



**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION
OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL
STATE FIRE TRAINING**

P.O. Box 944246
SACRAMENTO, CA 94244-2460
(916) 902-9738
Website: www.fire.ca.gov



Date: October 14, 2023

To: Statewide Training and Education Advisory Committee
c/o State Fire Training

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

Subject/Agenda Action Item:

Columbia College
Accredited Regional Training Program (ARTP) Reaccreditation

Recommended Actions:

Recommend Columbia College be provided Accredited Regional Training Program (ARTP) Reaccreditation in the State Fire Training (SFT) system for a period of five (5) years.

Background Information:

A Reaccreditation Site Evaluation was conducted on September 6, 2023, at the Columbia College training facility at 11600 Columbia College Drive in Sonora, CA. The accreditation visit was conducted by Deputy State Fire Marshal III (Specialist) Caryn Petty, State Fire Training. Introductions were facilitated by Shane Warner, Fire Technology Coordinator. Attendees included Andy Van Hoogmoed, Fire Technology Instructor; Jen Fraser, Program Specialist; Raelene Juarez, Interim Vice President of Instruction; Brandon Price, Dean of Career Technical Education; Sean Osborn, Interim Dean of Arts, Science and Human Performance; Mike Igoe, Dean of Student Services; Battalion Chief Justin Chaplin; Battalion Chief Mario Torres; and Fire Captain Mike Schmidt.

The College's Self-Assessment Report (SAR) was reviewed and 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 a tour of the training facilities with opportunity to assess training course records and equipment complement.

Analysis/Summary of Issue:

A tour of the training facilities indicated sufficient classroom space with a fully functioning and compliant training tower located off site complete with all necessary props, tools, equipment, and vehicles to accommodate a fire academy training program. The College utilizes the Fire Fighter

(2019) curriculum and possesses all necessary materials for successful and complete Certification Examination delivery.

The College campus exhibits appropriate California Fire Code-compliant classrooms 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 participate in the Academy delivery with members from regional partners complementing the need for Registered Instructors and Evaluators.

Area(s) of focus for growth and improvement:

- Continued recruitment of diversified Registered Instructors and Lead/Skills Evaluators that is reflective of the region and the College's neighboring fire agencies.
- The current staffing is at its capacity with workloads beyond the Academy delivery that would be offset with additional resources and personnel. The College has identified a specific need for additional personnel to lessen the workload of existing staff and ensure the thorough delivery of the Academy free of peripheral assignments, tasks, and duties. These persons are recommended as permanent positions for sustained program success:
 - o Full-time Academy Instructor
 - o Instructional Support Specialists
 - o Dedicated Administrative Secretary
- Working cooperatively with neighboring agencies, Columbia College shares training space at locations separate from the campus. This requires caravan of students between locations, resulting in instructional delays and increased liability. The logistics surrounding student and equipment transport has created a desire for procurement of a college-specific training facility to centralize training, while providing the region with a single location for enhanced availability and use. It is recommended that the College explore financial allocation and procurement of a designated training center to be utilized by the College students and partners.
- For curriculum compliance and self-sufficiency, it is recommended that the College explore avenues for procurement of additional apparatus for expanded Driver/Operator course delivery.
- For curriculum compliance and enhanced student safety, it is recommended that the College procure vehicle fire and flammable liquid props for training. Props designed and intended for this specific training will provide improved training and safety.

Columbia College is part of the Yosemite Community College District, serving the 4,000-square mile boundary of Tuolumne and Stanislaus Counties. Recognizing the need for consistent high-quality training, the program was created through cooperative efforts between local fire chiefs, agencies, and personnel that have contributed to the program design and implementation since 1968. Unique to Columbia College is a fully-functioning fire station staffed by program students that respond to on- and off-campus emergencies with surrounding agencies and jurisdictions. The College also maintains an on-site dormitory for use by out-of-area enrollees.

Columbia College has a strong focus on recruitment and development as exemplified in its pre-apprenticeship program preparing grade school-age students for entrance into a formal academy setting through instruction, job shadowing, support and information services, and hands-on learning. The College recognizes the unique training opportunities provided students given their surroundings and understands the importance of fostering interagency partnerships to provide quality education to the community.

State Fire Training recommends continued recognition of the Columbia College as an Accredited Regional Training Program in the State Fire Training system for a Reaccreditation period of five (5) years.