



Public Disclosure Notice on Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute

July 3, 2010

This public information is provided by the Higher Learning Commission regarding Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute to assist current and prospective students and other individuals seeking information about the accreditation status of the institution. The Higher Learning Commission is the regional accrediting agency that accredits organizations of higher learning in the 19 states of the North Central region.

What is the accreditation status of Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute?

Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, or SIPI, is a candidate for accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission. The Commission's Board of Trustees acted to withdraw accreditation and grant the institution candidate status with the Commission after it found that the institution no longer met the Criteria for Accreditation but that the institution had put forward plans that indicated it was likely to meet the Criteria for Accreditation within the maximum four-year period allowed by Commission policy for candidacy and otherwise met the requirements of the candidacy program.

What is the history of accreditation developments that led to this situation?

The last comprehensive evaluation visit took place in 2000, with a follow-up focused evaluation in 2002. A December 2009 comprehensive evaluation visit team documented issues with the comprehensiveness and integrity of the self-study process and insufficient progress in addressing two of the five previously identified challenges: program review and assessment. The team also found that several of the Criteria for Accreditation were not met, including Criterion One (Mission and Integrity), particularly Core Components 1.d and 1.e; Criterion Two (Planning for the Future), particularly Core Components 2.a, 2.b, and 2.c; Criterion Three (Student Learning and Effective Teaching), particularly Core Component 3.a; and Criterion Four (Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge), particularly Core Components 4.a, 4.c, and 4.d. The May 2010 Review Committee concurred with the team's recommendation to withdraw accreditation on the grounds that all of the above Criteria for Accreditation were not met; however, the Review Committee determined that Core Components 4.a and 4.d required organizational attention but were met. The institution requested, and the Commission conducted, a Board Committee Hearing. The Hearing provided a subcommittee of the Board the opportunity to hear directly from representatives of the institution as well as the team chair and the Review Committee chair. Representatives of the Bureau of Indian Education, Bureau of Indian Affairs and the U.S. Department of the Interior had the opportunity to participate in the hearing in support of the institution.

What are the next steps in the accreditation process?

SIPI will be in candidacy for a minimum of one year. SIPI will host a comprehensive evaluation team visit in Spring 2011 to determine that it continues to meet the Eligibility Requirements and is making reasonable progress toward meeting the Criteria for Accreditation as well as assembling evidence necessary to reestablish its accredited status. The Commission will work with the institution to determine when the institution is ready to host an evaluation visit to evaluate the institution for accreditation. Candidacy is a maximum of four years.
