REPORT OF A COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION VISIT
FOR INITIAL ACCREDITATION

TO

SOUTHWESTERN INDIAN POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
Albuquerque, NM

October 7-9, 2013

FOR

The Higher Learning Commission
A Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

EVALUATION TEAM

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Contents

I. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF INSTITUTION

A. History and Current Status of Accreditation with other Agencies

The Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) programs in Vision Care Technology (VCT) and Optical Laboratory Technology (OLT) have been accredited by the Commission of Opticianry Accreditation (COA). When the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) withdrew SIPI's accreditation, COA placed SIPI in a provisional accreditation status. The provisional status expired on September 15, 2012 and COA withdrew accreditation at that time. At the time of withdrawal, COA did indicate that students already enrolled in the previously accredited programs and graduating within 2 years would be considered graduates of a COA accredited program. COA also indicated that, once SIPI regains regional accreditation, that it would reinstate accreditation for the VCT and OLT programs without reapplication or an on-site visit.

In May 2006, SIPI received accreditation for its business programs from the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP). When regional HLC accreditation was withdrawn, ACBSP withdrew SIPI's membership in ACBSP until regional accreditation is reinstated, at which time SIPI will be required to apply as a new candidate and undergo the full process before re-gaining ACBSP accreditation.

B. Overview of the Institution

SIPI is one of two federally funded institutions of higher learning dedicated to the education of Native Americans and wholly supported by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). Located in Albuquerque, NM, SIPI is in the heart of Indian country and offers post-secondary and vocational training to more than 500 students from Federally-recognized tribes across the United States. SIPI's program in Early Childhood Education is offered on campus and through video teleconferencing to remote tribal locations. SIPI has 23 full-time faculty with additional adjunct faculty who are contracted through an agreement with the University of New Mexico.

C. Organizational Structure and Scope

SIPI is a Federally operated postsecondary institution established in 1971 as part of the Federal government's obligation to Indian tribes. SIPI offers certificates and associate degrees to members of Federally recognized tribes throughout the United States. SIPI is funded by Congressional appropriations through the Bureau of Indian Education and is eligible to compete for grants from Federal sources as well as from the State of New Mexico.

D. Governance Structure

While the BIE provides financial resources and has the responsibility of hiring and evaluating the President of the institution, SIPI has an active Board of Regents which is appointed by various tribal entities and serves as the governing board. The Board of Regents have been active in developing SIPI's mission, vision, values, and goals; recommending academic program offerings and services; participating in policy development; and acting as liaisons to the national Indian community. The President

and her leadership team lead the faculty and staff in a shared governance model which ensures the daily operations of the institution. SIPI faculty and staff are represented by the Federation of Indian Services Employees, Local 04524, and is the exclusive representative certified by the Federal Labor Relations Authority.

E. Legal Authorization

SIPI is authorized to provide postsecondary educational opportunities for American Indian students under the Snyder Act of 1921, Public Law 67-85, 25 USC13. Because of Federal and tribal sovereignty, the State of New Mexico does not authorize SIPI. However, in 2007, the New Mexico Secretary of Higher Education entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with SIPI to share student and enrollment data for enhanced accountability regarding eligibility, implementation, and the effective management of state sponsored scholarship programs impacted by tribal college participation. In 2009 the New Mexico legislature passed the American Indian Post-Secondary Education Act, authorizing its Higher Education Department to provide assistance to all public and tribal post-secondary educational institutions in improving postsecondary opportunities for American Indian students.

F. Human, Financial, Physical, and Technological Resources or Assets

Since SIPI is a Federal institution, it is primarily dependent upon the Federal budget process for funding. SIPI receives Federal funding appropriations in two categories: operations and facilities. In the most recent fiscal year (October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013) SIPI received $6.6M for operations and $1.8M for facilities. Federal funding has been flat for the past several years, due in large part to the national financial crisis. SIPI receives additional funding from Federal grant programs, New Mexico state grants, student fees, and through an endowment specifically designated for SIPI and its sister institution, Haskell Indian Nations University. For FY2012, SIPI's instructional expenditure per full time equivalent was $6292, well above the national median expenditure for community colleges.

Funding for SIPI's facilities and infrastructure is based on a formula and inventory system used by the BIE. Funds in this category are primarily used for normal maintenance and repairs and are not adequate to fund new building projects. Working with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Office of Facilities Management and Construction, SIPI has engaged in a Master Planning Project to establish a blueprint for change in order to provide a thoughtful and integrated framework for facilities projects and to establish an orderly direction for future projects for the next 10 years.

All SIPI faculty and staff are Federal employees and required to follow Office of Personnel Management (OPM) rules. Additionally, SIPI must work through OPM for hiring all full-time positions. In August and September 2013, SIPI successfully added 6 new faculty, bringing the total number of full-time faculty to 23. SIPI contracts with the

University of New Mexico to provide qualified part-time adjunct faculty to provide additional academic support and fill voids in the teaching schedule.

SIPI's Information Technology department provides wireless access for faculty, staff, and students across the entire campus. The IT staff collaborates with faculty and staff to ensure they have the proper software support and assistance in maximizing the productivity of the IT assets. Tutorials are available for the use of computer equipment, Microsoft Office, Blackboard, the internet, computer programming, and graphics illustration for all members of the SIPI community. The Academic Support Center is equipped with a computer lab with 24 networked computer work stations. SIPI has been able to use grant funds to keep software and hardware up-to-date so that students remain familiar with state-of-the-art technology.

II. CONTEXT AND NATURE OF VISIT

A. Purpose of Visit
In July 2010 the Board of Trustees of the Higher Learning Commission withdrew accreditation from SIPI and concurrently granted the institution candidacy status. The purpose of this visit was to conduct a comprehensive evaluation to determine if SIPI meets the requirements for initial accreditation.

B. Unique Aspects or additions to the Visit
None

C. Additional Locations or Branch Campuses Visited
None

D. Distance and Correspondence Education Reviewed
SIPI uses video teleconferencing technology, to include two-way interaction between students and instructors, to deliver distance learning courses to students who are unable to attend classes on campus. SIPI is actively engaged with HLC regarding a change request for distance learning sites. As a result, distance learning will be reviewed in a separate process from this comprehensive visit.

E. Interactions with Constituencies
President
Vice President Academic Programs
Vice President Operations
Director of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning
Director of Student Services
Director of Admissions and Financial Aid

Director of Assessment
Director of Special Programs and Title III
Advanced Technical Education Chair
Advanced Technical Education Secretary
Academic Program Support Assistant
Student Activity and Rights Specialist
Acting Housing and Recreation Director
College Resident Assistant (3)
Financial Specialist
Financial Aid Specialist
Financial Analyst-Special Programs and Grants
Supervisory Security Guard
Security Guard (2)
Facilities Assistant (2)
Contract Specialist
Biological Science Technician
Audio Visual Operator (2)
Education Technician
Grants Financial Analyst
Budget Analyst (2)
Librarian
Library Technician
Substance Abuse Counselor
Gardener (2)
Academic Support Technician
Laborer (2)
Admissions Office Automation Assistant
Maintenance Mechanic (2)
Financial Education Project Coordinator
Distance Education Director
Information Technology Specialist (2)
Mail Room Clerk
Human Resources Specialist
Human Resources Assistant
Program Support Assistant to the College President
Liberal Arts and Business Secretary
Liberal Arts and Business Chair
Facilities Operations Specialist Supervisor
Enrollment and Placement Officer
Administrative Support Assistant
Supply Clerk
Information Technology Specialist

Board of Regents (9)
Board of Regents Family Education/Extension Program Staff Member
Board of Regents Accountant
Board of Regents Development Office Director
SIPI Staff Members (53)
Full Time Faculty (20)
Adjunct Faculty (9)
Community Stakeholders (53)
Students (65)

F. **Principal Documents, Materials, and Web Pages Reviewed**
2013-2014 Student Handbook and Code of Conduct
Academic Calendars
SIPI Library Collection Development Guidelines
Liberal Arts Program Syllabi
Physical Facilities Master Plan
2013-2014 SIPI Catalog
Memorandum of Understanding: SIPI and Board of Regents
Board of Regents Conflict of Interest Policy
Board of Regents Bylaws
Board of Regents Constitution
SIPI Board of Regents Meeting Minutes for 2012-2013
SIPI Faculty Handbook
SIPI Employee Handbook
SIPI Employee Orientation Handbook
SIPI Hiring Plan
Department of the Interior Performance Appraisal Handbook
Letter of Appointment for SIPI President's Cabinet
SIPI Performance Improvement Accountability Plan
Academic Freedom Policy
President's Quarterly Reports for 2011-2013
Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute 2013-2014 Report
2012-2013 Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes
Academic Affairs Committee Bylaws
Faculty Schedule with Instructor Qualifications Document
University of New Mexico Adjunct Faculty Contract
Collective Bargaining Agreement
Office of Personnel Management (Federal) Approval to Require Masters Degree
Infrastructure Summary
Faculty Curriculum Vitae
Survey of Graduating Students
Community College Rankings

Academic Advisors' Guide

Cultural Legacy Table

Core Course Competencies Curriculum Map

Curriculum Committee Bylaws

Academic Admission, Good Standing, and Transfer and Completion Policies

Liberal Arts Curriculum

Noel Levitz Satisfaction Inventory

Strategic Plan 2000-2010

HLC Notification Letter July 2, 2010

Donations for Indians 25 USC 451

SIPI Library Collection Development Guidelines

Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs August 20, 2010 letter

Memorandum of Understanding between SIPI and Board of Regents August 21, 2013

Higher Learning Commission Letter July 25, 2011

Organizational Chart

SIPI 2013-14 Catalog

HLC Letter Early Childhood Education

Liberal Arts Programs Syllabi

Advanced Technical Education Syllabi

Adult Basic Education Syllabi

Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute Course Schedule Fall 2013, Spring 2013,
	Summer 2013

CACS 099 Introduction to Online Learning Syllabus

Liberal Arts and Business Program Assessment Plan AA Degree

Business Administration Program Assessment Plan General Education

Fall 2012 IPEDs Data

A Beginner's Guide to Non Academic Assessment, 2011

Commission on Opticianry Accreditation Withdrawal Letter

First Nations Agreement

Program Review Handbook

Status Report on Program Reviews June 26, 2013

Continuous Improvement Revised June 19, 2013

Final Program Review Report – Pre-Engineering Program

Program Review Taskforce August, 1, 2013

SIPI Graduating Student Survey

The Assessment Handbook: Five Steps to the Continuous Improvement of Student
	Learning

Academic Program Assessment Plans and Reports

SIPI Academic Support Center

SIPI Tutoring Services

Faculty Retreat Minutes – Curriculum Committee Meeting

Assessment Plan Template

Communication Rubric

Interpersonal Skills/Teamwork Rubric

Assessment report – Communication Fall 2011

Assessment Report – Interpersonal Skills/Teamwork Fall 2011

Assessment Report -Communication Spring 2012

Communication Rubric revised

General Education Assessment Manual – Revised 2012

Bylaws-Academic Assessment Committee June 24, 2013

2012 National Community College Benchmark Project Report for SIPI

Survey of Non-returning Students

2012-13 Non-Academic Assessment Report

Introduction to Online Learning Syllabus
Full-time Faculty Files
SIPI Budget Approvals
Title III Actual Budget 2013-2014 (P031T100425)
Title III Actual Budget 2013-2014 (P031T100325)
Title III IR Budget ed524
Grants 2013 Resource Room (Reimbursable Orders Report)
FY14 SIPI Budget (Budget Execution Model)
SIPI Funding Estimate—FY 2014
FY 14 SIPI President's Office (Budget Execution Model)
EDUC Balances with BOCs
9-27-13 Balances with Central
FY14 SIPI IT (Budget Execution Model)
FY14 Liberal Arts and Business (Budget Execution Model)
FY 14 Library (Budget Execution Model)
Student Fees Breakdown by trimester
Early Childhood Education Clinical Site Agreement
Opticianry Clinical Site Agreement

III. COMMITMENT TO ACCREDITATION

A. Reasons for Pursuing Accreditation

SIPI is committed to serving Native Americans throughout the nation, to prepare Native American students to be productive, life-long learners who are prepared to serve their tribal and national communities. Additionally, SIPI's programs in opticianry and business are popular programs which require HLC accreditation.

B. Preparation and Planning in Pursuit of Regional Accreditation

As detailed in the self-study and observed from the team's interactions with the SIPI community, students, faculty, staff, and the Board of Regents were all involved in the self-study process and in preparation for the visit. All those interviewed were fully aware of SIPI's current accreditation status and the actions of the institution to improve since the withdrawal of accreditation in 2010.

C. Accuracy and Completeness of the Institutional Materials

The self-study was well-organized and candid in addressing SIPI's previous accreditation issues. The self-study was supported by a well-organized and detailed resource room. The scheduled meetings engaged all constituents of the SIPI community and were well-attended. All SIPI constituents were supportive of the efforts of the institution to regain its accreditation status.

E. Adequacy of Progress in Addressing Challenges Identified by Other Accrediting Agencies or State Agencies

Neither the Commission of Opticianry Accreditation (COA) or the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) reported any issues with SIPI other than their requirements for regional accreditation.

F. Notification of Evaluation Visit and Solicitation of Third-Party Comment

Requirements were fulfilled. Ten third-party responses were received and all were supportive of SIPI, its importance to Native American education, and its efforts to regain HLC accreditation.

IV. FULFILLMENT OF THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A. Jurisdiction of the Commission

The institution falls within the Commission's jurisdiction as defined in the Commission's Bylaws (Article III). The Commission extends accreditation and candidacy for accreditation to higher education institutions that are 1) incorporated in Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming, or operating under federal authority within these states, and 2) have substantial presence, as defined in Commission policy, within these states.

Evidentiary Statements:
SIPI is operated by the BIE as a community college for the benefit of Native American students. Located in the state of New Mexico, it is also recognized by the New Mexico State Department of Higher Education.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

B. Legal Status

The institution is appropriately authorized in each of the states, sovereign nations, or jurisdictions in which it operates to award degrees, offer educational programs, or conduct activities as an institution of higher education. At least one of these jurisdictions must be in the HLC region.

Evidentiary Statements:

SIPI is located in the State of New Mexico and as such is within the jurisdiction of the HLC.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

C. Governing Board
The institution has an independent governing board that possesses and exercises the necessary legal power to establish and review the basic policies that govern the institution.

Evidentiary Statements:
SIPI's Board of Regents serves as the institution's governing board. Its existence is required by the rules and regulations of the Bureau of Indian Education. While this board does not have the authority to hire and fire the president or to determine the budget, it has a close partnership with the institution and makes recommendations on programs and approves SIPI's policies in relation to students, faculty, and staff. The Board of Regents diligently operates within the Federal institution parameters expected by the HLC.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

D. Stability
The institution demonstrates a history of stable operations and consistent control during the two years preceding the submission of the PIF.

Evidentiary Statements:
The current president has been in place since 2009 and has been instrumental in guiding the SIPI team through the candidacy process. The President's leadership team has been stable the past three years and has included the addition of key positions in Student Services and Institutional Research, Effectiveness and Planning. Financial support from the Federal government through the Bureau of Indian Education has been stable and manageable, even with the impact of sequestration.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

E. Mission Statement
The institution has a statement of mission approved by its governing board and appropriate for a degree-granting institution of higher education. The mission defines the nature and purpose of the higher learning provided by the institution and the students for whom it is intended.

Evidentiary Statements:
SIPI's mission statement is, "Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute is a National Indian Community College that prepares Native American students to be productive life-long learners, as tribal members, in an ever-changing global environment. As a land-grant institution, SIPI partners with tribes, employers, and other organizations with a stake in Indian education. An enduring commitment to student success is the hallmark of SIPI's operations." It was abundantly clear to the HLC team that everyone from maintenance and service personnel to faculty to the President and her leadership team to the Board of Regents embraces and lives SIPI's mission every day and consider it in every decision they make.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

F. **Educational Programs**

The institution has educational programs that are appropriate for an institution of higher education. The Commission may decline to evaluate an institution for status with the Commission if the institution's mission or educational programs fall outside areas in which the Commission has demonstrated expertise or lacks appropriate standards for meaningful review.

In appropriate proportion, the institution's programs are degree-granting and involve coursework provided by the institution, establishing the institution's commitment to degree-granting higher education.

The institution has clearly articulated learning goals for its academic programs and has strategies for assessment in place.

The institution:

- maintains a minimum requirement for general education for all of its undergraduate programs whether through a traditional practice of distributed curricula (15 semester credits for AAS degrees, 24 for AS or AA degrees, and 30 for bachelor's degrees) or through integrated, embedded, interdisciplinary, or other accepted models that demonstrate a minimum requirement equivalent to the distributed model. Any exceptions are explained and justified.

- has a program of general education that is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts common knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess. The institution clearly and publicly articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its general education program.

- conforms to commonly accepted minimum program length: 60 semester credits for associate's degrees, 120 semester credits for bachelor's degrees, and 30 semester credits beyond the bachelor's for master's degrees. Any exception to these minima must be explained and justified.

- The institution meets the federal requirements for credit ascription described in the Commission's Federal Compliance Program. *Note: A new Federal Compliance Guide and worksheet is applicable September 1, 2012.*

Evidentiary Statements:

SIPI offers seven certificate programs, nine AAS degrees, two AS degrees and two AA degrees. Credit hour assignments are consistent across the curriculum and meet Federal requirements. Each program has specified educational outcomes and each course has well-defined learning outcomes. Programs and courses execute thorough assessment processes which result in curriculum revision and improvement. General education credit hour requirements for each degree comply with HLC expectations. The general education curriculum focuses on four core competencies: communication,

interpersonal skills/teamwork, cultural legacy, and critical thinking. The general education program was designed around the New Mexico Higher Education Department's General Education Course Transfer Curriculum. As a participant, SIPI students are able to transfer credit for general education courses to four-year state colleges across New Mexico.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

G. Information to the Public
The institution makes public its statements of mission, vision, and values; full descriptions of its program requirements; its requirements for admission both to the institution and to particular programs or majors; its policies on acceptance of transfer credit, including how credit is applied to degree requirements; clear and accurate information on all student costs, including tuition, fees, training and incidentals, and its policy on refunds; its policies regarding good standing, probation, and dismissal; all residency requirements; and grievance and complaint procedures.

The institution portrays clearly and accurately to the public its accreditation status with national, specialized, and professional accreditation agencies as well as with the Higher Learning Commission, including a clear distinction between Candidate or Accredited status and an intention to seek status.

Evidentiary Statements:
The Course Catalog, Student Handbook, and Faculty and Staff Handbooks discuss in detail SIPI policies and procedures with respect to courses, student performance, faculty and staff expectations, educational costs, and disciplinary processes. SIPI's relationship with the HLC is prominently displayed on its website and in appropriate publications.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

H. Financial Capacity
The institution has the financial base to support its operations and sustain them in the future. It demonstrates a record of responsible fiscal management, including appropriate debt levels.

The institution:
- has a prepared budget for the current year and the capacity to compare it with budgets and actual results of previous years; and

- undergoes external financial audit by a certified public accountant or a public audit agency. For private institutions the audit is annual; for public institutions it is at least every two years. (Institutions under federal control are exempted provided that they have other reliable information to document the institution's fiscal resources and management.)

Evidentiary Statements:
SIPI is funded by the U.S. Congress through the BIE for college operations and through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) for facilities. SIPI also receives some funds through an endowment established by the US Department of Agriculture in 1992 for land-grant institutions and is also eligible for a variety of other grants. While some funds have been reduced due to the Federal budget cut-backs and sequestration, SIPI funding is stable

and is expected to remain so. SIPI financial managers carefully track funds and are required by Federal regulation to justify and account for every expenditure. The SIPI leadership also uses data-driven decision making to ensure funds are expended in areas with the greatest need to produce the best results. As a Federal institution, SIPI has no debt and must balance each year's budget with expenditures.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

I. **Administration**
The institution has a Chief Executive Officer appointed by its governing board.

The institution has governance and administrative structures that enable it to carry out its operations.

Evidentiary Statements:
As previously noted, the Chief Executive Officer is hired by the BIE since SIPI is a Federally owned and operated institution. SIPI's Board of Regents is appointed by tribes and tribal organizations and represents various tribes in SIPI's constituency. The Board of Regents works closely with SIPI leadership to ensure the needs of the various Indian communities are being met. SIPI's organizational structure is similar to that of most other two-year colleges and effectively manages the delivery of educational opportunities to its students and properly takes care of its faculty and staff.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

J. **Faculty and Other Academic Personnel**
The institution employs faculty and other academic personnel appropriately qualified and sufficient in number to support its academic programs.

Evidentiary Statements:
A review of faculty vitae and transcripts shows that SIPI faculty are qualified with either Master's or PhD degrees. In August 2013, SIPI was able to hire six additional full-time faculty. As is the case with all Federal hires through the OPM, this was a daunting task which required ingenuity and persistence on the part of the SIPI President and her leadership team. SIPI also added a full-time Director of Student Services to the leadership team and on the first day of the team visit filled the Vice-President of College Operations position which had been vacant for several years. SIPI leadership, faculty, and staff have a laser focus on the mission and are motivated and qualified to ensure mission success for the institution.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

K. **Learning Resources**
The institution owns or has secured access to the learning resources and support services necessary to support the learning expected of its students (research laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, etc.).

Evidentiary Statements:
The 164 acre campus has a seven-year old science and technology building which houses science and engineering laboratories and classrooms primarily in support of the

Natural Resource Management, Pre-Engineering, and Environmental Science programs, as well as science courses in support of the general education program. The newest building on campus is the Early Childhood Education Laboratory which provides day care services and serves as a practicum site for the Early Childhood Education Program. Many of the classrooms have smart-board technology and there are 300 desktop computers in 16 computer labs across the campus. These computers are loaded with up-to-date office software as well as appropriate software to support specific courses, such as the courses in the Department of Liberal Arts and Business. In 2010 the college upgraded from two T1 circuits providing 6 Mbps to a DS3 circuit which provides 45 Mbps of bandwidth for internet access.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

L. Student Support Services
The institution makes available to its students support services appropriate for its mission, such as advising, academic records, financial aid, and placement.

Evidentiary Statements:
The Director of Student Services has a Master's Degree in Education Administration. He leads a team which provides a variety of opportunities to include admissions and registration, financial aid, student rights, disability services, student activities, tutoring, counseling, student housing, dining services, and student government. SIPI faculty serve as academic advisors, sharing information about educational options, requirements, policies and procedures, and career goals.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

M. Planning
The institution demonstrates that it engages in planning with regard to its current and future business and academic operations.

Evidentiary Statements:
SIPI has a Strategic Plan that has been extended until 2015 in order to fully accomplish two of the main priorities of the plan—improvement of student success and establishment of a culture of evidence. Employees from every job description are not only aware of the Strategic Plan but fully aware of how their work impacts the plan and accomplishment of the mission. Academic programs are rigorously reviewed through the work of the Academic Affairs Committee. The Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning is leading the non-academic departments in formally assessing their operations so that they can each develop program improvement plans. Periodic budget requests not only describe how resources will be used but also require data to justify the need for those resources along with a plan to measure the effectiveness of the anticipated outcomes.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

N. Policies and Procedures
The institution has appropriate policies and procedures for its students, administrators, faculty, and staff.

Evidentiary Statements:
The President's Cabinet provides oversight of policies related to administrative processes. The Academic Affairs Committee provides oversight of policies related to academic programs. SIPI's policies and procedures are found in the Board of Regents Operations Manual, Catalog, Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook, Personnel Policy and Administrative Procedures Manual, and the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

O. Current Activity
The institution has students enrolled in its degree programs. (To be granted initial accreditation, an institution must have graduated students from at least one degree program.)

Evidentiary Statements:
Beginning with the 2007-2008 academic year, SIPI has graduated 337 students from its degree programs and 86 students from its certificate programs.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

P. Integrity of Business and Academic Operations
The institution has no record of inappropriate, unethical, and untruthful dealings with its students, with the business community, or with agencies of government. The institution complies with all legal requirements (in addition to authorization of academic programs) wherever it does business.

Evidentiary Statements:
Two Equal Employment Opportunity cases were filed since September 2009 and resolved in favor of those filing the complaint. In both cases the complaints stemmed from specific hiring decisions in 2004 under a previous SIPI president. As a result of the settlement of the EEO complaints, all SIPI staff received four hours of training from the Office of Civil Rights and managers/supervisors received eight hours of training. Staff members work diligently to ensure that SIPI follows Federal, State, and local regulations and the staff participates in training to make certain new Federal policies and regulations are being followed.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

Q. Consistency of Description Among Agencies
The institution describes itself consistently to all accrediting and governmental agencies with regard to its mission, programs, governance, and finances.

Evidentiary Statements:
SIPI consistently describes itself as a Federally funded and operated two year institution with open admissions, located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. It has an independent, tribally-appointed governing Board of Regents. SIPI is in candidate status with the Higher Learning Commission.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

R. Accreditation Record

The institution has not had its accreditation revoked and has not voluntarily withdrawn under a show-cause order or been under a sanction with another accrediting agency recognized by CHEA or USDE within the five years preceding the initiation of the Eligibility Process.

Evidentiary Statements:
SIPI's accreditation was withdrawn by the HLC in 2010. Simultaneously with that withdrawal, the HLC offered SIPI candidacy status, which SIPI accepted. Since that time SIPI has worked with the HLC to complete the candidacy program.

Team Determination: Since candidacy was initiated by the HLC, this eligibility requirement is met.

S. Good Faith and Planning to Achieve Accreditation
The board has authorized the institution to seek affiliation with the Commission and indicated its intention, if affiliated with the Commission, to accept the Obligations of Affiliation.

The institution has a realistic plan for achieving accreditation with the Commission within the period of time set by Commission policy.

If the institution offers programs that require specialized accreditation or recognition in order for its students to be certified or sit for licensing examinations, it either has the appropriate accreditation or discloses publicly and clearly the consequences of the lack thereof. The institution always makes clear to students the distinction between regional and specialized or program accreditation and the relationships between licensure and the various types of accreditation.

If the institution is predominantly or solely a single-purpose institution in fields that require licensure for practice, it demonstrates that it is also accredited by or is actively in the process of applying to a recognized specialized accrediting agency for each field, if such agency exists.

Evidentiary Statements:
The BIE strongly endorsed SIPI's efforts to complete candidacy and achieve accreditation by the HLC. As noted previously, SIPI programs in opticianry and business were accredited by COA and ACBSP, respectively. Both of these organizations require regional accreditation so both removed SIPI from their accreditation roles when HLC accreditation was removed. COA and ACBSP pledged to work with SIPI to restore their respective accreditations once HLC accreditation is restored. The self-study report and team visit provided ample evidence that SIPI has completed the necessary steps to complete candidacy.

Team Determination: This eligibility requirement is met.

V. FULFILLMENT OF THE CRITERIA

CRITERION ONE: MISSION. The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1. Findings on Core Component 1A

Evidentiary Statements:
SIPI's statements of mission, vision, and values were reaffirmed in the latest revision of the strategic plan and are approved by the tribally-appointed Board of Regents. SIPI's mission statement articulates the institution's focus on providing educational opportunities for Native American students, serving students from 83 tribes and 21 states in the past academic year. Included in the mission statement is the role of tribes, employers, and other stakeholders who are committed to Native American education.

SIPI recently established a Student Services Division which oversees financial aid, admissions and records, counseling services, tutoring, disability support, student housing, and recreation. Academic programs provide the appropriate foundation for students to transfer to four-year institutions and complete a variety of majors including many in STEM disciplines.

SIPI uses a program-based budgeting process which ensures that each major department requests funding based upon their needs to support students and to fulfill their departmental missions. Assessment data is incorporated into the budgeting process and weighed heavily in making institutional budgeting decisions. Annual budget decisions are made in an annual budget planning meeting conducted by the President and her cabinet.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

X Core Component is met without concerns

Core Component is met with concerns

Core Component is not met

2. **Findings on Core Component 1B**
Evidentiary Statements:
SIPI's mission is published in the Catalog; Student, Faculty and Staff Handbooks; and on the institution's website. The team also observed the mission statement on bulletin boards across campus and on bookmarks widely available from faculty and staff offices.

The current mission statement was approved by the Board of Regents in October 2009. The mission statement reflects the important role that SIPI plays in Native American education and its intent to promote lifelong learning in the context of tribal communities and the heritage of all Native American cultures as they engage in the global environment.

The SIPI mission statement, along with statements of vision, values, and goals, incorporates the needs of all stakeholders in Native American higher education. Academic programs work with business, industry, and other New Mexico public higher education institutions to ensure that the SIPI curriculum meets community and student needs for success as tribal members who are also productive members of a global society.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

X Core Component is met without concerns

Core Component is met with concerns

Core Component is not met

3. Findings on Core Component 1C

Evidentiary Statements:

SIPI's student body is currently composed of Native Americans from 83 tribes in 21 states. Each of these tribes has their own customs, traditions, and language. SIPI offers diverse programs and student activities which celebrate the diversity of the student population. Cultural and ethnic diversity are also imbedded into educational programs. SIPI has also developed a Global Cultural Awareness Program which has the goal of expanding the world view of SIPI students.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

X Core Component is met without concerns

Core Component is met with concerns

Core Component is not met

4. Findings on Core Component 1D

Evidentiary Statements:

As a Federal institution chartered by the Bureau of Indian Education, SIPI exists to provide educational opportunities for Native Americans. SIPI's Board of Regents represents diverse Native American tribes across the US and this board is active in all aspects of SIPI life.

SIPI is actively engaged with the Albuquerque community and with the tribal communities it serves. SIPI annually hosts a Geo-Spatial Technology Tribal Conference, offers a National Nuclear Science and History Museum Robotics Summer Camp for elementary and middle school students, supports numerous Native American high school college fairs, and collaborates with the Sandia National Laboratory Dream Catcher Summer Program for Native American youth.

SIPI's academic programs are active in community development projects, helping students put their learning into practice by serving their communities. The pre-engineering program regularly participates in community development projects which benefit local tribes. Some of these projects include the Jemez Pueblo Geo-Thermal Project and Analysis, Design of Eco-Buildings for the Santo Domingo Pueblo community, a solar power plant project at the Jemez Pueblo, and the numerous early childhood education projects which help develop a framework for incorporating traditional Native American values in the early childhood education programs on reservations.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

X Core Component is met without concerns

Core Component is met with concerns

Core Component is not met

Summary Statement on Criterion:

A strong sense of mission is apparent throughout SIPI. From gardeners to the President and from the mail clerk to faculty, everyone encountered at SIPI not only knew the mission but could explain how their work furthered the mission and impacted the educations and futures of SIPI students. External stakeholders and alumni offered numerous examples of SIPI's successes and stories of the positive impact of the institution on Native American education. SIPI has obviously addressed previous mission-related issues and has transformed the institution, from top to bottom, into a mission-focused organization which provides their students with quality educational opportunities while preparing them to be engaged citizens within their tribes and within the global community.

    X Criterion is met

        X Criterion is met without concerns

          Criterion is met with concerns

      Criterion is not met

Recommendation of the Team

The team recommends no follow-up; Criterion 1 is met.

CRITERION TWO: INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT. The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

1. **Findings on Core Component 2A**

   Evidentiary Statements:
   The College has policies and practices in place, many of which are Federal statutory and regulatory requirements that guide and govern financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions. Policies and processes are outlined in the Student, Faculty, and Employee Handbooks as well as on the institutional website. Faculty and staff noted that all employees attend annual training on ethics, sexual harassment, and whistle blowing and that before they are given access to student files, they must complete FERPA training. Employees and Board of Regents members annually complete and sign forms related to conflict of interest, and the College follows Federal policies prohibiting employees from accepting personal gifts with a value of $20 or more. Conversations with faculty and staff support ethical operations and approaches. For example, faculty noted that the President donated a blanket to the College that had been given to her. Through the efforts of the College to regain accreditation, faculty and staff noted that there is more transparency in budgeting and operations. The involvement of faculty and staff in the accreditation process has led to a broader understanding across campus regarding ethics in conducting research and surveys through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process. For example, the Supervisory Security Guard noted that during a flu clinic one of the nurses inquired about surveying students and because he was aware of the IRB and regulations, he was able to refer her to the correct office. All course syllabi have statements on ethics and integrity along with information on services for students with disabilities, and student transcripts have a FERPA notice printed at the bottom.

Conversations with students reflect a commitment to ethics and integrity in that students were able to share that their syllabi had statements of ethics, that their orientation program has a session on ethics, use of information, and plagiarism. Students also noted that they are required to sign computer user agreements and attend a session given by the Librarian on copyright laws.

SIPI is a Federal institution that has followed strict policies and procedures that are well established for their finances, procurement and maintenance functions as indicated by the Facilities and Operations personnel. The academic guidelines along with college personnel policies and procedures affecting auxiliary functions have been modified from Federal requirements to meet the real needs of an academic institution. This negotiation process was led by the strong and resilient leadership of the President. All employees, including maintenance, dormitory, faculty and staff, are aware of and are practicing the policies and processes that have been created by the President's Cabinet, the Academic Affairs Committee, and the Curriculum Committee that included all these personnel, as evidenced by their fluid conversations about accreditation requirements.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

                                                  X Core Component is met without concerns

                                                       Core Component is met with concerns

                                             Core Component is not met

2. **Findings on Core Component 2B**

    Evidentiary Statements:
    The College has clear statements regarding programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships in the College Catalog, website, and Student Handbook. The College maintains a "Consumer Disclosure" tab on its website homepage that houses extensive information regarding the College, including all academic programs and requirements, campus crime reports, cost of attendance, financial aid eligibility, tuition and fees, net cost calculator, transfer of credits, the College Catalog, and student code of conduct. The College maintains a link on its website homepage regarding its accreditation information including updates and the monthly newsletter. There is a broad and candid understanding by faculty, staff, students and Board of Regents members regarding current HLC accreditation status and the status of ACBSP and Opticianry accreditations. The College is open and forthright regarding its loss of accreditation and posts all notices and information, including accreditation loss notices, on its website.

    In the past years of candidacy there has been an active communication with all stakeholders about the processes that needed to be changed at SIPI. This was accomplished through the following initiatives: nametags were given to each employee to wear that had the mission on one side and the 2013-2015 SIPI President's Strategic Priorities on the other side; laminated cards that were given to guests, personnel, board members and students which state SIPI's Mission, Vision, Goals and Values; a video was made by students with an original rap song that emphasized the importance of accreditation; and most importantly t-shirts were given to students that highlighted their Cultural Legacy promotion.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

            X Core Component is met without concerns

              Core Component is met with concerns

          Core Component is not met

3. Findings on Core Component 2C

Evidentiary Statements:

The College maintains a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the United States Department of the Interior BIE that delineates the role and responsibilities of the Board of Regents (BOR) and the President. The MOU clearly articulates the role of the BOR to establish Indian education goals and objectives through policy, support, long-range planning, recommendations for additions or renovations of the physical plant, review of recommendations from the President regarding academic programs, services, organization and personnel processes, communicate from the national Indian community educational needs, and communicate to the national Indian community SIPI's programs, policies, reports, awards, and program evaluations. The eleven member tribe and tribal consortium-appointed BOR is governed by its constitution and bylaws and maintains its own 501c3 status. Conversations with BOR members support the autonomy of the role of the Regents in representing the voice of their respective Indian communities for educational needs while advocating for the College. Several BOR members articulated that the main role of the Board is to support the educational mission of SIPI in an advisory capacity. BOR members sign annually, per Board Policy, a Conflict of Interest Disclosure agreement declaring associations that could cause a conflict of interest. Review of BOR minutes support focus and deliberations relative to BOR scope of responsibilities and support of the SIPI mission. Conversations with BOR members, faculty, and staff support the utilization of the shared governance model in decision making whereas faculty and Academic Affairs have oversight and input regarding curriculum and academic matters. Faculty, staff, and BOR members noted that there is transparency in operations as a result of the shared governance model where various voices have an opportunity to provide input into planning and decision-making.

The BOR is made up of well-educated and intelligent individuals who are dedicated to the institution. Board members include retirees from the BIA, BIE and other Federal operations, tribal governments, and tribal associations. They represent tribes nationwide and are appointed by tribes, primarily in the southwestern United States, who have a significant number of students attending SIPI. Their professionalism and autonomy was evident in their communication with the team members. The decision to form a non-profit organization with 501c3 status demonstrates their dedication to the college. This status allows them to sponsor student activities and receive donations that a Federal college is not allowed to do.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

            X Core Component is met without concerns

              Core Component is met with concerns

          Core Component is not met

4. **Findings on Core Component 2D**

   Evidentiary Statements:
   In January of 2011, the College adopted an Academic Freedom Policy that outlines the purpose of the policy and relevant procedures. Conversations with faculty support the College's commitment to academic freedom as evidenced by proposed and completed research projects such as a wind tunnel and the recommendation and approval to add a Native American Studies course. A stated purpose of the Academic Freedom Policy is to create an environment where members of the College community are able to work, teach and learn in an atmosphere which is free from harassment and discrimination. Students note that they are encouraged to share ideas and thoughts on topics of interest to them, and feel supported in seeking out ways to express their ideas. As a result, three students created an original song and video about the HLC Accreditation visit. The College posted the video on its website in support of the students' work. Another student noted that she felt supported as a transgender individual, and that her ideas and position on transgender issues have been well received by both faculty and administration.

   The Faculty handbook clearly delineates Academic Freedom for faculty, staff and students. The institution encourages research projects while protecting participants from harm.

   Team Determination: X Core Component is met

                                                  X Core Component is met without concerns

                                                      Core Component is met with concerns

                                          Core Component is not met

5. **Findings on Core Component 2E**

   Evidentiary Statements:
   The College has a functioning Institutional Review Board (IRB) responsible for ensuring the protection of human subjects used in research. The IRB has established policies and processes in place, and conversations with faculty revealed that a majority had used the IRB process, and conversations with students revealed that several students had used the process for their research projects. The Librarian conducts sessions for all students regarding the appropriate use of information and copyright laws. Students indicated that the tutors are available to assist with proper citation techniques in writing assignments and research projects. The College maintains policies and processes regarding academic honesty and integrity. Conversations with faculty revealed that cases involving academic misconduct are handled within the academic department of the course where an incident occurs, and that the faculty member and/or the department chair have the authority to issue a sanction. The Faculty Handbook includes a clear description of the process as well as the concrete steps the faculty member must take in reporting and responding to instances of academic dishonesty. Several faculty noted that they had instances of dishonesty and used the process to resolve the issue. The Department Chair records all instances in the College STARS system to enable identification of patterns of behavior. This practice, as reported by faculty members, has helped them when

dealing with instances of dishonesty because they are able to see if this is the student's first instance or not prior to determining a sanction.

An Institutional Review Board has been formed and is registered with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources. During meetings with staff, Operations personnel who were approached to conduct research with students from an outside agency quickly made the referral to SIPI's Institutional Review Board for the appropriate approval.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

X Core Component is met without concerns

Core Component is met with concerns

Core Component is not met

Summary Statement on Criterion

The College has made significant progress on policy adoption and implementation related to ethics and integrity in its operations. The involvement of all sectors of the campus in the various teams responsible for the criteria has created an atmosphere of openness and focus of purpose that some report was nonexistent prior to loss of accreditation. The approach to the accreditation process and the involvement of all employees on a committee, provides impressive evidence of the College's commitment to ethics and integrity in operations. Without question, there is a broad and comprehensive understanding of the criteria and core components by faculty, staff, students, and BOR members. Ensuring that all stakeholders had a role in the accreditation process demonstrates integrity and ethics at a level beyond mere policy development and implementation. There is obvious transparency in operations from budget development to policy and curriculum development where the shared governance structure ensures individuals all have a voice in key decision-making processes.

X Criterion is met

X Criterion is met without concerns

Criterion is met with concerns

Criterion is not met

Recommendation of the Team

The team recommends no follow-up; Criterion 2 is met.

CRITERION THREE: TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES, AND SUPPORT. The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

1. **Findings on Core Component 3A**

   Evidentiary Statements:
   An analysis of the degree programs at SIPI shows that they are similar to programs offered in the state of New Mexico and other colleges and universities. The programs are geared toward employability in tribal and public agencies. Coursework is transferrable to other accredited colleges.

The curriculum at SIPI compares favorably with similar curricula at the associate's degree level of education. Courses, labs, and practicums have appropriate credit and contact hours as evident by articulation agreements with New Mexico higher education institutions. Thorough curriculum review processes and policies exist through committees as evident in bylaws and committee practices to ensure that the curriculum is relevant, current, and aligned with the institution's mission and purposes. Career and transfer programs range from 61 credit hours to 70 credit hours, which meet commonly acceptable levels for an associate's degree. At 30 credit hours, certificate programs are at the appropriate levels. Meetings with full time and adjunct faculty, and department chairs, along with a review of documents such as the college catalog, course syllabi, and meeting minutes of the committees (e.g., Academic Affairs Committee and Curriculum Committee) verified that the credit and contact hours are appropriate and that review processes are present at SIPI.

Significant effort by faculty has been expended to differentiate learning goals and outcomes for different levels of education since the previous team visit. For example, the Culinary Arts certificate and degree programs have clear and distinct mission statements, goals, and outcomes that clearly show the higher level of competency and more in-depth education within the associates degree. The Optical Laboratory Technology Certificate and Vision Care Technology AAS Degree provide a similar example of differentiated and appropriate learning goals and outcomes

Differences did not exist in programs or courses offered via various modes of delivery. The program goals and outcomes of the Early Childhood Education program, which is offered through videoconferencing to four sites, are the same as on-campus courses according to faculty, program information, and course syllabi. The self-study report as well as meetings with faculty and the Business department chair confirmed that online courses (Business Law and Principles of Macroeconomics) are subject to the same review processes as face-to-face courses and are approved for statewide transfer by the New Mexico Statewide Business Articulation Committee.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met
> X Core Component is met without concerns
> Core Component is met with concerns
> Core Component is not met

2. **Findings on Core Component 3B**

   Evidentiary Statements:
   SIPI attracts a significant number of grants from the National Science Foundation for the promotion of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. The support that this Federal granting agency has demonstrated is evidence of their belief in SIPI's ability to continue to achieve the goals they set for learning.

   The General Education Philosophy, four General Education Core Competencies (i.e., Communication, Interpersonal Skills/Teamwork, Cultural legacy, and Critical Thinking), and infusion of these competencies within general education courses and academic programs reflect SIPI's commitment to high academic standards,

intellectual inquiry, breadth of knowledge, lifelong learning, and the promotion of student academic, personal, and career success at the associate's degree level.

Observations of the SIPI campus community, meetings, and survey data provided evidence that the college reinforces its philosophy of general education which includes preparing students to live in and contribute to a dynamic, complex, and multicultural world [as] productive life-long learners and tribal members." The full Statement of General Education noted in the self- study report is present in the Catalog and was articulated by the faculty who often referred to the four core competencies of general education. The team observed students wearing white t-shirts that listed the four competencies. Student self-reports of their acquisition of a general education in a 2013 survey resulted in the opinion of more than 70% of students that they were able to demonstrate these competencies either "very much" or "quite a bit."

A review of SIPI's program goals and learning outcomes in the College Catalog and program assessment data provide evidence that students are engaged in educational experiences that prepare them to interact with information and develop habits of critical inquiry, creativity, and adaptability. Faculty in the Culinary Arts program and the Early Childhood Education programs reported on the extensive assessment planning sessions they underwent which resulted in the rewriting of outcomes to reflect clearer definitions, distinction between certificates and degrees, and expectations of students.

While SIPI has articulated a commitment to human and cultural diversity in its Cultural Legacy core competency, mission, vision statement, and diversity value, the college has recognized the challenges of realizing this commitment and is taking steps to expose students to the diverse cultural communities and global issues outside of SIPI. These steps include hosting speakers from outside the U.S., cultural events wherein tribes share their native cultures and histories, and activities sponsored by the Student Life Committee. Student groups that met with the team described the impact on their perceptions of themselves as tribal members after attending events sponsored by the Student Life Committee.

Meetings with community members and professors from the University of New Mexico enthusiastically supported self-study reports of the many national and international creative educational experiences in which SIPI students have participated and excelled. These experiences have included the National Wind Turbine Challenge, Microelectromechanical systems (MEMS) design competitions, and summer research experiences at Sandia National Laboratories, NASA Kennedy Space Center, and Arizona State University.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met
                                     X Core Component is met without concerns
                                         Core Component is met with concerns
                                 Core Component is not met

3. **Findings on Core Component 3C**

Evidentiary Statements:

A review of the credentials of faculty demonstrates that all instructors that teach in transferable degree programs, or teach core curriculum courses have a minimum of a Masters degree and many have the Doctorate degree. Faculty who teach only certificate or AAS coursework have a minimum of a Bachelors degree. There were many local Engineering Instructors from the University of New Mexico and private engineers from nearby laboratories who voiced their support for SIPI at a stakeholders meeting. Their testimonies included scenarios of students' successes and reinforcing the high level of education that students are receiving at SIPI.

SIPI has both experienced and recently-hired faculty who are participants in curricular and co-curricular aspects of student education. More than twenty full-time faculty were present at the faculty meeting with the visiting team and were vocal about their active participation in students' education both inside and outside the classroom. Through a contracted arrangement with the University of New Mexico, more than 20 adjuncts (part-time faculty) augment the faculty. Many of the part-time faculty who met with the team are longstanding faculty at SIPI and hold office hours and participate in assessment processes, even though their primary responsibility is to teach, according to the faculty handbook.

Full time faculty have the credentials, licensure and certification (as appropriate) congruent with the guidelines of the Higher Learning Commission. Faculty files are maintained in Human Resources and in the academic departments according to the self-study report, faculty, and department chairs. Full-time faculty credentials are listed in the college catalog.

Interviews with individual faculty members and with the faculty as a whole confirmed that full-time faculty are evaluated according to the procedures and guidelines outlined in the Faculty Handbook and the Department of the Interior. The group meeting and individual meetings conducted by team members confirmed that full-time faculty undergo an annual classroom observation and complete an Individual Development Plan. The department head of business showed the team faculty files with current documentation of this comprehensive evaluation. Students confirmed that they have an opportunity to evaluate their faculty.

The Faculty in individual and group faculty meetings corroborated self-study statements that SIPI invests in faculty professional development. The Individual Development Plan identifies goals for performance and developmental objectives, including proposed dates of completion, estimated costs, and date completed. According to the 2013 self-study report, SIPI has budgeted $110,000 towards faculty professional development and has demonstrated commitment to ongoing professional development by submitting a request for this purpose in a line item in their Federal budget. Faculty reported attending conferences and unanimously agreed that the institution supports their requests for professional development.

A random sample of course syllabi in all disciplines along with faculty reports revealed that SIPI faculty hold regular office hours and have created an environment of care and attention to students' educational and personal success. Students who met with the team praised faculty, calling them "caring and committed," and told many stories about the ways faculty went above and beyond to encourage students

to develop positive habits, remain in class, and complete their college educations.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

X Core Component is met without concerns

Core Component is met with concerns

Core Component is not met

4. Findings on Core Component 3D

Evidentiary Statements:
Professional development is provided for all staff members annually, but individual faculty may also attend conferences that are representative of their specific disciplines. Funds are set aside in the budget for training. Staff are encouraged to take advantage of any training that is available at no cost to them. It is evident that there is an exchange of ideas between the University of New Mexico, the state government agencies of New Mexico, and Arizona. Faculty members are on some of the state and tribal educational boards. They are aware what the employment needs of the surrounding tribal communities are and faculty bring that information back to campus for future planning.

SIPI offers an array of student support services that serve the needs of their student population. These include services for academic advising and support, tutoring, disability, placement, residential life, alcohol and substance abuse, counseling, student rights, Student Senate, and an array of student organizations. Recent to the administrative structure for student services is the appointment of a Director of Student Services, filling a gap in administration and acknowledging that important leadership was needed in this area. This person, while new in his position, has the credentials and experience for student services.

SIPI has clear criteria for the mandatory placement of entering students into the appropriate courses. Using ACT Assessment, SAT scores, and transfer credit, SIPI evaluates a student's background to determine whether a student's skills in reading, writing, and mathematics warrant the ACT Compass assessment to place students in a course. Additionally, a one credit preparatory course, "Introduction to Online Education" provides students instruction on navigating the learning management system. Two sections of this course were in the Fall 2013 Class Schedule. This course is highly suitable for educating students on the disciplinary requirements of online instruction, as well as the technical functions of an online course.

Survey results, documents, and meetings with faculty demonstrate that SIPI faculty and staff engage in academic advising. The Faculty Handbook and Academic Advisor's Guide outline the faculty role in advising and provide resource material for advising students. SIPI participates in nationally normed surveys including Noel-Levitz and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), both of which measure student opinions of importance and satisfaction with support services and instruction. While SIPI students report acceptable levels of satisfaction, the institution recognizes that the survey results show that faculty need additional training on their role as academic advisors.

The infrastructure and technology resources at SIPI provide students and faculty with the learning environment for instruction to take place in support of the academic programs. Some examples include creating two open computer labs (25 computers in each) in the library for student use. Library staff reported that many SIPI students who have limited funds for personal computers use the open computer labs. Classroom technology, including 300 computers campus-wide, instructional aids such as clickers and document cameras, videoconferencing technology, and software provide students with access to instructional resources. Expanded classroom space in the Science and Technology building, a lecture hall, the Early Childhood Development Center, and a wind tunnel provide further evidence that SIPI offers students an opportunity to gain practical experience without leaving the campus. All of these developments have resulted in a high quality environment for learning.

The learning resources center provides library collections and instruction related to the critical evaluation of learning resources and use of Internet resources in research in support of college programs. Meetings with the qualified staff of the leaning resource center confirmed that they work with faculty and students in the use of resources while recognizing that efforts should be made to strengthen the integration of the library resources with course and program instruction. The learning resource center staff noted they are in the process of collecting data to make a qualified case for additional budgetary dollars that will assist them in offering services during expanded hours, programming, electronic databases, and library collections. Additional sources of funding, such as consortia relationships and grants, could assist the library with this integration.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

                                          X Core Component is met without concerns

                                              Core Component is met with concerns

                                Core Component is not met

5. **Findings on Core Component 3E**

Evidentiary Statements:
An array of services is available for students on the SIPI campus. These services include the following: tutoring services are centralized at a Campus Resource center; a College Library; a Gymnasium; day care facilities; counseling; academic advising; AODA services; Health, Dental and Optical care; Residential Assistants; transportation; internships at nationally recognized laboratories; relevant cultural activities; student organizations; well-equipped classrooms; and current technology. Interviews with Leaders of departments further demonstrated that they had more improvements that they had planned to make SIPI a strong and stable academic environment. This was especially true for the Library in which a fairly new Librarian had ideas and plans to initiate that would attract more students to the library. Her usage of data analysis indicated that they had already increased the number of checked out materials by 50%.

The self-study report and meetings with students provided many examples of programs and activities outside the classroom that align with the mission of SIPI and reinforce the institutional learning outcomes of the college. Field experiences, cultural events, and pre-Engineering design projects are a few examples of this alignment. Students commented on the cultural, research, field experience, and classroom activities that helped them gain practical skills and knowledge, develop confidence, and understand and develop tolerance of others. Students were given leadership opportunities in the dormitories through student government, resident hall assistantships, and student clubs which helped them develop organization, management, collaboration, inclusiveness, empathic, and motivational skills.

SIPI's priorities, programs, activities, and focus are directly aligned with its mission. For example, an aspect of SIPI's mission is to prepare its students to be "productive lifelong learners as tribal members" and evidence showed that SIPI provides leadership opportunities for students, graduates students in degree and certificate programs, transfers students to universities or to work, and has a caring and committed faculty and staff. Further, SIPI's efforts to integrate the general education core competencies across its curriculum will strengthen the college's ability to graduate lifelong learners when fully realized.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

                              X Core Component is met without concerns

                                Core Component is met with concerns

                    Core Component is not met

Summary Statement on Criterion

SIPI is providing students with a quality learning environment, technology, programs, and services, is honest about its strengths, and is in the process of strengthening instructional delivery, student support services, co-curricular opportunities, and complete fulfillment of its mission. Clearly, the commitment of faculty and staff to their students and the unique mission of the college are the core strengths of SIPI. The team observed this strong commitment in faculty and students stories about the effect that SIPI has had on their lives. Excellent instructional delivery and successful fulfillment of students' educational goals will continue to be dependent on this commitment. At the same time, SIPI is experiencing new leadership in Student Services and new full-time faculty who enrich the learning environment with their backgrounds and experience. For SIPI to fully realize results from its intense effort over the past two years, it should continue to prioritize professional development and training of its faculty and staff, orient faculty to their advising role, pursue evaluation of its part-time faculty and upgrade outdated learning technology (including Blackboard) to current versions.   As SIPI moves forward to maintain a quality learning environment, it is the human, physical, and technological resources within a comprehensive planning and budgeting framework that will lead to success for SIPI students. Further, the integration of the learning resource centers with the academic functions of the college (faculty, students, and the classroom) can be strengthened to orient every student to resources that are vital to their development as critical thinkers. Yet, there is a disconnect as a library orientation does not appear to be part of the mandatory orientation of students, the library does not engage in programming to draw students into the library, and faculty do not make liberal use of its resources. The team advises SIPI to investigate consortia arrangements at the Federal and state levels that may be available to them to enhance their collections. It is the opinion of the team, based on the evidence provided in documents, meetings, and interactions with SIPI

faculty, staff, administrators, and students, and tours of the facilities, that SIPI understands itself and is well-positioned to enhance its educational offerings in a quality learning environment, be creative about finding sources to fund co-curricular programming and infrastructure, and continue contributing to the overall education and personal development of Native American students.

    X Criterion is met

        X Criterion is met without concerns

          Criterion is met with concerns

      Criterion is not met

Recommendation of the Team

The team recommends no follow-up; Criterion 3 is met.

CRITERION FOUR: TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT.
The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

1. **Findings on Core Component 4A**

   Evidentiary Statements:
   Evidence suggests that a program review process is in place at SIPI and that all degree and certificate programs are being reviewed or in the process of being reviewed. In a sample of program review binders, some programs had complete program reviews while other programs included the templates for the program review but were not yet completed. The Vice President of Academic Programs confirmed the self-study by reporting that the first stage of the program review process has concluded. Ten programs have been eliminated through this process, 18 programs were reviewed, and at least one program is in hiatus pending further review. The second stage of the program review process involved a taskforce, appointed by the Vice President of Academic Programs, to revise the process in place since 2010. SIPI is positioned to complete program reviews on a regular basis. SIPI was forthcoming about where it is in the process of maintaining a practice of regular program reviews.

   Student transcripts reviewed by the team provided evidence that SIPI evaluates all of the credit that it transcripts. SIPI does not award credit for prior learning as noted in meetings with administrators, the self-study, College Catalog, and Student Handbook.

   SIPI clearly states policies related to the transcript of credit. For example, the College Catalog outlines how transfer credits and military credits are calculated in a clearly marked section, "Transfer Credits."

   SIPI has the authority to maintain its instructional program related to matters of course goals, outcomes, pre-requisites, course expectations, rigor, faculty

qualifications, and access to learning resources. For example, SIPI full-time faculty reported their involvement in the articulation of courses with the New Mexico Higher Education Department. Further, interviews with administrators, and confirmed by documents, provided evidence that SIPI controls course pre-requisites, constructs its own syllabi, has determined faculty qualifications for full time and part time faculty, and establishes course rigor to ensure quality in the learning outcomes. None of the meetings with staff, faculty, and administrators identified any constraints with regard to these elements.

SIPI has maintained specialized accreditation for one program since the 2011 team visit and has confidence that this accreditation will be renewed upon notice of accreditation status with the Higher Learning Commission. A letter from the Commission on Opticianry Accreditation, the self-study, and meetings with faculty and division heads from the Vision Care Technology and Optical Laboratory Technology programs confirmed that SIPI has maintained good standing with the accrediting agency over a number of years, was placed into abeyance when it lost regional accreditation status, and expects to regain program accreditation once regional accreditation status is finalized.

Meetings with the Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning administrators confirmed self-study reports that SIPI has identified as an indicator of success the employment or university transfer rate of 90% within one year of degree attainment. Faculty and administrators confirmed that SIPI is tracking survey results of students after they graduate and have joined the National Clearinghouse to evaluate transfer students.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

                         X Core Component is met without concerns

                            Core Component is met with concerns

                     Core Component is not met

2. **Findings on Core Component 4B**

Evidentiary Statements:
SIPI has institutionalized stated learning goals and processes to assess student learning. The College Catalog includes goals and outcomes for all programs. Samples of college syllabi provided evidence of a consistent format where goals and expected outcomes were completed for all courses. Since 2010, according to the self-study, faculty have been actively engaged in developing the four core competencies, an assessment manual, hiring a highly qualified assessment coach and institutional researcher, attending conferences on assessment, learning the process of interpreting assessment results, and making course and program improvements. Additionally, SIPI is exploring curriculum mapping and integrating the four core competencies throughout the curriculum. The faculty expressed the tremendous effort they have expended over the past two years, articulated the continuous improvement culture that has developed at the college, and demonstrated to the team their commitment to both learning and doing assessment.

The institution provided evidence that it assesses the extent to which it meets, exceeds, or falls short of meeting learning outcomes for both curricular and non-curricular areas of the college. Many SIPI departments—from the BOR to the President's Office, Admissions and Records, Information Technology, Housing and the academic departments—had completed two cycles of assessment (2011-12 and 2012-13 fiscal years) as confirmed by Detailed Assessment Reports and meetings with administrators, staff, faculty, and the self-study report. Based on assessment results, departments created action plans and submitted budget requests during the annual budgeting cycle. These comprehensive data demonstrate that SIPI understands the basics of conducting assessment, connecting assessment outcomes to action plans and budgeting, and that the college has transformed its culture from compliance-centered to learner-centered.

Evidence was provided by SIPI faculty and staff that the information gained from assessing learning outcomes was used for improving student learning. One example is that, through the process of assessing learning outcomes, faculty in the Culinary Arts program examined classroom practices and program outcomes and included role play and demonstration, purchased materials for instruction in ServSafe and has seen improvement in student results on the ServSafe examination. Additionally, faculty described how the learning outcomes were rewritten in the Early Childhood Education program to delineate between certificate and degree programs. In the process of assessing the program in 2012-13, the faculty changed the practicum course and changed background checks.

Sound practices for the assessment of student learning were evident at SIPI. A Director of Assessment, who was hired by SIPI in December 2012, and an experienced Director of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning have developed documents to create a structure for learning outcomes assessment, integrated the structure with compliance reporting, and coached and guided the faculty, staff, and administrators to understand and articulate the ways that their departments contribute value to students at SIPI. Further, SIPI has developed a comprehensive handbook of assessment and templates for developing departmental mission statements and goals, measurements, and reports. The campus security officer, housing staff, faculty, and administrators, were knowledgeable of the processes for assessment and used their own language, not jargon, when describing assessment to the team.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

X Core Component is met without concerns

Core Component is met with concerns

Core Component is not met

3. **Findings on Core Component 4C**

Evidentiary Statements:
The self-study report and evidence provided in the resource room provides goals for completion, retention, and persistence that are realistic for SIPI's student population and educational offerings. Meetings with senior leaders and faculty at SIPI

confirmed that the college has the systems, processes, and people in place to effect a two percent annual increase in the graduation (completion), retention and persistence rates.

The team verified that SIPI's Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning collects data on retention, persistence, and completion of the college's programs. SIPI has administered two rounds of surveys to non-returner students. Results from the 2012 National Community College Benchmark Project showed SIPI's graduation rate (21% in three years) was 54% higher than comparison institutions. According to college administrators, SIPI is developing a predictive model of student attrition to build an early warning system and support entering students.

Reports from college administrators and faculty suggest that SIPI is in the early stages of building a culture of evidence from which they base decisions and improvements. Meetings with the President's Cabinet and institutional researchers confirmed that the institution is developing a predictive model of non-returning students with the goal of developing an early warning system. The self-study report stated that SIPI is in the "initial" stages toward this analysis.

Interviews with administrators in the Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning verified the self-study reports that sound practices for collecting and analyzing data on retention, persistence, and completion are being used by experienced and knowledgeable administrators.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

                                      X Core Component is met without concerns

                                      Core Component is met with concerns

                         Core Component is not met

Summary Statement on Criterion

SIPI is on a clear path to assessing student learning outcomes in curricular and co-curricular areas. While highly qualified and experienced institutional research and effectiveness administrators provide coaching, support, and structure for SIPI's assessment processes, faculty and staff are able to articulate how assessment is conducted within their departments in their own words. Moreover, faculty and staff are supportive of one another. New faculty commented that they felt they could ask anyone about how to get something done. A second faculty member commented that faculty "support each other in our assessment plans." The Director of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning described in detail how he met and worked with the non-academic areas of the college. The result of that effort was that, in their own words, they articulated how they knew they were contributing to the mission of the college and where they fell short. In summary, SIPI has the human resources to continue good practice related to assessment, understands how to improve the teaching and learning environment, and has evolved into an institution with a culture of continuous improvement.

         X Criterion is met

                X Criterion is met without concerns

                   Criterion is met with concerns

Criterion is not met

Recommendation of the Team
The team recommends no follow-up; Criterion 4 is met.

CRITERION FIVE: RESOURCES, PLANNING, AND INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS.
The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

1. **Findings on Core Component 5A**

   Evidentiary Statements:
   SIPI's resource base is very different from most other institutions, which makes the examination of this Core Component unique. The institution charges no tuition and receives the bulk of its funds from an annual congressional appropriation through the BIA and BIE. This appropriation is set through a Federal funding formula and is subject to the vagaries of congressional negotiation and politics. While SIPI is restricted in what they can do by Federal financial and contracting laws, they are engaged in creative planning for development opportunities to supplement their appropriations with grants and gifts. These additional sources of revenue can help on the edges, but SIPI must make future plans based largely on the funding formula and expected revenues year to year. A growth in the student body does not result in a growth in revenue, so the leadership must carefully consider any new programs or hiring requests as part of their planning processes. Though SIPI has been underfunded for the past few years, based on the Federal formulas, the institution's ability to effectively utilize the fiscal assets provided indicate that they are stable and can meet their obligations while fulfilling their stated mission. They are diligent in planning to meet today's needs, as well as preparing for tomorrow's.

   SIPI financial managers track funds and justify expenditures, as required by Federal regulations. SIPI leadership uses a detailed and rigorous process of data-driven decision making to inform budget allocations and departmental requests for funds to improve student education.

   Team Determination: X Core Component is met
                                          X Core Component is met without concerns
                                              Core Component is met with concerns
                                   Core Component is not met

2. **Findings on Core Component 5B**

   Evidentiary Statements:
   The institution demonstrated the effectiveness of its governance and leadership throughout our visit. The BOR, a tribally appointed board with specific limited powers, obviously works closely with the institution's leadership group to ensure that the needs of the constituent tribes are met through the educational work of SIPI. The

members of the Board were keenly aware of the academic direction of the institution and its fiscal condition, though they have no control over finances. They provide an excellent platform for outside constituents to introduce their issues and ideas into SIPI's decision making processes.

Throughout the visit a common theme was evident across all levels of the institution, from the groundskeepers to the BOR: that the change that has spread through SIPI since it lost its accreditation has been due to the leadership of SIPI's current President. Her imprint is on everything that occurs at SIPI and she has created a collaborative team that seeks every day to make the institution a better place for their students. During the open staff meeting, the individuals who maintain the boiler plant commented that the upgrades to the systems had allowed them to spend less time in the plant, giving them more time to get out and see what others in the institution were doing. This aided them in helping out in ways to create a better environment for the students. One of the groundskeepers during this same open session talked about the importance of non-academic assessment to his work so that he could show the leadership better ways to invest in beautifying the campus. This organization has bought into what the President is selling and is focused on working as a collaborative unit to improve the school and ensure it is a quality institution for many years to come. The President has created a leadership structure which is empowered to solve problems, but is future-focused to continually improve how SIPI educates Native Americans of all tribes.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

                       X Core Component is met without concerns

                           Core Component is met with concerns

                     Core Component is not met

3. **Findings on Core Component 5C**

Evidentiary Statements:
Because of its relatively small size, SIPI has been able to push its strategic planning process to the lowest levels. Our interviews with administrators provided us evidence of an emerging culture of planning, with the need for data from ongoing assessment to support strategic planning being the single most common comment. The librarian, who is relatively new and just growing the library in size and importance, spoke to the changes that needed to be made, but shared that she didn't feel right pushing her agenda forward into the planning process until she had data to inform the deliberations by the leadership of the institution. SIPI has a very specific process to look forward into the future when identifying its course forward and where its limited treasure should be spent. One of the more convincing arguments for how pervasive the culture of strategic planning is at SIPI was the short class we received on the strategic planning process from the institution's supply clerk. Though working at the lowest Federal pay grade of any member of the staff, he walked us through the process in detail and was accurate in every assertion. Many institutions make claims of being data-driven and have a culture of planning in their self-studies, but the team

members agreed that they have yet to encounter an institution that has been able to spread its planning processes to every corner of the school as well as SIPI.

From past history, SIPI had a planning problem, but that is very definitely past history. With the hiring of the current President and a new Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Research, SIPI has become one of the most seamless academic planning organizations one could imagine. The melding of academic and non-academic assessment with the program review process and the strategic planning process has created an environment that is extremely data-driven and links virtually all of the planning processes of the institution to assessment. Though only a cycle or two of data have been captured in this new assessment and evaluation system, the fact that it is the basis for all planning was apparent in every conversation, whether the group was made up of faculty, students, staff, administrators, or Board members. Rarely have we seen a culture of assessment so clearly demonstrated across all campus operations and throughout the day-to-day activities of the members of the institution.

Team Determination: X Core Component is met

                                                X Core Component is met without concerns

                                                    Core Component is met with concerns

                                            Core Component is not met

4. **Findings on Core Component 5D**

   Evidentiary Statements:
   SIPI has become a learning organization that uses performance measures and data-driven decision making in every aspect of the institution. From landscapers, to instructors, to human resource specialists, to the senior administrators the organization focuses on measuring their operational effectiveness and analyzing how they can become more efficient and effective. In all facets of program evaluation and planning, SIPI has become a data-driven organization that seeks constant improvement in all aspects of its operations.

   Team Determination: X Core Component is met

                                                   X Core Component is met without concerns

                                                   Core Component is met with concerns

                                           Core Component is not met

Summary Statement on Criterion
SIPI's organizational structure allows the institution to incorporate multiple perspectives into its key decision-making processes. By including stakeholders such as the BOR, employees' union, the Student Senate, faculty, and staff, institutional decisions incorporate multiple perspectives, are well-informed and have broad support across the institution. Resources are managed with a focus on student success as priority number one, ensuring that faculty and staff have development opportunities and that the necessary technological resources are available to provide a stimulating and modern educational environment. The culture of evidence pervades the institution and informs all decisions and processes. SIPI employs national assessment tools as well its own to

ensure that all academic and non-academic programs are supporting students and working toward improvement.

X Criterion is met

X Criterion is met without concerns

Criterion is met with concerns

Criterion is not met

Recommendation of the Team

The team recommends no follow-up; Criterion 5 is met.

VI. COMPLIANCE WITH ASSUMED PRACTICES WITHIN THE CRITERIA

SIPI complies with minimum expectations within the criteria as noted in the evidence presented for each criterion and as outlined in Appendix A.

VII. COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REGULATIONS

The team reviewed the required Title IV compliance areas and the student complaint information. Details are in Appendix B.

Requirements are met.

VIII. STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS

A. Affiliation Status
Accredited

Rationale for recommendation:
SIPI meets all eligibility requirements, complies with all Federal regulations, meets the minimum expectations and assumed practices, and meets all of the Criteria for Accreditation. The current governance model instituted by the President and her leadership team will continue to serve the institution well. SIPI is a model institution for inclusiveness and transparency in its operations and practices.

B. Nature of Organization

1. **Legal status**
   Public

2. **Degrees awarded**
   Associate 13; Certificates 7

3. **Controlling or Affiliated Organizations**
   Bureau of Indian Education

C. Conditions of Affiliation

1. **Stipulation on affiliation status**
   None

2. **Approval of additional locations or branch campuses**
   None

3. **Approval of distance and correspondence education**
   None

D. Summary of Commission Review
Timing for next comprehensive visit 2017-2018

Rationale for recommendation:
Since receiving formal notification of accreditation withdrawal on July 2, 2010, SIPI has been diligently working through candidacy to regain its accredited status with the HLC. During candidacy, SIPI was candid and forthright in disclosing its accreditation status, acknowledging the causes of accreditation withdrawal, and sharing with constituents the changes necessary for accreditation to be restored. This initial accreditation visit demonstrated the depth and commitment of all members of the SIPI community to the importance and value of the accreditation process. In a very short time, the President and

her leadership team have led the institution in a transformation that demonstrates transparency, shared governance, and a laser-focus on mission accomplishment. Strategic planning, assessment, and data-driven decision making are hallmarks of the institution that is SIPI. Educational programs embrace the Native American cultures and are appropriate to the needs of Native Americans across the country. A culture of assessment is embraced in all courses and programs and budget decisions are based in large part on assessment data in both academic and non-academic programs. The members of the SIPI Board of Regents are engaged with the institution and contribute immeasurably to SIPI's success. SIPI clearly meets all of the Criteria for Accreditation, the Assumed Practices, and Federal compliance requirements and is worthy of accredited status with the HLC.

Appendix A

COMPLIANCE WITH COMMISSION ASSUMED PRACTICES WITHIN THE CRITERIA

Assumed Practices within the Criteria for Accreditation
Worksheet A

Foundational to the Criteria and Core Components is a set of practices shared by institutions of higher education in the United States. Unlike Criteria and Core Components, these Assumed Practices are (1) generally matters to be determined as facts, rather than matters requiring professional judgment and (2) unlikely to vary by institutional mission or context.

The Assumed Practices are organized by four areas: (A) Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct; (B) Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support; (C) Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement; and (D) Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness. These areas link the Assumed Practices to their respective Criteria.

Institutions seeking candidacy will be required to meet all of the Practices prior to admission to candidacy. Institutions in candidacy that do not maintain these Assumed Practices during the candidacy period may have that status withdrawn. Institutions seeking initial accreditation will be granted that status only when all Assumed Practices and all Criteria for Accreditation are in place at the level expected of accredited institutions.

A. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct	Met	Not Met[1]
1. The institution has a conflict of interest policy that ensures that the governing board and the senior administrative personnel act in the best interest of the institution.	Yes	
2. The institution has ethics policies for faculty and staff regarding conflict of interest, nepotism, recruitment and admissions, financial aid, privacy of personal information, and contracting.	Yes	
3. The institution provides its students, administrators, faculty, and staff with policies and procedures informing them of their rights and responsibilities within the institution.	Yes	
4. The institution provides clear information regarding its procedures for receiving complaints and grievances from students and other constituencies, responds to them in a timely manner, and analyzes them to improve its processes.	Yes	
5. The institution makes readily available to students and to the general public clear and complete information including:	Yes	

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[1] **Documenting the Unmet Assumed Practices**
In addition to documenting the specific reason the practice is not met on this form, the team should also reference any unmet Assumed Practice in the appropriate area of the main team report; i.e., the related eligibility requirement, Federal Compliance requirement, or Core Component(s).

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a. statements of mission, vision, and values		
b. full descriptions of the requirements for its programs, including all pre-requisite courses		
c. requirements for admission both to the institution and to particular programs or majors		
d. policies on acceptance of transfer credit, including how credit is applied to degree requirements. (Except for courses articulated through transfer policies or institutional agreements, the institution makes no promises to prospective students regarding the acceptance of credit awarded by examination, credit for prior learning, or credit for transfer until an evaluation has been conducted.)		
e. all student costs, including tuition, fees, training, and incidentals; its financial aid policies, practices, and requirements; and its policy on refund		
f. policies regarding academic good standing, probation, and dismissal; residency or enrollment requirements (if any)		
g. a full list of its instructors and their academic credentials		
h. its relationship with any parent organization (corporation, hospital, church, or other entity that owns the institution) and any external providers of its instruction.		
6. The institution assures that all data it makes public are accurate and complete, including those reporting on student achievement of learning and student persistence, retention, and completion.	Yes	
7. The institution portrays clearly and accurately to the public its current status with the Higher Learning Commission and with specialized, national, and professional accreditation agencies.	Yes	
a. An institution offering programs that require specialized accreditation or recognition in order for its students to be certified or to sit for licensing examinations either has the appropriate accreditation or discloses publicly and clearly the consequences to the students of the lack thereof. The institution makes clear to students the distinction between regional and specialized or program accreditation and the relationships between licensure and the various types of accreditation.	Yes	

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b. An institution offering programs eligible for specialized accreditation at multiple locations discloses the accreditation status of the program at each location.	Yes	
c. An institution that advertises a program as preparation for a licensure examination publicly discloses its licensure pass rate on that examination, unless such information is not available to the institution.	Yes	
8. The governing board and its executive committee, if it has one, include some "public" members. Public members have no significant administrative position or any ownership interest in any of the following: the institution itself; a company that does substantial business with the institution; a company or organization with which the institution has a substantial partnership; a parent, ultimate parent, affiliate, or subsidiary corporation; an investment group or firm substantially involved with one of the above organizations. All publicly-elected members or members appointed by publicly-elected individuals or bodies (governors, elected legislative bodies) are public members. * *Institutions operating under federal control and authorized by Congress are exempt from these requirements. These institutions must have a public board that includes representation by individuals who do not have a current or previous employment or other relationship with the federal government or any military entity. This public board has a significant role in setting policy, reviewing the institution's finances, reviewing and approving major institutional priorities, and overseeing the academic programs of the institution.*	Yes	
9. The governing board has the authority to approve the annual budget and to engage and dismiss the chief executive officer.* *Institutions operating under federal control and authorized by Congress are exempt from these requirements. These institutions must have a public board that includes representation by individuals who do not have a current or previous employment or other relationship with the federal government or any military entity. This public board has a significant role in setting policy, reviewing the institution's finances, reviewing and approving major institutional priorities, and overseeing the academic programs of the institution.*	Yes—Meets Federal Institution requirements	

	Met	Not Met[2]
10. The institution documents outsourcing of all services in written agreements, including agreements with parent or affiliated organizations.	Yes	
11. The institution takes responsibility for the ethical and responsible behavior of its contractual partners in relation to actions taken on its behalf.	Yes	

Rationale for Assumed Practices indicated as unmet:

B. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support	**Met**	**Not Met[2]**
1. Programs, Courses, and Credits		
a. The institution conforms to commonly accepted minimum program length: 60 semester credits for associate's degrees, 120 semester credits for bachelor's degrees, and 30 semester credits beyond the bachelor's for master's degrees. Any variation from these minima must be explained and justified.		
b. The institution requires that 30 of the last 60 credits earned for a bachelor's degree that the institution awards and 15 of the final 30 for an associate's degree it awards be credits earned at the institution.* Institutions that do not maintain such a requirement, or have programs that do not, are able to demonstrate structures or practices that ensure coherence and quality to the degree. (Consortial arrangements are considered to be such structures. In addition, an institution that complies with the criteria for academic residency requirements of the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) will not be deemed out of conformity with this Assumed Practice provided that its policy is an exception for active-duty servicemembers and not for students in general.) *For example, for a bachelor's degree requiring 120 credits, the institution accepts no more than 90 credits in total through transfer or other assessment of prior learning, and the remaining 30 must fall within the last 60 credits awarded the student.*	Yes	

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[2] **Documenting the Unmet Assumed Practices**
In addition to documenting the specific reason the practice is not met on this form, the team should also reference any unmet Assumed Practice in the appropriate area of the main team report; i.e., the related eligibility requirement, Federal Compliance requirement, or Core Component(s).

c.	The institution's policy and practice assure that at least 50% of courses applied to a graduate program are courses designed for graduate work, rather than undergraduate courses credited toward a graduate degree. (An institution may allow well-prepared advanced students to substitute its graduate courses for required or elective courses in an undergraduate degree program and then subsequently count those same courses as fulfilling graduate requirements in a related graduate program that the institution offers. In "4+1" or "2+3" programs, at least 50% of the credits allocated for the master's degree – usually 15 of 30 – must be for courses designed for graduate work.)		
d.	The institution adheres to policies on student academic load per term that reflect reasonable expectations for successful learning and course completion.		
e.	Courses that carry academic credit toward college-level credentials have content and rigor appropriate to higher education.		
f.	The institution has a process for ensuring that all courses transferred and applied toward degree requirements demonstrate equivalence with its own courses required for that degree or are of equivalent rigor.		
g.	The institution has a clear policy on the maximum allowable credit for prior learning as a reasonable proportion of the credits required to complete the student's program. Credit awarded for prior learning is documented, evaluated, and appropriate for the level of degree awarded. (Note that this requirement does not apply to courses transferred from other institutions.)		
h.	The institution maintains a minimum requirement for general education for all of its undergraduate programs whether through a traditional practice of distributed curricula (15 semester credits for AAS degrees, 24 for AS or AA degrees, and 30 for bachelor's degrees) or through integrated, embedded, interdisciplinary, or other accepted models that demonstrate a minimum requirement equivalent to the distributed model. Any variation is explained and justified.		
2. Faculty Roles and Qualifications			
a.	Instructors (excluding for this requirement teaching assistants enrolled in a graduate program and supervised by faculty) possess an academic degree relevant to what they are teaching and at least one level above the level at which they teach, except in programs for terminal degrees or when equivalent	Yes	

experience is established. In terminal degree programs, faculty members possess the same level of degree. When faculty members are employed based on equivalent experience, the institution defines a minimum threshold of experience and an evaluation process that is used in the appointment process.		
b. Instructors teaching at the doctoral level have a record of recognized scholarship, creative endeavor, or achievement in practice commensurate with doctoral expectations.	Yes	
c. Faculty participate substantially in: 1) oversight of the curriculum—its development and implementation, academic substance, currency, and relevance for internal and external constituencies; 2) assurance of consistency in the level and quality of instruction and in the expectations of student performance; 3) establishment of the academic qualifications for instructional personnel; 4) analysis of data and appropriate action of assessment of student learning and program completion.	Yes	
3. Support Services		
a. Financial aid advising clearly and comprehensively reviews students' eligibility for financial assistance and assists students in a full understanding of their debt and its consequences.	Yes	
b. The institution maintains timely and accurate transcript and records services.	Yes	
Rationale for Assumed Practices indicated as unmet:		

C. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement	Met	Not Met[3]
1. Instructors (excluding for this requirement teaching assistants enrolled in a graduate program and supervised by faculty) have the authority for the assignment of grades. (This requirement allows for collective responsibility, as when a faculty committee has the authority to override a grade on appeal.)	Yes	
2. The institution refrains from the transcription of credit from other institutions or providers that it will not apply to its own programs.	Yes	
3. The institution has formal and current written agreements for managing any internships and clinical placements included in its programs.	Yes	
4. A predominantly or solely single-purpose institution in fields that require licensure for practice is also accredited by or is actively in the process of applying to a recognized specialized accrediting agency for each field, if such agency exists.	Yes	
5. Instructors communicate course requirements to students through syllabi.	Yes	
6. Institutional data on assessment of student learning are accurate and address the full range of students who enroll.	Yes	
7. Institutional data on student retention, persistence, and completion are accurate and address the full range of students who enroll.	Yes	
Rationale for Assumed Practices indicated as unmet:		

D. Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness	Met	Not Met[4]

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[3] **Documenting the Unmet Assumed Practices**
In addition to documenting the specific reason the practice is not met on this form, the team should also reference any unmet Assumed Practice in the appropriate area of the main team report; i.e., the related eligibility requirement, Federal Compliance requirement, or Core Component(s).
[4] **Documenting the Unmet Assumed Practices**
In addition to documenting the specific reason the practice is not met on this form, the team should also reference any unmet Assumed Practice in the appropriate area of the main team report; i.e., the related eligibility requirement, Federal Compliance requirement, or Core Component(s). ❦

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1. The institution is able to meet its current financial obligations.	Yes	
2. The institution has a prepared budget for the current year and the capacity to compare it with budgets and actual results of previous years.	Yes	
3. The institution has future financial projections addressing its long-term financial sustainability.	Yes	
4. The institution maintains effective systems for collecting, analyzing, and using institutional information.	Yes	
5. The institution undergoes an external audit by a certified public accountant or a public audit agency of its own financial and educational activities and maintains audited financial statements. For private institutions the audit is annual; for public institutions it is at least every two years.* *Institutions under federal control are exempted provided that they have other reliable information to document the institution's fiscal resources and management.*	Yes—Meets Federal Institution requirement	
6. The institution's administrative structure includes a chief executive officer, chief financial officer, and chief academic officer (titles may vary) with appropriate credentials and experience and sufficient focus on the institution to ensure appropriate leadership and oversight.	Yes	
Rationale for Assumed Practices indicated as unmet:		

Team Determination: *(Insert one of the following statements.)*

The team has reviewed all Assumed Practices within the Criteria for Accreditation and the institution meets all expectations.

Appendix B

COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Federal Compliance Worksheet for Evaluation Teams

Effective September 1, 2013 – August 31, 2014

Evaluation of Federal Compliance Components

The team reviews each item identified in the Federal Compliance Guide and documents its findings in the appropriate spaces below. Teams should expect institutions to address these requirements with brief narrative responses and provide supporting documentation, where necessary. Generally, if the team finds in the course of this review that there are substantive issues related to the institution's ability to fulfill the Criteria for Accreditation, such issues should be raised in appropriate sections of the Assurance Section of the Team Report or highlighted as such in the appropriate AQIP Quality Checkup Report.

This worksheet outlines the information the team should review in relation to the federal requirements and provides spaces for the team's conclusions in relation to each requirement. The team should refer to the Federal Compliance Guide for Institutions and Evaluation Teams in completing this worksheet. The Guide identifies applicable Commission policies and an explanation of each requirement. **The worksheet becomes an appendix to the team's report. If the team recommends monitoring on a Federal Compliance requirement in the form of a report or focused visit, it should be included in the Federal Compliance monitoring sections below and added to the appropriate section in the team report template.**

Institution under review: Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute

Assignment of Credits, Program Length, and Tuition

Address this requirement by completing the "Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours" in the Appendix at the end of this document.

Institutional Records of Student Complaints

The institution has documented a process in place for addressing student complaints and appears to be systematically processing such complaints as evidenced by the data on student complaints since the last comprehensive evaluation.

1. Review the process that the institution uses to manage complaints as well as the history of complaints received and processed with a particular focus in that history on the past three or four years.

2. Determine whether the institution has a process to review and resolve complaints in a timely manner.

3. Verify that the evidence shows that the institution can, and does, follow this process and that it is able to integrate any relevant findings from this process into its review and planning processes.

4. Advise the institution of any improvements that might be appropriate.

5. Consider whether the record of student complaints indicates any pattern of complaints or otherwise raises concerns about the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation or Assumed Practices.

6. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

   _X_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

   Comments: SIPI has a formal policy which is thorough and timely.   The Vice President of Operations maintains a log which tracks the complaints and their disposition. This log is periodically reviewed to determine if SIPI needs to take action to improve a program or process.

   Additional monitoring, if any:

Publication of Transfer Policies

The institution has demonstrated it is appropriately disclosing its transfer policies to students and to the public. Policies contain information about the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions.

1. Review the institution's transfer policies.

2. Review any articulation agreements the institution has in place, including articulation agreements at the institution level and program-specific articulation agreements.

3. Consider where the institution discloses these policies (e.g., in its catalog, on its web site) and how easily current and prospective students can access that information.

Determine whether the disclosed information clearly explains the criteria the institution uses to make transfer decisions and any articulation arrangements the institution has with other institutions. Note whether the institution appropriately lists its articulation agreements with other institutions on its website or elsewhere. The information the institution provides should include any program-specific articulation agreements in place and should clearly identify program-specific articulation agreements as such. Also, the information the institution provides should include whether the articulation agreement anticipates that the institution under Commission review: 1) accepts credit from the other institution(s) in the articulation agreement; 2) sends credits to the other institution(s) in the articulation agreements that it accepts; or 3) both offers and accepts credits with the other institution(s).

4. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

   _X_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: SIPI's transfer policy is published in the Catalog and on the college website and is provided to Academic Advisors. SIPI is a partner with the New Mexico Higher Education Department agreements that provide for transfer of specific courses among regionally accredited public institutions in the state.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Practices for Verification of Student Identity

The institution has demonstrated that it verifies the identity of students who participate in courses or programs provided to the student through distance or correspondence education and appropriately discloses additional fees related to verification to students and to protect their privacy.

1. Determine how the institution verifies that the student who enrolls in a course is the same student who submits assignments, takes exams, and earns a final grade. The team should ensure that the institution's approach respects student privacy.

2. Check that any fees related to verification and not included in tuition are explained to the students prior to enrollment in distance courses (e.g., a proctoring fee paid by students on the day of the proctored exam).

3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

   _X_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

   Comments: No costs for identity verification are passed on to students. The college adheres to FERPA requirements and accepted practice in network security to protect student privacy.

   Additional monitoring, if any:

Title IV Program Responsibilities

The institution has presented evidence on the required components of the Title IV Program.

This requirement has several components the institution and team must address:

- *General Program Requirements. The institution has provided the Commission with information about the fulfillment of its Title IV program responsibilities, particularly findings from any review activities by the Department of Education. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area.*

- *Financial Responsibility Requirements. The institution has provided the Commission with information about the Department's review of composite ratios and financial audits. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its*

responsibilities in this area. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion Five if an institution has significant issues with financial responsibility as demonstrated through ratios that are below acceptable levels or other financial responsibility findings by its auditor.)

▪ ***Default Rates.*** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its three year default rate. It has a responsible program to work with students to minimize default rates. It has, as necessary, addressed any issues the Department raised regarding the institution's fulfillment of its responsibilities in this area. Note for 2012 and thereafter institutions and teams should be using the three-year default rate based on revised default rate data published by the Department in September 2012; if the institution does not provide the default rate for three years leading up to the comprehensive evaluation visit, the team should contact Commission staff.*

▪ ***Campus Crime Information, Athletic Participation and Financial Aid, and Related Disclosures.*** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations.*

▪ ***Student Right to Know.*** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about its disclosures. It has demonstrated, and the team has reviewed, the institution's policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The disclosures are accurate and provide appropriate information to students. (Note that the team should also be commenting under Criterion One if the team determines that disclosures are not accurate or appropriate.)*

▪ ***Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance.*** *The institution has provided the Commission with information about policies and practices for ensuring compliance with these regulations. The institution has demonstrated that the policies and practices meet state or federal requirements and that the institution is appropriately applying these policies and practices to students. In most cases, teams should verify that these policies exist and are available to students, typically in the course catalog or student handbook. Note that the Commission does not necessarily require that the institution take attendance but does anticipate that institutional attendance policies will provide information to students about attendance at the institution.*

▪ ***Contractual Relationships.*** *The institution has presented a list of its contractual relationships related to its academic program and evidence of its compliance with Commission policies requiring notification or approval for contractual relationships (If the team learns that the institution has a contractual relationship that may require Commission approval and has not received Commission approval the team must require that the institution complete and file the change request form as soon as possible. The team should direct the institution to review the Contractual Change Application on the Commission's web site for more information.)*

▪ ***Consortial Relationships.*** *The institution has presented a list of its consortial relationships related to its academic program and evidence of its compliance with Commission policies requiring notification or approval for consortial relationships. (If the team learns that the institution has a consortial relationship that may require Commission approval and has not received Commission approval the team must require that the institution complete and file the form as soon as possible. The team should direct the institution to review the Consortial Change Application on the Commission's web site for more information.)*

1. Review all of the information that the institution discloses having to do with its Title IV program responsibilities.

2. Determine whether the Department has raised any issues related to the institution's compliance or whether the institution's auditor in the A-133 has raised any issues about the

institution's compliance as well as look to see how carefully and effectively the institution handles its Title IV responsibilities.

3. If an institution has been cited or is not handling these responsibilities effectively, indicate that finding within the federal compliance portion of the team report and whether the institution appears to be moving forward with corrective action that the Department has determined to be appropriate.

4. If issues have been raised with the institution's compliance, decide whether these issues relate to the institution's ability to satisfy the Criteria for Accreditation, particularly with regard to whether its disclosures to students are candid and complete and demonstrate appropriate integrity (*Core Component 2.A and 2.B*).

5. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

   _X_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

   Comments: SIPI does not participate in Title IV loan programs so it has a 0% default rate. Athletic programs are only intramural. SIPI's Campus Crime Information is reported annually to the Department of Education in its Clery Report, which is also posted on the college website. All required disclosures for students and the public, including satisfactory academic progress and attendance policies, are posted on the college website and in the Student Handbook and Catalog.

   Additional monitoring, if any:

Required Information for Students and the Public

1. Verify that the institution publishes fair, accurate, and complete information on the following topics: the calendar, grading, admissions, academic program requirements, tuition and fees, and refund policies.

2. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

   _X_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

   Comments: All of this information is on the college website as well as in the Catalog and Student Handbook.

   Additional monitoring, if any:

Advertising and Recruitment Materials and Other Public Information

The institution has documented that it provides accurate, timely and appropriately detailed information to current and prospective students and the public about its accreditation status with the Commission and other agencies as well as about its programs, locations and policies.

1. Review the institution's disclosure about its accreditation status with the Commission to determine whether the information it provides is accurate and complete, appropriately formatted and contains the Commission's web address.

2. Review institutional disclosures about its relationship with other accrediting agencies for accuracy and for appropriate consumer information, particularly regarding the link between specialized/professional accreditation and the licensure necessary for employment in many professional or specialized areas.

3. Review the institution's catalog, brochures, recruiting materials, and information provided by the institution's advisors or counselors to determine whether the institution provides accurate information to current and prospective students about its accreditation, placement or licensure, program requirements, etc.

4. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

   _X_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

   Comments: The Catalog, Student Handbook, and college website are the official sources of information for current and potential students and the public. Review of these documents showed that SIPI accurately portrays the institution to all constituencies and meets all Federal expectations.

   Additional monitoring, if any:

Review of Student Outcome Data

1. Review the student outcome data the institution collects to determine whether it is appropriate and sufficient based on the kinds of academic programs it offers and the students it serves.

2. Determine whether the institution uses this information effectively to make decisions about academic programs and requirements and to determine its effectiveness in achieving its educational objectives.

3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

_X_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: All courses and programs have appropriate learning outcomes and are rigorously assessed to identify trends and potential for improvement.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Standing with State and Other Accrediting Agencies

The institution has documented that it discloses accurately to the public and the Commission its relationship with any other specialized, professional or institutional accreditor and with all governing or coordinating bodies in states in which the institution may have a presence.

The team has considered any potential implications for accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of sanction or loss of status by the institution with any other accrediting agency or loss of authorization in any state.

Important note: If the team is recommending initial or continued status, and the institution is now or has been in the past five years under sanction or show-cause with, or has received an adverse action (i.e., withdrawal, suspension, denial, or termination) from, any other federally recognized specialized or institutional accreditor or a state entity, then the team must explain the sanction or adverse action of the other agency in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report and provide its rationale for recommending Commission status in light of this action. In addition, the team must contact the staff liaison immediately if it learns that the institution is at risk of losing its degree authorization or lacks such authorization in any state in which the institution meets state presence requirements.

1. Review the information, particularly any information that indicates the institution is under sanction or show-cause or has had its status with any agency suspended, revoked, or terminated, as well as the reasons for such actions.

2. Determine whether this information provides any indication about the institution's capacity to meet the Commission's Criteria for Accreditation. Should the team learn that the institution is at risk of losing, or has lost, its degree or program authorization in any state in which it meets state presence requirements, it should contact the Commission staff liaison immediately.

3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

   _X_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: SIPI has been honest and candid with all state and program accrediting bodies regarding their accreditation status with the HLC. Higher education institutions in the State of New Mexico have continued to honor transfer credits from SIPI and they have been very supportive of SIPI's efforts to regain regional accreditation from the HLC. Programmatic accrediting bodies have indicated in writing that they will work with SIPI to re-establish their accreditations once SIPI meets their regional accreditation requirement.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Public Notification of Opportunity to Comment

The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to solicit third party comments. The team has evaluated any comments received and completed any necessary follow-up on issues raised in these comments. Note that if the team has determined that any issues raised by third-party comment relate to the team's review of the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation, it must discuss this information and its analysis in the body of the Assurance Section of the Team Report.

1. Review information about the public disclosure of the upcoming visit, including sample announcements, to determine whether the institution made an appropriate and timely effort to notify the public and seek comments.

2. Evaluate the comments to determine whether the team needs to follow-up on any issues through its interviews and review of documentation during the visit process.

3. Check the appropriate response that reflects the team's conclusions:

   _X_ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution to meet the Commission's requirements but recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team has reviewed this component of federal compliance and has found the institution not to meet the Commission's requirements and recommends Commission follow-up.

   ___ The team also has comments that relate to the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation. See Criterion (insert appropriate reference).

Comments: As a Federally operated institution under the Bureau of Indian Education and Department of the Interior (DOI), SIPI worked through the Public Affairs Office to publicize the HLC team visit. This notification was released three months prior to the visit. The team receive ten comments, all of which were strongly supportive of SIPI.

Additional monitoring, if any:

Institutional Materials Related to Federal Compliance Reviewed by the Team

Provide a list materials reviewed here: Student Complaint Policy, 2013-2014 Catalog, Academic Advisor's Guide, Student Handbook, SIPI website (www.sipi.edu) Policy on Student Verification for Distance Education, Commission on Opticianry letter regarding SIPI's accreditation and support for re-establishment upon reaccreditation by HLC, ACBSP letter regarding SIPI's accreditation and support for re-establishment upon reaccreditation by HLC, Department of the Interior News Release regarding the accreditation visit, Campus Crime Report, Credit Hour Worksheet

Appendix B

Team Worksheet for Evaluating an Institution's Program Length and Tuition, Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours

Institution under review: South Western Indian Polytechnic Institute

Part 1: Program Length and Tuition

Instructions

The institution has documented that it has credit hour assignments and degree program lengths within the range of good practice in higher education and that tuition is consistent across degree programs (or that there is a rational basis for any program-specific tuition).

Review the *"Worksheet for Use by Institutions on the Assignment of Credit Hours and on Clock Hours"* as well as the course catalog and other attachments required for the institutional worksheet.

Worksheet on Program Length and Tuition

A. Answer the Following Questions

Are the institution's degree program requirements within the range of good practice in higher education and contribute to an academic environment in which students receive a rigorous and thorough education?

__X_ Yes   ____ No

Comments: All SIPI degree program requirements, in terms of program credit hours, meet accepted expectations of higher education. Review of syllabi and assessment of course objectives and outcomes reveal a rigorous program for SIPI students. SIPI courses meet the expectations of higher education institutions throughout New Mexico and are accepted for transfer to their programs. Numerous responses received by the team and comments in the public stakeholder meeting emphasized the value of SIPI courses and how they prepared SIPI students for success.

Are the institution's tuition costs across programs within the range of good practice in higher education and contribute to an academic environment in which students receive a rigorous and thorough education?

__X_ Yes   ____ No

Comments: SIPI students receive free tuition, room, and board and pay only modest fees of $300 or so each trimester. The low cost for SIPI students allows them to focus on their educations without undue concern for the expenses of attending college.

B. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's program length and tuition practices?

  ____ Yes   __X_ No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:

Part 2: Assignment of Credit Hours

Instructions

In assessing the appropriateness of the credit allocations provided by the institution the team should complete the following steps:

1. Review the Worksheet completed by the institution, which provides information about an institution's academic calendar and an overview of credit hour assignments across institutional offerings and delivery formats, and the institution's policy and procedures for awarding credit hours. Note that such policies may be at the institution or department level and may be differentiated by such distinctions as undergraduate or graduate, by delivery format, etc.

2. Identify the institution's principal degree levels and the number of credit hours for degrees at each level. The following minimum number of credit hours should apply at a semester institution:

   - Associate's degrees = 60 hours

   - Bachelor's degrees = 120 hours

   - Master's or other degrees beyond the Bachelor's = at least 30 hours beyond the Bachelor's degree

   - Note that one quarter hour = .67 semester hour

   - Any exceptions to this requirement must be explained and justified.

3. Scan the course descriptions in the catalog and the number of credit hours assigned for courses in different departments at the institution.

   - At semester-based institutions courses will be typically from two to four credit hours (or approximately five quarter hours) and extend approximately 14-16 weeks (or approximately 10 weeks for a quarter). The description in the catalog should indicate a course that is appropriately rigorous and has collegiate expectations for objectives and workload. Identify courses/disciplines that seem to depart markedly from these expectations.

   - Institutions may have courses that are in compressed format, self-paced, or otherwise alternatively structured. Credit assignments should be reasonable. (For example, as a full-time load for a traditional semester is typically 15 credits, it might be expected that the norm for a full-time load in a five-week term is 5 credits; therefore, a single five-week course awarding 10 credits would be subject to inquiry and justification.)

   - Teams should be sure to scan across disciplines, delivery mode, and types of academic activities.

   - Federal regulations allow for an institution to have two credit-hour awards: one award for Title IV purposes and following the above federal definition and one for the purpose of defining progression in and completion of an academic program at that institution.

Commission procedure also permits this approach.

4. Scan course schedules to determine how frequently courses meet each week and what other scheduled activities are required for each course. Pay particular attention to alternatively-structured or other courses with particularly high credit hours for a course completed in a short period of time or with less frequently scheduled interaction between student and instructor.

5. **Sampling.** Teams will need to sample some number of degree programs based on the headcount at the institution and the range of programs it offers.

   - At a minimum, teams should anticipate sampling at least a few programs at each degree level.

   - For institutions with several different academic calendars or terms or with a wide range of academic programs, the team should expand the sample size appropriately to ensure that it is paying careful attention to alternative format and compressed and accelerated courses.

   - Where the institution offers the same course in more than one format, the team is advised to sample across the various formats to test for consistency.

   - For the programs the team sampled, the team should review syllabi and intended learning outcomes for several of the courses in the program, identify the contact hours for each course, and expectations for homework or work outside of instructional time.

   - The team should pay particular attention to alternatively-structured and other courses that have high credit hours and less frequently scheduled interaction between the students and the instructor.

   - Provide information on the samples in the appropriate space on the worksheet.

6. Consider the following questions:

   - Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution?

   - Does that policy address the amount of instructional or contact time assigned and homework typically expected of a student with regard to credit hours earned?

   - For institutions with courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy also equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the timeframe allotted for the course?

   - Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

   - If so, is the institution's assignment of credit to courses reflective of its policy on the award of credit?

7. If the answers to the above questions lead the team to conclude that there may be a problem with the credit hours awarded the team should recommend the following:

   - If the problem involves a poor or insufficiently-detailed institutional policy, the team should call for a revised policy as soon as possible by requiring a monitoring report within no more

than one year that demonstrates the institution has a revised policy and evidence of implementation.

- If the team identifies an application problem and that problem is isolated to a few courses or single department or division or learning format, the team should call for follow-up activities (monitoring report or focused evaluation) to ensure that the problems are corrected within no more than one year.

- If the team identifies systematic non-compliance across the institution with regard to the award of credit, the team should notify Commission staff immediately and work with staff to design appropriate follow-up activities. The Commission shall understand systematic noncompliance to mean that the institution lacks any policies to determine the award of academic credit or that there is an inappropriate award of institutional credit not in conformity with the policies established by the institution or with commonly accepted practices in higher education across multiple programs or divisions or affecting significant numbers of students.

Worksheet on Assignment of Credit Hours

A. Identify the Sample Courses and Programs Reviewed by the Team (see #5 of instructions in completing this section)

SIPI has three AS degrees—Pre-Engineering, Computer Science Information Systems and Business Administration—and two AA degrees—Early Childhood Education and Liberal Arts. The team reviewed all five programs. Syllabi and learning outcomes were reviewed for approximately 50% of the courses in each program. Learning outcomes, contact hours, and assigned homework met expectation of higher education and reflected college-level work.

B. Answer the Following Questions

1) Institutional Policies on Credit Hours

Does the institution's policy for awarding credit address all the delivery formats employed by the institution? (Note that for this question and the questions that follow an institution may have a single comprehensive policy or multiple policies.)

__X_ Yes   ____ No

   Comments: In addition to normal classroom offerings for all programs and courses, SIPI offers its Early Childhood Education Program via synchronous videoconferencing. Due to the nature of the synchronous process, award of credit for both delivery methods is consistent.
Does that policy relate the amount of instructional or contact time provided and homework typically expected of a student to the credit hours awarded for the classes offered in the delivery formats offered by the institution? (Note that an institution's policy must go beyond simply stating that it awards credit solely based on assessment of student learning and should also reference instructional time.)

__X_ Yes   ____ No

   Comments: SIPI has 16-week trimesters and classes meet for 150 minutes per week. Class preparation and homework are assigned at appropriate levels to meet the expectations of college-level work.

For institutions with non-traditional courses in alternative formats or with less instructional and homework time than would be typically expected, does that policy equate credit hours with intended learning outcomes and student achievement that could be reasonably achieved by a student in the timeframe and utilizing the activities allotted for the course?

____ Yes   ____ No

    Comments: N/A

Is the policy reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

__X_ Yes   ____ No

    Comments:

2) **Application of Policies**

Are the course descriptions and syllabi in the sample academic programs reviewed by the team appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit? (Note that the Commission will expect that credit hour policies at public institutions that meet state regulatory requirements or are dictated by the state will likely meet federal definitions as well.)

__X_ Yes   ____ No

    Comments: Syllabi and course descriptions reflect rigorous college-level material and a sufficient amount of academic material is covered to justify the credit hours assigned. All credit hour assigned comply with the policies of the institution.

Are the learning outcomes in the sample reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit?

__X_ Yes   ____ No

    Comments:

If the institution offers any alternative delivery or compressed format courses or programs, were the course descriptions and syllabi for those courses appropriate and reflective of the institution's policy on the award of academic credit?

__X_ Yes   ____ No

    Comments: SIPI offers the Early Childhood Education courses via synchronous videoconferencing. As such, the distance students are participating in class with faculty and peers on the main campus. This format allows distance students to take the exact class as residential students, making the award of credit identical in both modalities.

If the institution offers alternative delivery or compressed format courses or programs, are the learning outcomes reviewed by the team appropriate to the courses and programs reviewed and in keeping with the institution's policy on the award of credit? Are the learning outcomes reasonably capable of being fulfilled by students in the time allocated to justify the allocation of credit?

__X_ Yes   ____ No

    Comments:

Is the institution's actual assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution reflective of its policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

__X_ Yes   ____ No

Comments: SIPI carefully follows its policies in all matters relating to academic credit. An external benchmark for appropriate practices by SIPI is that all of SIPI's general education courses are eligible for transfer to other New Mexico public institutions of higher education.

C. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

Review the responses provided in this section. If the team has responded "no" to any of the questions above, the team will need to assign Commission follow-up to assure that the institution comes into compliance with expectations regarding the assignment of credit hours.

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's credit hour policies and practices?

____ Yes   __X_ No

Rationale:

Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:

D. Identify and Explain Any Findings of Systematic Non-Compliance in One or More Educational Programs with Commission Policies Regarding the Credit Hour

None were noted.

Part 3: Clock Hours

Does the institution offer any degree or certificate programs in clock hours?

____ Yes   __X_ No

Does the institution offer any degree or certificate programs that must be reported to the Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs?

____ Yes   __X_ No

If the answer to either question is "Yes," complete this part of the form.

Instructions

This worksheet is <u>not</u> intended for teams to evaluate whether an institution has assigned credit hours relative to contact hours in accordance with the Carnegie definition of the credit hour. This

worksheet solely addresses those programs reported to the Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes.

Complete this worksheet **only if** the institution offers any degree or certificate programs in clock hours OR that must be reported to the U.S. Department of Education in clock hours for Title IV purposes even though students may earn credit hours for graduation from these programs. Non-degree programs subject to clock hour requirements (an institution is required to measure student progress in clock hours for federal or state purposes or for graduates to apply for licensure) are not subject to the credit hour definitions per se but will need to provide conversions to semester or quarter hours for Title IV purposes. Clock-hour programs might include teacher education, nursing, or other programs in licensed fields.

For these programs Federal regulations require that they follow the federal formula listed below. If there are no deficiencies identified by the accrediting agency in the institution's overall policy for awarding semester or quarter credit, accrediting agency may provide permission for the institution to provide less instruction provided that the student's work outside class in addition to direct instruction meets the applicable quantitative clock hour requirements noted below.

Federal Formula for Minimum Number of Clock Hours of Instruction (34 CFR §668.8)

1 semester or trimester hour must include at least 37.5 clock hours of instruction
1 quarter hour must include at least 25 clock hours of instruction

Note that the institution may have a lower rate if the institution's requirement for student work outside of class combined with the actual clock hours of instruction equals the above formula provided that a semester/trimester hour includes at least 30 clock hours of actual instruction and a quarter hour include at least 20 semester hours.

Worksheet on Clock Hours

A. Answer the Following Questions

Does the institution's credit to clock hour formula match the federal formula?

____ Yes   ____ No

Comments:

If the credit to clock hour conversion numbers are less than the federal formula, indicate what specific requirements there are, if any, for student work outside of class?

Did the team determine that the institution's credit hour policies are reasonable within the federal definition as well as within the range of good practice in higher education? (Note that if the team answers "No" to this question, it should recommend follow-up monitoring in section C below.)

____ Yes   ____ No

Comments:

Did the team determine in reviewing the assignment of credit to courses and programs across the institution that it was reflective of the institution's policy on the award of credit and reasonable and appropriate within commonly accepted practice in higher education?

____ Yes   ____ No

Comments:

B. Does the team approve variations, if any, from the federal formula in the institution's credit to clock hour conversion?

_____ Yes   _____ No

(Note that the team may approve a lower conversion rate than the federal rate as noted above provided the team found no issues with the institution's policies or practices related to the credit hour and there is sufficient student work outside of class as noted in the instructions.)

C. Recommend Commission Follow-up, If Appropriate

Is any Commission follow-up required related to the institution's clock hour policies and practices?

_____ Yes   _____ No

Rationale:Identify the type of Commission monitoring required and the due date:

STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION STATUS WORKSHEET

INSTITUTION and STATE: Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute NM

TYPE OF REVIEW*:* Comprehensive Accreditation Evaluation

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:

DATES OF REVIEW: 10/07/2013 - 10/09/2013

☐   No Change in Statement of Affiliation Status

Nature of Organization

CONTROL: Tribal

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

DEGREES AWARDED: Certificate, Associates

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Candidacy

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: Initial Accreditation

Conditions of Affiliation

STIPULATIONS ON AFFILIATION STATUS: Prior approval required for any new degree program.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

APPROVAL OF NEW ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS:
Prior Commission approval required.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

APPROVAL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREES:
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.

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change

ACCREDITATION ACTIVITIES:

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: No Change (None)

Summary of Commission Review

YEAR OF LAST REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION: 2009 - 2010

YEAR FOR NEXT REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION: 2013 - 2014

TEAM RECOMMENDATION: 2023-2024
(although after being placed in Standard Pathway, there will be a 2017-18 "Year 4" reaffirmation)

Higher Learning Commission
A commission of the North Central Association

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE WORKSHEET

INSTITUTION and STATE: 1508 Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute NM

TYPE OF REVIEW: Application: Comprehensive Accreditation Evaluation

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:

X No change to Organization Profile

Educational Programs

Programs leading to Undergraduate	Program Distribution
Associates	13
Bachelors	0
Programs leading to Graduate	
Masters	0
Specialist	0
Doctors	0
Certificate programs	
Certificate	7

Recommended Change:

Off-Campus Activities:
In State - Present Activity
Campuses: None.

Additional Locations: None.

Recommended Change:

Out Of State - Present Activity
Campuses: None.

Additional Locations: None.

Recommended Change:

Out of USA - Present Activity

Campuses: None.

Additional Locations: None.

Recommended Change:

Distance Education Programs:
Present Offerings:
Associate 13.1210 Early Childhood Education and Teaching A.A. in Early Childhood Education Audioconferencing

Associate 13.1210 Early Childhood Education and Teaching A.A. in Early Childhood Education One-way or Two Way Transmission

Recommended Change:

Correspondence Education Programs:
Present Offerings:
None.

Recommended Change:

Contractual Relationships:
Present Offerings:
None.

Recommended Change:

Consortial Relationships:
Present Offerings:
None.

Recommended Change: