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July 18, 2017

Dr. Carlee Rader Drummer
President
Quinebaug Valley Community College
742 Upper Maple Street
Danielson, CT 06239

Dear President Drummer:

I write to inform you that at its meeting on April 20, 2017, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education considered the Graduation Rate Information Project report submitted by Quinebaug Valley Community College and took the following action:

that the Graduation Rate Information Project report submitted by Quinebaug Valley Community College be accepted;

that the progress report scheduled for consideration in Fall, 2018 be confirmed;

that, in addition to the matters specified in our letter of November 14, 2016, the Fall, 2018 report give emphasis to the institution's success in implementing and evaluating the effectiveness of initiatives to improve its retention and graduation rates;

that the Commission notes the proposal by the President of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities system to merge the current twelve community colleges into a single institution and informs Quinebaug Valley Community College that the advancement of those or similar plans may result in changes to the scheduled monitoring of the College.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its actions.

The Graduation Rate Information Project report submitted by Quinebaug Valley Community College was accepted because it was generally responsive to the request made by the Commission in its letter of November 8, 2016.

The Commission commends Quinebaug Valley Community College (QVCC) for a well-written report that addresses how the institution defines and implements mission-appropriate measures of student success and uses student success data, including graduation rates, to improve curriculum, pedagogy, and student services. We appreciate the institution's candid discussion about the

College's student population. As noted in the report, about 60% are part-time students, many of whom are academically under-prepared or face personal and/or socio-economic challenges; 45% receive Pell Grants; 65% are eligible for need-based financial aid; and "a great number enroll at QVCC with the goal of transferring as soon as possible to a four-year institution or obtaining a specific work skill for promotion." We also recognize the limitations of the IPEDs graduation rate and therefore note with approval that QVCC utilizes additional measures such as transfer-out and in-progress rates to evaluate student success. Using the Fall 2010 cohort as an example, while the IPEDs graduation rate of 14% is low, when the time frame is expanded to 200% that rate increases to 21%. When the transfer-out and in-progress rates are included, the success rate at 150% of time for this cohort is 47%, and at 200% of time, 57%. We also note with approval that QVCC has implemented an Enrollment Management Plan that focuses on two goals: increase retention and increase completion.

The Commission confirms the progress report scheduled for consideration in Fall, 2018. In addition to the matters specified in our letter of November 14, 2016, we ask that the Fall, 2018 report include an update on a matter concerning our standard on *Educational Effectiveness*.

As noted above with approval, Quinebaug Valley Community College has established a targeted plan to increase retention and graduation rates. For example, efforts to improve retention rates include increasing the number of First-Year Experience course sections; implementing Degree Works progress software to facilitate course planning; offering strategic course schedules that better suit student needs; and implementing a Student Support Program and a Mental Health Seminar Series. To increase graduation rates, initiatives include communicating the benefits of reverse transfer; increasing the number of students who pursue "stackable credentials;" implementing Guided Pathways best practices to foster completion; and enhancing student support services. We ask that, in addition to the matters specified in our letter of November 14, 2016, the report submitted for consideration in Fall, 2018 give emphasis to the institution's success in implementing and evaluating the effectiveness of initiatives to improve its retention and graduation rates. We remind you of our standard on *Educational Effectiveness*:

The institution defines measures of student success and levels of achievement appropriate to its mission, modalities and locations of instruction, and student body, including any specifically recruited populations. These measures include rates of progression, retention, transfer, and graduation; default and loan repayment rates; licensure passage rates; and employment (8.6). (See also 2.2, 5.6, 9.24)

The institution uses additional quantitative measures of success, such as further education, civic participation, religious formation, and others, as appropriate to its mission, to understand the success of its recent graduates. Information from students and former students is regularly considered (8.7). (See also 2.2, 9.24)

The results of assessment and quantitative measures of student success are a demonstrable factor in the institution's efforts to improve the learning opportunities and results for students (8.8).

The Commission notes the proposal by the President of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities system to merge the current twelve community colleges into a single institution as soon as July 1, 2017. Such a change, or another significant re-organization, could result in a change in the schedule of monitoring Quinebaug Valley Community College. As you know, the Commission met with the President at its June meeting and will keep community college Presidents, as well as the System, informed of its decisions.

Dr. Carlee Rader Drummer
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The Commission expressed appreciation for the Graduation Rate Information Project report submitted by Quinebaug Valley Community College and hopes that its preparation has contributed to institutional improvement. It appreciates your cooperation with the effort to provide public assurance of the quality of higher education in New England.

You are encouraged to share this letter with all of the institution's constituencies. It is Commission policy to inform the chairperson of the institution's governing board of action on its accreditation status. In a few days we will be sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Matt Fleury. The institution is free to release information about the report and the Commission's action to others, in accordance with the enclosed policy on Public Disclosure of Information about Affiliated Institutions.

If you have any questions about the Commission's action, please contact Barbara Brittingham, President of the Commission.

Sincerely,



David P. Angel

DPA/sjp

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Matt Fleury