



**Northwest Commission on College and University (NWCCU)  
Annual Update for WSQA  
Academic Year 2010-2011  
Due October 15, 2011**

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Accreditation recommendations to the College and year of recommendation	Actions taken by the college to address recommendations	Improvement results
<p>Recommendation 1: “While program review processes at North Seattle Community College are being adapted from a 5-year to a 7-year cycle, the college has only recently reached a decision to define degrees and certificates as programs to be assessed. It is recommended that North Seattle Community College implement program assessment processes consistent with its Comprehensive Assessment Plan that encompass all of its offerings, specifically for each of its degree and certificate programs (2.B.2).”</p>	<p>Some context for the Spring 2010 recommendation is needed. When the recommendation states that “the college has <i>only recently</i> reached a decision to define degrees and certificates as programs to be assessed,” the “recent decision” refers only to the college’s <b>transfer</b> degrees and certificates. The decision did not impact the college’s long-standing practice of defining <b>professional-technical</b> degrees and certificates as programs and assessing them at that level.</p> <p>However, on the transfer side of the curriculum the college’s traditional practice had been to</p>	<p><u>Program Review and Degree Assessment</u>          As Fall Quarter 2011 begins, the integration of the traditional discipline-level program review process with the newer degree-level assessment model is the highest priority for the Vice President for Instruction. Under her leadership, both the Assessment Committee and the Program Review Committee to working to effect this integration. At the same time, templates for the first phase of the new multi-year model for program review are being introduced to faculty with the intent that all programs will complete them by year’s end. Completing the templates at the discipline-level will set the stage for</p>

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<p><i>(Focused Interim Evaluation Report, Spring 2010)</i></p>	<p>assess either at a <b>discipline</b> level (e.g. English, history, philosophy, chemistry, etc.) or occasionally by <b>clustering similar disciplines</b> together in a review (e.g. a social sciences review might include psychology, sociology, anthropology and women’s studies; a fine arts review might include music, the visual arts, and theater). In making the decision referred to in the recommendation, the college was saying that it needed to assess transfer offerings at the <b>degree</b> level, not simply at the <b>discipline</b> or <b>discipline cluster</b> level.</p> <p>This decision, while conceptually straightforward, presented implementation challenges that the college began clarifying and working through during the 2010-11 academic year. Even while it recognized the need for <b>degree-level assessment</b>, and began such an assessment of the Associate of Science Degree (see discussion below), at the same time there was a strong opinion that the traditional model of <b>discipline-level assessment</b> was a necessary precursor to any assessment at the <b>degree</b> level. The argument was that if faculty from multiple disciplines are to come together for a meaningful assessment of the degree to which they all independently contribute, they have to engage in discipline-level assessment <u>first</u> and then <u>later</u> bring that discipline-level assessment information to the degree assessment work.</p>	<p>degree-level assessment in the following year.</p> <p><u>Associate of Science Assessment Project</u> As a result of their assessment, the Faculty Inquiry Group recommended the following four actions to improve the AS Program:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create major tracks as a means to provide clear guidance through the murky waters of Option 1 and Option 2 of our AS degree. This would involve selecting faculty members to act as experts of specific majors and working closely with an advisor to chart a pathway that could be documented on a one page handout. The group would like to begin with the following disciplinary majors and faculty experts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chemistry: Kalyn Owens</li> <li>• Biology: Ann Murkowski</li> <li>• Math: Edgar Jasso and Denise Brenan</li> <li>• Engineering: Barbara Goldner</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Design artifacts that would help to make the AS degree more visible to the campus community including students, staff and faculty. This would involve creating posters for STEM classrooms that provide an overview of the Program along with a list of benefits that come with degree completion.</li> <li>3. Designate and/or create an entry point for the AS program so that students get information sooner and have a place to begin that puts them on the right track from the beginning.</li> <li>4. Disseminate the results of this study to all</li> </ol>

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	<p>Based on this premise, the Program Review Committee, revitalized with new membership and leadership from the Vice President for Instruction, worked throughout the Summer of 2011 and into the current Fall 2011 Quarter on a revised model for this discipline-level assessment (what has traditionally been called “program review”). The revised model calls for all “programs” (in this instance meaning degrees/certificates on the professional-technical side and disciplines or discipline clusters on the transfer side) to engage in a multi-year process by which they examine different aspects of their programs on a seven-year cycle matching the new accreditation cycle calling for reports in Years 1,3, 5 and 7. The first phase of this new model is being implemented during the current (2011-12) academic year. The goal is that all “programs” will complete this phase by Spring 2012. Completion of this first phase will mean addressing each of the questions about instructional programs that are embedded within Standard 2, primarily in Section 2.C. (See Appendix material at the end of this report.)</p> <p>At the same time that this work was proceeding to revise traditional program review (at the <b>discipline-level</b>), a parallel effort was</p>	<p>STEM faculty at a future Division Meeting as a means to address the fact that most STEM faculty do not know anything about the AS degree. This could also serve as a launch point for future discussions about AS Program Outcomes.</p> <p><u>Accounting</u> In Fall Quarter 2011, the Accounting faculty are reviewing the Faculty Inquiry Group report and its survey results. At a fall quarter meeting, they will discuss the lessons learned from this report and how they can standardize the project among the different faculty who teach Acct 202. They are also developing classroom materials on team building and public speaking which they intend to incorporate into the financial statement analysis project.</p> <p><i>Note: The Nursing Program assessment project was significantly impacted by a major health crisis experienced in Spring Quarter 2011 by the faculty member who was providing leadership to both projects. That faculty member, Ms. Cesily Crowser, is still recovering as of Fall Quarter 2011. As a result, some of the results the project are currently unavailable .</i></p> <p><u>Nursing</u> As of Fall Quarter 2011, the nursing faculty have the results from the most recent computerized</p>

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	<p>undertaken to assess student learning in three <b>degree</b> programs and within the Parent Education non-degree program. Below are excerpts from the college's Year One Report (March 2011) that describe those assessments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Associate of Science Degree assessment involves faculty from five disciplines: nanotechnology, mathematics, computer science, biology, and chemistry. The inquiry is focused on the degree itself: Do faculty from the different disciplines have a common understanding of it? What do students understand it to be? How do advisers see it and how do they describe it to students? What pathways are possible within the degree? What pathways do students take through the degree? What do graduates do upon completion of the degree? In order to investigate these questions, the FIG is employing focus groups, surveys, video documentation and database extracts.</li> <li>• The Accounting faculty assessed the effectiveness of a capstone project, the Financial Statement Analysis project, within the Principles of financial Accounting II course. Using pre- and post surveys, faculty asked students whether they felt the project contributed to increased skills in collaboration, research, financial analysis, written communication, and oral communication.</li> </ul>	<p>exams for the Spring 2011 student cohort, but they are experiencing difficulty getting the results of the pre-test that was given to these students upon program entry two years previous. The difficulty arises from the fact that the two tests (pre and post) were administered by two different companies. The nursing coordinator and a lead faculty are in discussion with the company holding the pre-test results and hope to have them released so that a comparison can be made with the post-test results. Tapes of interviews with nursing students about the outcome are not available since they were recorded by the faculty member from student interviews are not currently available because they are in the possession of Ms. Crowser who continues to be on medical leave.</p> <p><u>Parent Education</u></p> <p>As it turned out, the Parent Education assessment project was conducted by only one faculty member, the others having determined that the project was not appropriate for their particular classes. Below is the faculty member's report of the two classes in which she conducted the assessment project:</p> <p><b>What you learned about student learning as a result of your project?</b></p> <p>Students were asked two questions:</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Nursing faculty is focusing its inquiry on one of the learning outcomes within its LPN Degree Program: "Demonstrate competency in data gathering, contributing to problem identification, planning, implementing nursing care, and contributing to evaluation within a variety of settings utilizing appropriate technology." Students are given a standardized (HESI) test upon entry into the program and a similar standardized test upon exit. Comparing their pre-test scores to end-of-program scores will provide data to the nursing faculty about how effective they are in teaching to this competency and whether changes to curriculum are suggested. Like the science faculty, the nursing FIG is using student interviews as another data source, asking students how they experience this outcome being applied in the classroom.</li> <li>The Parent Education faculty has decided . . . [to assess] how well the students/parents feel the classroom is being used as a Parent Education Lab. Each faculty member will then come up with a plan to make the learning and application of learning more visible and approachable in the classroom from now until the end of Spring Quarter. We will then send out another evaluation at the end of the year and determine if the adjustments were successful or not."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>How do you utilize what you see/hear in the classroom from your teacher/ and or Parent Educator?</i> and</li> <li><i>How often do you feel you take the opportunity, when in the classroom, to practice the tools/techniques taught in the evening Parent Education sessions?</i></li> </ul> <p>Responses demonstrated overwhelmingly that students do try out new tools/ideas both at home and in the classroom, and do so with enough frequency that they self-report positive attempts. As an instructor, I learned that students do reflect that they gain-- and use-- new tools.</p> <p><b>What improvements/changes you've made to the program on the basis of your findings?</b></p> <p>A small percentage of students (7-9%) report that they think about new skills, but are unsure how to incorporate them. As a result, I will be including a component in class sessions concretely highlighting the learning target, i.e., that students leave with an understanding of 3 situations in which a new skill or tool could be helpful.</p>

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	<p>Each of these assessment projects was undertaken in direct response to Recommendation 1 of the Spring 2010 Evaluation Report. The assessment of the Associate of Science Degree in particular reflects the college’s “decision to define [transfer] degrees and certificates as programs to be assessed.” At the same time, these efforts reflected a key principle within the college’s Comprehensive Assessment Plan developed in 2009-10, that “assessment . . . must be grounded in faculty’s ongoing and evolving curiosity about and commitment to student learning.” Based on this principle, the work began by asking faculty “What is it you want to know about student learning within your program?” “What are the questions that are important to you?”</p> <p>As was noted in our Year One report, “the ideal that the college is striving for is to bring the two processes together.” That is, to bring together the newly-adopted <b>degree-level assessment</b> model which was field-tested this year with the Associate of Science Degree, and the traditional (now revised) <b>discipline-level</b> program review process. The strengths of <b>degree-level</b> assessment (faculty-driven inquiry and degree/certificate focused), if successfully coupled with the strengths of a <b>discipline-based</b> review process (ongoing, comprehensive</p>	

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	<p>self-examination sequenced to align with the new accreditation cycle, of subject matter closest to faculty's expertise and interest) hold the greatest promise for deepening the culture and practice of ongoing assessment that the new accreditation standards are designed to foster and that the college is committed to achieving.</p>	

## Appendix Material

### Appendix A

#### Accreditation Standards & Program Review Standard One: Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

The institution articulates its purpose in a mission statement, and identifies core themes that comprise essential elements of that mission. In an examination of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations, the institution defines the parameters for mission fulfillment. Guided by that definition, it identifies an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.

##### 1.B – Core Themes

1.B.2: The institution establishes objectives for each of its core themes and identifies meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement that form the basis for evaluating accomplishment of the objectives of its core themes.

*Program faculty should participate in the selection of the core themes with standard three in mind. They should be able to articulate how their program outcomes support the core themes and that there can be meaningful assessment of student learning that can contribute to institution level assessment of the core themes.*

##### Action:

- *Identify program outcomes and specify their connection to core themes.*

#### Standard Two: Resources and Capacity

By documenting the adequacy of its resources and capacity, the institution demonstrates the potential to fulfill its mission, accomplish its core theme objectives, and achieve the intended outcomes of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered. Through its governance and decision-making structures, the institution establishes, reviews regularly, and revises, as necessary, policies and procedures that promote effective management and operation of the institution.

##### 2.A – Governance Policies and Procedures

Academics

2.A.12 Academic policies—including those related to teaching, service, scholarship, research, and artistic creation—are clearly communicated to students

and faculty and to administrators and staff with responsibilities related to these areas.

## Students

- 2.A.16 The institution adopts and adheres to admission and placement policies that guide the enrollment of students in courses and programs through an evaluation of prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to assure a reasonable probability of student success at a level commensurate with the institution's expectations. Its policy regarding continuation in and termination from its educational programs—including its appeals process and readmission policy—are clearly defined, widely published, and administered in a fair and timely manner.

*All program level policies regarding admission and termination are published and available to all decision makers. There is evidence that they are adhered to without significant numbers of exceptions. Looking forward to standard three, there is evidence that admission policies are set to assure a reasonable probability of student success at a level commensurate with the institution's expectations.*

### **Action:**

- *Review/create published policies*
- *Identify those responsible for the oversight of these policies*
- *Review reasons and numbers of exceptions.*
- *Identify measures that exist or are needed to gauge student success as related to admission criteria.*

## Academic Freedom

- 2.A.29 Individuals with teaching responsibilities present scholarship fairly, accurately, and objectively. Derivative scholarship acknowledges the source of intellectual property, and personal views, beliefs, and opinions are identified as such.

*Faculty often utilize copyrighted content in course material whether as part of course packets, handouts, or online. In what way do program faculty assure that all scholarship follows appropriate college guidelines?*

### **Action:**

- *Review published material including all program websites.*
- *Review understanding of policy by all program faculty.*
- *All program/course material contains appropriate college disclaimers/policy statements regarding plagiarism, diversity, fragrance, etc.*

## 2.B – Human Resources

- 2.B.4 Consistent with its mission, core themes, programs, services, and characteristics, the institution employs appropriately qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and assure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs, wherever offered and however delivered.

*How are program faculty hired? Are there sufficient faculty to meet program outcomes, offerings, and student numbers?*

***Action:***

- ***Identify existing guidelines (state, professional societies, certification and accreditation requirements, etc.) related to appropriate ratios related to safety and student learning.***
- ***Review Faculty/Student and FTF/PTF ratios.***
- ***Review faculty hiring procedures including the hiring of PT and movement to the Priority Hire list. Are program faculty involved and how does this impact the program?***

2.B.5 Faculty responsibilities and workloads are commensurate with the institution's expectations for teaching, service, scholarship, research, and/or artistic creation.

*What kind of workload is required beyond classroom duties? How is this load shared by all program faculty? What other college duties/responsibilities have been taken on by program faculty?*

***Action:***

- ***Review faculty duties beyond the classroom and the impact on the program.***

**2.C – Education Resources**

*The standards in this section refer to elements of the curriculum down to the individual course level. To the extent that courses are the primary means for the presentation of learning opportunities to students in a program, the detail in the course curriculum must inform the program level review.*

- 2.C.1 The institution provides programs, wherever offered and however delivered, with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission; culminate in achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes; and lead to collegiate-level degrees or certificates with designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.
- 2.C.2 The institution identifies and publishes expected course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Expected student learning outcomes for courses, wherever offered and however delivered, are provided in written form to enrolled students.
- 2.C.4 Degree programs, wherever offered and however delivered, demonstrate a coherent design with appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing of courses, and synthesis of learning. Admission and graduation requirements are clearly defined and widely published.
- 2.C.5 Faculty, through well-defined structures and processes with clearly defined authority and responsibilities, exercise a major role in the design, approval, implementation, and revision of the curriculum, and have an active role in the selection of new faculty. Faculty with teaching responsibilities take collective responsibility for fostering and assessing student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes.
- 2.C.6 Faculty with teaching responsibilities, in partnership with library and information resources personnel, ensure that the use of library and information resources is integrated into the learning process.

2.C.7 Credit for prior experiential learning, if granted, is: a) guided by approved policies and procedures; . . . d) awarded only for documented student achievement equivalent to expected learning achievement for courses within the institution's regular curricular offerings; and e) granted only upon the recommendation of appropriately qualified teaching faculty.

#### Undergraduate Programs

2.C.10 The institution demonstrates that the General Education components of its . . . transfer associate degree programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that are stated in relation to the institution's mission and learning outcomes for those programs.

2.C.11 The related instruction components of applied degree and certificate programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes. Related instruction components may be embedded within program curricula or taught in blocks of specialized instruction, but each approach must have clearly identified content and be taught or monitored by teaching faculty who are appropriately qualified in those areas.

#### **Action:**

- *Identify existing "Essential Learning Outcomes" related to this program.*
- *Identify Program Level Outcomes.*
- *Review and Update Course Level Outcomes in Master Course Outlines and Syllabi.*
- *Identify and Review the connection between ELO's, Program level, and Course Level Outcomes.*
- *Identify and Review the means by which students are informed of learning outcomes (ELO, program, and course) that relate to their involvement with this program's learning opportunities.*
- *Review all related outcomes with respect to their accessibility.*
- *Review and Update the assessment information in the Master Course Outline.*
- *Review all related outcomes with respect to their connection to the core themes and college mission.*
- *Looking forward to Standard Three, identify assessment projects that will inform student learning related to selected ELOs, Program level outcomes and course level outcomes that connect to the colleges identified core themes.*
- *Identify and Review the means by which student use of library and information resources is integrated into program learning experiences for all groups of students.*
- *Review the means by which all curriculum development, assessment, and learning material oversight is assigned and carried out by program faculty.*
- *Identify and Review an prior learning policies and procedures.*

#### **2.E – Library and Information Resources**

2.E.1 Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution holds or provides access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth, and breadth to support the institution's mission, core themes, programs, and services, wherever offered and however delivered.

#### **Action:**

- *Review any existing library resources with respect to program needs.*
- *Review whether and to what extent library resources have been provided for he purpose of carrying out previous program review action*

*plans.*

## 2.F – Financial Resources

2.F.1 The institution demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow and reserves to support its programs . . . .

### **Action:**

- *Review any regular financial resources with respect to regular needs.*
- *Review whether and to what extent financial resources have been provided for the purpose of carrying out previous program review action plans.*

## 2.G – Physical and Technological Infrastructure

### Physical Infrastructure

2.G.1 Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution creates and maintains physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure, and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure healthful learning and working environments that support the institution’s mission, programs, and services.

### **Action:**

- *Review any regular physical/capital resources with respect to regular needs, safety, upkeep, accessibility, etc.*
- *Review whether and to what extent physical/capital resources have been provided for the purpose of carrying out previous program review action plans.*

2.G.4 Equipment is sufficient in quantity and quality and managed appropriately to support institutional functions and fulfillment of the institution’s mission, accomplishment of core theme objectives, and achievement of goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services.

### **Action:**

- *Review any regular equipment resources with respect to regular needs, safety, upkeep, accessibility, etc.*
- *Review whether and to what extent equipment resources have been provided for the purpose of carrying out previous program review action plans.*

### Technological Infrastructure

2.G.5 Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution has appropriate and adequate technology systems and infrastructure to support its . . . academic programs . . . wherever offered and however delivered.

### **Action:**

- *Review any existing technology resources with respect to program needs.*

- *Review whether and to what extent technology resources have been provided for the purpose of carrying out previous program review action plans.*

2.G.6 The institution provides appropriate instruction and support for faculty, staff, students, and administrators in the effective use of technology and technology systems related to its programs, services, and institutional operations.

**Action:**

- *Review any existing technology related professional development resources with respect to program needs.*
- *Review whether and to what extent technology related professional development resources have been provided for the purpose of carrying out previous program review action plans.*

## **Appendix B**

### **Program Review Plan 2011-2015**

**What is a Program Review?** Program Review is a process in which program faculty engage in reflection about a program’s stated goals in relation to the reality of the program offerings and student learning. The Program Review Report is the documentation resulting from this reflection, and is the record of proposed actions resulting from the review.

**What is a “Program”?** For the purposes of Program Review, a “program” is:

- A named program offering a degree or certificate, often in professional/technical areas.
- A unit that exists for the purpose of providing the opportunities designed to help students to achieve certain outcomes in their lives.
- A group of courses with common goals, methods or scope.
- A specific course of study often leading to entry into a department at a 4-year institution.
- A recognized discipline, department, or major.

#### **The Program Review Report**

The report will be written in three sections corresponding to the college accreditation cycle. One review will be completed every report cycle though selected sections of the report will be written or updated every year.

#### **Section A: Corresponding to accreditation standards 1-2**

##### Program Description Resources

- Program goals
- Degree and certificate offerings

- Population served
- Program outcomes tied to core themes

#### Program Policies, Participants & Resources

- Policies: Review, use, and analysis of exceptions
- Publications including websites
- Physical, Financial, and Information Resources
- Faculty including number, qualification, responsibilities, and professional development.
- Courses and Activities
- Planning for evidence collection: student learning, retention, program admission, completion
- Review enrollment ratios
- Faculty responsibilities
- Program resources including technology, facilities and library.
- Other program service to the community or profession

### **Section B: Corresponding to accreditation standards 3-4**

#### Program Implementation and Improvement Planning

##### Analysis and Reflection

- Assessment of Program Outcomes & Results
- How does the evidence compare to the program objectives?
- Student Progress and Completion
- Student Demographics
- Program strengths & weaknesses
- Program connections to other units, community and organizations

### **Section C: Corresponding to accreditation standards 5**

#### Program Implementation and Improvement Planning

##### Action Plans

- Plans for transforming program weaknesses into new opportunities and strengths.
- Plans for moving forward with those things that are the strengths of your program.
- Sustainability Analysis
- Programs connection to the institution's mission

##### Highlights

- A brief summary highlighting the major results of your program review.

## Schedule

<b>Program Review Schedule</b>	F 2011 to Sp 2012	F 2012 to Sp 2013	F 2013 to Sp 2014	F 2014 to Sp 2015	F 2015 to Sp 2016
<b>Program Review Section Due</b>	<b>A</b>		<b>B</b>		<b>C</b>
<b>Group A Programs</b>	Section A	Section B	Section B	Section C	Section C
<b>Group B Programs</b>	Section A	Section A	Section B	Section B	Section C
<b>Group C Programs</b>	Section A	Section B & Related External Requirement			Section C