

June 15, 2023

Dr. Daren Otten  
Superintendent/President  
Copper Mountain College  
6162 Rotary Way  
Joshua Tree, CA 92252

Dear Dr. Otten:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting June 7-8, 2023, reviewed the Midterm Report and related evidentiary materials submitted by Copper Mountain College. The purpose of the review was to determine the degree to which the institution has made progress in implementing its plans and improving outcomes related to student achievement. After consideration of the Report, the Commission has determined that the institution's progress is appropriate and has accepted the Report. The Commission requires that you disseminate the Midterm Report and this letter to all campus constituencies and the public by placing copies on the College website within seven business days of your receipt.

On behalf of the Commission, we wish to acknowledge the College's commitment to improvement as it continues its efforts in the best interests of its students. We look forward to working with the College as it prepares for its next comprehensive review, which will begin with Team ISER Review in the fall term of 2025 and conclude with a Focused Site Visit in the spring term of 2026.

Sincerely,



Mac Powell, MBA, Ph.D.  
President



Lori Gaskin, Ph.D.  
Chair

cc: Ms. Melynie Schiel, Accreditation Liaison Officer

January 27, 2022

Dr. Daren Otten  
Superintendent/President  
Copper Mountain College  
6162 Rotary Way  
Joshua Tree, CA 92252

Dear Dr. Otten:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting January 12-14, 2022, reviewed the Follow-Up Report and related evidentiary materials submitted by Copper Mountain College. The Commission also considered the Peer Review Team Follow-Up Report prepared by the follow-up team that visited the institution on November 16, 2021. The purpose of this review was to determine whether the College has addressed the deficiencies and demonstrated compliance with the Standards cited in the Commission's February 1, 2021, Action Letter.

Upon consideration of the information noted above, the Commission acted to **Reaffirm Accreditation for the remainder of the cycle**. The Commission finds that Copper Mountain College has addressed the compliance requirements, corrected deficiencies, and meets Standards I.B.2, II.A.3, and II.A.11. The Commission requires the College to disseminate the Follow-Up Report, the Team Report, and this letter within the institution, including by posting them on the College's website. A final copy of the Peer Review Team Report is attached.

The next report from the College will be the Midterm Report<sup>1</sup> due on March 15, 2023. The institution's next comprehensive review will begin with Team ISER Review in the fall term of 2025 and conclude with a Focused Site Visit in the spring term of 2026.

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<sup>1</sup> Institutions preparing and submitting Midterm Reports, Follow-up Reports, Special Reports, or Teach-out plans/agreements to the Commission should review *Guidelines for Preparing Institutional Reports to the Commission*, found on the ACCJC website at <https://accjc.org/guides-and-manuals/>.

On behalf of the Commission, we wish to express appreciation for the diligent work and thoughtful reflection that Copper Mountain College undertook to respond to these requirements. These efforts confirm that peer review can serve well the multiple constituencies of higher education by both ensuring and encouraging institutional quality and effectiveness.

If you have any questions about this letter or the Commission's action, please feel free to contact Dr. Cindy Miles or the vice president assigned as liaison to your institution.

Sincerely,



Cindy Miles, Ph.D.



Sonya Christian, Ed.D.

cc: Ms. Melynie Schiel, Accreditation Liaison Officer

February 1, 2021

Dr. Daren Otten  
Superintendent/President  
Copper Mountain College  
6162 Rotary Way  
Joshua Tree, CA 92252

Dear Dr. Otten:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting January 13-15, 2021, reviewed the Follow-Up Report and related evidentiary materials submitted by Copper Mountain College. The Commission also considered the spoken testimony of Dr. Daren Otten, President, Dr. Michael Reese, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs and Achievement, and Dr. Alma Correa, Dean of Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness. The Commission found these additional perspectives to be helpful.

The purpose of this review was to determine whether the College has appropriately responded to the issues as identified by the peer review team at the time of the last visit and as expressed in the Commission's Action Letter of June 28, 2019, and whether the College has demonstrated compliance with the related Standards.

Upon consideration of the information noted above, the Commission found continued non-compliance with Standards I.B.2, II.A.3, and II.A.11 (Compliance Requirement 1) and acted to **grant a Good Cause Extension**. The College is required to **submit a Follow-Up Report by November 1, 2021**, which will be followed by a visit from a peer review team. The accredited status of the institution continues during the good cause extension period.

The Commission requires the College to disseminate this Follow-Up Report, and this letter within the institution, including by posting them on the College's website. The Commission looks forward to receiving the College's second Follow-Up Report to address the deficiencies. The Commission has granted as much time as allowable under Federal regulations and will be obligated to take an adverse action if the Standards are not met.

If you have any questions about this letter or the Commission's action, please feel free to contact Dr. Stephanie Droker or the vice president that has been assigned as liaison to your institution.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Droker, Ed.D.



Sonya Christian, Ed.D.

cc: Dr. Michael Reese, Accreditation Liaison Officer

June 28, 2019

Mr. Jeff Cummings, Superintendent/President  
Copper Mountain College  
6162 Rotary Way  
Joshua Tree, CA 92252

Dear President Cummings:

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, at its meeting June 5-7, 2019, reviewed the Institutional Self Evaluation Report (ISER) and evidentiary materials submitted by Copper Mountain College. The Commission also considered the External Evaluation Team Report (Team Report) prepared by the peer review team that conducted its onsite visit to the College March 4-7, 2019. The Commission considered the written response to the evaluation team report that you submitted prior to the Commission meeting, as well as your spoken testimony and that of Mr. Jacob Kevari, Director of Institutional Effectiveness. The Commission found these additional perspectives to be helpful.

The purpose of this review was to determine whether the College continues to meet ACCJC's Eligibility Requirements, Commission Policies, and Accreditation Standards (hereinafter, the Standards). Upon consideration of the written and oral information noted above, the Commission acted to **Reaffirm Accreditation for 18 months and require a Follow-Up Report, due no later than October 1, 2020.**

Commendations

The Commission recognizes the exemplary performance of Copper Mountain College in the following areas. Commendations signify practices for which the Commission believes the institution has exceeded standards.

**Commendation 1:** The Team commends the College's implementation of its mission to understand and meet the needs of its unique community, characterized by its inclusive approach to its local community and constituents, including engaging with, and responding to, community concerns and recommendations; being proactive in building relationships with, and supporting, K-12 educational partners; and crafting and carrying out a mission that best serves the College's desert communities and student population. (I.A.3)

**Commendation 2:** The Team commends the College's leadership in creating and encouraging innovation resulting in institutional excellence, and for empowering all employees to take initiative to provide exemplary service to students and the broader community. (IV.A.1)

### Compliance Requirements

The Commission also determined that the College must demonstrate compliance with the following Standards, as identified in the College recommendations. This demonstration must be addressed in the required Follow-Up Report.

**Standard I.B.2, II.A.3, II.A.11 (College Recommendation 1):** In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the College complete its course, program, and institutional level learning outcomes assessment cycle.

In accordance with federal regulations, compliance requirements must be addressed and the institution must demonstrate that it aligns with Standards within two years<sup>1</sup>.

### Modifications to Recommendations

The Commission also determined that the wording of the recommendation should be revised as follows:

**Original Recommendation #1 (Compliance):** In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the College follow its course, program, and institutional level learning outcomes cycle. (I.B.2, II.A.3, II.A.11)

**Revised Recommendation #1 (Compliance):** In order to meet the standard, the team recommends that the College complete its course, program, and institutional level learning outcomes assessment cycle. (I.B.2, II.A.3, II.A.11)

### Recommendations for Improving Institutional Effectiveness

The Team Report noted Recommendations 2, 3, 4 for improving institutional effectiveness. These recommendations do not identify current areas of deficiency in institutional practice, but consistent with its mission to foster continuous improvement through the peer review process, the Commission encourages institutions to give serious consideration to the advice contained in the peer reviewers' recommendations. The Commission anticipates that you will bring them and the team's full report to the attention of your institution for serious consideration. In the Midterm Report, the College will include actions taken in response to the peer review team's improvement recommendations.

### Next Steps

The Team Report provides details of the peer review team's findings. The guidance and recommendations contained in the Report represent the best advice of the peer review team at the time of the visit but may not describe all that is necessary for the college to improve or to come into compliance. A final copy of the Team Report is attached.

The Commission requires that you disseminate the ISER, the Team Report, and this letter to those who were signatories of the ISER and that you make these documents available to all campus constituencies and the public by placing copies on the College website.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information, refer to "[The Two-Year Rule and Extension for Good Cause](#)" available on the ACCJC website.

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Please note that in response to public interest in accreditation, the Commission requires institutions to post current accreditation information on a Web page no more than one click from the institution's home page. In keeping with ACCJC policy, the Commission action will also be posted on the ACCJC website within 30 days of the date of the Commission's action.

On behalf of the Commission, I wish to express appreciation for the diligent work and thoughtful reflection that Copper Mountain College undertook to prepare for this evaluation. These efforts confirm that peer review can well serve the multiple constituencies of higher education by both ensuring and encouraging institutional quality and effectiveness.

If you have any questions about this letter or the Commission's action, please feel free to contact me or the vice president that has been assigned as liaison to your institution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Winn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Richard Winn, Ed.D.  
President

RW/tl

cc: Mr. Jacob Kevari, Accreditation Liaison Officer

Enclosure