



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

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In order to address the three recommendations, WCC has instituted several initiatives:

- Beginning in July 2010, WCC assigned a staff assistant to provide support to the Director of Assessment and Institutional Research (hired in May 2008) with assessment- and institutional research-related responsibilities.
- Beginning in fall 2011, WCC has granted release time to a faculty member to assist with both program review (recommendation #1) and data generation and application (recommendation #3).
- The Office of Assessment and Institutional Research revised its website to make it more user-friendly (<http://www.faculty.whatcom.ctc.edu/InstResearch/index.htm>). Data and reports are now easily accessible and provide information to improve decision making campus-wide. All accreditation reports and documentation are posted on this website.
- WCC has delegated responsibility to pairs of key individuals to lead each of the recommendations it received in its comprehensive visit in 2011. These leaders report to the accreditation steering committee and to President's Cabinet.
- WCC is in the process of reviewing software options to assist with the electronic organization of all Curriculum Committee and outcomes assessment information (recommendations 1 and 2).
- WCC's extensive assessment plan outlines the systematic collection of information about student learning to make decisions to improve teaching and learning over the next year. WCC reports on its assessment progress annually in its Assessment Reports.

Accreditation recommendations to the College and year of recommendation	Actions taken by the college to address recommendations	Improvement results
<p>1. While noting that WCC has engaged in extensive planning for programs and services, the evaluation committee found very little evidence of an effective system of assessment for achievement of clearly identified goals or outcomes for those programs and services. Therefore, the evaluation committee recommends that the college take immediate steps to implement a regular, comprehensive, data-driven system of assessment of achievements of its programs and services. (4.A.2, April 2011)</p>	<p>WCC is addressing the recommendation by creating and improving templates and procedures for both program and services review.</p> <p>(1) <i>Program review</i>: WCC is revising the program review process of its professional-technical programs and its transfer degrees. The revised program review process will use program outcomes information, feedback from graduates and employers, and quantitative data to improve programs.</p> <p>(2) <i>Services review</i>: WCC is implementing a new services review process. Currently, WCC is at the stage of researching best practices in the field. WCC will be initiating its revised services review process with the <i>Library</i> and the <i>Office of Student Life</i>.</p>	<p>(1) <i>Program review</i>: In 2010-11, professional-technical faculty identified a draft set of program outcomes and created curriculum maps for each certificate and degree. These outcomes will be integrated into the program review process. Retention and graduation rates were generated based on program code fields. In 2011-12, WCC will generate these rates based on course-taking patterns.</p> <p>(2) <i>Services review</i>: WCC is creating a services review template and model that will be used to conduct services review. Over the next academic year, individual campus departments will be generating mission statements and evaluating service data.</p>

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<p>2. While the evaluation committee acknowledges the planning process for the assessment of student achievement, the committee found limited evidence of the identification of course, program, and degree learning outcomes and further, limited evidence of assessment of student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes at the course, program, and degree level. Therefore, the evaluation committee recommends that WCC take immediate steps to complete identification of learning outcomes for all courses, programs, and degrees. Further, the evaluation committee recommends that the college move quickly to implement a comprehensive system of assessment of those learning outcomes. (4.A.3 and Eligibility Requirement 22, April 2011)</p>	<p>WCC is rapidly building on its current learning outcomes assessment work through existing structures and committees. The Outcomes Assessment Committee includes faculty across various disciplines and administrators. The group meets monthly and provides a forum for consultation and reviews outcomes assessment-related plans and initiatives. There are three levels of outcomes assessment at WCC (i.e., at the college, program, and course levels). The strategy to identify outcomes and implement the assessment system is different for each level and is outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) <i>Core learning abilities (CLAs)</i>: In 2010-11, WCC faculty from the Outcomes Assessment Committee identified and defined a new set of 5 CLAS, developed draft rubrics for each of the CLAs, and had initial discussions regarding mapping the CLAs across the curriculum. Work in this area is continuing in 2011-12 as faculty refine rubrics, draft curriculum maps, and start identifying formal assessment processes for one of the CLAs. (2) <i>Program outcomes</i>: In 2010-11, professional-technical faculty identified a draft set of program outcomes and created curriculum maps for each certificate and degree. In 2011-12, work will continue in this area as faculty draft rubrics, revise curriculum maps, and identify formal assessment processes for their programs. (3) <i>Course outcomes</i>: In 2010-11, WCC reviewed course <i>objectives</i> and decided a complete revision of all course <i>outcomes</i> was necessary. In fall 2011-12, 30 faculty are being financially compensated to revise course outcomes through a series of formal workshops. These faculty will lead the revision process of all course outcomes by serving as mentors for other faculty. 	<p>WCC continues to work on identifying and assessing college, program, and course level outcomes. For the 2010-11 academic year, WCC has developed a series of workshops for faculty that specifically focus on course outcomes development and assessment.</p>

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<p>3. The evaluation committee did not find evidence that institutional planning at WCC was supported by the collection and analysis of complete, accurate, useful and meaningful data to evaluate the fulfillment of its mission. Therefore, the committee recommends that the college aggressively engage in the identification, collection, and analysis of appropriate data to determine the effectiveness of its accomplishments. (3.A.3, 3.B.3, and 4.A.1, April 2011)</p>	<p>WCC became an <i>Achieving the Dream</i> College in 2011, thus gaining additional resources to assist with identifying, collecting, analyzing, and using accurate data to improve the effectiveness of the College. As a result of the grant, WCC has approved release time to a faculty member to assist with this area. Also, WCC is contracting with an expert in DATAx (the student management software used by WCC) to assist in training staff and creating relevant queries.</p> <p>WCC’s Student Success and Achievement Committee members serve as the Achieving the Dream data team by identifying and improving college-wide student persistence, retention, and achievement based on relevant data; designing and implementing strategies to improve student achievement and success; and assessing results.</p> <p>In 2010, WCC conducted the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). The results of the survey provide baseline information about student engagement at WCC, specifically as it relates to the five benchmark areas that CCSSE identifies: active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student / faculty interaction, and support for learners.</p>	<p>CCSSE results were presented to faculty and staff during the 2010-11 academic year and are being used to initiate conversations about engaging students in their own learning processes. The results of this student survey provided baseline information about student experiences at WCC and suggested areas for improvement. Results from this survey are being used to revise course offerings, increase access to computers and wireless technology, improve financial aid information and outreach to prospective students, and create more study spaces. Managers across the college are reviewing the survey results to identify strategies for improvement within their departments.</p> <p>Institutional data is used for many purposes, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) To collaborate with Bellingham Technical College in analyzing ABE enrollment patterns to identify areas for the colleges to collaborate in providing services. (2) To increase underrepresented populations in healthcare programs, the college, through a major initiative of the Pathways to Health Careers grant, has developed and implemented initiatives to increase these populations. Initial data indicates an increase in diversity in these programs. (3) To increase completion rates in prerequisite courses for the Nursing and PTA Programs, the College added increased face-to-face and online tutoring and developed an <i>Introduction to Science</i> course for students to take prior to enrollment in the biology and chemistry courses.