



# CASCADIA

## COMMUNITY COLLEGE



**Ten Year Academic Plan**

**2013-14 to 2023-24**

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# **10 Year Academic Plan Cascadia Community College**

**February 19, 2014**

## **Introduction**

Cascadia Community College -- a young, vibrant and growing institution that provides an outstanding education to students – was founded in order to increase higher education access in northeast King and southeast Snohomish counties. The co-location of Cascadia Community College with the University of Washington Bothell was based on the vision of providing students who began in a two-year institution a seamless pathway to degree completion in a premier public institution.

Cascadia Community College's enrollment has exceeded expectations from its opening in the year 2000. In its first fall quarter 1,940 students enrolled (equaling 1,059 full-time equivalents or FTE) far exceeding its state allocation of 800 FTEs. The College has consistently exceeded its two year running allocation, often by over 25 percent. Maintaining a strong enrollment base is grounded in retention and recruitment strategies for student success resulting in increases in both new and continuing students.

From the beginning, Cascadia Community College established a reputation for excellence. Washington Monthly magazine has ranked Cascadia in the top 25 community colleges in each eligible year. The College enjoys one of the highest transfer rates among community colleges in the state. In 2011-12, the most recent data available, over 600 students from Cascadia enrolled in public and private four-year institutions; 43 percent of those enrolled in the University of Washington Bothell. Over 80 percent of Cascadia's students enrolling in the University of Washington Bothell earn a degree – fulfilling the founding vision of the college.

The excellence of Cascadia's students is based on three main factors:

- outstanding faculty – more than 25 percent of Cascadia's full time faculty have doctorates, one of the highest percentage of any community college in the state;
- integrated education<sup>1</sup> – an innovative approach to teaching and learning;
- a foundational belief that a learning-centered community embraces innovation, reflection, inclusiveness, shared governance, strategic planning, and assessment.

This is the basis of sustained quality and fully realizes our mission: to transform lives through integrated education in a learning-centered environment.

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<sup>1</sup>Integrated education: the connection of disciplinary and interdisciplinary ideas to complex contexts, the building of knowledge across the curriculum and co-curriculum, and the application of this education to situations on and off campus.

Fulfillment of this mission is guided by Cascadia's Strategic Directions, which provide a broad, all-college structure to activities that further our mission. The complete picture of Cascadia's identity is included in Appendix A. This plan is designed to further articulate how the College expects to direct resources to instruction for the purpose of increasing student success, integrating learning, and promoting a learning-centered environment. The Academic Plan provides detailed strategies and initiatives that focus on our academic mission and its associated programs.

As with any plan, there will be opportunities and challenges ahead, which are outlined in Appendix B, C, and D. Appendix B describes detailed enrollment projections. An analysis of student success in Cascadia's STEM programs is attached in Appendix C and a needs assessment for the implementation of the academic plan is in Appendix D.

Sustainable access to higher education (access), a desire for continued excellence (excellence), and increasing demand for education (growth) are the hallmarks of Cascadia Community College since its opening and underlie this ten year academic plan.

## **ACCESS**

Cascadia Community College's accomplishments in access are significant and sustained. Collaborations with local school districts have aligned mathematics curriculum, as well as encouraged an increasing number of Running Start and College in the High School students. Students enrolling in Cascadia have access to transfer programs as well as an increasing number of high-quality, cutting edge professional-technical programs. In addition, a seamless pathway to degree completion is provided to a variety of premier public and private institutions. In the next ten years Cascadia is committed to:

**Increasing access to students in northeast King and southeast Snohomish counties.** This will be accomplished through the following strategies.

- Expanding college access for high school students
  - Strengthening opportunities for high school students in math
  - Creating new initiatives in English to bridge the gap between high school and college
  - Developing an integrated K through 20 system of education in Cascadia's district that focuses on life-long learning
  - Expanding student enrollment in Running Start and College in the High School
  - Exploring an early college high school academy program in Information Technology
- Promote pluralism and social justice by expanding access to college programs

- Enhancing recruitment and support of students with lower socio-economic status
- Improving transitions from Adult Basic Education to college coursework
- Increasing off-campus, online, and time-shifted scheduling to increase options for students

➤ Streamlining access to Bachelor's Degree attainment

- Streamlining pathways with UW-Bothell (co-located partner) and other four-year institutions in areas such as Global Studies, Art, Engineering, Computer Science and Science
- Developing new Transfer Admission Guarantees, with UW and other high choice destinations (e.g., Stanford, Arizona State University)
- Developing a system of co-enrollment with several universities (e.g., Bastyr, UW, Seattle University, DigiPen)

## EXCELLENCE

*Transforming lives through integrated education in a learning-centered community* – the mission of Cascadia Community College – forms the foundation for the excellence of this young institution. Integrated education, a hallmark of Cascadia from its inception, is based on the premise that a quality education must transcend traditional curriculum and classroom boundaries. It includes interdisciplinary projects, learning communities and linked classes, community-based learning undertakings, internships, and study abroad. Recently, Cascadia began discussions on strategies for globalizing the educational experiences of domestic students by building on the knowledge and expertise of faculty as well as the increased enrollment of international students. Student surveys affirm this approach to integrated education: Cascadia was in the 90 percentile nationwide for “active and collaborative learning” according to the 2012 Community College Survey of Students.

Cascadia is a learning centered community. A learning centered college intentionally provides the most effective educational experiences for all students as well as faculty and staff, and also continually improves as it learns from experiences, exploring new ideas, using data to assess and enhance programs, and implementing and evaluating best practices. Cascadia believes that this approach has contributed to the significant increases in new student retention: e.g., from 68 percent to 73percent for the 2009 and 2012 degree seeking cohorts respectively (See Appendix B for details).

The learning centered community at Cascadia is also a caring community. Small class sizes with frequent group work and highly responsive faculty creates a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Over 94 percent of the students agree that Cascadia provides an accessible, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all students (2012 Community College Survey of Students).

In the next ten years Cascadia is committed to:

**Strengthening integrated education through the expansion of interdisciplinary programs, community based learning, and the implementation of a model globalization plan.** This will be accomplished through the following strategies.

➤ Enhancing interdisciplinary programs

- Implementing the Bachelors of Applied Science in Sustainable Practices
- Expanding learning communities and linked classes for new and continuing students
- Exploring ways to further integrate STEM and Humanities programs
- Developing new interdisciplinary Professional Technical programs/certificates in high demand occupations

➤ Growing community-based learning and internships

- Identifying opportunities in the curriculum for community-based learning and internships
- Developing industry-to-college partnerships that promote assessment and community-based learning programs
- Recruiting industry partners to engage students in real world applications

➤ Developing and implementing a model community college globalization plan

- Developing a comprehensive and integrated internationalization plan including the infusion of global themes into the curriculum and the development of global studies
- Facilitating ties between local and global cultures within Cascadia Community College and beyond
- Exploring innovative ways to link STEM programs to global partners

**Enhancing the quality of the learning-centered environment by improving faculty support, enhancing academic support for students, creating physical spaces to enhance integrated education, and expanding STEM education.** This will be accomplished through the following strategies.

➤ Improving faculty support

- Increasing the full-time part-time faculty ratios to 50:50 of credits taught as budget and enrollment allow
- Increasing support for full time and part time faculty development
- Supporting use of data in implementing best practices in teaching and learning
- Recruiting and supporting faculty to represent the diversity of the student body, pluralism and social justice

➤ Extending Academic Support for Students

- Implementing, assessing and refining effective supplemental instruction and/or tutoring models including developing a comprehensive STEM Learning Center
- Enhancing retention by implementing and improving best practices (e.g., intensive advising for high risk students, mandatory orientation, year-long registration)
- Ensuring the continued adoption and implementation of high impact instructional technology

➤ Creating physical spaces that support integrated education

- Devising physical spaces to more effectively integrate STEM and the humanities
- Creating spaces that support informal modes of learning
- Developing spaces that increase the connections between student learning and community partners

➤ Enhancing and Expanding STEM Education

- Enhancing the quality of STEM education through cutting-edge lab curricula, new faculty hires, and ongoing professional development
- Expand the integration of sustainability research and practices in STEM education
- Creating spaces and identifying resources that allows for the development of undergraduate research opportunities

## **GROWTH**

Cascadia's comprehensive planning involves aligning the institution to projected growth. Influencing this growth is Cascadia's location in King and Snohomish counties, historic enrollment growth exceeding SBCTC targets, an increasing enrollment of Running Start students, an excellent retention rate, and documented excellence as a transfer institution. Highlights of the projected growth include the following:

- The college-age population (17-22) is projected to experience steady growth from 2015-16 to 2040
- The college consistently exceeds SBCTC allocation targets often by over twenty-five percent
- Running Start student enrollment increased significantly over the last three years and the percentage of Running Start students subsequently enrolling as new Cascadia College Students has also increased.
- The FTE overall growth has increased at a faster rate than head count, meaning that students are taking more classes during any given quarter
- Retention has increased steadily over the past five years
- International student enrollment has increased significantly and the number of international students is expected to continue to increase.

Cascadia has established valuable partnerships with local area school districts and four-year institutions such as the University of Washington Bothell, and Bastyr University. It has also established solid relationships with local communities such as Bothell, Redmond, and Snohomish. These strategic connections will help ensure that growth in enrollment and programming will continue for the next ten years.

This analysis support the need for the action items listed under Access and Excellence.

Detailed data and analyses of the growth projections are contained in Appendix B.

## **Conclusion**

Since opening in 2000, Cascadia Community College has established that it is a high quality, growing, access-oriented institution. This academic plan is designed to further the access mission, and continue excellence by transforming lives through integrated education in a learning-centered community.



## APPENDIX A

Cascadia Community College	
We strive for a place where...	<b>OUR VISION</b> Every individual is supported and engaged in lifelong learning.
We do this by...	<b>OUR MISSION</b> Transforming lives through integrated education in a learning-centered community.
We stand for...	<b>OUR VALUES</b> a caring community pluralism & cultural richness collaboration access success innovation environmental sustainability global awareness responsiveness creativity
We teach students how to...	<b>OUR LEARNING OUTCOMES</b> <u>think</u> creatively, critically, and reflectively <u>learn</u> actively <u>interact</u> in complex and diverse environments <u>communicate</u> with clarity and originality
We are committed to...	<b>OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS: 2012-17</b> <u>increasing</u> opportunities for academic-transfer education <u>strengthening</u> collaborations to enhance professional-technical programs <u>being</u> a national model for community college best practices <u>improving</u> financial sustainability <u>helping</u> students complete their education*
* "complete", meaning to transfer, earn a degree or certificate, find a job, or complete an educational goal.	

## APPENDIX B

### Growth at Cascadia: A Comprehensive Analysis

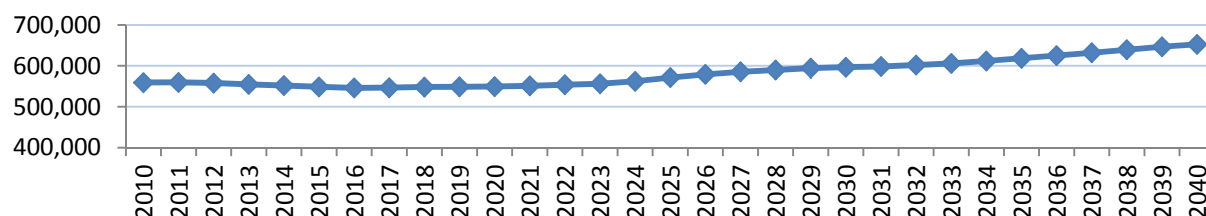
Traditional planning for growth was grounded in setting goals for enrollment based on population/market share and then developing steps to achieve those goals. As enrollments changed with the economy, Cascadia made efforts to not only identify environmental opportunities and threats, but to also manage comprehensive growth planning that involved aligning the institution with its environment externally and internally. By tracking academic success, fiscal resources, recruitment, and retention as interwoven pieces that support each other instead of as silos, the College identified factors that allow them to successfully grow and influence the environment.

These factors include several important growth influencers: population changes, recruitment strategies, retention strategies, and an awareness of Cascadia's role in the community college system and in the community as a transfer institution. Factors such as these take time to become established and internalized into a culture. Cascadia established partnerships with local area school districts and four-year institutions as well as built relationships in area communities such as Bothell, Redmond, and Snohomish. As the College continues to shape its future with intention and purpose, these strategic connections help ensure that growth continues beyond the current market shares.

#### Office of Financial Management State Projections

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) projects the college-age population (17-22) to experience modest declines through 2015-16 before experiencing steady growth through 2040. This is in line with the 12<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment estimates from the school districts and Office of Superintendent of Public Schools (OSPI) showing increases beginning around 2016-17.

#### OFM Population Projections for College Age (17-22)

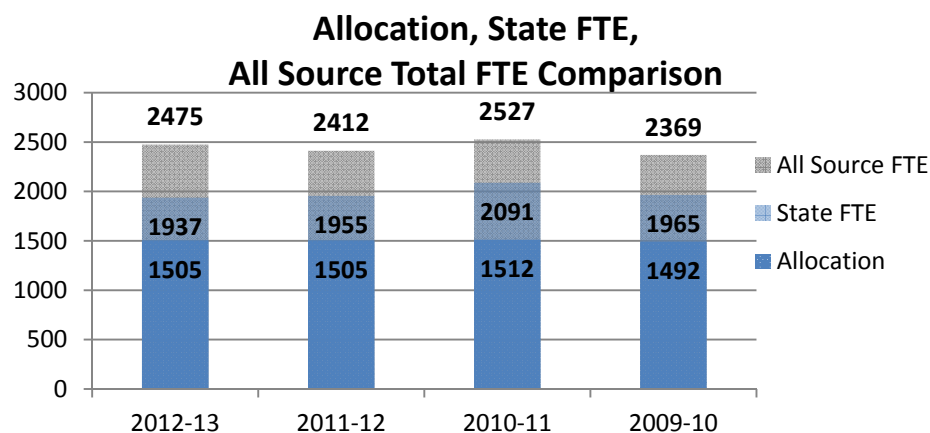


+ This is a positive contribution to Cascadia's growth projections. While the college-age population is not the fastest growing, it is growing and this age group (17-22) is Cascadia's

primary age range. Cascadia is located in areas of King and Snohomish County which are projected for slightly higher growth among this population.

### SBCTC FTE Allocation

Each year the Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) sets an enrollment allocation for institutions in the system. Cascadia has exceeded the SBCTC's allocation every year since it opened by an average of 21 percent. Since 2009, that percentage increased to an average of 32 percent, which demonstrates that the College consistently serves students above the established state level.

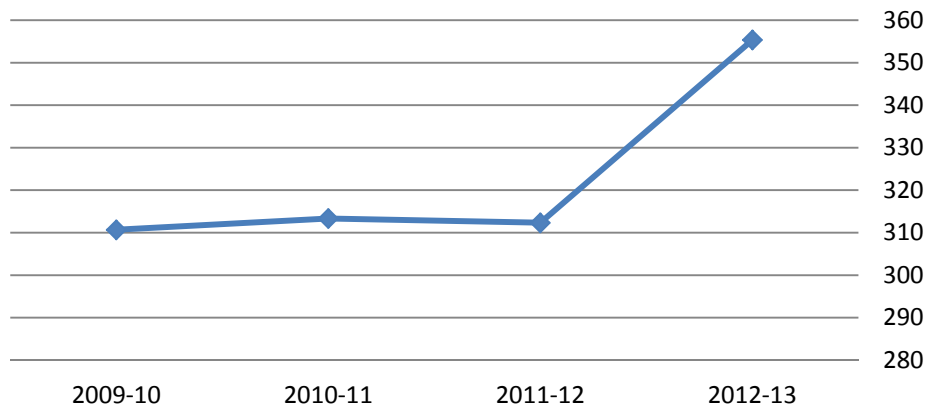


+ This is a positive contribution to Cascadia's growth projections; the college has consistently exceeded SBCTC allocation targets even during state-wide periods of enrollment loss.

### High school/Running Start

Cascadia strategically built strong relationships with local high school districts and strives to provide access pathways that lead to a college education. Students from local high schools are choosing Cascadia as a road to more than just high school completion. The College has experienced significant increases in Running Start (RS) enrollments even though the numbers of senior high school students has decreased.

### Running Start FTEs

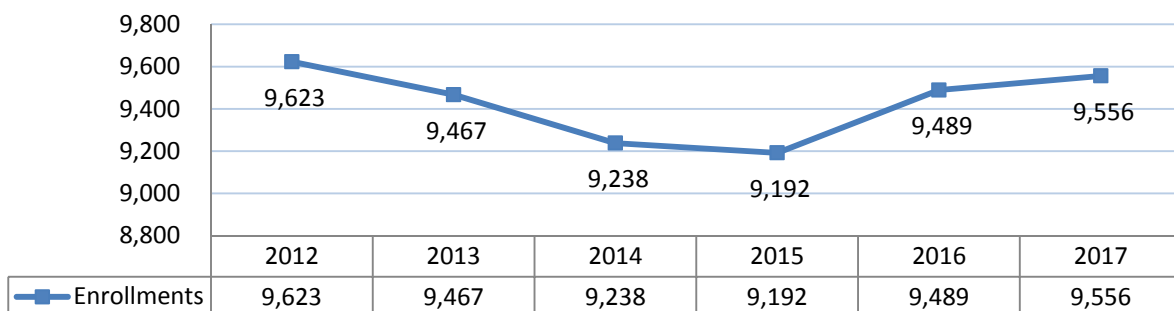


Of the 530 high school students that participated in the Running Start (RS) program in the academic year 2012-13, 50 percent of them were retained from fall to fall: 34 percent in the RS program, 16 percent as new college students, with an additional 7 percent having earned an academic award. This was a 2 percent increase in the conversion rate from the year before. Converting RS enrollments to college enrollments is one area that the College will focus resources on in the coming years as part of our continued growth.

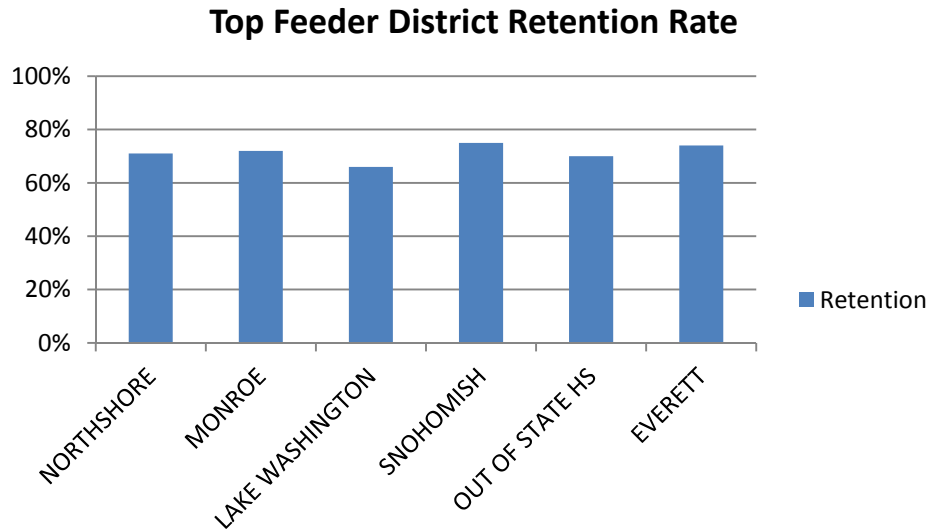
+ This is a positive contribution to Cascadia's growth projections, while the number of high school seniors has experienced some decline; the College has created a Running Start pathway to engage high school students that has thrived even in the midst of a reduction in high school graduates.

As the high school senior population begins to increase, the enrollments in Running Start and traditional new student numbers are projected to increase beginning in 2016.

### Top Feeder Districts 12th Grade Enrollments



Overall enrollments from school districts have been steady at the College for the past several years along with a three year average fall-to-spring retention rate slightly over 70 percent.



+ This is a positive contribution to Cascadia's growth projections; the pathways with the school districts will, at a minimum, maintain the market share and is predicted to increase as senior year enrollments increase in the area feeder districts.

#### Enrollment increases – headcount and FTE

Over the past five years the full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollments have grown at a higher rate than the headcount (HC) of students. Even in 2011-12 when losses were experienced around the system, Cascadia experienced minimal losses, the state allocation was still met, and FTEs were retained at a higher rate.

	FTE	+/- previous year	HC	+/- previous year
<b>2012-13</b>	2475	3%	4547	-4%
<b>2011-12</b>	2412	-5%	4754	-9%
<b>2010-11</b>	2527	7%	5250	1%
<b>2009-10</b>	2369	18%	5214	3%
<b>2008-09</b>	2010	19%	5057	2%

+ This is a positive contribution to Cascadia's growth projections; the FTE overall growth shows the strength of the institution to engage students and help them progress.

## Retention

Retention has become a major focus at Cascadia over the years as the college has worked to develop strategies that help students achieve their academic goals. Overall retention increased 10 percent in the last three years and other key indicator areas have increased approximately 4 percent in the same time period. While Basic Skills experienced a slight increase in 2012-13, it has increased its retention rate dramatically in the four year period.

Retaining students illustrates a solidifying of Cascadia's role as a transfer institution and not just a stop gap until students can get into their chosen school. As Cascadia increasingly becomes part of students' path to their educational goal, retention will continue to influence growth in a positive way.

+ This is a positive contribution to Cascadia's growth projections; the retention in most areas of enrollment has increased steadily over the past five years.

Fall to Spring											
<i>(single filter application)</i>		Overall Retention		Degree Seeking		Basic Skills		Transfer		Workforce	
Fall 2009 New Student Cohort		54%		70%		30%		70%		55%	
Fall 2009 Transfer Student Cohort		48%		62%		33%		55%		41%	
2009 Total New Student Cohort		53%		68%		30%		65%		50%	
Fall 2010 New Student Cohort		↑	58%	↑	75%	↑	44%	↑	72%	↑	57%
Fall 2010 Transfer Student Cohort		↓	47%	↓	57%	↓	22%	↓	53%	↓	36%
2010 Total New Student Cohort		↑	55%	↑	70%	↑	42%	↑	66%	↓	48%
Fall 2011 New Student Cohort		↑	64%	↓	72%	↑	50%	◇	72%	↓	52%
Fall 2011 Transfer Student Cohort		↑	52%	↑	65%	↑	25%	↑	58%	◇	36%
2011 Total New Student Cohort		↑	61%	◇	70%	↑	50%	↑	68%	↑	50%
Fall 2012 New Student Cohort		↑	70%	↑	76%	↓	47%	↑	76%	↑	66%
Fall 2012 Transfer Student Cohort		↓	51%	↓	64%	↑	57%	↓	56%	↑	41%
2012 Total New Student Cohort		↑	65%	↑	73%	↓	48%	↑	70%	↑	57%

## Enrollment Projections

As Cascadia projects its enrollments, all of the above factors play a positive role: retention, population growth, and high school engagement. While the growth line is not filled with dramatic leaps or increases, it represents a solid, steady, climbing trend line.

The projections below are based on a gradually increasing scale from 1.6 to 2.0 percent over the next ten years. These projections are founded on the 2014-15 SBCTC forecast and are reviewed annually with adjustments occurring as needed. The next forecast from the SBCTC should be released around January 2014.

Student Type	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
Academic Transfer	1,250	1,468	1,582	1506	1466	1489	1513	1537	1563	1590	1618	1647	1677	1709	1741	1775	1810
Basic Education	185	174	180	158	193	150	152	155	157	160	163	166	169	172	175	179	182
Pre-College	140	174	170	161	168	155	157	160	163	165	168	171	175	178	181	185	188
Professional Technical	105	149	159	129	111	120	122	124	126	128	130	133	135	138	140	143	146
*State FTE	<b>1,680</b>	<b>1,965</b>	<b>2,091</b>	<b>1,954</b>	<b>1,938</b>	<b>1914</b>	<b>1945</b>	<b>1976</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2043</b>	<b>2080</b>	<b>2118</b>	<b>2156</b>	<b>2197</b>	<b>2239</b>	<b>2281</b>	<b>2327</b>
Running Start	284	311	313	312	355	340	346	352	358	364	371	377	384	391	399	406	415
International	61	90	110	145	177	220	280	390	397	450	550	560	570	581	592	603	615
Total	2,025	<b>2,366</b>	<b>2,514</b>	<b>2,411</b>	<b>2,470</b>	2,474	2,571	2,718	2,764	2,858	3,001	3,055	3,110	3,169	3,229	3,291	3,356
* all numbers come from SBCTC Academic Year Reports							based on SBCTC forecast:										
							OFM by county and state level population was used										
							ESRI data by ZIP and age was used to determine the adjustment needed for king/snohomish colleges										
increase per year +/- based on state + running start							37	37	40	40	43	44	45	48	49	50	

The largest area of enrollment for Cascadia is from students who express a desire for “academic transfer” at an average of 76 percent of total enrollment. The area of academic transfer includes plans for targeted STEM growth including a new Bachelors of Applied Technology in Sustainable Practices. This requires a commitment to labs and resources to accommodate the students and faculty in a learning-centered environment.

While Cascadia was established for an FTE enrollment of 4,000, the campus already experiences growth challenges with an FTE of 2400 in terms of education space and parking (See Appendix D for Needs Assessment) The SBCTC Capital Analysis Model shows Cascadia with a current square footage deficit given its enrollment.

- This is a negative contribution to Cascadia’s growth projections; in the upcoming ten years these issues will need to be resolved in order to achieve the 4,000 FTE.



## APPENDIX C

### Cascadia Student Success in STEM Courses

A major contributor to the lack of STEM graduates with two-year and four-year degrees is the number of students who fail or withdraw from gateway STEM courses in college. A recent report from the U.S. Department of Education found that one of the strongest predictors for STEM students dropping out of college or switching to a non-STEM major is poor grades and withdrawals in STEM courses<sup>2</sup>. The “math-science death march” involves freshmen wading through a blizzard of calculus, physics and chemistry lectures.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, improving undergraduate STEM education with more student engagement in real world projects and undergraduate research is a major priority of the National Science Foundation.

Cascadia Community College embraces integrative and small group-based learning in all disciplines, but it is especially visible in STEM classrooms, where students are engaged well beyond the lecture in an environment that emulates the project-based nature of STEM professions. The pass rate of students enrolled in STEM courses<sup>4</sup> is considerably higher than a recently reported average of 70 percent<sup>5</sup>. For example, 16 of 21 (76 percent) of courses had an average pass rate of 80 percent % or higher (see chart below). Cascadia students also have a very high success rate in transferring to four-year institutions and completing bachelor’s degrees; hence, teaching and learning in these STEM courses at Cascadia must be rigorous. Faculty are not simplifying the curriculum and are not giving high grades liberally; rather they combine high expectations with high impact practices.

These high pass rates indicate the STEM pipeline at Cascadia is less “leaky” than at many institutions and therefore it is an important contributor to the development of STEM graduates in the Puget Sound region. In addition, well established partnerships between Cascadia faculty and local area high school teachers results in aligned curricula and clearly defined pathways for students from high school to the completion of a bachelor’s degree and post-graduate educational plans. Cascadia Community College provides access to students in the local community as well as high quality teaching and learning. The College is a crucial component in reducing the Washington jobs skills gap.

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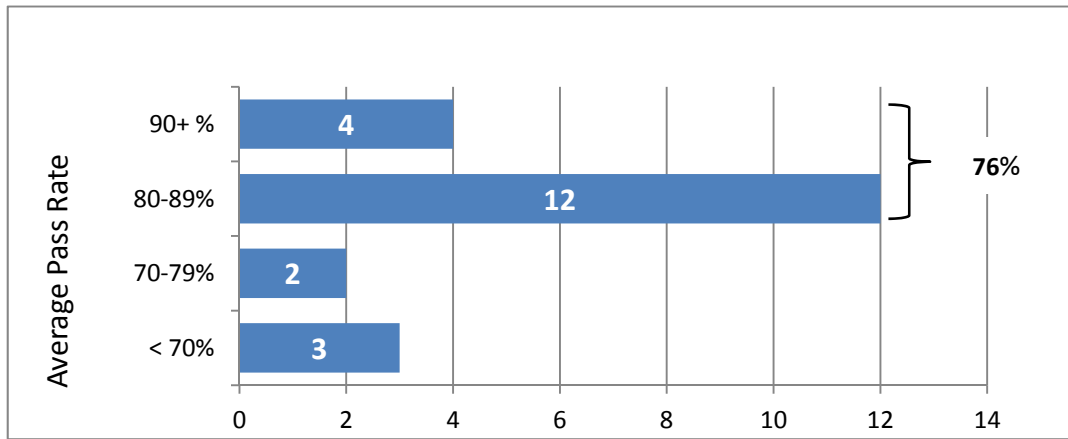
<sup>2</sup> *STEM attrition: College students’ paths into and out of STEM fields: Statistical analysis report* by X, Chen and M. Soldner. November 2013 U.S. Department of Education

<sup>3</sup> Why science majors change their minds (It’s just so darn hard). C. Drew New York Times November 4, 2012

<sup>4</sup> Cascadia’s STEM courses as defined by the SBCTC include GEOG120, CHEM&13, MATH&141, PHYS&121, PHYS&221, ENGR&215, CHEM&161, ENGR&225, PHYS&222, BIOL&211, PHYS&114, BIOL&213, BIOL&212, CHEM&121, PHYS&223, PHYS&122, CHEM&163, BIOL&260, ENGR&214, CHEM&162, PHYS&115

<sup>5</sup> Increased Course Structure Improves Performance in Introductory Biology by S. Freeman, D. Haak,\* and M. P. Wenderoth. *CBE—Life Sciences Education* Vol. 10, 175–186, Summer 2011 .

**Number of STEM Courses by Average Pass Rates**



## **APPENDIX D**

### **Needs Assessment**

The ten-year Academic Plan focuses on enhancing access and excellence under projections of steady enrollment growth. This will require additional resources as outlined below.

#### *Personnel*

Cascadia will need to continue increasing the number of personnel dedicated to supporting students in- and outside of the classroom to achieve the predicted growth rate. This includes not only faculty, but student services and support personnel.

Without additional funding, this is a game of “Leap Frog”. Enrollment must increase slightly in order to hire new personnel. When new personnel are hired, enrollment can continue to increase until enough funding is secured to add more personnel.

Cascadia maintains a maximum classroom capacity of 33 students, which the college will not exceed because of the implications for successful learning.

#### *Space*

The College must secure space for both teaching activities (classrooms, labs, study space) as well as to house personnel. Ideally, these spaces would be on-campus where the learning environment can be more closely monitored and supported.

Alternatively, Cascadia could invest in off-campus satellite venues for teaching. This solution has benefits (increased capacity) and costs (fiscal and learning impacts).

#### *Auxiliary Services*

Cascadia focuses on teaching. Hence, it relies on access to shared auxiliary services with the University of Washington Bothell to fulfill students’ out-of-class needs. Parking is already impacted, dining services are requested beyond the current choices, and child care is not offered.

Beyond enhancing or considering these kinds of services, enrollment growth and access needs will also require an evaluation of regional bus services and commuter opportunities.

A new student center is being built and is expected to be operational by September 2015. While this will add to “campus life,” the building is already too small to handle current enrollment.

### *Technology*

Cascadia maintains a healthy technology reserve account. This serves to replace computer hard- and software for the current population. Increased enrollment will stretch these financial and staffing capabilities.