

# CFHE Campaign for the Future of Higher Education

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July 31, 2013

Alisa Messer  
President  
AFT Local 2121  
311 Miramar Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94112

Dear Alisa:

We are writing to express our solidarity with you and your members, as well as the students and staff at San Francisco City College. We were shocked and angered by the recent decision of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges to withdraw accreditation effective July 2014. As a faculty and staff coalition concerned with the future of higher education, we see this decision against one of the premier community colleges in the United States as a tragedy both for the community you serve and for the future of higher education in our country.

In our view, the Commission's decision runs counter to so many facts about City College and the quality higher education it provides. Your campus's public track record of providing access and excellent service to your community is remarkable; and the high quality of your programs has been cited repeatedly, in the New York Times 2007 listing of best community colleges in the United States, for instance, and in the Commission's own report.

Your union and your campus are also to be commended—not punished—for having made City College a good place for faculty to work, despite the high cost of living in San Francisco. In fact, you are a model of faculty employment with an admirably high percentage of full-time faculty and a part-time faculty that enjoys reasonable wages, benefits and some modicum of job security and preference for upgrading to those full-time jobs. We applaud you for having created these quality working conditions for faculty, which have been essential in creating high-quality learning conditions for City College students.

We also applaud you and your campus for keeping shared governance and democratic management alive—despite the past thirty years of budget cuts and pressure to “do more with less.” In our view, this too is an important principle in quality higher education that your campus has put into practice.

In short, City College, your academic programs, your faculty and your organizations have played an important positive role locally and nationally. We are dismayed at the virtually unprecedented series of actions undertaken by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. Please let us know how we can help you in your continued fight for quality higher education at City College.

Sincerely,

Steering Committee  
Campaign for the Future of Higher Education