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March 4, 2016

Greetings from Western Dakota Tech.

On February 25, 2016, the Board of Trustees of the Higher Learning Commission, Western Dakota Tech's regional accrediting body, placed the college on probation. This action was taken because of concerns related to assessment of student learning, persistence and completion rates, and institutional effectiveness.

Western Dakota Tech remains accredited by the Higher Learning Commission during the probationary period, and the finding does not affect the ability of students to receive degrees, diplomas, financial aid, Pell grants, or academic credits or to qualify for certification exams in any field. As a condition of the probation, Western Dakota Tech will submit a plan by June 1, 2016, outlining how the college will meet HLC's Assumed Practices by the end of the probation period. In addition, the college will submit a report by July 2017 providing evidence the college has resolved HLC's concerns and host a comprehensive evaluation by September 2017. In February 2018, the HLC Board of Trustees will review materials related to this evaluation and determine if the college can be removed from probation.

It is important to understand the Commission's concerns have nothing to do with the quality of the education Western Dakota Tech students receive. Instead, the HLC believes improvements can be made to the college's processes regarding assessment of student learning, persistence and completion rates, and institutional effectiveness. As you know, 98 percent of Western Dakota Tech's most recently surveyed graduates were either working, in the military, or continuing their education six months after graduation. Every college in the country envies those results, and we are extremely proud to provide an education that prepares students for success.

While Western Dakota Tech disagrees strongly with the Higher Learning Commission's decision, the college recognizes its opportunities for improvement and takes the finding of probation seriously. During this period, Western Dakota Tech will ensure the Commission understands we are meeting and exceeding expectations. And, just as we always have, we will continue to provide high-quality education to students who want to enter high-demand careers in our community.

Western Dakota Tech wants to answer any questions you have. Please contact me at (605) 718-2401 or ann.bolman@wdt.edu or Steve Buchholz, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Advancement, at (605) 718-2436 or stephen.buchholz@wdt.edu if you have questions. You also can contact the Higher Learning Commission at info@hlcommission.org or (800) 621-7440.

All the best,

Ann Bolman, Ed.D.
President

Mission

Western Dakota Tech is a public institution of higher learning that embraces quality programs, expert faculty and staff, and a commitment to academic excellence to teach the knowledge, skills, and behaviors students need to be successful.