



August 26, 2016

ID Code 00011220(MC)

VIA E-MAIL AND UPS DELIVERY

Ms. Judith Sutton
Director
Mountain State College
Spring At 16th Street
Parkersburg, WV 26101

acics@msc.edu

Dear Ms. Sutton:

Subject: Renewal of Accreditation Show-Cause Directive Letter

The Council reviewed your institution at its recent meeting, including the institution's application for renewal of accreditation, the report for the on-site evaluation visit conducted in January 2016, and the institution's multiple responses to the visit report. As a result of its review, the Council found the following based on the *Accreditation Criteria*:

1. There are incomplete retention and placement improvement plans in the Campus Effectiveness Plan (CEP) for programs that fall below standard (Sections 2-1-809, 3-1-111, and 3-1-512).
2. The CEP does not meet Council standards related to graduate and employer satisfaction (Section 3-1-111).
3. There is incomplete documentation that the campus evaluates the work of its faculty and staff members (Section 3-1-202(b)).
4. The institution has not demonstrated a process of careful recordkeeping due to numerous inaccuracies found during the on-site evaluation visit. Specifically, the institution categorized 13 students as completers of a program when they had not finished all the necessary requirements. In addition, the institution had multiple inconsistencies related to placement classifications. Through several responses to the Council, the institution has reclassified all of the students and graduates into the appropriate classification. However, due to the serious lapses in recordkeeping and reporting to ACICS, the institution has not evidenced that they have an understanding of the requirements, guidelines, or importance of submitting accurate information to its accreditor (Sections 3-1-303(a) and 3-1-203).

Council Action

Due to the systematic and recurring nature of the findings discovered during the institution's on-site evaluation visit and the consistent inability of the institution to provide evidence to resolve these findings through multiple submissions, the Council directed the institution to show-cause why its application for accreditation should not be denied or otherwise conditioned during the December 2016 review cycle. The institution is required to review and follow the Council hearing procedures as detailed in Section 2-3-500 of the *Accreditation Criteria* and the "Schedule of Fees" listing on the ACICS website. The institution must provide the appropriate notification and fee within ten days of receipt of this notice.

In response to this action, the campus is directed to provide the following information no later than **November 1, 2016**. This information must be well organized and responsive to the Council's requests:

1. Evidence that all programs that fall below Council standards include improvement plans in the CEP. Documentation must include retention improvement plans for the Paralegal, Dependency Disorders Technology, Higher Accounting Management, Administrative Assistant, and Computer Information Technology programs. These plans must include timelines for completion, specific personnel responsible for the outcomes, and evidence that the activities have been implemented and monitored. In addition, a CEP placement improvement plan for the Computer Information Technology program must be provided that includes timelines for completion, specific personnel responsible for the outcomes, and evidence that the activities have been implemented monitored.
2. Evidence that graduate and employer surveys are utilized to improve educational processes at the campus. Documentation must include an updated CEP that includes an explanation of how the data collected have been used to improve the educational processes at the campus. The institution must describe any changes made to the educational processes that were directly related to the collection and analysis of this data.
3. Evidence that the institution has a process in place to ensure faculty and staff evaluations are regularly administered to all employees. Documentation must include an updated schedule for faculty and staff evaluations including specific dates for the 2017 faculty and staff evaluations, along with the names of the individuals who will be conducting the evaluations.
4. Evidence that the institution is appropriately classifying students, in all cases, on the CAR. The institution must upload its submitted 2016 CAR along with documentation to verify all retention and placement classifications listed on the report. Documentation

must include student transcripts for each student listed on the CAR that match the classification of graduate/completer, still enrolled, or withdrawal. In addition, the campus must provide back-up documentation for each graduate classified as placed, which includes a signed letter of employment or job description from the employer that indicates the job responsibilities and positions of the graduate. For those students classified as not available for placement, the institution must submit the necessary back-up documentation as described in the *2016 Campus Accountability Report Guidelines and Instructions*.

Please submit eight hard copies of your response and one electronic copy via flash drive by the date indicated above. Failure to provide all information requested by the Council may result in the withdrawal of your institution's accreditation.

Institutional Teach-Out Plan

Finally, in compliance with Section 2-3-230 of the *Accreditation Criteria*, the campus is directed to submit a contingency teach-out plan to the Council office by **November 1, 2016**, which must include:

- a. A listing of students with the student name; program of study; expected graduation date; and status of unearned tuition, status of refunds due, and current account balance for each student.
- b. A listing of comparable programs offered at other institutions in case teach-out agreements or transfer arrangements are needed for students to complete their programs elsewhere.
- c. A custodian for all permanent academic records in case of closure that includes contact information for this individual or entity and the process by which students can obtain their records.
- d. A description of the financial resources available to ensure that students can complete their programs or receive refunds if the institution does cease operations.

The Council is obligated to take adverse action against any institution that fails to come into compliance with the *Accreditation Criteria* within established time frames without good cause. Please consult the Introduction of Title II, Chapter 3 for additional information.

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Please contact Ms. Jan A. Chambers at jchambers@acics.org or (202) 336-6764 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger J. Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style. In the background, there is a faint watermark of a building with a steeple, likely a university or institutional logo.

Roger J. Williams
Interim President

- c: Ms. Cathy Sheffield, Accreditation and State Liaison, U.S. Department of Education
(aslrecordsmanager@ed.gov)
Ms. Nancy Gifford, U.S. Department of Education, School
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