Year Seven Peer–Evaluation Report

Portland Community College
Portland, Oregon

April 26-29, 2015

A confidential report of findings prepared for the
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

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INTRODUCTION

Portland Community College (PCC) began in 1961 as the adult education program of Portland Public Schools. Candidacy accreditation status was granted in 1966 and approved in 1970. The College currently offers 75 associate degree programs and 109 certificate programs. In August 2014, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities approved a contractual agreement with the non-regionally accredited service district known as Oregon Coast Community College (OCCC). Portland Community College sponsors OCCC in its pursuit of independent accreditation. Oregon Coast Community College is currently operating under the accreditation status of Portland Community College.

This report will focus on Portland Community College. Some facts will also be included about Oregon Coast Community College, especially about its relationship with Portland Community College. Oregon Coast Community College completed its own Year Seven Self Evaluation in preparation of the Portland Community College review. One member of the evaluation committee conducted an on-site visit at OCCC. Additionally, members of the evaluation committee interviewed members of the PCC faculty and staff regarding the relationship, oversight, and partnership between the two institutions. Documents from OCCC were reviewed and discussed. The review assessed the institution's regular and ongoing contact with Oregon Coast Community College, as well as the institutional readiness dedicated to OCCC's pursuit of independent accreditation, including governance and policies, student services, continuity and assessment of program curricula and outcomes, and library and learning resources.

Since the Evaluation Committee reviewed two individual Year Seven Self-Evaluation Reports, as well as extensive documentation on-line from both institutions, the Committee was able to understand the successful partnership and oversight responsibilities. Clearly, both institutions operate with individual missions, core themes, and geographic realities, but they also operate with an Intergovernmental agreement. OCCC students graduate with a diploma issued by PCC. Financial Aid is awarded through PCC. OCCC curricular decisions must be approved by PCC, but faculty from both institutions communicate changes, concerns, and recommendations. Faculty from OCCC are invited to attend Subject Area Committee (SAC) meetings at PCC.

The Evaluation Committee will clearly make one confidential recommendation to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities on Portland Community College, but the partnership may require some comments about the oversight of OCCC.

The PCC operating budget is approximately $414 million. The College employs 3,075 full and part time faculty, as well as academic professional, classified, and management personnel. Members of the Committee were able to visit four comprehensive campuses located throughout the district: Cascade Campus in North Portland, Rock Creek Campus in Beaverton, Southeast Campus in Southeast Portland, and Sylvania Campus in Southwest Portland. PCC also operates eight centers. Exploration is underway for an additional center in Scappoose, in Columbia County, Oregon.

PCC enrollment is approximately 55,378 credit and 32,801 non-credit students, which is equal to 31, 940 FTE, using the State of Oregon's annualized calculation for FTE.

The economic recession caused a dramatic increase in the enrollment numbers, as well as the number of degrees and certificates that were awarded. During that same period the Oregon funding for all community colleges was decreased. At this time PCC currently enrolls more than 3,000 FTE for which the college receives no state FTE reimbursement.

The College experienced record growth during the recession. Beginning 2012-2013 enrollment began to gradually decline, although the number of certificates and degrees awarded has significantly increased.

In 2010 the College was awarded a Title III grant of nearly $2 million over five years with the goals to increase financial access and business processes for students, improve access to scholarships, demystify the financial aid process, and support PCC Veterans.

ASSESSMENT OF THE SELF-EVALUATION REPORT AND SUPPORT MATERIAL

Portland Community College and Oregon Coast Community College submitted Year Seven Institutional Self-Evaluations, as agreed between the two institutions. The Committee reviewed both documents and support materials. The reports were found to be honest self-appraisals. All support documents were available for the review of the Evaluators. Personnel at both institutions were available and helpful to the Committee to locate, interpret or provide additional data. All materials were timely and accurate. It was especially helpful to the Committee that all documents were available on-line.

It was evident that the PCC oversight has provided OCCC an excellent opportunity to move in the direction of candidacy. Strong resources, including personnel, best practices, financial allocations, and strong leadership indicate a short-term positive relationship between the two institutions.

Portland Community College responded to a Recommendation that was previously requested by the Commission. A previous Committee wrote, "The evaluation committee recommends that the College develop indicators of achievement for all of the College Core Learning Outcomes that are assessable and can be used as a basis for determining that an established target for student performance levels has been achieved and that such achievement contributes to demonstrating mission fulfillment." (Standard 1.B)

The Committee reviewed the measures of student performance used for successful fulfillment of learning outcomes. It was the opinion of the Committee that PCC has successfully addressed and met this recommendation. As the College moves forward in developing faculty and institutional expertise in conducting authentic embedded assessment for CTE certificate programs and CTE degree programs, faculty and administration will coordinate the SACS to ensure common vision and goals.

Both the PCC and the OCCC documents were honest appraisals of improvements, challenges, and major strides. Assessment measures have determined the reallocation of specific resources, but some of the measures are rather new. Measures are in place to determine success and both institutions have the capacity to measure institutional and student success.

The Committee found the PCC Self-Study to reflect the reality of what is happening at the College. Interviews, documents, and observations were consistent with the Self-Study.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

After a review of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) Eligibility Requirements, it appeared to the Committee that Portland Community College and Oregon Coast Community College are operating with full respect and accordance with the Northwest Eligibility Requirements. Both schools accurately present their accreditation status. Oregon Coast Community College clearly delineates its operation under the accreditation of Portland Community College.

MISSION, CORE THEMES AND EXPECTATIONS

The Mission of the institution reads "Portland Community College advances the region's long-term vitality by delivering accessible, quality education to support the academic, professional, and personal development of the diverse students and communities we serve."

The College updated the existing value statements and institutional goals in August 2010 to better align with the updated Mission Statement. A resulting document, "PCC Cornerstone" presented an easy-to-reference one page overview.

The College has identified 20 indicators of achievement and it meets the targeted performance levels on 16 of those indicators. This performance meets the mission fulfillment with one exception.

The College's Core Themes are clearly defined. Each Theme is closely aligned with the College Mission Statement. The Core Themes are:

• Access and Diversity

• Quality Education

• Student Success

• Economic Development and Sustainability

Three of the four Core Themes track verbatim to wording found in the Mission Statement with the exception of economic development and sustainability. This Core Theme corresponds to the College impact on the community stated as "advances the region's long term vitality."

Both college documents and statements made in interviews during the PCC Evaluation visit, support the broad participation in the development and the assessment of the Mission Statement and Core Themes. Board review and approval of the Mission occurred in 2010. Along with the revised Mission, the Board approved the Core Themes in June 2010. Accordingly, the Board is kept informed on the progress of the Core Themes. The College regularly analyzes and reports on a wide range of accountability measures to the Board, the State of Oregon, the Federal Government, and grant funding agencies.

During the visit the College Administration indicated a college-wide review of the current themes. Continuous improvement may result in the adoption of six new themes during the next year. It was evident that with the assistance of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the planning, implementation, assessment, and college improvement process is strong.   Each Core Theme has rationale for each indicator, performance target, and data source. Where appropriate, an acceptable maximum, minimum, or range value is also used for the performance targets.

The Core Themes are clearly defined and each of the Themes is closely aligned with the Mission Statement, followed by the college's interpretation of how the themes manifest themselves. The institutional state funds, student tuition, and local property taxes support the educational mission and goals of Portland Community College.

Four Committee Evaluators focused on a review of each Core Theme. The analysis of those Themes will be covered in a later section of this document.

RESOURCES AND CAPACITY

Governance

The Portland Community College Board of Directors is the governing body of the PCC District pursuant to ORS Chapter 341. The primary duty of the Board is to adopt policies for the general governance of PCC. The Board considers, reviews, and acts upon the recommendation of the College President in matters of policy pertaining to the current and future welfare of the PCC District. It was evident from interviews that the Board members understand the clear delineation of authority. They have knowledge of the budget, performance of the chief executive officer, and agreements made by the College.

A Committee Evaluator also interviewed the Board members from Oregon Coast Community College. Those members were extremely knowledgeable about the institutional operation, Mission Statement, Core Themes, and contractual agreement between Oregon Coast Community College and Portland Community College. They expressed extreme appreciation for the oversight and guidance of Portland Community College, and they are anxious for their President to move forward on a request to NWCCU for candidacy. Their confidence in the strong leadership of the current

president and her team was evident. Their support of moving forward for accreditation and their belief that the institution is prepared for the next step was clear.

Portland Community College leadership is vested in the President's Cabinet. Members of this cabinet are highly qualified. They meet weekly to plan, strategize, and manage affairs of the College. Other college leadership may be involved in weekly meetings as appropriate. Recent retirements, reassignments, and reorganizations have made it possible to streamline some administrative duties. At the time of the Seven Year Evaluation visit, some organizational changes were being considered with full support of the Board. The Committee understands that change occurs in a college at many different times of the year.

The Committee does recommend further development of the Board and further development of the Cabinet, especially in defining roles and the professional boundaries of each in relationship to the CEO.

In a number of Committee Forums held on the Sylvania Campus, members of the faculty, staff, administration and students commented that the current administrative structure is confusing. Members of the Evaluation Committee understood the organizational charts and the delineation of duties. At the same time, they understood the confusion that may exist on all teaching sites by the current structure. The College may want to analyze the best organizational structure for efficiency, clarity, and student success.

College Forums with a number of different groups also indicated a high level of respect across the campus for members of the Administration, Faculty, and Staff. Portland Community College and Oregon Coast Community College appear to have qualified professionals in the right positions. At both institutions, students come first. Students recognize this commitment to their success and they seem to respond in-kind in their support of the institutions.

Policies and Procedures

Portland Community College's Faculty and Academic Professional Agreement (FAPA) policy clearly delineates practices related to teaching, service, scholarship, research and artistic creation in Article 5 – Professional Duties. The FAPA policy document is available to faculty, students and staff on the PCC website and relevant elements are provided to students in syllabi. Policies regarding access to and use of library services and resources are readily available on the PCC library website.

Policy and procedures for transfer-of-credit are clearly stated and available to students on a transfer webpage. Additionally, Oregon Transfer Guides are available on the web and contain detailed transfer information, facilitating efficient mobility of students between Oregon institutions of higher education. Some students mentioned that the website needs to be streamlined and that they needed assistance from advisors to understand the pathways.

Portland Community College provides academic freedom for all faculty. Faculty rights and responsibilities concerning academic freedom are clearly delineated in Article 13 of the FAPA policy. PCC also has many Board policies that serve to support academic freedom through defining expectations for the institution to create an environment conducive to inclusive shared governance. Expectations for those with teaching responsibilities to present scholarship fairly, accurately and objectively are also contained in Article 13 of the FAPA.

Review of the self-study materials, links/web pages, and interviews with staff; demonstrate that policies and procedures, including student rights and responsibilities, are widely available. They are referenced in multiple venues, including MYPCC portal pages for students, faculty and staff. The sites contain content and links to all appropriate information, consistent with catalog and hard copy materials. Regular review of basic skills placement score levels provides reasonable expectations of student success. Access to pre-college and college level course enrollment is consistent with an open door admissions policy.

Well published and readily available policies guide the development of student leadership, academic and social community development at each campus reflecting the unique nature of those campuses and provide for the development of unique community cultures at each campus. The Committee heard a number of discussions on the value of being unique, but included in the "One College" concept.

Human Resources

Labor contracts and handbook procedures for non-represented employees are easily accessed and are referenced on the appropriate employee web portal, web page, and provided upon the hiring of new employees. All points of contact and forms with instructions are available on line for all employee groups.

New employee orientations and employment benefit orientations are required attendance to ensure consistent application and understanding. The Administration tries to ensure that all employees understand conditions of their employment. Human Resource staff are available to assist employees with their personnel questions when online resources may not be sufficient.

Electronic and hard copy records are maintained in secure and restrictive access areas consistent with PCC privacy and confidential policies centrally in one location at the downtown center. In interviews with employees and the review of paper and electronic records, the committee found the Human Resource office maintains both public and internal web sites. The sites contain accurate and current information on employment procedures, with reviewed and consistent qualifications, job descriptions and related information. This is easily navigated for public and the employee use. Evaluation criteria and frequency are well defined. Information is fed back to the supervisors responsible for evaluations regularly so that evaluation time lines are met and consistency is assured. The workload and professional responsibilities of faculty are well defined in the agreement that addresses both FT and PT faculty.

Multiple funding streams and professional development opportunities are available for staff and faculty. Professionals can increase knowledge in their discipline or prepare for professional and/or leadership opportunities. Growth and professional advancement opportunities are designed to provide career growth pathways for staff seeking career progression.

Focused initiatives to address equity and diversity in the hiring practices are well defined including training of screening committee training on cultural competency and hidden bias identification. Faculty and staff are both aware of the initiatives and active in the goal to increase diversity at Portland Community College.

Education Resources

In order to validate the criteria outlined in Standard 2.C., the Evaluation Committee reviewed materials provided in the Self-Study and online, toured facilities on the four PCC campuses, and met with groups of faculty, administrators, staff and students.

Based on the Committee's review of the learning outcomes and course descriptions listed in the PCC catalog, samples of course syllabi, and institutional data, it appears that PCC offers courses of appropriate content and rigor for students intending to transfer to

professional programs and regional four-year universities. PCC fulfills its mission by offering a wide variety of courses including developmental, CTE, academic transfer, and continuing education courses. A list of PCC's certificates and degrees are published in the catalog and college website. Instruction is delivered as face-to-face, distance, and broadcast courses.

 PCC's course, program, and degree learning outcomes are detailed on the college website. The catalog includes a brief description of the six PCC Core Outcomes: Communication, Community and Environmental Responsibility, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Cultural Awareness, Professional Competence, and Self-Reflection. Most of the course syllabi that were reviewed by the NWCCU team included listings of course outcomes.

Credit, certificates and degrees are based on documented student achievement in a manner consistent with generally accepted learning outcomes, norms or equivalencies in higher education. The curriculum at PCC appears to be aligned with courses and programs at other public colleges and universities in Oregon.

The requirements for PCC's degrees and certificates are clearly outlined in the college catalog.   Published course schedules indicate that the required courses are regularly available to students and are properly sequenced. A review of catalog course descriptions, a sample of course syllabi, and the textbooks available at the college bookstore indicates that the courses have appropriate breadth and depth. Degree programs are efficiently designed and appear to be consistent with the other public colleges and universities in Oregon.

Standing committees, composed of faculty and academic staff, review each program every five years, assuring that the curricula and syllabi are current. At PCC, the groups primarily responsible for these tasks are the Subject Area Committees and the Learning Assessment Committees (LAC).   Standard procedures are followed, and all changes are reviewed by the appropriate administrator or committee. All faculty who were interviewed report that they play an active role in the selection of new faculty.   As a result of the agreement between PCC and OCCC, OCCC faculty are welcome to attend all meetings, especially meetings that focus on curricular decisions.

Interviews with faculty assured the NWCCU evaluators that PCC faculty incorporate the resources of the college library into the curriculum. A sample of students also reported that they frequently use the library and have found its resources helpful and easy to access.

Credit for experiential learning: PCC's policy for "Non-Traditional Credit" is described on page 177 of the 2014-2015 college catalog. This section outlines the process for the transfer of Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, College Level Entrance Examination Program, Military Service Credit, and course work at non-regionally accredited institutions and training sites. A maximum of 45 credits may be recorded from non-traditional sources.

Acceptance of transfer credit: PCC's policy for evaluation of transfer credit is described on page 178 of the 2014-2015 college catalog. The standards are aligned with generally accepted practices in higher education.

Undergraduate Programs

The general education components of associate degree programs at PCC are described in policy A107 through a philosophy statement that specifies the knowledge, abilities, and values expected of educated citizens. Courses meeting the expectations of the philosophy statement are approved by the Degree and Certificate Committee for inclusion in the general education/discipline studies list of PCC degrees. In addition to containing 16 quarter hours of general education from clear distribution areas, transfer degrees must also meet the outcomes established by the state for AA and AS Oregon transfer degrees. Programs descriptions and available general education course lists provide evidence that PCC degrees meet the expectation of containing a recognizable core of integrated general education including humanities and fine arts, mathematical and natural sciences and social sciences.

PCC's Curriculum Office has a robust resource website providing guidance for faculty in developing courses that support PCC Core Outcomes including expectations for student learning. Academic program documents, accessible via a link in the college catalog (pg.190), provide evidence of the alignment of PCC Core Outcomes with degree and certificate outcomes. These documents are not easy to find through direct navigation of the college website. The students interviewed by evaluators were not familiar with the PCC Core Outcomes.

PCC certificates contain the general education components of computation, communication and human relations (2-yr 16 credit hours, 1-yr 8 credit hours) either through stand-alone approved general education courses or through embedded related instruction. Certificate programs with related instruction use a template showing how program courses contribute to the three general education areas. This template and related

CCOGs are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee, Degrees and Certificates committee and approved by administration. However, the contribution is measured as the number of hours a student would spend in the course addressing the general education areas. It was not clear to the evaluators that all 21certificates with related instruction have general education components based on identifiable and assessable learning outcomes in relation to the core PCC outcomes.

To meet the requirement of related instruction components taught by qualified faculty, PCC maintains an Instructor Qualifications website with the qualifications for instructors in these programs. However, evaluators found the processes used to determine qualifications vary between departments and it is not universally understood who is responsible to ensure instructors meet the requirements. Upon inspection of the Instructor Qualifications site, the evaluators found the related instruction qualifications for some programs are aligned more to the CTE field and less to the general education components - examples being Medical Assisting and Dental Assisting. In contrast, Landscape Technology and Machine Manufacturing Technology have related instruction qualifications that are clearly in accordance with published guidelines. It is evident that faculty, through their SACs, curriculum bodies and assessment groups have done a significant amount of work integrating course level outcomes, program outcomes and PCC Core Outcomes. Faculty are to be commended on this genuine effort and the level of reflection. The LAC and curriculum groups shared that work remains to be done in the area of general education outcomes and assessment in transfer and CTE programs. They acknowledged the need to reevaluate and reframe an outdated general education philosophy statement and consider assessable general education learning outcomes stated in relation to the institution's mission and program outcomes.

After reviewing Recommendation One (Standard 1.B) the evaluation team has determined that PCC has substantially achieved the requirements of the recommendation through the assessment and curriculum work described above in the standard elements pertaining to Undergraduate Programs.

Through many conversations and upon careful examination of evidence documents, the evaluators find that PCC needs to review the general education related instruction, and the qualifications of the faculty teaching those components for certificate programs and CTE degrees.

Continuing Education and Non-Credit Programs

Credit and non-credit continuing education programs and other special programs are in alignment with Portland Community College's Mission which states: "**Portland Community College advances the region's long-term vitality by delivering accessible, quality education to support the academic, professional, and personal development of the diverse students and communities we serve**."

The evidence demonstrates that PCC offers a robust menu of Community Education (CE) offerings in a variety of locations in the areas of arts, home and garden, language and culture, recreation and wellness, and work and life balance which supports the personal and professional development of citizens, and extends the college's reach in the community. Community Education also offers Continuing Education and License Renewal preparation in a variety of fields (for example, Accounting and Tax Preparation, Electrical, Mediation Training).

The PCC CLIMB (Continuous Learning for Individuals, Management and Business) Center offers professional development for incumbent workers through non-credit professional training, customized training for business and industry, and a small business development center. The CLIMB program offers face to face instruction, as well as growing online opportunities. Both the Community Education and CLIMB programs align well with the core themes of: Access and Diversity, Quality Education, Student Success, Economic Development and Sustainability. Access and Diversity are demonstrated through non-credit community education and CEU courses offered at a variety of times and locations which provide lifelong learning opportunities for citizens across the range of ages (including youth, adult, and "encore" learners). Community business and industry partnerships are supported and increased through the CLIMB programs. An emphasis on Quality Education was documented through a review of courses offering CEUs. The evaluator verified that course outlines included information on specific content, objectives, target audience, and intended outcomes. Further, sample student evaluations were reviewed that documented the feedback provided to instructors. The variety of educational non-credit offerings being provided by PCC demonstrates the College's support for community and personal enrichment, an emphasis on sustainability, and support for economic development through professional development of citizens.

The Community Education and CLIMB program staff and administrators are responsible to ensure academic quality of all aspects of the continuing education and special learning programs and courses offered by PCC. Program coordinators in the CE program are well connected to instructors in order to determine which courses to offer, when to offer new

courses, and improvements to be made. CLIMB program administrators are well connected to business and industry partners to identify corporate or industry training needs, to hire appropriate faculty and maintain current and cutting-edge programming. Faculty are frequently hired directly from industry with the appropriate background and expertise to plan and teach the courses. All courses that award Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are reviewed for approval by the Curriculum Support Office. Evaluation of PCC continuing education and special learning activities is completed on a regular basis, reviewed, and shared with faculty/instructors.

The granting of credit or CEUs for continuing education courses and special learning activities appears to the evaluators to be guided by generally accepted norms, based on institutional mission and policy, is consistent across the institution, is appropriate to the objectives of the course, and determined by student achievement of identified learning outcomes. Course outlines document the hours, course description, outcomes, format for instruction, and intended audience for instruction. Continuing education courses that offer CEUs go through the PCC Curriculum Office for review before a course is offered.

Community Education course outcomes were not required before 2011, but are now being added as these courses are revised. The number of CEUs awarded is determined by the number of hours necessary to teach the approved content.

Appropriate records are maintained of all non-credit instruction at Portland Community College, including the number and type of courses offered, and enrollment data. Interviews of program staff indicated this information is regularly used for planning purposes and to make decisions regarding future offerings. A review of course outlines documented the nature of learning provided in each course, along with the course descriptions and outcomes.

Student Support Services

Through the review of Self-Study materials and embedded links, well attended campus forums for employees and students, as well as individual interviews, the Committee agreed that the programs and services available for students supporting learning and engagement are well developed and intentional, ranging from the variety of support and focused populations that are tailored to each campus student culture to the design of casual and intentional areas for student studying and collaborative engagement. The range of support programs range from multi-cultural services, Veterans services, women centers, tutoring services, TRIO, LBGTQ, international, and academic-focused clubs.

Students voted to increase the activity fee in order to support and expand more of these programs on all the campuses as each campus addresses their student needs.   This vote seems to indicate both student understanding and support of the College budget limitations.

Campus safety and policies and reporting requirements are current and well published. Comprehensive security plans, including technology and staffing are in place and are regularly "tested" for operation at all campus sites. Available security staff, electronic notification and auditory notification systems and emergency drills provide a redundant communications system for students and staff. Federal and state reporting of crime and incidents are well published, augmented by an established behavioral intervention team (BIT), Title IX coordinators, and access to local law enforcement dispatch notices and incident databases. Ongoing work by a faculty, student services, and student committee continues to revise the policies to incorporate recent changes in Title IX, Violence Against Women Act (VAMA) and the Clery Act. Focused effort is on maintaining a safe and secure environment.

A comprehensive outreach and orientation plan serves multiple groups, including secondary school students, service area community residents, and state and local business. The integration of marketing materials, outreach coordination, college diversity and equity initiatives is evident. Orientation for all new students is an element of a multiple level program (Panther Tracks) that addresses student information-needs from pre-enrollment to financial literacy planning.

In the event that students enrolled in a program that is deleted, the students have an opportunity to complete their program in a timely manner with minimum disruption, consistent with Oregon CCWD (Oregon Department of Community College and Workforce Development) guidelines. All other college information regarding Core Themes, the academic calendar, or program requirements is published in multiple formats and widely available. Records and student information is centrally maintained in secure and restricted facilities with well published policies regarding access, release of information, directory information and FERPA compliance.

Comprehensive financial aid programs, including Title IV, scholarships, and Veterans benefits are administered and available across all campuses as well as at Oregon Coast Community College by MOU. The College provides technical assistance, advising and coordination at each campus. Comprehensive financial aid planning and services are part of the ongoing "Panther Tracks" orientation series. The series runs from initial application, financial planning and through exit interviewing. Through LEAN analysis,

process re-engineering, technology infusion and near paperless processing a significant reduction in loan default rates is realized as well as reducing processing time by 40%. Repayment plans and other services are core to the financial literacy component of "Panther Tracks" to educate and empower students to manage their finances during and after college. Financial aid staff, enrollment services and student accounts staff have been cross- trained to perform all functions in the service areas, including a bank of self-help service stations to assist with student navigating their finances. Recent design and construction has developed a welcoming and easily navigated environment that has an information counter/kiosk as the starting point for student navigation of the above services. Self-help information service kiosks, orientation centers, special population and focused support services, testing and advising and career services are planned for all campuses.

Professional advising staff assist student with academic navigation, financial aid basics, and related matters.   PCC degree, certificate and transfer plans are published, but staff continue to receive additional training to ensure the accuracy of the information given to students. An Advising Council made up of faculty, students and student services professionals, is exploring new advising models to better serve each campus population. Unique populations are additionally served through programs such as TRIO, Woman's programs, Multicultural Services, Career Center, Veterans Services.

Through unique student identification assignment and faculty verification of student identity, access and participation are secured to protect privacy and disclosure.

Portland Community College co-curricular programs are vibrant and well developed, tailored to each campus interest and campus culture. Activities are designed and identified to support several Core Themes and College Mission.   Participation in intercollegiate athletics is open to both men and women. Title IX and NWAACC policies and regulations are followed.

Student leadership and student programs, including ASPCC (Associated Students of Portland Community College), are viewed by students as a critical element of their experience. These activities provide safe and inviting opportunities to engage personally in the college and to contribute to the leadership and vibrancy of their campuses. Several students gave examples of how their entry and "finding their place at PCC" was easier and more comfortable when they participated in these programs.

There are dining and auxiliary services on all four campuses in support of the College Mission and student learning. These services operate on a self-support or contracted model with regular solicitation of student and campus input.

Library and Information Resources

Portland Community College's library system appears appropriate and sufficient. PCC is a member of the Orbis-Cascade alliance, which is recognized nationally and internationally as an innovative and forward-looking library cooperative. PCC students, faculty and staff have access to remarkable library resources and services through the alliance, and PCC has provided leadership, effort and a high degree of collaboration during the Alliance's recent migration to a new platform. In this context, the library systems acquisitions budget, staffing and organization can be leveraged to create collections, local services and assessment activities that support teaching and learning in meaningful ways. Students, faculty and staff have ready-access to outstanding and relevant library resources.

PCC librarians are recognized by their faculty peers for their efforts in planning how library and information resources are delivered. The librarians are highly focused on assessing how library instruction strengthens student learning outcomes. The director describes a "Communities of Practice" (COP) effort among the librarians which allows them to explore and innovate on the most pressing issues facing the library system. The librarians are highly engaged in the college governance structure, as is the director, and thus receive feedback from affected users. In addition, the Library Advisory Council provides direct feedback on a quarterly basis from faculty and students regarding their priorities for library services.

The library's definition of instruction includes the following: interactions that happen at the "Research Helpdesk," the library reference desk; "one-shot" instructional sessions provided to discipline-area classes; and the one-credit library skills class. This instruction is supported by the enthusiastic and sophisticated approach to learning by the librarians, and the explicit connection they make between library instruction and the college learning outcomes.

Faculty provide enthusiastic endorsement of the library efforts to support teaching, learning and assessment. Discipline area faculty describe "great librarians" who are "very involved" in their classes. "If you invite them they will come," said one faculty member who teaches on all four campuses. The librarians are described as "highly

skilled" at supporting online courses. This effort is evaluated through the library SAC and is supported by both local analytics and information derived from the Orbis-Cascade consortium.

The above opinions and comments are made because of the exemplary effort and professionally skilled support staff.   PCC has twelve librarians, a director, and several additional staff members. While the director describes the number of librarians as sufficient, that may be the result of the quality of effort of the total library staff. Library evaluation is no longer about the size of the physical collection, the ratio of square feet to students or the library's acquisitions budget. It is, instead, about a highly evolved approach to a standard which expects library resources to support teaching and learning "wherever offered, however delivered," and PCC libraries lead the effort to meet that standard.

The Committee commends the library for the high quality of the resources, facilities, instruction and services it provides, and for the leadership and collaboration.

Financial Resources

The institution demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow and reserves to support its programs and services. 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. Resource planning and development include realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and responsible projections of grants, donations, and other non-tuition revenue sources.

The institution clearly defines and follows its policies, guidelines, and processes for financial planning and budget development that include appropriate opportunities for participation by its constituencies. The institution ensures timely and accurate financial information through its use of an appropriate accounting system that follows generally accepted accounting principles and through its reliance on an effective system of internal controls.

For each year of operation, the institution undergoes an external financial audit, in a reasonable timeframe, by professionally qualified personnel in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Results from the audit, including findings and management

letter recommendations, are considered in a timely, appropriate, and comprehensive manner by the administration and the governing board.

The Evaluator found evidence to support the College has sufficient resources to support programs and services. PCC anticipated a decline in enrollments in the budget development process, which included an advisory committee and an opportunity for campus constituents to provide input. PCC has a defined process that allows input from constituents, however the committee heard from a number of faculty and staff that they felt isolated from the budget process. Audited financial statements were provided, and are produced by an accounting system that complies with GASB, State of Oregon, and institutional principles, regulations and policies.

Capital budgets reflect the institution's Mission and Core Theme objectives and relate to its plans for physical facilities and acquisition of equipment. Long-range capital plans support the institution's mission and goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership, equipment, furnishing, and operation of new or renovated facilities. Debt for capital outlay purposes is periodically reviewed, carefully controlled, and justified, so as not to create an unreasonable drain on resources available for educational purposes.

The capital projects and equipment funded by the recent bond issue have significantly improved the institution's physical infrastructure, enhancing the educational environment. PCC has established policies and a system to review, monitor, and control bond obligations, and a dedicated office to oversee the process. Current operating budgets have been adapted to include the maintenance and operations of new facilities.

The institution defines the financial relationship between its general operations and its auxiliary enterprises, including any use of general operations funds to support auxiliary enterprises or the use of funds from auxiliary services to support general operations. The Committee found evidence to support institutional compliance with Standard 2.F 6. Policies and practices define the relationship between the auxiliary enterprises and general obligation. However, the Committee is concerned that these policies have not been reviewed and updated since 1998. This is a concern.

All institutional fundraising activities are conducted in a professional and ethical manner and comply with governmental requirements. If the institution has a relationship with a fundraising organization that bears its name and whose major purpose is to raise funds to support its mission, the institution has a written agreement that clearly defines its relationship with that organization. The College presented evidence of an agreement. The current agreement is in the process of review to address recent adjustments to

Foundation support planned by the organizations to further assist in supporting the mission and strategic objectives of PCC. The Committee is impressed by the efforts and plans being developed to increase support of PCC through external funding.

Physical and Technological Infrastructure

Physical Infrastructure

Consistent with its Mission, Core Themes, and characteristics, the institution creates and maintains physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure, and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure healthful learning and working environments that support the institution's mission, programs, and services.

Equipment is sufficient in quantity and quality and managed appropriately to support institutional functions and fulfillment of the institution's Mission, accomplishment of Core Theme objectives, and achievement of goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services. The Evaluation Committee reviewed evidence to support Standards 2.G.1 and 2.G.4. Utilizing resources generated from the 2008 bond issue, PCC has constructed and enhanced facilities that improved and increased its capability to deliver mission driven programs and services. In addition, the construction and renovation projects allowed PCC to address ADA issues and adopt modern sustainability concepts and practices. The equipment at PCC is sufficient to meet mission, core theme and program requirements, and is consistently included in the operating budget process.

The institution adopts, publishes, reviews regularly, and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the safe use, storage, and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials. The institution adheres to Standard 2.G.2, with policies and procedures and training provided by the Public Safety department. However, the Committee is concerned that the published procedures for spill prevention, controls and countermeasures for the new Southeast campus is not yet published on the College intranet for access by faculty and staff.

The institution develops, implements, and reviews regularly a master plan for its physical development that is consistent with its Mission, Core Themes, and long-range educational and financial plans. PCC has performed remarkably in developing and renovating the campus and center facilities, however a current, comprehensive facilities master plan was not provided. The facilities department is proactive, responsive and accountable, and has many of the elements required of a comprehensive facilities master

plan. However administration recognizes that the final step of compilation, resulting in a facilities master plan is needed. The evaluation committee recommends that PCC address standard 2.G.3 and develop a facilities master plan consistent with its Mission, Core Themes, and long-range educational and financial plans.

Technological Infrastructure

Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution has appropriate and adequate technology systems and infrastructure to support its management and operational functions, academic programs, and support services, wherever offered and however delivered.

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

The College presented evidence to support Standards 2.G.5 and 2.G.6.   PCC's technology infrastructure provides the platform and services necessary to support its management and operational functions, academic programs, and support services. Interviews with faculty and staff indicate general satisfaction with instruction and support, and the web design faculty expressed appreciation for current platform provided for their instructional needs, stating that it allowed "cutting edge" curriculum development.   However, during the evaluation process the Committee became aware that many of the faculty, staff, and students felt that several critical elements, such as the degree audit program, were awkward and unreliable. The College is in the process of evaluating the overall technological infrastructure, including the use of external consultants to help determine institutional direction and needs.

Technological infrastructure planning provides opportunities for input from its technology support staff and constituencies who rely on technology for institutional operations, programs, and services. The institution develops, implements, and reviews regularly a technology update and replacement plan to ensure its technological infrastructure is adequate to support its operations, programs, and services.

While providing adequate technological services, the College lacks a comprehensive technological infrastructure plan and a process to develop input from technology support staff and their constituencies. While the Committee was provided evidence that the College is compiling information to support long-term technological planning, the

administration recognizes the need to develop a technology update and replacement plan. The Evaluation Committee recommends the institution develop a process to produce a comprehensive technology update and replacement plan that provides opportunity for input from staff and campus constituencies.

CORE THEME PLANNING, IMPLEMENTATION, EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPROVEMENT

Core Theme One--Access and Diversity

Introduction

The Access and Diversity core theme is an essential element of the PCC mission statement. PCC is mandated by the state of Oregon and different governing bodies to report on several sets of performance indicators. These and institution specific performance indicators provide a wealth of indicators of access and diversity from which to measure achievement of the Access and Diversity Objective: Competitively priced educational offerings are available in an environment enriched by student, faculty and staff diversity.

The indicators of achievement for this core theme objective are meaningful, assessable and verifiable and the rationale provided clearly establishes the basis for these performance metrics. The targets for racial distributions of staff and faculty are currently "moving targets" but will be reconsidered during the upcoming planning cycle.

In addition to quantitative measures of access and diversity, students, faculty and staff shared qualitative evidence that access and diversity are pervasive cultural values across PCC. The evaluation team was generally impressed that each of the college campuses, with a unique cultural identity, provides a welcoming, supportive environment for diverse learners.

Planning

The self-study and site visit provided the evaluators many examples of how PCC plans, and directs resources and capacity to support the access and diversity core theme. Examples include:

- Faculty discuss and implement plans to advance student access and diversity through curriculum and pedagogy changes in discipline SACs. Specific exemplars include social justice training for math faculty and subsequent changes to developmental education math curriculum to give diverse students access to math competency through alternative course pathways.

- Diversity plans and initiatives cross silos and evaluators found joint projects between academic and student services and the Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI).

- Resources have been directed to the Office of Equity and Inclusion to provide inclusivity training for employees and hiring committees. The OEI also manages an exemplary Faculty Diversity Mentorship Program aimed at increasing the diversity of the adjunct instructor pool. Human Resources has also invested in diversity training for college employees.

- The coordinating and planning work of campus Diversity Councils is evident through campus programming events and exhibits. Vibrant multicultural resource centers have been established on four campuses.

- Student leaders direct fees and collective efforts to improve support services for the diverse student body at all campuses.

- Distance Education provides universal access guidance for faculty in the selection and development of instructional materials.

Requests for resources to advance the access and diversity core theme are made through various avenues and may organically arise. Employees interviewed by evaluators were not aware of formal processes to request funding and resources to do projects related to the core theme. However, administrators report that they use a holistic approach to consider and prioritize requests that would support campus- level and district-level diversity initiatives.

Assessment

In the discussion of Standard 3.B Core Theme Planning, PCC states "The planning for core theme programs and services is primarily driven by the collective and integrated findings from Academic and Student Services program reviews and annual learning assessments." The evaluation team did find strong evidence that student services

program reviews and assessments are informing planning and improvements relative to access and diversity. The Enrollment Services and Student Records Program Review and Strategic Plan 2014 is an excellent example of an assessment/improvement loop that has had a measurable impact on student access. The FLAIR program that stemmed from this program review resulted in significant changes to the financial aid program and student intake processes.

Evaluators were not able to find widespread evidence of direct linkages between five-year academic program reviews and annual learning outcomes assessment with plans to advance the access and diversity core theme. Faculty reported being actively engaged in making their curriculum and pedagogy appropriate and accessible to diverse learners, but it was evident that many did not see how their assessment practices informed institutional planning.

Improvement

District administrators in collaboration with campus administrators do review the assessment results and program reviews to find emergent themes that inform institutional planning, resource allocation and program improvement decisions. Evaluators saw many examples during site visits of campus-level improvements and plans directed toward improving access to services and programs supporting diverse students.

The three institutional-level access and diversity indicators of achievement are intentionally broad and readily measurable. Faculty and front-line staff shared a perceived gap between their work and the impact it has on the broad diversity and access indicators. However, the Institutional Effectiveness Office does a commendable job of providing functional areas and committees a wealth of fine-grained data that inform operational improvements to advance the access and diversity core theme. For instance, the Workforce Analysis Report informs assessment of the minority employee ratio indicator relative to targeted ratios. Based on gap analyses, initiatives to recruit and retain diverse faculty and staff have been implemented across PCC.

Improvements have been made in increasing the diversity of staff and administrators, but despite concerted efforts, the percent of minority faculty has decreased over the past two years. Some employees shared their views with the evaluation team about why PCC is not able to hire or retain racially diverse faculty, but the team did not observe pervasive patterns to confirm claims of non-inclusive practices.

The evaluation committee compliments PCC on the many initiatives underway that address the access and diversity objective to provide competitively priced educational offerings available in an environment enriched by student, faculty and staff diversity. The committee also recommends that PCC take the next steps to address the disparities of what they want to accomplish under the access and diversity core theme and what the committee learned - to move from a culture of diversity to a culture of inclusivity for all faculty, staff and students.

Core Theme Two– Quality Education

Introduction

The PCC Mission statement clearly specifies the College will provide a quality education, and the evaluation team found throughout the visit that quality education is an essential focus of the College and its efforts at each campus throughout the district. The core theme of Quality Education has been established with three indicators of achievement that include licensure or certification examination pass rates, student grade point average at transfer, and college learning outcomes assessment results.

The target for examination pass rates has PCC pass rates at least as high as current college averages, with the acceptable minimum being no pass rates less than 5% of college average. The target for PCC transfer student performance is equal to or greater than other transfer and native university students, with the acceptable minimum being the collective grade point average of PCC transfers within 5% of other transfer and native student averages.

The PCC Core Outcomes include: Communication, Community and Environmental Responsibility, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Cultural Awareness, Professional Competence, and Self-Reflection. The self-study document reported these student learning outcomes are "intentionally broad" in order to resonate with faculty across the diversity of programs and disciplines offered by the College. For example Critical Thinking and Problem Solving may look different depending upon the discipline in which it is applied or assessed. There are a number of councils, committees, and initiatives in place to address the assessment of student learning outcomes at PCC, the third indicator of achievement in fulfillment of the Quality Education Core Theme. These include:

- Learning Assessment Council (LAC) - The LAC is a faculty body with administrative support that leads the assessment efforts including annual learning assessment reports, and provides support for faculty professional development regarding assessment of student learning. The LAC leadership rotates every two years, and the College supports the Council with a course release for the Chair. The LAC works closely with individual faculty and with Subject Area Committees (SACs).

- Subject Area Committee (SAC) - Subject Area Committees are comprised of full-time and some part-time teaching faculty in each program and discipline. There approximately 120 - 130 SACs. The focus of the SAC is on curriculum, program review, and assessment. The evaluation team found that these committees meet at least twice per year or more often to discuss development or revision of curriculum, to complete assessment of the core learning outcomes, and to complete program reviews (every 5 years). SACs make written recommendations that are reviewed by deans and used in planning.

- Educational Advisory Council (EAC) - The Educational Advisory Council develops and revises policies and standards pertaining to academic and curricular matters, is responsible for recommending the approval of curriculum, certificates, and degrees. The EAC has five standing committees. The Curriculum committee, the Degrees and Certificates committee, and the Academic Policies and Standards committee are three examples.

- Institutional Effectiveness - This department furnishes customized data and program profile information used in assessment of learning outcomes and program reviews, and is available in a support role in some of the above councils and committees.

- Completion Investment Council – A group of staff, faculty and administrators that serves in an advisory capacity to the College administration to improve outcomes in the "prepare" phase of the Panther Path that leads eventually to student completion and thriving.

Planning

As stated in the PCC Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report, the Evaluation Committee found that "The planning for Core Theme programs and services is primarily driven by the collective and integrated findings from Academic and Student Service Program

Reviews and annual learning assessment reports." As validation, the Evaluation Committee learned from a variety of interviews that campus deans use the SAC program review information to identify themes for planning purposes, as do the faculty in each subject area committee. The LAC publishes/shares learning assessment reports on its website to be used by faculty. It was also learned that no specific group is assigned responsibility for each Core Theme; rather responsibility is distributed across the college throughout the administrative structure and through the various committees and councils. This distributed approach may have contributed to a lack of clarity regarding overall connections of Core Theme review to ongoing planning processes.

The Committee found evidence that collections of appropriately defined data are analyzed and used to evaluate core theme objectives. The customized data profiles provided to each SAC by the office of Institutional Effectiveness, and Oregon University System transfer student grade point average data are examples of how data is provided in planning to support the core theme of Quality Education and contributes to the accomplishment of the core theme's objectives.

Assessment

Students in many program areas are required to pass national and/or state external examinations. Examples include Nursing, Radiology, Ophthalmic Medical Technology, EMS/Paramedic, Paralegal, Medical Laboratory Technology, Automotive Service Technology, Dental Hygiene, Dental Assisting, and Aviation Maintenance Technology. Portland Community College student licensure and/or exam average pass rates are consistently above 90% (93% in 2013-14), and therefore this first indicator of achievement of the core theme Quality Education was achieved.

The grade point average of PCC students after transfer is higher than the average for all other transfers or for native university students in the Oregon University System, 3.10 in 2012-13 compared to 3.05 for the Oregon System, therefore the second achievement indicator was met for the Core Theme of Quality Education.

The Committee found a number of student learning assessment efforts in place at Portland Community College that are producing positive results. These efforts are faculty-led and supported by administration. The institution engages in ongoing collection and analysis of meaningful data, both quantitative and/or qualitative as the basis for evaluating the accomplishment of its core theme objectives. (4.A.1)

A deep passion and commitment to assessment was readily apparent as the accreditation team had the opportunity for multiple campus interviews. A key faculty-led effort is spearheaded by the Learning Assessment Council, although other important assessment work is happening throughout the institution including within the Subject Area Committees, through the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and through the curriculum approval bodies. The program review process accomplished through the SACs is robust and completed for each program once during a 5 year period. In addition, learning assessment reports are completed by SACs on an annual basis. Each year, two of the core learning themes are being assessed. The evaluation team found the institution engages in an effective system of evaluation of its academic and CTE programs, to evaluate achievement of clearly identified degree and certificate intended outcomes, and in particular recently reversed the focus on program outcomes for CTE programs to a focus on certificate and degree outcomes. Faculty have a primary role in this evaluation. A variety of qualitative and quantitative data are used in the analysis. (4.A.2)

The institution documents, through an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment of student achievement, that students who complete its educational courses, programs, and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, achieve identified course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Faculty with teaching responsibilities are responsible for evaluating student achievement of clearly identified learning outcomes. (4.A.3)

Improvement

The indicators of achievement for the core theme of Quality Education appear to be meaningful for the institution, and are used in planning and decision-making, although it is less clear how this may influence the resource allocation, budgeting process. Faculty monitor individual program pass rates to determine what, if any, instructional or curricular changes are necessary to improve student success rates. The College provided evidence of such changes in several programs including Medical Laboratory Technology, Dental Hygiene, and Ophthalmic Medical Technology. The evaluation committee reviewed evidence that SACs produce written recommendations for changes through the program review process. These recommendations are reviewed by deans and can be used in planning, and used by the faculty to make program improvements. For example, in the recent Business program review, a recommendation was made to develop a part-time faculty training and mentorship program, and to expand distribution of diversity principles and practices throughout the business curriculum. Both academic and student

services program reviews are regularly completed. The results ofthese program reviews, learning assessment reports, and other similar reports are readily available on the College website.

Core Theme Three--Student Success

Introduction

Student Success was one of the four core themes approved by the PCC board in June 2010 following a review of their mission statement. PCC established five indicators of student success, and the data indicate that the College has essentially met the targets on each.   Based on interviews with faculty, staff, students and the College's Board, the NWCCU evaluators are certain that PCC is heavily invested in the academic and holistic success of their students.

The Evaluators discussed the Core Theme process with faculty and staff. They indicated that the Core Themes were distilled through several phases of strategic planning. PCC's process for planning Core Themes was consistent with the overall institutional comprehensive plan.

PCC has an open-door admission policy and welcomes students from all levels of academic preparation. They provide learning opportunities in basic literacy, college transfer programs, career and technical education, and community education. Their goal is to help students progress from developing basic academic skills to attaining degrees or certificates, or becoming life-long learners.

Following the development of the strategic plan, PCC identified programs and services related to the Student Success Core Theme and reviewed the college's existing data pertinent to student success. Five objectives and related quantitative indicators were selected for the evaluation of this theme. Core theme planning is informed by the collection of appropriately defined data that are analyzed and used to evaluate accomplishment of core theme objectives.)

The five indicators of PCC's student success were:

1) Course completion rates
2) Former developmental student performance in college-level courses
3) Graduation and transfer rates
4) Number of degrees and certificates awarded

5) Employment status of Career and Technical Education (CTE) graduates

PCC set reasonable targets for each indicator, using data from Banner, IPEDS, the Oregon offices of Workforce Development and Department of Labor.   The evaluators reviewed the data summaries provided by PCC, verifying that they essentially met their targets on all of the five indicators.

Assessment

The institution engages in ongoing systematic collection and analysis of meaningful, assessable and verifiable data – quantitative and/or qualitative, as appropriate to its indicators of achievement – as the basis for evaluating the accomplishment of its core theme objectives.

The College Office of Institutional Effectiveness manages the data from several sources, as described extensively in the PCC Self-Study. All administrators and faculty who were interviewed by the evaluators stated that assessment data is easy to access and is widely used by those involved in assessment and planning.

Data is routinely provided to the approximately 130 reports to over 90 Subject Area Committees for their annual reports. These reports are rated by trained faculty, and feedback is given to the Subject Area Committees and academic administrators. In turn, the pertinent information from the annual reports is used in the five-year Program Reviews. The Learning Assessment Council is charged with the analysis of the annual reports and making recommendations for improvement. The Deans of Instruction work with the higher level administrators and the Budget and Planning Advisory Council to reallocate funds, as necessary.

Improvement

Most of the faculty and staff, and many students who spoke with the Committee appeared to be familiar with the College's Core Themes. Evidence was reviewed that indicated Core Themes have been integrated into the daily work at the College
Because PCC generally met its targets for the indicators of student success, no major changes were made to the initial plan. Faculty on key academic committees reported that the student success indicators would be revised during PCC's next accreditation cycle.

PCC's Panther Path is a model that guides the College in the promotion of student success. College staff told the evaluators that the Panther Path is a "top priority." The model consists of five phases: Prepare Engage, Commit, Compete, and Thrive. Between

2012 and 2014, the "Prepare" phase was implemented by the establishment of the Completion Investment Council (CIC).

The CIC established a task force to reform PCC's developmental education program by revising basic reading and writing courses, realigning placement scores, strengthening advising, and expanding faculty professional development. The Math Subject Advisory Council instigated substantial changes in math course content and prerequisites. They participated in the Oregon Metro Connects Consortium to help prepare high school students for college-level math. A series of math study skills videos were also developed.

Some new courses have been designed in response to assessment. For instance, the evaluation team heard from faculty that a new web design capstone course has been developed.

The Completion Investment Council is responsible for ongoing assessment and revision of the Panther Path student success model. The council is now working on the second phase of the model.

Interviews with a sample of students from the Associated Students of Portland Community College (ASPCC) indicated high satisfaction with PCC's commitment to student success. Many students gave testimonials of the ways that PCC had changed their lives for the better. The ASPCC group provides a liaison between the students and the college administration, and PCC seems to be responsive to the particular needs of a diverse student body, including minority and disabled students. Evaluators held several forums with faculty, and it was evident that faculty are strongly invested in the Core Theme of Student Success.

TRIO, Roots, the Women's Resource Center, the Multicultural Center, and the Veterans' Center all provide extra support for students. Evaluators noted the Answer Center and convenient study room in the Library, both of which are conducive to student success. Tutoring services are available to students at several locations.

An exemplary model of promoting the success of disadvantaged students is the Middle College project at the Cascade Campus. Students from a public high school located across the street from the campus have the opportunity to walk to the campus and take college-level courses. According to PCC faculty and the high school principal, the Middle College program has been a phenomenally successful way to engage first-generation minority college students.

In the opinion of the evaluators, PCC is addressing its Student Success Core Theme by fostering a learner-centered environment for its diverse community, offering basic skills courses, and also providing the opportunity for students to enroll in programs which lead

to certificates or degrees. Physical facilities are well-maintained, welcoming and accessible, providing ample places for students to feel comfortable while on campus. During the evaluators' visit to campus, PCC's Library study areas, lobbies of classroom buildings, and the student union building were filled with students who were studying and socializing. Faculty and staff are collegial, well-qualified for their jobs, and committed to student success. The evaluators are confident that the faculty and staff's enthusiasm for student success and their awareness of the importance of assessment will ensure a successful future for PCC. A key to that success will be the use of data to make informed decisions for the betterment of the institution and the Portland community.

Core Theme Four--Economic Development and Sustainability

Introduction

The thematic elements represented in Core Theme Four support the College Mission Statement. The greater Portland area's understanding of the word "vitality," a key term in the College Mission Statement, is commonly perceived in the Pacific Northwest as incorporating a dynamic and diversified economy and a strong emphasis on sustainability in all of its' meanings. This Core Theme is understood across the college as having two distinct elements and it is described and assessed that way in the Core Theme Objectives. This report stresses that bifurcated understanding of this theme. A higher-level reading brings the elements together, however, suggesting that the College can focus on sustainable economic development practices both in its own behaviors and in the programs and services it delivers, and this reading is also addressed in this report.

Economic development is a vital part of the College Mission and there is evidence that the institutional efforts in this area are successful. The college's significant investment in the Southeast campus, transitioning it from a center to a campus and making significant capital investments there, intentionally brings significant economic development resources to a struggling portion of the region. The Small Business Development Center is an effective tool for supporting fledgling businesses in all parts of the district. The college's significant number and quality of professional and technical certificates and the high job placement rates of graduates are clear indicators of the intentionality and success of its efforts to support economic development.

The College also supports sustainable approaches to its business practices. It leads by example, demonstrating both college- and student-driven efforts to support the "triple bottom line," a term heard in multiple interviews which refers to social, environmental

and financial approaches to sustainability. The Committee found remarkable examples of student-led sustainability efforts such as the learning gardens, the Cascade bike rental program and the water bottle filling stations available across the college. The Committee also saw evidence of the College commitment to sustainable practices such as the shuttle service between campuses, a commitment to LEED certifications, and open discussion about how expenditures can be focused in a way that encourages sustainable practices.

When economic development and sustainability come together, the synergy produces an interesting and intriguing set of ideas. This synergy is captured in PCC's Sustainability Council.

Planning

Planning for the economic development portion of this core theme is evident in the college's curriculum development structure, administrative structure and strategic plan. Oregon's traditional focus on community colleges as drivers of economic development is reflected in the fact that the college focuses its offerings on certificates and 2-year degrees in professional, technical and transfer programs. The college's administrative structure reflects the focus on economic development. In the 2014 strategic plan, strategic intention 4-3 states that "PCC promotes economic development in the community by creating partnerships and providing education and training focused on small and emerging business development. PCC's agility becomes an effective force in attracting new business and industries to the region." This statement clearly describes focus on economic development.

Planning for the sustainability portion of this core theme is supported by the singular focus in the 2014 strategic plan which calls upon PCC to "Think Accountable: Achieve Sustainable Excellence in All Operations." This strategic intention clearly articulates PCC's effort to achieve sustainable operations. The effort to satisfy this intention is evident in interviews with staff and faculty, who articulate myriad sophisticated ways in which they pursue this intention; by students, who "tax" themselves intentionally to support this theme; and in the college's structure, which includes a sustainability coordinator. Interviews, data and a clear evolution in practices indicate that the latter position has been highly effective, and the Committee encourages the college to continue that effort. PCC leads community colleges across the nation in sophisticated and meaningful sustainability efforts.

A higher level reading of PCC's intentions for this Core Theme suggests that the College supports sustainable economic development practices both in its own behaviors and in the programs and services it delivers. This support goes beyond an individual's "reduce, re-use, recycle" approach to sustainability to one that integrates sustainability in business, education, governmental and other practices. Planning for this effort is evident in PCC's Sustainability Council, created by the cabinet, which ensures that PCC itself demonstrates relevant practices and provides instructional programs with examples and opportunities relevant to this intention. Where it would be easy for an institution to demonstrate separate emphases on economic development and sustainability, PCC provides powerful examples of how these themes can come together to support a region economically and make a significant difference in the "triple bottom line."

Assessment

Economic development is essential to PCC's mission. Students, faculty and staff all spoke to this aspect of the Mission with energy and clarity, and they provided concrete examples of how PCC pursues this aspect of the mission. Students provided examples of employment they or their peers had as a result of studies at PCC; faculty spoke of direct connections between the curriculum and employment opportunities; and administration spoke of industry partnerships. Assessment of the economic development core theme is supported by evidence from the college's program reviews and assessment structures. In addition, the CLIMB Center's efforts and outcomes clearly indicate success in the college's effort to support economic development, as do the efforts, measures and outcomes of the Small Business Development Center. The direct indicators in the college's report provide meaningful, assessable and verifiable evidence of the College performance within this Core Theme and are well understood by college faculty and staff. The College also reports to the Board and State of Oregon on multiple other indicators related to this theme including the "Community College Achievement Compacts," consisting of 88 unique measures of institutional performance, and regular Green House Gas emissions reports.

The sustainability portion of this Core Theme is assessed both through learning outcomes and measures of the institution's efforts to engage in "green" practices. While the seven learning outcomes identified by the Sustainability Council are relatively new, there is broad knowledge across the students, faculty and staff about them and how they are manifest in courses. Staff and faculty are looking forward the possibility of moving from focus areas to degrees, and many people cite the possibility of various "green"

concentrations becoming degrees. Sustainability on the operational side is measured in the Green House Gas emissions reports, data captured by the Sustainability Council, and the many initiatives guided by the facilities staff, such as the construction of LEED certified buildings. PCC demonstrates serious, focused and intentional efforts at measuring its sustainability efforts, both on the instructional and operational sides of the institution.

Improvement

PCC demonstrates the capacity to innovate efforts to increase academic capacities to develop and implement sustainability initiatives, both on the operational and instructional sides of the institution. Students, faculty and staff speak readily about sustainability initiatives; the administration includes significant positions focused on sustainability, such as the sustainability coordinator and the co-chairs of the Sustainability Council (the Director of Facilities and a faculty member), as well as significant efforts by the campus presidents, student leadership and members of the upper administration. Other than Green House Gas emissions reports, there are few comparative national measures regarding academic institutions' sustainability efforts. In the Committee's opinion, PCC is a leader in the development, implementation and measure of sustainability efforts, both on the operational and instructional sides of the institution, and its efforts improvement in this area will provide leadership to institutions around the country.

MISSION FULFILLMENT, ADAPTATION, AND SUSTAINABILITY

Portland Community College assessment and reporting of accomplishments continues to evolve with the introduction of Core Themes and indicators of achievement. PCC defines mission fulfillment as successfully meeting 75 percent or more of the indicators of achievement performance targets. Indicators are summarized on a table for each Core Theme.

Academic and Student Services program reviews and annual assessment reports indicate if the College has the capacity to achieve the Core Theme objectives. Results have required additional college resources and the Administration has responded by providing the resources for hiring new faculty, purchasing new equipment, or the expansion of classroom or lab facilities.

Enrollment realities and the Oregon higher education funding for community colleges cuts have influenced resource allocation, but the available resources are tied closely to both the College Mission and Core Themes. Evidence presented, tied the Core Themes and resource allocation, indicating the current Mission is both sustainable and reasonable. While the College was able to adjust to the high student enrollment during the recession, this situation may not have been sustainable. Currently, facing a drop in student enrollment, the College faces a different challenge, but the institution is tied to the funding sources and their limitations. When faced with the budget challenge, the Committee was impressed that students voted on a fee increase to meet some of the educational and service needs of the student body. This obvious community of caring and "student success" demonstrates an institution that can sustain tough times while it continues to place students first.

In addition to the responsibility Portland Community College has to its own students, it now also accepts oversight responsibility for the student success of Oregon Coast Community College. In the opinion of the Committee, the agreement is working well, but the Committee recognizes that OCCC students and community residents want OCCC to operate as soon as possible under their own NWCCU Accreditation status. PCC has helped move the institution forward.

SUMMARY

Portland Community College is a complex and dynamic organization. The administration works to make sure there is inclusiveness, but communication can also be complex, especially with new initiatives, new Core Themes, the size of the student body, campus distances, and large number of employees.

The past five years of the recession have been difficult for an organization with 40% growth, reduction in state allocations, and greater federal and state scrutiny. PCC still managed to meet the accountability measures while adhering to the principle of continuous improvement in college functions, teaching, and learning experiences.

Strategic planning is an integral part of the institution. The College has been working on new strategic themes, which may or may not necessitate significant change in the Mission Statement and Core Themes. As the College moves forward with the Strategic Plan,

there will be a need for clarity and alignment of the Strategic Plan and the Core Themes. PCC has the resources and capacity to move forward.

The Committee recommends that in this continuous planning process, Portland Community College keep the student experience at the center. To do this the institution may want to consider reinforcing the idea of "One College" with four comprehensive campuses. This may reinforce the student need and student right for consistent educational services for all Portland Community College students.

Portland Community College is an institution practicing the Student Success Core Theme in all of its partnerships, documents, policies, Mission, and Strategic Planning. Change is inevitable. New faculty and staff will be hired. Leadership will change. In the case of this institution, new faculty and staff will be fortunate to work with the caring and committed core of individuals who remain at the College and who believe in supporting student success, supporting the communities served by Portland Community College, and supporting one another.

COMMENDATIONS

1. The Committee commends the College for the implementation of student initiatives that support sustainability. A few examples include PCC Rock Creek Solar Panel System, Learning Gardens, Habitat Restoration, water bottle filling stations, and reusable café coffee mug racks.

2. The Committee commends the College for its "grass roots" engagement by faculty, staff, administrators, and students to advance the Core Themes.

3. The Committee commends the College for creating an accessible and attractive physical multi-campus learning environment that supports collegiality and the educational mission of the College.

4. The Committee commends the library for the high quality of resources, facilities, instruction, and services staff provide, as well as the leadership demonstrated by library personnel.

5. The Committee commends the College for its caring, dedicated, and knowledgeable staff, faculty, and administrators. It is evident that students both recognize and appreciate the commitment to student success.

6. The Committee commends the College for its collaborative efforts with the students, faculty, staff and administrators to improve the College Community. Student support was evidenced by the vote to increase the activity fee to support and expand services on all campus sites.

7. The Committee commends the College Student Financial Services for innovative and forward approaches to serving students. LEAN analysis, process re-engineering, technology infusion, and near-paperless processing, the resulted in a significant reduction in the loan default rate and processing time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Committee recommends that the College develop a process to produce a technology update and replacement plan that includes opportunity for staff and constituent participation. (2.G.7 and 2.G.8)

2. The Committee recommends that the College ensure embedded related instruction components of applied degree and certificate programs have assessable learning outcomes, and that those components are taught or monitored by teaching faculty who are appropriately qualified in those areas. (2.C.11)

3. The Committee recommends that the College complete the process necessary to produce a Facilities Master Plan. (2.G.3)