



DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL
State Fire Training Division
P.O. Box 944246
SACRAMENTO, CA 94244-2460
(916) 568-2911
Website: www.fire.ca.gov



Date: July 9, 2021

To: Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee
State Board of Fire Services

From: Caryn Petty, Deputy State Fire Marshal III (Specialist)
State Fire Training

Subject/Agenda Action Item:

Southwestern Community College Accredited Regional Training Program (ARTP) Initial Accreditation

Recommended Actions:

Recommend Southwestern Community College be provided Accredited Regional Training Program (ARTP) Initial Accreditation in the State Fire Training (SFT) system for a period of three (3) year.

Background Information:

An Initial Accreditation Site Evaluation was conducted on June 7, 2021, at Southwestern Community College (SWC) located at 8100 Gigantic Street in San Diego, CA. The Evaluation was conducted by Deputy State Fire Marshal III Caryn Petty, State Fire Training, with retired-Chief/Fire Technology Director Lorraine Hutchinson.

A review of the College's Self-Assessment Report (SAR) was discussed, with requirements for supplemental documentation noted. Said documentation has since been received and has met the requirements as set forth by State Fire Training policies and procedures. The review of the SAR was followed by an evaluation of the Conditional Accreditation requirements noted in the 2019 and 2020 Conditional Accreditation processes which have been satisfied. The initial Site Team was provided the revised SAR for remote review.

Analysis/Summary of Issue:

The Southwestern Community College ARTP Accreditation was proposed as a two-part phased concept in 2019 and received a one-year Conditional Accreditation. Phase 1 served the 2020 Chula Vista Fire Department (CVFD) Fire Fighter Academy, with SWC providing the ARTP collaborative oversight while construction of the College training facility, program, and curriculum construct began. Phase 2 is focused on the development and implementation of the State Fire

Training-compliant college-level Fire Fighter 1 academy and diversified Fire Science Technology curriculum with new classrooms, training tower/facility, and equipment complement.

To satisfy the Phase 1 component in 2019, a site evaluation of the CVFD training facilities indicated sufficient classroom space with a fully functioning training tower. The site possessed all necessary props, tools, equipment, and vehicles to accommodate a fire academy training program supplemented by satellite and partnered training sites. A February 2020 visit to the site affirmed this compliance with no major changes or removal of structures or equipment. The CVFD training facility provides recruits an appropriate classroom equipped with enhanced audio/visual equipment and necessary learning aids. All Academy recruits are provided sufficient study materials, devices, and equipment for applicable success within the Academy training. Several Registered Instructors participated in the Academy delivery with additional members complementing the need for Lead and Skills Evaluators. In Spring 2020, CVFD successfully delivered the Fire Fighter 1 (2019) certification exam.

Phase 2 is underway, with a newly constructed training facility near completion. A review of the campus indicates sufficient classroom space with the training facility to supplement learning beginning Fall 2021. As construction finalizes, SWC will begin delivering new wildland-specific instruction in conjunction with region partners.

Area(s) of focus for growth and improvement:

- Although the program has sufficient staff, the current staffing is at its capacity with staff working well beyond the typical work schedule and hours. This condition has tasked existing staff with workloads beyond the Academy delivery that would be offset with additional resources and personnel. It has been identified that there is a need for additional instructional staff and full-time clerical support to lessen the workload of existing staff and enhance the Academy and fire technology course deliveries.
- For complete, self-sustained Fire Fighter Academy delivery, procurement of dedicated training apparatus be explored with consideration to covered parking for vehicle longevity and security. This would include, but is not limited to, wildland apparatus.
- To successfully begin compliant delivery of the Fire Fighter 2 (2019) curriculum and Certification Examinations, it is recommended that procurement of a flammable liquids and gas fire prop be explored.

Since 1991, Southwestern Community College has maintained steady and robust Fire Science Technology certification and Associate of Science degree programs. In 2007, the

College's Higher Education Center was expanded to include all public safety programs at the new Otay Mesa location. In 2018, College leadership committed to \$21.5 million to design and build a Joint Public Safety Training Facility including the EMT/Paramedic programs, the Police Academy, and the new Fire Fighter Academy. The new Facility includes new classrooms as well as a four-story training tower and simulator. Program coordinators recognize the underserved student and small agency populations in the southern areas of San Diego and have an expressed desire to bridge the regional fire service training and education gap. This focus on providing education for all students is indicative of the training devotion serving as the foundation of this new program. Coordination personnel possess an energetic approach to program development with a strong focus on maintaining diversified student populations while adhering to the standards set forth by State Fire Training.

Southwestern Community College possesses a strong dedication to comprehensive student development from entry-level firefighters to career advancing leadership. The College is proactively building cooperative relationships founded on producing strong, well-rounded fire service professionals. The Site Evaluation Team is unanimous in the recommendation of the Southwestern Community College being designated as an Accredited Regional Training Program in the State Fire Training system for an Initial Accreditation period of three (3) years.