who were signatories of your institutional Self Study Report. This group should include campus leadership and the Board of Trustees. The Commission also requires that the Evaluation Team Report and the Self Study Report be made available to students and the public. Placing copies in the College library can accomplish this. Should you want an electronic copy of the report, please contact Commission staff.

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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,



Barbara A. Beno, Ph.D.
President

BAB/tl

cc: Mr. Elihu Harris, Chancellor, Peralta Community College District
Dr. Linda Berry-Camara, Accreditation Liaison Officer
Board President, Peralta Community College District
Mr. Michael Claire, Team Chair
Evaluation Team Members