



Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Albuquerque, N.M. -- Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) will undergo a comprehensive evaluation visit March 21-23, 2011, by a team representing The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The public is being invited to submit comments on the school until next month. SIPI has been accredited by the Commission since 1975.

The Higher Learning Commission is one of six accrediting agencies in the United States that provide institutional accreditation on a regional basis. Accreditation is the primary means for assuring accountability; it certifies institutional quality and protects the institution's academic freedom. Institutional accreditation evaluates an entire institution and accredits it as a whole. Other agencies provide accreditation for specific programs. Accreditation is voluntary. The Commission accredits approximately 1,100 institutions of higher education in a 19-state region. The Commission is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

For the past year-and-a-half, SIPI has been engaged in a process of self-study, addressing the Commission's requirements and criteria for accreditation. The evaluation team will visit SIPI to gather evidence that the self-study is thorough and accurate. The team will recommend to the Commission a continuing status of SIPI; following a review process, the Commission itself will take the final action.

Comments should be sent to:

Public Comment on Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute

The Higher Learning Commission

30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400

Chicago, Ill. 60602

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of SIPI or its academic program. Written, signed comments must be received by February 21, 2011. The Commission cannot guarantee that comments received after the due date will be considered. Comments should include the name, address and telephone number of the person providing the comments. Comments will not be treated as confidential.

Individuals with a specific dispute or grievance with SIPI should request the separate Policy on Complaints document from the Commission office. The Higher Learning Commission cannot settle disputes between institutions and individuals. Complaints will not be considered third party comment.