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March 27, 2019

Dr. Joanne E. Berger-Sweeney
President
Trinity College
Williams Memorial Hall
300 Summit Street
Hartford, CT 06106-3100

Dear President Berger-Sweeney:

I write to inform you that at its meeting on February 28, 2019, the New England Commission of Higher Education considered the report submitted by Trinity College and took the following action:

that the report submitted by Trinity College be accepted;

that the interim (fifth-year) report scheduled for consideration in Spring 2022 be confirmed;

that, in addition to the information included in all interim reports, as well as the matters specified in our letter of January 17, 2018, the institution give continued emphasis, in the Spring 2022 report, to the four matters specified for attention in the Spring 2019 progress report, namely:

1. continuing to strengthen its financial position with emphasis on reducing operating budget deficits;
2. developing and implementing its deferred maintenance plan;
3. achieving its enrollment goals;
4. implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of its credit-hour policy;

that the comprehensive evaluation scheduled for Spring 2027 be confirmed.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its action.

The report submitted by Trinity College was accepted because it was generally responsive to the concerns raised by the Commission in its letter of January 17, 2018.

We commend Trinity College for its exemplary progress report and concur with the institution that it has made “substantial and concrete” progress in each of the areas identified for review by the Commission. Trinity’s renewed commitment to shared governance as a “necessary component of financial sustainability and institutional vitality” is evident from the collaborative and transparent approaches taken to address each issue. We are pleased to learn that Trinity College has achieved a record of operating surpluses since FY2016 and is on track to surpass its FY2019 projections, and that it has met or exceeded its enrollment goal of 575 new students (including transfers) since 2015 achieving a 91% first-year retention rate in Fall 2018. The institution’s financial strength is grounded in its development of a realistic five-year financial plan that maintains a discount rate under 50%; its ability to “align resources with the College’s core academic mission” that included strategic cost reductions of \$4.8 million in FY2018 while, at the same time, increasing financial aid and salaries; and its “excellent philanthropic support.” The College’s plan to launch a comprehensive bicentennial campaign in 2019 with a goal to grow the endowment by at least \$150 million for “long-term sustainability” is also noteworthy, as is its pursuit of new revenue sources including the creation of a downtown space to house emerging partnerships and programs that is already generating \$500,000 in revenue annually. In addition, we note with approval that deferred maintenance is “now a priority recognized by the community” as demonstrated by the development of a plan that will be implemented over the next eight years with deferred maintenance and capital project priorities determined by a multi-constituent advisory group. We appreciate, too, the attention given to assuring the College’s credit-hour policy aligns with the Commission’s standards and that it is being reinforced in course syllabi and the course approval process, and is serving as a central aspect of the curriculum revision process underway.

Commission policy requires an interim (fifth-year) report of all institutions on a decennial evaluation cycle. Its purpose is to provide the Commission an opportunity to appraise the institution’s current status in keeping with the Policy on Periodic Review. In addition to the information included in all interim reports, the College is asked, in Spring 2022, to give emphasis to its continued success in addressing the four areas of attention in the Spring 2019 progress report specified above. The Commission understands that these issues do not lend themselves to rapid resolution and will require the institution’s continued attention over time; hence, we ask that evidence of continued progress be provided in the interim report submitted for consideration in Spring 2022.

Finally, the scheduling of a comprehensive evaluation in Spring 2027 is consistent with Commission policy requiring each accredited institution to undergo a comprehensive evaluation at least once every ten years.

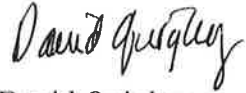
The Commission expressed appreciation for the report submitted by Trinity College and hopes that its preparation has contributed to institutional improvement. It appreciates your cooperation with the effort to provide public assurance of the quality of higher education in New England.

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 Ms. Cornelia P. Thornburgh. 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.

Dr. Joanne E. Berger-Sweeney
March 27, 2019
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If you have any questions about the Commission's action, please contact Barbara Brittingham,
President of the Commission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Quigley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "D".

David Quigley

DQ/jm

Enclosure

cc: Ms. Cornelia P. Thornburgh