

*building dreams, transforming lives*

# Columbia Gorge Community College

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## 2016 Mid-Cycle Self-Evaluation Report

Prepared for the  
Northwest Commission  
on Colleges and Universities



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# 2016 Mid-Cycle Review

## Introduction

The 2016 Mid-Cycle Review for Columbia Gorge Community College (CGCC) provides an update of the college's progress since its 2013 Self-Evaluation Report and its 2014 Year One Self-Evaluation Report. This report will address:

- A definition of and the process for determining mission fulfillment
- The development of Core Themes and current status
- Two examples of assessment and action to promote student learning
- Sustainability and readiness in anticipation of the Year Seven Review
- Addendum: Responses to Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) recommendations 1 and 2 received following the 2013 Self Evaluation Report and visit

## Part I Overview of Institutional Assessment Plan

### Mission

The mission statement of Columbia Gorge Community College was adopted by the Board of Education in 2003. College Board members, elected representatives of the community, crafted the mission in a participatory process that included broad college and community involvement. The mission statement is widely published and distributed through such media as the college's catalog, website, class schedules, annual report, social media, and press releases. The mission statement emphasizes the intrinsic connection between lifelong learning and the fulfillment of personal goals. The mission directs the institution to ensure that its educational programs are pertinent to the community it serves. Widely understood by college students, staff, faculty and the community at large, the mission drives college action and purpose.

*"Columbia Gorge Community College builds dreams and transforms lives by providing lifelong educational programs that strengthen our community."*

### Mission Fulfillment

The context for mission fulfillment is established through three Core Themes. The Core Themes are defined by planning statements that clarify specific elements of the mission.

- Core Theme A: Building Dreams (Access) – CGCC offers multiple environments and opportunities for people to grow personal and intellectual skills;
- Core Theme B: Transforming Lives (Education) – CGCC provides learning resources and tools for a sustainable future for individuals;
- Core Theme C: Strengthening Our Community (Partnerships) – CGCC links people and community resources.

Mission fulfillment is assessed by the extent to which the institution meets its specific objectives, measures, and targets for each core theme. Each measure is scored on a 1-5 scale:

1. Below Mission Expectation
3. Meets Mission Expectation
5. Surpasses Mission Expectation

Threshold scores have been identified in order to rate achievement of each measure, and the average scale score across all core theme measures collectively determines the institution's annual level of mission fulfillment.

### **Evolution of Core Themes and Definition of Mission Fulfillment**

By the end of the 2012-13 academic year, CGCC had gone through different iterations of core themes assessment and definitions of mission fulfillment. The college had shifted from single absolute targets for each measure to a scaled approach that was more informative regarding the achievement of college objectives. Overall mission fulfillment at that time was determined to have been achieved when a minimum of 80% of results compiled from all three core themes met or exceeded their target. This definition of mission fulfillment linked to an absolute 80% target did not allow for a range in scoring or recognize varying degrees of fulfillment. Either the college fulfilled its mission or it did not.

In November 2013, during the college's standard yearly review of key aspects of the CGCC Strategic Plan and related statements, objectives and measures, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and a cross section of college staff and faculty reviewed core themes and the standing definition of mission fulfillment. Several issues/questions arose, including:

- Were Core Theme measures truly indicative of the scope of the mission?
- Did the scoring rubric have sufficient latitude to reflect the complexity of the institution?
- Was the timing of the assessment process appropriately aligned with overall institutional planning?
- There was inconsistent understanding regarding the application of the 80% requirement for mission fulfillment: different methods of calculation provided different results and conclusions.
- Should the college incorporate a scaled approach to the overall assessment of mission fulfillment similar to what is used for the assessment of individual measures?
- Should measures be weighted according to their impact on mission fulfillment?
- Should mission fulfillment be based on an absolute and ultimate aspirational benchmark/target, or should it be based on a more fluid target using milestones for benchmarks of achievement?

While there were strong feelings that revision was needed based on these issues/questions, it was determined that the college needed to allow some time to pass and to gain additional experience with the assessment methodology already in place before making any decisions about revisions. Therefore, core theme objectives and measures, as well as their assessment and the calculation for mission fulfillment, remained relatively unchanged for the next two years.

At the close of the 2014-15 academic year, having had three years of consistent institutional assessment using the same methodology, it was noted that the same issues kept presenting themselves annually: data for measurements that were difficult or impossible to obtain, measurements that reflected actions rather than results, difficulty interpreting and accepting results as reflective of mission fulfillment, challenges in connecting results to planning and decision making processes across the college, and the desire to consolidate reporting and planning documents. It was agreed that Core Theme assessment was not producing the information desired, and the college was ready to make a change.

### **2016 Core Theme Revision and Recalculation of Mission Fulfillment: A 3-Step Process**

Based on the experience of the previous three years and ongoing discussions regarding the efficacy of the college's Core Theme assessment practices and the resultant calculation of mission fulfillment, steps were taken to make revisions and to disseminate these revisions to the college community.

#### ➤ Step 1: Revision of Core Theme Objectives and Measures

The most significant change was related to measures. To be included, measures were required to reflect results rather than actions. Previously, many of the Core Theme measures reflected college practices rather than outcomes. Departments were concerned that by removing these action-based measures, their good work would go unnoticed and uncredited. With time, there was new understanding regarding a better representation of mission fulfillment. In addition, a supporting document was proposed to go along with the Core Theme matrix, which outlined each department's contributions to the achievement of any given objective. Not only would this supplemental document recognize department action, but it would also be helpful when forming strategies to improve results in specific target areas.

In addition, the data for some measures had not been obtainable and were continually marked as NA (not available). These unobtainable measures resulted in complications when calculating the 80% completion requirement for mission fulfillment. Should they be included in the calculation as a "0" or not be included at all? In the 2016 revised version of Core Themes, measures with unobtainable data were eliminated except for one, Measure B2.9 CTE employment placements. Being that job placement is recognized as a significant piece of the college's mission, this measure was retained even though at this time, the college is unable to track a large portion of graduate job placement. There is reasonable expectation that Oregon's new data collection system, D4A (Data for Assessment), may provide this information in the near future.

Finally, objective wording was revised for clarity and to reflect the college's emphasis on results versus action. And, the subtitle of Core Theme A was changed to "Access" instead of "Opportunities." In the original iteration of Core Themes, the subtitle for Core Theme A had been

“Access.” In 2011-12, it was revised to “Opportunities” to provide a broader definition of “Building Dreams” which included access to employment. However, it was determined that this broader definition went outside the specific boundaries of the college’s mission, which was to provide access to education. Employment was a method for achieving the mission, but it was not the mission itself.

On February 9, 2016, CGCC’s Board of Education unanimously approved the revised core themes document. (EV 1)

➤ Step 2: Revision of Calculation for Determining Mission Fulfillment

Following approval of the revised Core Theme objectives and measures, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) met to review how mission fulfillment would be determined based on the new matrix. The revised objectives and measures were considered to be a better reflection of the college’s mission, including its scope and complexities, which answered two of the concerns expressed regarding the calculation of mission fulfillment.

The use of aspirational targets versus milestone targets was also discussed. Targets for many measures could be set representing an ideal that the college would want to achieve every year; however, attainment of some measures required growth over several years and would be better measured by annual milestone targets. Therefore, it was agreed that the Core Theme Matrix would include measures with milestone targets that would change annually. To ensure that the ultimate aspirational target was not lost or forgotten, it was decided to have a supplemental page identifying the measures with longer term aspirational targets and a schedule of annual targets for the anticipated years until realization.

Finally, ELT addressed the calculation formula itself that said that mission fulfillment would be achieved if a minimum of 80% of results compiled from all three core themes met or exceeded their target. It was agreed that 80% was an arbitrary number that held the college to an absolute target requiring mission fulfillment to be reported as either achieved or failed. A graded scale was preferred, so the group revised the calculation to be the average of all Core Theme measures expressed on the same five-point scale.

➤ Step 3: Dissemination of New Core Themes and Mission Fulfillment Expectations

Since its approval by the college’s Executive Leadership Team and Board of Education, the revised Core Themes have been presented to college directors and managers at the March 2016 Quality Council meeting and to all staff at the March 2016 Winter All Staff Training. Faculty will be introduced to the revised Themes at the April 2016 Spring Faculty In-Service.

To build the supporting document described in Step 1, paragraph one, outlining each department’s contribution toward the realization of Core Theme objectives and measures, department meetings are being scheduled for March and early April, 2016. These meetings include: 1) a review of Core Themes, their purpose and relationship to the college mission, 2) an update on revised Core Theme objectives and measures, and 3) identification and recording of department actions/goals that lead to achievement of Core Theme objectives and/or measures.

In addition, the latest version of the Strategic Plan (currently under development and expected to be completed by May 2016) will include the revised Core Themes and objectives. Strategic goals, objectives, and action items will be linked to Core Theme objectives.

### **Core Themes and Mission Fulfillment as Related to Institutional Planning**

Core Theme data has been collected annually in July and August following the close of the academic year. Preliminary analysis of each measure was provided in a narrative section supporting the data provided by the Core Theme Matrix. This narrative also included potential recommendations of actions for improvement as well as notes regarding the efficacy of the assessment measure/tool.

Prior to 2014-15, the gathering of Core Theme data and the writing of the narrative was conducted by Core Theme Committees under the direction of the Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC). The IAC was dissolved as of January 30, 2014, and Core Theme Committee membership dwindled until the committees were nonexistent in fall 2014. Prior to their dissolution, the committees completed data collection and analysis for 2013-14. (EV 2) However, the responsibility for collecting 2014-15 data was unassigned and is still pending completion.

As a result, planning activities related to Core Theme assessment and mission fulfillment were not realized in fall 2015. Although these planning activities were not realized, other planning activities occurred; however, they were not based on Core Themes nor calculations of mission fulfillment. The college was focused on resolving a serious structural deficit, which resulted in significant budget cuts, including layoffs and not filling a growing number of vacancies. Planning was primarily driven by budget realities.

CGCC administration recognizes that it needs to reestablish its processes for assessing mission fulfillment and linking to college planning. The revision of Core Theme objectives and measures as well as the redefinition of mission fulfillment are steps in this direction. Dissatisfaction regarding the previous measures had resulted in a lack of confidence regarding their efficacy to guide college planning and decisions. Initial dissemination of the newly revised, leaner Core Theme documents and steps to meet with all departments to review Core Themes and address department responsibility for the realization of mission fulfillment have been received positively across all levels of the college.

The college is back on track for collection of 2015-16 Core Theme data in July and August 2016. Review of the planning process will be conducted in spring 2016. An initial schedule has been proposed that reflects an evolution of current and new practice:

- Collect Core Theme data and perform initial analysis, July/August
- Disseminate to all departments, September
- Have departments review the data and analysis as well as conduct their own analysis and develop recommendations specifically related to their department, September/October
- Hold a cross department planning meeting to develop strategic goals and strategies/actions for next fiscal year, November

- Build and approve the budget based on strategic planning, January through May
- Reassemble departments for reconciliation of final budget and strategic plan, May

## Part II Examples of Student Learning and Assessment

### Example #1 Computer Applications and Office Systems Program Review and Subsequent Actions

Instructional programs are reviewed on a regular cycle to ensure relevancy, currency, and alignment with professional standards and workforce needs. Faculty play a key role in the process assessing curriculum, resources, and student achievement of outcomes. The goal of Instructional Program Review is to empower departments and faculty to make informed decisions and improvements that support student success and prepare our graduates for advanced studies or employment.

Instructional programs, both credit and non-credit, are reviewed, as per the review cycle (EV 3), as part of the college's continuous improvement processes. The department chair and department faculty write reports using the approved template. (EV 4) External reviews can be used in place of internal reviews so long as they address all components per the instructional program review template.

The Computer Applications and Office Systems (CAOS) department first performed a department review, independent from Portland Community College (PCC), in the 2011-12 academic year. (EV 5) The department's next review is scheduled for 2016-17.

This example illustrates how the CAOS department reviewed its processes in order to develop and grow its instructional program. In particular, it is an example of how, based on its mission "*to provide a full skill range of computer applications, and technical training to our students, workplace community, and our staff,*" the CAOS department set a goal to add new certificates and/or degrees, addressing community interest and need as reported in the 2012-16 Academic Master Plan. (EV 6) This goal became the foundation for the 2011-12 program review recommendation to add web design degrees and certificates, which were then offered at PCC but not at CGCC. In addition, the review included a recommendation for the creation of a local advisory board to help guide this type of program development. Prior to independent accreditation in 2013, CGCC's Career and Technical Education programs were under the auspices of PCC advisory boards.

By fall 2013, an advisory committee was formed. Starting in January 2014, the CAOS department initiated research regarding the development of new certificates focusing on web development skills. Local web businesses were consulted, a labor market survey conducted, and the information gathered was brought to the newly formed advisory committee for review. At first, the department was recommending the addition of one web development certificate; however, local industry partners urged the college to create two certificates addressing web development and web graphics. The advisory committee approved this suggestion in May 2014, and the department proceeded with the development of courses for both. New courses and two new certificates (Web Design Assistant and Web Development Assistant) were brought before and approved by the Curriculum Committee at the October and November 2014 meetings. Both certificates were approved by the CGCC Board of Education in November and submitted to the Oregon Community



Colleges and Workforce Development office for state approval, which was granted in February 2015. The certificates were on track for a fall 2015 offering. A goal that was inspired by the 2012-16 Academic Master Plan and further grounded in the assessment and recommendations of the CAOS Department Review was realized.

Unfortunately, this good work was derailed by fiscal realities that beset the college in 2014-15. A significant structural deficit resulted in the cessation of any new courses or programs as well as limiting some existing programs. Therefore, the new web certificates were suspended as of September 2015, before they even started. The college had three years to reinstate them before the state would inactivate them permanently.

During the budget build for 2016-17, it was determined that funding could be made available once again for one of these certificates in the next academic year. The Web Development Assistant certificate was reinstated by the Curriculum Committee in February 2016, and state recognition of this reinstatement has been requested. Pending state and NWCCU approval, the certificate will be listed in the 2016-17 catalog. In addition, it is anticipated that the Web Design Assistant certificate will be reinstated and offered in 2017-18.

Review of this new certificate and its courses will occur annually through the program level outcomes assessment process and the course assessment process. The next department review of CAOS is scheduled for 2016-17. The Web Development Assistant certificate will be in the middle of its first year at that time, so limited information will be available. A full analysis of data related to student success in this certificate will occur in the following review in 2021-22.

### **Example 2: Student Achievement of Institutional Core Learning Outcomes**

In fall 2015, CGCC instituted a process for assessing institutional Core Learning Outcomes, putting into place the third and final assessment process addressing the three levels of student learning outcomes: course, program (degree/certificate), and institutional.

Between 2011 and 2014, CGCC followed a three-year plan establishing processes for the assessment of student learning outcomes at the program and course level. (EV 7) Assessment practices for program outcomes began in 2011-12, and a process for tracking and reporting the achievement of course outcomes began in 2012-13. In 2014-15, the outcomes assessment plan was updated for another three years. (EV 8) The new 2014-17 plan generally continued the processes established in the first three years for assessing course and program outcomes with few modifications.

Building faculty buy-in and compliance for these first two levels of outcomes assessment took time and is still a work in progress. As a result, the development of a process for assessing CGCC's institutional outcomes was delayed; however, prior to fall term 2015, it was thought that sufficient progress had been made in the understanding and acceptance of outcomes assessment that the college could move forward with developing methodology for assessing institutional Core Learning Outcomes (CLOs). An addendum was included on the 2014-17 outcomes assessment plan addressing the inclusion of CLO assessment.

A five-person committee was formed including the academic assessment coordinator, three faculty from diverse instructional departments, and the instructional coordinator. Research was performed on ways other colleges have assessed institutional outcomes, and a subsequent plan was formed to assess CLOs based on the nationally-recognized AACU's (Association of American Colleges and Universities) LEAP Value Rubrics with some modifications.

It was decided that each year, one to two CLOs would be assessed, completing all five CLOs in a five-year period to coincide with the General Education Department Review. (EV 9) In 2015-16, CGCC is beginning this process by assessing student achievement of CLO #1: Communicate effectively using appropriate reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. (*Communication*)

Basic parameters were established for choosing courses to participate. First cut was based on identifying career and technical education as well as general education courses that students would be taking nearing the completion of their degree studies (predominantly 200-level courses). Additional screening for general education courses was based on whether the course had identified the assessed CLO as being addressed "in-depth" on the Course Content and Outcome Guide (CCOG). (EV 10) Finally, in an attempt to minimize workload for faculty, courses were chosen from the list of courses that were already up for Course Outcomes Assessment each term.

Instructors teaching courses falling within the above parameters were then asked if their course included an assignment that could be scored using one of the two communication rubrics – written communication or oral communication. (EV 11) For fall 2015, seven instructors participated in CLO assessment and provided the academic assessment coordinator with information on the assignment to be assessed. In addition to receiving the appropriate rubric, instructors were provided with directions regarding its application and how to report results electronically at the end of the term. (EV 12) The academic assessment coordinator was available to assist them with any questions and/or concerns. All instructors reported results. (EV 13)

The committee had concerns about relying on instructor assessment of artifacts rather than using outside or "unbiased" assessors to apply the rubric to the assignment. It was agreed that there may be a tendency for faculty to express biases in scoring their own students; however, the committee was unable to agree upon an alternate solution because of the potential negative impacts to workload and budget. It was determined that being able to move forward with the assessment outweighed the possibility of biased reporting. In an attempt to minimize this issue, invitations to participate and directions on grading and reporting emphasized that this assessment was not focusing on individual instructors or individual courses. Its purpose was to obtain a global snapshot of CGCC student ability to perform the particular CLO.

The assessment of CLO #1 is continuing winter term 2016, with eight instructors having agreed to assess class assignments. CLOs #2-5 will be assessed over the next four years. Annual data will be reviewed and initially analyzed by general education department chairs in conjunction with their annual program outcomes assessment. Full analysis will take place during the General Education Department Review, which is scheduled to take place every five years, the next being in 2020-21. Results are also reported annually as part of the Core Theme Matrix. Core Theme B includes measures for all three levels of outcomes assessment, making the achievement of student learning outcomes a significant and recognized component in mission fulfillment.

## Part III In Preparation for Year Seven

CGCC is making steady progress toward preparing for a successful Year Seven report. The college feels strongly that the revisions to the Core Themes and adjustment of the definition of mission fulfillment will provide the college a clear and data-driven picture of its progress each year. Implementation of the Core Learning Outcomes assessment plan will provide four more years of data, providing opportunities to make changes and improvements based on the data as well as to fine tune the process to show incremental improvements in time for the comprehensive Year Seven report. The college has made progress by:

- Developing a more succinct and results oriented Core Theme assessment matrix to better determine mission fulfillment. This process and metric tool is sustainable over time and will provide the necessary data to drive change and improvement
- Improving dissemination to college community of Core Themes and parameters around mission fulfillment

Recognizing that the college is in the early developmental stages of assessment, there is still work to be done. As CGCC moves forward, the following areas will need to be addressed to continue to make progress toward a successful Year Seven report:

- Integration of core theme assessment/mission fulfillment determination, strategic planning and budget development
- Communication of data, analysis, and recommendations for action
- Analysis of data that focuses on the efficacy of the activity being assessed rather than the efficacy of the assessment tool/strategy
- Formation of data-driven recommendations

The college completed a full accreditation review process in 2013 in preparation for the final accreditation visit. This review process gave the college the opportunity to identify areas of development necessary to successfully complete a full seven-year cycle. Since that time the Facilities Master Plan has been refreshed, a Strategic Enrollment Plan completed, and a Strategic Planning process is underway. Broader understanding of the connections between Core Themes and the other standards, particularly Standard 2, will make it much easier to complete a comprehensive Year Seven report. These connections between planning and accreditation criteria will keep CGCC strong, moving in a positive direction and making continual improvements.

### Evidence

- EV 1 2015-16 Core Theme Matrix
- EV 2 2013-14 Core Theme Matrix and Narrative
- EV 3 Instructional Program Review Schedule
- EV 4 Instructional Program Review Template

- EV 5 Computer Applications and Office Systems Program Review, 2011-12
- EV 6 2012-16 Academic Master Plan
- EV 7 2011-14 Outcomes Assessment Plan
- EV 8 2014-17 Outcomes Assessment Plan
- EV 9 CLO Assessment Schedule
- EV 10 CCOG Example
- EV 11 Oral and Written Communication Rubrics
- EV 12 Directions for Completing CLO Assessment
- EV 13 2015-16 Fall CLO Results

## Addendum – 2013 Recommendations Update

### ➤ Recommendation #1 Balance of Full- and Part-Time Faculty

*“While Columbia Gorge Community College may currently employ a sufficient number of qualified faculty to achieve its mission, the percentage of full-time faculty in the institution is very low. It is unclear to the evaluation committee that the current staffing level for full-time faculty is sustainable. It is recommended that the college develop a plan to ensure that the number of full-time faculty employed by the college is sufficient 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 (Standard 2.B.4).”*

Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 589-008-0100 delineates faculty hiring standards as: “Teachers of lower division collegiate courses must include a master’s degree in a subject area closely related to that in which the instructor will be teaching; however, in subject areas in which individuals have demonstrated their competencies and served in professional fields and in cases in which documentation to support the individual’s proficiency and high level of competency can be assembled, the master’s degree requirement may be waived at the discretion of the college president.” CGCC Board Policy GCA follows the OAR. Each faculty file contains an approval form indicating how the person meets the hiring requirements. CGCC employs sufficient faculty to achieve its educational objectives, to establish and oversee academic policies, and to ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs.

CGCC employs qualified faculty, all of whom bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to their teaching. At the same time, the institution recognizes that full-time faculty provide additional consistency and continuity in regards to its academic programs, assessment, and overall educational objectives. As an accredited institution, there is an increase in the number of activities that require faculty involvement and input (standing committees, assessment practices, initiative research and development, etc.). The current full-time faculty are stretched to cover these responsibilities. In addition to teaching, full-time faculty benefit the institution through their roles in leadership, program advocacy, and fostering student engagement. In 2004, the chief academic officer (CAO), with the Instructional Council, established a long-range goal to have a full-time faculty member for each discipline or program area that has sufficient numbers of courses or enrollment to support a full-time position. At the time, there were twelve full-time positions in the following areas: biology, chemistry, mathematics, business, nursing, and electronics engineering technology.

By 2008, full-time faculty had been hired for the following general education areas: Writing/English, Pre-College, Biology, and Social Sciences/Arts & Humanities. With the expansion and development of new programs in the Career and Technical Education department, additional full-time positions were created and filled in the following areas: Renewable Energy Technology (through a combination of general funds and temporary grants), Medical Assisting, and Certified Nursing Assistant. In total, there were eighteen full-time faculty, eight in General Studies and ten in Career and Technical Education.

In 2012, the Instructional Council revisited its goals for the hiring of full-time faculty. The revised goals were based on the following criteria: sufficient coverage (i.e. availability of qualified instructors) for high demand courses; full-time faculty representation in each instructional department; and the identified needs documented in instructional program reviews and the Academic Master Plan. From these criteria, proposed full-time positions were prioritized into two tiers, the first of which were included in the CAO's instructional budget proposal for 2013-14 and four of the positions were hired (EV A.1):

Tier 1

- Computer Applications and Office Systems
- Developmental Education
- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- Math
- English/Writing

Tier 2

- Arts & Humanities
- Embedded Technology
- Psychology

In 2014, the college saw a significant decline in enrollment in addition to funding challenges. The college continues to address those challenges in 2016. Attrition as well as shifts in enrollment have resulted in fewer CGCC employees overall, including full-time faculty. Currently, CGCC has 17 full-time faculty, nine in General Studies and eight in Career and Technical Education. While the college set a long-range goal to have a full-time faculty in each department or program and made progress in that regard, it continues to have two departments without full-time faculty: Arts & Humanities and ESOL. Limitations in funding have resulted in these positions remaining unfilled.

The current goals for the hiring of full-time faculty differs from the 2012 plan in that while the college still recognizes the importance of having full-time faculty representation in all instructional departments, the need for additional qualified instructors in core areas is determined to be a higher priority. The reliance on adjunct faculty causes scheduling challenges that can reduce offerings that are in high demand by students. Furthermore, finding qualified instructors interested in teaching part-time is especially challenging in rural areas. In 2015-16, Instructional Council revisited the criteria for hiring full time faculty and made revisions to the 2012 plan to reflect the new fiscal and enrollment realities of the college. The following revisions/additions were recommended for future hiring of full-time faculty:

- Faculty hiring needs will be determined by Instructional Council on an annual basis.
- Recommendations for full-time positions will be made prior to the budget build each year. The following criteria will be used to determine need:
  - Demonstrate academic program needs/demands
  - Meet accreditation requirements/standards
  - Align with the strategic goals as outlined in CGCC's Strategic Plan

- Impact recruitment and retention positively
- Potentially increase enrollment and growth of programs
- Ensure quality instruction is enhanced or maintained
- Support for the hire from the department as evidenced by an affirmative majority vote from the faculty of that department
- Establish mentoring for faculty that includes a plan for success with consistent and constructive performance evaluation per the bargaining contract
- The Instructional Council will submit recommendations to the CAO to be included in the biennial budget build as funding is available.

➤ **Recommendation #2 Outcomes Assessment**

*“CGCC has responded to the recommendations 1 and 2 made after the 2011 NWCCU visit. The Core Themes are essentially the same but objectives and measures are more clearly defined and more relevant in assessing the goal of accomplishing the college’s mission. Likewise, there is evidence that substantial work has been done in the assessment of outcomes at the course and program level. It is, however, recommended that the mapping of course and core outcomes (particularly) to program outcomes be completed and that the body of systematically collected relevant data at the course and program levels be increased. These data need to be used as indicators of achievement in verifying the assertion that educational programs are transforming lives (Standard 4.A.3, 4.B.2).”*

**History of Outcomes Assessment**

CGCC began its own program of outcomes assessment in 2011, two years prior to becoming independently accredited. A three-year plan was designed to assess outcomes at the course and program (degree/certificate) levels. This plan outlined the purpose and method, and it included a three-year rollout schedule through the 2013-14 academic year. (EV R2.1)

In 2014-15, the outcomes assessment plan was updated for another three years. The new plan generally continued the processes established in the first three years for assessing course and program outcomes with some modifications. An addendum was made in 2015-16 addressing the assessment of the college’s Core Learning Outcomes, completing the assessment plan for all three levels of outcomes achievement. (EV R2.2)



**Course Assessment**

CGCC’s Course Assessment process combines student course evaluations and course outcomes assessment. The academic assessment coordinator (AAC) and department chairs establish a

schedule so faculty participate at least once per year and regularly taught courses are assessed every three years. Participating faculty complete a plan (PART A) at the beginning of the term and a results and analysis section (PART B) at the end of the term. (EV R2.3)

In 2014-15, emphasis was placed on refining and strengthening the original approach/methodology. Under the original three-year plan, the responsibility of scheduling courses and faculty for course assessment fell completely upon department chairs. Based on feedback from department chairs and the AAC, it was determined that it would be more efficient to have the AAC build the initial schedule and have department chairs review and approve. Now, with this change, there exists a five-year plan that tracks all courses as well as faculty compliance with course assessment. (EV R2.4)

It became apparent during the first three to four years of the course assessment project that, while many faculty were appropriately using the assessment process to express instructional concerns and needs, they were not receiving a response or support regarding ways to resolve these issues. This lack of support resulted in unsatisfactory closure for the faculty. The intention was that department chairs and directors would review each term's assessments in order to gain a perspective of the status of their department and to address faculty questions and concerns; however, this step was not realized for most departments. In an effort to improve this portion of the process, the AAC reviews all course assessment and highlights faculty questions, concerns, and/or best practices. The AAC forwards this information to the appropriate department chair and director whose responsibility it is to respond to faculty and support their needs. Unfortunately, there is still little evidence that this support is being provided. The AAC is now considering following-up with faculty who requested assistance, asking if they have been contacted by their department chair and/or director and if their concerns/needs have been addressed.

In a further attempt to bolster individual faculty responsibility for closing the loop and realizing continuous improvement, in 2015-16, an additional field was added to the analysis portion of PART B asking faculty to describe how they have addressed issues and potential instructional changes indicated in previous assessments. Several PART B submissions for fall 2015 have included responses to this new field. (EV R2.5)

### **Program Level Assessment**

Outcomes assessment at this level is conducted annually in order to measure student achievement of degree, certificate, and program outcomes. Departments assess and analyze the cumulative effect of the course work that constitutes a degree, certificate, or program. Information from the assessment is used by departments to make improvements that strengthen degrees, certificates, and programs as well as increase student success.

There has been little change to the design of program level outcomes assessment since its inception in 2011-12. Departments use three models of assessment:

- Course grades for a wide range of courses that have been mapped to specific degree and certificate outcomes are aggregated, and targets are set;
- Specific course assignments are mapped to given degree/certificate outcomes, and targets are set regarding grade achievement;



- External evaluators from the healthcare professions assess student performance using a rubric that aligns with outcomes, and targets are set.

In the first two to three years, annual reporting was sporadic. By 2014-15, all departments submitted annual outcomes assessment for all degrees and one-year certificates. (EV R2.6) Pre-College, previously opting-out of the process, has now opted-in and submitted its first program assessment plan for 2015-16. It should be noted that while compliance in this area of assessment has increased, there is still much work that needs to be accomplished to make assessment of program outcomes relevant to program changes and improvements.

Ongoing concerns regarding program assessment include:

- When analyzing results, departments often focused on the validity of the assessment tool rather than the efficacy of instruction.
- While departmental revisions are sometimes recommended, they are not necessarily reflective of the results and analysis of program outcome assessment.
- Some departments continue to use course end of term grades even though course grades may be less than precise in determining whether program outcomes have been achieved. It has also been noted that end of term grades most often show that departments are meeting their benchmarks.

Departments will review courses that map to specific degree/certificate/program outcomes during the 2016 Spring Faculty In-Service, to ensure that plans are current and relevant.

### **Institutional Core Learning Outcomes Assessment**

The assessment of Institutional Core Learning Outcomes has a broader scope than assessment of course, degree, certificate and program outcomes, assessing whether students, regardless of which degree they earn at CGCC, achieve the skills and knowledge that are at the foundation of CGCC's General Education program.

Assessment at this level measures whether degree-seeking students leave with some level of mastery of the institutional Core Learning Outcomes (CLOs):

Through their respective disciplines, CGCC students who earn a degree can:

1. Communicate effectively using appropriate reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. (*Communication*)
2. Creatively solve problems by using relevant methods of research, personal reflection, reasoning, and evaluation of information. (*Critical thinking and Problem-Solving*)
3. Apply the knowledge, skills and abilities to enter and succeed in a defined profession or advanced academic program. (*Professional Competence*)
4. Appreciate cultural diversity and constructively address issues that arise out of cultural differences in the workplace and community. (*Cultural Awareness*)
5. Recognize the consequences of human activity upon our social and natural world. (*Community and Environmental Responsibility*)

CLO assessment aligns with the General Education Department Review schedule, with each CLO being assessed at least once in the five-year period. (EV R2.7) Instructors annually assess student mastery of one or two CLOs, applying a rubric that was adapted from the AACU's (Association of American Colleges and Universities) LEAP Value Rubrics. For the 2015-16 assessment of CLO #1, instructors had the option of using one of two rubrics, addressing either oral or written communication. (EV R2.8) Data is submitted electronically to the academic assessment coordinator at the end of each term. (EV R2.9)

Analysis of CLO assessment results is conducted by the General Education Department annually in conjunction with annual program (degree/certificate) outcomes review. A comprehensive review of all five CLOs is done during the General Education Program Review every five years. This assessment is meant to assist the General Education Department in making informed adjustments and improvements to the General Education program.

Following annual analysis of CLO assessment data by the General Education department, the CLO assessment process will be reviewed and modified as needed.

### **Mapping Course Outcomes to Program and Core Learning Outcomes**

Course mapping to program (degree/certificate) outcomes is evident in annual program assessment plans. (EV R2.6) Courses that reflect or teach to the given program outcome are identified by faculty, and either overall course grades or graded assignments are used to report outcomes achievement. Where course grades are used, faculty have chosen a course based on the premise that students would be unable to pass the course with a "C" or better without mastery of the given outcome. Review of course to program mapping is scheduled to take place at the Spring Faculty In-Service in April, 2016.

Mapping of General Education courses to institutional Core Learning Outcomes (CLOs) can be found in each course's Course Content and Outcome Guide (CCOG). Courses seeking General Education status, are required by the Curriculum Committee to provide a description of how their course outcomes, supported by course content, address CLOs. To be granted General Education status a course must demonstrate that three of the CLOs are addressed "in-depth" and one additional CLO is addressed at least "minimally." (EV R2.10) These ratings are included on the CCOGs for all General Education courses that have completed Initial Independent Course Approval (IICA). Upon independent accreditation in 2013, all courses were required under IICA to be reviewed, including General Education status, by CGCC's Curriculum Committee before the end of the 2015-16 academic year. This three-year process is nearing completion and notation of alignment to CLOs will be included on all General Education courses by August 2016.

### **Outcomes Assessment Linked to Academic and Institutional Assessment**

Instructional Program Review currently includes analysis of outcomes assessment at the course and the program level as evidenced in the Instructional Program Review Template. (EV R2.11) The template will be updated for the 2016-17 academic year to include analysis of the Core Learning Outcomes as well now that they are on a regular assessment schedule. Along with analysis of enrollment, faculty, budget, and relevancy of curriculum, analysis of outcomes achievement is an integral part of assessing programs and provides the basis for recommendations for improvement.

Outcomes assessment is also prominent in institutional assessment in that Core Theme B: Transforming Lives (Education) includes Objective B3: Ensuring student proficiency in course, program and institutional student learning outcomes. The objective includes a measure for each level of outcome achievement. The measurement for CLOs was added this year with the addition of CLO assessment. (EV R2.12)

## **Evidence**

- EV R1.1 Full-Time Faculty, Tier 1 Priority 2012-13
- EV R2.1 2011-14 Outcomes Assessment Plan
- EV R2.2 2014-17 Outcomes Assessment Plan
- EV R2.3 Course Assessment PART A & B <http://www.cgcc.edu/institutional-assessment/course-outcomes-assessment>
- EV R2.4 2015-20 Course Assessment Tracking Plan
- EV R2.5 PART B Examples
- EV R2.6 Completed Program Assessment Examples <http://www.cgcc.edu/institutional-assessment/degree-certificate>
- EV R2.7 Core Learning Outcomes Assessment Schedule
- EV R2.8 Oral and Written Communication Rubrics
- EV R2.9 CLO Electronic Submission Form <http://www.cgcc.edu/institutional-assessment/written-communication-scoring-rubric>
- EV R2.10 General Education Request Form
- EV R2.11 Instructional Program Review Template
- EV R2.12 2015-16 Core Theme Matrix