



# **NWCCU AD HOC REPORT**

for Portland Community College, August 30, 2024

# **CONTRIBUTORS**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Introduction to the Ad Hoc Report	4
Exhbits	4
Recommendation	5
Statement of Recommended and Related Standard	6
Recommendation 4: Spring 2022 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness	6
NWCCU Standard 2.C Policy and Procedures	6
Response	7
Response to Recommendation	8
Rationale for Portland Community College's Response	8
Exhibits	8
Purpose, Scope and Composition of the Task Force	9
Exhibits	1C
Key Findings and Lessons Learned	11
Exhibits	11
Summary of PGAT Activities	12
Exhibits	14
Summary of Deliverables	15
Exhibits	15
Next Steps	17
Overview of Next Steps	18
Exhbits	20
Conclusion	21
Conclusion	22
Exhibits	22

# Introduction



# Introduction to the Ad Hoc Report

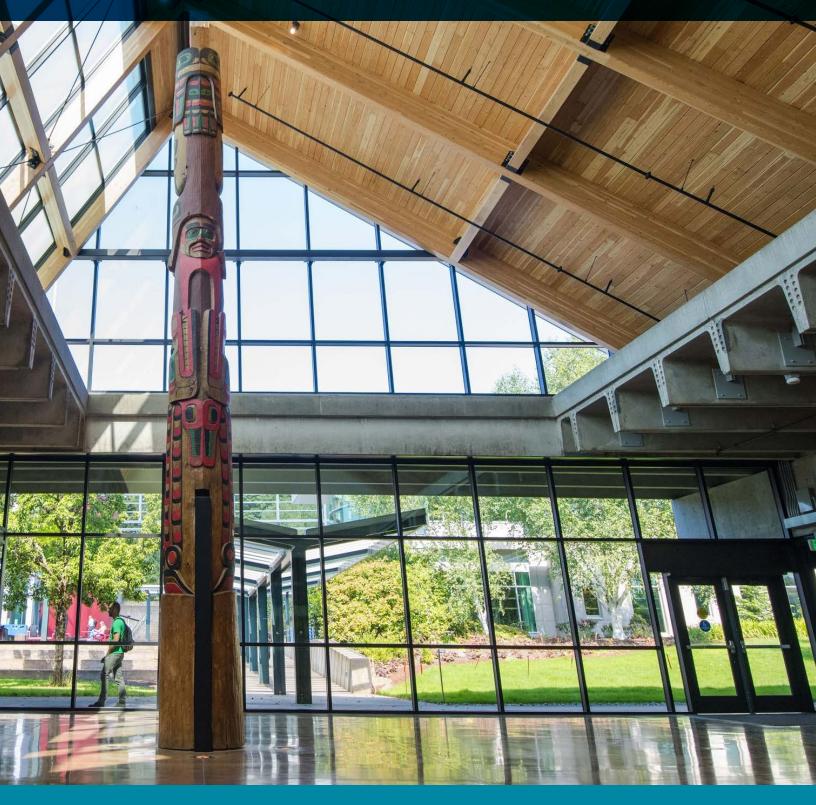
In April 2022, Portland Community College (PCC) hosted a Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) virtual evaluation team visit as part of the <u>Year Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness self-evaluation report</u> and peer evaluation. Following the virtual visit, the commission provided a summary of actions, commendations, and recommendations in a <u>Letter of Action</u> (<u>reaffirmation of accreditation</u>) to PCC on July 25, 2022. In response to the letter, PCC prepared this Ad Hoc report to address Recommendation 4. Specific details on Recommendation 4, including satisfying the recommendation and ongoing efforts building on the resulting framework to sustain continuous improvement, are detailed in the body of this report.

### **EXHIBITS**

PCC Year Seven Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness Self-Evaluation Report (March 2022)

NWCCU Letter of Action (July 2022)

# Recommendation



### Statement of Recommendation and Related Standard

### **RECOMMENDATION 4: SPRING 2022 EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

Complete a comprehensive alignment of policies, procedures, and administrative guidelines that are clearly stated, easily understandable, reality accessible, and regularly reviewed. (2020 Standard(s) 2.C).

### **NWCCU STANDARD 2.C POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The institution develops and widely publishes, including on its website, policies and procedures that are clearly stated, easily understandable, readily accessible, and administered in a fair, equitable, and timely manner.





# Response to Recommendation

### RATIONALE FOR PORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S RESPONSE

In July 2022, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) issued a <u>Letter of Action</u> (reaffirmation of accreditation), recommending Portland Community College (PCC) complete a comprehensive alignment of policies, procedures, and administrative guidelines that are clearly stated, easily understandable, readily accessible, and regularly reviewed (2020 Standard 2.C).

In order to determine an appropriate institutional response to Recommendation 4, college leadership reviewed PCC's Year Six (2021) and Year Seven (2022) self-evaluation reports and corresponding NWCCU peer review reports along with NWCCU's Action Letter. Because the PRFR Peer Review found PCC to be compliant with all criteria under Standard 2.C (2.C.1 to 2.C.4) and PCC's own experience gathering evidence for the PRFR indicated that existing policy and procedure practices were not consistent across the college, PCC leadership determined that establishing an institutional framework for policy governance was needed in order to implement college-wide, systemic, and consistent development and review related to Board Policies, other college policies, and administrative procedures. Institutionalizing such a framework would ensure that all policies and procedures would be "clearly stated, easily understandable, readily accessible, and regularly reviewed" and that related policy administrative governance practices would be sustained.

Subsequently, on a bi-annual visit to PCC in June 2023, Achieving the Dream (AtD) coaches recommended that PCC review all policies with a focus on equity and removing barriers to student success (Achieving the Dream's June 2023 Coaches Reflection Letter). Specifically, the AtD coaches recommended that PCC begin a systematic review of policies, processes, and procedures with an emphasis on equity and removing barriers to student success. This reinforced the need for a comprehensive and systematic approach to reviewing current policies and making policy changes.

To address both the NWCCU and AtD recommendations, the President of PCC, Dr. Adrien L. Bennings, formed the Policy Governance Administration Taskforce (PGAT) in July 2023 to guide and oversee the development and implementation of a formal institutional framework for policy governance administration. This task force also aligned with the <a href="President's Annual Workplan for 2023-24">President's Annual Workplan for 2023-24</a> and broader goals of governance at PCC.

### **EXHIBITS**

NWCCU Letter of Action (July 2022)

Achieving the Dream Coaches Reflection Letter (June 2023)

President's Annual Workplan FY 24 (July 2023)

# Purpose, Scope, and Composition of the Task Force

Over the 2023-24 academic year, the Policy Governance Administration Task Force (PGAT) met with the primary objective to support the Office of the President in creating a systematic approach to policy governance at Portland Community College (PCC) with an emphasis on equity and removing barriers to student success. This included:

- Establishing a college-wide framework for policy governance;
- Promoting a common understanding of roles and responsibilities; and
- Ensuring accountability, communication, and transparency in policy governance processes.

PGAT's efforts centered on the following key areas and deliverables:

- Role Definition
  - Clarify and define roles in the policy governance process.
  - Deliverable: Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed (RACI) Matrix to outline key tasks in policy governance and identify responsible, accountable, consulted, and informed individuals or groups.
- Policy Development
  - Create and formalize operating policies and procedures for PCC, providing guidance on what constitutes an operating policy.
  - Deliverable: Policy flowcharts that visually represent policy development, review, and approval processes, including "How a policy is created."
- Policy Governance Administration Standards
  - Initiate and draft a Policy Governance Administration Standards policy, subject to review and approval by the President's Cabinet and the Board of Directors.
  - Deliverable: Draft Policy Governance Administration Standards policy.

In carrying out these expectations, PGAT served an important role in defining the important aspects of policy governance, collectively identifying areas for improvement, and understanding the potential impacts and anticipated outcomes of the project.

The composition of PGAT was a diverse group of representatives from key stakeholder groups chosen for their expertise, skills, and knowledge in policy creation, review, development, and implementation at PCC.

### The members included:

Dr. Adrien L. Bennings, *President* 

Sage Learn, Chief of Staff, OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Eric Blumenthal, Executive Vice President, FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Kurt Simonds, Vice President, STRATEGY, POLICY, AND INTEGRATED PLANNING

Dr. Steven Nakana, Vice President, PEOPLE STRATEGY, EQUITY, AND CULTURE

Stacie Williams, Faculty; Chair, EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Melisa Manolas, Faculty; Vice-Chair, EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
Nathaniel Kung, Student; President, ASSOCIATED STUDENTS PCC
Berto Cerrillo, Director, STUDENT LIFE AND STUDENT GOVERNANCE OPERATIONS
Jeannie Moton, Manager, STRATEGY, POLICY, AND INTEGRATED PLANNING
Josh Peters-McBride, Executive Dean, COLLEGE OPERATIONS
Sonya Bedient, Executive Dean, ACADEMIC AND CAREER PATHWAYS GUIDANCE
Michael Reis, Executive Dean, TEACHING AND LEARNING SUPPORT
James Hill, Interim Sr. Director, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS
Juanita Lognion, Classified Employee, BUYER/CONTRACT SPECIALIST

### **EXHIBITS**

President's Memo Providing an Overview of PGAT (June 2023)
PGAT Orientation Presentation (July 2023)

# **Key Findings and Lessons Learned**

In order to begin a comprehensive review of policy governance and existing work at Portland Community College (PCC), members of the Policy Governance Administration Task Force (PGAT) participated in a comprehensive review grounded in using a Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed (RACI) framework. Members were asked to review the <u>Building the RACI Matrix Workbook</u> (July 2023) for PGAT and complete a RACI Matrix specific to their roles within the task force, aiming to establish a clear understanding of responsibilities and decision-making processes.

The results of the completed RACI Matrices by PGAT members were summarized and presented in September 2023 (see PGAT: RACI Matrix – Report of Results) to PGAT and the President's Cabinet with an overview of PGAT's work presented to the PCC Board. The presentation showcased how different roles intersect and collaborate, providing a framework for more streamlined decision-making and accountability in policy administration. The subsequent discussion revealed critical insights and lessons learned from the RACI Matrix exercise. Members discussed how these insights could contribute to the overall effectiveness of governance administration at PCC. The discussion underscored the importance of precise role definitions and clear communication lines in achieving effective policy governance, and produced an Updated RACI Matrix - Summary of Results.

Several areas of misalignment were identified during the review discussion. These discrepancies primarily involved overlaps in responsibilities and some instances of under-defined roles that could lead to ambiguities in accountability and decision-making processes.

To address these identified misalignments, PGAT proposed several solutions and recommendations:

- Clarification of Roles: Enhance the definitions within the RACI Matrix to eliminate any ambiguity
  regarding the responsibilities of each role. This will ensure that each member clearly understands
  their tasks and the extent of their accountability.
- Redistribution of Responsibilities: Adjust the distribution of responsibilities to prevent overlap. This involves reassessing certain phases in the framework to ensure that each role has a distinct set of responsibilities, thereby reducing confusion and improving workflow efficiency.
- Further Review and Discussion: Provide additional time for review and discussion of the RACI Matrix to adapt and refine roles and responsibilities before finalizing the governance framework.

### **EXHIBITS**

Building the RACI Matrix Workbook (July 2023)

PGAT: RACI Matrix - Report of Results (September 2023)

<u>Updated RACI Matrix - Summary of Results (November 2023)</u>

# **Summary of PGAT Activities**

Over the past academic year, the Policy Governance Administration Task Force (PGAT) created a comprehensive framework designed to enhance the understanding and implementation of policy governance at Portland Community College (PCC). This framework is divided into three key dimensions:

- **Situational Dimension:** This aspect of the framework focuses on the external and internal factors that influence policy formulation and implementation. Understanding this dimension helps PGAT consider how various environmental factors, such as regulatory requirements and institutional culture, impact policy governance.
- Structural and Process Dimension: This dimension addresses the organizational structures and processes that support policy governance. It emphasizes the importance of clear, efficient, and robust processes and structures that facilitate effective policy development and implementation.
- Outcome Dimension: This focuses on the results and outcomes of policy governance. It aims
  to ensure that policies effectively achieve their intended goals and positively impact the college
  community.

PGAT reviewed existing policy guidelines, such as policies <u>BP 2410 - Board Policies</u>, <u>Bylaws</u>, and <u>Administrative Procedures</u> and the <u>College President's Duties and Responsibilities - B 213</u>, discussing the criteria for when to create new policies. There was also a review of the current landscape of Board Policy and other policies and procedures, such as NWCCU Standards and PCC academic standards and policies work by the Education Advisory Council (EAC). The review emphasized the need for policies to be clear, actionable, and directly linked to enhancing institutional effectiveness and governance. Members then engaged in a thorough review and discussion of proposed policy definition suggestions. This review helped to identify gaps, overlaps, and areas needing updates to align within the policy governance framework. In addition, PGAT discussed the Oregon Community College Association (OCCA) framework that outlines a structured approach to community college governance. This framework was analyzed to understand how it might serve as a model or guide for revising and improving governance practices at PCC.

Clear distinction between Board Policies (BP) and Operation Policies and Procedures (OP) is crucial for effective governance at PCC. This differentiation ensures that both strategic direction and operational execution are well-defined, maintaining a balance between governance over sight by the Board and operational leadership by the President. By delineating responsibilities and processes, PCC enhanced transparency, accountability, and efficiency in meeting its educational and administrative objectives.

After preliminary definitions were established, surveys were conducted in order to gather insights from PGAT members and the President's Cabinet. These surveys marked a significant milestone in PGAT's efforts to refine policy governance at PCC, underscoring the commitment to transparency, collaboration, and continuous improvement in institutional governance. These surveys are described in the following paragraphs and the surveys and survey results are included under Exhibits below.

**PGAT: Policy Definitions Survey.** This survey represented a critical step in refining PCC's policy governance framework; PGAT members were presented with two distinct policy definition options, each reflecting a unique approach to guiding organizational direction and efficacy:

- **Option 1:** A policy is a set of guidelines or principles, formally adopted by the governing body or executive leadership, guiding decision-making, operational procedures, and compliance.
- Option 2: A policy is a formal statement of intent, adopted by the governing body or executive leadership, guiding decision-making processes, operational methodologies, and compliance mechanisms.

**PGAT: College Policy and Board Policy Descriptions Survey.** This survey solicited feedback on two key aspects of policy governance:

- Board Policies: Broadly scoped directives established by the Board of Directors, setting the "WHAT" in terms of institutional objectives and values; approval for these policies lies with the Board of Directors.
- Operating Policies and Procedures: Detailed guidelines and protocols governing day-to-day operations at PCC, defining the "HOW" of institutional administration; approval for these policies rests with the President.

**PGAT: Identify Primary Categories Survey.** This survey sought to gather input from PGAT members to identify and organize policy categories within PCC's policy governance framework.

**Policy Category Review.** Members of PGAT and the President's Cabinet were presented with various policy categories, accompanied by detailed descriptions; this step provided an overview and description of primary categories typically structured within a policy framework, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the scope and purpose of each category.

- **Primary Categories Selection:** Members were instructed to check all the policy categories they recommended to be included in PCC's policy governance framework. This step allowed members to directly influence the identification of primary categories essential for effective policy governance at the college.
- Other Primary Categories Suggestion: In this section, members were invited to identify any
  primary policy categories not included in the previous step and provide their recommendations
  along with brief descriptions. This open-ended opportunity enabled members to contribute additional
  insights and suggestions, ensuring comprehensive coverage of policy categories relevant to
  PCC's operations.

PGAT then created a set of <u>Updated College and Board Policy Descriptions</u> that clarified definitions around types of policies and the differences between Board Policies (BP) and Operation Policies and Procedures (OP). Based on this, an <u>Updated Policy Development Flowchart</u> and <u>RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed): Policy Category Worksheet</u> were created. This flowchart outlines the specific steps, appropriate responsibilities, and accountability for policy work at PCC. Together, the flowchart and worksheet apply to the review, revision, and development of all policy documents.

### **EXHIBITS**

BP 2410 - Board Policies, Bylaws, and Administrative Procedures

College President's Duties and Responsibilities – B 213

PGAT Survey: Policy Definitions Google Form

Policy Definition Survey Results

PGAT: Survey: College Policy and Board Policy Descriptions Google Form

College Policy and Board Policy Descriptions Survey Results

PGAT Survey: Identify Primary Categories Google Form

Identify Primary Categories Survey Results

<u>Updated College and Board Policy Descriptions (January 2024)</u>

Updated Policy Development Flowchart (March 2024)

RACI: Policy Category Worksheet (March 2024)

# **Summary of Deliverables**

As part of the comprehensive initiative to align and enhance the policy governance framework at Portland Community College (PCC), the Policy Governance Administration Task Force (PGAT) completed several key deliverables. These outputs will ensure the successful implementation of the revised policy governance framework and demonstrate PCC's commitment to thoroughness and accountability.

Below is a summary of the major deliverables completed between July 2023 and April 2024 by PGAT:

- 1. RACI Matrix Summary of Results: PGAT developed and finalized the <u>RACI (Responsible</u>, <u>Accountable</u>, <u>Consulted</u>, <u>Informed</u>) <u>Matrix Summary of Results</u>, which clearly defines roles and responsibilities in the policy governance process; this matrix is instrumental in clarifying who is involved in each stage of policy development and ensures that all relevant stakeholders are appropriately engaged.
- 2. Finalized the Policy Governance RACI Matrix Workbook: The comprehensive <u>Building the RACI Matrix Workbook</u> was updated and finalized, providing a detailed and operational guide to roles and responsibilities in policy governance across PCC.
- **3. Institutional Definition of Policies:** PGAT successfully created an <u>Institutional Definition of Policy</u>, which helps to standardize the language and understanding of what constitutes a policy at PCC.
- 4. Descriptions for Board Policies (BP) vs. Operating Policies and Procedures (OP): Clear, detailed descriptions were established to delineate among <u>Board Policies and Operating Policies and Procedures</u>; this clarity supports better governance and operational clarity across the college.
- **5. RACI by Policy Category:** PGAT developed the <u>RACI: Policy Category Worksheet</u> that includes RACI matrices for PCC's eight policy categories, facilitating clearer understanding and management of each policy category within the college's new framework.
- **6. Policy Development Flowchart:** A comprehensive <u>Policy Development Flowchart</u> was created to visually represent the phases in the process of policy development, review, and approval through an equity-centered approach at PCC; this flowchart aids in understanding the sequential steps involved in policy management and serves as a guide for employees involved in the governance process.
- 7. Policy Governance Administration Standards: PGAT informed the development of an Operating Policy (OP), Policy Governance and Administration Standards, draft that established a formal institutional framework for policy administration at PCC, including standards for policy creation, review, and maintenance and ensuring consistency and integrity in policy management; this policy also includes PCC's equity-centered approach to the policy governance administration process.

### **EXHIBITS**

Building the RACI Matrix Workbook (August 2023)

Updated RACI Matrix - Summary of Results (November 2023)

Institutional Definition of Policy (January 2024)

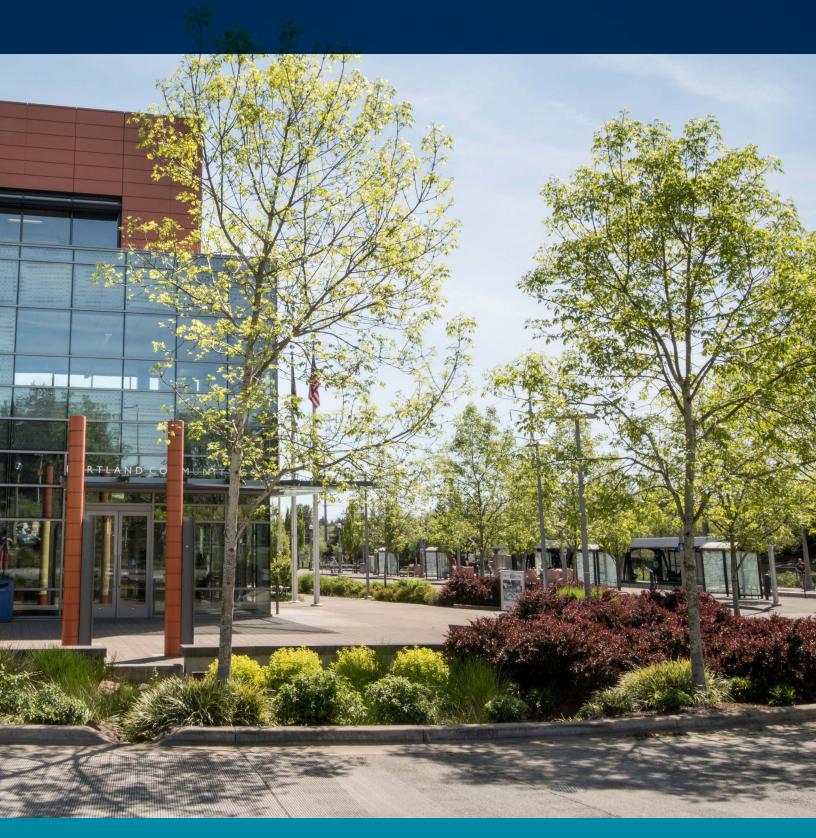
Updated College and Board Policy Descriptions (January 2024)

RACI: Policy Category Worksheet (March 2024)

Policy Development Flowchart (March 2024)

Policy Governance and Administration Standards (Draft, April 2024)

# Next Steps



# **Overview of Next Steps**

The work of the Policy Governance Administration Task Force (PGAT) concluded in June 2024. The President then began facilitating the transition to the implementation phase. A dedicated Policy Governance Administration (PGA) Implementation Team was assembled in July 2024 to oversee the execution of the policy governance framework. This team consists of members from PGAT, including faculty, classified staff, and student representation; additional staff who specialize in technology, web development, and project management; and a PCC Board representative.

The <u>PGA Implementation Team</u> had their first meeting on <u>July 30, 2024</u>. During that first meeting the following workgroups were formally established:

- Workgroup: Website Design, Structure, and Content Group The primary focus of this group is
  to create a public, accessible policy governance webpage that ensures access to the college's policy
  library and resources. The webpage should be user-friendly, informative, and reflect the college's
  commitment to transparency and governance.
- Workgroup: Policy File: Organization, Access, and Nomenclature Group This group is tasked
  with setting up the college's policy file structure to house records pertaining to the policy process,
  forms, tracking logs, and other relevant documents. This effort is essential for records retention and
  compliance purposes, ensuring that all policy-related documents are organized, accessible, and
  correctly named.
- Workgroup: Policy Inventory and Transition Group The primary responsibility of this group is to review the college's current policies (both board and college) and recommend a plan to categorize, transition, and archive policies as necessary. This includes assessing the relevance and categorization of existing policies and establishing a timeline for transitioning policies.

The PGA Implementation Team is <u>scheduled to meet monthly</u> to complete the following activities and deliverables over the 2024-25 academic year:

- 1. Finalization and Adoption of the Operating Policy, Policy Governance and Administration Standards: The <u>draft policy developed by PGAT</u> will be finalized and presented to the President's Cabinet for adoption; this policy will serve as the cornerstone of PCC's governance framework, ensuring clarity and consistency in how policies are managed across the college through an equitycentered approach to the policy governance administration process.
- 2. Development of a Systematic Review Schedule and Process: A structured schedule and process for regular policy reviews, including Board Policies, will be established to maintain the relevance and effectiveness of all policies; the Implementation Team is already at work reviewing existing practices, including the Board's annual schedule, in order to create a newer, more comprehensive process that will include: (a) mechanisms for routine updates and feedback incorporation, (b) a schedule of review aligned with the accreditation cycle, and (c) a schedule of review by policy category and individual policies that might be further developed by month and/or fiscal year.
- 3. Identification of Technology and Resources: To support the efficient development, review, and approval of policies, appropriate technology and resources will be identified and deployed; this will include software for document management and collaboration tools to facilitate communication among stakeholders.

- 4. Redesign of the Website to Create a Policy Library Hub: The PCC website will be redesigned to include a comprehensive hub for all policies and policy-related documents, forms, and resources; this hub will ensure that policies are easily accessible to all stakeholders and are maintained in a transparent and user-friendly manner.
- 5. Monitoring, Reporting, and Communications: An ongoing monitoring framework will be set up to track the implementation of the policy governance framework; quarterly reports will be prepared and shared with key stakeholders to update them on the PGA Implementation Team's progress, highlight successes, and address any challenges encountered and provide an opportunity for continuous feedback and improvement.
- 6. Policy Inventory and Transition: The team will complete an inventory of ALL policies at PCC and develop and recommend a plan to transition policies to the policy framework; this will include identifying which policies should either be a board policy (BP) or an operating policy and procedure (OP), or not a policy at all, and determining the best placement for policies within one of the eight policy categories:
  - a. 1.0 College Governance Policies encompassing institutional governance, decision-making processes, and the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors, ensuring transparency and accountability in PCC operations.
  - b. 2.0 College Administration Policies pertaining to the internal management and administration of the institution. These include policies covering administrative directives, conflict of interest, ethical standards, compliance, accreditation, published materials, adherence to laws and regulations, and complaints and grievances.
  - c. 3.0 Academic Affairs Policies related to PCC's academic programs, curriculum development, transfer of credit, academic freedom and integrity, faculty roles and responsibilities, standards for education programs (e.g., admission, placement, continuation, termination, appeals), library and information resources, distance education, and student assessment.
  - d. 4.0 Student Affairs Policies focused on supporting and enhancing the student experience, addressing matters such as student rights and responsibilities, student identity verification, student services, retention of student records, financial aid, student loan monitoring, campus life/engagement, and support services to promote student success and well-being.
  - **e.** *5.0 Information Technology & Security* Policies encompassing technology infrastructure; accessibility, safety, and security; data management; cybersecurity measures, technology usage guidelines, and data protection to safeguard PCC's digital assets.
  - f. 6.0 Financial Management Policies related to oversight and management of fiscal resources, financial planning and budgeting, accounting, procurement, financial reporting, and risk management. These policies ensure responsible fiscal stewardship, transparency, and compliance with financial regulations.
  - g. 7.0 Facilities, Safety, & Operations Policies governing the use, accessibility, maintenance, security, and hazardous waste and safety protocols for campus facilities. This category also includes sustainability initiatives and operational guidelines, ensuring a secure and efficient campus environment.

h. 8.0 Personnel & Employment - Policies pertaining to personnel hiring; teaching, scholarship, service, and artistic creation; working conditions, rights and responsibilities, evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination; professional growth and development; and fostering a positive and inclusive work environment.

Through these steps, PCC will sustain policies and procedures that meet accreditation standards, focus on equity and removing barriers to student success, and enhance its capacity to adapt to changing educational needs and expectations. This proactive approach to policy governance will reinforce PCC's commitment to transparency, accountability, and operational excellence in all aspects.

### **EXHIBITS**

**PGA Implementation Team List** 

July 30 2024 Meeting Agenda

PGA Implementation Team Meeting Schedule 2024-25

Policy Governance and Administration Standards (Draft, April 2024)

PowerPoint: Policy Governance Implementation Team

**DRAFT: Policy Resolution Template** 

**PCC Operating Template** 

Overview: Policy Governance Framework



### Conclusion

As demonstrated by the year-long work of the Policy Governance Administration Task Force (PGAT). Portland Community College (PCC) has completed a comprehensive framework for alignment of policies, procedures, and administrative guidelines as recommended by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) with an equity-centered approach to policy creation and review. This framework positions PCC to have clarity and alignment around policies and procedures that are "clearly stated, easily understandable, reality accessible, and regularly reviewed" as stated in Recommendation 4 while applying an equity-centered approach to all policy-related work across the college. PCC anticipates that the full implementation of the policy governance framework will be completed in the 2024-25 academic year. In addition, PCC recognizes that there are critical policy updates that need to be made. To that end, the college piloted the proposed policy updates process, including a Policy Intake Form and Policy Proposal Form, through an expedited process for timesensitive legal mandates in order to address two critical policy updates, one a board policy (BP) and one an operating policy and procedure (OP). At its July 2024 Business Meeting, the PCC Board of Directors adopted a new BP, Data Governance Program - B 8118, necessary to comply with local, state, national, and international data protection standards, and accepted a new OP, Prohibition of Sexual Harassment and Misconduct - B 216, replacing Gender-Based and Sexual Misconduct - B 216, in order to comply with newly released Federal Title IX regulatory changes.

### **EXHIBITS**

Policy Intake Form

Policy Proposal Form

**Expedited Process for Time-Sensitive Legal Mandates** 

PCC Board of Directors Business Meeting, July 18, 2024 (Agenda)

Data Governance Program - B 8118

Prohibition of Sexual Harassment and Misconduct – B 216