



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION
Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
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Date: August 4, 2017
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Public Comments Invited on SIPI's Accreditation

Albuquerque, N.M. – The Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) will undergo a comprehensive evaluation visit by a team representing the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) that will take place on November 13-14, 2017. The public is invited to submit comments on the quality of SIPI or its academic programs prior to the team's visit and by the deadline date of October 13, 2017.

SIPI (<http://www.sipi.bia.edu>) is a National Indian Community College and Land Grant Institution of higher learning with a national, tribally appointed board of regents. It is operated by the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Education for students from the nation's federally recognized tribes. SIPI was granted initial accreditation by the Commission on February 27, 2014.

The HLC is one of six accrediting agencies in the United States which provide institutional accreditation on a regional basis to institutions of higher learning. Accreditation is the primary means for assuring accountability by a higher learning institution: it certifies institutional quality and protects the institution's academic freedom. Institutional accreditation evaluates an entire institution and accredits it as a whole. Accreditation is voluntary. The Commission is recognized by the U.S Department of Education.

SIPI has been engaged in a process of self-study while addressing the Commission's requirements and criteria for accreditation. The evaluation team will review SIPI's ability to meet the HLC's *Criteria for Accreditation* and then make its recommendation to the Commission. Following a review process, the Commission itself will take the final action.

Comments must be in writing and address substantive matters related to the quality of SIPI or its academic programs. They can be submitted via the HLC's website at www.hlcommission.org/comment or mailed to:

Public Comment on Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
The Higher Learning Commission
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, IL 60604-1411

All written, signed comments must be received by October 13, 2017.

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