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May 29, 2012

Mr. Thomas C. Galligan, Jr.  
President  
Colby-Sawyer College  
541 Main Street  
New London, NH 03257-7835

Dear President Galligan:

I am pleased to inform you that at its meeting on April 19, 2012, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education considered the report submitted by Colby-Sawyer College regarding its plans to offer distance education programming and took the following action:

that the report submitted by Colby-Sawyer College be accepted and distance education programming be included within the institution's accreditation, with an effective date of April 19, 2012;

that the comprehensive evaluation scheduled for Spring, 2015 be confirmed;

that, in addition to the information included in all self-studies as well as the matters specified in our letters of April 14, 2010 and November 28, 2011, the self-study prepared in advance of the Spring, 2015 visit provide an update on the College's progress in assessing online student learning outcomes.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its action.

The report submitted by Colby-Sawyer College (CSC) was accepted and distance education programming encompassed within the institution's accreditation because the Commission finds the activity to be substantially in compliance with the *Standards for Accreditation* and relevant Commission policies.

The Commission commends the College for its well-written proposal detailing its plans to offer on-line certificate programs in coaching and human resource management that support its recently updated mission. We note with favor that online course pedagogy is consistent with on-site offerings to "assure quality and consistency" in the academic experience provided to students across different types of course delivery. We are gratified to learn that the College has established the position of Associate

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Dean for Distance Learning, that a central Academic Policies Committee is creating a policy manual expressly for online courses, and that faculty are sufficient in number and credentialed in their respective disciplines. We appreciate that the Moodle Learning Management System, combined with the College's Learning Commons Model of information and technology support, ensures appropriate access to library and information resources and services for both on-ground and online students and faculty. Finally, we note with favor that student enrollment is "the highest in the College's history," that student retention rates are increasing, and that the pilot certificate programs in coaching and human resource management appear to be financially viable.

The scheduling of a comprehensive evaluation in Spring, 2015 is consistent with Commission policy requiring each accredited institution to undergo a comprehensive evaluation at least once every ten years. We ask that, in addition to the information included in all self-studies, as well as the matters specified in our letters of April 14, 2010 and November 28, 2011, the institution give special emphasis within the self-study prepared for the comprehensive evaluation to a matter related to our standard on *The Academic Program*.

We are pleased to learn that the institution is implementing a "process for evaluation and quality control of online courses..." and that the Online Advisory Committee continues to explore "appropriate tools for assessment." We look forward to learning, in the self-study prepared in advance of the Spring 2015 visit, of the College's continued progress in assessing online student learning outcomes in keeping with our standard on *The Academic Program*:

The institution offering programs and courses...via distance...learning demonstrates that students completing these programs or courses acquire levels of knowledge, understanding, and competencies equivalent to those achieved in similar programs offered in more traditional time periods and modalities....(4.39)

The Commission expressed appreciation for the report submitted by Colby-Sawyer College and hopes its preparation has contributed to institutional improvement. We appreciate 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. Thomas Csatari. The institution is free to release information about the evaluation and the Commission's action to others, in accordance with Commission policy.

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

Sincerely,



Mary Jo Maydew

MJM/sjp

cc: Mr. Thomas Csatari