Year One Peer-Evaluation Report

Central Oregon Community College
Bend, Oregon
Spring 2013

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

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Introduction

Central Oregon Community College (COCC) is a two-year public community college with 11,334 students enrolled in college-credit classes during the 2011-2012 academic year. While the main campus is located in Bend, OR, COCC also operates campuses in the nearby communities of Redmond, Madras, and Prineville. The COCC district covers a 10,000-square-mile area including 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, which employs 117 full-time faculty, 50 adjunct faculty, as well as approximately 200 part-time instructors.

From March 1, 2013 to May 17, 2013, a three-person peer-evaluation team from the Commission conducted a Year One Peer-Evaluation of Central Oregon Community College in a distance environment. The structure of the evaluation consisted of a teleconferenced meetings through audio conferencing authorized by the Commission. The peer evaluation was conducted based upon the Commission's 2010 Accreditation Standards and Eligibility Requirements.

The College's accreditation was reaffirmed in July 2012 on the basis of the Spring 2012 Comprehensive Evaluation which was expanded to address Recommendation 1 of the Spring 2011 Year One peer evaluation report. In reaffirming COCC's accreditation, the Commission requested that the Spring 2013 Year One Self-Evaluation Report include an addendum to address Recommendations 1, 2, and 3 of the Spring 2012 Comprehensive Peer-Evaluation Report.

Report on Recommendation 1

Recommendation 1 is as follows:
"The Evaluation Committee recommends that the Institution identify learning outcomes for all transfer and applied courses, programs, and degrees, and develops a systematic method for applying the results to improve student learning (2.C.2, 2.C.11, 4.A.3, Eligibility Requirement 22)."

- The Evaluation Committee is concerned that although COCC reports a program review process is underway to support this recommendation, and will be completed by the end of 2014, no evidence to support or illustrate this progress was included in this report.

Report on Recommendation 2

Recommendation 2 is as follows:
"Recognizing that all institutional activities should support core themes, the Evaluation Committee recommends that the institution recognize and document how institutional activities support the College mission and core themes. (3.B.1)"

- The Evaluation Committee is concerned that the College still has not documented how institutional activities recognize and support the College's Mission and Core Themes. Although updating the College's Strategic Plan is a good start, it is still not readily apparent how the Colleges everyday operations and activities are guided and shaped by COCC's Mission.

Report on Recommendation 3

Recommendation 3 is as follows:
"The Evaluation Committee recommends that the institution articulate a more comprehensive methodology for assessing core theme fulfillment. For example, indicators might include student learning outcomes, program outcomes, nationally normed tests, feedback from transfer institutions and employers, and student satisfaction, etc. (1.B)"

- The faculty and staff of COCC have started identifying assessment methodology, but are encouraged to update and refine their plans. Specific areas that could benefit from refinement are found later in this report.

Assessment of the Self-Evaluation Report

Central Oregon Community College submitted a lengthy Year One Self-Evaluation Report that clearly demonstrates the significant amount of time and effort put forth in addressing and documenting their accreditation efforts. The report clearly identifies the institution's Themes, Objectives, and Indicators. However, the Evaluation Committee was concerned that the report is long on narrative, and short on details, especially in regards to rationales for the Objective Indicators.

Report on Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility Requirement Two – Authority

Central Oregon Community College was chartered by the State of Oregon's Board of Education on September 28, 1965, and thus fulfills Eligibility Requirement 2.

Eligibility Requirement Three – Mission and Core Themes

The COCC Board of Directors approved the current COCC Mission Statement on November 14, 2012, and the current vision statement on December 12, 2012. The COCC Core Themes were approved by the Board on December 9, 2009. In December 2011, the COCC Board of Directors revised the Board goals to clarify the alignment between these goals and the four Core Themes: (1) transfer and articulation, (2) workforce development, (3) basic skills, and (4) lifelong learning. As such, COCC fulfills Eligibility Requirement 3.

Section One

Report on Standard 1.A: Mission

Mission Statement (1.A.1)

Central Oregon Community College's Mission Statement is "Central Oregon Community College promotes student success and community enrichment by providing quality, accessible, lifelong educational opportunities."

Acceptable threshold of Mission Fulfillment (1.A.2)

COCC is still in the process of establishing specific benchmarks for the Objectives and Indicators, although the method for measuring our success is captured by a color-coded rating; Red signifies achievement that has not yet met the minimum benchmark threshold, yellow signifies achievement at an acceptable level, and green signifies that aspirational achievement has been reached. COCC defines mission fulfillment as achieving at least acceptable—yellow— status in 70% of the achievement indicators in each of the four core Theme areas.

- The Evaluation Committee is very concerned that specific benchmarks have to yet been identified and quantified. Although the foundation of this assessment has been framed, there is yet much work to do in order to transform this process into a meaningful and useful assessment tool of COCC's Mission.

Report on Standard 1.B: Core Themes

Core Theme Identification (1.B.1)

The COCC Board adopted four Core Themes in December 2009 that manifest the essential elements of COCC's mission as articulated in the Board goals and priorities.
- Transfer and Articulation
- Workforce Development
- Basic Skills

- Lifelong Learning

Core Theme Objectives and Indicators (1.B.2) Transfer and Articulation

COCC has identified three Objectives, and eighteen supporting Indicators, connecting the College's Mission with Transfer Preparation:

- 1.1: Maximize entry, support, and exit services to promote access and success for students intending to transfer.
    - Although this Objective identifies student services to promote access and success for students, none of the 6 Indicators except for 1.1a appear to directly assess student services. All of the stated Indicators measure student success, and are thus seemingly used as an indirect measure of the student services meant to support that success.
    - In the rationale section, it is noted that: "By also tracking transfer students who do not complete a credential prior to transfer, the College can better understand student behavior and plan accordingly." It is unclear how simply tracking these students will allow COCC to alter their processes and procedures to address future non-completers.

1.2: Maintain and strengthen student opportunities to make reasonable progress toward degree completion and/or transfer.
- Several of the Indicators for Objective 1.2 raise issues that may diminish their usefulness as assessment Indicators.
    - 1.2.c - it is unclear how "non-traditional" is defined at COCC.
    - 1.2.d - This assessment tool appears to be limited to concurrently enrolled High School students.
    - 1.2.e – This assessment tool appears to be limited to concurrently enrolled High School students.
- The rational section does not seem to correspond well to the Indicators of this Objective, and in short does not adequately explain how or why COCC believes these Indicators help measure Objective 1.2

1.3: Provide students with a rigorous, high-quality general education experience.

- Half of the six Indicators for Objective 1.3 utilize student satisfaction surveys for data collection and assessment. Although such surveys can be useful in addressing some questions, the evaluation committee is concerned with such a heavy reliance on student surveys.

- In it unclear how the percentage of full-time faculty submitting course assessment results makes a direct, or independent analysis of rigor. It would seem that the percentage should always equal 100%, and the assessment value comes from what is contained within the reports.

Core Theme Objectives and Indicators (1.B.2) Workforce Development

COCC has identified five Objectives, and twenty-one supporting Indicators, connecting the College's Mission with Workforce Development:

2.1: Services for CTE students will maximize entry, support, and exit services to promote successful completion of CTE programs.

- This appears to be essentially the same Objective as 1.1, and thus it is unclear how this is an objective unique, and thus appropriate, to this particular Core Theme.
- Indicator 2.1.b is not clear as to what supplemental services would be provided or when they would be provided.
- The rational section does not seem to correspond well to the Indicators of this Objective, and in short does not adequately explain how or why COCC believes these Indicators help measure Objective 2.1.

2.2: COCC will deliver CTE curricula that align with current industry standards.

- All Indicators spear to be relevant and appropriate, however, 2.2c – 2.2e all appear to measure the same general variable. It would seem logical to integrate these all into a single Indicator.

2.3: Students actively participating in CTE programs will achieve the sought after program credential.

- It appears that this Objective simply states that all CTE students will complete their program.
    - Is this not an Objective you want for all programs? How is this Objective unique to the CTE program, and thus not applicable to all other programs at the institution?

2.4: COCC will prepare students for employment through the acquisition of knowledge, discipline-specific skills, and employability skills necessary to meet current industry needs.

- Well Done - No comments or suggestions.

2.5: COCC will cultivate current and future industry partnerships and assist industry partners in regional economic development.

- Although the Objective and associated Indicators are appropriate and well presented, the Rationale does not appear to support the Indicators, and it is extremely unclear how the stated rationale relates back to, and supports, COCC's Mission.

Core Theme Objectives and Indicators (1.B.2) Basic Skills

COCC has identified four Objectives, and eleven supporting Indicators, connecting the College's Mission with Basic Skills:

3.1: Students who complete English Language Learner (ELL) courses will have the skills to succeed in Adult Basic Education/Adult Secondary Education (ABE/ASE) courses.

- Well Done - No comments or suggestions.

3.2: Students who complete Adult Secondary Education (ASE) level courses will have the skills necessary to obtain a GED.

- It is unclear how 3.2.a would be measured; however, 3.2.b appears to be an adequate indicator that is readily measurable, thus would suggest eliminating 3.2.a altogether.

3.3: Adult Secondary Education (ASE) completers will have the skills to succeed in credit writing and math courses.

- Well Done - No comments or suggestions.

3.4: Students who successfully complete developmental writing and/or math courses will succeed in higher-level credit writing and math courses appropriate to their certificate or degree programs.

- Well Done - No comments or suggestions

Core Theme Objectives and Indicators (1.B.2) Lifelong Learning

COCC has identified five Objectives, and fifteen supporting Indicators, connecting the College's Mission with Lifelong Learning:

4.1: Broaden learning opportunities based on assessed campus, community, and industry needs.

- It is unclear the differences between 4.1.a and 4.1.b. as these both appear to address the same material. What is the functional difference between trainings and work skills?

4.2: Increase overall, lifelong learning participation.

- In 4.2.a, the term "Activities" appears to be extremely broad. Can the institution track, and thus by definition have defined, all of these "activities?"

4.3: Increase accessibility, instructional delivery, and registration options in Community Learning.

- 4.3.c – It would seemingly be more appropriate to measure non-credit online enrollment rather than successful non-credit online registrations. The latter seems to imply you are comparing successful vs. unsuccessful enrollments.

4.4: Improve marketing effectiveness.

- 4.4.c – Need to include some measure for assessing the use of Social Media.

4.5: Design and advance learning opportunities for faculty and staff.

- Well Done - No comments or suggestions.

Summary

The faculty, staff, and administration at Central Oregon Community College have illustrated through the production of their Year One Self-Evaluation Report they have put considerable time, effort, and thought into crafting the Mission and Core Themes of their institution. Although the institution has identified four Objectives, in general the Indicators used to assess those goals, and the definitions of specific benchmarks to measure goal attainment need to be revisited, and refined.

Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations:

Recommendations:

1. The Evaluation Committee recommends that the recommendations set forth in the prior report need to still be addressed by COCC, with specific attention paid to how the College will measure and address daily operations as to their relation and support of the institution's mission.

2. The Evaluation Committee recommends that COCC identify quantifiable achievement benchmarks.

3. The Evaluation Committee recommends that COCC ensure rationales clearly address and support their objectives and indicators.

4. The Evaluation Committee recommends that COCC provide more specificity as to how Indicators will be measured.