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September 11, 2013

Dr. Maria Rose
President
Fairmont State University
1201 Locust Avenue
Fairmont, WV 26554

Dear President Rose:

The monitoring report you submitted to our office has now been reviewed. A staff analysis of the report is enclosed.

On behalf of the Commission, staff accepts the report on a plan for coming into compliance with Minimum Expectation 3.3.2. No further reports are required. A focused visit is scheduled for 2014-2015 to verify that the institution meets Minimum Expectation 3.3.2 on assessment of student learning and strategic planning. The institution's next reaffirmation of accreditation is scheduled for 2022 - 2023.

Also enclosed is a copy of the institution's Statement of Affiliation Status, which reflects the actions taken by the Commission. For more information on the interim report process contact Lil Nakutis, Process Administrator, Accreditation Services, at lnakutis@hlcommission.org. Your HLC staff liaison is Andrew C. Lootens-White (alootenswhite@hlcommission.org); (800) 621-7440 x 105.

Thank you.

HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION



STAFF ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL REPORT

DATE: September 9, 2013

STAFF: Andrew C. Lootens-White

REVIEWED BY: Katherine C. Delaney

INSTITUTION: Fairmont State University, Fairmont, WV

EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Maria Rose, President

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTION RE: REPORT: A monitoring report due 8/31/2013 focused on a plan for coming into compliance with Minimum Expectation 3.3.2.

ITEMS ADDRESSED IN REPORT: The office of the Commission received Fairmont State University's report on the above topic on 9/4/2013.

STAFF ANALYSIS: Fairmont State University hosted a comprehensive visit in October 2012. The team noted that

Although some planning efforts are evident, key plans that provide major direction for the University are either in an infancy stage or non-existent. These include: a University Strategic Plan; A University Assessment plan; A Strategic Plan for Enrollment management; and a Strategic Plan for online education and faculty and staff development.

The team recommended a focused visit in 2014-2015 on strategic planning, to include development of process and an implementation cycle. At the same time, the team observed that the institution was not in compliance with Minimum Expectation 3.3.2 and, as a result, recommended this monitoring report:

Minimum Expectation 3.3.2 (Assessment provides evidence of student learning: Processes for assessment of student learning are in effect.) is not met. Monitoring Report due in 3 months on a plan for coming into compliance with Minimum Expectation 3.3.2 and a Focused Visit within 2 years to verify that the plan has been implemented. If the institution has not developed a plan to resolve the issue, then Commission staff will recommend appropriate action.

The monitoring report submitted by Fairmont State University included a strong plan to develop both an effective strategic planning process and a sound assessment program at the University in time for the focused visit in 2014-2015. The monitoring report presented details of the plan to accomplish these purposes, but it also provided a summary of the entire plan, which is included here:

Summary of Action Steps and Target Dates

Target Date	Action
September 30, 2013	Action Step 1.1: Clarify, revise and update as needed organizational charts (academic and administrative units)
October 15, 2013	Action Step 3.5: Create, support and sustain a core group of faculty and staff from each organizational unit who will support capacity building in University strategic planning and implementation at the University and unit levels.
November 1, 2013 January 31, 2014 July 1, 2014	Action Step 2.5: Establish processes and an annual cycle for administrative and organizational support units to engage in assessment and evaluation activities, based on a range of data sources and forms, to articulate effectiveness and engage in continuous improvement. Determination of the annual cycle structure Development of preliminary unit goals and benchmarks Initiation of first annual cycle
December 15, 2013	Action Step 1.2: Affirm (and edit and revise as necessary) Fairmont State University's mission statement, vision statement and core values as constructs and language driving strategic planning, decision making and resource commitments.
December 15, 2013	Action Step 2.1: Inventory all academic programs to identify existing, identified learning outcomes and associated assessment procedures and data.
December 15, 2013; ongoing	Action Step 2.3: Development of assessment infrastructure and capacity (including archiving structures) across the Fairmont State campus
December 15, 2013	Action Step 2.4: Inventory all organizational units to identify existing, identified goals and associated assessment or evaluation procedures and data. Inventory will be completed for all administrative and support units.
December 15, 2013 January 15, 2014 May 15, 2014	Action Step 2.2: Establish and confirm a systematic, comprehensive, University academic assessment plan including integration of learning outcomes at all levels (course, program, college/school, University), analysis of academic results, an annual process for reporting, and an annual process for continuous improvement based on results. Review of existing campus structures Initial plans at the program level to implement systems where not in place and identification of support system to be used Existing structure reports and drafts for structures in development
January 2014	Re-start search process for VP of Institutional Assessment and Effectiveness
January 31, 2014.	Action Step 1.3: Review, revise and adjust as needed, and confirm the <i>Fairmont State University Strategic Plan Update: Redefining Our Future</i> (Sept. 2010)
January 31, 2014	Action Step 1.4: Focus particular attention on enrollment by strengthening strategies and results for recruitment, retention, and student success; Target date for preliminary enrollment plan: (to be tied to and integrated with the University strategic plan.
January 1, 2014	Action Step 1.5: Determine explicit and routine organizational schedules for regular review and examination of activity and data related to implementation of the strategic plan at the University and unit levels
May 1, 2014	Action Step 1.5: Translate updated University strategic plan to unit (academic and organizational) levels
Begin immediately; ongoing	Action Step 2.6: Develop and implement a plan to ensure that academic assessment and assessment of the University's organizational units informs the strategic plan, strategic decision making, budget commitments.
September 30, 2014	Action Step 3.2: Create, support and sustain a core group of faculty from each college and school who will support capacity building for faculty and staff with colleges and schools. The group will work as a "Critical Friends Group" (CFG) to collaborate with academic leadership to provide guidance to campus-wide efforts related to assessment development, implementation and revision of learning outcomes and assessments.
	Action Step 3.1: The University will create and support structures for faculty and staff professional development in the design, implementation and analysis of assessments for learning.
October 15, 2013	Identification and implementation of immediate professional development activities

January 1, 2014	Preliminary plan for structural support
January 2014	First campus-wide activities in place for Faculty Development Week
	Action Step 3.3: The University will create and support mechanisms to provide faculty and staff professional development in the design, implementation and analysis of assessment for the effectiveness of organizational support units.
October 15, 2013	Identification and implementation of immediate professional development activities
January 1, 2014	Preliminary plan for structural support
January 2014	First campus-wide activities in place for Faculty Development Week
	Action Step 3.4: The University will create and support structures for faculty and staff professional development in the design and implementation of strategic planning, decision-making and action steps.
October 15, 2013	Identification and implementation of immediate professional development activities
January 1, 2014	Preliminary plan for structural support
January 2014	First campus-wide activities in place for Faculty Development Week
Begin immediately; ongoing	Action Step 4.1: Engage faculty leadership by ensuring regular participation by faculty as representative of the central academic mission of the University.
Begin immediately; ongoing	Action Step 4.2: Engage students in ways that promote more student responsibility for learning and quality of campus life to the greatest degree possible.
Begin immediately; ongoing	Action Step 4.3: Engage the public through dissemination of information about strategic planning, assessment for learning and assessment of organizational effectiveness.
Begin immediately; ongoing	Action Step 4.4: Identify and secure internal and external resources to support University efforts with strategic planning, action steps, assessment, enrollment management and continuous improvement.

Staff comment: Fairmont State University has developed a realistic and sound plan for addressing its issues in planning and assessment. The University is commended for a strong plan. It is, as well, encouraged to respect the plan and its actions and target dates in order to prepare for and experience a productive focused visit in 2014-2015.

STAFF ACTION: Accept the report on a plan for coming into compliance with Minimum Expectation 3.3.2. No further reports are required. A focused visit is scheduled for 2014-2015 to verify that the institution meets Minimum Expectation 3.3.2 on assessment of student learning and strategic planning. The institution's next reaffirmation of accreditation is scheduled for 2022 - 2023.

STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

Fairmont State University
1201 Locust Ave.
Fairmont, WV 26554-2470

Affiliation Status:

Candidate: N/A
Accreditation: (1928-34; 1947- .)

Nature of Organization

***Control:
Degrees Awarded:***

Public
Associates, Bachelors, Masters

Conditions of Affiliation:

Stipulations on Affiliation Status:

Accreditation at the Master's level is limited to the Master of Business Administration, Master of Education, Master of Arts in Teaching, and Master of Science in Criminal Justice.

Approval of New Additional Locations:

Prior Commission approval required.

Approval of Distance and Correspondence Courses and Programs:

The institution has been approved under Commission policy to offer up to 20% of its total degree programs through distance education. The processes for expanding distance education are defined in other Commission documents.

Accreditation Activities:

Monitoring, Focused Visit: 2014 - 2015
A visit in 2014-2015 to verify that the institution meets Minimum Expectation 3.3.2 on assessment of student learning and strategic planning.

Institutional Change, : 10/14/2013;
Request to offer the Master of Architecture program.

Summary of Commission Review

Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2012 - 2013

STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

Year for Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2022 - 2023

Last Date of Information Change: 09/11/2013

Accreditation Note::

None.

Name Change:

Fairmont State Teachers College to Fairmont State College to Fairmont State University
(4/7/04)

