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June 20, 2005

Open Letter to Compton College Students

Last Friday, June 17, 2005 the college was informed by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC), Western Association of Schools and Colleges that they "took action to terminate the accreditation of Compton Community College Effective August 19, 2005.

The most important thing for us to answer immediately is; what does this mean to you as a student:

- a) previously enrolled
- b) currently enrolled; and,
- c) planning to enroll in the fall at the college.

Attached you will find a series of "Questions and Answers" (Q&As) to help you answer this most important set of questions.

Please review this information carefully. Continue to focus on your number one priority which is to attend your classes and do your best. In addition, if you have any questions or concerns please do one of the following:

1. Come to the President's Office and submit your question in writing; or,
2. Submit your questions to the Presidents Office to:
Rita Cepeda until June 30, 2005
Jamillah Moore after July 1, 2005.

Compton College is here and will always be here to serve you.

Sincerely,

Rita M. Cepeda, Ed.D.
Interim Superintendent/President

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE ACTIONS OF THE ACCREDITING COMMISSION REGARDING COMPTON COLLEGE

Q – Is Compton College an accredited institution?

A – Yes. Until all of our legal options are resolved we continue to retain accreditation and we continue to have all the rights and privileges of a community college?

Q- Can the college fight and overturn this decision?

A -Yes. We have the right to “Request a Review” within 28 calendar days of the June 17th date of the letter from the Commission. We intend to request the review on July 15, 2005. The “Request for Review” will be filed on that date to maximize our response time.

Q - What happens after the Request for Review is filed?

A - We then have 21 additional calendar days or until August 5, to provide additional information and justification for the review.

Q - What will happen if the Commission does not overturn its decision?

A - We then have an additional 30 days after receipt of the final review report to file an appeal with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) which is the parent association to which AACJC belongs. Our case can only be made on the following grounds:

- a) Correct errors or omissions and demonstrate any procedural irregularities made by the Commission as they prepared their decision.
- b) Demonstrate bias or prejudice on the part of one or more Commission members.

Q - What will happen to all the credits I have from courses I have taken at Compton?

A - All your credits are absolutely safe and valid. We are making doubly sure to protect your records by digitizing all transcripts to hold them safe and inviolate.

Q - What happens to the credits I am earning this summer?

A - All credits are also absolutely safe, valid and effective. The College retains its accreditation status until all appeals have been resolved and/or until our accreditation status is fully resolved.

Q - I was planning to enroll in the fall what do I do now?

A - Continue with your plans as usual because our number one priority is that **NO STUDENT HAS ANY BREAK IN THEIR ACADEMIC PROGRAM.** We have two ways to ensure this:

1. We win our appeal and we are solidly accredited
2. We ensure that your credits remain valid by establishing a "Memorandum of Understanding" (MOU) with a neighboring community college. This is allowed by law and we would offer courses under their "accredited status." In other words, you will get your credits either from Compton College or from another community college which "lends" us or allows us to use their accredited status.

Q - Do I need to do anything with this other college to ensure that I am enrolled?

A - No. We will handle all procedures, transfer of records, transcripts etc.

Q - What happens to my financial aid eligibility?

A - You continue to be eligible and will receive financial aid support under the Compton College or under the auspices of another college's accreditation. In other words the answer is the same as in #s 1 and 2 above.

Q - Is there anything that I as a student can do?

A - Stay the course and make your views known at every opportunity available to you.

CONCLUSION:

- There are many options available to the college to resolve this matter.
- We are taking all necessary steps immediately to address all options.
- We are going to take all of the time legally available to us to prepare the best response to the Commission.
- Most important of all we are going to do all that is necessary to ensure that impact to students is minimized or eliminated.
- The State Chancellor's Office has charged us with the establishment of a strategic team made up primarily of experts whose sole job it will be to focus on the Request for Review and any other communication to the Commission.