YEAR ONE
SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

MARCH 2011

CASCADIA
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Year One Self Evaluation Report
Cascadia Community College
March 1, 2011

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

Cascadia Community College celebrated its tenth anniversary last fall. As one of the newest colleges in the state of Washington, it has navigated the challenging waters of creating a new institution while concurrently responding to an explosion of community needs and demands. The college is collocated with the University of Washington-Bothell, a partnership that serves students well.

Cascadia's first official connection with the Commission was as part of Shoreline Community College's Substantive Change Proposal, whereby Shoreline sought permission to provide accreditation support services to Cascadia during its developmental phase. The Commission approved Shoreline Community College's proposal in June 2000; in August of that year, Cascadia enrolled its first students. The College opened with unprecedented success, welcoming 1,940 students (1,067.7 FTEs), far exceeding its State allocation of 800 FTEs.

Cascadia submitted its Application for Consideration for Candidacy to the Commission in November 2000. The Commission notified Cascadia of its approval of the application in February 2001, and the College was authorized to proceed with its self-study. The Commission conducted an evaluation visit in April 2002, and the College was granted "Candidate for Accreditation" status in June. The College provided the Commission with an interim report prior to its Interim Evaluation visit in October 2003. A second interim report and focused visit was completed in October 2004; and a third Interim Evaluation visit was conducted in April 2005.

In early 2007 the College submitted a comprehensive self-study report to the commission. The evaluation site visit in April 2007 affirmed the College's readiness to receive accreditation. The official notice of initial accreditation was received in July 2007. The Commission also requested that Cascadia Community College prepare a Focused Interim Report and host Commission representatives in spring 2009 to address the four recommendations from the spring 2007 Initial Accreditation Evaluation Report. A Focused Interim Report was prepared in March 2009; it provided an update on the institution's responses to the four recommendations. The site visit in April 2009 was very productive and informative for Cascadia. The evaluator's report to the commission resulted in reaffirmation of Cascadia Community College's accreditation, with a Progress Report due in fall 2010 to address one recommendation.

The Fall 2010 Progress Report demonstrated that Cascadia had made great strides in making certain that data is systematically gathered, centrally located, and visible to all constituent groups. Faculty and staff have been working to make the processes in place more visible to internal and external constituencies. The timetable in which data is gathered and analyzed is being systematized. Committees such as the Program Review Task Force have had a more public profile to make constituencies aware of the committee's ongoing activities. More feedback is being provided to faculty and staff about outcomes assessment. Committee chairs and administrators are more conscious of intentionally linking planning and evaluation to the decisions made for the college. A new software package has been purchased to facilitate documentation and tracking of the linkages between outcomes assessment, strategic planning, accreditation goals, and college accountability to help us to follow through on action and documentation. We have instituted accountability reports for the targeted budget allocations that were authorized for 2009-10 so that we can track links between college goals, planning, budgeting, and institutional improvement.

Cascadia has the resources and the expertise to provide a stronger and clearer link between data, analysis, and action. We are making these processes more visible and transparent. Cascadia Community College is on target with the tasks inherent in this recommendation.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Cascadia Community College was founded on the principles of a learning college which include innovation, the involvement of learners (both students and staff), and engagement in continual improvement. When the Board of Trustees reviewed the college mission statement in February 2010, they reaffirmed the language and the intent of being a learning-centered institution. Even though Cascadia has undergone significant changes within the past 12 months (new board members, new president, change of administrative organization, budget cuts, and legislative threats), the college and community remain invigorated by the possibilities for growth and service.

This was very evident on the morning of the All-College Convocation last fall. Enthusiasm was high for the start of the new academic year. As employees gathered for coffee, they prepared to address some important questions: Why does Cascadia exist? What is our purpose? What is our role? Faculty and staff worked in small groups to discuss Cascadia's beginnings, the development of the mission statement, and the changes that had occurred over the past decade. As the groups reported out and discussion ensued, the mission became more focused and essential elements of the mission statement became clearer. The results of this group work were the starting point for articulating Cascadia's two Core Themes: Learning-Centered Education and Collaboration.

The president established a theme team for each Core Theme, charged with the task of clarifying the objectives and outcomes that would be most important for fulfilling Cascadia's mission over the next five years. The teams were composed of institutional effectiveness, two faculty members, a classified staff representative, and an exempt staff representative; two members of the executive committee co-chaired each team. Team members studied the reports from convocation, reviewed the existing strategic plan, considered the board's work plan for the new president, conducted campus-wide surveys, and interviewed many stakeholders. Input was solicited from students, faculty, librarians, and staff members. The first drafts from each team were broad and filled with great ideas and action plans; these comprehensive documents needed reworking to focus the college's efforts on clear objectives with measurable outcomes. The next drafts reviewed by the executive team provided a more focused framework, with more than 60 indicators and measures of effectiveness, but the objectives and outcomes still needed to be tighter. A third draft was prepared; it was distributed to the larger college community via the public website and college intranet for comments, ideas, and questions.

The stakeholders provided feedback that was incorporated into the framework of the two Core Themes. The Board of Trustees reviewed the materials on February 16, 2011. The Core Themes reflect the reason Cascadia Community College was created, and set the direction for fulfilling the mission.

PREFACE

The Board of Trustees for Cascadia Community College reviewed the college mission statement in February 2010 in conjunction with an overview of the accreditation process. The college's Core Themes were discussed in November 2010 and again in more detail in February 2011. The board has endorsed the current mission and core themes as appropriate for Cascadia Community College.

Cascadia Community College has submitted nine reports to the NWCCU in the past decade as part of the process of becoming an institution of higher education accredited by the NWCCU.

- November 2000
- April 2002
- October 2003
- October 2004
- April 2005
- April 2007
- April 2009
- April 2010
- October 2010

Cascadia has been able to address each recommendation received throughout the review process. The last site visit was in April 2009. The evaluator's report to the commission resulted in reaffirmation of Cascadia Community College's accreditation, with a progress report due in fall 2010 to address the one recommendation of the spring 2009 Focused Interim Evaluation Report:

> Cascadia Community College has great examples of "closing the loop" as indicated in this report. However, it is not systematic, documented, broad-based, and universally visible to all constituent groups, in a systematic way, how planning and evaluation lead to institutional improvement and how assessment activities lead to improvement in teaching and learning (Standards 1.B.9, 2.B.3).

Making our planning and assessment processes systematic, documented, and visible to all constituencies has been a major undertaking. The director for institutional effectiveness has met with key college constituencies to discuss what data is available, what data is needed, and where and how information can be accessed and used for decision-making. The Institutional Effectiveness office's mission is to promote student learning and Cascadia's effectiveness by generating and analyzing relevant statistical information that supports college-wide, evidence-based decision-making. The director has worked with the executive team to refine the college processes and document the linkages between planning and institutional improvement. Up-to-date information is available on enrollments, student demographics, and institutional assessments such as the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). General data that was used to assess progress on Cascadia's strategic plan in 2009 and 2010 is public and available for review. Data for the Student Achievement Initiative (SAI), for example, is available in a format (FAST: Fast Analysis System Tool) that allows faculty and administrators to see what kinds of initiatives made a difference for students and for the college's success in helping with student progression. That analysis was important in our decision to refocus college attention on student retention and progression in developmental math. It also allowed us to link our work with our local school districts (and student preparedness for college-level math) with the general college mission focusing on access and success.

The committee working with outcomes assessment has undergone a similar process. There is greater clarity about how outcomes assessment can improve teaching and learning, and faculty members are striving to gather useful data that informs their pedagogy. This is the second year that we have required all full-time faculty to participate in workshops focused on assessing student outcomes. Associate faculty members were also invited to attend, and received a stipend to encourage participation. It was invigorating to witness the energy of faculty as they focused on the rubrics that had been used to assess a random sampling of student work, and the discussions on what kind of assignments fit within different courses to measure the same institutional outcomes.

Cascadia has made great strides in making certain that data is systematically gathered, centrally located, and visible to all constituent groups. Faculty, staff, and students can access the data via Cascadia's intranet, My.Cascadia. The college website has a page that provides information for external constituencies about the data collected and an analysis of the implications. It has been a challenge for Cascadia to document that changes have occurred because of the data review process. Although faculty and staff can articulate the changes that have occurred in the curriculum and the institution based on the data, the college did not have one central location for tracking and storing such information. We also prepared accountability reports for the targeted budget allocations that were authorized for 2009-10 so that we can document links between college goals, planning, budgeting, and institutional improvement.

The major institutional change since the October 2010 report to the NWCCU has been the purchase of a software package from StudentVoice that will facilitate documenting the progress and linkages between our core themes, the outcomes assessment process, strategic planning, and budgeting. Staff training for the package has started; additional employees will be trained over the next six months. The student

government has also purchased a software module that will link with our institutional assessment software so that we can bring in the student life activities component more easily. The college's public website is currently undergoing a redesign to improve accessibility to Cascadia's processes and data. Cascadia is committed to more systematic documentation and more visible links between data, analysis, and action.

CHAPTER ONE: MISSION, CORE THEMES, AND EXPECTATIONS

SECTION I: STANDARD 1.A

Cascadia Community College has a widely published mission statement that has been approved by the Board of Trustees. The mission statement articulates an appropriate purpose for an institution of higher learning, gives direction to Cascadia's efforts, and is generally understood by our community.

> Cascadia is a community college whose caring culture supports creative, comprehensive, culturally rich, technologically advanced, and learner-centered education that is environmentally sensitive, globally aware, and seamlessly linked with the community, area enterprise, and other educational institutions.

Cascadia Community College identified two core themes, with extensive thought and input from a variety of constituencies, based on the Cascadia mission statement and founding principles of a learning college; the core themes are Learning-Centered Education and Collaboration. These two themes embody the foremost, integrated areas through which we realize our mission, and encompass all the college does with transfer education, basic skills, professional technical offerings, and continuing education. The themes overlap and integrate with each other as well as with the four institutional Learning Outcomes; Think, Learn, Interact, and Communicate. The College's support systems to assist learners are addressed by the two core themes. The following section describes these core themes, their objectives and intended outcomes, indicators of effectiveness, and the rationale for selection of the indicators. These core themes individually convey essential elements of, and collectively encompass, our mission.

We struggled to define mission fulfillment. As we refined our objectives and outcomes under the core themes, each item along the way needed to be considered in the framework of mission fulfillment. Ideally, each student would progress toward his/her goals in a timely manner and complete at Cascadia on track with clearly articulated goals for the future. Ideally, each employee would embrace learning opportunities of benefit to the employee and the institution. Ideally, all of the objectives would be met at 100%. The reality is that within the context of the purpose and characteristics of the institution, not everything can be accomplished at 100%. Each core theme therefore has objectives and outcomes with indicators that reflect a reasonable stretch; they are intended to take the college to the next level of service.

Therefore, for Cascadia Community College's initial foray into defining mission fulfillment under these terms and circumstances, we propose that meeting 70% of the effectiveness standards set for the objectives and outcomes would be a satisfactory measure of successful mission fulfillment.

SECTION II: STANDARD 1.B

Core Theme One: Learning-Centered Education
Learning-Centered Education is a focus on both the *Learner* and the learning *Environment* such that learners have the ability to meet their educational goals. *"The learning college places learning first and provides educational experiences for learners anyway, anyplace, anytime"* (O'Banion, 1995-96, p. 22).

The learning college is based on six key principles: 1). The learning college creates substantive change in individual learners; 2). The learning college engages learners as full partners in the learning process, with learners assuming primary responsibility fo r their own choices; 3). The learning college creates and offers as many options for learning as possible; 4). The learning college assists learners to form and participate in collaborative learning activities; 5). The learning college defines the roles of learning facilitators by the needs of the learners; 6). The learning college and its learning facilitators succeed only when improved and expanded learning can be documented for its learners.

In support of our values and in keeping with its mission, Cascadia has made a consistent effort to fully embody its learning-college identity.

Objectives and Intended Outcomes
The objectives for this core theme, Learning-Centered Education, identify strategies to enable Cascadia to encompass the six principles of a *Learning College,* define our mission, and provide outcomes and indicators of effectiveness that are measurable and assessable.

Objective #1: Foster a learning-centered environment that engages students and employees.

Outcome	Indicator and Effectiveness
College-wide learning outcomes are the framework for structuring courses and programs for students, and professional development for employees	**Robust academic program review**; 100% of programs complete 360 program review; 100% of course syllabi and Course Outcome Guides (COGs) reflect institutional learning outcomes **Professional development**; 50% of permanent employees are engaged in a given year in professional development; 50% of professional development learning is further shared with campus colleagues
Learners are actively engaged	**CCSSE Active and Collaborative benchmark;** Achieve and maintain 90th percentile **CCSSE Student Faculty Interaction benchmark;** Achieve and maintain 80th percentile **Community engagement**; 3% annual increase in the number of students engaged in service learning
Faculty professional development focused on pedagogy	**Teaching and learning assessment workshops**; 25% of permanent and non-permanent faculty participating; 90% attending new faculty orientation; 3 training events on teaching design and innovation annually
Development of student leadership skills	**Student clubs leader training;** 60% participating in training **Club activities**; 5% annual increase in club sponsored activities

Rationale: A strong, robust, 360-degree program review lays the foundation for a learning environment that engages students and provides a scheduled documented feedback loop to faculty. This includes comprehensive course outcome guides that integrate the institutional learning outcomes with the

curriculum and consistent course syllabi that inform and support learners. All staff and employees are encouraged to continue learning through professional development. Participating in activities and sharing the knowledge gained back out to the campus feeds both the learning environment and engagement. By using the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), we are using the students' feedback to ensure we are responsive to their needs.

Objective #2: Provide support services that enable achievement of student educational goals

Outcome	Indicator and Effectiveness
Welcoming environment	**CCSSE CQ -11**. *Cascadia provides an accessible, inclusive and welcoming environment for all students*; Maintain score in the 90th percentile
Services support student needs	**CCSSE SUPPORT benchmark;** Use/satisfaction/importance rating increases and decreases reflect services offered
Technology options meet student expectations	**Noel Levitz CQ-76**. *Use and availability of technology at the institution meets my need;* Achieve/maintain a Satisfied to Very Satisfied rating

Rationale: Supporting learners' needs is part of creating an environment where students feel safe and want to engage with the campus to complete their goals. By using the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, we are using the students' feedback to ensure we are meeting their needs. It is important to listen to the students directly; therefore, these surveys are conducted on a regular schedule with follow up reports and workshops analyzing the results and sharing feedback.

Objective #3: Promote environmental sensitivity within our curricular content and within our institutional decisions.

Outcome	Indicator and Effectiveness
Courses reflect integration of environmental content	**Course Outcome Guides**; 50% contain environmental content **CCSSE CQ-12.** *Cascadia's focus on environmental sensitivity is obvious in how and what faculty teach;* Achieve/maintain a Satisfied to Very Satisfied percentage at or above 85%
Institutional activities reflect environmental sensitivity	**Recycling options;** 2% increase of recyclables collected per AYR **Student and staff participation in environmental activities;** Environmental events and activities see regular increases in exhibits and participation

Rationale: A key element of our mission is sensitivity to our environment. Cascadia incorporates environmental sensitivity into our curriculum creating an environment of learners that engage and understand what is involved in being part of an ecological community. Using the Community College Survey of Student Engagement gives a consistent measure of effectiveness in reaching learners. Learners and the institution assist each other in being more aware by participating together in teaching and learning activities.

Objective #4: Create an environment where global and intercultural awareness thrive.

Outcome	Indicator and Effectiveness
Global and intercultural awareness in curricular materials	**Course Outcome Guides reflect global and intercultural awareness content;** 50% contain global and intercultural content **CCSSE CQ-13**. *The college provides students with exposure to issues and cultures needed to become globally aware;* Achieve/maintain a Satisfied to Very Satisfied percentage at or above 85%
Active, ongoing educational exchange programs	**Electronically mediated student exchanges**; 3 successful electronically mediated (international ITV) student exchanges a year

	Participation in educational exchange programs; 30 students in study abroad
Events engaging global and multicultural themes held on campus	**Noel Levitz CQ-75**. *The college provides students with exposure to the issues and cultures needed to become more globally aware*; Achieve/maintain a Satisfied rating while striving to a Very Satisfied rating **Engagement in event organization**; International students have organizing role in 50% of all global and multicultural events

Rationale: Another key element evident in our mission which is vital to creating an environment for learning and engagement is global and intercultural awareness. A minimum of fifty percent of the curriculum contains objectives to ensure this commitment. Again, we turn to the students through the use of both the Community College of Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory to ensure we are meeting this objective. Participation in educational exchange programs enriches the lives of our learners and in turn, our environment. Having active participation from our international students also increases the global and intercultural awareness and engagement on our campus.

Objective #5: Support students' educational goal achievement via access, progress, and completion

Outcome	Indicator and Effectiveness
Enrollment represents our service area	**Demographic profile**; Reflects service area demographic profile within a 5% margin
Student progress towards goal	**Student Achievement Initiative (SAI);** Regular AYR increases for Basic Skills, Pre-college, 15 credit, 30 credit, and student completion points
Students have ability to learn while being employed	**Students working while attending classes**; Maintain in proportion to enrollment trends **Student options for degree completion;** 3-5% yearly expansion of course delivery options
Student completion	**CCSSE CQ-15.** *Cascadia's learning model that stresses active and collaborative learning has contributed to my success*; Increase Strongly Agree/Agree to 85% **Degree completions**; Increase completions by 5% each AYR **Completion/working**; Increase by 2% working after completion

Rationale: Supporting students' access is the first step in engaging students in a learning environment. Making sure that we represent the demographic profile of our service area is an indicator of open access to our community. Supporting student progress becomes evident as a learner achieves milestones such as level progression in Basic Skills, pre-college, 15 credits, 30 credits, and completion. Using the State Board of Community and Technical College Student Achievement Initiative (SAI) points provides consistent, measurable, and assessable means of monitoring how successfully we are supporting our students' progress. It is important to Cascadia to support student goal completion by putting in place action plans to increase the number of learners completing their goals for both full-time learners and those working while they learn, and to use the Community College of Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to be sure we are meeting this outcome.

Core Theme Two: Collaboration

Collaboration is the process by which Cascadia enhances and extends its effectiveness through both internal and external partnerships. We know that creating a learning environment extends well beyond the edge of our campus. Being part of a community makes us a resource for all learners, from high school to lifelong to business and civic. In support of our values and in keeping with its mission, Cascadia makes a consistent effort to fully bridge the gap across educational experiences for learners.

Objectives and Intended Outcomes
The objectives for this core theme, Collaboration, identify strategies to enable Cascadia to enhance academic learning as well as to foster relationships that strengthen engagement for learners, define our mission, and provide outcomes and indicators of effectiveness that are measurable and assessable.

Objective #1: Strengthen engagement with other educational institutions.

Outcome	Indicator and Effectiveness
Area high school students complete more college credits	**Number of College in the High School courses offered**; 3 additional courses offered first year; increases in alignment with College in the High School plan thereafter **Enrollment in College in the High School courses and Running Start**; 10% increase in the percentage of high school students in Cascadia's service area taking classes
Students seeking a 4 year degree transfer at higher rates	**Transfer rate of transfer intent code students (SBCTC);** 5% increase in the overall transfer rate **Transfer rates to institutions with which Cascadia has a partnership**; 10% increase in the transfer rate to institutions with which Cascadia has a partnership
Applications for admission increase relative to potential admissions pool	**Number of applications relative to potential student population in Cascadia's service area**; 5% increase in applicant yield **Number of placement tests taken in proportion to number of applications**; 10% increase in the ratio of placement tests taken to applications
Curricula align to enable student progress	**Number of institutions with whom Cascadia faculty are collaborating to develop articulation agreements**; 3 faculty per year engaged in the development of articulation agreements **Number of articulation agreements**; 1 new articulation agreement a year

Rationale: In order to best serve the student it is important to provide multiple options for learning which is achieved through active working partnerships with others. Increasing the number of courses offered to high school students shows a working collaboration that strengthens relationships and provides opportunity for learners. Students will also benefit from relationships between Cascadia and the four year institutions. Increasing the transfer rates is beneficial to not only the four-year and Cascadia, but supports the completion of learner goals through the collaboration.

Objective #2: Form and sustain partnerships to create opportunities for learners.

Outcome	Indicator and Effectiveness
Course offerings based on industry needs	**Number of courses;** 1 course per year developed in response to industry demand **Number of programs;** 1 new professional technical program within 5 years **Industry participation;** 5 industry speakers per year in each program
Industry internships	**Internship availability;** 5% annual increase in number of available internships

	Internship participation; 5% annual increase in internship participation
Industry support of technology enhances learning	Industry contributions in the realm of technology; 2% increase of industry speakers on technology issues; increasing dollar value of industry contributions of hardware and software
Student scholarships	Number of student scholarships; 1 new student scholarship per year Scholarship funds distributed; 5% annual increase in scholarship funds available per FTE

Rationale: Working through our program curriculum and the Continuing Education program, partnerships are formed that create multiple opportunities for learners. Responding to the needs of industry by developing courses that are in demand supports learners and strengthens the understanding of community needs. The creation and participation of internships creates opportunities for learners and integrates the campus with the community. People support ideas and principles they believe in. Increasing support for Cascadia through contributions of hardware and software is a strong indicator of support of Cascadia's mission and increases the experience for learners. Another powerful indicator of community support for Cascadia and our learners comes in the form of donations for scholarships. These scholarships build relationships and truly provide learner experiences that otherwise may not have been possible.

CONCLUSION

Cascadia Community College is a vibrant, learning-centered institution. Even though it is a relatively new kid on the block, the college is maturing in its offerings and in its processes. There is a commitment to fulfilling the mission for which the college was established and a passion for doing that within the framework of the two core themes articulated: Learning-Centered Education and Collaboration.

The core themes were developed with extensive thought and input from various constituencies. All that the college does with transfer education, basic skills, professional technical offerings, and continuing education is encompassed within the two core themes. All of the support systems in place to assist learners are addressed by the two core themes.

In the past decade Cascadia has responded to each NWCCU recommendation as a learning opportunity to do a better job of serving our community. The college is stronger for that feedback. Cascadia is preparing to move into its second decade at the same time the NWCCU moves into the new accreditation standards. This exercise of thoughtfully reviewing the college mission statement and the activities conducted in its name was timely as we celebrated our 10th anniversary. The mission statement was reaffirmed by the board of trustees. The core themes, along with the objectives and outcomes, provide Cascadia's framework for assessing our purpose. The college is focused on providing service while concurrently embodying the principles of a Learning College and providing systematic documentation that planning and evaluation lead to institutional improvement.

Cascadia Community College is prepared to move forward within the accreditation cycle.

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