Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Report

Klamath Community College
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Klamath Falls, OR 97603

April 18-20, 2018

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Introduction

Klamath Community College (KCC) is a two-year public institution serving Klamath and Lake Counties in south central Oregon. As the youngest of Oregon's community colleges (established in 1996), the institution takes pride in offering access to a 14,000 square mile service region that reflects high unemployment and limited living-wage job opportunities. The College saw an 8.5% increase in enrollment between 2014 and 2017, and now serves approximately 1,840 FTE. While students enroll in each of the College's mission areas (basic skills, technical/professional training, academic transfer, and community education), the majority take academic credit-bearing courses.

The College is agile and flexible in meeting demand on campus and in outlying sites. Many students who attend are first time enrollees; 66% quality for federal Pell Grants. During the early years of operation, KCC enrollments reflected many displaced workers and non-traditional students. Through more recent efforts, access for active-duty military personnel and high school students (whether in dual credit or pipeline courses) serves to more fully balance out the student population.

While more work is being accomplished, KCC is recovering from two significant operational challenges: a high student loan default rate and a low student retention and completion pattern. Strengthened admissions, advising, and orientation processes are resulting in improvements necessary for meeting US Department of Education expectations.

Assessment of the Self   Evaluation Report and Support Materials

The institution's self-evaluation report is well-organized, includes relevant data, and is supported by strong analytical components. The report was found to be accurate based on a review of readily-available exhibits and interviews with various College and community stakeholders. Links to electronic exhibits were helpful; requests for additional information were met with quick responses.

Eligibility Requirements (appropriate to the scope of the evaluation)

The following detailed information is provided about selected eligibility requirement elements. The team found all other elements follow NWCCU Eligibility Requirements.

Eligibility Requirement 3. Mission and Core Themes: In response to Recommendation 1 from the 2011 visit, careful work was undertaken to more clearly articulate the KCC mission and identify well-aligned core themes. The result serves as a framework for College operations and mission fulfillment.

Eligibility Requirement 7. Governing Board: KCC has a well-functioning governing board that reflects strong support for the College and the KCC mission. Because several board members have deep ties to the community and two are family members, periodic ethics training will assist in further improving board operations.

Eligibility Requirement 9. Administration: KCC serves a small, somewhat isolated geographic area that sometimes proves to be a deterrent for attracting and retaining administrative employees. Comprehensive succession planning will ensure smooth continuation of operations should unexpected vacancies arise.

Eligibility Requirement 13. Library and Information Resources: The library (LRC) serves a vital function for the College, especially given the breadth of operations and outreach to on-line students. It is essential that required policies be developed to serve as a foundation for LRC operations.

Eligibility Requirement 23. Institutional Effectiveness: In order to further improve KCC planning and evaluation processes, clearer assessable and measurable metrics for demonstrating mission fulfillment and sustainability should be developed to serve as the basis for ensuring institutional effectiveness.

Standard 1 – Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

Standard 1.A Mission

In 2011, in keeping with the fall visit Recommendation 1, the College undertook a comprehensive mission review process, engaging a wide range of community and College stakeholders. Documentation and interviews verify that KCC now reflects a mission statement that clearly articulates the purpose of the College. Individuals across the institution (administrators, faculty, staff, and students) can quote the mission statement and identify how it applies to them and their efforts. It is evident that the mission statement serves as a foundation for efforts to measure mission fulfillment.

Standard 1.B Core Themes

Because of updates completed in 2015, KCC now identifies four core themes that align with the mission of the institution. The themes are: 1. Provide accessible education and services; 2. Provide quality education and services; 3. Meet the diverse needs of our students, businesses, and community; and 4. Support student success in workforce training, academic transfer, foundational skills, and community education. The core themes, along with their supporting objectives, appear to represent a clear and cohesive structure that supports the KCC mission. This work completes the College's response to Recommendation 1 from the fall 2011 visit.

Per Accreditation Standard 1.B.2, institutions are required to identify meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement that form the basis for evaluating accomplishment of the objectives of each of the core themes. While KCC demonstrates a strong commitment to evidence-based practice, additional refinement of measures and targets is needed to fully demonstrate core theme accomplishment. Such refinement is necessary to complete the full cycle of performance improvement.

KCC's mission and core themes serve as an important foundation for generating goals and measuring the performance of the institution. Attention must be given to ensuring assessable, meaningful, and measurable indicators of achievement.

Concern: The institution fails to fully reflect assessable, meaningful, and measurable indicators of achievement that support assessment of core theme accomplishments. A review of current measures of effectiveness should occur to ensure the results tie to goal accomplishment and mission fulfillment.

Standard 2 – Resources and Capacity

Standard 2.A

Governance

KCC employs a clear and effective system of governance. Roles and responsibilities of various individuals and constituent groups are well-documented. As fitting with the culture of the institution, there is a strong commitment to broad-based shared governance at KCC. Evidence attests to compliance with NWCCU Standards for accreditation.

Concern: Because shared governance is so pervasive at the College, many individuals note "engagement fatigue" that can, at times, detract from regular duties. The College should consider reviewing governance structures to ensure that both efficiency and engagement in governance are adequately balanced.

Governing Board

The Board of Education at KCC consists of seven members, five of whom are elected from specific geographic service areas and two serve at-large. At the time of the visit, five positions (out of seven total) are open for election. Board minutes and interviews attest to practices reflective of a strong policy governance model. Board members demonstrate strong values, clearly communicating their opinions about policy and budget oversite of the College. When disagreements arise, Board members strive to find resolution or engage the help of others to gain consensus.

As noted in the previous Eligibility Requirements section, several board members have strong ties to various organizations in the community, while two individuals are family members. It is suggested that periodic ethics training should be undertaken to assist in further improving board operations.

The Board reviews College policies on a regular basis, completing full scope examination within a two- to three-year period. Policies are clearly written, easy to understand, and appear to be up-to-date with respect to compliance with federal and state guidelines.

Proper delegation of authority is given to the KCC President. A 360-degree evaluation model ensures comprehensive information about performance of the CEO is obtained, then used to highlight accomplishments and areas for improvement. The Board engages in professional development during their annual retreat and at other appropriate times. The Board has a clearly documented and implemented evaluation process; Board evaluation (individual and the Board as a whole) takes place each year at an annual summer retreat. At that time the Board uses the results of their evaluation to improve performance of individual and collective members and sets annual goals for the institution.

Concern: Because administrative changes happen on a frequently-occurring basis, the Board should develop and adopt a succession plan should a CEO vacancy arise.

Leadership and Management

KCC employs administrators who are well-qualified for their respective roles. Administrative vacancies occur more frequently at KCC due to a somewhat isolated location that may be a deterrent to retention. The College actively engages in professional development that prepares staff and faculty for administrative positions should they be available. The administrative structure is well-documented and understood by individuals at the College and in the community.

Concern: Development of a documented succession plan should occur to ensure continual, uninterrupted College operations.

Policies and Procedures

Academics:

Exhibits and additional College documents attest to well-developed and implemented policies related to academic efforts. Faculty note these academic policies provide guidance related to their teaching, scholarship, research, and academic freedom. Such policies are developed in a way that allows latitude while establishing important standards.

The KCC Learning Resource Center (LRC) webpage includes several policies pertaining to the Library. The documented policies include Patron Code of Conduct; Employee Code of Conduct; Selection Guidelines and Criteria; Copyright; and Offensive Materials and Computer Use. The Library Access Procedure and the Library Instruction Policy were provided as evidence but are not published or available to the public. The Evaluation Committee is concerned that several of the policies do not represent the authentic policies of the Library and should be tailored to embody the actual practices of KCC (i.e. Selection Guidelines and Criteria (published by Linn-Benton Community College), Library Access Procedure (published by University of Michigan), and Library Instruction Policy (published by Auburn University of Montgomery). A Circulation Policy, which is common to academic libraries, was not found to be documented or published).

The institution's Transfer of Credit policy is up-to-date and demonstrates clear and specific guidelines related to credit transfer between KCC and four-year institutions. This important tool

is user-friendly; students note the guidance provided assists with their transfer decisions and processes.

Students:

The KCC Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy is relevant, serving as a means for defining expectations regarding academic honesty, appeals, and grievances. Policies related to accommodations are created by a college-wide committee and influence facility and classroom learning needs for students with differing abilities.

Careful work was accomplished to review and update admissions procedures at KCC. The results are reflected in a strong set of admissions policies and procedures that support student success, progression, and retention. Placement testing policies and practices are noted by both staff and students as being appropriate and effective. Using an academic warning system, faculty report quick response should be student be placed in a course that is different than their demonstrated academic ability. Guidelines for co-curricular activities are readily available and form the basis for defining expectations and participation.

Human Resources:

Policies related to hiring, employee orientation, training, and performance evaluation are readily available. Employees across the institution express knowledge about and appreciation for the support and guidance obtained through the regular application of human resource standards.

Institutional Integrity:

The KCC catalog and other program and service publications are accurate depictions of programs and services at the College. Publications were found to be up-to-date, and staff provided evidence of systematic and periodic review procedures. Students and members of the public express trust in the integrity of KCC, noting quick response to concerns. During the visit a student noted campus disruption due to construction and detailed how facilities, safety, and Title IX staff worked to find appropriate solutions.

The Board adopted and applies a Conflict of Interest Policy, expressing a commitment to undergoing additional training as it pertains to their own affiliate relationships. Such training will serve to further establish trust among members and within the community-at-large.

Policies related to copywrite and publication rights for intellectual property are evident; faculty report such policies are understood and used, especially for faculty work products. The institution published and portrays NWCCU accreditation status in an accurate manner.

If the institution enters into contractual agreements with external entities for products or services performed on its behalf, the scope of work for those products or services, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, is stipulated in a written and approved agreement that contains provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution. In such cases, the institution ensures the scope of the agreement is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, adheres to

institutional policies and procedures, and complies with the Commission's Standards for Accreditation.

Academic Freedom:

The institution has in place adequate and appropriate policies related to academic freedom. Students and faculty note a commitment on the part of KCC for their engagement in and publication of research, scholarship, and other such academic endeavors. Such work is produced independently, without undue influence from the organization. Ample examples lead to the conclusion that such published material adheres to adopted standards for acknowledgement of sources and appear absent of personal, unproven or unsubstantiated beliefs.

Finance:

The institution clearly defines policies, approved by its governing board, regarding oversight and management of financial resources, including financial planning, board approval and monitoring of operating and capital budgets, reserves, investments, fundraising, cash management, debt management, and transfers and borrowings between funds.

Standard 2.B Human Resources

Evaluators found KCC human resources hiring, orientation, evaluation, and professional development practices to be strong, appropriate, and consistent. Faculty, administrators, and staff are qualified for the positions to which they are selected. Orientation, to include opportunities for mentorship by senior employees, occurs on a frequent basis. All personnel are evaluated on a regular basis and job-related goals are aligned with departmental, unit, and institutional goals. In many cases, a 360-degree process is used for performance evaluations, including input from peers, supervisors, and others with whom the employee works.

KCC is a small institution, so many employees have wide-ranging responsibilities that ensure the work of the College is accomplished. Targeted professional development and, in many cases, strong opportunities for professional growth an advancement are readily evident.

Standard 2.C Education Resources

A careful review of academic programming and degrees at KCC shows a responsive mix of courses and programs, specifically aligned with regional workplace and transfer needs. Course and programs are reviewed on a regular basis; course and program learning outcomes are used to inform and improve curricula. Course syllabi contain information about learning outcomes and students provide feedback related to attainment of these important elements. Faculty provided multiple examples about how the results of assessment inform their teaching and course content.

Degrees and certificates reflect adherence to industry or transfer standards. Through the mandatory advising model, students are clearly informed about requirements necessary for

graduation or certification. Curriculum decisions occur through a faculty-led structure that is well-informed by data and institutional research.

KCC librarians are available to provide in-class Information Literacy sessions for any faculty who request a session. Statistical data of the frequency of the sessions was unavailable. Information concerning library and information resource access are delivered to Distance Education students through the online DE Student Orientation Course if the student chooses to participate. A proactive approach by the librarians would ensure active involvement of these two valuable services by faculty and students.

The College presented evidence that it has appropriate policies and procedures in place that effectively manage and control the granting of credit for prior experiential learning. Of three randomly selected records reviewed, two were found to be fully compliant while credit-granting protocols, while one record demonstrated an error in awarding KCC credit before attainment of the first 12 resident credits as per policy. After discussing this with the college registrar the error was traced back to a former procedure that had since been updated. Evaluator interviews with students substantiated the College's effective application and use of credit awarding policies. KCC presented evidence that indicates there is adequate control and management of transfer credit as evidenced by a review of five randomly-selected credit transfer records. No discrepancies were identified through either this review or conversations with students and faculty.

Degrees and certificates at KCC contain a carefully-designed, recognizable core of general education or related instruction. Students attest to the benefit of these courses/components and provided several examples of how their learning is applied through assignments, projects, and research. All general education and related instruction elements document well-aligned learning assessment. General education learning outcomes, program level outcomes and course level outcomes are systematically and formally assessed.

Evaluator interviews with College continuing education and community education officials and found that the College's mission statement and the actual CE and non-credit instructional offerings were in substantial alignment with the College's mission. The College provided evidence of quality program development and execution for continuing education and non-credit offerings. Through a review of three randomly selected course outlines and associated documentation to was found that KCC faculty are actively involved in the development CE credit and non-credit offerings. Additionally, interviews with full-time faculty verified that in their representative subject matter areas the College's continuing and community education officials engage them for specific work in both development and delivery of offerings. The College has a concrete and effective policy and procedure in place that governs granting credit and/or CEUs as evidenced by a review of three randomly selected course outlines and associated documentation. There was clear evidence of specific learning outcomes in each and no deficiencies were noted.

KCC provided evidence in the form of academic year 2016-2017 records of all non-credit instruction offered—the records were both complete and adequately descriptive. Additionally, the review showed that learning outcomes were present for each offering.

Standard 2.D Student Support Resources

KCC invests in a comprehensive array of services that support student success. After examining data about extremely low completion rates, several changes were made to better assist students in their academic progression and completion. Mandatory advising, comprehensive student orientation, mandatory placement testing, and early academic warning are just some of the many changes that demonstrate a commitment to improving student retention and completion statistics. These efforts directly influence student support resource planning and allocation.

Based on careful design and maintenance of KCC facilities, students are afforded an appropriate and inviting learning environment. Through interviews with personnel and students, safety is a primary concern on campus. Documents and personal examples attest to early detection and solutions related to issues such as campus lighting, access, and parking. Of special note is a comprehensive and well-constructed Clery Report that includes a wide range of information and resources related to Title IX and other federal policy requirements.

KCC employs a mandatory placement testing policy, augmented by an academic warning system that identifies students whose courses may need to be adjusted based on need. Through a unique partnership with Goodwill, basic education students receive both academic and work-placement support at the campus. Faculty provided example of student accommodations that are made if/when specific course or program offerings are discontinued, allowing students ample opportunities to complete determined goals.

A review of the KCC College Catalog found that all elements of Standard 2.D.5 are evident. Students attest to easy access to information and policies that guide their admission, enrollment, and degree completion processes. Information about unique program or certificate requirements (e.g., healthcare occupations) is made available to students prior to completion of their admission. Adequate means are evident to ensure accurate identification of distance learning students for purposes of admission and work products using a unique log-in assigned to each student and the need to present in-person identification documents before any changes to the student system can be made.

Student records are maintained in a confidential and secure manner, store using three measures of backup. FERPA guidelines are published, and interviews attest to knowledge about and adherence to policies related to the release of student information.

The College has taken strong steps to address an unacceptable financial aid default rate, moving from a high of 33 percent in 2011 to the current 23 percent. The KCC Student Handbook records requirements for a mandatory financial aid adviser meeting to review obligations, such as student academic progress, prior to disbursement of aid. Each FAFSA letter includes the type of aid awarded and details about repayment obligations. Aid must be accepted in person by students attending campus classes or can be accepted by online students with their signature documenting knowledge about and acceptance of award requirements. Additional in-person advising takes place with complete withdrawals, and student transcripts are held until the advising session requirement is fulfilled. First time financial aid students wait 30 days for

disbursement, while returning students are given funds after 2.5 weeks. Student financial aid and budgeting information is included in college success class offerings and during orientation.

At KCC, student advising is a responsibility shared by both staff and faculty. Students report a high degree of satisfaction with advising, noting the available of campus personnel at any time advice about enrollment or academic programming is needed. Advising is mandatory for students to gain access to classes during each enrollment period.

Maintaining a bookstore and food service operation at KCC, given the size of the institution, is a costly undertaking. The State of Oregon employs a low-cost or no-cost books statute with which the bookstore works to comply. The College lowered markup at the bookstore and revenue is reducing dramatically; no revenue is anticipated being transferred to the general fund this year. The bookstore manager works directly with faculty to low-cost purchasing solutions. Students provide input regarding bookstore operations via comment card boxes. Program review takes place for both the bookstore and food service. Due to the impending relocation of services, ongoing review is underway to determine the best model for bookstore and food service operations.

KCC does not have an athletic program.

Standard 2.E Library and Information Resources

The KCC Library provides students with access to periodical, reference, and media databases that are appropriate for this institution. With a move from ownership of physical materials to digital formats, the KCC Library weeded their physical collections for currency, scope, and relevancy—reducing their overall print collections. They also reduced their subscriptions of print journals to 20 titles. With the smaller number of physical materials, their online holdings must provide the depth and breadth, now lacking in physical form, which is required to support the institution's mission. The KCC Library relies on state funded and consortium participation for their subscription databases, as well as open access resources such as the Directory of Open Access Books and Project Gutenberg. KCC students may obtain an Oregon Institute of Technology Library card for $25 which provides them with access to this institution's resources. KCC Library has access to the resources of the SAGE Consortium which could provide students with resources that are not available at the KCC Library, but it was reported that this service is used infrequently. Interlibrary loan services are currently unavailable.

Statistical circulation information gleaned from reports generated by the library's Evergreen Integrated Library System guides planning for information resources. Secondly, statistical information provided by online resource vendors guides the library's decision-making process on whether to cancel or continue subscriptions to specific databases. Feedback from faculty for additional physical materials is encouraged.

The KCC librarians, with the collaboration of faculty, have developed information literacy sessions to provide information on finding, evaluating, and using information resources. Online library orientation videos are available on the Learning Resource Center website. Circulation statistics and staff observations provide evidence in the assessment of the quality, adequacy, and

utilization of library resources. Academic Program Reviews include a review of the library's holdings for relevancy and currency for their specific program.

Standard 2.F Financial Resources

The institution demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow and reserves to support its programs and services. The College, however, would like to increase reserves to have the ability to respond to unique and unanticipated circumstances. Under Oregon law, reserve balances must be fully reviewed every three years. Financial planning reflects available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and appropriate risk management to ensure short-term solvency and anticipate long-term obligations, including payment of future liabilities. Of note is the careful integration of financial planning in alignment with core theme attainment and mission accomplishment.

The College obtained a private bond in December 2016 to fund new construction on campus. KCC was the first institution in Oregon to use this unique, leveraged funding model for capital projects. Given the local economic picture and rate of regional unemployment, passing a public bond for capital construction was not viewed as being an option.

The College engages in a robust budget process, acquiring input and receiving requests from each campus unit. Each budget proposal must align with a respective core theme and demonstrate potential for institutional progress or improvement. The institution is working to move to a zero-based budget process, and current employs a seven-year financial forecasting model whereby the first two- to three-year projection is used for decision-making, with the remaining year projections used for information purposes.

KCC employs Jenzabar for financial management. The system is locally hosted and overseen by College module managers. Module managers authorize access to financial accounting elements, and the College's IT then grants electronic access. Adequate back-up provisions ensure preservation of financial transactions and records.

KCC employs an annual capital budget process with financing details managed by the CFO. When capital funding is identified, design, administration of project, construction, owner furnishings, technology, landscaping, and on-going operations are managed through the maintenance and operations budget. Program-specific projects are managed by campus facilities leadership, with specifics related to instructional, student service, safety, and access needs identified by various constituent groups on campus.

Work is underway to build out the campus Phase II expansion. The College submits a due diligence report related to capital construction every two years. Recently, KCC requested the maximum $7.85m available to the College, then added funds from an economic development grant for $3m and used local philanthropy funds ($716,000). A private bond, mentioned above, secured authority to begin construction.

The College is audited on a regular basis, the most recent audit covering FY 2015. Care was taken to ensure an accurate audit occurring during the transition to a new Jenzabar financial

system. In keeping with acceptable standards, records reflect regular audit report reviews by the Board.

The KCC Foundation is responsible for donor and donor-related fundraising. The recent capital campaign demonstrates strong leadership and effective community ties that serve to afford support for the College. Scholarship availability and the recent successful capital campaign attest to the effectiveness of Foundation operations.

Standard 2.G Physical and Technological Infrastructure

Physical Infrastructure:

Based on the age of the campus, physical and technology changes can occur with long-term planning in mind: the buildings are new and in good physical condition; set-aside funds are provided for older buildings to keep progress with those more newly-constructed. Energy efficiency improvements occur through the Oregon Energy Trust (planning for new buildings and operation of existing). Exterior lights are LEDs and it is proposed to change interior lighting as well. The College employs a campus-wide irrigation system; keyless entry upgrades and is working to make security camera installation a priority. The next planned capital project, Phase III, will provide fire safety training, manufacturing, and welding space. Discussion is underway concerning a possible child care facility to align with ECE/Head Start programming. Capital planning aligns with and support core theme attainment, mission fulfillment, and program/campus needs.

The campus adheres to and reflects ADA compliance. Aside from regular and ongoing communication, facilities leadership meets with Title IX staff, campus representatives, and ASKCC about twice per year. An example of the results of this collaboration is reflected is decisions regarding space or parking moves during construction.

During the last academic year and concern was brought to OSHA regarding use and storage of chemical materials. Since that time, MSDS policy updating and training took place. The campus Safety Committee was mandated to continue reviewing policies during the last nine months. This work has re-energized both the Safety Committee and the subcommittee tasked to evaluate disaster preparedness.

The most recent KCC Master Plan update took place in 2016 during which time future service locations were identified. Oregon statute requires full review of each master plan after a certain number of years; the College currently is preparing for the next review cycle. The Klamath County Building Department and Klamath County Planning Department approved the KCC Master Plan in 2016 with notice and comment.

Technological Infrastructure:

The needs for new or renovated technology begins with identification at the program level. IT is involved early in the design phase as a support to instructor-driven classroom design and maintains a regular interface with faculty. The IT Department presents information about new or changing technology at the beginning of each academic year during convocation.

When considering classroom technology decisions, IT interfaces with faculty to identify available technology, participants evaluate new technology options, and if viable, then set up demonstrations and work manufacturers to acquire demonstration equipment at no charge. Faculty, either directly or through instructional leadership, are involved in construction and instructional equipment purchase decisions.

College technology staff offer problem-solving and training to many campus units. The student help desk reports great success with a no-que system for providing service on a walk-in basis. Instructional innovation training is now offered in academic affairs following an initial assessment of potential advantages.

The KCC Technology Plan is reviewed every year prior to the budget cycle. The IT Department develops project lists related to core themes and indicators (excellence and access); then develops budget requests using multiple fund sources—administrative computing from the general fund; and instructional technology from the technology fee fund. Staffing is designed to ensure both administrative and student needs are met: The System and Network Manager is the administrative services project manager, while the Systems and Multimedia Manager is the student project manager.

The Technology Replacement Plan is adopted by the Board and reviewed annually. The adopted replacement cycle is routinely met; occasionally the warranty on servers is extended from five to seven years.

Standard 3 – Planning and Implementation

Standard 3.A Institutional Planning

KCC reflects effective and inclusive planning processes that directly tie to the institution's core themes. Such planning takes place at the institutional, unit, and department level and is clearly understood by campus stakeholders. It is suggested that the College revisit the vocabulary used to describe planning elements; evaluators found it somewhat easy to differentiate between the College Strategic Plan and the individual unit strategic plans (i.e., instruction or student services) but experienced more difficulty in differentiating between unit and department strategic plans.

Work has been done to fully-realize a data-driven system at the College. As previously noted, data elements do not always align with the stated measures, thereby failing to fully determine progress against core themes.

Academic, student services, administrative services, and capital planning carefully guide decisions related to KCC resource allocation. The annual budget process takes approximately two weeks, affording each department and unit an opportunity to present their requests (reductions, changes, or additions) to decision-makers. This process affords a well-aligned result and deepens understanding about budget priorities and outcomes.

Standards 3.B and 4.A and 4.B–Core Theme Planning, Effectiveness, and Improvement

Core Theme planning, effectiveness, and improvement structures and processes are nearing full development at KCC. In response to recommendations from the previous accreditation visit, core themes were reviewed and updated, providing a strong framework for institutional progress and improvement. While work remains related to indicators and measures, evidence from documentation, interviews, and observations attest to a stable planning, effectiveness, and improvement system.

Core Theme 1: Provide Accessible Education and Services

This core theme contains two objectives with three indicators for the first objective and two indicators for the second objective. While some work remains with respect to refinement of the indicators and establishment of more concrete benchmarks, the College demonstrates engagement in effective planning that guides program and service selection. Based on interviews, exhibits, and the self-study report, evidence exists that planning is informed by data.

Core Theme 1 Planning

The College provides clear and well-documented evidence that good overall long-term Core Theme 1 planning is successful. Additionally, interviews conducted with members of the College's CIIC indicates that planning efforts are conducted on a periodic basis with results used to improve progress against core theme accomplishment. There also is evidence, however, that planning is intermittently informed by data, a factor worthy of improvement to ensure strong analysis that informs this core theme.

Core Theme 1 Assessment

The College's program review process and related significant and comprehensive efforts/results to evaluate program- and course-level learning outcomes indicates an adequate level of assessment supports Core Theme 1. There is also evidence that regular, in-depth review of the core theme takes place.

Core Theme 1 Improvement

The College provided evidence that core theme objective indicators are reviewed periodically. It is noted that missing or incomplete data was evident, indicating more work is needed to make and sustain needed progress. Evidence of intermittent use of student learning outcomes assessment for academic planning is present.

Core Theme 1 Summary

Overall, it was found that there is solid evidence that planning does indeed guide program and service selection for Core Theme 1. Good effort and thought has been put forth by all members

of the College community as is evident in the quality of work reviewed. The College is encouraged to continue to review and, as appropriate, refine Core Theme 1 indicators and measures as it moves into the next cycle of accreditation.

Core Theme 2: Provide Quality Education and Services

The core theme of Quality Education and Service is supported through a focus on ensuring faculty and staff are qualified, regardless of location or status. Faculty and staff satisfaction is measured through a College Climate survey and through periodic completion of a salary study with comparable institutions. Over the past five years the College has also implemented several initiatives designed to support improvement of faculty and staff qualifications. For example, an improved 360-degree evaluation process is in place for all employee groups. A process is in place to propose merit-based advancements, and an interest-based approach is being used in collective bargaining, all with the intent of supporting quality academic and support service experiences for students.

Objectives to ensure quality instruction and high-quality support services are identified to further support this core theme. Students are asked to demonstrate proficiency in achievement of student learning outcomes through a question on the end-of-term course evaluations (indirect measure). Within the past few years a system for course, program, and institutional learning outcomes assessment has been put in place, and this work seems to be stable in supporting systematic assessment. The quality of student support services is measured through student satisfaction; the College uses SENSE and CCSSE student responses regarding academic supports and advising. The core theme for Quality Education and Service contains three objectives and four indicators. There is a clear, logical flow from the core theme to objectives to indicators (measures).

Core Theme 2 Planning

In the past several years, the College has promoted an increased emphasis on planning activities, with the objective to support Strategic Plan Initiatives and tie initiatives to core themes. The increasing use of data is also evident, although the self-study report acknowledges that an aggregate of cross-departmental results or college wide progress (p. 91) has been difficult due to the uniqueness of departmental approaches. This is expected to change as the College moves forward with the new Strategic Plan 2.0, and as there is more standardization in departmental measures tied to mission fulfillment reports. There is evidence of widespread campus planning efforts that are tied to the College's Strategic Initiatives and core themes. The exhibit room contained examples of such departmental planning. The College's campus budget process is also tied to core themes. The College is increasingly using data to support planning efforts. One example is the annual data summit in which all College employees are encouraged to participate. The data summits have served to inform the planning processes related to the core themes.

Core Theme 2 Assessment

Measures used to assess faculty and staff qualifications include percentage of faculty who meet and/or exceed the minimum position requirements, the ratio of full- to part-time faculty, employee satisfaction measured through a College Climate survey, and salaries within range of

comparable colleges. Additional study should take place to ensure the final measure is truly an indicator of qualification.

The objective to measure proficiency in student learning outcomes is assessed through the percentage of student that complete term course evaluations, and the percent of courses assessing course and program learning outcomes, indicators worthy of review to determine whether the assessment truly informs a determination of student learning outcome proficiency. Finally, an objective designed to ensure high quality support services is assessed through questions on the Sense and CCSSE surveys, although only two areas of the CCSSE – "support for learners" and "academic advising" are listed as benchmarks. The report states these measures are intended to inform and measure effectiveness of data summits, advising trainings and staff development.

Core Theme 2 Improvement

From the evidence presented and interviews it was determined that the College engages in ongoing collection and analysis of assessment data, evaluation of instructional programs, and documents student learning in courses, programs, and at the institutional outcome level (general education outcomes). Some of these systems are highly developed. The program viability analysis completed annually for CTE programs, and the five-year program reviews, are examples.

Core Theme 2 Summary

There is some lack of clarity about the connection between the measures and benchmarks selected for each Core Theme 2 indicator. In some instances, the measure fails to relate well. As an example, Objective 2.1 is: "Ensure that faculty and staff are qualified", and the Indicator, 2.1.1 states, "All faculty and staff regardless of location or status meet and/or exceed minimum requirements." However, one of the measures, 2.1.1B, is the ratio of full-time to part-time faculty. In this case, the relationship of the full-time, part-time ratio to faculty qualifications is not clear.

Concern: Review and refinement of measures and indicators should be undertaken to ensure true alignment with and information about Core Theme 2 achievement.

Core Theme 3: Meet Diverse Needs of Students, Business, and Community

Core Theme 3 contains three objectives and six indicators. Alignment is strong from core theme to objective to indicators. There is less clarity about the connection between the measures and benchmarks chosen for each indicator.

Core Theme 3 Planning

There is clear alignment between the part of the College's mission statement that references serving the community and Core Theme 3. Evidence gathered from reviewing reports and attending meetings indicates there is a cross-departmental committee, the Continuous Improvement and Innovation Committee (CIIC), charged with oversight for core theme

planning. This group was instrumental in developing the core themes, objectives and indicators. In addition, there is evidence to show that Core Theme planning is informed by data collection and analysis, including the annual Data Summit, student satisfaction as measured by CCSSE, a campus climate survey, annual program viability reports, and regular program review. Institutional planning is also directly tied to core themes as evidenced by the Strategic Plan, Department Action Plans, and the annual budget planning process.

<u>Core Theme 3 Assessment</u>

Based on a review of reports, exhibits and interviews it was found that the College engages in regular collection of and analysis of data to inform Core Theme 3. These data include campus climate surveys, CCSSE results, Program Viability reports and Program Review reports. However, it appears that there is not a clear rationale for the measures identified for each indicator. Several of the measures appear to have been selected because they were data already being collected by the unit and do not necessarily reflect progress made on achieving the indicator. For example, an indicator stating the College ensures its financial aid systems do not unintentionally place barriers in front of students has a measure of reducing the default rate. While reduction of the loan default rate is an essential task for the College, is not evident how reduction of the loan default rate impacts reduction of barriers for students.

<u>Core Theme 3 Improvement</u>

Evidence suggests that results of core theme assessments is intermittently used for improvement. For example, Program Viability data is used to develop an action plan for programs with poor performance or to make the decision to suspend an academic program, and labor market data is used to determine where there is industry demand for new workforce programs. These data are regularly made available to constituents via SharePoint. However, it is difficult to measure improvement for several core theme indicators given the apparent lack of congruency between the indicator and the chosen measure. For example, it is not clear how the measure of campus climate regarding diversity and sensitivity is designed to impact the indicator measuring how the college responds to community culture.

<u>Core Theme 3 Summary</u>

The three objectives and six indicators in Core Theme 3 are well defined and there is evidence to show that planning is informed by data, that regular collection and analysis of data is occurring, and that results of assessments is used for improvement.

Core Theme 4: Support Student Success in Workforce Training, Academic Transfer, Foundational Skills, and Community Education

Core Theme 4, Support Student Success in Workforce Training, Academic Transfer, Foundational Skills, and Community Education (Student Success), is focused on providing the academic and support services that students need to complete degree programs, certificates, and industry certifications to obtain living wage jobs. The Student Success core theme includes three objectives, six indicators and eight measures.

Core Theme 4 Planning

There is clear alignment from the College's mission to the Student Success Core Theme. However, the review noted concerns that there is less clarity between the objectives, indicators and measures. For example, while the College has declared that job placement and wage attainment have been "especially targeted" in the Student Success Core Theme, there are not any indicators or measures presented in the Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability (MF&S) Report for either of these elements. Instead, data that is being utilized to assess job placement and wage attainment is "students make use of career services on campus". While these data are obtainable for the College from WorkSource Oregon, they do not accurately quantify job placement or wage attainment and therefore do not allow evaluation of College efforts in this area. Additionally, indicator 4.2.1 says, "Students progress from developmental to collegiate-level coursework." While 4.2.1A reports on enrollments and pass rates, these do not assess successful transitions to college-level work (for instance developmental math to college-level math). The second measure, 4.2.1B, does capture successful transition to college-level coursework by looking at the percent of students who took developmental education that graduated; however, there is no benchmark set for this measure.

Core Theme 4 Assessment

Based on the MF&S Report, the exhibits, and the meetings that were held with faculty, staff and administration, the Evaluation Committee saw strong evidence that supports the College's commitment to student success. This is exemplified through initiatives such as mandatory orientation and advising, first-year experience courses, an early-alert system, accelerated learning opportunities, and curriculum maps. The Evaluation Committee compliments the College on its K-12 partnerships and the use of multiple-measures for placement that have resulted in fewer credits being required for students to complete developmental education. The Evaluation Committee compliments Career Technical and Continuing Education on their ability to identity additional opportunities to develop contextualized pathways for students that enable them to more quickly gain the skills that they need to obtain jobs.

When reviewing the indicators and measures, the Evaluation Committee noted and is concerned that there is a large amount of dependency on external data sources. For example, the data for the first three measures come from IPEDS reports; the fourth measure comes from State industry certification reports; the fifth comes from Oregon WorkSource.

As a specific example, the first two of these measures are aligned with retention and completion rates. The College has identified increasing these rates as a priority. The reports that are used for these measures are from IPEDS, which tracks the first-time, full-time, degree-seeking fall cohort (FTFTDS). These data allow the Institution to compare themselves with other colleges in their region or colleges of similar size, etc. However, when asked if the College also has and uses institutionally-developed longitudinal cohort analysis to evaluate its retention and graduation rates at the institutional and program levels for its degree-seeking students, the response from multiple groups was that these types of reports are not currently being produced but would be highly valuable to a programs' ability to plan and evaluate effectiveness.

To note, the IPEDS FTFTDS cohort does not include part time students, students that start in quarters other than fall, or that have previously earned college credits (excluding dual enrollments). The College was unsure what percentage of their students are represented in the IPEDS FTFTDS cohort in comparison to the total degree seeking population that they serve.

Core Theme 4 Improvement

During the faculty meeting, the majority of those present reported that they have and use rubrics for the evaluation of student work. Moreover, they reported and provided examples of using this evidence for curricular and program improvement. The Evaluation Committee compliments the faculty for the active use of direct student learning outcomes for the improvement of their courses and programs. While the evidence is clear that this practice is occurring, and the data are being used for improvement, there currently are no indicators or measures that utilize these data.

The IPEDS FTFTDS retention and completion rates have increased. However, not knowing what percent of the College's degree-seeking population this increase represents or the College's institutional and program-level degree-seeking retention and completion rates, it is difficult to ascertain if, or to what extent, improvement has occurred. Most of the Student Success Core Theme measures on the College's Mission Fulfillment 2017 Report Scorecard show as not being met. However, as there is not any documentation explaining how measures aggregate up to determine if core themes thresholds have been met, and how core themes aggregate up to mission fulfillment, the report is somewhat ambiguous. Many of the measures have a stated target of simple increase. While the Scorecard provides some information, the Evaluation Committee is concerned that it does not concretely communicate how mission fulfillment is determined.

Core Theme 4 Summary

The self-study report, exhibits, and meetings provided clear evidence that the College is committed to student success. While there is alignment between the mission and the Student Success Core Theme and related objectives, there is some misalignment between the objectives, indicators and measures. Additionally, there is not clear documentation to indicate core theme or mission fulfillment. These issues have limited the College's ability to plan, assess and improve. Due to these limitations, the College is rated as emerging on the NWCCU rubric for Standards 3.B, 4.A and 4.B.

To move to highly developed structures, the Evaluation Committee suggests that the College consider the development of institutionally created data sets and measures, including utilizing direct student learning outcomes to demonstrate student success. To increase understanding in terminology, the Evaluation Committee also suggests the need to establish vocabulary that is consistent with the NWCCU terminology.

Core Theme 4 Compliments

1. The Evaluation Committee compliments the College on its K-12 partnerships and the use of multiple-measures for placement that resulted in fewer credits being required for students to complete developmental education.

2. The Evaluation Committee compliments Career Technical and Continuing Education on their ability to identity additional opportunities to develop contextualized pathways for students that enable them to more quickly gain the skills that they need to obtain jobs.

3. The Evaluation Committee compliments the faculty for the active use of direct student learning outcomes for the improvement of their courses and programs.

Core Theme 4 Concerns

1. There is clear alignment from the College's mission to the core themes. However, the Evaluation Committee is concerned that there is less clarity between the objectives, indicators and measures. (Standard 1.B.1, 4.A.1, 4.A.6, 4.B.1, 5.A.1, and 5.B.1)

2. When reviewing the indicators and measures, the Evaluation Committee noted and is concerned that there is a large amount of dependency on external data sources. Without comparable institutional measures or a clear understanding by the College of what percentage of their students are reflected in the external data, there is question regarding the meaningfulness of the measures (Standard 1.B.1, 4.A.1, 4.A.6, 4.B.1, 5.A.1, and 5.B.1)

3. While the Scorecard provides some information, the Evaluation Committee is concerned that it does not concretely communicate how mission fulfillment is determined. (Standard 1.A.2, 1.B.2, and 5.A.2)

Standard Five – Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation, and Sustainability

Standard 5.A Mission Fulfillment

KCC is an institution that actively engages in systematic and periodic assessment of accomplishments to guide performance improvement, resource allocation, and future direction. These activities work together to ensure the institution realizes mission fulfillment and sustainability into the future. Ample evidence details focused efforts to develop a comprehensive mission fulfillment, adaptation, and sustainability system in keeping with NWCCU expectations.

All levels of the College demonstrate engagement in planning that aligns with adopted Core Themes. Based on NWCCU guidance from the previous accreditation cycle, these Core Themes are now clear and assessible while also responding to student, College, and regional needs. Less fully-developed are data elements that directly align with adopted measures. A potential over-reliance on readily available data, without a determination about how such data truly informs determinations of progress or areas worthy of improvement, fails to serve the institution well. Systems are in place to fully communicate the successful results of assessment work to the

College community and public. What is needed is a review of measures and indicators to further refine their usefulness and effectiveness.

Standard 5.B Adaptation and Sustainability

The region served by KCC presents many challenges for the College. Statistics show high levels of unemployment; many families exist on low incomes or social service support; high numbers of KCC students are PELL eligible, indicating limited financial means; and opportunities for viable employment are diminished as long-standing occupations prove lacking in viability. Based on a review of documents, individual and group conversations, and available data, KCC has great potential for success despite these challenges. Programming at the College is viable and relevant. Staff, faculty, and administrators are remarkably committed to student success. The College engages in effective partnerships and collaborations that leverage resources in highly effective ways. And, innovation (e.g., the current capital construction project), is a strong College attribute.

The College actively engages in planning to anticipate future opportunities and challenges. Resources are carefully managed to maintain institutional viability. Planning efforts are both strong and widely-adopted by employees of the institution. There is ample evidence that the results of assessment, both with respect to assessment of student learning and of organizational performance, is effective. While both the College and evaluators agree that Core Theme measures and indicators need review, significant systems are in place to ensure adaptation and sustainability of College operations continues.

Summary

KCC demonstrates a commitment to the accreditation process and existing standards. Response to previous recommendations is appropriate and shows improvement in meeting expectations. Institutional practices, policies, planning, assessment, and improvement efforts reflect a thoughtful and effective demonstration of full engagement in exhibiting mission fulfillment and sustainability into the future. While there are areas recommended for improvement, noteworthy efforts to date attest to the ability of KCC to more fully realize expectations of NWCCU.

Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

1. The Evaluation Committee commends the College for producing a well-organized, comprehensive, accurate, and highly useful Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability Report.

2. College faculty are commended for the development and use of highly effective student learning assessment practices at the course, program, and institutional level.

3. The Evaluation Committee commends the College for its comprehensive, inclusive, and transparent process of resource allocation that closely links budgeting to strategic planning efforts on both program and institutional levels.

4. The Evaluation Committee commends the College for the use of facility and technology planning efforts that engage a wide range of stakeholders, maximize the use of available resources, and result in enhanced teaching, learning, and work environments.

5. The Evaluation Committee commends the College for the adoption and use of meaningful partnerships that increase educational opportunities for students from throughout the region.

6. The College is commended for engagement in numerous efforts that result in improved student access, retention, and progression.

7. The College is commended for establishing a safe, positive, and supportive campus environment that promotes teamwork and enhances opportunities to support student success.

Recommendations

1. The Evaluation Committee recommends that the College engage the LRC in reviewing and updating essential policies (Circulation; Library Access; Selection Guidelines and Criteria; and Library Instruction) to reflect current practices and procedures accurately. It is further recommended that the College establish a calendar for regular review of such policies. (Standard 2.A.13)

2. The Evaluation Committee recommends that the College more clearly define, ensure alignment with established measures and objectives, and use the results of Core Theme assessment to determine whether mission fulfillment is accomplished. (Standard 1.A.2, 1.B.2, and 5.A.2)

3. The Evaluation Committee recommends that the College improve the identification, alignment, and analysis of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable measures of achievement that form the basis for evaluating Core Theme objectives. (Standard 1.B.1, 4.A.1, 4.A.6, 4.B.1, 5.A.1, and 5.B.1)