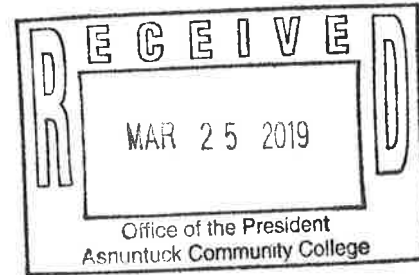




New England Commission  
of Higher Education



March 22, 2019

Dr. James P. Lombella  
President  
Asnuntuck Community College  
170 Elm Street  
Enfield, CT 06082-3811

Dear President Lombella:

I write to inform you that at its meeting on March 1, 2019, the New England Commission of Higher Education considered the information about student loan default rates submitted by Asnuntuck Community College and voted to take the following action:

that the report about student loan default rates submitted by Asnuntuck Community College be accepted and no further reporting be requested at this time.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its action.

The report submitted by Asnuntuck Community College (ACC) was accepted because it was substantially responsive to the Commission's request of October 24, 2018. According to the information received, the College's default rate on student loans exceeded 20% in FY15, with a rate of 22.9%. We understand, as indicated in the report, that only a relatively small portion of the Asnuntuck Community College student population utilized the federal student loan program resulting in a small cohort, and that, "as a result, any single default tends to have a disproportionate effect on the overall rate." The Commission acknowledges that ACC suffered a "debilitating loss of state-funded need-based financial aid" during the time when borrowers in the default rate cohort attended the College; the decrease of 71.4% in state funds resulted in a higher number of students accessing federal student loan funds. We are pleased to learn of the steps ACC is taking to minimize student loan defaults, including: diverting its campus-based grant funding "solely to students with higher levels of financial need," offering more robust financial literacy training to first-time student loan borrowers, and considering contracting with a "third-party default management vendor."

The Commission concurs with the College's assessment that its procedures for minimizing the student loan default rate are sufficient. Consequently, no further reporting related to the institution's cohort default rates is requested at this time. The information provided by the College was helpful to the Commission in defining the scope of this issue.

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Dr. James P. Lombella  
March 22, 2019  
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The Commission expressed appreciation for the information provided by Asnuntuck Community 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 and the head of the system of action on its accreditation status. In a few days we will be sending a copy of this letter to Matt Fleury and Mark Ojakian. The institution is free to release information about the evaluation and the Commission's action to others, in accordance with the enclosed policy on Public Disclosure of Information about Affiliated Institutions.

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

Sincerely,



David Quigley

DQ/sjp

Enclosure

cc: Matt Fleury  
Mark Ojakian