

Year One Peer-Evaluation Report

South Seattle Community College

Seattle, WA

Fall 2011

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

Table of Contents

Evaluators	i
Introduction.....	1
Assessment of Self-Evaluation Report	3
Report on Eligibility Requirements	3
Report on Standard 1	
Standard 1.A Mission	4
Standard 1.B Core Themes	5
Summary	5
Commendations and Recommendations	6

Evaluation Committee

Dr. Patty M. Scott (Chair)
President
Southwestern Oregon Community College
1988 Newmark Ave
Coos Bay, OR

Mr. Kurt Simonds
Division Dean, Liberal Arts and Sciences
Portland Community College
P.O. Box 19000
Portland, OR

Dr. Gregory V. Benson
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Student Services
Utah State University – College of Eastern Utah
451 East 400 North
Price, UT

Introduction

South Seattle Community College is one of three separately accredited Colleges in the Seattle Community College District. South Seattle Community College is a comprehensive community college serving approximately 15,000 students (unduplicated headcount) from its main campus in West Seattle, the New Holly Learning Center in South Seattle, and the Georgetown Apprenticeship and Education Center in Seattle's industrial center.

South Seattle Community College had its accreditation reaffirmed on the basis of an October 2009 full-scale accreditation visit. In addition, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities granted accreditation at the baccalaureate level to include Bachelor of Applied Science in Hospitality Management.

Institutional changes since the last Regular visit in 2009 include:

- Leadership changes, including President, Vice President for Instruction, Vice President for Student Services, Vice President for Administrative Services, and Executive Dean of the Georgetown Campus;
- State budget reductions;
- Development of Core Themes and Performance Indicators, strengthening the connection between the College's Mission and Strategic Plan.
- Responses to Commission Recommendations 1, 4, and 6 of the Fall 2009 Comprehensive Evaluation Report.

Response to Commission Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Most, but not all, of South Seattle Community College's academic programs provide regular and systematic assessment of program-level student learning outcomes. The committee recommends that the College extend its effective regular and systematic assessment of program-specific student learning outcomes to all academic programs (Standard 2.B.2).

Response: South Seattle Community College's Response to Recommendation 1 is that 1) regular Program Reviews are conducted by outside evaluators and industry experts and the results are reviewed by program faculty and instructional administrators, and 2) program outcomes are mapped to course outcomes and that by meeting sequenced course outcomes students demonstrate they meet program outcomes. The College should provide evidence of these assessment practices to be validated at the next accreditation visit.

Recommendation 4: The committee found evidence of at least one academic field in which the College hires only part-time faculty. The evaluation committee recommends that South Seattle Community College employ professionally qualified faculty with primary commitment to the institution and representatives of each field or program in which it offers major work (Standard 4.A.1).

Response: The College states that two areas were cited as the reasons for this recommendation: Geology and Apprenticeship. Based on the Commission's Recommendation, the College has hired a full-time temporary faculty in the Building Sustainable Management program to oversee the apprenticeship programs. This position is supported by grants and contracts and will be re-evaluated as the budget improves and the hiring freeze is lifted.

In regard to Geology, the College reports that Geology courses are offered primarily as electives at the 100-level and are not an area of major work. Furthermore, the number of Geology courses offered does not make up a full-time instructional work load. Finally, the College asserts that under the new standard 2.B.5 the College itself can make judgments about appropriate staffing levels and that a full-time Geology instructor is not warranted or feasible.

The evaluators find that College is not in compliance with Commission Recommendation 4; however, given the limited type and number of Geology courses offered, the College's financial and hiring constraints, and the changes in Accreditation standards since the previous Comprehensive Report, the evaluators find that College is now substantially in compliance with current Accreditation standards(2.B.4 and 2.B.5).

Recommendation 6: The committee recommends that the College work with the District Office to publish the individual College Budget in addition to the aggregate District budget as part of the Board of Trustees' approval of the budget document (Standard 7.A.3).

Response: Effective with the Fiscal Year 2010-2011, the budget information presented to the Seattle Community College District Board of Trustees listed each campus' budget separately. The Board of Trustees approved these budgets in this new format at their meeting on September 9, 2010.

Evaluation: The evaluator believe that South Seattle Community College has provided evidence (Appendix 2) that it is in compliance with Recommendation 6.

Assessment of the Self-Evaluation Report

During September and October, 2011, a three-person peer-evaluation team from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (hereafter referred to as

the Commission) conducted a Year One Comprehensive Peer-Evaluation of South Seattle Community College. In accordance with Commission procedures, the review was carried out using the off-site virtual environment. Further, the evaluation was conducted based upon the *2010 Accreditation Standards and Eligibility Requirements* published by the Commission.

The Evaluation Committee received a hard copy of the College's *Year One Self-Evaluation Report* and Appendices in a timely manner. The Report was accompanied by a copy of the South Seattle Community College 2010-2012 Catalog. South Seattle Community College submitted a *Year One Self-Evaluation Report* that addressed Standard 1 requirements. The background information provided in the Introduction, Institutional Context and Preface described the College's response to the Commission's 2009 Recommendations as well as recent institutional changes and challenges.

Report on Eligibility Requirements

2. **AUTHORITY:** The Seattle Community College District is authorized to operate and award degrees as a higher education institution by The State of Washington through the Washington Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

3. **MISSION AND CORE THEMES:** The institution's mission and core themes are defined and adopted by its governing board. The institution's purpose is to serve the educational interests of its students and its principal programs lead to recognized degrees.

South Seattle Community College's Year One Report clearly demonstrates that the College meets Eligibility Requirement 2 (Authority) and Eligibility Requirement 3 (Mission and Core Themes).

Report on Standard 1

Introduction

The mission statement presented in the *Year One Self-Evaluation Report* reads as follows:

South Seattle Community College is a constantly evolving educational community dedicated to providing quality learning experiences which prepare students to meet their goals for life and work.

Standard 1.A Mission

Standard 1.A.1

The College used an inclusive process to review its mission and identify core themes over a period of time from Spring 2010 – February 2011. The process was led by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee and received input from faculty, staff, and the President's Cabinet. College-wide open forums were held in Fall 2010. The College's mission was reaffirmed with minor changes, and core themes were developed and approved by the College Council, the President's Cabinet, and, in February 2011, by the Seattle Community College District Board of Trustees. The College's mission statement is congruent with the district-wide mission.

South Seattle Community College's mission statement is appropriate for a comprehensive community college. The mission statement is succinct, and states in general terms how South Seattle Community College will serve the needs of its community.

The mission statement is published widely, in the printed 2010-2012 Catalog, on the college web site, on the quarterly schedule, in classrooms, and in various College reports.

Complement 1: The College should be complemented for its thorough and inclusive review of its mission statement.

Standard 1.A.2

Mission fulfillment is defined as demonstrating acceptable levels of performance on fourteen key performance indicators derived from the four core themes of Student Achievement, Teaching and Learning, College Culture and Climate, and Community Engagement and Partnerships (pg. 10 of Report).

Concern 1: It is not clear to the evaluators how mission fulfillment is defined or how acceptable thresholds of institutional accomplishment or outcomes are articulated (1.A.2).

Standard 1.B Core Themes

Standard 1.B.1

South Seattle Community College has articulated four core themes: Student Achievement, Teaching and Learning, College Culture and Climate, and Community Engagement and Partnerships. The Core Themes provide broadly defined categories for the 14 key performance indicators that align with the

Seattle Community College District Strategic Goals 2010-15. The College should be complemented for its efforts to align its Mission, Core Themes, Performance Indicators, and Strategic Plan.

Standard 1.B.2

Core Theme 1: Student Achievement

The objectives for this Core Theme are related to student retention, credit completion, and satisfaction; college navigation; student engagement and financial literacy.

Core Theme 2: Teaching and Learning

The objectives for this Core Theme are related to outcomes assessment and student satisfaction; credit, degree, and certificate completion; transfer and employment rates; curriculum updates; and faculty training and certification.

Core Theme 3: College Culture and Climate

The objectives for this Core Theme are a diverse and culturally competent workforce; campus climate, activities, and technology; and efficient management of resources and enrollments.

Core Theme 4: Community Engagement and Partnerships

Objectives associated with Core Theme are industry support of programs through investment, internships, and participation in advisory groups; high school partnerships and college articulation agreements; enrollment in classes for enrichment and professional development; and mutually advantageous relationships with community organizations and businesses, including customized workforce training.

Concern 2: Benchmarks have not been established or reported for any of the Core Themes. The institution is expected to identify clearly defined objectives as well as indicators of achievement that are meaningful, assessable, and verifiable (1.B.2).

Summary

South Seattle Community College has taken steps to address the Commission's recommendations from the fall 2009 Comprehensive Report. Progress on these previous recommendations, specifically Recommendation One, will need to be validated at the next campus visit. The College also needs to do further work

defining Mission fulfillment and articulating acceptable and meaningful thresholds for institutional accomplishments.

Recommendations

Recommendations

1. The College should further define Mission fulfillment by articulating acceptable thresholds for of institutional accomplishments or outcomes (1.A.2).
2. The College should establish objectives for each of its core themes and identify meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement for evaluating accomplishment of these objectives (1.B.2).