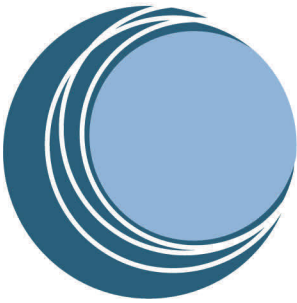


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Comprehensive Self-Evaluation Report

Northwest Commission on Colleges & Universities



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Institutional Overview

Founded in 1949 as part of the Bend-La Pine School District, Central Oregon Community College is the longest-standing community college in Oregon. The Central Oregon Community College District covers a 10,000-square-mile area, making it larger than eight U.S. states. It includes all of Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson Counties, as well as the southern part of Wasco County and the northern portions of Klamath and Lake Counties. A seven-member board of directors, elected from geographic zones, governs the College.

COCC educates students on four campuses in Central Oregon. The 200-acre main campus in Bend includes 24 buildings with a total of approximately 485,000 square feet under roof. The newest building, the Jungers Culinary Center, opened in the fall of 2011. Two additional facilities, a health careers building and a science center, are under construction and scheduled to be completed for fall term 2012. These buildings will add an additional 95,000 square feet. The Bend campus also enjoys a close partnership with Oregon State University-Cascades, which is located at COCC. In partnership with COCC, OSU-Cascades offers upper division courses in several baccalaureate and graduate degree programs, providing an option for COCC students to dually enroll at both institutions. COCC also contracts with the Oregon Department of Corrections to provide basic skills and limited training at the Deer Ridge Correctional Institution.

On the 29-acre Redmond Campus, three buildings house classrooms, a computer lab, the Manufacturing and Applied Technology Center, College administration, and student support services. Construction on the new Redmond Technology Education Center will begin this year (summer of 2012). The Redmond Campus also includes a partnership with the Redmond Workforce Connection, supporting unemployed and underemployed residents needing education and training opportunities. The College has recently opened new campuses in Madras and Prineville, communities located approximately 40 miles from Bend and 20 miles from Redmond.

Across the four campuses, COCC employs 111 full-time faculty members, 52 adjunct faculty, and approximately 200 part-time instructors for credit classes. Full-time faculty members serve as academic advisors to individual students, assisting them in planning academic programs and schedules. All COCC faculty are required to have at least a master's degree or equivalent industry training with a strong emphasis on practical workplace skills. About 40 percent of the full-time faculty have doctorates in their disciplines or a terminal degree/licensure in their fields, a very high percentage for a community college. The institution encourages and supports continuing professional improvement by all faculty, administrators, and support staff.

Over the past five years, the College has experienced unprecedented growth; enrollment has more than doubled in full-time equivalent students during this time period. The downturn in the nation's economy has been a clear driver of enrollment growth. While this growth has served the College well financially, expansion has challenged faculty and staff, who serve students at increasingly higher levels each year.

According to annual enrollment reports, 6,436 full-time equivalent students (FTE) enrolled in credit classes at COCC during the 2010-11 academic year. The headcount comprising this FTE included 2,475 full-time students plus 8,368 part-time (those who enrolled in fewer than 36 credits annually) for a

grand total of 10,843. Also in 2010-11, an additional 7,590 individuals enrolled in a wide variety of noncredit courses.

COCC's mission, vision, goals, and Board priorities are reviewed by the Board of Directors on a biennial basis. In the fall of 2010, the Board reaffirmed the COCC mission, vision statement, and goals. In the spring of 2011, the Board modified and reaffirmed the Board priorities for 2011-13, which drive current institutional initiatives and outcomes assessment. The larger community of Central Oregon is represented in the process of reviewing and renewing the COCC mission, vision statement, goals, and priorities as members of the Board of Directors are elected from regions across the COCC District and represent the interests of their communities.

In response to the changes to the NWCCU Standards for Accreditation, the College formed the Accreditation Coordinating Team (ACT) charged with aligning the external Board-led community interests with internal operations. ACT members include representatives from Instruction, Student Services, Institutional Effectiveness, and Administration. ACT has four primary objectives: (1) help disseminate the Board-approved core themes to the College, (2) identify appropriate objectives and indicators for each core theme, (3) guide various stakeholders in developing and implementing appropriate means of assessing campus-wide articulation to the core themes, and (4) guide and support the writing of accreditation reports.

Based upon the recommendation of the ACT, the COCC Board of Directors approved the core themes of transfer and articulation, workforce development, basic skills, and lifelong learning on December 9, 2009. The Board found these themes to be consistent with the comprehensive community college mission and with the Board's mission, vision, goals, and priorities. Since that time, the ACT has worked to disseminate the themes throughout the College and to encourage College-wide engagement with the newly identified core themes. Representatives of ACT have presented the core themes to ChairMoot (the committee comprised of all academic department chairs, the vice president for instruction, and instructional deans), the Deans and Directors, the Student Services Division, and the full campus community at the fall 2010 College retreat. This process has also helped to disseminate the new accreditation standards and to provide a means for feedback from across the College.

The mission, vision statement, goals, and priorities clearly articulate a broad commitment to the educational and workforce development of Central Oregon community members.

Preface

COCC has followed NWCCU guidelines and schedules in preparation and submission of self-evaluations and reports to the NWCCU, and in May 2011 the College received a Year One Peer-Evaluation Report. This report contained one recommendation and three concerns, which appropriately challenge COCC to provide meaningful and measurable indicators that document success and clarify “inherent confusion” in many board-related documents and processes.

Recommendation 1: Though the College has identified objectives, indicators of success, and rationale for each of its three core themes, the Evaluation Committee recommends that the College provide indicators that are meaningful and measurable, and that provide a clear connection between the indicators of achievement and objectives. (Standards 1.B.1 and 1.B.2).

Concern 1: The various documents and processes relating to mission, goals, vision, fulfillment of mission, effectiveness, priorities, plans, and the future Institutional Scorecard are complex and confusing.

Concern 2: While the desired outcomes are well defined and described, they must be measurable.

Concern 3: While the desired outcomes are well defined and described, they must be meaningful, measurable, and provide a clear connection between the indicators of achievement and objectives.

In response to the recommendation, the Year Seven Self-Evaluation Report includes indicators that are meaningful and measurable, and COCC continues to seek data-driven methods to expand upon indicators that can be used to assess the multifaceted and complex work of the College. Our response to this recommendation simultaneously responds to Concern 3, which uses the same language as the recommendation.

In response to the concern that College planning and evaluation documents are “complex and confusing” (Concern 1), COCC has refined planning processes to better align Board goals and priorities with core themes and objectives. In response to the Year-One Peer Evaluation Report, and in order to eliminate confusion, the COCC Board has taken two actions based on input from the Executive Team. At its November 2011 Board Meeting, the Board removed the Vision Concept Paper as a formal planning document, eliminating the challenge of integrating it with other documents. At the December 2011 Board Meeting, the Board approved revised Board goals which formalize a more direct relationship between the Board goals and the core themes. This revision of Board goals was reviewed by several internal governance groups prior to Board action. The revised Board goals are reflected in the Year Seven Report. This continued work on mission and planning systems focuses on retaining the benefits of these statements while minimizing the potential confusion from multiple and overlapping elements.

In response to the concern that desired outcomes “must be measurable” (Concern 2), the College restated the desired indicators in more specific terms. Detailing current and planned indicators has clarified how COCC will measure established outcomes now and in the near future. Additional

connections between Board priorities and core theme objectives have been added with specific indicators that verify outcomes achieved for each objective. In detailing the indicators and connections, the College demonstrates that outcomes are measurable.

Since the April 2009 Focused Interim Evaluation, COCC has seen continuing explosion in enrollment without, up to this point, a corresponding growth in staff. This unprecedented enrollment growth creates challenges for staff and at the same time underscores the value of effective data retrieval and mission clarity as we determine where to grow. The College is currently planning and constructing new facilities on the Bend Campus and in outlying communities. We are also developing new academic programs and refining teaching and learning strategies to strengthen outcomes and improve fiscal efficiency.

The April 2009 Focused Interim Evaluation Report concluded that the College made significant progress on the April 2007 recommendation related to assessing student learning outcomes. The 2009 evaluation gave the College three commendations (with no recommendations) related to the administration's support of faculty assessment activities and the development of a comprehensive, recurring assessment of COCC's General Education Outcomes. As the College broadens institution-wide assessment of the mission and core themes, we plan to build on the model used in the commended instructional assessment projects: We will identify what it means to successfully achieve outcomes and then design assessment projects to measure performance on those outcomes. We will follow up by analyzing data and making adjustments as needed based on our analysis.

This systematic approach has formed the framework for assessing COCC's institutional effectiveness. As we align our assessment activities with our core themes, we are also refining our outcomes and indicators in relation to those core themes. The College is confident that the emerging holistic orientation of measures will lead to a significant and meaningful analysis that will increase our effectiveness over time.

The comprehensive self-evaluation report was written by the following members of the College community:

President: Dr. James Middleton
Vice President for Instruction: Dr. Karin Hilgersom
Director of Institutional Effectiveness: Brynn Pierce
Dean of Student & Enrollment Services: Alicia Moore
Vice President for Administration: Matt McCoy
Director of College Relations: Ron Paradis
Chief Financial Officer: Kevin Kimball
Vice President for Instruction, Retired: Dr. Kathy Walsh
Associate Professor, Anthropology: Dr. Amy Harper
Associate Professor, Human Biology: Dr. Julie Hood Gonsalves
Assistant Professor II, Humanities: Dr. Annemarie Hamlin