



ACCREDITATION

LETTER



SOUTHWESTERN INDIAN POLYTECHNIC, SIPI's Accreditation Committee's

SIPI employees and staff are hard at work preparing for the Higher Learning Commissions visit in March. The following committee's are engaged in working with the individual criterion and core components:

Criterion 1: Mission & Integrity

Co-Chairs: Joe Carpio and Joan Goodman

Committee Members:

Kirby Gchachu
William Dyea
Angelica Dominguez
Verbie James
Kimberly Whitney
Vina Hiyi
Joe Abeita
Michael Daney
Joseph Mitchell
Marcella Rivera
Leia Madalena
John Gachupin
James Jojola

Criterion 2: Planning for the Future

Co-Chairs: Monte Monteith and Dorothy Wester

Committee Members:

Albert Artiaga
Bert Curley
Karlisa Shomour
Irene Marrs
Jeffrey Walters
Gloria Mariano
Juana Ray
Ronnie Paquin
Jameson Castillo
Gloria Wilson
Eugene James

Criterion 3: Learning & Effective Teaching

Co-Chairs: Kathryn Akipa and Bill Adams

Committee Members:

Angeline Sells
David Benalli
Bryon Pershall
Mary McCormick
Regina Jaramillo
Terry Martin
Paul Frank
Barbara Chino
Gary Trujillo
Alice Platero
Jim Snyder
Alta Tsosie
Arthur Tsyitee
Mary Yepa
Sam Henderson

Criterion 4: Acquisition of Knowledge

Chairs: Chris Harrington

Committee Members:

Doug Dunning
Matt Harriman
Roxy Hunt
Audrey Benallie
Melynda Mitchell
James Dunn
Joseph Jiron
Dorothy Treadwell
Nader Vadiiee
Neva Lucero
Evangeline Bahe
Kevin Chee
Maria Pino

Criterion 5: Engagement

Co-Chairs: Cecelia Cometsevah, Sheri Redshirt and

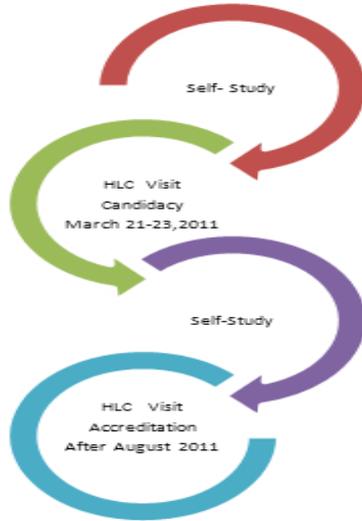
Nancy Garcia

Committee Members:

William Fragua
Elliott Gachupin
Marilyn Pargas
Bernadine Fisherman
Nelson Martinez
Leo Livingston



RIISING TO THE CHALLENGE: SIPI'S ROAD TO ACCREDITATION



On July 2, 2010 SIPI received formal notification from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) that their Board of Trustees voted to withdraw our accreditation, but also granted us “candidate for accreditation status.” The HLC had determined that although the Institute no longer meets the Criteria for Accreditation, SIPI retained its presumption of meeting “Eligibility Requirements.” The HLC stated that the plan put forward by SIPI indicates that we are likely to meet the Criteria for Accreditation within the maximum four-year period allowed by Commission policy for candidacy. The HLC went on to note the high degree of commitment demonstrated by institutional representatives to SIPI’s historic mission and to students, as well as to the commitment to improving operations and addressing significant issues.

While the HLC’s policy allows SIPI up to a maximum four-year period to move from Candidacy Status to Accredited Status, SIPI and the Bureau of Indian Education leadership are working vigorously to shorten this timeframe to the minimum one-year period allowed by the HLC. SIPI has launched “Rising to the Challenge: The Road to Accreditation.”

On this road to accreditation SIPI is completing another self-study in preparation for a HLC comprehensive evaluation visit scheduled for **March 21-23, 2011**. The purpose of this on-site visit is to determine whether SIPI continues to meet the Eligibility Requirements, is making reasonable progress towards meeting the Criteria for Accreditation and assembling specific evidence addressing: governance, strategic planning, budgeting/audit, program reviews, assessment and establishing advisory committees. The SIPI President has seated a new accreditation committee and charged every employee on the campus to participate in a Criterion subcommittee (see next page of assignments). These subcommittees are hard at work on a new self-study for the March 2011 visit.

SIPI faculty and staff have come a long way in addressing issues, but there are no rest stops, faculty and staff must continue to strengthen internal processes and build a strong “pattern of evidence” documenting that we merit accreditation. After the March 21-23, 2011 visit, based on additional feedback from the HLC evaluation team, SIPI will continue to address issues and build internal processes, and conduct another self-study in anticipation of yet another comprehensive evaluation visit by the HLC for accreditation after August 6, 2011 which marks the “minimum one-year” period of “candidacy status” that the HLC specified. This will be two years out from the December 2009 visit that led to withdrawal of our accreditation. SIPI faculty and staff will have developed the internal structures and processes to ensure we are ready to apply for accreditation.

This is not an easy road, parts of the road have been washed out over the years, and parts of the road are unpaved. But we know that historically the tribes fought to establish SIPI, that our graduates have gone on to make their mark in the world, and that SIPI can be a stronger and better gateway for other Native Americans to prepare for the workforce or prepare to pursue baccalaureate and graduate degrees. SIPI faculty and staff do not travel the road alone; we have a cadre of supporters extending their prayers, their commitment and their expertise. With this support we will complete our journey.