Comprehensive Self-evaluation Report

Highline
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Prepared for The Northwest Commission
on Colleges and Universities

August 2013

Year Seven
Comprehensive
Self-Evaluation Report

Prepared for
The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

Highline Community College
August 26, 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Institutional Overview

College profile

Founded in 1961, today Highline serves approximately 17,000 students. Our campus has expanded over the years to meet student, technology, and employer needs. In addition to the main campus in Des Moines, we now offer a limited range of classes at sites in local communities, including our Marine Science and Technology Center (MaST) at nearby Redondo Beach. Highline offers associate degrees that prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions along with associate degrees and certificates in approximately 40 professional-technical programs. We also offer pre-college and basic education, short-term training programs, and continuing education classes. In addition to face-to-face daytime classes, we offer on-line, hybrid, web-supported, evening and weekend classes to serve today's mix of traditional and non-traditional students.

With over 68% of our students reporting race or ethnicity other than white, Highline remains the most racially diverse community college in the state — almost twice as diverse as the system average, in fact. The majority of our students are local adult learners, but we also serve approximately 650 international students, along with 1,064 high school juniors and seniors in the state's Running Start co-enrollment program. Students' purposes for attending are varied, with 30% seeking basic skills education, 30% declaring an intention to transfer to a four-year institution, 21% attending for work-related courses or other educational goals, 2% seeking high school completion, and 1% looking for personal enrichment.

Current environment

As with other colleges in the Washington community and technical college system, over the last few years Highline's enrollments increased dramatically as displaced workers returned to school for retraining or enrolled because of the absence of employment opportunities. Over that period, the college successfully coped with increasing enrollment pressures, adding course sections in various delivery formats to meet the needs of the community. Meantime, we continued to experience strong demand from new immigrant groups seeking tuition-waivered basic skills courses, which remain nearly one-third of our overall effort. We have been nimble in our response to these challenges, launching new initiatives while preserving the majority of our core services.

Finances have remained an ongoing challenge, with continuing reductions year-to-year in direct state support. Between 2007-08 and today, for example, the college lost almost $9 million in state dollars, with $5 million of that cut taken since 2009-10 alone. We buffered that loss through a combination of strategic budget cuts and increased reliance on tuition and revenue from Running Start and international enrollments. Because we had meaningful core themes and objectives in place, the college made budget choices that best met those goals. Most recently, the 2013 Legislature adopted a 2013-15 budget with minimal cutbacks to higher education; at the same time, the state's economy is slowly stabilizing. As a result, we anticipate greater financial stability in the immediate years ahead.

In addition to the challenges of smaller budgets and larger enrollments, the past several years in Washington state higher education have seen many long-term practices and policies begin to undergo change — among them, statewide placement practices, academic transfer processes, and degree-approval mechanisms. During this period, Highline has benefited from stability in its internal structure, allowing us to focus on our core themes and attain some noteworthy achievements to advance those core themes. Here are a few highlights:

Core Theme 1 — Student engagement, learning and achievement: In 2012-13, we completed our second year as an Achieving the Dream Leader College — a national-level recognition of our sustained improvement in key student achievement indicators and our leadership in the nation's student completion movement. Also, we completed our second year of a TRiO grant which provides wrap-around support services to first-generation college students, low-income students, and students with disabilities. Our Gateway to College (GtC) program, a college-based high school dropout-recovery initiative, admitted its second 50-student cohort in 2012-13. The same year saw our second round of faculty engagement in Reading Apprenticeship Training, a pedagogy that

increases student retention and success. At the same time, Highline's Placement Task Force created several solutions for various departments to adopt more effective and student-friendly intake placement methods.

Core Theme 2 — Diversity and globalism: This year we started the Culturally Competent Educators initiative to increase our cultural competence in serving students. Also, in our second year of a federal Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) grant, we expanded our ACHIEVE project, which helps intellectually disabled individuals attend and succeed in college. The Mathematics Engineering and Science Achievement (MESA) Student Center also completed its second year in 2012-13, offering academic support and advising for underrepresented students in math, engineering, science, and technology, and providing a concrete bridge to four-year transfers. Over the same period, our global initiatives have continued to expand partnerships and exchanges with educational institutions in Egypt, Indonesia, Brazil, and China. Ongoing global projects include our Community College Initiative (CCI) program, which in its fourth year brought more than ten non-traditional students from seven countries to study at Highline. At the same time, our Welcome Back Center continues to provide a streamlined path to careers for immigrant adults who had medical careers in their home countries.

Core Theme 3 — Presence within the college's communities: This year, as a community service, we launched Career Coach, an online program that provides current local data on employment and associated education and training, and offers a Resume Builder. In response to low participation rates among local Latino populations, we also initiated a Spanish language website and various Latino outreach initiatives. This past year saw a second, very successful annual Highline Alumni Dinner. The third annual Black and Brown Male Youth Summit hosted keynote speakers and workshops where students can learn and have courageous conversations about masculinity and about being a student, a leader, and a change agent. Meantime, the Marine Science and Technology (MaST) Center remained open year-round for education to the community and students. Our Small Business Development Center worked with new clients and created new jobs while our StartZone microenterprise initiative continued to launch new businesses led by low-income women, people with disabilities, and immigrant communities.

Core Theme 4 — Sustainability: Sustainability includes not only preserving existing resources but also garnering new ones. In addition to a number of recent grants, our ongoing awards include $225,000 in National Science Foundation funding for geoscience education, and monies from the Port of Seattle, which underwrote a major renovation of our unhealthy Building 4 this past year. Another grant helped us to decrease our waste tonnage. Also, this past year we recruited a dozen new-to-Highline full-time faculty, converted three from part-time to full-time, and successfully promoted employees from within our institution, including the director of Multicultural Services, the Institutional Research Office's project manager,. One-time funds from sources such as extra tuition were also used strategically to move the college's goals forward, including facilities upgrades, software purchases, and temporary staffing expansions.

Highline Community College today remains a vibrant, innovative, and values-driven institution. In keeping with our core themes, we strive to serve our diverse community with passion, respect, and excellence, as well as to be a part of that community.

NORTHWEST COMMISSION ON COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

BASIC INSTITUTIONAL DATA FORM

Information and data provided in the institutional self-evaluation are usually for the academic and fiscal year preceding the year of the evaluation committee visit. The purpose of this form is to provide Commissioners and evaluators with current data for the year of the visit. After the self-evaluation report has been finalized, complete this form to ensure the information is current for the time of the evaluation committee visit. Please provide a completed copy of this form with each copy of the self-evaluation report sent to the Commission office and to each evaluator.

To enable consistency of reporting, please refer to the glossary in the 2003 Accreditation Handbook for definitions of terms.

Institution: Highline Community College

Address: 2400 S 240th Street

City, State, ZIP: Des Moines WA 98198

Degree Levels Offered: ☐ Doctorate ☐ Masters ☐ Baccalaureate ☒ Associate ☐ Other

 If part of a multi-institution system, name of system: _____

Type of Institution: ☒ Comprehensive ☐ Specialized ☐ Health-centered ☐ Religious-based
☐ Native/Tribal ☐ Other (specify) _____

Institutional control: ☒ Public ☐ City ☐ County ☐ State ☐ Federal ☐ Tribal
☐ Private/Independent (☐ Non-profit ☐ For Profit)

Institutional calendar: ☒ Quarter ☐ Semester ☐ Trimester ☐ 4-1-4 ☐ Continuous Term
☐ Other (specify) _____

Specialized/Programmatic accreditation: List program or school, degree level(s) and date of last accreditation by an agency recognized by the United States Department of Education. (Add additional pages if necessary.)

Program or School	Degree Level(s)	Recognized Agency	Date
Medical Assisting	AAS	CAAHEP	October 2008
Nursing	AAS	NLNAC	April 2003
Paralegal	AAS	ABA	Winter 2007
Respiratory Care	AAS	CAAHEP	Fall 2005
Polysomnography	AAS	CAAHEP/CoPSG	July 2010

Revised February 2011

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Enrollment (Formula used to compute FTE: SBCTC formula_____

_____)

Official Fall 2012   (most recent year) FTE Student Enrollments

Classification	Current Year Dates: Sept-Dec, 2012	One Year Prior Dates: Sept-Dec, 2011	Two Years Prior Dates: Sept-Dec, 2010
Undergraduate	5461	5437	5527
Graduate	0	0	0
Professional	0	0	0
Unclassified	0	0	0
Total all levels	5461	5437	5527

Full-Time Unduplicated Headcount Enrollment. (Count students enrolled in credit courses only.)

Official Fall 2012   (most recent year) Student Headcount Enrollments

Classification	Current Year Dates: Sept-Dec 2012	One Year Prior Dates: Sept-Dec 2011	Two Years Prior Dates: Sept-Dec 2010
Undergraduate	7043	6933	7089
Graduate	0	0	0
Professional	0	0	0
Unclassified	0	0	0
Total all levels	7043	6933	7089

Numbers of Full-Time and Part-Time Instructional and Research Faculty & Staff and Numbers of Full-Time (only) Instructional and Research Faculty & Staff by Highest Degree Earned. Include only professional personnel who are primarily assigned to instruction or research.

Total Number   Number of Full Time (only) Faculty and Staff by Highest Degree Earned

Rank	Full Time	Part Time	Less than Associate	Associate	Bachelor	Masters	Specialist	Doctorate
Professor								
Associate Professor								
Assistant Professor								
Instructor	152[+]	237	1	3	5	91	0	43*
Lecturer and Teaching Assistant								
Research Staff and Research Assistant								
Undesignated Rank								

*includes JD prepared faculty
+Includes tenure track and one year, temporary, full-time faculty, 2013-14.

Mean Salaries and Mean Years of Service of Full-Time Instructional and Research Faculty and Staff. Include only full-time personnel with professional status who are primarily assigned to instruction or research.

Rank	Mean Salary	Mean Years of Service
Professor		
Associate Professor		
Assistant Professor		
Instructor	$60,487	13.5
Lecturer and Teaching Assistant		
Research Staff and Research Assistant		
Undesignated Rank		

Financial Information. Complete each item in the report using zero where there is nothing to report. Enter figures to the nearest dollar. Auxiliary and service enterprises of the institution (housing, food service, book stores, athletics, etc.) should be included. The institution's audit materials should be an excellent reference for completing the report.

Fiscal year of the institution: July through June

Reporting of income:	Accrual Basis		Modified Accrual Basis	X
Reporting of expenses:	Accrual Basis		Accrual Basis	X

BALANCE SHEET DATA

ASSETS	Last Completed FY Dates:2011-12	One Year Prior to Last Completed FY Dates:2010-11	Two Years Prior to Last Completed FY Dates:2009-10
CURRENT FUNDS			
Unrestricted			
Cash	9,192,162	5,917,145	9,823,223
Investments	18,572,063	18,541,639	12,009,348
Accounts receivable gross	3,799,484	3,208,431	3,821,343
Less allowance for bad debts	(549)	0	(6,920)
Inventories	352,062	314,988	435,404
Prepaid expenses and deferred charges	50,158	69,735	85,035
Other (identify)	0	0	0
Due from	0	0	0
Total Unrestricted	31,965,379	28,051,938	26,167,433
Restricted			
Cash	0	0	0
Investments	0	0	0
Other (identify)	0	0	0
Due from	0	0	0
Total Restricted	0	0	0
TOTAL CURRENT FUNDS	31,965,379	28,051,938	26,167,433
ENDOWMENT AND SIMILAR FUNDS			
Cash	0	0	0
Investments	0	0	0
Other (identify)	0	0	0
Due from	0	0	0
TOTAL ENDOWMENT AND SIMILAR FUNDS	0	0	0
PLANT FUND			
Unexpended	0	0	0
Cash	1,989,596	2,004,649	5,939
Investments	0	0	0
Other (identify)	0	0	0
Total unexpended	1,989,596	2,004,649	5,939
Investment in Plant			
Land	48,289	48,289	48,289
Land improvements	0	0	0
Buildings	52,512,010	54,065,450	55,618,899
Equipment	1,442,393	1,582,053	1,737,224
Library resources	349,745	392,331	447,622
Other (identify)	0	0	0
Total investments in plant	54,352,437	56,088,124	57,852,034
Due from			
Other plant funds (identify)	0	0	0
TOTAL PLANT FUNDS	56,342,033	58,092,773	57,857,973
OTHER ASSETS (IDENTIFY)	0	0	0
TOTAL OTHER ASSETS	0	0	0
TOTAL ASSETS	88,307,412	86,144,711	84,025,406

BALANCE SHEET DATA (continued)

LIABILITIES	Last Completed FY Dates:2011-12	One Year Prior to Last Completed FY Dates:2010-11	Two Years Prior to Last Completed FY Dates:2009-10
CURRENT FUNDS			
Unrestricted			
Accounts payable	(460,844)	(741,666)	(544,140)
Accrued liabilities	(2,273,464)	(1,622,182)	(2,975,353)
Students' deposits	(3,065)	(2,707)	(2,228)
Deferred credits	(3,795,527)	(3,573,089)	(3,291,772)
Other liabilities (identify) Vacation and Sick Leave Payable	(3,882,188)	(3,787,214)	(3,640,144)
Due to	0	0	0
Fund balance	0	0	0
Total Unrestricted	(10,415,088)	(9,726,858)	(10,453,637)
Restricted			
Accounts payable	0	0	0
Other (identify)	0	0	0
Due to	0	0	0
Fund balance	0	0	0
Total Restricted	0	0	0
TOTAL CURRENT FUNDS	(10,415,088)	(9,726,858)	(10,453,637)
ENDOWMENT AND SIMILAR FUNDS			
Restricted	0	0	0
Quasi-endowed	0	0	0
Due to	0	0	0
Fund balance	0	0	0
TOTAL ENDOWMENT AND SIMILAR FUNDS	0	0	0
PLANT FUND			
Unexpended	0	0	0
Accounts payable	0	0	0
Notes payable	0	0	0
Bonds payable	0	0	0
Other liabilities (identify)	0	0	0
Due to	0	0	0
Fund balance	0	0	0
Total unexpended	0	0	0
Investment in Plant			
Notes payable	0	0	0
Bonds payable	(8,170,817)	(8,789,676)	(9,413,346)
Mortgage payable	0	0	0
Other liabilities (identify)	0	0	0
Due to	0	0	0
Other plant fund liabilities (identify)	0	0	0
TOTAL INVESTMENTS IN PLANT FUND	(8,170,817)	(8,789,676)	(9,413,346)
OTHER LIABILITIES (IDENTIFY)	0	0	0
TOTAL OTHER LIABILITIES	0	0	0
TOTAL LIABILITIES	(18,585,905)	(18,516,534)	(19,866,983)
FUND BALANCE	69,721,507	67,628,177	64,158,423

CURRENT FUNDS, REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND OTHER CHANGES

REVENUES	Last Completed FY Dates:2011-12	One Year Prior to Last Completed FY Dates:2010-11	Two Years Prior to Last Completed FY Dates:2009-10
Tuition and fees	11,692,789	10,679,429	14,947,908
Federal appropriations	0	0	0
State appropriations	22,724,994	27,258,844	26,482,225
Local appropriations	0	0	0
Grants and contracts	26,250,435	24,456,546	26,922,566
Endowment income	0	0	0
Auxiliary enterprises	4,799,490	5,340,876	5,340,766
Other (identify)	1,032,624	2,507,054	1,810,565
EXPENDITURE & MANDATORY TRANSFERS			
Educational and General			
Instruction	37,624,104	37,222,653	36,377,413
Research	0	0	0
Public services	0	0	0
Academic support	5,355,362	5,780,309	5,398,233
Student services	3,868,136	4,440,043	4,234,492
Institutional support	480,899	1,139,649	639,750
Operation and maintenance of plant	4,156,622	4,796,444	5,639,428
Scholarships and fellowships	7,947,684	7,706,354	7,360,717
Other (identify)	489,194	492,216	635,892
Mandatory transfers for:	0	0	0
Principal and interest	0	0	0
Renewal and replacements	0	0	0
Loan fund matching grants	0	0	0
Other (identify)	0	0	0
Total Educational and General	59,922,001	61,577,668	60,285,925
Auxiliary Enterprises			
Expenditures	5,450,346	5,680,294	5,797,985
Mandatory transfers for:	0	0	0
Principal and interest	0	0	0
Renewals and replacements	0	0	0
Total Auxiliary Enterprises	5,450,346	5,680,294	5,797,985
TOTAL EXPENDITURE & MANDATORY TRANSFERS	65,372,347	67,257,962	66,083,910
OTHER TRANSFERS AND ADDITIONS/DELETIONS (identify)	0	0	0
EXCESS [deficiency of revenues over expenditures and mandatory transfers (net change in fund balances)]	1,127,985	2,984,787	9,420,120

INSTITUTIONAL INDEBTEDNESS

TOTAL DEBT TO OUTSIDE PARTIES	Last Completed FY Dates:2011-12	One Year Prior to Last Completed FY Dates:2010-11	Two Years Prior to Last Completed FY Dates:2009-10
For Capital Outlay	8,170,817	8,789,676	9,413,346
For Operations	0	0	0

Domestic Off-Campus Degree Programs and Academic Credit Sites: Report information for off-campus sites <u>within the United States</u> where degree programs and academic coursework is offered. (Add additional pages if necessary.)

Degree Programs – list the <u>names</u> of degree programs that can be completed at the site.
Academic Credit Courses – report the <u>total number</u> of academic credit courses offered at the site.
Student Headcount – report the <u>total number (unduplicated headcount)</u> of students currently enrolled in programs at the site.
Faculty Headcount – report the <u>total number (unduplicated headcount)</u> of faculty (full-time and part-time) teaching at the site.

<div align="center">

PROGRAMS AND ACADEMIC CREDIT OFFERED AT OFF-CAMPUS SITES WITHIN THE UNITED STATES

</div>

Location of Site Name City, State, ZIP	Degree Programs	Academic Credit Courses	Student Headcount	Faculty Headcount
n/a				

Programs and Academic Courses Offered at Sites Outside the United States. Report information for <u>sites outside the United States</u> where degree programs and academic credit courses are offered, including study abroad programs and educational operations on military bases. (Add additional pages if necessary.)

Degree Programs – list the <u>names</u> of degree programs that can be completed at the site.
Academic Credit Courses – report the <u>total number</u> of academic credit courses offered at the site.
Student Headcount – report the <u>total number (unduplicated headcount)</u> of students currently enrolled in programs at the site.
Faculty Headcount – report the <u>total number (unduplicated headcount)</u> of faculty (full-time and part-time) teaching at the site.

PROGRAMS AND ACADEMIC CREDIT COURSES OFFERED AT SITES OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES

Location of Site Name City, State, ZIP	Degree Programs	Academic Credit Courses	Student Headcount	Faculty Headcount
n/a				

Preface

Update on institutional changes

Since we submitted our *Year Three Self-Evaluation Report* just over one year ago, Highline Community College has no substantive changes to note.

A new member was recently appointed to our Board of Trustees. Sili Savusa joined the board in July 2013. She is the executive director of the White Center Community Development Association, and also serves on the Governor's Commission on Closing the Achievement Gap, the Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs, and the Community Center for Education Results steering committee. Ms. Savusa previously served as the Highline School Board Director and Family Center Coordinator for Southwest Youth and Family Services. She is also the founder of the nation's first Samoan/Pacific Islander Parent Teacher Student Association, which works to address education issues impacting Pacific Islander students and their families.

There were no recommendations made by the Commission from Highline's spring 2012 Year Three Peer Evaluation.

Chapter One: Mission, Core Themes and Expectations

Executive summary of Eligibility Requirements 2 and 3

<u>Authority (ER 2)</u>

Highline Community College, established in 1961, in accordance with the Revised Code of Washington, Chapter 28B.50, provides "thoroughly comprehensive educational, training, and service programs to meet the needs of both the communities and students served by combining high standards of excellence in academic transfer courses; realistic and practical courses in occupational education, both graded and ungraded; community services of an educational, cultural, and recreational nature; and adult education, including basic skills and general, family, and workforce literacy programs and services." The college operates under the authority of Title 132I of the Washington State Administrative Code, its Board of Trustees, and the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

<u>Mission and Core Themes (ER 3)</u>

Highline Community College's core themes were approved by our Board of Trustees, consistent with its legal authority in 2010. An updated mission statement, incorporating those themes, was adopted May 2013, fulfilling an April 2012 resolution to accomplish that task. Our mission and core themes, which can be found in Chapters 2 and 3 of this document, are appropriate to a degree-granting institution of higher education. In accordance with the Revised Code of Washington, Chapter 28B.50, our purpose is to serve the educational interests of our students. Our primary programs lead to degrees recognized in higher education, among them the Associate of Arts, Associate of Applied Science, and Associate of Science degrees. As a publically-funded institution, all of our resources go to support our educational mission.

Mission (Standard 1A)

Mission statement

Our current mission statement, as adopted by the trustees in May 2013, is fully aligned with our core themes.

> *As a public institution of higher education serving a diverse community in a multicultural world and global economy, Highline Community College promotes student engagement, learning, and achievement, integrates diversity and globalism throughout the college, sustains relationships within its communities, and practices sustainability in human resources, operations, and teaching and learning.*

Interpretation of mission fulfillment

Highline Community College has, over the past several years, moved strongly and continuously toward a establishing a "culture of evidence" for its work. Our efforts in this direction have been supported by the structures and requirements of Achieving the Dream, the state's Student Achievement Initiative (SAI) performance-funding metrics, and the accreditation process. The development of the core themes and their related elements are a natural extension of the work we have done in those areas.

Our four core themes provide the lenses through which we view and assess mission fulfillment. Each of the core themes is grounded by objectives which reflect the concrete components of the vision articulated in the theme. Every objective is further refined by a limited set of indicators of achievement which are meaningful, verifiable, and directly assessable. Each measure has an identified benchmark, which represents a minimum

threshold of fulfillment. Benchmarks are tied either to externally validated standards of achievement or, in the absence of an external reference, an internally defined standard for continuous improvement. Data are drawn from accessible, well-accepted measures and sources.

Constant attention to the values articulated in our core themes and objectives, ongoing assessment of the indicators for the objectives, and strategic planning to sustain continuous improvement are how we interpret mission fulfillment.

Articulation of extent of mission fulfillment

We define our minimum threshold for mission fulfillment as achievement of 70% of our benchmarks across all core theme objectives. The annual *Mission Fulfillment Report* (User name: NWCCU, Password: Acr3d1t3d) presents a comprehensive evaluation of institutional performance. The report then articulates the achievement level (relative to the benchmarks) on each indicator of every objective in the four core themes. At this deeper level of analysis, the details are an important and rich source of information for strategic planning, campus and community discussion, and goal-setting.

The *Mission Fulfillment Report* (MFR) is posted annually for review by the college community. Over the course of the year, our Executive Staff — comprised of the president and the four vice presidents — regularly evaluate data from the MFR to ensure that the college is maintaining the course charted by the core theme benchmarks and the college's planning, assessment, and improvement processes. In consultation with the trustees, Executive Staff is charged with developing goals and, where deficiencies arise, a data-driven response plan that delegates implementation to appropriate groups and individuals. In this way, mission fulfillment is an ongoing process, carefully managed, effectively guiding the day-to-day work of the college.

Core Themes (Standard 1.B)

Core Theme #1

Promote student engagement, learning, and achievement

Highline is a learning community where students are empowered to pursue their own educational pathways through innovative curricula, quality instruction, and student services. Students engage with their peers and community to experience multiple perspectives, practice civic responsibility, and contribute to the global community.

Objective 1: Students engage with their curriculum, campus, and community for a meaningful educational experience.

Indicator	Measure	Benchmark
1.1: Students experience positive interactions with faculty in and outside of the classroom.	*1.1A:* CCSSE "Student-Faculty Interaction" scores	Scores remain at or above national norm of 50.
1.2: Students participate in organizations and activities that provide support, mentoring, or leadership opportunities on campus and in the community.	*1.2A:* Percent of students who participate in student organizations (CCSSE item 13.i.1)	Score remains at or above 17% (CCSSE national sample).

Rationale:

We begin with student engagement because we believe that it is the foundation of student success. Students who form meaningful relationships with faculty, staff, and fellow students are far more likely to stay in school than those who are less connected. Vincent Tinto, arguably the leading spokesperson for that view, says it this way: "Simply put, involvement matters, and at no point does it matter more than during the first year of college when student attachments are so tenuous" (2003). Though our focus of this objective begins in the classroom, it expands to the campus and greater community.

Besides retention, there are, of course, additional benefits to an engagement-focused college. "Through collaborating with others to solve problems or master challenging content, students develop valuable skills that prepare them to deal with the situations and problems they will encounter in the workplace, the community, and their personal lives" (Center for Community College Engagement, 2012).

Measures of both indicators for this objective come from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), a widely used, nationally-normed instrument which we have administered since 2008. Indicator 1.1 reflects the most elemental aspect of the student experience — interactions with faculty — as the core of student engagement. We use the national norm for those items as our benchmark. As a mid-sized, low-funded institution serving an exceptionally diverse population of many first-generation and low-income students, performance at the national average is an ambitious but achievable benchmark of our success in this area, we believe.

Indicator 1.2 reflects the college experience outside the classroom. Here, we are using a single CCSSE item which directly measures extra-curricular participation, setting our initial benchmark at CCSSE's national average for that item. Because recent years have been a period of significant budget declines and sharply rising enrollments, we believe that our consistency against national averages over that time offers a reasonable baseline for later measurement.

Objective 2:   Diverse teaching methods, innovative curricula, and student support services fulfill the learning needs of students.

Indicator	Measure	Benchmark
2.1: Faculty engage in continuous course-level assessment.	*2.1A*: Number of departments reporting on faculty assessment of course level student learning outcomes	Number of departments reporting is 90% or better.
2.2: Students experience HCC courses as challenging and engaging.	*2.2A:* CCSSE "Academic Challenge and Collaborative Learning" composite score	Score is at or above the national norm of 50.
2.3: Faculty and student services personnel provide effective support to students.	*2.3A:* CCSSE "Support for Learners" score	Score is at or above the national norm of 50.
	2.3B: Number of departments reporting on student services delivery and learning outcomes	Number of departments reporting is 90% or better.

Rationale:

Our second objective moves from engagement to learning. Here, our first indicator advances a philosophy that expects instructors to consistently assess student performance based on stated learning outcomes which are explicitly linked to our College-Wide Outcomes, to use the assessment findings to engage in self-evaluation, and to revise and innovate for improvement in instruction. Our second indicator reflects our belief that strong curriculum and pedagogy are evidenced in a student experience that includes collaborative learning and a challenging intellectual environment. Finally, best practices are enhanced with academic support in flexible, responsive options available for all students. Thus, in our third indicator, we focus our attention on delivery of services that help students navigate the college system and connect with one another.

In this objective we again turn to the CCSSE for our measures 2.2A and 2.3A, using national norms as our benchmark for self-assessment. For indicators 2.1A and 2.3B we rely on internal measures of unit-level assessment activity. The reporting processes for the college's educational and student services assessment programs are comprehensive and rigorous. By maintaining a high level of participation in these programs, we ensure that faculty and staff continue to monitor, refine, and evaluate their work in order to maintain ongoing improvement of the student experience.

Objective 3:   Students achieve their goals by progressing on educational pathways.

Indicator	Measure	Benchmark
3.1: All Basic Skills students will achieve level gains.	*3.1A:* Student Achievement Initiative (SAI) points per eligible student	Number of points per eligible student is at or above our three year running average.
3.2: Advanced Basic Skills students will transition from non-credit to credit courses.	*3.2A:* Percentage of Advanced Basic Skills students who transition to college-level courses during the academic year	Percentage is at or above 10%.
3.3: Degree- or certificate-seeking students will progress through significant educational	*3.3A:* Percentage of eligible students who attain 15 college-level credits within the academic	Percentage is at or above 45%.

milestones.	year	
	3.3B: Percentage of eligible students who attain five college-level credits in quantitative reasoning within current year	Percentage is at or above 25%.
3.4: Degree- or certificate-seeking students will attain credentials.	*3.4A:* Percentage of eligible students who attain a credential and 45 credits in current year	Percentage is at or above 25%.
	3.4B: IPEDS graduation rate of full-time, first-time degree-seeking students within three years	The rate is at or above Washington state peer institutions' aggregate rate for the current year.

Rationale:

Our final objective measures student progress. If students are engaged and are learning, their successes should lead to tangible achievements: course completions, credit accumulation, and credentials.

Here, our indicators and measures directly align with Washington State's Student Achievement Initiative (SAI) measures. The SAI framework builds on the work of Cliff Adelman, veteran researcher formerly of the U.S. Department of Education, and others who have argued that students who gain academic momentum have a higher likelihood of remaining in college or achieving a degree or certificate irrespective of background characteristics, social, or academic integration (Adelman, 2006). Adapting Adelman's framework to a Washington context, Leinbach and Jenkins (2008) proposed that measures such as basic skills gains, developmental education completion, and key credit-level benchmarks promote continued momentum toward completion. Because those benchmarks can be analyzed locally, we have selected them as a convenient, meaningful, and rich source of data on student goal-attainment. For each, we have set as our benchmark our initial three-year rolling average, a reasonable target given Highline's high SAI performance relative to system averages. We have chosen the IPEDS graduation rate as a final measure, with a benchmark equal to or higher than the aggregate state rate for the current year.

Core Theme #2

Integrate and institutionalize diversity and globalism throughout the college

Highline is an institution in which issues of diversity and globalism are central to decision-making, integrated throughout curriculum and pedagogy, and considered in all interactions among faculty, staff and students. Faculty and staff are culturally competent, all students progress and achieve at comparable rates, and a positive campus climate exists for all.

Objective 1: Diversity and globalism are infused throughout the curriculum; faculty employ a pedagogy that integrates diversity and globalism.

Indicator	Measure	Benchmark
1.1: Diversity and globalism are integrated broadly across the curriculum.	*1.1A:* Percentage of courses with student learning objectives that link to the College Wide Outcome on diversity	Percentage is at or above 35%.
1.2: Students from diverse backgrounds experience positive interactions with faculty in and outside the classroom.	*1.2A:* CCSSE "Student-Faculty Interaction" score, disaggregated by race/ethnicity	For each racial/ethnic category, the score is at or above the national norm of 50.
1.3: Students from diverse backgrounds experience HCC courses as challenging and engaging.	*1.3A:* CCSSE "Academic Challenge/Active and Collaborative Learning" composite score, disaggregated by race/ethnicity	For each racial/ethnic category, the score is at or above the national norm of 50.

Rationale:

According to the literature, students benefit from exposure to issues of diversity in the classroom, through course content, discussion, and interaction with diverse peers and faculty (Millem, C. & Antonio, A.L.; Hurtado, S. Dey, E.L., Gurin, P.Y. & Gurin, G., 2003). Therefore, diversity must be infused throughout the curriculum, and faculty must be competent to teach in a way that advances those values.

We begin with curriculum. Our associate degrees all include a diversity requirement which can be met by taking a course designated as having significant diversity content. Beyond that requirement, however, ongoing exposure to issues of diversity supports further learning for all students, not just degree-seekers. Accordingly, we have adopted a College-Wide Outcome which addresses awareness of diversity, as well as the capacity to use that knowledge to guide ethical behavior in diverse contexts. Because we have explicitly linked course-level student learning outcomes to the College-Wide Outcomes, we can readily identify the extent that diversity is integrated into the curriculum.

Second, to assess the cultural competence of teaching staff, we have opted to disaggregate Core Theme 1's "Student Faculty Interaction" and "Academic Challenge/Active and Collaborative Learning" scores by race and ethnicity, again setting CCSSE's national norms as our benchmark. Our rationale reflects the belief that, in a culturally competent environment, students' perceptions of their learning experiences and interaction with faculty should be consistent across races and ethnicities.

Objective 2:   Student support and business services initiatives successfully meet the needs of students from diverse backgrounds.

Indicator	Measure	Benchmark
2.1: Support and business services are effectively/ successfully delivered to diverse students.	*2.1A:* CCSSE "Support for Learners" score, disaggregated by race/ethnicity	For each racial/ethnic category, the score is at or above the national norm of 50.

Rationale:

Beyond the classroom, services and programs on campus play an equally significant role in the success of our diverse students. Accordingly, we are committed to providing culturally competent support services. Here, student perception is again an important tool for evaluating our success. The CCSSE "Support for Learners" score includes items that assess financial aid services, advising, and help with general coping, among others. In disaggregating the results by race/ethnicity, we can determine how well our diverse students feel we are meeting their needs with these critical wrap-around services. These data can help us identify areas for improvement in the cultural competency of the services we offer.

Objective 3: Students from diverse backgrounds progress, achieve goals, and complete degrees/certificates.

Indicator	Measure	Benchmark
3.1: Degree- and certificate-seeking students from diverse backgrounds achieve significant milestones at rates comparable to relevant comparison groups.	*3.1A:* Percentage of eligible students who attain 15 college-level credits within the academic year, disaggregated by race/ethnicity	For each racial/ethnic category, the percentage is at or above 45%.
	3.2B: Percentage of eligible students who attain 5 college-level credits in quantitative reasoning within the current year, disaggregated by race/ethnicity	For each racial/ethnic category, the percentage is at or above 25%.
3.2: Students from diverse backgrounds complete degrees and certificates at rates comparable to relevant comparison groups.	*3.2A:* Percentage of eligible students who attain a credential and 45 credits within the current year, disaggregated by race/ethnicity	For each racial/ethnic category, the percentage is at or above 25%.
	3.2B: IPEDS graduation rate of full-time, degree-seeking students within 3 years, disaggregated by race/ethnicity	For each racial/ethnic category, the rate is at or above Washington state peer institutions' aggregate rate for the current year.

Rationale:

Highline's very existence is based on helping students achieve academically, and if we are not serving all students equally well, then we need to understand why and adjust course. Scholars of diversity in education have argued that measuring equity of student outcomes is crucial. Bauman et al (2005), for example, state that achieving "inclusive excellence [demands] equity in educational outcomes for all students at its conceptual core." For this objective, then, we have again chosen to disaggregate measures from Core Theme 1 to give us a clear view of whether diverse students are achieving equitably. The SAI benchmarks are identical to those used in Core Theme 1: a three-year rolling average of our own students' achievement. The IPEDS graduation rate is similarly disaggregated here, again with a benchmark that is aligned with that of Core Theme 1.

Objective 4: The College engages in inclusive recruitment and hiring practices, and fosters a campus climate perceived as culturally competent and inclusive by all constituents.

Indicator	Measure	Benchmark
4.1: Recruitment, hiring and retention of personnel are equitable and full-time employees show increasing diversity.	*4.1A:* Percentage of people of color in full-time positions	The percentage is at or above 25%.
4.2: Employees from diverse backgrounds experience the campus climate as positive.	*4.2A:* Percentage of employees indicating general satisfaction with workplace environment, disaggregated by race/ethnicity	The percentage is at or above 75%.

Rationale:

Campus climate is influenced by everything from the diversity of faculty and staff, to visual images in posters, to the way new visitors are treated, to processes for debating campus issues. Together, these disparate elements create a "feeling" that makes some perceive that they are welcome and makes others feel alienated. There is a large body of research on campus climate and its importance in making members of the campus community feel productive and engaged. Clayton-Pederson et al. (2007) include campus climate as one of the key dimensions in their framework for campus diversity.

Our first climate-related measure focuses on the diversity of our employees. In selecting a benchmark we considered many options, including national figures on faculty (17.7% faculty of color), SBCTC data (14.7% faculty, 23.1% classified staff, 16.7% professional staff of color) and Washington state population (23.8% people of color). Since we have exceeded all of these, we set our personal best as our benchmark. At the same time, our long-term goal is to mirror the diversity of our student population (68%).

For our second indicator, we look at employee perception of campus climate, again disaggregating the results of another core theme's measure: Core Theme 4's employee satisfaction metrics. From that assessment, we have selected three key survey items — "Co-workers and supervisors treat me with respect"; "HCC consistently demonstrates support for a diverse workforce," and "In general, I'm satisfied with my job" — for disaggregation by demographic traits. We chose a benchmark of 75%, which mirrors the benchmark for workplace satisfaction in Core Theme 4, Objective 1.

Core Theme #3

Build valuable relationships and establish a meaningful presence within Highline Community College's communities

Highline Community College, in collaboration with community partners, identifies community needs, and develops, implements, and maintains programs based on those identified needs.

Objective 1:   The College communicates effectively with its communities.

Indicator	Measure	Benchmark
1.1: The community is aware of Highline's programs, offerings, and services.	*1.1A:* Rate of community members' awareness of the college's mission elements as reported in the Community Perception Survey	80% of respondents indicate awareness of all three college mission elements.

Rationale:

The first step in community engagement is establishing awareness of Highline and its offerings within the communities the college serves (Walshok, 1999). Successful communications lead to both awareness and positive perceptions of the college. The communities' perceptions of the college are fundamental to their decisions about engaging with Highline. When a community understands the offerings of the college, it begins to assess the potential benefits and opportunities gained through deeper engagement, thus opening the door for the college to connect with the community (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Rusbult, 1983).

We believe that this first objective is best measured with a direct, straightforward assessment of community awareness, in that effective communication builds awareness. Within the past several years, we have conducted two community perception surveys. In these surveys, we explored the level of awareness that community members have about the college's primary mission. Community members showed that they are not only aware of the college, but also familiar with our three primary mission elements: transfer programs, workforce training, and basic skills education. The specific and positive nature of that feedback has led us to see community awareness as a useful and appropriate measure of our success in external communications. Accordingly, we have set a high benchmark for achievement here, with the goal of maintaining the 80% awareness level that we have reached in the past two survey cycles.

Objective 2:   The College initiates community connections to understand community needs.

Indicator	Measure	Benchmark
2.1: The college actively offers a variety of programs and makes connections with external organizations.	*2.1A:* Rates of agreement that the college is meeting community educational needs as reported in the Community Perception Survey	Pending
2.2: Participation rates of traditional-aged students reflect meaningful connections and confidence in the quality of college offerings.	*2.2 A:* Overall participation rate from high schools within the service district	Overall participation rate is at least 50% of the district total.

	2.2B: Participation rate of traditional-aged, degree-seeking students by racial/ethnic group	The percentage of students of color is within 5% of the district total for each racial/ethnic group.

Rationale:

While outward communication is a critical first step in engaging the community, the second step is creating reciprocal connectivity to communities. In assessing this objective, we look not only at awareness of college services but also at evidence of their perceived relevance. In other words, it's not enough that community members know about us. They should also see value in what we do. That value derives from our success in initiating meaningful connections and understanding community needs.

We have selected two areas of assessment for this objective. The first is, again, a perception measure. Our Community Perception Survey includes questions about our success in meeting community needs. Based on the 2011 survey's results, we have set a benchmark (pending) of 50% for this measure as we continue evaluating the validity of that target.

Our second metric is derived from the participation rates of traditional-aged students. Our rationale here is that if the families who live in our community are both aware of the college and confident that we can provide quality educational experiences, then they will encourage their children to attend Highline. Our assessment is framed in two dimensions: overall rates of participation and equity of participation among ethnicities. Tentatively, our first target is to maintain an overall participation rate of 50% among our area's recent graduates. As with the community perception benchmark mentioned above, we are in the process of evaluating the meaningfulness of the participation rate benchmark. The second target is to have our percentage of traditional-aged students from underrepresented groups remain within 5 percent of their numbers in the district population. By breaking out the numbers by group we can more clearly see where our efforts at connecting are effective and where they are in need of revision. A final note deserves mention here. While participation rates among other age groups offer another useful measure of our relevance in the community, we have concluded that those rates are more likely to fluctuate based on factors beyond our control: unemployment rates, agency referral policies, and employer incentives, among others. In the end, the most consistent measure of our community's trust is the faith that families place in us to educate their children.

Objective 3:   Highline Community College contributes to meeting community needs.

Indicator	Measure	Benchmark
3.1: The college serves as a public center for regional economic development efforts in job creation.	3.1A: Number of local jobs created by the Small Business Development Center	At least 40 local jobs are created each year (three year rolling average).
	3.1B: Regional economic impact (in thousands of dollars) of Small Business Development Center	Regional economic impact is 750 thousand dollars or better (three year rolling average).
3.2: The college meets regional workforce development needs.	3.2A: Post-completion employment rate of workforce education programs.	The percentage of students who are employed following program completion is at or above 74%

Rationale:

While outward communication and relevance are critical aspects of engaging the community, full engagement finds the community integrated with the college, its programs, and offerings. In that environment, effective partnerships between agencies, schools, universities, businesses, government, and residents are a vital part of

community growth. Such collaboration increases the likelihood that organizations reach a larger population, avoid a duplication of services, make better use of their resources, and deal more effectively and thoroughly with the myriad problems faced by communities (Buys & Bursnall, 2007; Hastad & Tymeson, 1997). As a result, communities benefit through receiving services, student learning is enhanced through real-world contexts, and the college increases its ability to generate external funding.

When we created our core themes, we soon realized that our community connections and understanding would be difficult to measure through commonly available data. Furthermore, good community-engagement data benchmarks are still being developed, researched, and understood by most institutional researchers and colleges in our sector. For example, as the table above indicates, we originally focused on the number of local jobs created as a measure of Core Theme 3, Objective 3. Thus we relied on the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and Institutional Research (IR) to monitor regional economic development. However, this approach created several problems: one, there is no easy way to set a benchmark; two, measuring the number of new jobs is too limited a view of our community impact, and three, the number of jobs is vulnerable to economic fluctuations independent of Highline. Therefore, as you'll read in Chapter 4, we are revisiting Core Theme 3, Objective 3 Indicators and Measures to identify indicators and measures which more accurately reflect our contributions to meeting community needs.

Core Theme #4

Model sustainability in human resources, operations, and teaching and learning

Sustainability calls for policies, procedures, and strategies that meet society's present needs without compromising the welfare of future generations. Sustainability encompasses the intertwined ideals of viable economies, social equity, and ecological integrity. For the college, sustainability calls for us to use our resources — human, physical, and financial — to improve the future success of the college, minimize our impact on the environment, and model sustainability for students.

Objective 1:   The College recruits, retains, and develops a highly qualified workforce.

Indicator	Measure	Benchmark
1.1 Staff and faculty actively pursue continuing professional development opportunities.	*1.1A:* Percentage of employees indicating that they have opportunities at work to learn and grow professionally	The percentage is at or above 75% for item 5 on the Employee Satisfaction Survey.
1.2: Current employees indicate satisfaction with working environment and campus climate.	*1.2A:* Percentage of employees indicating general job satisfaction and positive campus climate	The percentage is at or above 75% for items 7, 8, and 20 on the Employee Satisfaction Survey.
1.3: Employees are retained by the college.	*1:2B:* Short-term (2-year) attrition rate	The attrition rate is at or below 8%.

Rationale:

Education is a service-oriented industry where the quality of the professional providing instruction and support services has significant influence on student success. Thus, our people are our most important resource. The quality of our employees is both developed and maintained through the professional development opportunities we provide to everyone. Investment in professional development improves not only the qualifications of the existing workforce on campus, but also the level of employee workplace satisfaction. Further, workplace satisfaction is clearly linked to staff retention.

As an employer, Highline strongly supports professional development and provides funding for all employees to pursue opportunities for professional growth. Thus, our proposed measure of employee professional development is direct and quantitative: the rate of agreement that employees have opportunities at work or learn and grow professionally. In fall 2011, we completed our first local Employee Satisfaction Survey, adapted from the Washington Department of Personnel's question bank, as a replacement for the expensive and cumbersome Noel-Levitz instrument we had used previously. Because the survey is a new, we currently have a single-year benchmark of 75% as the rate of agreement for our baseline year of 2010-11. Only longitudinal analysis will help us determine the appropriateness of this benchmark long-term.

Workplace satisfaction and employee retention also can be measured directly, if perceptually. The first-run Employee Satisfaction Survey responses indicated significant overall satisfaction with the working environment and campus climate, an encouraging but unsurprising finding given our two-time recognition as a "Great Colleges to Work For" awardee from the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and as a NWJobs.com "People's Pick" favorite employer in the education category. In light of these successes, we set our initial benchmark for this measure at a high mark: 75%. Finally, for an initial measure of retention, we are using short-term attrition. Our rationale for that choice derives largely from the current hiring climate, with budget constraints limiting recruitment and the economic downturn forcing individuals to apply for, accept, and remain in positions that may be significantly below their professional qualifications. Our baseline, based on two-year internal measures, is 8%.

Objective 2:   The College demonstrates good stewardship of financial resources while ensuring sufficient resources will be available in the future.

Indicator	Measure	Benchmark
2.1: The college maintains sufficient financial resources to both maintain programs and remain strategic in times of financial downturn.	*2.1A:* Percent of general operations budget maintained as operating reserves	Reserve remains at or above 10% of general operations budget.
2.2: The college maintains strong internal controls over assets and ensures compliance with college and state procedures.	*2.2A:* Number of annual audit findings	Annual audit findings remain at zero.
2.3: The college ensures continuing alignment of fiscal resources to meet current operating needs.	*2.3A:* Percentage of instruction-related expenses (direct instruction, library, and student services) relative to general operating expenses	The percentage remains at or above 67%.

Rationale:

We recognize the critical importance of financial stability and growth to ensure the successful realization of the college's educational mission. The college has adequate financial reserves which allow us to respond strategically and thoughtfully to financial challenges. Our reserve benchmark of 10% matches the level fixed by our Board of Trustees. Further, a strong culture of internal controls assures funding authorities that the college is a good steward of scarce resources, strengthening our ability to compete for those resources. Any audit findings would be unacceptable, so our benchmark is zero there. Finally, in aligning our fiscal resources with operating needs, we recognize that the bulk of those resources should be committed to our primary mission of delivering education to students. Here, we have set our benchmark at the statewide average of 67% of general operating funds for instruction-related expenditures, including direct instruction, library, and student services. As a comparatively low-funded college, this target is ambitious and yet, given our priorities, attainable.

Objective 3:   The College demonstrates stewardship of environmental resources.

Indicator	Measure	Benchmark
3.1: The college encourages awareness and use of 'green' practices in working environments.	*3.1A:* Percent reduction in annual waste stream/landfill tonnage from baseline	Maintain or increase 5% reduction from baseline.
	3.1B: Percent reduction in annual total energy consumption (electricity and fossil fuels combined) from baseline	Total energy consumption remains 2% or more below baseline of 78, 511 MBTUs.

Rationale:

As stewards of the environment with a commitment to resource management, we are dedicated to efficiently using energy and reducing consumption of resources in our daily operations. Coordinated actions campus-wide reduce our environmental footprint by improving recycling efforts, reducing waste, and achieving college-wide reductions in fuel and energy consumption.

To assess our focus on resource management, we use two important and available measures — one of inputs and the other of outputs. While conserving water resources is a priority for the college, our ability to measure those reductions is prevented by the water metering system in place on our aging campus. As a result, we have chosen to measure campus landfill tonnage and its reduction as the primary metric for our waste-management efforts. Because it is a new measure for us, we have set our benchmark at our most recent level of achieved reduction, which was 5% below our 2009-10 tonnage. While we intend to further reduce our waste stream, maintenance of our current reduced levels requires vigilance. The second measure of our indicator is a reduction in total energy consumption. For this measure, we use a benchmark of remaining at least 2% below a baseline of 78, 511 MBTUs. This baseline is in alignment with the requirements of our Puget Sound Energy Resource Conservation Program grant, secured in December 2009, which incorporated industry-standard targets for an institution of our profile.

In the longer-term, we intend to integrate teaching and learning into our sustainability efforts, establishing course-, program-, and eventually college-wide learning outcomes for this important human endeavor. However, at present, that curricular initiative is at its beginning stages and, as such, is a matter of strategic planning.

Executive Summary of Eligibility Requirements 4-21

Operational Focus And Independence (ER 4)
Highline Community College has full authority over its district budget, curriculum, and governance, making the college accountable and responsible for meeting the Commission's accreditation standards and eligibility requirements (Standard 2.A.2, pg. 19).

Non-Discrimination and Institutional Integrity (ER 5, 6)
Highline is committed to diversity at all levels, as seen in the college's Cultural Diversity Policy.

Ethical standards are established and followed. College employees are bound by the Washington State Ethics Act and governed by the Highline Community College Code of Ethics. The Board of Trustees Code of Ethics binds that body. Faculty are bound by the Highline College Education Association Agreement 2009-15 (Standards 2.A.22, 2.A.23, and 2.A.24, pg. 26).

Governing Board, Chief Executive Officer, and Administration (ER 7, 8, 9)
Highline's five-member Board of Trustees, none of whom has a contractual or employment relationship with the college, is appointed by the governor (Standards 2.A.4, 2.A.5, 2.A.6, 2.A.7, pg. 20).

The Highline Community College president (chief executive officer) is appointed by the Board of Trustees. The president serves as secretary to the board, not as an *ex officio* member (Standard 2.A.10, pg. 22).

Highline administrators and their governance groups represent all major units of the college, and manage the institution (Standard 2.A.1, pg. 18). Administrators engage in strategic planning, consultation, assessment, and policy development. The college has a sufficient number of qualified administrators to carry out its mission (Standard 2.A.11, pg. 23).

Faculty (ER 10)
Highline employs a sufficient number of appropriately qualified faculty to achieve its educational objectives (Standard 2.B.4, pg. 29). Faculty evaluation procedures meet the standards of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (Standard 2.B.6, pg. 31). Full-time faculty workloads meet the college's expectations (Standard 2.B.5, pg. 30). Faculty ensure that academic programs maintain appropriate content and rigor (Standard 2.C.5, pg. 33).

Educational Program, General Education, and Related Instruction (ER 11, 12)
Highline offers the Associate of Arts degree; the Associate of Science degree in chemistry, computer science, physics, and general engineering; the Associate of Applied Science degree in 30 professional/technical areas; and various certificates (Standard 2.C.1. pg. 31). Information for these appears in the college catalog, on the website, and in course syllabi (Standard 2.C.2, pg. 32).

For any degree, students complete at least 90 college-level credits. The number of credits and general course requirements for A.A. and A.S. degrees reflect policies developed by the Washington State Intercollege Relations Commission and the Washington State Joint Transfer Council. Professional/technical degrees and certificates meet requirements in the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (Standard 2.C.3, pg. 32).

Library and Information Resources (ER 13)
The Highline library provides access to both physical and electronic resources to meet the information needs of students, faculty, staff, and the community (Standards 2.E.1, 2.E.2, pg. 44). It ensures that the collection has the currency, breadth, and depth needed to support the information needs of its primary users. The library promotes and enhances the information literacy (IL) skills of students, faculty, staff, and administrators (Standard 2.E.3, pg. 45).

Physical and Technological Infrastructure (ER 14)
The college maintains physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure, and conducive to healthful and productive learning and working (Standard 2.G.1, pg. 52). The college's Master Plan provides for the continued development and renewal of the campus, explains the college's programs, and describes its current and future campus facilities requirements (Standard 2.G.3, pg. 53).

Highline's technological infrastructure meets the technology needs of the college community (Standard 2.G.5, pg. 57).

Academic Freedom (ER 15)
Academic freedom for students and faculty is specifically addressed in the Instructional Policies section of the college catalog (Standard 2.A.27, 2.A.28, 2.A.29, pg. 27). Additionally, for students, the Student Rights section of the Highline Students Rights and Responsibilities (SR&R) code includes a detailed statement specifying the academic freedoms to which students are entitled.

Admissions (ER 16)
The college provides open access to any adult who can benefit from its educational services. Highline's Admissions/Entry Services department website and the college catalog provide information on the college's entry processes and procedures (Standard 2.D.3, pg. 40). Two degree programs — Associate Degree Nursing and AAS Respiratory Care — require competitive-entry admissions. Criteria appear on the programs' web pages. To ensure objectivity, admissions decisions are handled by Admissions/ Entry Services (Standards 2.A.15, 2.A.16, and 2.A.17, pg. 23).

Public Information (ER 17)
The online college catalog has the college's mission in its *About Highline* section. Admissions information is on the Admission/Entry Services website. Information about academic programs and courses is found at the Programs and Courses website and in the online college catalog (Standard 2.C.1, pg. 31). Grading policy is found under Instructional Policies in the catalog.

The Board of Trustees/Faculty/Staff section of the catalog provides titles and academic credentials of administrators and faculty.

The Students Rights and Responsibilities Code is on the Student Services website (Standard 2.A.15, 2.A.16, 2.A.17, pg. 23). The Registration and Records website lists tuition and fees. The Cost of Attendance webpage estimates the overall cost of attending Highline. The college lists its refund policy and procedures in the college catalog. The Financial Aid Department website links to information on how to apply for aid, deadlines, types of financial aid, forms, scholarships, and more (Standards 2.D.8, 2.D.9, pg. 42).

The Academic Calendar is posted by the Academic Affairs division of the college and contains both the current and proposed calendars.

Financial Resources and Accountability (ER 18, 19)
Highline Community College is financially stable, with sufficient cash flow and reserves to cover all operations and commitments (Standard 2.F.1, pg. 47). The college plans for the next fiscal year beginning the current winter quarter, and develops careful revenue estimates (Standard 2.F.2, 2.F.3, pg. 47-48). Risk assessments are completed annually by all major college departments (Standard 2.F.4, pg. 49).

Audits are conducted by qualified state auditors. SAO audit staff and management then meet with the college to review and discuss recommendations or action items (Standard 2.F.7, pg. 51).

Disclosure (ER 20)
Highline accurately discloses to the Commission all information the Commission may require to carry out its evaluation and accreditation functions.

Relationship with the Accreditation Commission (ER 21)

Highline accepts the standards and related policies of the Commission and agrees to comply with these standards and policies.

<u>Student Achievement (ER22)</u>
Highline Community College identifies its expected course, credential, and college-wide learning outcomes in the college catalog, the college website, and individual course syllabi.

For student achievement data, the college uses the state's [Student Achievement Initiative](#) measures and the [Community College Survey of Student Engagement](#) (Standard 2.C.5, pg. 34). Faculty assess student learning with support from the [Standards, Outcomes and Competencies Committee](#). Academic departments submit annual assessment activity reports to the vice president of academic affairs (Standard 2.C.5, pg. 34).

Chapter 2: Resources and Capacity

Highline Community College's resources and capacity are sufficient to fulfill the institution's mission, accomplish its core theme objectives, and achieve the intended outcomes of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered. In accomplishing its goals, the college's greatest asset — without question — is its people: an exceptionally dedicated, talented, and collaborative faculty and staff. On the other hand, like all institutions, Highline faces some resource challenges, among them, declining state finances and an aging infrastructure. The college has established realistic plans to address those challenges. Day to day, Highline Community College's human, financial, educational, and policy resources are more than adequate to ensure the institution's effectiveness and sustainability.

Governance

Decision-making processes (Standard 2.A.1)

On a day-to-day basis, Highline Community College's decision-making processes are unusually collaborative, reflecting community values around mutual respect, inclusion, and the power of synergy. Even so, the institution's formal governance structures, though relatively flat, are largely traditional and hierarchical with clearly defined authority, roles, and responsibilities.

The college president reports to the Board of Trustees. Reporting to the president, four vice presidents lead their respective divisions: Academic Affairs, Administrative Services, Institutional Advancement, and Student Services. Collectively, these five administrators comprise Executive Staff, which meets weekly to manage the college's strategic planning, operations, and division-level policies.
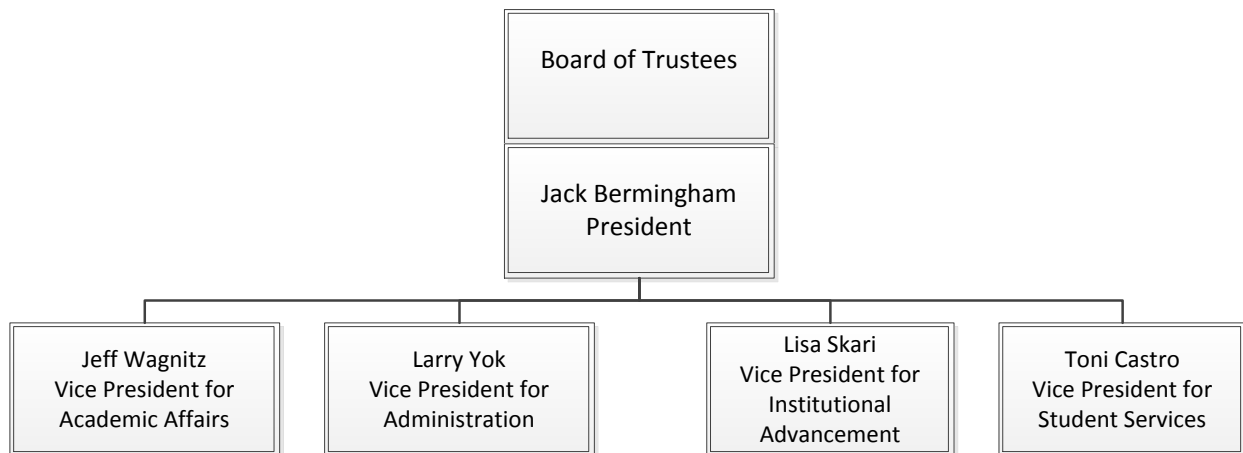
To provide for constituent input in decision-making, a variety of committees play a formal role in Highline's deliberative processes:

- *Administrative Cabinet* consists of the president, the vice presidents, and their direct reports. Administrative Cabinet meets once a quarter, and acts both as a sounding board and as a decision-making voice in the college's policy-development process. It advises the Executive Staff and explores issues that committee members have brought forward. This group does not engage in active planning but does consider planning proposals.

- *Instruction Cabinet* consists of the vice president for academic affairs, the instructional deans, and the chairs of the five faculty divisions: Arts and Humanities; Social Sciences; Pure and Applied Sciences;

Business, and Health, PE, and Education. Membership also includes select direct reports to the vice president. The cabinet meets bi-weekly and considers issues, policies, and procedures, primarily related to instruction.

- *Student Affairs Cabinet* consists of the vice president for student services, the associate dean for the center of leadership and service, engagement, and assessment (formerly the dean of student programs), the associate dean for counseling and student judicial affairs (a new position), and Student Services department directors. The cabinet meets monthly and focuses on assessment, planning, policies, and organizational development.

- The *Faculty Senate* consists of an executive committee (chair, vice-chair, secretary and two senators-at-large) elected by the faculty as a whole, and two representatives from each of the five academic divisions, selected by the members of the divisions. It "provide[s] a forum for faculty discussion, advocacy and leadership regarding academic affairs at Highline Community College." The Senate Constitution defines it as the "paramount recommending body to the president and Board of Trustees (BoT) to establish and revise college-wide academic standards, grading policies, degree requirements and educational outcomes after considering input from all interested parties." It also serves as an advisory board to the vice president for academic affairs and the deans of instruction on curricular issues. The faculty senate meets on the first and third Wednesday of the month during the academic year.

- All currently enrolled students are members of the *Associated Students of Highline Community College* (ASHCC). It represents students' interests and concerns to the college administration, faculty, staff, and greater community. Representatives from the executive council, caucuses, and student clubs form the associated council. The associated council representatives meet approximately every two weeks when school is in session and participate in setting campus policy and procedures, allocate funds, serve on various campus committees, and evaluate student programs.

In addition to these governance bodies, the college actively seeks input, as appropriate, from faculty and staff collective-bargaining units. In this role, classified staff are represented by the Washington Public Employees Association (WPEA), and faculty by the Highline College Education Association (HCEA). The executive committees of both WPEA and HCEA meet quarterly with Highline's Executive Staff. Additionally, the trustees' by-laws provide that the WPEA, HCEA, ASHCC, and Faculty Senate have access to the board during its regular meetings. Board Resolution No. 35-85 also states in part that the Board of Trustees "supports those processes and procedures which provide for the participation of all major campus groups — faculty, staff, students, administrators, and trustees — in addressing major campus decisions and formulating policies which govern the [c]ollege."

State and local governance (Standard 2.A.2)

The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) provides clearly limited oversight to the state's 34 community and technical colleges. SBCTC's primary functions include allocating state funds, setting enrollment-reporting procedures, managing statewide data, and advocating for the colleges in legislative and regulatory arenas. Local college boards retain full authority over their district's budgets, curriculum, and governance.

Accreditation compliance (Standard 2.A.3)

Highline's compliance with Standards for Accreditation is the responsibility of the college president and the vice president for academic affairs, who serves as Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO). The ALO ensures that compliance is not affected by collective bargaining, legislative action, or external mandates. Further, the Washington State Public Employment Relations Committee is charged to "prevent or minimize disruptions to public services by the uniform, impartial, efficient and expert resolution of labor-management disputes."

Governing Board

Board composition, orientation, and roles (Standard 2.A.4, 2.A.5, and 2.A.6)

Highline's five-member Board of Trustees is appointed by the governor. Washington State law (RCW 28B.50.100) addresses board qualifications and appointments. The powers and duties of the boards are codified in RCW 28B.50.140.

For new board members, an annual orientation to state community and technical colleges is held by the Trustees Association of Community and Technical Colleges (TACTC). This orientation provides an overview of the concepts of trusteeship, characteristics of an effective trustee, ethics, differences between policies and administration, and guidelines for board self-evaluation and evaluation of the college president. Additionally, the college provides local orientation meetings to each new Highline trustee. In these sessions, the president, vice presidents, and other administrators overview the roles and responsibilities of their offices, divisions, and departments. The executive assistant to the president also provides a reference notebook of college resources and materials prior to the trustees' initial public board meeting.

The by-laws for Highline's Board of Trustees are found in the Washington Administrative Code Title 132I.104. Current board members and their responsibilities and authority, as well as meeting agendas, minutes, and board policies can be found at the board's website. The board chair is determined on an annual basis, typically by rotation.

Washington administrative code "Restrictions of Individual Authority" provides that "No individual member of the board may act on behalf of the board unless specifically instructed by action of the board. Three members shall constitute a quorum and no action may be taken with less than a quorum present." Washington's Trustees Association of Community and Technical Colleges (TACTC) guidelines include a similarly worded governance statement, reiterated locally in the trustees' Standards of Practice and Roles and Responsibilities.

Board authority and delegation (Standards 2.A.6 and 2.A.7)

Highline's Standards of Practice and Roles and Responsibilities, updated November 2011, define the board's responsibilities and processes for fulfilling them. These responsibilities include broad oversight functions for campus policies.

These standards further define the board's responsibility to select, retain, and, on an annual basis, evaluate the college president. The evaluation process is "based on yearly goals approved by the [trustees] which support the established strategic initiatives of the college." Trustees use an evaluation form that calls for comments or recommendations regarding the president's performance with respect to the college's core themes. The board's standards of practice explicitly state that the trustees "shall delegate all operational responsibilities to the CEO and appointing authority to the CEO," adding that "Board members shall be mindful and respectful in distinguishing the board's governing role versus operational/administrative roles or activities of the college and the CEO."

Board self-evaluation (Standard 2.A.8)

The board's standards of practice further provide that a "self-evaluation shall occur yearly to evaluate board performance and to identify strengths and strategies for improvement." In this self-evaluation, trustees complete a form that focuses on board organization and operation, policy development and review, community relations, and strategic planning for the college, including its vision, mission, and goals.

Leadership and Management

Leadership qualifications, accountability, and assessment (Standard 2.A.9)

Qualifications for Highline's leadership positions are normally drafted by college search committees, which typically include staff, faculty, and student representatives. These draft qualifications are reviewed by Human Resources and are ultimately approved by the president or appropriate vice president.

Administrators and their governance groups are charged with planning, organizing, and managing the institution, as detailed in Standard 2.A.1 (Governance). Although administrative accountability is maintained through supervisory structures, Highline's culture values collaboration and collegiality in management and decision-making.

The college's major divisions — Academic Affairs, Student Services, Administrative Services, and Institutional Advancement — all undertake regular planning and assessment activities specific to their responsibilities.

- Academic Affairs holds bi-weekly Instruction Cabinet meetings, where it conducts long-term academic planning and policy development activities largely through topic-specific subcommittees. In addition, cabinet members hold an annual retreat during which a division work plan is developed and the outcomes from the prior year's plan are evaluated. For division-level assessment, Academic Affairs draws heavily on the work of the Standards, Outcomes and Competencies Committee (see 2.C.5) and the Office of Institutional Research.

- In addition to its annual planning retreat for all staff, Student Services holds regular meetings of the vice president, department heads, and direct reports to engage in planning and operational management. Student Services maintains a systematized assessment process centered around its Assessment Task Force (ATF), which was restructured in Summer 2012 to coordinate department level assessment, implement new division-wide assessment activities, and coordinate division assessment practices with those of the college. To this end, the position of dean of student programs has also been restructured, with additional responsibilities reflected in the new title of associate dean for the center of leadership and service, engagement, and assessment.

- Administrative Services holds a weekly leadership team meeting of the vice president and direct reports. The division holds an annual retreat to engage in longer-term planning. Each department in the division sets goals in the form of a project-oriented work plan and completes quarterly assessment reviews.

- Institutional Advancement, the smallest division of the four, holds an all-staff meeting monthly, and the vice president holds a meeting with direct reports every other week. Its primary mission is the fulfillment of Core Theme 3, *"Build valuable relationships and establish a meaningful presence within Highline Community College's . . . communities."* The division holds a retreat in fall in which the administrators engage in strategic planning. In addition to informal avenues, assessment takes place through a mid-year review of progress made on the strategic plan and is summarized in the division's annual report.

On a college-wide level, the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) coordinates the college's research and reporting functions and contributes to program, grant, and accreditation evaluation efforts. Specifically, this office compiles data for Highline's *Mission Fulfillment Report* (MFR) (User name: NWCCU, Password: Acr3d1t3d), which provides an annual summary of the college's key indicators derived directly from core themes. The Office of Institutional Research draws data for the MFR from several state and local sources, including the state's Student Achievement Initiative, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, and the Employee Satisfaction Survey.

President's qualifications and role (Standard 2.A.10)

Highline's chief executive officer is its president, who reports to the Board of Trustees and serves at their will. The president serves as secretary to the board, not as an *ex officio* member. The president has full-time responsibility for the institution.

The current president holds an earned doctorate in history from the University of California – Santa Barbara and has been active in scholarly publishing and presentations. At the time of his permanent appointment in May 2008, he had accumulated 14 years of experience in community college leadership, serving earlier as vice president for academic affairs and then as interim president of Highline.

Administrative staff adequacy and effectiveness (Standard 2.A.11)

As noted in Standard 2.A.1, Highline's management structure represents all major functions and units of the college. Our managers engage in strategic planning, consultation, assessment, and policy development. The representative memberships of the college's governance committees contribute to an institutional leadership and management style that favors collaboration and a holistic view of college operations as they advance Highline's core themes. Administrative job descriptions describe each position's qualifications, responsibilities, and accountability.

In filling its administrative vacancies over time, Highline Community College has consistently attracted well-qualified candidates with strong credentials and extensive experience. In recent years, our college has enjoyed a very low turnover rate in senior and mid-level administration. The experience and stability of the administrative team has greatly benefitted the college's recent efforts to address significant cuts in its operating budget from reduced state funding. Rather than making across-the-board reductions, Highline has tried to identify and cut non-core programs and services — closing the campus childcare center, for example, and shuttering an off-campus center in Federal Way — while minimizing the impact of these budget cuts on front-line staff and faculty. This process has led to some lay-offs of mid-level administrators, further flattening the college's organizational structure. Where necessary, the remaining responsibilities from these mid-level administrator positions have been generally assumed by upper administrators.

The 2013-15 Washington state operating and capital budgets (effective July 1, 2013) did increase spending in higher education after years of debilitating cuts. However, the Washington State Economic and Revenue Forecast Council foresees only slow state growth, impacting state revenues, with the added complication of the federal budget sequestration. In this tenuous economic environment, increased stress and staff inefficiencies are clear threats. Offsetting these threats to some degree, however, is our campus's exceptionally positive climate. Despite recent budget challenges, job satisfaction among administrators remains remarkably high. The college's executives understand the importance of continuing strategic budget reductions and, where possible, implementing reorganizations gradually in order to minimize staff strain.

Policies and Procedures

Despite our day-to-day informality and preference for collaborative problem-solving, Highline Community College maintains regular and stable processes for policy development and approval.

Chartered by the Board of Trustees in 1985, the Policy Development Council (PDC) is at the center of these processes. The chairs of each constituent governance group — Faculty Senate, student government, and the three cabinets — comprise the PDC membership, with *ex officio* representation from the staff and faculty collective bargaining units. PDC is chaired by the college president or designee, usually the vice president for administrative services. It meets on average twice a year or whenever policies impacting the college and requiring approval by the president or board are proposed. Any PDC member may bring a policy proposal to the PDC. PDC representatives take the proposed policies to their constituents for comment and then reconvene. This process ensures that all areas of the campus are aware of — and have substantive input into — important policy changes under consideration.

Established policies and procedures are well-defined, widely understood, and clearly communicated through a variety of avenues.

Academic policies (Standard 2.A.12, 2.A.13, and 2.A.14)

Highline's general policies around teaching and learning are well established and easily accessed. The Instructional Policies section of the College Catalog includes academic freedom and honesty statements, academic standards, course requirements, and other instruction policies. The Highline College Education Association (HCEA) Faculty Agreement 2009-15 delineates faculty operational and professional responsibilities, including teaching and service, copyrights and patents, research and sabbaticals, and other rights and responsibilities. The Students Rights and Responsibilities Code addresses the rights of students concerning their scholarly and artistic creations.

In addition, specific guidelines address library and credit transfer:

- *Information resources:* Library policies, posted on the Institutional Resources Operational Policies and Procedures webpage, are written and approved by the Library Management Team after review by all library staff. Policy discussion and training occurs as needed at quarterly library staff meetings.

- *Credit transfer:* Highline's transfer-of-credit policy is published in the catalog's General Information section under "Transfer Students." The college accepts academic credits earned at other regionally accredited institutions which align with Highline's academic offerings. The college's Transfer Center, part of the Educational Planning and Advising Center, provides guidance to students around transfer issues. On a day-to-day basis, our credentials evaluator, who reports to the registrar, determines how external credits transfer. Information on this process is available online on the Registration and Records Department's Transcript Evaluation webpage. The student has the responsibility of providing necessary documentation to determine course equivalency. When necessary, the evaluator consults with the appropriate faculty department or program coordinator in making a final determination. Credits transferred from other Washington community and technical colleges are accepted under the statewide reciprocity policy. Further, Highline uses the state's common course numbering system, instituted to facilitate intra-system transfer among two-year colleges. Because Washington's Inter-College Relations Commission (ICRC) maintains a statewide two- to four-year transfer agreement, college-to-college articulation agreements are few. When such agreements are deemed advantageous to Highline students, they are negotiated by the dean of instruction for transfer and pre-college education, whose office maintains those records.

Student policies (Standard 2.A.15, 2.A.16, and 2.A.17)

At the broadest level, Highline's Students Rights and Responsibilities Code (SR&R Code) outlines expectations of students, their rights, and the processes for resolving alleged code violations, including academic dishonesty. The SR&R Code was last revised in 2012. The vice president for student services, who serves as the chief student judicial affairs administrator, assigns, trains, and oversees a judicial officer team. Disciplinary sanctions imposed by the judicial officer can be appealed to the Highline Discipline Committee, which may uphold, remove, reduce, or increase the disciplinary sanctions. Sanctions imposed by the Discipline Committee may be appealed to the college president, whose ruling is final.

The SR&R Code, student judicial documents, and links to the instructional complaint process are available on the web as well as in printed brochures and the *Student Handbook*.

Additional policies address more particular areas of student rights and responsibilities.

- *Accommodations:* The Access Services Department facilitates reasonable accommodations for qualified students, employees, and applicants with disabilities in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act and the Federal Rehabilitation Act. Services include classroom reassignments, course

substitution requests, service animal policies, and complaint resolution. Students with disabilities are provided a [handbook](#) outlining services, policies, and procedures.

- *Placement:* Highline is an open-access institution. New students are advised to take the COMPASS reading and writing placement test and MyMathTest placement test prior to registering for classes. Though the tests are not required for admission, COMPASS and MyMathTest scores are prerequisites for many Highline classes required for degree attainment. The Testing Center works with [Admissions/Entry Services](#) and [Educational Planning and Advising](#) to provide accurate placement advisement.

  Two degree programs — Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) and AAS Respiratory Care — require competitive-entry admissions. Criteria are available on the program web pages. To ensure objectivity, admissions decisions are handled by Admissions/Entry Services.

  In keeping with Core Theme 2, *"Integrate and institutionalize diversity and globalism throughout the college,"* Highline's placement practices have been shaped by the extraordinary linguistic diversity of our district. The ESL COMPASS assessment is offered to students for more accurate placement into pre-college level classes. In addition, the college's [I-BEST](#) (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training) programs allow pre-college level students to enroll in business, education, or health and wellness courses team-taught by ESL and content-area faculty, allowing enrollees to gain language skills while earning degree credit.

- *Academic standards:* Students whose performance drops below stated academic standards are placed on academic probation or suspension as outlined in [Policies, Procedures, Statistics and Notifications](#) in the catalog. Also included are policies for returning from academic suspension and a petition processes for appealing suspension. The policies ensure consistency in academic sanctions and provide timelines for their implementation.

- *Co-curricular activities:* The [Associated Students of Highline Community College](#) (ASHCC) serves as the sole representative voice of Highline students in policy and all formal representative actions. The ASHCC [Constitution](#) outlines the student governance process and delegates oversight of the process to students. Constitutional by-laws are reviewed by the student government as needed and may be revised through a two-thirds vote at ASHCC council meetings.

- ASHCC is responsible for its own resource allocation, as provided by the Services and Activities (S&A) [Financial Code](#). A student-led S&A budget committee allocates over $2 million annually to support a broad spectrum of [activities and offerings](#) that enhance students' extra-curricular and co-curricular opportunities. Students are made aware of these programs in the *Student Handbook*, an annual student-created publication that outlines student-funded services and lists the current-year allocation of S&A funds.

  The *Thunderword* is Highline's weekly student newspaper, and the *Arcturus* is our annual literary journal. Funded by ACHCC, both have long legacies of award-winning excellence. The faculty advisers of these publications are affiliated with professional organizations, such as Society of Professional Journalists and Pacific Northwest Journalism Educators Association, which guide their practice and support the production of these publications.

Human Resources policies (Standard 2.A.18, 2.A.19, 2.A.20, 2.B.1, 2.B.2, and 2.B.3)

The Human Resources Department maintains a [Policies and Procedures](#) webpage as the main access point to its policy resources. It also maintains separate [Supervisors](#) and [Employees](#) webpages with relevant policies and procedures for each employee group. The Human Resources website also provides links to the separate handbooks for faculty, employees, and supervisors, as well as to the faculty and classified staff negotiated labor agreements.

Human Resources policies and procedures are updated according to the needs of the college or legislative actions or mandates. To some degree, these policies vary by employee category:

- Administrative-exempt employees are appointed under annual contracts which provide the terms of employment. They are evaluated on a three-year cycle under the college's Exempt and Administrative Performance Appraisal System (EAPAS).

- Highline's classified employees are represented by the Washington Public Employees Association (WPEA). Accordingly, the conditions of their employment, including an annual evaluation, are outlined in the WPEA Higher Education Collective Bargaining Agreement.

- Conditions of employment for faculty are found in the Highline College Education Association (HCEA) Faculty Agreement 2009-15.

All employees attend an orientation presented by the Human Resources Department which outlines the policies and procedures which affect their employment and benefits provided by the employer.

Employment records are stored in a locked file room inside the Human Resources office. Files are kept up to date by human resource staff and employees who have signed a confidentiality agreement. Entry is controlled during non-office hours by a key-card system with an alarm monitored by Campus Safety and Administrative Technology staff. Access to the file room and other confidential areas is controlled by a front desk employee during working hours.

Highline's recent implementation of the NEOGOV technology system will eventually automate the hiring and performance evaluation process. Records will be stored electronically, helping to ensure that access is limited to authorized staff. Already, most campus hiring committees obtain NEOGOV authorization from Human Resources in order to review applications online.

Training and employee development for classified staff is covered in Article 9 of the WPEA Higher Education Collective Bargaining Agreement and further defined in the Washington Administrative Code 357.34. The code contains the purpose, procedures, stipulations, and circumstances that apply to training and employee development for classified staff at Highline. The President's Education Fund is available to those classified staff employees pursuing educational degrees and certificate programs.

For administrative-exempt employees, the Exempt Staff Training Fund can reimburse tuition, fees, and books for staff working on a degree or certificate. Applications are approved by Executive Staff. Formerly available to full-time administrative staff after six years of service, the sabbatical professional leave program has been suspended due to budget constraints.

A variety of college divisions contribute funds to underwrite Highline's annual Professional Development Day, which serves all employees. Professional development activities for administrators, exempt, and classified staff are also funded from contingency funds managed by each vice president.

Communications policies (Standard 2.A.21)

The Department of Communications and Marketing (C&M) ensures Highline's compliance in all matters regarding campus communications and publications. The C&M Department staff conducts material audits on an annual basis and reviews publications to ensure that the college complies with federal and state regulations, accreditation standards, and college brand standards.

Institution-wide publications include the *Bulletin*, a quarterly mailed to every residence in the college's service district. Along with the *Bulletin*, C&M also produces an annual *Report to the Community*, a fast-facts brochure, and other general promotional materials designed to inform our constituents of available programs and services.

For most program-level communications, the college employs a distributive model. Communications and Marketing staff consult with campus clients to identify promotional strategies. These strategies may include publications, advertisements, press releases, or electronic media. Once a plan is established, the client provides the content while C&M oversees design and editorial services.

The Communication and Marketing Department's staff are experienced professionals, many of whom have a long history of employment with the college. However, as a result of recent budget cuts, C&M's staffing was effectively halved, dropping from three full-time equivalent (FTE) employees to 1.5 FTE between 2008 and 2012. These reductions impacted the department's ability to provide the consistency, responsiveness, and comprehensive service that have been its longstanding goals. In response, C&M implemented a variety of solutions to continue and maintain the accuracy, clarity, and consistency of college communications. These strategies have included greater use of on-line, single-source repositories of information and increased use of contractors for short-term projects. In the most recent budget cycles, the college has reinvested in C&M to some degree, restoring some of the department's former staffing levels.

Ethics and conflicts of interest (Standard 2.A.22, 2.A.23, and 2.A.24)

Highline Community College is committed to the pursuit of truth and to the equitable, inclusive treatment of people. Accordingly, we strive to manage all of our affairs with integrity.

College employees are bound by the provisions of the Washington State Ethics Act, as interpreted by the State Executive Ethics Board. These state-level resources provide a framework for local agencies to develop ethics policies of their own. The Highline Community College Ethics Policy "governs the actions and working relationships of Highline Community College employees with fellow employees, current or potential customers, suppliers, government representatives, the media, and anyone else with whom the employees of Highline Community College have contact." The policy covers such topics as gifts, confidential information, compensation, and use of state resources for personal benefit. Though comprehensive, the document is not static. It was recently revised to address the ethical considerations of new media and technologies.

Additional ethics guidelines have been established for specific constituencies.

- The Board of Trustees' Code of Ethics, revised in 2011, begins with the statement that "The Highline Community College Trustees will set the ethical tone for their institution through both their personal conduct and their institutional leadership." The code also reminds readers that the trustees are subject to the Ethics in Public Service Act (Revised Code of Washington 42.52). This code of ethics is intended to supplement the requirements of that act, not to substitute for or replace the requirements.

- For faculty, Section 303 of the Highline College Education Association (HCEA) Faculty Agreement 2009-15 reaffirms the responsibility of both full- and part-time faculty to "maintain a standard of honest and ethical behavior in their professional duties."

Processes for resolving complaints and grievances are outlined in the relevant codes and their associated documents. For example, the Washington State Ethics Act sections RCW 42.52.410 and 42.52.420 address the filing and investigation of ethics complaints, as does the Highline Community College Ethics Policy.

As a public agency whose sole function is higher education, Highline Community College is relatively free from undue influence by social, political, corporate, or religious organizations. Even so, conflict of interest remains a central ethical consideration in any complex institution. Accordingly, the Washington State Ethics Act specifically addresses issues of potential conflict, including financial or business interests, misuse of state positions, outside compensation and gifts. Likewise, Highline's local Ethics Policy (see 2.A.22) states in part that "the college expects that employees will observe the highest standards of ethical conduct. Each employee must place the college's interest above his or her own self-interest in all educational, business, and other work-related matters where there is any actual or potential conflict or the appearance of a conflict." The policy

specifies issues involving use of state resources for personal benefit, gifts, confidentiality, use of public resources for political purposes, honoraria, outside compensation, and financial interests in transactions.

Furthermore, policies regarding ownership, copyright, control, compensation and revenue from the creation and production of intellectual property are addressed in Section 902 (Copyright Policy) of the Highline College Education Association (HCEA) Faculty Agreement 2009-15. The language encourages the publication of scholarly works and acknowledges "the right of faculty, staff and students to prepare and publish, through individual initiative, articles, pamphlets, and books, software, or devices that are copyrightable, trademark-able or patentable." Sections 902.2 and 902.3 specify the exceptions, conditions, and the types of materials covered in the policy. Further, the college's Student Rights and Responsibilities Code protects student work from use without written consent.

Accreditation status (Standard 2.A.25)

The About Highline section of the college catalog addresses Highline's accreditation status, stating simply that "Highline Community College is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and the secretary of the United States Department of Education." No language speculates on the college's future accreditation status.

Contractual relationships (Standard 2.A.26)

All contractual agreements with external entities for products or services have clearly defined roles and responsibilities as part of the contract's written scope of work. All contracts for personal or client services are approved as to form, content, and consistency with the college's mission and goals by the vice president for administrative services. They also comply with NWCCU's standards. Highline follows the State of Washington Office of Financial Management (OFM) guidelines for soliciting, awarding, and reporting of all personal and client services agreements. In no case does the college relinquish or diminish its control of curriculum or operational policy through its contracts with service providers.

Academic freedom and freedom of inquiry (Standard 2.A.27, 2.A.28, and 2.A.29)

Highline Community College's catalog section on Instructional Policies contains an Academic Freedom Policy. That language affirms that "Faculty members are free to explore problems and issues, without fear of interference from administrators, the Board of Trustees, governmental agencies, the public, students or parents of students. Faculty members have a basic responsibility to promote freedom of thought, expression, and the pursuit of knowledge."

Academic freedom is further guaranteed by Section 301 of the Highline College Education Association Faculty Agreement 2009-15. In part this section states that

> Academic freedom allows all faculty to seek and present knowledge in their respective disciplines. Faculty should be free to explore problems and issues without fear of interference from administrators, the board, governmental agencies, the public, students or parents of students. Faculty have a basic responsibility to promote freedom of thought, expression, and the pursuit of knowledge. Faculty have an obligation to protect students' right to freedom of inquiry.

For students, the Student Rights section of the Highline Students Rights and Responsibilities (SR&R) code includes a detailed statement specifying the academic freedoms to which students are entitled. These rights include free inquiry, expression, and assembly. Student interests are represented as well in the college catalog's Academic Freedom Policy language.

Of course, with rights come responsibilities. Accordingly, the Student Rights and Responsibilities Code reiterates the college's expectations that students will "accept the responsibility to promote a learning and

working environment which ensures mutual respect, civility, honesty, and fairness" and that they "be open-minded and prepared to learn."

Similarly, Section 303 of the Highline College Education Association Faculty Agreement 2009-15 includes the expectation that all faculty "maintain a standard of honest and ethical behavior in their professional duties." The criteria for tenure in each of the five academic divisions also include standards of ethical practice in teaching and scholarship. These criteria are employed in regular evaluation of faculty throughout the tenure and post-tenure evaluation process, ensuring the ethical presentation and use of scholarship throughout an individual's tenure with the college.

Highline Community College's commitment to free expression and civility reflects an equally deep commitment to diversity. The institution's values include a commitment to "respect the rights and perspectives of the diverse populations who live, learn, and work in [the college's] community." Core Theme 2 echoes these values, stating that "diversity and globalism are infused throughout the curriculum [and that] faculty employ a pedagogy that integrates diversity and globalism." These ideas guide college policy on academic freedom and ethics.

Finance policies (Standard 2.A.30)

Highline Community College adheres to clearly defined financial management policies approved by the Board of Trustees. The board approves the college's annual operating and capital budgets, and has granted authority to the president to make adjustments to those budgets as necessary throughout the year, with the requirement to report any adjustments to the board on a quarterly basis. The president also has board-delegated authority to transfer unobligated fund balances to cover cash deficits and to provide working capital. The college is authorized to invest cash balances through the Office of the State Treasurer's Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) through board resolution. Highline Community College maintains a board-approved reserve of 10 percent of its annual operating budget. Reserve funds may be accessed by the college president in an emergency, provided that the trustees are informed of and approve the expenditures no later than its next regular meeting.

As an agency of the state of Washington, Highline also follows all applicable Washington Office of Financial Management (OFM) accounting policies and procedures, published in the State Administrative and Accounting Manual (SAAM) as well as accounting policies and procedures documented in the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) Fiscal Affairs Manual. Compliance with college, OFM, and SBCTC policies and procedures is reviewed as part of the college's regular audit conducted by the Office of the State Auditor.

Faculty Resources

The criteria, qualifications, evaluation, and development of Highline's non-faculty personnel (Standards 2.B.1, 2.B.2, and 2.B.3) are detailed in the Human Resources Policy sections of this self-evaluation report. Here, the focus shifts specifically to faculty.

Faculty professional development (Standard 2.B.3)

Highline Community College faculty are provided with a variety of professional development resources. Section 610 of the Highline College Education Association Faculty Agreement 2009-15 guarantees that tenured and tenure-track faculty receive $1,500 every other year to be used for professional development. Any unused allocations are retained in a general fund that can be drawn on by other faculty for professional development purposes, at the discretion of Instruction Cabinet. In addition, a separate fund of $3,000 is set aside each year to fund professional development projects by part-time faculty. Grants, federal allocations, and administrative contingency funds often supplement the pool of professional development resources.

Faculty also participate in campus-based professional growth activities. The Academic Affairs Division funds 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) in release-time to staff the Learning and Teaching Center (LTC) in Building 9. There, a three-member team of faculty organize a yearlong calendar of events that include workshops, presentations, and informal "teacher talk" conversations. In addition to the LTC, the college maintains an Instructional Design department that provides technical assistance, lesson-design advice, and troubleshooting for instructional technology applications. Instructional Design is staffed by one full-time administrator and several "faculty fellows" who receive partial release-time to offer peer coaching. The Multimedia Instructional Design Studio (MIDS), also in Building 9, offers state-of-the-art equipment to support faculty projects and hands-on training.

Sabbatical leaves are also available to faculty holding tenure-track appointments. Section 604 of the HCEA Agreement addresses the procedures and criteria for professional leave and growth and enrichment leave. For single-quarter leaves, faculty may receive up to their full salaries. Two- and three-quarter leaves are typically paid at 75 percent of salary.

Faculty qualifications and staffing levels (Standard 2.B.4)

Highline employs a sufficient number of qualified faculty to achieve its educational objectives.

The process for appointing tenure-track faculty is included in Section 801 of the Highline College Education Association (HCEA) Faculty Agreement 2009-15. This section states that the college "seeks to hire the most qualified educators available to fill approved vacancies for tenure-track faculty, consistent with the institution's commitment to affirmative action, equal opportunity, and campus diversity." Job descriptions include both required and desirable qualifications. These criteria are drafted by the department, reviewed by the division chair and dean, and approved by the vice president before openings are posted. For tenure-track appointments, the typical search committee consists of the academic division chair, the coordinator (or equivalent) of the new faculty's department, a division faculty member, an at-large faculty member, and an administrator appointed by the vice president for academic affairs. Both this representation and the perspective it provides promote the selection of highly qualified faculty who are full members of the campus community, beyond their departments. The selection process is nearly identical for full-time, non-tenure appointments.

Scheduling part-time faculty members for class assignments is managed by the department coordinator, subject to approval of their employment contract by the division chair and the vice president for academic affairs. Selection processes for part-time faculty vary somewhat by department but at a minimum require a review of the applicant's resume, transcripts, and references.

Statewide minimum qualifications for faculty appointments appear in Washington Administrative Code 131-16-091. These basic requirements apply to both full- and part-time instructors:

- *For disciplines where an advanced degree is commonly available*, a master's degree (or higher) and professional experience.

- *For professional-technical fields for which bachelor's or master's degrees are not commonly available,* sufficient broad and comprehensive training, an industry recognized certification (when available), and two years relevant work or teaching experience.

According to the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) 2011-12 Academic Year Report, Highline employed 149 full-time (tenure and non-tenure-track) and 355 part-time faculty. Of the full-time instructors, 42 hold a doctoral degree, 94 a master's, and 11 a bachelor's degree or less. Among full-time appointees, the median length of service is 14 years, with a range of four to 46 years. Highline's average full-time faculty salary, currently the state's second-highest at $60,487, is $4,599 above the Washington system average. The majority of Highline's part-time faculty earn $2,900 to $3,600 for a typical five-credit course ― not the state's highest rate, but competitive with other suburban institutions.

Although the college is proud of its successes in attracting and retaining highly-qualified faculty, there are reasons for continued attention to faculty recruitment, compensation, and development:

- *Diversity:* Highline's success in fulfilling its Core Theme 2, "*Integrate and institutionalize diversity and globalism throughout the college,*" can be measured in part through the diversity of the faculty. From a comparative perspective, Highline's diversity initiatives have been effective. According to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' *2012 Fall Quarter Enrollment and Staffing Report,* Highline employs one of the most diverse faculties in the state, with 23.9% full-time faculty of color (state average 14.0%), 17.6% part-time faculty of color (state average 10.8%), and overall 19.9% faculty of color (state average 12.0%). However, from the perspective of Highline's student body — over two-thirds of whom are students of color — much work remains to be done. In a period of financial constraint, when little hiring is possible, it is difficult to make further progress in diversifying full-time faculty ranks. Even so, the college's Human Resources office, Instruction Cabinet, and Multi-Cultural Affairs staff continue to develop and refine institutional strategies to attract, retain, and a develop diverse faculty.

- *Full-time to part-time ratio:* Over the past five years, as vacancies from retirements and resignations have gone unfilled, the number of tenured faculty at Highline has dropped from 139 to 121. Meantime, enrollments have swelled, leading to greater reliance on part-time faculty. In 2011-12, 53% of Highline's state-funded course sections were taught by adjunct instructors, up from 44 percent in 2007-08. The trend is not isolated: SBCTC's *Academic Year Report* 2011-12 indicates that the system has seen a 15.7% increase in part-time faculty over five years. For Highline, these changes have not yet had an impact on academic program continuity or student achievement. However, the college is mindful that, as more part-time faculty teach more sections on campus, their orientation, departmental integration, and professional development become increasingly critical. Enrollment pressure is expected to wane in the coming years, softening the demand for part-time instruction. Meantime, though it is unlikely that full-time hiring rates will return quickly to historical levels, the state's recent budget stabilization has led to some restoration of empty full-time positions, with 6 tenure-track and 9 new one-year appointments for 2013-14 alone. At the same time, we remain committed to further improvements in our support for adjunct instructors.

- *Salary competiveness:* Between 2008 and 2013, due to legislative action, both longevity increases and cost-of-living adjustments were suspended for faculty. Because the downturn in academic hiring has been national in scope, Highline has so far not seen substantial faculty attrition due to that salary freeze. As the employment market improves, however, the college will be challenged to maintain competitive salary rates. The college administration and faculty association have continued to discuss strategies to achieve an attractive yet sustainable compensation plan for faculty long-term. One significant result of these discussions was the Memorandum of Agreement (2012–2015) between the college and the HCEA that specifically provided for additional promotional and salary advancement opportunities for full-time faculty. Further, when the 2013 Legislature restored authorization for longevity increments, Highline took advantage of that opportunity to enhance faculty compensation, authorizing the increases for 2013-14.

Faculty workloads (Standard 2.B.5)

Full-time faculty workloads are addressed in Section 300 of the Highline College Education Association (HCEA) Faculty Agreement 2009-15. Section 303.1 addresses responsibilities in teaching, participating in college governance, advising students, and pursuing appropriate professional development to maintain currency in the assigned discipline(s). Section 303.2 concerns operational responsibilities such as working collaboratively with colleagues, participating in institutional activities, and providing information related to program or institutional accreditation. Section 305 (Responsibilities of Non-Classroom Faculty) details the responsibilities of counselors and librarians. The responsibilities and workloads for part-time faculty are

addressed in Section 704 of the agreement. In all cases, these workloads are aligned with common expectations among two-year college faculty.

Faculty evaluation (Standard 2.B.6)

Highline Community College's faculty evaluation procedures meet the standards of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. Moreover, the college's practices are transparent, well documented, and constructive.

Tenure-track faculty initially undergo a three-year tenure review process described in Section 400 of the Highline College Education Association (HCEA) Faculty Agreement 2009-15. That process calls for quarterly student evaluations, collegial observations, and regular self-evaluations throughout the evaluation period. Once tenured, faculty are subject to the college's post-tenure review procedure, outlined in Section 308. The process requires that tenured faculty are evaluated three years after initially receiving tenure and, thereafter, every five years. The schedule of evaluations is maintained by the vice president for academic affairs. The three-member post-tenure evaluation team consists of the faculty member being evaluated, at least one faculty from the same or related discipline, and an administrator appointed by the vice president. The evaluation itself consists of student evaluations for all classes taught, evaluations by other members of the team, a self-evaluation, and a letter of evaluation regarding the faculty's professional responsibilities outside the classroom from the appropriate division chair or administrator. The evaluation also includes a professional development/growth plan for the next five years. A portfolio containing all of these items is submitted to the vice president for academic affairs, who reviews it and provides written notification within a specified period whether the portfolio is satisfactory. If the portfolio is deemed unsatisfactory, the vice president and the faculty member meet develop a remediation plan. The Faculty Agreement requires the college to "make reasonable efforts to provide resources that support faculty improvement and growth." In the event that remediation is ultimately unsuccessful, the college may implement dismissal proceedings under the provisions of Section 502.

Part-time faculty evaluation is addressed in Section 706 of the Faculty Agreement. Department coordinators have the responsibility of ensuring that part-time faculty are evaluated by students once a quarter for each class taught. In addition, the coordinators themselves conduct an evaluation of their part-time faculty on a schedule that is detailed in Section 706.1 and monitored by the vice president's office. The maximum evaluation interval is three years. The coordinator, division chair, and vice president have access to the raw evaluation materials.

Education Resources

Credentials offered (Standard 2.C.1)

Consistent with its mission and core themes, Highline Community College offers a range of degrees and programs that meet the educational needs of our district. Available credentials are consistent with accepted practice in higher education:

- *Associate of Arts (A.A.):* The A.A. degree prepares students to transfer to a four-year institution in pursuit of a bachelor's degree. Its structure corresponds roughly to the first two years of a baccalaureate program. Though designed as a generic arts and sciences credential, the A.A degree can be tailored through course selection to have an emphasis area for students who have a strong interest in a particular course of study. Additionally, the college offers four discipline-specific A.A. degrees ― in business, elementary education, pre-nursing, and biology ― that comply with statewide guidelines for pre-major general-education choices in those pathways. All A.A. degrees meet the requirements identified in the Direct Transfer Agreement of Washington's Inter-College Relations Commission (ICRC).

- *Associate of Science (A.S.):* The college offers A.S. degrees in chemistry, computer science, physics, and general engineering. The A.S. degrees provide students with a core curriculum that maintains their progression through the requisite first- and second-year course series that are expected of students in those majors. These degrees are recognized by the ICRC.

- *Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S):* Highline offers 30 AAS degrees in professional/technical areas ranging from accounting to polysomnography to web/database development. These degrees are developed with the skills standards of each profession in mind and with input from industry professionals serving on program advisory committees. AAS programs prepare students for employment and/or licensure in their selected profession. In addition, each of these degrees includes course work in human relations, quantitative skills, and communications.

- *Certificates:* Highline's certificates prepare students for entry-level employment or provide special skills to enhance students' employability within their current profession. The college offers 15 certificates that require a year or longer (45-credits or more) of study. Each of these certificates includes course work in human relations, quantitative skills, and communications.

All degrees and certificates are listed and detailed in the college catalog, along with the student learning outcomes for each degree and certificates of 45 or more credits.

Course and program-level learning outcomes (Standard 2.C.2)

Highline Community College identifies its expected course, credential, and college-wide learning outcomes. These outcomes are shared with students and the public through the course catalog, the college website, and individual course syllabi.

The course-level student learning outcomes (SLOs) of all Highline courses are linked directly to college-wide outcomes (CWOs), which are published in the Student Learning Outcomes section of General Information in the college catalog. The SLOs and their linkages to the CWOs can be found on Course Adoption Forms and the online class quarterly. Course syllabi are expected to list student learning outcomes. Degree and college outcomes are accessible using the Credentials section of the catalog. Learning outcomes for professional/technical programs are also posted in the Pathways: Fields of Study publication.

Credit and credential awards (Standard 2.C.3)

As noted in the Instructional Policies section of the college catalog, students are required to apply for graduation using a form available online or in print at the Registration Office. When students apply for graduation, their records are reviewed by the credentials evaluators in the registrar's office who verify that the student has completed the number and type of credits necessary for the specified credential. For any degree, students must complete at least 90 college-level credits, 23 of which must be earned at Highline. A 2.0 grade point average is the minimum required to graduate. The college uses a numeric grading system, generally accepted and understood in higher education, to measure and report student performance. Decimal grade points range from 4.0 to 0.7, reported in 0.1 increments. Any grade under 0.7 (D-) is recorded as 0.0. The number of credits and general course requirements for A.A. and A.S. degrees reflect policies developed by the Washington State Inter-College Relations Commission and Washington State Joint Transfer Council. Professional/technical degrees and certificates meet requirements articulated by the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and for some programs by external accrediting organizations.

Credit Hour Policy (Standard 2.C.3, continued)

Highline defines a "credit hour" in accordance to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) Policy Manual, specifically in Chapter Four: Appendix B: Credit Hours/Credit Equivalents by Type of Instruction.

Credit hour integrity at the college is maintained by the use of Course Adoption Forms (CAFs), which as master course outlines list course credit hours, contact hours and type (lecture, lab, clinical), course descriptions and outlines, and student learning outcomes. The administrative assistant who develops the quarterly course schedule proofreads for alignment between credits and contact hours. Course adoption forms are created for all new credit classes, and existing CAFs are reviewed on a regular three-year basis. Online courses must follow the same CAF requirements as their face-to-face counterparts.

Curriculum design and sequencing (Standard 2.C.4)

Highline Community College's degree and certificate programs demonstrate coherent design, with appropriate depth, breadth, and sequencing of courses and synthesis of learning. Transfer degrees follow the structure recommended by the state's Intercollege Relations Commission (ICRC). Under the ICRC's Direct Transfer Agreement (DTA) guidelines, A.A. and A.S. degrees must provide general education fundamentals such as written and oral communication and quantitative skills, as well as exposure to distribution areas of science, social science, and the humanities. Minimum and maximum credit requirements in these areas ensure a balanced educational approach while also meeting the learning goals of the specific degree.

Professional/technical degrees are developed with input from business and industry professionals serving as members of program advisory committees. The advisory committees, required to meet at least twice a year, contribute information on employer expectations and needs. These committees also provide information on industry changes, standards, and future directions, thus ensuring that program curriculum remains current. Core courses in these programs typically are sequential so that students build upon skills developed and mastered in prior courses. Further, all professional/technical degrees include related instruction in quantitative skills, communication, and human relations. In addition to the core, breadth, and basic skills requirements common to higher education credentials, Highline requires that all degree-seeking students complete at least one course with diversity and globalism content. This requirement reflects the curricular impact of Core Theme 2, "*Integrate and institutionalize diversity and globalism throughout the college.*"

Faculty responsibility for curriculum (Standard 2.C.5)

Multiple college offices ensure that Highline's academic programs maintain appropriate content and rigor. Faculty exert central authority over these processes through two curriculum bodies:

- *Instruction Council:* At the course level, new offerings are first proposed and developed by faculty in the discipline. Instruction Council (a standing faculty committee) reviews and approves new courses based on submission of Course Adoption Forms (CAFs), which serve as master course outlines. All CAFs include course-level student learning outcomes as well as course contact hours, prerequisites (if any), course organization, and degree requirements fulfilled by the offering. On their way to Instruction Council, CAFs are reviewed by the department coordinator, division chair, and appropriate dean.

- *Faculty Senate:* Like individual courses, new degrees and certificates are developed by faculty in the discipline. Upon approval at the department level, new degrees are reviewed and approved by Faculty Senate. Though the Senate reserves full authority over curricular matters, degree proposals are generally shared with the Policy Development Council so that other constituent groups have an opportunity for comment. This open and inclusive process ensures that all areas of the campus are aware of important changes in the college's offerings.

In addition to these on-campus groups, curricular guidance is provided by program advisory committees, through the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' professional-technical program approval processes, and through the ICRC. A handful of Highline programs maintain external accreditation as well. Examples include the paralegal program's American Bar Association accreditation and the nursing program's National League for Nursing accreditation. While these entities offer valuable input into curriculum, Highline's faculty retain final authority and responsibility for the college's courses and programs.

Assessment of student learning (Standard 2.C.5, continued)

Assessment of Highline's educational program, meantime, occurs at two levels — institutional and departmental.

Institution-wide assessment: Student attainment

At the institution-wide level, success is measured through the lens of Core Theme 1, *"Promote Quality Instruction and Student Achievement."* There, the evidence is student attainment and student satisfaction, college-wide. For data, the college relies primarily on local analysis of the state's Student Achievement Initiative (SAI) data and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) as reported in the college's *Mission Fulfillment Report* (User name: NWCCU, Password: Acr3d1t3d). Collectively, these sources provide an ongoing picture of the college's impact on students' academic lives and of their perception of the quality of their learning experiences. The data is used to monitor student success trends, to identify gaps and opportunities there, and to task the appropriate bodies with responding to issues identified in the report.

Over the past six years, we have significantly refined our use of student-achievement data through our participation in Achieving the Dream (AtD), a national non-profit "dedicated to helping more community college students, particularly low-income students and students of color, stay in school and earn a college certificate or degree." The steering committee for this effort ― locally known as the Core Team ― includes all Executive Staff members, two instructional deans, two faculty members, and Highline's institutional researcher. Together, the Core Team guided the college's initial data-analysis and its development, over time, of interventions that have substantially improved student attainment in three critical areas: pre-college math completion, pre-college English and English completion, and transition of non-credit English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) students into degree programs. As a result of Highline's work in these initial interventions, the college in 2010 was named a Leader College, one of 52 nationwide, based on three years of continuous improvement in student attainment. More significantly, the AtD experience has proven to be foundational in Highline's development as a data-driven, improvement-oriented institution. Building on its first three interventions, the Core Team has since undertaken efforts to improve new student orientation and, most recently, to increase attainment rates among African-American enrollees.

Departmental assessment: Student learning

At the program and course level, meanwhile, responsibility for assessment of student learning resides squarely with the faculty. The assessment process is supported and facilitated by the Standards, Outcomes and Competencies Committee (SOCC), a standing faculty committee comprised of divisional representatives and library faculty, with *ex officio* representation from instructional deans and the institutional researcher. SOCC has a long history at the college. Over time, it has refined its processes, expanded its scope, and accumulated significant informational and support resources. Today it is one of the college's most important committees.

Thanks to SOCC's exceptional engagement and conscientiousness, Highline's assessment process has remained overwhelmingly faculty-driven. The approach allows faculty to focus on outcomes specifically meaningful to them, using assessments derived from their disciplines and pedagogy. At the same time, SOCC's processes facilitate a cycle of continuous improvement. Annual reports on assessment activities are submitted by academic department coordinators at the end of every academic year to the vice president for academic affairs, who reviews them before forwarding them to SOCC. The reports follow a structured,

consistent format determined by the vice president. Using a common rubric, SOCC members review and evaluate the departmental reports. These evaluations are then sent to the vice president and the academic division chairs. When necessary or requested, SOCC members assist departments in improving their assessment activities, including support in designing and executing assessment plans. Over the years, this process has been gradually redesigned to ensure that the assessment loop is closed as fully as possible, and to support faculty in maintaining momentum in their assessment activities. Furthermore, SOCC supports faculty in continuing to develop assessment skills and in using assessment results to improve pedagogy and student learning. SOCC achieves these ends through training and through individual and departmental consultations.

Integration of information resources (Standard 2.C.6)

Highline faculty are encouraged to work with the college's reference librarians to embed information literacy (IL) into courses and programs. One primary form of support is formal information literacy sessions taught by library faculty. In a typical year, over 250 of these sessions are scheduled, both in classrooms and in the library's instructional space. In addition, as described under Standard 2.E.3, the library offers a comprehensive suite of IL resources for faculty to integrate and assess information literacy in the learning process. Librarians offer their colleagues assistance in person, by email, or through group announcements. Library faculty receive CAFs at the same time as Instruction Council. At that point, librarians can reach out to faculty about the new course(s) and see what resources might be needed. As a result of these mechanisms ― as well as the extraordinary professionalism, approachability, and competence of Highline's library staff ― the college enjoys an exceptionally high level of engagement between teaching faculty and the library.

Credit for prior experiential learning (Standard 2.C.7)

In 2010, through Substitute Senate Bill 6357, Washington's legislature formally recognized the value of prior learning credit in maintaining and accelerating student momentum. Highline Community College was ahead of that mandate. Highline began piloting a program to grant academic credit for prior learning in 2009-10. From this pilot, the college established a Prior Learning Assessment Office which provides a structured process and policy, approved by Faculty Senate, for students seeking credit for prior educational experience.

Students who can demonstrate to the discipline-specific faculty that they have achieved the knowledge and skills in specific course(s) may be granted academic credit which will be reflected on their transcript. These prior learning experiences might not be in the traditional classroom, but may be in the workplace, through community-based training, or through other life experiences. Credit can be granted only for courses already offered by the college and cannot total more than 25 percent of the student's degree credit requirements. The college's Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) office supports and guides students through the process for receiving PLA credit, including documenting the prior learning experience and meeting with appropriately qualified teaching faculty in the relevant subject area. PLA credit is so designated on the student's transcript. No prior assurances are made regarding the likelihood or credit value of PLA awards.

Transfer-of-credit practices at Highline are detailed in this report's discussion of Standard 2.A.1.

Undergraduate Programs

In 2002, Highline Community College adopted a set of College-Wide Outcomes (CWOs) that represent an integrated set of foundational knowledge, skills, and attitudes that prepare each learner for future academic and career success. Directly related to Core Theme 1, *"Promote Quality Instruction and Student Achievement,"* these basic competencies create a foundation for a lifetime of self-directed learning, effective communication, and responsible citizenship. Highline's CWOs are:

Think Critically
The ability to identify and summarize assumptions, issues, and salient arguments, as well as to draw logically valid conclusions from statements, images, data, and other forms of evidence relevant to discipline- or occupation-specific content, and to assess the implications and consequences of conclusions.

Reason Quantitatively
The ability to comprehend, analyze, estimate, use, and evaluate quantitative information arising in a variety of situations and involving a combination of words, data sets, graphs, diagrams, and symbols.

Communicate Effectively
The ability to read, write, listen, speak, and use visual and other nonverbal means of communication with clarity and purpose while being mindful of audience characteristics; to express original thought, to take a position and defend it using solid evidence and sound reasoning; and to recognize and consider the perspectives and contributions of others.

Demonstrate Civic Responsibility in Diverse and Multifaceted Environments
The ability to understand and interact productively and ethically with others in diverse local, national, and global communities with an informed awareness of contemporary issues, their historical contexts, and their personal relevance.

Develop Information and Visual Literacy
The ability to assess the information requirements of complex projects, to identify potential textual, visual, and electronic resources, to obtain the needed information, to interpret, evaluate, synthesize, organize, and use that information, regardless of format, while adhering strictly to the legal and ethical guidelines governing information access in today's society.

As discussed in Standard 2.C.5, Highline's College-Wide Outcomes (CWOs) are directly linked to course-level student learning outcomes across the curriculum. Continuous assessment of student learning at the course level ensures that the CWOs are also assessed regularly, providing the college with data for continuous improvement in all areas.

The student learning outcomes for degrees and certificates of 45 or more credits are accessible in the Credentials section of the college catalog.

General education (Standards 2.C.9 and 2.C.10)

For our transfer degrees, Highline follows the structure recommended by the Intercollege Relations Commission's Direct Transfer Agreement. This framework ensures that students complete a recognizable core of general education that represents an integration of basic knowledge. Though some degree options may increase the requirements, the minimum credits in each skill and distribution area are as follows:

> *Written and oral communications:* 15 credits
> *Quantitative skills:* 5 credits
> *Physical Education:* 3 credits
> *Diversity and Globalism:* 3 credits
> *Humanities:* 10 credits
> *Social Sciences:* 15 credits
> *Science:* 15 credits

For each requirement, the list of course options is clearly delineated in the catalog.

Because the Associate in Science programs require a larger block of pre-major and sequenced coursework in the first two years of study, these degrees require fewer general education credits ― typically five credits in communications, five to ten credits in humanities, and five to ten credits in social sciences. The mathematics and science requirements in these degrees are correspondingly much larger, totaling as many as 70 credits in

those areas. Under the Direct Transfer Agreement's provisions, A.S. graduates may complete any outstanding general-education requirements at the receiving four-year institution.

Over time, Highline has devoted considerable resources and has worked diligently to improve the assessment of our general education learning outcomes. As part of that effort, the college in 2008-09 developed and adopted a set of assessable outcomes for each of its transfer degrees. These learning goals are published under "Transfer Degrees" in the Credentials section of the college catalog. Believing that the outcomes could be further strengthened, in 2010-11, small teams of transfer-area faculty crafted suggested revisions to the outcomes, often using assessment data to determine appropriate adjustments. A final version of the AA transfer outcomes was adopted in spring 2012.

Related instruction (Standard 2.C.11)

In all cases, Highline Community College's applied degrees and certificates of 45 credits or more require related instruction coursework in human relations, computation, and communication. Though many Associate in Applied Science degrees require more, the minimum related instruction requirement is 15 credits: five credits each in communications, computation, and human relations. Applied degree requirements are reviewed annually by principal faculty in the respective departments.

The specific courses that meet these requirements vary somewhat among AAS. degrees, in keeping with the need for such instruction to align with and support program goals. However, a master list of allowable choices is maintained by the dean of instruction for professional-technical education. Highline Community College does not embed related instruction. All related instruction courses are taught by faculty in those disciplines. The specific courses identified as requirements are published in the college catalog and in program-specific publications such as brochures.

As with all Highline courses, those meeting the degree requirements for related instruction have clear, measureable student learning outcomes which appear in the Course Adoption Form database. Those learning outcomes are directly connected to the college-wide outcomes. They are disclosed to students in the quarterly class schedule and class syllabi, as required by the syllabus section of the Faculty Handbook.

Like their counterparts in transfer education, faculty in the professional/technical programs invested significant effort in assessment of student learning within their programs. Faculty have mapped all degree and certificate learning outcomes to the outcomes for specific courses within their curricula, including related instruction courses. Through the mapping process, the connection between the related instruction components of a degree and the purpose they serve in the degree itself is made quite clear.

Graduate programs (Standards 2.C.12-15)

Highline Community College does not offer graduate programs.

Continuing education (Standards 2.C.16, 2.C.17, 2.C.18, and 2.C.19)

Highline Community College's Continuing Education division plays an integral part in the college's connection with the community. Its unit-level mission, *"To enrich our community through personal and professional lifelong learning opportunities,"* echoes the language of our Core Theme 3, "*Build valuable relationships and establish a meaningful presence within Highline Community College's . . . communities."*

To this end, Continuing Education offers a variety of educational services designed to meet community needs, including these primary areas:

- *Professional development and personal enrichment:* These courses and workshops, both face-to-face and online, help individual community members to improve their lives.

- *Customized training:* Our training clients include area municipalities, local business and industry, and workforce-development entities like the Workforce Development Council and the Port of Seattle's Port JOBS program. Offerings may be grant- or contract-funded and may serve incumbent workers, applicant trainees, or the unemployed.

- *Economic development:* Recognizing its responsibility to promote the economic vitality of its service area, Highline Community College offers a variety of educational consulting services to small business. In that effort, the Southwest King County Economic Development Initiative (SKCEDI) serves as a central convener, bringing together local municipalities, the college, King County, and the Port of Seattle to build programs focused on increasing jobs and business opportunities in Southwest King County. Services are funded through a variety of sources that include community development block grants and federal, state, and private foundation monies. Programs focus on local small business development, with a particular emphasis on promoting international trade. Highline Community College houses the state's [Center of Excellence for Trade, Transportation and Logistics](#).

- *Disability services:* A major focus of Continuing Education at Highline Community College is education and employment support for individuals with disabilities. Services are grant-funded through local counties, the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, nearby school districts, and, most recently, a Transition Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The college's Access Services program for students is housed within this organizational unit.

Although Continuing Education is a self-support unit of the college, it is fully integrated with the academic and governance structures of the institution. Its executive director reports to the vice president for academic affairs and sits on Instruction Cabinet. In all cases, the college maintains direct responsibility for the quality of academic programming in Continuing Education. All continuing education courses are developed and taught by local professionals who are experts in their fields. These courses, both credit and non-credit, are evaluated by students.

The vast majority of Continuing Education's services are non-credit. In a limited number of instances, however, Continuing Education has partnered with Highline's academic departments to develop short courses or pilot programs. A typical example is the Human Resource Certificate Program, a partnership between Continuing Education and the Business Information Technology (BTECH) Department. In cases of this kind, Continuing Education staff follow a standard process in which they collaborate with the faculty division chair or department coordinator representing the discipline. Faculty hiring follows the practices common to the department involved. Credit courses are developed and updated according to college guidelines for all credit-bearing courses. This includes completion and approval of Course Adoption Forms. In no case does Continuing Education offer credentials outside the college's core disciplines.

Where academic credit is awarded for Continuing Education courses, grades and credit determinations are consistent with institutional practices. Where Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are awarded, one CEU is defined as ten clock hours of participation in an accredited and organized continuing education program with qualified instruction. The primary purpose of CEUs is to provide a permanent record of the educational accomplishments of an individual who has completed one or more significant, non-credit courses. Continuing Education maintains copies of quarterly catalogs and class offerings in a centralized file room. Additionally, course names and enrollment records can be tracked by quarter through the college's Student Management System (SMS).

Student Support Resources

Highline Community College's Core Theme 1, *"Promote student engagement, learning and achievement,"* includes as its second objective that *"Diverse . . . student support services fulfill the learning needs of*

students." An important complementary component of learning is the support services that Highline offers to meet the unique learning needs of each student.

Student programs and services (Standard 2.D.1)

To support students' learning and their progression on educational pathways, we offer a comprehensive and diverse array of services to our student communities. In general terms, these services may be categorized in three major groups:

- *Student-specific services:* The college responds to specific student needs through its Counseling Center, Multicultural Affairs, Intercultural Center, Women's Programs, Veteran's Services, WorkForce Services, TRiO , International Student Programs, High School Programs (high school completion, enhancement, Running Start), Access Services and Gateway to College programs.

- *Academic supports:* The Academic Affairs Division also coordinates specialized services to support learning outside of the classroom. The Tutoring Center, Math Resource Center and Writing Center provide individualized and small-group support, both peer- and faculty-led, for students seeking to enhance their classroom performance. The Math Engineering Science Achievement Program (MESA) program encourages greater participation and success among underrepresented groups in science, technology, engineering, and math programs through tutoring, advising, and college-awareness activities. The Puget Sound Welcome Back Center assists healthcare professionals who were trained in other countries to re-enter their profession here, in the local workforce.

- *Student programs:* Highline's students are invited to engage in leadership and service roles throughout campus and in student leadership. The Center for Leadership and Service works to provide an environment that promotes connection and relationships.

Beyond programming, student success depends on access to physical spaces that promote community development and engagement. To meet that end, the college's Student Union, Intercultural Center, Tutoring Center, MESA Center, and the open study spaces in the library and Student Services Building have all been built and maintained as welcoming, attractive places for student collaboration, reflection, and community.

Safety and security (Standard 2.D.2)

Highline Community College takes seriously the safety and security of its students, faculty, staff, and community members.

The Campus Safety Department, a unit of the Administrative Services Division, is responsible for campus security. At least one officer is on duty at all times. Campus Safety staff share information with college administration in order to provide timely warning and safety notices to the campus community. They also provide safety and crime prevention information using campus-wide email and occasional campus presentations. The department's staff is responsible for organizing and assessing regular fire drills, and it coordinates with the college's Administrative Services Division for annual emergency drills. As part of this training effort, college staff have rehearsed responses for inclement weather, high-risk speaker events, Swine Flu, and earthquake-preparedness scenarios. The college maintains National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) certification for its leadership team and other key response personnel. The college Emergency Action Plan is reviewed and updated annually.

The Campus Safety Department maintains daily incident logs, available for public viewing. The department also maintains college crime statistics in accordance with the federal Cleary Act of 1990. These statistics are compiled and reported to Executive Staff, the executive director of human resources, the facilities director, and the Des Moines Police Department (DMPD) on a quarterly basis. An annual *Campus Safety Report*, including reportable crime statistics for the previous three years, is published each year by October 1 and reported to the

United States Department of Education. The report's release is announced to students, staff, and faculty through campus email, and it is posted on the Campus Safety Department public website.

As a result of the college's safety practices and resources, the campus remains generally safe. However, in the surrounding neighborhoods, crime rates are sometimes a concern. As a consequence, college officials recognize the importance of continued vigilance and pro-active planning to ensure that the campus remains secure and, equally important, is perceived to be safe by its occupants.

Because improvement is an ongoing goal, we have taken additional steps to improve campus safety. For example, to facilitate communications during an emergency, the Administrative Technology Department recently installed speaker telephones in all classrooms as part of a campus notification system. In addition, two new emergency phones were added in the east parking lot, along with three other emergency telephones installed around the campus, to improve access to emergency responders. Furthermore, thanks to additional technology upgrades in recent years, the college can now send emergency alerts through campus-wide email and text message. Criminal activities on campus are reported via campus-wide email from the vice president for administrative services office.

Similarly, over the past few years Administrative Services staff have made it a priority to collaborate more closely with local first responders. As a result, today the Campus Safety Department works regularly with the Des Moines Police Department (DMPD), South King Fire and Rescue, and the City of Kent Fire Department. The value of these relationships has been significant. As one example, in late 2008, the college and DMPD jointly conducted a campus-wide Crime Prevention by Environmental Design (CPED) inspection that identified landscaped areas with overgrown plants and areas where lighting could be improved. With the report providing guidance, Highline's Facilities Department took aggressive measures to prune and/or remove landscaping that could conceal a person or limit visibility. At the same time, the parking lot lighting and some internal walkway lighting were upgraded with new pulse start ballasts and bulbs that resulted in a significant improvement of campus light levels. More recently, in summer 2013, the college held a table-top active-shooter drill in collaboration with Des Moines Police Department (DMPD) and South King Fire and Rescue.

Recruitment, admission, and orientation (Standard 2.D.3)

At Highline, student recruitment is primarily the responsibility of the Institutional Advancement Division. That office produces the college's promotional materials, organizes recruitment events, and employs professional staff who conduct outreach into area schools. Recognizing and valuing the diversity of the surrounding community, Outreach Services staff have developed a non-traditional recruitment model that pro-actively engages students and their families by bringing services into K-12 classrooms and community settings, developing long-term relationships, and emphasizing a college-going culture of expectation.

As an open-access institution, the college attempts to meet the educational needs of any adult who can benefit from its educational services. Appropriate to that mission, Highline Community College's Admissions/Entry Services (AES) department provides information on the college's entry processes and procedures. Potential students can apply online and register, either in-person or through the college website, as long as they meet any class prerequisites.

Information about academic requirements and transfer policies is the initial responsibility of the Educational Planning and Advising Center (EPAC). There, students receive orientation and academic and program advising from EPAC staff. A significant change in student orientation began in summer 2012 with mandatory orientations of all new students who have not attended college previously. Orientations are offered weekly and an online orientation is available for students unable to attend an on-campus session. The purpose of these orientations is to emphasize the importance of higher education, to cover information relating to academics and student life at Highline, and to offer small group interactions between the new students and student mentors. By the beginning of fall quarter 2012, the Educational Planning and Advising Center had over 700 new students attend these orientations.

Additionally, Women's Programs, International Student Programs, Multicultural Services, and some professional-technical programs provide orientations for special populations. The Running Start program (because of the special requirements of dual-credit enrollment) also provides a distinct orientation for students and their families.

Educational publications and website postings are updated annually. If academic requirements change due to departmental action, EPAC reflects these changes on its website and in print publications at their next scheduled printing.

Program revision or elimination (Standard 2.D.4)

Committees comprised of faculty and administrators conduct the college's program reviews. If a committee determines the need for significant change in program requirements, it drafts a plan to implement the changes with minimum disruption to current students. This plan is developed in collaboration with the program advisory committee and approved by the vice president of academic affairs. If requirements change, students have the option of graduating under the original or under the updated program requirements.

Thankfully, program closures are rare. When they occur, the decision is almost certainly budget- or demand-driven. In such cases, the program review committee drafts a plan for students to complete the program with minimal disruption. This plan is clearly communicated to the students in person, in writing, and through the program website. Typically, program elimination involves ending new enrollment while teaching out the remaining students so they can complete their certificate and/or degree within the normal timeframe for that credential. Program closures are reported to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

College catalog and publications (Standards 2.D.5 and 2.D.6)

The Highline Community College Catalog, available on the college website, is updated annually. A comprehensive update and review of the catalog occurs every two years. In 2011, the college converted from a print-only catalog to the on-line Acalog tool. A limited number of hard-copy catalogs are available in the bookstore. To provide convenient web access, kiosks are available on campus in Student Services public areas, faculty office buildings, and the Outreach Center (Building 99). In addition, the library has over 70 general-use computers available to students, prospective students, and the public.

The college catalog and other publications consistently include the information required by Standards for Accreditation and common higher education practice.

The college catalog contains the following items in the sections noted:

Institutional mission and core themes:	About Highline section
Entrance requirements and procedures:	Getting Started section
Grading policies:	Instructional Policies section
Academic program information:	Credentials section
Trustees, faculty, and staff:	Board of Trustees/Faculty/Staff section
Academic calendar:	General Information section

Course offerings are found in the Class Schedule webpage. Student rights and conduct regulations appear in Policies, Procedures, Statistics and Notifications area under College Policies. Tuition, fees, refund policies, and financial aid information are available in General Information.

Highline uses its website as the primary source of accurate information regarding programs and courses. When professional/technical programs have eligibility requirements for licensure or occupational entry, that information appears on the program websites as well as in the college catalog. Additionally, all students are

encouraged to establish *myHCC* email accounts, through which the college disseminates updates, reminders, and other important notices to the general student population.

Student records (Standard 2.D.7)

Highline's Registration and Records Department in the Student Services Division maintains student records. All student data is backed up daily by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, which also extracts student records on a quarterly and annual basis. The college maintains confidentiality of student records as provided by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). An explanation of student FERPA rights appears in the Student Services Division's webpage as well as the Policies, Procedures, Statistics and Notifications in the college catalog.

Financial aid (Standard 2.D.8 and 2.D.9)

Poverty rates and unemployment in South King County are substantially higher than regional averages. As a result, Highline's student population relies heavily on financial support to access the college's academic programs. In 2011-12, the college awarded approximately 4,700 students some form of financial assistance. Given the community's need, providing accurate and comprehensive financial aid information is a crucial task. Consequently, financial assistance is a standard topic when prospective students first interact with the Entry Services and Admissions, Financial Aid Office, or Outreach Services staff.

Highline's Financial Aid website is the primary information portal for both incoming and returning students. The site provides information on scholarships and student loans, as well as traditional aid sources. The website invites students to attend financial aid orientations and workshops. The college updates the site as needed when information changes; print publications containing financial aid information are updated annually. In addition, Financial Aid Office staff are available to students seeking information or clarification in person.

Students are notified of any repayment obligations by letter. Copies of repayment obligation letters are retained in student files. The college's Student Loans webpage outlines student responsibilities and requirements associated with student loans. Students are also required to complete the Federal Online Direct Student Loan Entrance Counseling at the U.S. Department of Education Student Loans website.

All student loan disbursements are reconciled monthly. Default rates for Highline are published annually by the Department of Education at its Official Cohort Default Rates for Schools webpage.

Academic advising (Standard 2.D.10)

Highline Community College maintains a dual system of academic advising, providing services both by staff advisers and by faculty.

Students who are new to campus or taking online or evening classes are more likely to be served by professionals in Educational Planning and Advising (EPAC) and High School Programs (HSP) advisers. Approximately 66 percent of all degree and certificate seeking students at Highline have a faculty adviser on record. Students are free to seek out faculty members to serve as their academic advisers. Faculty advisers may also be assigned by EPAC based on the student's academic interests and goals.

Advising training for faculty advisers is primarily handled by the Academic Affairs Division through the academic departments and the Faculty Advising Committee. For EPAC, HSP, and special programs such as International Student Programs, Athletics, and WorkForce Education Services, adviser training is managed by each department, with additional information available on the Highline Advisor Network listserv. New advisers and interns are given extensive orientations and training, part of which consists of shadowing experienced advisers for two to four weeks.

Updated program and degree requirements are reviewed, published, and posted on the college website annually and are found at the Programs & Courses webpage.

Co-curricular programs (Standard 2.D.11)

Highline Community College's Center for Leadership and Service (CLS) manages and coordinates the institution's co-curricular offerings. Its work aligns directly with Core Theme 1, particularly in its second objective's goal that "*students engage with their curriculum, campus, and community for a meaningful educational experience*."

The Center for Leadership and Service provides opportunities for growth and learning through student leadership roles in campus governance. It also develops and maintains student-funded programs that build and support student community — clubs, campus publications, and athletics, for example — as well as advancing the college's diversity and global initiatives by providing funding and coordination of diversity, international, and social justice programs. The list of chartered clubs is extensive, with over 25 active organizations representing the diversity of Highline's students and their interests.

Governance of Highline's co-curricular programs is the responsibility of the Associated Students of Highline Community College (ASHCC). As the college's representative student government, ASHCC provides program oversight and funding to the many co-curricular programs offered across campus. As outlined in its Constitution, ASHCC's responsibilities include allocating student activities funds, providing leadership and involvement opportunities for students, and acting as the collective voice of enrolled students. Its budget policies can be found in the ASHCC Financial Code.

Highline's co-curricular programs are managed by the associate dean for student programs and leadership, who serves as budget authority for student funds. The associate dean delegates financial monitoring to budget managers for each program offered. These budget managers are accountable to both the ASHCC and the college to assure compliance with relevant institutional and state policies.

Auxiliary services (Standard 2.D.12)

Auxiliary Services at Highline consists of three functional areas, all under the supervision of Administrative Services:

- The Hospitality Services Department coordinates rental and use of campus space for all non-academic purposes. As part of that role, Hospitality Services assists in planning events for a wide variety of campus constituencies, including students, faculty, and staff. In addition, Hospitality Services collaborates with the college's food service vendor to support events for the Highline Foundation and other organizations.

- The Highline Bookstore provides students with learning resources — including textbooks, software, and program supplies — needed for academic success. In addition, the bookstore supports broader campus community events throughout the year and contributes to the educational mission of the college by providing opportunities for student employment.

- Food Services (Catering) are provided by contract with Chartwell's. Chartwell's maintains a cafeteria-style main dining area, plus two smaller coffee-and-snack outlets in Building 8 and 29. This firm is also the college's caterer.

Auxiliary Services contributes to student learning by providing student employment and internship opportunities. The bookstore and Hospitality Services also reflect the college's core themes by providing resources in support of extra and co-curricular events such as Global Fest, Unity Through Diversity Week, Graduation Fair, and various author signings throughout the year. Input regarding auxiliary programs is possible by direct conversations with staff and by using contact information found on the Auxiliary Services website. The Highline Bookstore maintains a Textbook Advisory Committee to provide feedback and input.

Whenever the food service contract is renegotiated, Administrative Services convenes a multi-constituent committee to provide input and ideas.

Athletics (Standard 2.D.13)

Highline Community College's Athletic Department is dedicated to the academic, athletic, and social growth of every student athlete. The program and its students are closely monitored to ensure the educational mission of the college is being met. The college is a member of the Northwest Athletic Association of Community Colleges (NWAACC) and strives to remain consistent with the ideals and goals of this organization. The college's wrestling program is a member of the National Junior College Athletic Association.

Highline's scholarship policy exceeds the requirements of both leagues to promote the academic success of all student athletes. Oversight of these programs is conducted by an athletic director who serves as the budget authority and departmental administrator for all athletic facilities and programs, as well as the supervisor for all coaching staff.

Admission requirements and procedures, academic standards, degree requirements, and financial aid awards for students participating in co-curricular programs are consistent with those for any students. No exceptions or special access is granted to students involved in athletics, the student community, or leadership roles.

Identity verification (Standard 2.D.14)

Highline's distance education courses are delivered through the college's Angel Learning Management System (LMS). The Angel system is accessed by students through their *myHCC* accounts, which are established at the time of admission through a one-time activation code mailed to the student's physical address of record. This activation code, combined with additional personal information, is used to verify the students' identity when creating the *myHCC* account. The student is required to set a strong password and to answer a set of security questions for purposes of later identification. If the student cannot answer the security questions, he or she must present photo identification at the Instruction Computing Helpdesk, or answer a set of personal identification questions via telephone or email, in order to gain account access. Beyond normal admissions fees, there is no charge for establishing the *myHCC* account.

Instructors of individual online courses employ a variety of methods to verify student identity in the assessment process. Highline's online faculty also emphasize short written assignments as a means to develop a sense of each student's voice before any major written work is assigned.

Library and Information Resources

Resource adequacy and planning (Standards 2.E.1 and 2.E.2)

The Highline Community College library provides access to both physical and electronic resources to meet the information needs of students, faculty, staff, and the community. The Library Collection Development Policy provides that the main collection is maintained at the Research Libraries Group Conspectus Level Two (basic information level) for most subject areas. In addition to its main collection, the library has smaller collections — among them legal, new readers, and career information — designed to meet specialized needs and interests of the Highline community. The Stanley P. Owens Native American Collection houses books related to Native American history and culture. The library is a selective depository in the Federal Depository Library program. It also supports satellite collections at points of service across campus, such as the Health Occupations Lab and the Learning and Teaching Center.

Library planning is guided by the Library Management Team (LMT), a group that meets bi-monthly to discuss library planning, administration, and policies. LMT is chaired by the dean of instructional resources, a librarian who acts as library director. In addition, LMT includes representatives from the circulation, reference, technical services and library technology departments. Also, individual library departments meet on a regular basis to discuss both day-to-day and long-range issues and planning.

To ensure that the collection has the currency, breadth, and depth to support the information needs of its primary users, each reference librarian has selection and weeding responsibilities in one or more of over 50 subject areas. Under the coordination of the collection development lead, librarians solicit title requests through emails, meetings with faculty and staff, viewing reading lists for various classes, and announcements made at instructional division and faculty meetings. Students can submit requests at the reference desk, by email, or using a web form created for this purpose.

To help assess and develop the overall collection, the college librarians have a variety of reports available on demand, such as individual title usage, lost and withdrawn items, and expenditure summaries by subject and format. As an example of how this information has been used, in summer 2012 the collection development librarian conducted a statistical analysis of library collection usage by format. This analysis clearly indicated a significant decrease in the use of print periodicals. Librarians thus decided to engage in an evaluation of the print periodicals collection in fall 2012. After a collaborative process involving all full- and part-time librarians and some discipline faculty, librarians agreed on print titles to cancel, reducing print periodical subscriptions by approximately 50%. The approximately $10,000 savings resulting from this reduction has been reallocated to increasing the print book and electronic resources collections, where demand is higher.

In addition to collection and usage data, library staff incorporate both formal and informal feedback from students, faculty, and college administrators in planning for library services. To provide a more formal avenue for input, in spring 2011 the Library Assessment Committee (LAC) worked with the college's institutional researcher to develop and administer a pilot survey to solicit student opinions about the quality of library resources, services, and staff. The LAC followed up this survey with a slightly revised survey in spring 2012, targeting two general education classes taken by almost all degree seeking students. Surveys were administered in the classrooms after getting permission from the instructors. One problem brought out by the survey was students being able to find computers to use within five minutes. With the 74 computers currently available to library users, and other computers available to students in campus labs, this challenge appeared to be manageable using existing resources. According to library policy, students needing computers for college-related work get priority; librarians work with these students to ensure such access.

The LAC will not administer the student survey in 2013; instead, it is working with library administration to focus on improving the assessment of internal library processes and activities. The LAC anticipates administering the student survey again in spring 2014.

In addition, the faculty reference librarians and library administrators participate actively in shared governance at Highline. Their memberships include the Faculty Senate; the Standards, Outcomes, and Competencies Committee (SOCC); the Accreditation Steering Committee and its subcommittees, and a wide variety of curriculum and governance groups. The dean of instruction sits on Instruction Cabinet. In performing these tasks, library staff receive regular feedback about the library from other faculty and college administrators.

Information literacy instruction (Standard 2.E.3)

Library resources and services directly support the achievement of the college's Core Theme 1, *"Promote student engagement, learning and achievement."* In support of that goal, a primary focus of the library is to promote and enhance the information literacy (IL) skills of students, faculty, staff, and administrators through a variety of activities including direct reference services, formal instruction sessions, and direct collaboration with faculty in a number of venues, both in-person and online. The importance of information literacy at Highline is demonstrated in that it is one of the college's five college-wide learning outcomes. Specifically, Highline defines information and visual literacy as follows:

The ability to assess the information requirements of complex projects, to identify potential textual, visual and electronic resources, to obtain the needed information, to interpret, evaluate, synthesize, organize, and use that information, regardless of format, while adhering strictly to the legal and ethical guidelines governing information access in today's society.

Reference Department policy is to regard every patron interaction as an opportunity to teach information literacy. In providing one-on-one reference services, librarians discuss database selection, explain search strategies, and guide students in evaluating the quality and authority of sources.

All full- and part-time librarians also provide formal IL instruction. To encourage the use of this service, the library developed an online form to simplify the process for faculty to request instruction for their classes. A formal peer assessment process provides feedback on the quality of the presentations.

In addition to in-person instruction, the library has made available IL tools that faculty and students can assign or use at their convenience. Reference librarians adopted the IRIS Tutorials (Information and Research Instruction Suite) developed through a grant from the Distance Learning Council of Washington, tailoring the tutorials to meet the needs of Highline faculty and students. The Reference Department has also created Camtasia videos and other types of materials focusing on information literacy instruction.

The library has recently made changes to the physical space so that students can use library resources more effectively. In summer 2010, the circulation desk was relocated to the main entrance, providing a clear point of service for library users. In summer 2011, the library equipped its third-floor study rooms with wall-mounted monitors and laptop connections to improve student options for collaborative work. A new information literacy instruction classroom with 36 computers has been in use since fall 2012.

Resources and services evaluation (Standard 2.E.4)

Within the library itself, assessment is conducted primarily at the department and program levels and is closely tied to planning and other administrative activities. In fall 2010, the dean of instructional resources met with individual library departments to evaluate departmental activities and departmental plans for assessments. The dean and department staff identified activities that were not being adequately assessed and those activities that staff felt needed improvement. As a consequence of this work, library departments implemented assessment activities on a more consistent basis, with positive impacts on service delivery. Examples include the following:

- The Reference Department has used statistics to identify peak information literacy instruction times and, to ensure coverage, has adjusted its desk schedule accordingly.

- The Technical Services Department in spring 2010 began recording book-check data on typos and processing errors as a way to improve accuracy, training, and procedures. Technical Services also routinely tracks processing speed for all acquisitions to assess workflow processes and staffing.

- In spring 2011, the Circulation Department began assessing returned-item processing, tracking discharge, and shelving accuracy and timeliness.

To follow up on this work, as mentioned above, the Library Assessment Committee is working with library administration to implement a structural assessment and improvement of internal library processes and work. To this end, in fall 2012, the library began using annual department work plans that include objectives, responsibilities, measures, and benchmarks. Some of the items included in the reference department workplan, for example, were the 2012 print periodicals evaluation; the implementation of Gimlet, a software product used to quantitatively measure patron interactions at the reference and circulation desks; and the creation and use of an information literacy rubric in IL instruction and at the reference desk. After one year the workplan model

proved itself to the point where, with further refinements based on staff input, it will become what library staff use on an ongoing basis in establishing, organizing, tracking, and evaluating the completion of work priorities.

The security of patron records is a high priority. The Highline Community College library is committed to the intellectual freedom and privacy of its users. It supports the principles of the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) Statement on Libraries and Intellectual Freedom. These principles are reflected in the formal regulations adopted by Highline's library (WAC 1321-168A). Consistent with its commitment to privacy, the library does not retain patron borrowing records beyond the return of materials. All library computers are accessible without user identification, and temporary computer files are erased daily. For the technologies that do require a log-in, sessions automatically log out several seconds after use.

Financial Resources

Highline Community College's Core Theme 4, *"Model sustainability in human resources, operations, and teaching and learning,"* includes a focus on resource stewardship. Specifically, Objective 2 commits the institution to demonstrating "good stewardship of financial resources while ensuring sufficient resources will be available in the future." The college community takes these commitments seriously. The institution is both conservative and creative in managing resources and capitalizing on opportunities while avoiding undue risk.

Financial stability and risk management (Standard 2.F.1)

Highline Community College is financially stable, with sufficient cash flow and reserves to cover all operations and commitments. Even as state revenues have declined over recent years, Highline's enrollment has surged, bringing in additional tuition and student fees. The college has seen substantial growth in other local funding sources, including grants and contracts and enterprise funds.

Historically, Highline's approach to financial planning has emphasized realism and sustainability, using conservative enrollment targets and revenue projections which recognize the continued economic uncertainties of the environment.

Although Highline's finances have remained stable overall, the institution continues to face fiscal challenges, most notably the shift toward greater reliance on local rather than state support. The last several years have seen significant declines in taxpayer investment in Washington's community and technical colleges. Since fiscal year 2007, state allocations to Highline Community College have decreased $8.8 million, dropping from 67 percent of the college's total operating funds for 2007 to 61 percent for fiscal year 2012. Fortunately, over that same time period, state tuition rates have increased and Highline's tuition-paying enrollment has continued to exceed the state target. As a result, the college has been able to convert any full-time equivalent (FTE) students above the state allocated target to contract-funded enrollments, a process known locally as "excess enrollment." This process allows the college to retain revenues that otherwise would have been remitted to the state. With this financial flexibility, Highline has been able to plan for and implement budget and programmatic reductions in a strategic manner over the course of the state's downturn.

This strategy is consistent with the college's approach to risk-management. The college maintains a board-approved reserve fund of 10 percent of its annual operating budget. For fiscal year 2012, this reserve was approximately $4 million. Highline also maintains specific reserve funds for capital improvements, litigation contingencies, and program continuity. The college also has significant unrestricted fund balances, and carefully monitors tuition collection against projections on a quarterly basis.

Resource planning (Standard 2.F.2)

Highline Community College follows an annual budget cycle, with planning for the next fiscal year beginning during the current winter quarter. As a key element of that process, the college develops careful revenue

estimates for each of its major fund sources: state allocations, tuition revenue, contracted-enrollment income, and grants and contracts.

Working directly with the Executive Staff, the Budget Office develops a tuition revenue estimate based on historical enrollment levels and any anticipated tuition increase. Budget Office staff then estimate the college's likely state allocation, using the current year as the base and adding or subtracting any anticipated increases or decreases. For the past three years, recognizing that the current enrollment surge is economically-driven and likely short-lived, the college deliberately chose to budget tuition revenue at 2009 enrollment levels. The Budget Office then has applied any revenue in excess of that projection, as appropriate, to help offset a portion of anticipated state reductions in the next year's budget. This "forward-funding" approach to excess tuition has allowed the college to soften the year-to-year impact of the state's cutbacks.

In addition to tuition, contracted-enrollment income is a significant portion of the college's revenue stream. Highline's two largest contract-enrollment programs are Running Start co-enrollment and International Student Programs. For students who participate in the Running Start high school co-enrollment program, the college receives revenue from the sending high school to support all instructional activity related to that student population, as well as wrap-around services including advising and student programs. Currently, Highline Community College is one of the state's largest Running Start providers, with over 1064 students enrolled in 2011-12. International students pay the full cost of their instruction, currently $9,600 per year, full-time, and, like Running Start enrollees, are considered as contract-funded, rather than state-funded, students. Last year, Highline served over 600 international students. The college's operating budget realizes support from both of these programs, with projections based on anticipated enrollment levels and a formula that calculates direct instructional costs. The college conducts enrollment planning for these two special populations annually as part of our budget development process.

Along with realistic enrollment-based revenue estimates, the college exercises prudent judgment in projecting grant and contract revenue. While grants and local revenues are an important part of Highline's overall funding picture, college officials recognize that grants are restricted funds, and so we do not rely on either grants or indirect monies from grants to support regular college operations. Rather, we see grants as a way to supplement and enhance the college mission and to provide resources for new partnerships and innovations. Grant applications are approved through the division vice president and, ultimately, through the vice president for institutional advancement. Grant budgets are reviewed by the director of budget and grants and contracts. The director calculates salary and benefit information and assists in determining the funding levels required for support of the grant. The Budget Office initiates all invoicing for grants, with invoices processed through financial services.

Budget development (Standard 2.F.3)

Budget development at Highline, under the guidance of its Budget Office, is a continual process that involves multiple campus constituencies. Structurally, the process follows the college's formal organizational framework.

Beginning in winter quarter, budget managers in each division present their budget requests to their individual vice presidents. Where known, budget reductions are calculated into those requests. Divisions present requests for increases to a department's base budget separately from the carry-forward budgets. During spring quarter, Executive Staff discusses each department's budget and makes the final determination of each area's funding allocation. Executive Staff also analyzes reduction proposals to address impacts to service and to revenue generation. At this same time, Executive Staff makes decisions regarding any one-time expenditure requests for the upcoming year, including minor facility improvements, technology upgrades, or other short-term investments. Once Executive Staff approves the entire budget, it sends the budget to the Board of Trustees for review and approval.

Though the formal budget-approval process is hierarchical, broad college representation in budget matters is ongoing and deliberate. An *ad hoc* budget committee, consisting of the budget director and budget managers

from each division, meets on a regular basis throughout the fiscal year to address continuing and emergent budget issues. The committee serves as a conduit for broader campus conversation around fiscal planning. In addition, the college's executive leadership regularly seeks input on the implications of budget decisions. For example, in response to state cutbacks that year, in 2010 Executive Staff formed a task force to solicit and evaluate suggestions for cost savings from the campus community.

Financial information systems (Standard 2.F.4)

The college ensures timely and accurate financial information through its use of the Washington community and technical college system's Financial Management System (FMS). FMS is an integrated system supporting cashiering, customer accounts, accounts payable, inventory, and chart of account management. System-generated monthly financial reports are available to campus users, as are *ad hoc* reports generated through FMS's reporting module. The college also uses a utility that provides budget status, revenue, and expenditure updates daily.

The vice president for administrative services is responsible for the fiscal functions of the college. Financial functions reporting through the vice president include financial accounting and reporting, banking and investments, accounts payable, customer accounts, budget, purchasing, grants and contracts, contract administration, risk management, and payroll.

The director of finance and auxiliary services, who has twenty years of experience in Washington's community college system, is responsible for the quality of financial information recorded in the college's management system. The associate director of finance, who is responsible for general ledger accounting, financial reporting, and adherence to generally accepted accounting principles, is a certified public accountant with over twenty years of experience in higher education accounting.

Responsibility for internal controls is distributed throughout the college. However, Financial Services is responsible for internal control assessment, monitoring, and reporting. All major college departments complete risk assessments annually. Additionally, finance and purchasing management review and monitor several functions, including cash receipting, inventory control, and procurement-card transactions.

Throughout the college, individual budget managers are required to reconcile accounts under their area of responsibility and to report discrepancies to Financial Services staff in a timely manner. Budgets are monitored regularly by the college Budget Department. Any over-expenditures at the department level are brought to the attention of the budget manager, who is responsible to ensure that budgets are not over-spent.

Purchases are made within the guidelines of RCW 28B.10.029. Under that statute, institutions of higher education and their boards of trustees have independent purchase authority, and do not have to go through the Department of Enterprise Services for the procurement and contracting of goods and services. By state regulation, all purchases that exceed $10,000 must be competitively solicited. Where other legislative restrictions apply, expenditures require prior approval by a vice president. All purchasing documents are reviewed prior to issuance of payment.

Capital budgets (Standard 2.F.5)

The college develops capital budgets following guidelines prescribed by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC). Fund sources may be legislatively-allocated or local. Biennially, the college undergoes a facilities condition survey, which provides the basis for routine state funding of repairs, minor projects, and maintenance. The college also can request state allocations for major renovations and new construction. Major projects are submitted as part of the college's biennial capital budget request and are developed in accordance with the college's Master Plan.

That plan is closely aligned with the college's core themes, particularly with our focus on providing quality learning environments. Accordingly, at present, Highline's highest-priority capital funding requests are for renovating two classroom buildings. Future capital projects include renovations to the library and three

additional classroom buildings. The campus Master Plan's goal of promoting environmentally-friendly facilities also corresponds to the sustainability focus of Core Theme 4.

Along with legislatively-appropriated monies, Highline has made creative use of alternative funding sources to secure capital improvements. Since the mid-1990s, the college has partnered with the Port of Seattle in remodeling a number of campus buildings. Because of the college's location directly under the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport flight path, the Port has underwritten noise-abatement projects in a number of instructional facilities. Highline's practice has been to leverage the Port's investments by strategically combining state-allocated repair dollars and local college funds to extend the scope of renovation. The college's particularly outdated performing arts building, Building 4, was thoroughly renovated through this process in 2012-13. Plans are in the works to continue this process for the next several years.

By state law, debt for capital outlay must be funded through the Office of the State Treasurer's Certificate of Participation (COP) program, which allows borrowing for capital projects or equipment at favorable interest rates. Highline has made limited use of that program to garner additional capital funding. The college currently makes debt-service payments on one major construction project, as well as one smaller equipment purchase. The college identifies specific fund sources for repayment prior to initiating the financing process, and the college Executive Staff and Financial Services staff carefully review all potential debt outlays prior to requesting approval. Budgets for major capital projects include furnishing and equipment, and also take into consideration cost-escalation factors and on-going building operations. After the initial COP is funded, the State Treasurer's finance staff continually review its interest rate to determine if a more advantageous interest rate could be acquired through refinancing.

Auxiliary enterprises (Standard 2.F.6)

The college engages in enterprise activities appropriate to its mission, its core themes, and the needs of its students. These activities include parking and three Auxiliary Services areas: the bookstore, campus food services, and Hospitality Services. Each of these activities is accounted for either in separate funds or distinct organizational codes within a fund. In general, auxiliary enterprises are self-sustaining and do not rely on general operational funds for support. Neither do the college's basic operations depend on enterprise income.

- *Parking:* Highline's parking fund pays a 15% overhead charge to the college. The fund receives income from sales of student and staff parking passes and from fines. Its revenues primarily offset maintenance costs for the college's parking lots. As noted above, parking revenue partially supports the Campus Safety Department s part-time department enforcement officers. After operating at a near break-even point for several years, in 2009 parking fees were raised to rebuild reserves for needed repairs and to maintain an adequate emergency response fund. Although the fund is now financially stable, ongoing lack of state support for parking lot repairs may necessitate additional increases in permit costs within the next few years.

- *College bookstore:* The college-owned and operated bookstore pays an overhead charge that is the same as that of the parking fund. It also contributes $100,000 annually to debt service on the Student Union Building where it is located. The bookstore remains profitable, although the traditional financial model for college bookstores has changed dramatically in just a few short years. As recently as five years ago, the primary profit source was used textbooks, with sales of new texts close behind. With the advent of various initiatives aimed at reducing textbook costs, Highline's bookstore has seen its revenue in those two areas decline rapidly. By partnering with industry consortiums such as the National Association of College Stores and with wholesalers such as Follett and Nebraska, the bookstore has been able to remain competitive by offering innovative programs such as e-books and text book rentals, along with expanding its offerings in non-text book merchandising, such as software and electronics.

- *Food service:* Since 2008, Highline has contracted with Chartwell's to provide dining and catering services on a profit-and-loss basis, with Chartwell's paying the college 5% commission on gross sales.

- *Hospitality services:* Highline receives enterprise income from facility rental activities. This includes the rentals of classroom or conference spaces to individuals and groups for events such as meetings, conferences, and training. Income from these activities supports the event management function of the college, covering the salaries of one full-time and one part-time employee. Other rental activities include renting classroom and office space to two private educational providers — Kaplan International and Heritage University — as well as leasing the childcare building to Children's Home Society of Washington. Revenues from these long-term rentals offset facility repairs and upgrades.

Financial audits (Standard 2.F.7)

As an agency of the state of Washington, the college falls under the authority of the Washington State Auditor's Office (SAO). Audits are conducted by qualified state auditors in accordance with the state's annual audit plan for higher education. Findings and management letter items are carried forward to subsequent audit cycles until each issue is resolved. Prior to and at the conclusion of each audit, SAO audit staff and management meet with the college president, the vice president for administrative services, the director of finance and auxiliary services, and at least one board member to review and discuss recommendations or action items.

For the period July 2000 through June 2009, Highline received no audit findings and has successfully resolved all management letter items.

Beginning with fiscal year 2010, the SAO adopted a new approach to auditing state government, including higher education. Historically, SAO regulations called for biennial audits, with each audit covering the prior two fiscal years. Because of significant budget cuts and unfunded legislative mandates, however, the SAO shifted its focus to auditing and reporting on statewide audit topics, rather than conducting separate accountability audits of individual agencies. For fiscal year 2010-11, the area chosen for review in higher education was tuition waivers. The SAO selected ten community colleges for on-site audit work, focusing on eligibility and legal limitations (Highline was not one of the colleges chosen for initial review). Overall the colleges examined during the audit were found to have awarded tuition waivers in compliance with state law or policy. As a state agency, the college is also part of the state's Single Audit Report, an entity audit that examines both the financial statements and the expenditures of federal awards by all state agencies, including institutions of higher education.

Highline's financial information is reported and audited through the State of Washington's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. The objective of this report is to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free of any material misstatements. For the fiscal year 2012, Highline Community College had no programs identified with control or compliance weaknesses. Highline also undergoes an annual operations review by internal audit staff from the State Board for Community and Technical College (SBCTC). Typically, this review covers operational activities including faculty pay increments, local capital projects, and course coding. It also examines federally-funded activities including WorkFirst, Worker Retraining, and Job Skills Programs. Due to staff shortages at SBCTC, Highline's last full review was for fiscal year 2008. However, the college submitted follow-up information in 2010 in the areas of WorkFirst, WorkFirst Childcare, WorkFirst Financial Aid, and Job Skills Programs. SBCTC has indicated that it plans on reinstating the operations review process within the next fiscal year, with Highline scheduled for a full review in 2014.

Institutional fundraising (Standard 2.F.8)

Fundraising activities at Highline Community College are coordinated through the Highline Community College Foundation. Established in 1972, the Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization supporting the educational mission of the college through scholarships, emergency need awards, and special projects. Additionally, the Foundation provides capital fund-raising assistance and ongoing operational funding for the college's Marine Science and Technology Center (MaST) on the water in nearby Redondo. The college also contracts with the Foundation to provide support for International Student Programs.

The relationship between the college and the Foundation is governed by a formal agreement that clearly defines roles and responsibilities of each partner. The Foundation is a separate financial entity from the college and undergoes an independent audit of its financial statements annually. Auditor's opinions consistently indicate that the financial statements are free of material misstatement. The Foundation also publishes an annual report which summarizes its activities and showcases specific areas of college support.

Physical and Technological Infrastructure

As called for in its Core Theme 4, *"Model sustainability in human resources, operations, and teaching and learning,"* Highline Community College is committed to maintaining physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure, and conducive to healthful and productive learning and working. Overlooking Puget Sound, Highline's 80-acre campus is home to 569,134 square feet of classroom, office, and maintenance space. Despite some funding and infrastructure challenges, the college maintains an attractive, functional learning environment for its students, staff, and community.

Adequacy of facilities (Standard 2.G.1)

The task of maintaining Highline's physical environment is frankly easier in some parts of the campus than others. At one extreme, our newest buildings — the Higher Education Center (Building 29) and the Student Union Building (Building 8) — are models of attractiveness, efficiency, and functionality. On the other hand, the oldest facilities, now approaching 50 years of service, require considerable attention, ingenuity, and investment to maintain. Highline's hillside location compounds the some of the challenges, particularly around accessibility.

Where these challenges have emerged, the college's Facilities Department has responded with innovation and dedication, forming partnerships with other constituencies as needed. Below are some key examples of these successful collaborations:

- *Accessibility:* In 2008, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) conducted a routine accessibility audit on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR). That audit identified a number of barriers to accessibility across campus. In a follow-up memorandum of agreement, the college agreed to remedy the concerns. To guide the work, a Campus Access Advisory Group was established to draw up a plan addressing the audit findings and any other barriers to accessibility that the group identified. The college remedied a number of problems immediately, with the more extensive projects scheduled over a series of fiscal years. The college received a complimentary report in spring 2010 on its substantial progress in addressing the audit findings. The remaining work was completed summer 2013.

  Nonetheless, physical access remains a focus of the college. Recent repair projects include restroom upgrades, door replacements, improved signage, and improving the accessibility of routes in and around campus facilities. Highline's Access Services department works closely with Academic Affairs to schedule classrooms that accommodate students with special needs. The Access Services Handbook for Student Accommodation includes an "Accessible Room Reassignment" procedure, developed in February 2009, to improve students' access to classrooms, recognizing that the topographical layout of the campus makes some buildings more accessible than others.

- *Building security:* Following a rash of equipment thefts in the early 2000s, the college undertook a major re-keying project scheduled that was completed in 2013. All classrooms can be locked, with most having recently been converted to a new master keying system. The Campus Safety Department issues keys to faculty for the classrooms in which they teach. Faculty have been instructed to lock classrooms when leaving. Custodial staff and Campus Safety officers check doors and windows in the

evenings to ensure that spaces are secure. As a result, the college has significantly reduced its equipment losses.

- *Classroom availability:* Increased enrollment over the past few years has impacted classroom scheduling. The Academic Affairs administrative assistant who has responsibility for room assignment matches faculty classroom requests with appropriately sized and equipped spaces. Though this informal method has worked well over many years, the college may need to formalize a policy for classroom scheduling that is fair and equitable, yet still meets institutional needs.

- *Office space:* Faculty office assignments remain a challenge, especially for part-time instructors. Offices are often shared, providing limited space for private conversations. This issue is not a new one to the college, and the updated Master Plan calls out the need to create additional faculty office areas closer to the instructional spaces. Capital funding from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges will be critical to allow Highline to address this challenge fully. In the meantime, the college has created new cubicle space in formerly open areas of Building 16 and Building 19.

Though focused on service, the Facilities Department's activities are not purely reactive. In recent years, this department has launched an aggressive effort to reduce energy consumption and waste campus-wide, which is a direct contribution to Core Theme 4's goal of *"sustainability in human resources, operations, and teaching and learning."* As part of that effort, the department has altered campus waste-collection procedures, secured external funding for energy-reduction projects, and revised its efficiency guidelines for fixtures.

The foregoing examples, though specific to facilities, illustrate the college's collegial approach to problem-solving in general. Thanks to this spirit of cross-constituent cooperation, campus facilities remain pleasant, safe, and functional in spite of their occasional challenges.

Hazardous materials (Standard 2.G.2)

The college's emphasis on sustainability carries over into our Facilities Department's handling of hazardous materials. The department is working to limit the amount of hazardous items introduced to the campus either for operational or instructional purposes. As one example, the college has taken steps to reduce the use of toxic cleansers.

Even so, some level of hazardous-materials generation and use is unavoidable. We work closely with the Washington State Department of Ecology and follow that agency's requirements for the safe handling and removal of hazardous materials. Facilities personnel with responsibilities for handling hazardous waste follow written procedures on its proper handling and removal. "Right to Know" postings and Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are available where specific chemicals are used. In addition, the warehouse/grounds supervisor in Building 25 maintains a master MSDS file for on-site chemicals. Hazardous materials are properly labeled and stored in approved containers. Most are consolidated either at Building 25 (Shipping and Receiving) or in the maintenance shop in Building 26 in secure and safe, dedicated rooms. Trained personnel in these two areas determine proper packaging/removal requirements and use outside vendors to pick up and properly dispose of the materials.

Hazardous materials are found in campus buildings housing the biology, chemistry, and physics laboratories, and in those buildings housing the medical assisting and nursing programs. The Biology Department and Chemistry Department, in their respective laboratories, follow their own stringent policies and procedures, administered by laboratory coordinators, for hazardous materials handling.

Facilities master plan (Standard 2.G.3)

The college's Master Plan provides a long-range program for the continued development and renewal of the college's Des Moines campus. The Master Plan catalogs the college's programs, describes its current and future campus facilities requirements, and explains the effect its activities have on the surrounding governmental jurisdictions. The plan focuses on providing facilities that:

- Support educational programs and meet community needs

- Promote the effective use of contemporary technology

- Encourage enrollment by presenting a safe, accessible, and welcoming environment

- Promote environmentally sound college operations, and

- Strengthen the college's ties with the communities in which it operates.

In 2010-11, our college embarked on a process to update and enhance its campus facilities plan. A Master Plan Committee, comprised of administrators, faculty, and staff, met regularly for four months to complete the review. The group's work was supported by an architectural consulting firm and incorporated input from representatives of local jurisdictions.

The updated plan outlines a vision of the Highline campus and prioritizes its development for the next 20 to 30 years. The master plan framework is reviewed annually by the vice president for administrative services and the Facilities Department. Updates or changes are incorporated as necessary before submitting budgets or requests for new facilities or for renovation, improvement, or replacement of existing facilities.

For the 2011-13 capital budget cycle, the college requested funding to renovate the Performing Arts Building (Building 4) as part of the Port of Seattle's noise-remediation efforts. The funding was approved and this renovation completed in August 2013. Scheduled next is the renovation of Building 1 (Administration) and the east wing of Building 16 (Print Shop/classrooms) beginning 2015, if the requested funding is provided. The 10-Year Capital Plan ([Implementation Plan](#) sections 5a & 5b of the College Master Plan) identifies intermediate-term plans for new, renovated, or replacement buildings. Minor buildings and grounds projects are planned annually as either preventive maintenance or repairs.

Equipment (Standard 2.G.4)

The college's equipment stock is sufficient to meet both its operational and instructional needs.

Academic Affairs and the Facilities Department together conduct an annual inventory of classroom interior assets and furniture. The two offices identify classroom needs for equipment, maintenance, and repairs. The goal is to establish and maintain a standard for classroom setups and, accordingly, a plan for the purchase of additional or replacement classroom furniture. Despite recent budget constraints, the college has made steady progress in this area over the years, gradually equipping more and more classrooms with "smart" instructional technologies and modern, comfortable furnishings. Currently, multimedia instructional equipment has been installed in all 101 regular (non-computer lab) classrooms.

Office furniture is budgeted and purchased by individual departments as necessary. The Facilities Department has a maintenance shop allowing staff the ability to store parts, supplies, tools, and equipment to make necessary maintenance and repairs.

Academic Affairs maintains a nearly $360,000 account for instructional equipment purchases annually. Each spring, the division chairs poll their departments for equipment needs. Instruction Cabinet prioritizes the requests and allocates funding accordingly. In many cases, non-state funds— from federal sources or grant projects, for example — supplement the state-funded allocation for equipment. In recent years, available funds have been more than sufficient to meet the divisions' requests.

The college replaces instructional computing equipment, including workstations in the computer labs, library, and classrooms, on a cycle determined by the Instructional Computing Department with feedback/requests through the [Technology Advisory Committee](#).

Technology infrastructure (Standard 2.G.5)

Highline Community College's operational technologies are the responsibility of Administrative Technology (AT), a department within Administrative Services. AT maintains the campus network, communications, and desktop computing operations. Together, these resources are clearly adequate to support day-to-day functions, including these key technology resources:

- *Local Area Network (LAN):* Highline's LAN, designed, installed, and supported in-house, has been upgraded to allow increased utilization of video, videoconferencing, telephony, and computing, both on- and off-campus. A campus wireless LAN includes secure wireless connectivity throughout campus buildings for faculty, staff, and students.

- *Internet access:* The college's bandwidth is provided by the Washington State K-20 network and supported by AT. Bandwidth has been increased from 6Mbs/second to 100Mbs/second. Even with this increase, instructional demands on the network require tools such as packet shaping to help assure that programs have access to the bandwidth they require.

- *Telecommunications*: Campus-wide telecommunications services include an Avaya phone system and voicemail. Available support services include telephone line setup and hardware support for all faculty and staff. All classrooms have a telephone, allowing for emergency calls. Highline's current legacy phone system constrains the use of new telephony tools such as remote presence and voice-to-text. Despite these limitations, the college has implemented Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), allowing a greater use of the college network for telephony and reducing the need for additional copper wiring.

- *Office tools:* AT supports employee email using a Microsoft Exchange server and desktop Outlook accounts, with remote access via either a web client or direct virtual private network (VPN) connection. Office productivity software and support are supported by Administrative Technology using campus-wide licensing agreements.

- *Enterprise software:* Primary administrative tools such as the Student Management System (SMS), Financial Management System (FMS), Personnel/Payroll Management System (PPMS), and Financial Aid Management (FAM) are hosted at the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges site in Olympia. Those statewide resources are scheduled for replacement with a modern enterprise system, called CTC-Link, over the next five years. Highline's local administrative tools include software that conducts environmental monitoring of campus buildings and their electrical usage, as well as a maintenance management system. The college's Web Transaction Server supports authentication for Instructor Briefcase and Online Student Services functions, which include grading, registration, transcripts, and waitlists.

Complementing AT's people and resources, the Instructional Computing (IC) department provides and maintains computer equipment and software in all instructional areas, whether in classrooms, the library, or in labs:

- *Classroom technology:* IC installs and supports multimedia equipment in classrooms campus-wide. IC staff consult with faculty and administrators in determining the standard technology setup. IC also consults in greater depth with those academic programs, such as Computer Science or Business Information Technology, that often require specialized technology.

- *Instructional Computing labs:* The Instructional Computing Center in Building 30 provides a large drop-in open lab space with access to all hardware and software resources used in courses throughout the college. This space is available to all students who have paid the applicable Instructional Technology Fee. Faculty may schedule individual labs for class use. Labs are configured so that students may work individually or in groups.

- *Instructional Resources:* The library's Information Commons, open to students and community members alike, houses 74 computers with software tailored for instructional needs. The college's nearby Tutoring Center, Writing Center, and Math Resource Center are equipped with additional computer stations and multiple classroom-style projection systems for group tutoring sessions.

In addition to these facility-based resources, instructional technology is integrated throughout the college's learning resources. The Angel Learning Management System — soon to be replaced statewide by the Canvas product — supports online, hybrid, and web-enhanced face-to-face classes. These tools provide content delivery, discussion boards, chat capability, assessments, assignment drop-boxes, and other teaching and learning features. The college has allocated over $100,000 to support the conversion to Canvas, with much of the allocation devoted to user support. In addition to learning-management software, the college uses the Echo360 Lecture Capture hardware to record guest speakers and other activities and the Tegrity Lecture Capture System to record audio- video- and computer-based lecture information.

Technology support and instruction (Standard 2.G.6)

The Highline IT Helpdesk provides individualized support to students, faculty, and staff through a physical location in the Instructional Computing Center, as well as by email, phone, and the web. In addition to responding to user requests, the Helpdesk provides information and some tutorials on the web, and updates the campus community on technology issues via email.

Beyond these on-demand supports, the IT Helpdesk provides workshops on campus technology tools for faculty and staff as part of the annual Opening Week and Professional Development Day schedules. Past topics have included "New Tools Available at Highline," "Angel Assessments," "Microsoft Outlook," "Excel," "Editing Websites with Microsoft Expression," and more.

The Instructional Design Department (ID) staff are available to meet individually with faculty and staff who are teaching online, hybrid, and web-enhanced courses. Instructional Design also provides scheduled training on everything from developing an online course to using a specific feature of online teaching tools. The college's Faculty-in-Residence program provides release time for faculty experts in instructional technology to provide support to their colleagues. The release time also allows the faculty-in-residence the opportunity to learn new techniques and teach these to others.

Supplementing its in-house resources, the college has taken advantage of several grant-funded and freely-available online courses, with promotion and registration coordinated by the Instructional Design Department and Learning and Teaching Center. These online offerings have included seminars offered by the Sloan Consortium, Washington Online, and Quality Matters (a program designed to certify the quality of online courses and components).

Technology planning (Standard 2.G.7 and 2.G.8)

The college's longstanding Technology Advisory Committee (TAC) sets standards for campus technology and replacement cycles. Its membership includes representatives from the four major divisions on campus — Administrative Services, Academic Affairs, Student Services, and Institutional Advancement. This committee coordinates with the college's Administrative Technology (AT) and Instructional Computing (IC) Departments, whose directors serve on TAC. TAC provides input on long-term technology needs to Executive Staff for use in budget planning. In addition, TAC itself manages an annual technology budget which primarily funds desktop computer replacements and periodic contributions to campus technology projects.

A smaller Technology Resource Group, comprised primarily of AT and IC staff, meet regularly to discuss technology operations that affect functionality and user experiences.

The Technology Advisory Committee serves as author of Highline's Technology Strategic Plan, which guides the long-term development and growth of campus technology services. This plan helps inform budgeting

decisions made in the Administrative Technology and Instructional Computing departments as well as by TAC itself.

The effectiveness of these planning resources can be measured by the college's progress in its technology initiatives. Among some key, recent accomplishments are the following:

- *Infrastructure stability:* Since 2008, we have made major strides in securing its technology infrastructure. Key investments include a generator capable of supporting the campus servers in a power outage, expansion of storage area networks (SANs) to a total capacity of 64TB, and enhancements to the college's backup system to sustain operations in the event of a local disaster.

- *Wireless network:* We have installed campus-wide wireless internet access with levels of access and security appropriate to different user constituencies.

- *Virtual infrastructure:* To reduce our equipment and support costs, the college has recently made a major investment in both virtual server and virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI). The VDI project replaces individual desktop computers with inexpensive, low-capability thin clients, concentrating computing power in a single data center. The payoffs are many — lower replacement costs, reduced energy consumption, and lessened cooling demands in computer labs, as well as increased efficiencies in workstation and software management.

Chapter Three: Institutional Planning

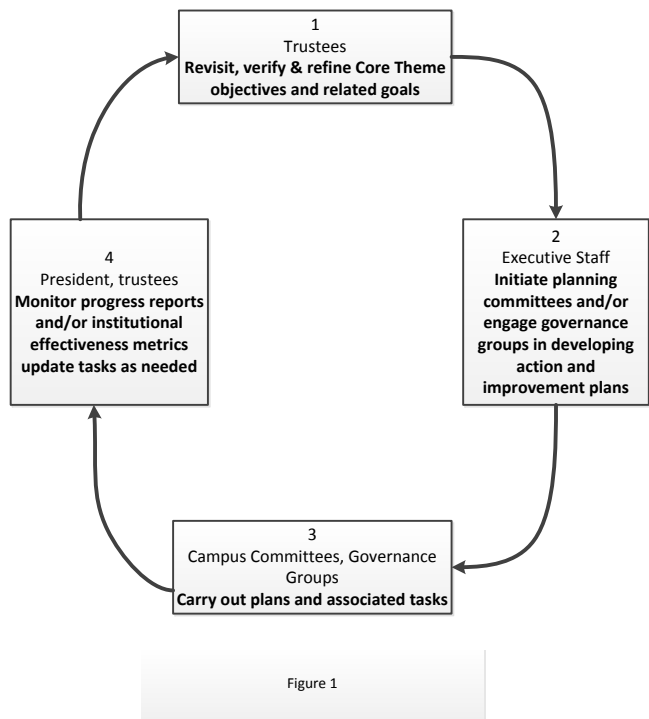## Institutional planning processes (Standard 3.A.1)

At Highline, day-to-day decision-making is, in many regards, highly decentralized. Outside of specific support areas like Safety and Security or Facilities, the college maintains few command-and-control processes. The 2012 Peer Evaluation Committee used a "bee swarm" metaphor to describe routine campus direction-setting, noting that "ideas are allowed to develop freely and, as long as they are headed to one of the campus goals, and gather sufficient support along the way, the swarm is allowed to continue to gather strength as it meanders to its objective." The campus community recognized itself in that depiction.

That's not to say that Highline is directionless, by any means. Paradoxically, while governance-related discussions are diffuse, a great deal of final decision-making power is concentrated in the president's Executive Staff. In exchange for Executive Staff's large scope of authority, its members recognize their responsibility to honor the institution's core values and to cultivate the campus's communications networks, both formal and informal.

Prior to the advent of the new accreditation process, Highline Community College maintained a five-year cycle for institutional strategic planning. The effort was initiated by the trustees, who delegated the internal processes directly to the president. The college's strategic plans were posted to the college website and periodic, largely activity-based progress reports were distributed as well. Though the specifics have varied over time, the overall approach maintained a high degree of consistency over its 15-plus years. Over that time, the college settled on a handful of central goals — called Strategic Initiatives — which today are the foundations of the college's four core themes. The long-term durability of those priorities has been particularly constructive, allowing the college to build a strong sense of cohesion and momentum around them.

With the establishment of an Institutional Research Office in the mid-2000s, the college moved from activity-based monitoring of progress to a metric-driven assessment, first with the annual *Institutional Effectiveness Report* and, more recently, the core theme-based *Mission Fulfillment Report*. These newer data reports are consistently available on the Office of Institutional Research's intranet site.

Responsibility for mission fulfillment rests squarely with Executive Staff, as does stewardship for institution-level planning. The Board of Trustees plays an important role at this level as well. The president and vice presidents meet annually in retreat with the Board to review the *Mission Fulfillment Report* and, in response, to develop long- and medium-term strategic plans. From there, individual initiatives are delegated through the vice presidents to the appropriate administrative structures, governance groups, or task forces within their division's planning, assessment, and improvement processes. This cycle is summarized in Figure 1.

1
Trustees
Revisit, verify & refine Core Theme objectives and related goals

2
Executive Staff
Initiate planning committees and/or engage governance groups in developing action and improvement plans

4
President, trustees
Monitor progress reports and/or institutional effectiveness metrics update tasks as needed

3
Campus Committees, Governance Groups
Carry out plans and associated tasks

Figure 1

At an operations level, each division maintains its own set of planning, assessment, and improvement processes. To understand how these divisional systems interact with stewardship of core themes, it may be useful to have an overview of the planning, assessment, and improvement processes within each major college division.

Academic Affairs

Academic Affairs takes primary responsibility for planning, assessment, and improvement of Core Theme 1. In addition, where Core Theme 2 objectives address curriculum and pedagogy, as well as student progress, Academic Affairs provides secondary support.

Within Academic Affairs, the planning, assessment, and improvement processes rest with two primary bodies: Instruction Cabinet and the Standards, Outcomes and Competencies Committee (SOCC).

Instruction Cabinet

As the chief governance body within Academic Affairs, Instruction Cabinet guides instructional policy and practice college-wide. The academic deans, division chairs, director of adult basic education, director of instructional computing, and the executive director of community and employment services are the members of Instructional Cabinet. Though comprised mainly of the instructional leadership group, it includes cross-over membership from Student Services Cabinet, helping to ensure a link between the two areas in their fulfillment of Core Theme 1 and Core Theme 2. The planning, assessment, and improvement process for Instruction Cabinet follows an annual calendar, beginning with the group's yearly fall retreat. There, members review data from the *Mission Fulfillment Report* and assess accomplishments from the prior year. Using that information as a platform, Cabinet develops an annual work plan that is organized around core themes. Organizationally, Instruction Cabinet relies on a variety of other committees and groups to carry out its overarching policy directions. Some of these organizational units — like the Learning and Teaching Center or Faculty Senate — are permanent. In many cases, however, the groups are temporary, appointed by Instruction

59

Cabinet to study a specific issue or to develop a specific plan. Examples of such temporary groups are the Placement Task Force and the Developmental Education Committee.

Standards, Outcomes, and Competencies Committee

The Standards, Outcomes, and Competencies Committee (SOCC) is a faculty body charged by the vice president for academic affairs with coordinating and reviewing faculty-driven assessment of student learning. In addition to two faculty members from each academic division, the program manager for institutional research and the deans of professional-technical education and of transfer and pre-college education and are *ad hoc* SOCC members, as is a liaison from the Accreditation Steering Committee. Thus, the process of student learning assessment is understood and supported at multiple levels within Academic Affairs. The SOCC cycle of planning, assessment, and improvement also follows an annual calendar, beginning with the submission of a report from each academic department detailing its assessment projects and findings from the past academic year, along with assessment projects anticipated for the next academic year. The report is submitted to the vice president in June and, using a rubric, is subsequently peer-reviewed in September by a pair of SOCC members. The rubric scores from all department reports are then entered into a spreadsheet that presents the level of achievement across all departments. A divisional report is prepared by SOCC and forwarded to the division chairs, who are encouraged to discuss results with departments. SOCC develops a "priority list" which identifies departments which may need additional support in refining their assessments and completing effective reports. Committee members schedule one-on-one meetings with the coordinators of those departments to discuss their report and the rubric. The goal is to complete those meetings by early in winter quarter, ensuring support and guidance for the current year's assessment projects and reports. Consultation and professional development opportunities are offered by SOCC during the remainder of the academic year. Additionally, the committee undertakes its own planning, assessment and improvement process, implementing changes to the overall process as necessary.

Student Services

Student Services is the primary steward of Core Theme 2 and provides key support on the student support services and campus engagement elements of Core Theme 1.

Within Student Services, the planning, assessment, and improvement processes are guided by two primary bodies: Student Affairs Cabinet and the Assessment Task Force.

Student Affairs Cabinet

As the chief governance body within Student Services, Student Affairs Cabinet (SAC) guides student services policy and practice college-wide. The associate deans in leadership/engagement, enrollment, and counseling, as well as department directors of financial aid, entry services, TRiO, women's program/WorkFirst services, registration, educational planning, transfer center, and multicultural affairs are the members of the Student Affairs Cabinet. Though comprised mainly of the student services leadership group, it includes cross-over membership from the divisions of Academic Affairs and Institutional Advancement, helping to ensure a link between the two areas in their fulfillment of Core Theme 1. The planning, assessment, and improvement process for Student Affairs Cabinet follows an annual calendar, beginning with the annual Student Services retreat in July with all employees of the division. At this retreat, staff share achievements and improvement plans, conduct annual planning for departmental improvement and assessment, choose assessment priorities for the year, and ensure that departmental plans align with core themes. Later, in August, SAC members meet in a strategic planning retreat to review data from the *Mission Fulfillment Report* and from departmental assessment activities from the prior year. They then determine what initiatives should be addressed during the year to support college mission fulfillment and contribute to continuous improvement. Using that information, the vice president of student services develops an annual work plan. Additionally, there is a monthly meeting of the Student Services Assessment Team — which consists of SAC members and the members of the Assessment Task Force, described below — to support Student Services assessment initiatives.

Assessment Task Force

The Student Services' Assessment Task Force (ATF) maintains an infrastructure for assessment initiatives that facilitate continuous improvement in student learning and departmental effectiveness. The ATF has three focus areas: institutional, divisional, and departmental assessment. Each focus area has an assigned coordinator or coordinators to shepherd the process of planning, assessment, and improvement

- *Departmental:* Each department has a clear mission, identified service populations, and learning and service outcomes addressed by the department's annual system of assessment and improvement. The ATF coordinator for departmental assessment maintains a robust, annual self-study function in Student Services. Each department develops annual service and/or learning outcomes, assesses these outcomes with multiple measures, then institutes change in the department in response to findings. ATF members and college administrators provide review and support to the departments at each point in the process.

- *Divisional:* There are two coordinators for the divisional assessment focus who direct activities to evaluate students' growth and experiences across the different departments of the division with the intent of creating recommendations for improvement. The divisional assessment cycle includes an annual review of Departmental Assessment Reports and an annual publishing of Assessment Summary Reports. Additionally, the divisional assessment arm of the ATF has created Focused Assessment Coordinating Teams (FACTs), with membership of both Academic Affairs and Student Services staff, which explore the annual assessment themes.

- *Institutional:* Finally, the coordinator for the institutional focus ensures that ATF efforts are aligned with institutional mission fulfillment initiatives, particularly those connected with diversity and globalism.

Through this system of assessment and improvement, Student Services has been able to use data findings to make changes to offerings and improve service for students.

Institutional Advancement

Institutional Advancement (IA) has primary responsibility for Core Theme 3. IA also endeavors to support the college's mission through public information activities and legislative liaison activities. Within Institutional Advancement, planning, assessment, and improvement processes are undertaken by the whole division, led by the vice president of the division.

Institutional Advancement

This division is quite small, and there's a good deal of cross-area support. IA holds an annual retreat to align departmental goals with IA divisional goals for mission fulfillment. IA department heads collectively establish divisional goals, collect, and report data related to those goals. Since 2011, divisional goals have been based on SWOT (strengths-weaknesses-opportunities-threats) analysis results. The SWOT approach allows for improved data collection, to better inform divisional planning, assessment, and improvement.

Departments meet once a week, and the division directors meet monthly. Directors' meetings serve to ensure that planned initiatives are on track. While budget cuts have reduced the size of the division and its ability to engage in larger scale initiatives, stability in the division has increased recently, with little turnover in staffing and no new areas of responsibility added. This stability has enabled the division to evolve its planning and assessment processes from annual tactical plans to more data-driven five-year plans which are based on the college's core themes and aligned specifically with Core Theme 3. Today, department heads develop annual

tactics based on the core theme-based five-year plan. The division's annual year-end assessment procedure determines what goals have been achieved, and what improvements need to be made.

Administrative Services

Administrative Services, which includes Administrative Technology, Budget Office, Facilities Department, Finance, and Auxiliary Services, has primary responsibility to ensure that the goals of Core Theme 4 are successfully met. Additionally, Administrative Services provides secondary support on the business services elements of Core Theme 2.

Within the division, planning, assessment, and improvement for Core Theme 4 is a shared responsibility. Beginning in 2008, each department within Administrative Services began identifying key areas to evaluate to determine mission fulfillment. Measurement targets in support of core theme objectives are chosen based on several factors, such as system- or industry-defined benchmarks or college-identified priorities. Based on these measurements, department directors complete quarterly assessments of results and resultant actions. These indicators of mission fulfillment are themselves assessed regularly for continued relevance and effectiveness in support of mission fulfillment. Also on a quarterly basis, directors share their results with their division peers, who provide feedback on continued adequacy of measurements, results of the assessments, and on-going improvement initiatives based on those results. The entire process is reviewed on an annual basis, and work plans for subsequent cycles are developed based on these ongoing assessment activities.

Constituent engagement (Standard 3.A.2)

In keeping with the college's culture of inclusiveness, Highline's planning processes offer widespread opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies. By design, the college's yearly planning cycles include extensive use of large *ad hoc* planning committees. In Highline's recent work to develop its core themes, objectives, and attainment measures, we have maintained strong constituent involvement.

The core themes and objectives themselves were drafted by cross-constituent groups and refined through a series of participatory campus-wide events. Similarly, the *Mission Fulfillment Report* was developed in close consultation with Executive Staff and the 11-member Accreditation Steering Committee, which includes representatives from all of the college's major divisions. In the 2011-12 and 2012-13 years, college leaders employed a variety of avenues to share the *Mission Fulfillment Report* and its findings with constituent groups at every level of the institution, from all-campus events like Professional Development Day and large-scale division-wide meetings to small standing committees and work-group gatherings. Along the way, input was encouraged, gathered, and fed back to Executive Staff.

With the development and implementation of the college's core themes underway over the last few years, however, it seemed inappropriate and impractical to maintain the traditional processes and five-year cycle of the older Strategic Initiatives planning and *Institutional Effectiveness Report* processes. Accordingly, the college deferred the scheduled 2011 planning process. In its place, a model Interim Strategic Plan was developed to reflect the core themes, objectives, and indicators. The model plan was designed to guide college-wide efforts to sustain and, where appropriate, to improve institutional outcomes as they appear in the *Mission Fulfillment Report*. This model plan was shared with the board at its 2012 summer retreat, where it was positively received. Since then, however, continued instability in the fiscal environment has slowed the final adoption of a long-term, formal strategic planning cycle at the trustee level. Additionally, given Highline's compressed-timeline conversion to the new accreditation standards, the board opted to complete the first evaluation cycle — and to incorporate what we learned from that process — before launching a more permanent institutional planning effort. At this time, Executive Staff retains primary responsibility for medium-term and long-range planning, in consultation with the trustees and the college's existing governance structures. Meantime, as noted in Chapter Five, our year-by-year resource-management plans have emphasized the "glide path" of strategic reductions and enrollment management, allowing us to maintain stability in an unstable environment. Very recently, the economy has begun to settle and we are now able to

take up the model strategic plan again, with the new status quo shaping our strategic plan for the long term.

Evaluation of institutional data (Standard 3.A.3)

Highline's comprehensive planning process is informed by the regular collection and analysis of appropriately defined data. With the adoption of the college's core themes and objectives, the earlier *Institutional Effectiveness Reports* have given way to the more streamlined, dashboard-format *Mission Fulfillment Report*, which presents a comprehensive data picture of Highline's success in attaining its mission and core themes. The *Mission Fulfillment Report* includes achievement thresholds that, in most cases, reflect acceptable minimums, rather than improvement targets — a strategic, culture-driven choice that is intended to reinforce mission-commitment, not the threat of failure, as the primary motivation behind continuous improvement. Even so, based on assessment of *Mission Fulfillment Report* metrics, the college's regular planning processes identify areas of below-threshold performance as the highest priorities for intervention, with additional objectives for improvement set by Executive Staff and their constituent groups. Consequently, Highline articulates institutional goals for both remediation and continuous improvement.

Resource allocation and prioritization (Standard 3.A.4)

Where assessment reveals deficiencies, the college's planning processes ensure that priorities are articulated and that resources and institutional capacity are applied to addressing the highest priorities first.

Two examples will help illustrate the planning cycle's ability to allocate resources to address deficiencies:

- *Latino participation rates:* Both the 2010-11 and 2011-12 *Mission Fulfillment Reports* identified college-level participation rates among Latino communities as a stubborn challenge, with as much as a 17 percentage-point gap between district demographics (19 percent Latino) and Highline credit enrollments (2 percent Latino). The current planning processes articulated this challenge as a highest priority. In 2011-12, with the endorsement of Executive Staff and the trustees, the college successfully sought grant funds to initiate a planning process to address these gaps. In 2012-13, Executive Staff allocated over $50,000 in discretionary funds to match the grant dollars while also reassigning key staff in Academic Affairs to lead the response. This resulted in the creation of the Latino Advisory Committee, the central clearinghouse *El Centro Latino*, and a Spanish-language website (See Chapter 4, Core Theme 3, Objective 2).

- *African/black student attainment:* In much the same way, the college's *Mission Fulfillment Report* data have consistently revealed a puzzling and disturbing gap in attainment — particularly in first-year progress measures — for Highline's African and black students. Despite their above-norm level of satisfaction with their instructional experiences and with college services, these students lag considerably behind their counterparts in reaching the 15 college credit benchmark and in completing college math within their first year of attendance. Again, the current planning process identified this challenge as a high priority for further study and, ultimately, intervention design. In this case, the college's Achieving the Dream Core Team was assigned responsibility, with the expectation that requests for additional resources would be forthcoming as intervention pilots are launched. For 2013-14, the Core Team has chartered an Intervention Team to plan a pilot response, with roughly $50,000 allocated for release-time and planning support (See Chapter 4, Core Theme 2, Objective 3).

Highline's planning process functions equally well for our second priority — to identify continuous-improvement goals and to support their achievement. The most recent planning cycles have identified several such areas where, despite acceptable current performance levels, improvement is nonetheless desirable. For instance, to further improve student progression (Core Theme 1, Objective 3), Executive Staff-sponsored initiatives have called for several institution-level responses, each incorporating an accountable entity(ies) and a reallocation of staff and resources. Among these responses were directives to:

- Support initial implementation of mandatory orientation program and assess its effectiveness in promoting first-year retention
- Support and encourage additional curriculum reform efforts to accelerate student progression through pre-college math and English
- Study impacts of proposed changes to Student Achievement Initiative metrics

Similarly, the current near-term plan incorporates an initiative to "expand the college's enrollment base(s) and entrepreneurial activities to sustain state targets and to maintain or improve current local revenue ratios." While acknowledging that the college's financial reserves are at present sufficient (Core Theme 4, Objective 2), the directive anticipates likely downturns in future tuition-bearing enrollments. In response, Executive Staff allocated over $75,000 in 2012-13 one-time funds to expand marketing and outreach activities, particularly to under-served populations.

Additional examples are plentiful. Collectively, they speak to the college's success in committing its resources and energy both to deficiencies and to opportunities — a set of practices that underlie the ongoing fulfillment of each of our core themes, as detailed below in Chapter 4.

Emergency preparedness (Standard 3.A.5)

Highline's emergency preparedness activities are coordinated through the Office of the Vice President for Administrative Services. A comprehensive *Emergency Action Plan* is available to all employees and is posted in classroom and office areas. As part of the college's emergency planning, the college conducts periodic evacuation drills for all buildings and, for each college facility, has identified emergency coordinators who are charged with coordinating evacuation activities. In addition, college leaders participate regularly in table-top simulations for a variety of emergency situations. All executive-level administrators and 34 other managers hold National Incident Management System (NIMS) certification.

Contingency planning for continuity and recovery of operations is also coordinated through the vice president for administrative services, with each divisional vice president having responsibility for recovery efforts specific to their area. The college's *Emergency Action Plan* outlines duties related to resumption of operations. Institutional efforts at ensuring operational stability include maintaining an insurance policy for business interruption as part of our Master Property Insurance. Other efforts include the migration of the college's email system to the cloud, with replicated copies of email hosted at different data centers throughout the United States, and proof-of-concept work for data back-up and recovery.

Chapter 4: Core Theme Planning, Assessment, and Improvement

Executive summary of Eligibility Requirements 22-23

Student Achievement (ER 22)
The learning outcomes for every degree and certificate program offered at Highline Community College are published in the college's catalog (Standard 2.C.2, p. 32). Highline Community College faculty regularly assess student achievement of these learning outcomes, and report their findings annually (Standard 2.C.5, p. 33 and Standard 4.A.2 and 3, p. 71).

Institutional Effectiveness (ER 23)
Highline Community College systematically applies clearly defined evaluation and planning procedures, assesses the extent to which it achieves its mission and core themes, uses the results of assessment to effect institutional improvement, and regularly publishes the results to its constituencies. Through these processes Highline regularly monitors its internal and external environments to determine how and to what degree changing circumstances may impact the institution and its ability to ensure its viability and sustainability (Standards 3, 4, and 5, pp. 58-92).

Standards 3.B, 4.A, and 4.B

As noted elsewhere in this report, each of Highline's core themes is assigned to a vice president — and, by extension, to his or her constituent groups — for primary oversight. This practice ensures that accountability for the core themes is clear and is aligned with the institution's formal, permanent organizational structures. At the same time, the campus's culture encourages extensive collaboration in achieving college objectives. That interplay is evident in the planning, assessment, and improvement processes for each of our four themes. Further evident is the college's two-pronged approach to mission-fulfillment thresholds. Where the thresholds are met, the relevant constituent groups are encouraged to establish and pursue continuous-improvement goals. Where thresholds are in deficit, a more top-down approach prevails, with the appropriate Executive Staff members accepting responsibility for planning and implementing a response.

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Core Theme #1

Promote student engagement, learning, and achievement

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Overview of Planning, Assessment, and Improvement Ownership for Core Theme 1

Divisional Responsibility: Academic Affairs (primary), Student Services (secondary)

Executive Staff Responsibility: Vice President for Academic Affairs (primary), Vice President for Student Services (secondary)

Responsible Governance and Operational Groups:
- Instruction Cabinet
- Standards, Outcomes, and Competencies Committee
- Student Affairs Cabinet
- Assessment Task Force (Student Services)

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Objective 1: Students engage with their curriculum, campus, and community for a meaningful educational experience

Student Services takes primary responsibility for planning, assessment, and improvement for Core Theme 1, Objective 1. This objective supports the college mission through program and service offerings in the areas of student engagement, enrollment, student support, advising, and retention support that promotes student success. At the same time, Academic Affairs also provides important support for student engagement. Because our *Mission Fulfillment Report* data reflect the ongoing success of these endeavors for Objective 1, our planning, assessment, and improvement efforts are focused on refinements and improvements, rather than addressing deficiency, in these areas.

One example of opportunity-driven improvement may be found in the growth of "leadership centers" around our campus which are facilitated and led through a unique model of student leadership development. As our *Mission Fulfillment Report* data show, Highline students are engaged at a rate higher than the national average. This level of engagement provides evidence of the success of the student programs re-design here at Highline.

The current model replaced Highline's former, fairly typical slate of student activities with programs that have a greater focus on engaging students in leadership. This change in focus led to the creation of the Center for Leadership and Service (CLS), the First Fridays Leadership Institute, and the expansion of the existing Winter Leadership Retreat. To realize this new vision, the Associated Students of Highline Community College (ASHCC) agreed to concentrate on purposeful programming that supports the development of student leaders. As a result, today small cohorts of well-trained, engaged students are paid from student programs funds as "para-professionals" in areas such as Entry Services, the Educational Planning and Advising Cengter, and Outreach Services. Their scope of work carries an expectation that they contribute to a culture of student engagement by building community while serving in these departments. In addition, leadership positions have been bolstered or created to engage students in a variety of co-curricular areas, including the student newspaper, drama, music, athletics, and our literary arts journal. Today student leadership development — along with the networks of student engagement it provides — is a critical component of our student success and retention strategies.

In addition to improving student engagement, the redesigned Center for Leadership and Service has improved students' ongoing success. As part of its departmental assessment activities, the CLS studied the academic achievement and persistence rates of student leaders involved at different levels of our organization from 2009 to 2012. The data revealed that that our most involved students — our paid student leaders — often experienced a decrease in grade attainment while in their positions. The findings were discussed among the division, with the vice president for student services, and with Student Affairs Cabinet. As a result of these deliberations, two interventions were initiated: first, the minimum GPA for these student-funded positions was raised from 2.0 to 2.5, and, second, academic advising was made mandatory for all student leaders paid from these funds. Though these changes are too recent to provide meaningful follow-up data at this point, the CLS leaders are confident that the improvements will have a positive impact on student attainment.

Meantime, the Academic Affairs division has focused on faculty advising in its planning, assessment, and improvement efforts for Core Theme 1, Objective 1. Based on national research that student retention and satisfaction are strongly correlated with student-faculty interaction outside the classroom, an Instruction Cabinet subcommittee was charged with expanding and energizing faculty advising. To that end, the study group gathered information about how faculty regard their role as faculty advisers, identified issues related to student knowledge of faculty advising, and launched a project to help students become more aware of faculty advising. The project involved the creation of a faculty advising committee (composed of faculty from across campus) to spearhead faculty activities such as drop-in advising tables in the student union and library during registration periods. The initiative also promotes faculty professional development in advising through activities such as brown bag conversations about advising issues. The most recent product of this initiative

was a three-day summer institute developed by committee members and attended by 15 faculty from across campus. The institute focused on advising for undecided students and created a cohort of advisers who will engage in development and mutual support for each other in providing faculty advising to students who are still sorting out their educational pathway.

Other, similar examples of planning, assessment, and improvement around student engagement can be found in a variety of settings across campus. Among them:

- When the Student Services division's Assessment Task Force (ATF) found that student engagement suffered among our students with disabilities, Access Services requested and received funding through ASHCC to create the Peer Navigator Student Leadership program. This funding line was created to support a student leadership community that could nurture and support all students in accessing involvement and engagement opportunities, with a special focus on our population that uses educational accommodations in their college experience.

- After examining local and national data on first-quarter and first-year retention, in July 2012, HCC launched the mandatory College Orientation and Registration Experience (CORE) intervention with joint support from Student Services and the Achieving the Dream Core Team. CORE is designed for all degree- or certificate-seeking students who have never attended college prior to Highline. Previously, mandatory orientations took place only for specialized populations (e.g. Workforce Education, International Student Programs, and athletics). New students acquire "generic information" during CORE orientation, enabling them to focus on more individualized needs and questions during their initial advising session. Assessment is underway to determine the impact of this intervention on student persistence and completion.

Objective 2: Diverse teaching methods, innovative curricula, and student support services fulfill the learning needs of students

Academic Affairs and Student Services divisions share primary responsibility for planning, assessment, and improvement on Core Theme 1, Objective 2. Because our mission fulfillment data show that we remain above national norms on the indicators for this objective, our planning, assessment, and improvement efforts are focused on refinements and improvements.

Highline has a history of promoting innovation in teaching and in curriculum development, with support and guidance residing in Instruction Cabinet. From a day-to-day faculty perspective, instructional innovations are developed through diffuse, intentionally decentralized processes, with individual faculty and departments developing proposals which are then reviewed by division chairs, deans, and ultimately Instruction Cabinet. To advance Core Theme 1, Objective 2's broad curricular and pedagogical innovation goals, Instruction Cabinet funds training, scales up successful pilots, and allocates resources to sustain effective innovations. In much the same way, Student Services personnel — who consider themselves as educators first — sponsor a variety of committees and groups to support student enrollment, engagement, achievement, and enhanced learning.

One example of our planning, assessment, and improvement cycles for Core Theme 1, Objective 2 is the spread of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Just as universal design in architecture makes buildings inherently more accessible for all users, Universal Design for Learning is a framework for employing multiple methods and materials in curricula and lessons, thus supporting all learners. Although Highline's Instructional Design (ID) and Instructional Computing (IC) departments had been actively investing in a variety of technologies to support faculty engagement with students, our Access Services department used external data to determine that Highline needed more innovative curricula to fulfill the learning needs of all students. Accordingly, in early 2008 a pilot UDL team was convened. Composed of faculty from across all divisions, representatives of key student services, and staff from Instructional Computing staff, this team was charged with deploying UDL strategies in their own domains (classroom teaching and student support services),

planning campus events, and providing input on purchases of instructional technology. The college has now invested heavily in UDL technologies, including document cameras, computer-projector systems, and lecture-capture tools.

Other, similar examples of our planning, assessment, and improvement cycle for Core Theme 1, Objective 2 can be found across campus:

- As a result of national data showing that poor reading skills decrease student completion of core courses, Academic Affairs in 2012 began underwriting training for faculty in Reading Apprenticeship, a formalized approach to mentoring adult learners in content-based reading. A handful of content-area faculty enrolls in the training each year, and they engage in an ongoing learning community. The intention is that, much like UDL, the use of Reading Apprenticeship strategies will become embedded in teaching at the college, facilitating greater student retention and completion.

- As part of Student Services Managers' 2010-2011 annual review, Judicial Affairs leaders documented an increase in the number of students with extreme behavioral difficulties which negatively impacted the campus and learning environments. This phenomenon was not unique to Highline, and national best practices suggested the formation of behavioral intervention functions at colleges. Working first with Student Affairs Cabinet and then with Executive Staff, the vice president for student services formalized the HCC Behavioral Assessment Team (BAT). Using a customized approach, the BAT process works behind the scenes, assessing student information from faculty and staff reports, to identify at-risk students and help them to address underlying issues which contribute to disruptive behaviors. This approach facilitates a productive learning environment for all students, as well as providing support for the student who requires intervention.

Objective 3: Students achieve their goals by progressing on educational pathways.

Within the Academic Affairs area, the Faculty Senate and Instruction Cabinet share primary responsibility for planning, assessment, and improvement on Core Theme 1, Objective 3, with Student Services also providing important support for student achievement. However, unlike Objective 1 and 2, where results are at or above benchmark, here our *Mission Fulfillment Report* data are below benchmark. As a result, our planning, assessment, and improvement process changes. As stated earlier, because mission fulfillment accountability lies with Executive Staff, that body takes over whenever a measure is below benchmark. Executive Staff then delegates the item to the appropriate vice president, who mobilizes the necessary governance bodies, longstanding committees, or temporary task forces to address the issue.

Core Theme 1's third objective, Measure 3.2.A — *Percent of advanced basic skills students who transition to college-level courses during academic year* — has recently fallen below benchmark. This issue, a longstanding area of focus and concern at the college, has accordingly been delegated to the vice president for academic affairs, who brought the matter to Instruction Cabinet in fall 2012. Initial analysis suggests that the drop in this indicator is due in part to recent budget-driven cuts made to Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) offerings — an important pathway for basic skills students to co-enroll in entry-level credit courses. It is also likely due, in part, to a temporary loss of leadership in our Transition Referral and Resource Center (from 1.5 full time employees to one .5 full time employee) through attrition. To address these challenges, Instruction Cabinet formed an I-BEST Task Force and prominently incorporated the transition-to-college rate into the 2013-2014 Academic Affairs Work Plan. Already, Academic Affairs has doubled its 2013-2014 support for the JumpStart program (described in Chapter 4, Core Theme 2), which has proven to be an effective, less costly alternative to I-BEST. The vice president has also allocated temporary funding to shore up staffing levels in the Transition Referral and Resource Center. Additional efforts are under study.

In the other areas of Core Theme 1, Objective 3, we meet or exceed the benchmark. Therefore our focus is on refinements to the existing, successful cycles of planning, assessment, and improvement.

One compelling example of effective planning, assessment, and improvement comes from the Math Department. As part of the college's Achieving the Dream effort, the Math Department studied both national data and local data on completion rates of college math. The department began a variety of pilot interventions to increase those rates, eventually adopting several effective long-term interventions. Perhaps most notably, in 2011 the department overhauled its pre-college math curriculum, reducing the number of pre-college math courses and facilitating more effective preparation for math success across various academic pathways. The new structure, which can be seen in Highline's [Math flow chart](#), produced a 16 percentage-point increase in college math completion for students placed two levels below 100, and a 16 percentage-point increase in enrolling in college math for students placed one level below 100. As a follow-on intervention, in 2013 the Math Department adopted a new placement test, MyMathTest, to replace the COMPASS instrument, which was shown to result in unnecessarily high rates of remedial placement. As a result of these changes, the percentage of eligible students who fulfill their math requirement within the current year is approaching an additional increase of five percentage points.

Another, equally encouraging example comes from the English Department. In response to national data showing that students placing below college level are much less likely to complete college, in 2010 the English Department piloted an accelerated program for students with placement one level below college. In assessing the effectiveness of this accelerated course over the last two and a half years, the faculty found a 41 percentage-point increase in college English completion for students in the accelerated program. This improvement led to another pilot in 2012 for students who score even lower on placement tests. This pilot will be assessed in 2013-2014.

Examples like these arguably are the result of Highline's years of data analysis and innovation under Achieving the Dream. Where interventions demonstrate positive results, our next step is to institutionalize them under the formal governance of Instruction Cabinet, where they can be scaled up beyond discrete department-level pilots.

That work never ends. Current national research and statewide initiatives, for example, have highlighted intake-assessment as a key area of opportunity to dramatically increase student momentum. Promising reforms include using multiple assessment methods, providing comprehensive pre-test orientations, and establishing inter-institutional placement reciprocity agreements. In response, Highline's Instructional Cabinet recently created the Placement Task Force and the Developmental Education Committee, which are charged with ensuring that placement testing is as accurate and effective as possible, and that developmental education on campus is effective and supportive of student success. Going forward, these groups will further advance Highline's achievement of Core Theme 1, Objective 3's goals.

Meantime, in response to other opportunities to improve student attainment, other new programs and initiatives have opened up additional pathways to college, including these:

- In response to both national and local data showing that many high school drop-outs could earn high school diplomas and college credit with appropriate support, the college adopted the national Gateway to College (GtC) program which serves youth, 16 to 21 years old, who have dropped out of school or are significantly behind in credits and unlikely to graduate. The dual-credit program allows students to earn a high school diploma while progressing toward a college degree or certificate. GtC students learn how to succeed in an educational setting, under the guidance of a team of instructors and resource specialists with experience and interest in youth who did not complete high school. The first two GtC cohorts were retained at rates above 80%.

- After reviewing data that showed Tech Prep courses were not well utilized by students heading into professional technical programs at the college, we used our established relationships with the Federal Way and Highline school districts to create "Career Start" — essentially a professional-technical version of the Running Start co-enrollment program. Career Start allows students to graduate from high school at or near the same time that they receive an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree

from Highline Community College. Thirteen of our professional technical programs are now articulated with high school graduation requirements.

- After reviewing national data showing that at least 10-12% of immigrants have healthcare credentials from their home countries and are working in the U.S. in entry-level jobs, we reasoned that, likewise, our large ESL community would mirror that statistic. Thus, we created the Puget Sound Welcome Back Center (PSWBC) — in conjunction with the national network of Welcome Back Centers— to provide counseling and educational services to help internationally trained healthcare professionals to practice their profession in Washington state.

- Student Services analyzed internal data to determine that more students would progress toward their educational goals if they simply applied for graduation. In response to this finding, in 2009-2010, Enrollment Services started to explore interventions for increasing the number of students who apply for their credentials. Assessment findings indicated that students would be more likely to apply if they were more readily able to assess their progress through a degree audit. Citing this data, Enrollment Services convinced Student Affairs Council and the Technology Advisory Committee to leverage the human and financial resources to activate our current electronic degree audit application. This information tool makes it easier for students to recognize that they should apply for graduation and complete their degree.

- Based on national and local data on the obstacles that professional-technical graduates face in seeking bachelor's degrees, Highline is currently in the process of developing Bachelor's of Applied Science degrees in the areas of respiratory care, data forensics, international trade and logistics, and youth development. We have chosen these areas because the data show a need in the market for professionals trained at a four-year degree level, a dearth of four-year programs to train those professionals, and great interest in pursuing these degrees expressed by students enrolled in our two year programs and those at other institutions.

Taken together, these examples— among many others that could be cited — illustrate Highline's active, ongoing commitment to data-analysis, planning, and implementation in support of Core Theme 1, Objective 3's mandate to ensure that "students achieve their goals by progressing on educational pathways."

In addition to measuring our educational effectiveness through MFR benchmarks, we also measure our effectiveness through faculty assessment of student learning.

Faculty Assessment of Student Learning (Standards 4.A.2 and 4.A.3)

Highline engages in an effective system of assessment of its educational programs and services to evaluate achievement of clearly identified program goals. These processes operate at two levels — institutional and programmatic/departmental.

As stated in the discussion of Standard 2.C.5, at the institution-wide level, Instructional Council and Faculty Senate ensure that Highline's academic programs maintain appropriate content and rigor. Among other tools, we use national benchmarks, state Student Achievement Initiative data, and Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) norms to measure student attainment and satisfaction, college-wide. At the same time, we rely on our local data from our Achieving the Dream assessments and faculty assessments of student learning to ensure, first, that students gain the knowledge and skills that we intend and, second, that our effectiveness in instruction continues always to improve.

At the department and program level, faculty submit their assessment results annually with the vice president for academic affairs and the academic division chairs. We have worked consistently, with broad and authentic faculty engagement, to ensure that the assessment loop is closed as much as possible.

The Student Outcomes and Competencies Committee (SOCC), whose processes are described in Chapter 2, Standard 2.C.5, continues to guide the cycle of planning, assessment, and improvement for the departmental outcomes assessment. For example, during the last two years, both the department outcomes Annual Assessment Report form and the rubric used by SOCC to evaluate these reports have gone through substantial revisions. The intention was to maintain faculty's focus on meaningful assessment of course-level student learning outcomes, with clear reporting of the planning, assessment, and improvement process in their department's instructional activities. The departmental report structure, which matches the evaluation rubric, includes questions that require respondents to document a complete assessment loop. Among these questions are such prompts as, "Reflect on the results of this assessment activity. What do the results tell you about student learning for this . . . outcome?" and "What specific changes in your teaching, curriculum, or department did you make because of the results of the assessment activity?"

The new reporting forms and rubric were approved by SOCC and the vice president for academic affairs in March 2012. These new forms were used for the most recent reporting periods (2011-12, 12-13). Generally speaking, the committee has been pleased with the results. In addition to an increased return rate, greater clarity and specificity were evident in the reports. Most departments continue to focus constructively on reporting on their assessment of course-level student learning outcomes (SLOs). Aligning the report form closely with the rubric has also made the job of reviewing the reports much more efficient.

The reports themselves reflect faculty participation in meaningful assessment of student learning outcomes. Moreover, faculty use the findings to make informed changes to pedagogy and curriculum. The following are just a few examples from across campus that demonstrate closing the loop of planning, assessment, and improvement in teaching and learning.

- The Math Department maintains a particularly well-structured assessment program which has been improved to include strong assessment practices across all courses. As a result of assessments that revealed instructor-to-instructor variations in student mastery, the department created faculty handbooks for all math courses, with strong participation by adjunct as well as full-time faculty in the effort. The materials include common exam questions, and all faculty who teach the course examine and discuss the data. The design allows individual faculty to uncover areas where their own pedagogy can be refined, with follow-up data gathered for later analysis.

- The Polysomnography Program has extensively evaluated and improved student learning of professionalism. Data gathered in fall of 2011 indicated less than satisfactory levels of professionalism in students. Interestingly, the data also suggested that faculty needed additional training to effect the necessary changes to the curriculum. Faculty were provided with additional training and new material was introduced, including professionalism content, simulation training, and regular student self-assessment of professionalism skills.

- The Geology Department employs a standardized instrument (Geologic Concept Inventory) for pre- and post-testing, examining specific items to evaluate different student learning outcomes each year. When the findings in 2011-12 reflected weak levels of improvement in several ability areas, the faculty developed new in-class activities to effect better results.

- The Physical Education Department chose to assess students' test scores in specific areas. The data revealed that changes to the lecture material in the Personal Health Science class appeared to positively impact averages on the nutrition portion of the course, with average test scores on that material improving from 70% in the previous year to 80% in 2011-12. This year, the faculty found that a drop in attendance seemed to correlate with poor scores on weight management and physical activity. Instructors are incorporating a series of in-class labs on each topic to improve attendance and scores in the correlated areas.

The foregoing examples offer a window into the ongoing efforts of Highline's faculty to assess, plan, implement, and re-assess their curriculum, pedagogy, and materials with the goal of continual improvement. Additional examples can be found in the collected annual reports. Summary data is maintained by SOCC as part of its annual review cycle.

In 2010, our course adoption forms (CAFs) were revised to link course-level student learning outcomes (SLOs) to the College-Wide Outcomes, providing a clear connection between department-level and broader, degree-level assessment of student learning. The CAF database allows for systematic analysis of those links.

The SOCC assesses its own process, too, and this year (2012-13) convened a focus group of department coordinators to provide feedback on the rubric and the SOCC feedback process.

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Core Theme #2

Integrate and institutionalize diversity and globalism throughout the college

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Overview of Planning, Assessment, and Improvement Ownership for Core Theme 2

Divisional Responsibility: Student Services (primary), Academic Affairs (secondary), Administrative Services (secondary)

Executive Staff Responsibility: Vice President for Student Services (primary), Vice President for Academic Affairs (secondary), Vice President for Administrative Services (secondary)

Responsible Governance and Operational Groups:
- Student Services Administration
- Student Affairs Cabinet

- Assessment Task Force
- Human Resources (Administrative Services)

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Objective 1: Diversity and globalism are infused throughout the curriculum; faculty employ a pedagogy that integrates diversity and globalism.

Academic Affairs has primary responsibility for planning, assessment, and improvement on Core Theme 2, Objective 1. The college's longstanding emphasis on diversity and globalism is maintained through the work of Instruction Cabinet, along with the Learning and Teaching Center. Because we significantly exceed our mission fulfillment benchmarks for Core Theme 2, Objective 1, our planning, assessment, and improvement efforts are focused on refinement and improvement here.

As a measure of curricular infusion of diversity and globalism, we set our benchmark at 35%. We assumed that this figure would represent a high standard, since some course areas presumably offer limited possibilities to integrate diversity and globalism content. Given that most full-time students take three courses per term, it seemed ambitious to expect that one of those courses, on average, would link to the college-wide outcomes on diversity and globalism. Our strong performance on this measure — over 75%, based on Course Adoption Form data — is likely due to our long-time commitment to including diversity and globalism in curriculum and pedagogy. As early as the mid-1990s, it was evident to faculty and administration that knowledge of cultural and global issues would be critical for students to be successful in their pursuits after graduation. Accordingly, diversity and globalism were included in the very first set of college-wide outcomes (CWOs), developed in 1994. Our current CWOs likewise include "the ability to understand and interact productively and ethically with others in diverse local, national, and global communities with an informed awareness of contemporary issues, their historical contexts, and their personal relevance."

To further these goals, in 1997, a diversity and globalism graduation requirement in the Associate in Arts transfer degree was approved. Soon after, in 1998, a Culture, Gender, and Global Studies Department (now the Diversity and Global Studies or DGS Department) was established. From the very beginning, the approach has been two-pronged. One approach is fairly traditional, with the DGS Department offering some 23 courses which meet degree distribution requirements in the Humanities and Social Sciences. The other approach is more inter-disciplinary. Courses across the curriculum can be submitted for review and designated by the Diversity and Globalism Committee as meeting the DG graduation requirement. Through this process, courses from a variety of disciplines are infused with diversity and globalism outcomes.

Regardless of our success in Core Theme 2, Objective 1, the college continues to find ways to plan, assess, and improve on how we infuse diversity and globalism into the curriculum and to track that infusion:

- Now that our course adoption forms (CAFs) link course-level student learning outcomes to the College-Wide Outcomes, a review of the CAF database clearly reveals the multitude of courses which carry diversity outcomes. The number of these courses extends well beyond those approved for the DG requirement, reflecting the strong infusion of diversity and globalism in our curriculum.

- In 2012, the Faculty Senate approved revised graduation requirements for Associate in Applied Science degrees, requiring diversity and globalism course credits for our professional-technical students as well as our transfer students. This change was accomplished with ease because there is a well-established array of courses to meet the requirement, and an equally well-established process for new courses to be added to that array.

Objective 2: Student support and business services initiatives successfully meet the needs of students from diverse backgrounds.

Student Services takes primary responsibility for planning, assessment, and improvement on Core Theme 2, Objective 2, with additional support from Administrative Services. Because our *Mission Fulfillment Report* data show strong performance in support for learners among all student populations, again, our planning, assessment, and improvement efforts are focused on refinement and improvement here.

Like other areas, The Multicultural Services (MCS) department has a long-time practice of using data to inform its improvement practices. The MCS department was reorganized in 1996 to report to both Student Services and Academic Affairs in response to evidence that our student demographic at Highline was changing significantly. Initially, MCS was designed to provide extra support for college navigation for our growing numbers of students of color (at that time 26% of our student population). But, over time, our under-served students (currently 68% of our student population) grew to surpass our traditional populations. In response, we then provided cultural competence training for everyone in Student Services, broadening the range of staff who could effectively provide college navigation support for our students. At that point, in 2012 the Multicultural Services Department changed its focus from specific services for students to facilitating system changes in Student Services. Renamed Multicultural Affairs (MCA), the office broadened its focus to address institutional change, to support diversity initiatives on a macro-level, and to respond to the ever-changing demographics of our community and across the institution. Using ongoing planning and assessment processes to guide decision-making, in 2012 we relocated our student Intercultural Center (ICC) from Building 6 into our Highline Student Union Building, increasing the ICC's capacity for enhanced programming in leadership development and social justice education. In MCA's evolution, the college has demonstrated its thoughtful, data-informed commitment to meeting the needs of our highly diverse student population.

Evidence of that commitment is by no means limited to MCA or, for that matter, to Student Services. For example, for the past three years our Access Services Department has conducted program assessment to better understand how students with disabilities access in-classroom accommodations to meet their learning needs. When the department studied the effectiveness of our Letter of Accommodation, staff discovered that students were sometimes requesting accommodative services without this official letter. This meant that students did not receive services at the appropriate levels. Due to this finding, Access Services has developed a new training where students learn the process for correctly using the letter.

This kind of adaptive program revision, designed to improve services to our diverse students, can be found throughout college:

- Admissions intentionally employs student workers that mirror our student body, many of whom are bilingual. Admissions has also fine-tuned Highline's "Get Ready! Getting Started" online admission checklist, making steps easier for prospective students to follow and successfully enroll.

- Cashiering has added two full-time bilingual employees, and the bookstore also employs a number of students who reflect the demographic of the student population.

- The Educational Planning and Advising Center (EPAC) has also created an online catalogue of "how-to" videos that teach students how to register for classes, how to check on their waitlist status, and how to check on their registration time (to list just a few), with the intention of providing this information in multiple modalities.

- Financial Aid (FA) offers thirty-minute information sessions for students before all College Orientation and Registration Experience (CORE) sessions. FA continues their commitment to our ESL student population by providing FA workshops during ESL Night (an evening event for ESL students to learn about higher education opportunities) in both English and Spanish. FA also

collaborates with individual ESL instructors in High-Intermediate and Advanced ESL classrooms, presenting workshops along with providing one-on-one advising on financial aid.

These examples, like many other initiatives campus-wide, illustrate the many service improvements that have grown out of internal continuous assessment, planning, and improvement, and a collective desire to provide outstanding services to our increasingly diverse student population.

Objective 3: Students from diverse backgrounds progress, achieve goals, and complete degrees/certificates.

Academic Affairs leads planning, assessment, and improvement processes on Core Theme 2, Objective 3, with support from Student Services. In general, under Objective 3, our *Mission Fulfillment Report* data show reasonably equitable achievement across groups. The exception is Indicator 3.1, where results are below benchmark for those students who self-identify as African/black. In light of this deficiency (as with Core Theme 1, Objective 3), our planning, assessment, and improvement cycle automatically becomes an item for Executive Staff, where it is then delegated to the appropriate vice president(s).

In this instance, the Achieving the Dream Core Team — which includes the vice presidents of both Academic Affairs and Student Services — is deeply involved in improvement planning to address the achievement gap among our African-American and black students. A year ago, in its summer 2012 retreat, the Core Team agreed to restructure its membership in an effort to include new voices who could guide a new phase of intervention-planning. After a year of study, the Core Team opted to charter an intervention team to design a cohort-based pilot for trial in 2014-15. As noted in the discussion of Standard 3.A.4, significant human and fiscal resources have been reallocated to this planning effort. Further, as a governance matter, Instruction Cabinet included the issue in its work plan for both 2012-13 and 2013-14. Though results of the intervention will not be available for some time, the Core Team and Executive Staff are committed to a rigorous follow-up review of data. The need for effective, sustainable action is clear.

Meantime, other initiatives reflect our ongoing planning, assessment, and improvement efforts in ongoing support for Core Theme 2, Objective 3. Our attainment of a TRiO grant in 2011 offers one example. TRiO Student Support Services is a federally-funded program to improve success for students from groups which are well-represented in Highline's diverse student body — low income, first generation, and/or students with disabilities. In designing its services, the TRiO program has used student survey data to develop its Retention Indicators: Academic Preparedness, Transfer-Ready, Community Support, and Financial Literacy. Student assessment showed that students who did not meet certain competency levels in these areas were less likely to complete their academic programs. Using those findings, TRiO implemented training modules and services to increase competencies in these identified areas. Similarly, assessment of TRiO's Transfer-Ready Indicator led to the development of a TRiO-sponsored HCC Portfolio Review Day event where all students were invited to submit their transfer materials (entrance essays, letters, examples of academic work) for review by transfer evaluators from state colleges and universities.

Other, similar examples of the planning, assessment and improvement cycle for Core Theme 2, Objective 3 can be found across campus:

- In an effort to address low participation and attainment rates in the sciences, Highline launched its Math, Engineering, and Science Achievement (MESA) program in 2009 to serve underrepresented students in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields by providing them with academic support and professional development. MESA provides rigorous academic enrichment services along with personal, financial aid, and transfer advising. Our MESA Student Center offers students a dedicated space to study, access to computer workstations, industry guest speakers, workshops, advising, and scholarship and internship resources. Our goal is for students to excel academically and transfer successfully to four-year institutions as STEM majors.

- We began the JumpStart program in 2010 as an innovative delivery model designed to help academically motivated immigrant/refugees and other non-native English speakers successfully transition into college. A collaborative effort of Highline's ESL, English and Reading departments, JumpStart provides upper-level ESL students the chance to attend one quarter of developmental college classes free of charge, with COMPASS writing test score requirements waived. Each quarter, 8-10 participants are selected through a competitive application process based on academic skills, motivation, and long-term goals and resources for pursuing college studies. Selected students are then integrated into (non-ESL) English 91 and Reading 81/91 with tuition-paying students, as well as a supplemental ESL Support Seminar taught by Highline's ESL faculty. Over several years of analysis, data have shown that JumpStart students successfully transition to college-level courses at high rates.

CT 2, Objective 4: The College engages in inclusive recruitment and hiring practices, and fosters a campus climate perceived as culturally competent and inclusive by all constituents

Administrative Services takes primary responsibility for planning, assessment, and improvement on Core Theme 2, Objective 4, with additional support from appointing authorities from all divisions of the college. Our *Mission Fulfillment Report* data show that we are above benchmark in hiring and retaining faculty of color. Our campus-climate benchmark for employees from diverse backgrounds remains tentative, awaiting our re-administration of the Employee Satisfaction Survey using a method which will allow us reliably to disaggregate the data for race/ethnicity. This year, instead, our campus participated in *The Chronicle of Higher Education's* "Great Colleges to Work For 2013" survey. To avoid survey fatigue, we chose not to re-administer our Employee Satisfaction Survey that same year. In the meantime, we are using the results from the "Great Colleges to Work For 2013" survey — which earned Highline a special commendation around staff diversity — as a temporary, positive measure of campus climate. Highline was the only medium-sized community college to earn excellence in this category, which measured the institution's "effort to create a welcoming and fair environment for all employees." Employees agreed with statements like "This institution has clear and effective procedures for dealing with discrimination."

Though diversity work is never finished, Highline Community College brings to it a deep rooted value of diversity and multicultural competencies for all employees. The college trustees adopted a Cultural Diversity Policy in 1993 that commits the college to "elimination of discrimination" as opposed to statements that speak solely to tolerance or acceptance. For the past 20 years, as Highline has moved from a predominantly Caucasian-serving institution to serving the most culturally diverse student population in the state, a key part of this transformation has involved the hiring and retaining of a diverse workforce. Though we currently have one of the most diverse employee pools in the Washington State community and technical college system — and are meeting our benchmarks for staff and faculty diversity — the campus aspires to much more: our long term goal is to have our faculty and staff demographics match our student profile.

In support of that goal, Highline's Executive Staff has continued to make changes to improve recruitment and retention of diverse staff. Recently, the Executive Staff has taken additional steps to recruit diverse applicant pools for open positions. For example, in 2011-12, the vice president for academic affairs revised the standard faculty job posting language to ensure that our commitment to hiring a diverse faculty to serve a diverse student body is evident. Further, this past year, he directed hiring committee chairs and administrators in Academic Affairs to create recruitment plans that consciously reach out to diverse applicant pools. Follow-up data reveal that diverse finalists were interviewed in all of the year's 15 full-time faculty searches. Meantime, in Human Resources, a recent switch to a national human resources program called NEOGOV makes our job postings accessible on a national level, facilitating our ability to attract and build more diverse applicant pools. Further, all professional and faculty job postings at the college include a required diversity statement that, scored by rubric, provides hiring committees with a means to evaluate candidates' multicultural competencies.

Once new employees join the campus community, we take steps to create a comfortable climate for our faculty and staff of color. The Faculty and Staff of Color professional group provides ongoing support and, during Opening Week, holds a luncheon for its members and allies. Further, each year we sponsor a contingent of

faculty and staff to attend the statewide Faculty and Staff of Color Conference, as well as sending a group of faculty, staff, and students to the statewide Students of Color Conference.

Still, further progress is always a priority. Many additional examples of planning, assessment, and improvement in our diversity initiatives can be cited. For one, a recent grassroots initiative — called Whites on White — to foster greater self-awareness and cultural competency informed the development of a formal initiative under the auspices of Instruction Cabinet: the Culturally Competent Educators group. This group is currently working in tandem with the Learning and Teaching Center to guide and deliver a multi-year professional development initiative aimed at improving cultural competence among faculty and staff. The effort included the dissemination of a culturally competent educator rubric to guide the efforts of the group throughout 2012-13. In short, Highline's Core Theme 2 informs planning, assessment, and improvement activities that not only support faculty and staff in developing expertise, creativity, and cultural competence in their roles, but that support students from diverse backgrounds to progress on their educational pathways and achieve their goals.

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CORE THEME #3

Build valuable relationships and establish a meaningful presence within Highline Community College's communities

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Overview of Planning, Assessment, and Improvement Ownership for Core Theme 3

Divisional Responsibility: Institutional Advancement (primary), Academic Affairs (secondary), Student Services (secondary)

Executive Staff Responsibility: Vice President for Institutional Advancement (primary), Vice President for Academic Affairs (secondary), Vice President for Student Services (secondary)

Responsible Governance and Operational Groups:

- Communication and Marketing
- Web, Outreach Services
- Highline Foundation

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CT 3, Objective 1: *The College communicates effectively with its communities*

Institutional Advancement (IA) takes primary responsibility for Core Theme 3, Objective 1. In addition to internal monitoring of activities, Highline uses external research to assess the degree to which the Core Theme 3 objectives are being met. The assessments currently include the National Media Preferences Survey, which assesses student's preference and use of communication mediums, and the Hebert Community Perception Survey, which assesses the public's perception and awareness of the college. Results from these assessments, and an ongoing consideration of other instruments to better measure core theme objectives, inform the planning, assessment, and improvement cycle here. Because *Mission Fulfillment Report* data show that we are above benchmark for Objective 1, our focus is on refining and improving our performance through the cycles of planning, assessment, and improvement.

One example is our use of National Media Preferences Survey results to guide our communications strategies (data that are benchmarked with national data). Because the 2009 survey indicated that students preferred getting most of their information online, Highline increased its efforts to improve website usability and

content, with print publications targeted to areas where students wanted materials in that format. The data also indicated heavy use of social media by students. Accordingly, Highline embraced social media as a tool that allows us to move from simply communicating our mission, to actively listening to our communities. In 2012, the college increased its Facebook presence by expanding fourfold the number of users that follow the page (currently over 4,000). Highline has also been active with Twitter and is beginning to experiment with other platforms that will allow the college to engage with potential, current, and past students.

Along similar lines, the college has used the Hebert Community Perception Survey to collect baseline data that inform how best to align college programs, community needs, and the institution's public image for future community-based engagement, and for the educational needs and interests of Highline's service district. When Highline administered the Hebert Community Perception Survey most recently in 2011, the results indicated a continued strong community awareness and positive perception of the college's mission — a positive indicator of our success with Core Theme 3's first objective.

The Senior Signing Day initiative offers another example of a similar planning, assessment, and improvement cycle within Core Theme 3, Objective 1. This year, Senior Signing Day replaced our Spring Festival, which had formerly brought large groups of high school students to campus to consider Highline as an institution to attend. When high school budget cuts ended the Spring Festival, the more refined, targeted Senior Signing Day program was developed, targeting two groups of students that, according to our data, were most likely to enroll: those who indicated they were likely to attend a community college, and those not likely to attend college at all. Highline now communicates intentionally to these two target groups, bringing them to campus, connecting them to resources and beginning the admissions, financial aid, advising, and student engagement processes — a more deliberate approach that responds to shifting community needs.

A parallel example is our change of communication tactics based on the 2011 Hebert Community Perception Survey. There, findings indicated that some high school students did not know about the college. Using a data-driven approach, Highline examined the demographics of the high school students in the area, finding that certain groups were less aware of Highline than others. As a result, we changed tactics to target our communication toward the groups most unaware of Highline or most unlikely to consider attending Highline — specifically Latino and Latina students — in an effort that also supports our efforts to initiate community connections under Objective 2.

CT 3, Objective 2: The College initiates community connections to understand community needs

Responsibility for Core Theme 3, Objective 2 lies with Institutional Advancement (IA) and Institutional Research (IR). Secondary responsibility lies with Academic Affairs and with Student Services. Monitoring is conducted by both IA and IR. Overall, our performance on Objective 2 is above benchmark and positive. However, for this objective, one measure is below benchmark, and one benchmark is pending validation.

Specifically, Core Theme 3, Objective 2, Measure 2.2B monitors "participation rates of traditional-aged, degree-seeking students by ethnic group (vs. district population)." On this metric, the college meets or exceeds its target for every group — except Latino students. For them, a 17 percentage-point gap separates the district representation (19 percent) from the group's rate of participation (2 percent) in degree and certificate programs.

In keeping with Highline's protocols for core theme assessment, where results are below benchmark, our planning, assessment, and improvement cycle activities fall under the oversight of Executive Staff, with delegation to the appropriate vice president(s).

For the Latino student participation rate, Academic Affairs assumed primary responsibility, first forming an ad hoc advisory group in 2010-11 to study this gap and to offer recommendations. That group's initial report came before Instruction Cabinet in June 2011. This past academic year, the effort gained considerable momentum under the leadership of the dean of instruction for transfer and pre-college education, and with the collaboration and support of faculty and Student Services staff.

As noted in the discussion of Standard 3.A.4, significant human and fiscal resources have been reallocated to this effort. Among key accomplishments so far:

- The college was successful in securing a $50,000 planning grant from the College Spark Foundation, matched with college funds, to develop an action plan based on community-based research.

- Highline also created the Latino Advisory Committee in fall 2012, made up of 15 members, including Highline Community College students and graduates, high school students, their parents, college administrators, school district administrators, and community organization members. The members will provide resources, feedback, and structure in carrying out the project outcomes of the partnership.

- The college launched and staffed *El Centro Latino* in spring 2013 as a central clearinghouse for programmatic outreach, referral assistance, and higher-education navigation in English and Spanish. The Center will occupy a visible permanent space on campus, with dedicated staff and support resources

Additionally, Highline worked with community partners to learn how to increase the participation rates of Latino students taking college courses and to shape Highline Community College's campus into a more welcoming space for our Latino students and families. In partnership with a local non-profit organization, Latinos for Community Transformation, we conducted a survey of 492 Latino adults on topics pertaining to attending college. Another 100+ participated in focus groups. The resulting spring 2013 report offers a wealth of ideas, recommendations, and resources for closing the participation gap among our Latino communities. Already, the research initiative has encouraged a variety of pilot activities, including a [Spanish language website](#), new Heritage Spanish offerings, campus visits from high school Latino organizations, an infusion of college-going resources into Spanish GED courses, and others. While it's too early to measure the impacts of full implementation, we are confident that we have developed a thorough, thoughtful, and community-responsive blueprint for our next steps. We further believe that other student populations will benefit from what this initiative has taught us.

CT 3, Objective 3: Highline Community College contributes to meeting community needs

Highline has a strong tradition of faculty and staff from across campus creating and maintaining relationships with our community in formal and informal ways, and new connections are regularly formed. However, in developing our core themes, we found that our community connections proved difficult to measure through readily-available data sources. Our conversations with colleagues, in fact, suggest that good community-engagement metrics are still being developed, researched, and understood by most institutional researchers and colleges in our sector. In initially crafting our measures here, we focused on the number of local jobs created as a measure of Core Theme 3, Objective 3. In doing so, we relied on the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and Institutional Research (IR) to monitor those indicators of regional economic development. Using those metrics, we completed one full cycle of data collection and assessment. However, this approach created several problems: first, there is no easy way to set a benchmark, and, second, the number of new jobs provides too limited a view of our community impact. Furthermore, the number of jobs is vulnerable to economic fluctuations independent of Highline. Therefore, as noted in Chapter One, we are currently revisiting Core Theme 3, Objective 3 to identify indicators and measures which more accurately reflect our contributions to meeting community needs. Likely candidates include community surveys and broader measures of the college's overall economic impact, like those available through Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI). Measure 3.2.A, which tracks job placement rates for professional-technical graduates, offers another positive and meaningful measure of alignment with local economic needs that could be expanded upon. For example, to provide greater access to the community we serve, we have developed multiple innovative '"on-ramps" to college that are offered at off-campus sites, including a Spanish GED pathway, an Early Childhood Education certificate offered in the Somali language, and an I-BEST program in Business Technologies sited at the White Center YWCA. The impact of these efforts, if measured effectively, could paint a more thorough

picture of our success in meeting constituent needs. For now, however, we have chosen to maintain consistency in our core theme metrics until the current accreditation cycle concludes and we revisit Chapter 1.

Even in the absence of fully settled indicators and measures for Core Theme 3, Objective 3, we have nonetheless proceeded with cycles of planning, assessment, and improvement activities to advance the objective's goals. For example, under the auspices of Instruction Cabinet, we formed the Professional Technical Outreach and Marketing (PTOM) group to analyze data around enrollment in our professional-technical programs. The rationale is that, when interest in these programs declines, it can be an early indicator of a downturn in certain job fields which, in turn, provides an early indicator of our relevance to the community. The PTOM committee's findings, due for release in summer 2013, will help us plan for changes in the make-up and promotion of our professional-technical programs for the future. Meantime, we continue making improvements to meet community needs, including the implementation of Career Coach, which helps students at all levels of education and previous work experience to explore career options, providing them with local job market data and employment trends. Career Coach also catalogs current job openings and listings that provide current Highline students a way to actively search for employment in the career they seek. It is a free program that is widely promoted to our communities to meet their needs for enhanced employment opportunities.

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CORE THEME #4
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Model sustainability in human resources, operations, and teaching and learning
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Overview of Planning, Assessment, and Improvement Ownership for Core Theme 4
Divisional Responsibility: Administrative Services (primary)

Executive Staff Responsibility: Vice-President for Administrative Services (primary), Vice-President of Academic Affairs (secondary)

Responsible Governance and Operational Groups:

- Human Resources
- Executive Staff
- Finance and Auxiliary Services
- Facilities

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CT 4, Objective 1: The College recruits, retains, and develops a highly qualified workforce

Administrative Services — in particular, its Human Resources unit — takes primary responsibility for Core Theme 4, Objective 1. Our *Mission Fulfillment Report* data show success in meeting the objective. As a result, our planning, assessment, and improvement initiatives are geared towards enhancement and responsiveness to emergent issues.

Our employee recruitment process is a representative example of how our institutionalized assessment and planning process leads to ongoing improvement at Highline. In 2011, one of Human Resources' quarterly assessments uncovered several problems that significantly lengthened the time to fill positions and decreased the efficiency of the application and information-sharing aspects of the process. The hiring process itself was manual and labor-intensive, with paper applications and hard-copy supplemental information supplied by applicants. These materials were copied, entered manually into Human Resources' stand-alone applicant

tracking database, and then reviewed for minimum qualifications before copies were made for screening committee to review. Along with the process's inefficiencies, it offered no way to either assess the quality of the process or to analyze any applicant demographics without significant manual intervention.   Further, with no way to easily sort, search, or compare application materials, Human Resources' staff could not reliably determine if they were recruiting applicants who were representative of our community at large, if recruitment efforts targeting certain populations were successful, or even if the college was losing candidates due to its unwieldy hiring process. Finally, Human Resources staff was left with literally mountains of paper applications to retain and manage, counter to the college's commitment to green practices and sustainability.

To address these challenges, Human Resources managers began researching alternative methods of managing position recruitments. Several alternatives were considered, and in 2012, the college purchased and implemented the web-based NEOGOV recruitment management system. With this system, all application materials are submitted online, and no staff resources are needed to track or manage applicant information.

Having implemented the system fairly recently, its full impact has not yet been assessed. However some benefits are clearly evident, even at this early date. For example, the volume of paper has been reduced, reviewing applications is vastly more efficient, and the security of applicant information is easier to maintain. Also, higher quality recruitment data can now be compared to benchmarks and other indicators of effectiveness. The new system also enables the college to significantly expand its visibility to potential candidates, as NEOGOV allows applicants from across the country to search for jobs in specific fields and geographic locations. This improvement allows us to recruit a highly qualified workforce.

Similarly, our faculty and staff professional development efforts provide another example of our institutionalized assessment, planning, and improvement for Core Theme 4, Objective 1. Each fall, the college holds Professional Development Day and Opening Week for ongoing professional development. Both events are planned and run by committees of faculty and staff who actively and formally solicit participant feedback after each event, typically through an online poll. Though the committee's membership changes each year, the current co-chairs serve on the subsequent year's planning team. Through constituent feedback and membership continuity, the committees are able to maintain a cycle of continuous improvement in planning these key events year to year. Encouragingly, our employee satisfaction survey reflects staff and faculty agreement that they "have opportunities at work to learn and grow professionally" — a sign that our professional development initiatives are effective in helping Highline maintain a highly qualified work force. These efforts also support employee satisfaction, an indicator that has been consistently positive in the results from our own Employee Satisfaction Survey and in the "Best Colleges to Work For" survey, which we have administered twice. Both instruments showed a positive campus climate for faculty and staff, which, in turn, sustains our positive record of retention.

CT 4, Objective 2: The College demonstrates good stewardship of financial resources while ensuring sufficient resources will be available in the future

Administrative Services takes primary responsibility for Core Theme 2, Objective 2. At Highline Community College, good stewardship of financial resources means purposeful and proactive fund management, allowing us to successfully fulfill our mission, meet economic challenges, and provide stability for the college community. We ensure good stewardship of financial resources through a variety of key, on-going measurement tools. These include the Internal Control Assessment Process, quarterly financial reports to the Board of Trustees, the administrative directors' quarterly assessments, and various program reviews and audits. Monitoring activities include the tracking of student enrollment, tuition revenue generation, and fund balances. As we are meeting our benchmarks in the area of financial stewardship, our planning, assessment, and improvement initiatives focus on refinements and enhancements to our processes.

A key part of the process that ensures financial sustainability is the monitoring and assessment that occurs regularly throughout the fiscal year cycle. For Highline, it also serves as an example of process assessment and improvement. Before 2006-07, budget monitoring was relatively decentralized, with those responsibilities

largely left to each vice president's area. In particular, there was little analysis to ensure that revenue trends were aligning with projections. The result of this silo process, along with an unexpected downturn in enrollment, was that by the end of fiscal year 2005-06 the college had depleted a $1.5 million dollar surplus in its operating fund balance. In response to this unexpected gap and mindful of its contributing factors, the college's budget process underwent a significant restructuring. Under the leadership of a new president and vice president of administrative services, budget development was redesigned to be a more transparent, iterative, and collaborative process, which includes not only initial budget development, but also assessment and ongoing revisions and updates. Of particular importance, the new process more seamlessly integrates short- and long-term forecasts of local revenue — both from tuition and from contract enrollments like Running Start. As these non-state resources have accounted for increasingly significant shares of the operating budget, their ongoing assessment has become a central tool in ensuring the college's fiscal health. Today, enrollment (upon which tuition revenue is estimated) is monitored and reported to the college's Executive Staff daily, with tuition revenue monitored and reported monthly. The college's institutional researcher conducts careful trend analyses of these data, providing high-quality projections year-over-year. Additionally, the director of finance and auxiliary services' quarterly reports to the Board of Trustees include updates on tuition and fee revenue, alongside state allocation revisions and the status of capital and auxiliary service funds.

The current budget development and monitoring process is reflective of the college's thoughtful and collegial approach to decision-making. This on-going and collaborative budget process has led to several improvements in both financial transparency and stability. Improvements in the timeliness and relevance of financial information have allowed the college to easily manage its board-approved 10% reserve fund, and also have evolved into better focusing of reserve monies targeted for litigation, capital projects, and program continuity. Easily accessible fund balance information allows for better, timelier management decisions, and has allowed the college to strategically maneuver through the past several years of significant cuts to state allocations without significant cuts in service to students.

CT 4, Objective 3: The College demonstrates stewardship of environmental resources

Administrative Services also takes primary responsibility for Core Theme 4, Objective 3. Stewardship of environmental resources at Highline Community College is managed by the Facilities Department with leadership and guidance from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and an ongoing commitment from the entire campus community. Our internal initiatives monitor, assess, and reduce resource usage, while we collaborate with external partners on infrastructure improvements that address long-term sustainability goals. Because *Mission Fulfillment Report* data show ongoing success in meeting our goals for environmental stewardship, our planning, assessment, and improvement efforts are focused more on refining and enhancing our processes in these areas.

In 2009, the college began identifying sustainability benchmarks in the area of waste consumption, electricity, and fossil fuel usage. The college now measures these data-points on a quarterly basis, and the Facilities Department publishes an annual *Department Sustainability Report* that details initiatives, improvements, and recommendations in the areas of energy management, recycling, maintenance, green cleaning, and purchasing. In the early phases of these assessment activities, the college administration realized that its initial usage goals were not being met. Accordingly, we began efforts to more fully engage the campus community and our external partners in sustainability efforts. As initial areas of focus, we developed sustainability and resource conservation practices for custodial services and renewed our efforts in water conservation and recycling, implementing a custodial Green Cleaning Program in winter 2011 and piloting a number of low- or no-water initiatives. At the same time, we took steps to improve storm water management, including the use of goats as a natural method of vegetation management of the college's retention pond. In summer 2009, the college refocused its recycling efforts, with multiple initiatives aimed at reducing the college's waste stream. Along with improving its co-mingled recycling program, in 2010 the college and its food service vendor, Chartwell's, began an organic recycling program aimed at reducing kitchen waste, as well as a kitchen oil recycling program. Additional recycling programs for fluorescent light bulbs, batteries, and electronics were implemented as well. Also in 2010, the college began a construction material recycling program which

requires contractors to recycle waste construction materials. This program has had multiple benefits. In addition to reducing the college's waste stream, it has provided cost reductions to capital projects and has contributed to the college's efforts in maintaining Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) construction principles.

Over the past year, Highline has been particularly effective in obtaining federal energy grants, partly because of the college's commitment and willingness to embrace energy saving technologies and practices. These stand-alone projects have had a direct effect on the college's overall utility consumption, as has the college's practice of updating HVAC and other mechanical systems to current environmental standards as part of every major capital project. The college also has improved the energy efficiency in renovated spaces by installation of digital control systems and other advanced technology.

Along with initiatives led by the Facilities Department, several student-initiated activities around environmental stewardship have led to improved sustainability in teaching and learning over the past few years. These include a bottle cap recycling program and the installation of a solar light fixture at a college bus stop. Co-curricular activities have combined global stewardship with real-world activities. For example, economics students provide mentorship and support to local immigrant farmers by hosting an organic produce stand at the college each summer. Other projects include involving students in natural invasive species control and initiatives around marine-life sustainability through our Marine Science and Technology (MaST) center.

In short, Highline's approach to sustainability involves continuous planning, measurement, and improvement to ensure that all resources — human, financial, and physical — are sustained thoughtfully and effectively.

Chapter Five: Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation, and Sustainability

Executive Summary of Eligibility Requirement 24

Scale and Sustainability (ER 24)
Highline Community College demonstrates that its operational scale (e.g., enrollment, human and financial resources and institutional infrastructure) is sufficient to fulfill its mission and achieve its core themes in the present and will be sufficient to do so in the foreseeable future (Standard 5.B., pg. 91).

Mission Fulfillment (Standard 5.A)

Together, the preceding chapters of this report provide evidence that Highline Community College engages in regular, systematic, participatory, self-reflective, and evidence-based assessment of its accomplishments. The processes, both formal and informal, which underlie college planning involve all college constituency groups — trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, students, and community members. The development of our core themes and their measures has prompted significant, meaningful engagement with our mission and values, along with a productive assessment of our performance objectives. Today, more than ever, the campus and its community partners are committed to the pursuit of a culture of evidence, and the ongoing cycle of planning, assessment, and improvement.

As discussed in Chapter 1, Highline defines mission fulfillment as achievement of 70% of our benchmarks for core theme objectives and indicators. We consider this level of achievement to represent acceptable performance, while encouraging continuous improvement — even in our strongest areas — as a matter of fundamental institutional culture and expectation. Using the data from our assessment processes, we make determinations of quality, effectiveness, and mission fulfillment, using those findings to guide planning and improvement processes. In short, we interpret mission fulfillment as requiring constant attention to the values articulated in our core themes and objectives, ongoing assessment of the indicators for the objectives, and regular planning to sustain continuous improvement. As discussed in Chapter 3, the data are reviewed regularly over the course of the year by our Executive Staff to ensure that the college is maintaining the course charted by the core theme benchmarks. When necessary, Executive Staff develops institution-level goals and a data-driven response plan, delegating implementation to appropriate groups and individuals. Meantime, other groups are empowered to propose, implement, and evaluate improvement initiatives in their areas. For us, mission fulfillment is a carefully managed, ongoing process, guiding the day-to-day work of the college.

The current *Mission Fulfillment Report*, seen below, is published online annually for review by the college community — employee groups, the Board of Trustees, and student government — with the goal of ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to explore the report and become familiar with our performance on the core theme objectives and indicators. The resulting discussions richly inform the development of planning and improvement goals. The results of our accreditation evaluations — which also reflect our degree of mission fulfillment — are published on the college website for the campus community, the college community, and the rest of the public to view.

Definition of Mission Fulfillment
Highline Community College defines mission fulfillment as meeting at least 70% of benchmarks across all of the core theme objectives.

Mission Fulfillment Summary		13/13 met (100%)
Core Theme 1:	Promote student engagement, learning, and achievement	3/3 objectives met
Core Theme 2:	Integrate and institutionalize diversity and globalism throughout the college	4/4 objectives met
Core Theme 3:	Build valuable relationships and establish a meaningful presence within Highline Community College's communities	3/3 objectives met
Core Theme 4:	Model sustainability in human resources, operation, and teaching and learning	3/3 objectives met

Core Theme Results KEY:	Results Meet or Exceed Benchmark	Results Below Benchmark; Monitor	Results Far Below Benchmark; Action Needed

Core Theme #1
Promote student engagement, learning, and achievement.

Objective 1 - Students engage with their curriculum, campus, and community for a meaningful educational experience.			Met (100%)
Indicator 1.1 - Students experience positive interactions with faculty in and outside of the classroom.		**2011-12**	**Benchmark**
Measure 1.1A	CCSSE "Student-Faculty Interaction" score	**54**	50 (national norm)
Indicator 1.2 - Students participate in organizations and activities that provide support, mentoring, or leadership opportunities on campus and in the community.			
Measure 1.2A	Percent of student who participate in student organizations (CCSSE item 13.i.1)	**24%**	18% (CCSSE national sample

Objective 2 - Diverse teaching methods, innovative curricula, and student support services fulfill the learning needs of students.			Met (100%)
Indicator 2.1 - Faculty engage in continuous course-level assessment.		**2011-12**	**Benchmark**
Measure 2.1A	Percent of departments reporting on faculty assessment of course level student learning outcomes. (42 total)	**95% (n=40)**	90% (internal)
Indicator 2.2 - Students experience HCC courses as challenging and engaging.			
Measure 2.2A	CCSSE "Academic Challenge/Active &Collaborative Learning" Composite score	**54**	50 (national norm)
Indicator 2.3 - Faculty and student services personnel provide effective support to students.			
Measure 2.3A	CCSSE "Support for Learners" scores	**53**	50 (national norm)
Measure 2.3B	Percent of departments reporting on student services delivery and learning outcomes (14 total)	**93% (n=13)**	90% (internal)

Objective 3 – Students achieve their goals by progressing on educational pathways			Met (83%)
Indicator 3.1 – All Basic Skills students will achieve level gains.		**2011-12**	**Benchmark**
Measure 3.1A	Student Achievement Initiative (SAI) Basic Skills points per eligible student	**1.65**	1.50 (internal)
Indicator 3.2 – Advanced Basic Skills students will transition from non-credit to credit courses.			
Measure 3.2A	Percentage of Advanced Basic Skills students who transition to college level courses during the academic year	**8% (N=1621)**	10% (internal)
Indicator 3.3 – Degree- or certificate- seeking students will progress through significant educational milestones.			
Measure 3.3 A	Percentage of eligible students who attain 15 college-level credits within the current year	**50% (n=4272)**	45% (internal)
Measure 3.3B	Percentage of eligible students who attain 5 college-level credits in quantitative reasoning within the current year	**29% (n-3025)**	25% (internal)

Indicator 3.4 – Degree- or certificate-seeking students will attain credentials.			
Measure 3.4A	Percentage of eligible students who attain a credential and 45 credits in the current year	**31% (n=2358)**	25% (internal)
Measure 3.4B	IPEDS graduation rate of full-time, first-time degree-seeking students within three years (2011)	**28% (n=437)**	28% (internal)

SAI Student Group Definitions

3.1A Basic Points – Students who earn CASAS test gains in ABE/ ESL/GED during the year shown.

3.2A Advanced Basic Skills students include levels ABE3-4 and ESL4-5. Transition is defined as attempting college-level credits during the year shown.

3.3A 15 College-level Credits - Transfer/Prof Tech/ RS who had no prior college level credits

3.3B Quant Point - Transfer/Prof Tech/ RS who had some prior college level credits but no college-level Math

3.4A 45+ Credential - Transfer/Prof Tech/ RS who had 30+ prior college level credits and prior college-level Math

Core Theme 2

Integrate and institutionalize diversity and globalism throughout the college

Objective 1 – Diversity and globalism are infused throughout the curriculum; faculty employ a pedagogy that integrates diversity and globalism.						**Met (100%)**
Indicator 1.1 – Diversity and globalism are integrated broadly across the curriculum.					**2011-12**	**Benchmark**
Measure 1.1A	The percentage of courses with student learning objectives that link to the College Wide Outcome on diversity (courses)				**75%**	35% (internal)
Indicator 1.2 – Students from diverse backgrounds experience positive interactions with faculty in and outside the classroom.		**African/ Black**	**Asian/ Pacific Isl**	**Hispanic/ Latino**	**Caucasian/ White**	**Native American**	**Benchmark**
Measure 1.2A	CCSE "Student-Faculty Interaction" score (2012)*	**52**	**54**	50	**55**	54	50 (national norm)
Indicator 1.3 – Students from diverse backgrounds will experience HCC courses as challenging and engaging.							
Measure 1.3A	CCSSEE "Academic Challenge/Active & Collaborative Learning" composite score (2012)*	**54**	**54**	48	**54**	57	50 (national norm)

*CCSSE results are not evaluated for small groups (n<50) and should be interpreted with caution.

Objective 2 – Student support and business services initiatives successfully meet the needs of students from diverse backgrounds							Met (100%)
Indicator 2.1 – Support and business services initiatives are effectively/successfully delivered to ethnically diverse students.		**African/ Black**	**Asian/ Pacific Isl**	**Hispanic/ Latino**	**Caucasian/ White**	**Native American**	**Benchmark**
Measure 2.1A	CCSSEE "Support for Learners score (2012)*	60	55	48	50	51	50 (national norm)

Objective 3 – Students from diverse backgrounds progress, achieve goals, and complete degrees/certificates							Met (86%)
Indicator 3.1 – Degree- and certificate-seeking students from diverse backgrounds achieve significant milestones at rates comparable to relevant comparison groups (2011-12).		**African/ Black**	**Asian/ Pacific Isl**	**Hispanic/ Latino**	**Caucasian/ White**	**Native American**	**Benchmark**
Measure 3.1A	Percentage of eligible students who attain 15 college-level credits within the current year	40% (n=669)	56% (n=672)	45% (n=412)	62% (n=1563)	48% (n=31)	45% (internal)
Measure 3.1B	Percentage of eligible students who attain 5 college-level credits in quantitative reasoning within the current year	20% (n=447)	34% (n=418)	31% (n=225)	29% (n=1359)	22% (n=41)	25% (internal)
Indicator 3.2 – Students from diverse backgrounds complete degrees and certificate at rates comparable to relevant comparison groups (2011-2012).							
Measure 3.2A	Percentage of eligible students who attain a credential and 45 credits with in the current year	25% (n=239)	28% (n=527)	27% (n=140)	35% (n=1047)	14% (n=22)	25% (internal)

	IPEDS graduation rate of full-time, first-time, degree-seeking students within 3 years (2011)	23% (n=43)	37% (n=71)	23% (n=30)	31% (n=205)	0% (n=3)	28% (WA)
Measure 3.2B							

3.1A 15 College-level Credits - Transfer/Prof Tech/ RS who had no prior college level credits
3.1B Quant Point - Transfer/Prof Tech/ RS who had some prior college level credits but no college-level Math
3.2A 45+ Credential - Transfer/Prof Tech/ RS who had 30+ prior college level credits and prior college-level Math

Objective 4 – The College engages in inclusive recruitment and hiring practices, and fosters a campus climate perceived as culturally competent and inclusive by all constituents			Met (100%)
Indicator 4.1 – Recruitment, hiring, and retention of campus personnel are equitable and full-time employees show increasing diversity.		**2011-12**	**Benchmark**
Measure 4.1A	Percentage of people of color in full-time positions	**29%**	25% (internal)
Indicator 4.2 – Employees from diverse backgrounds experience the campus climate as positive (2011-12).	**Of Color**	**Caucasian/ White**	**Benchmark**
Measure 4.2A	Rate of job satisfaction and positive campus climate (survey items 7, 8, 20)	pending	pending	75% (internal)

Core Theme #3

Build valuable relationships and establish a meaningful presence within Highline Community College's communities.

Objective 1 – The College communicates effectively with its communities		Met (100%)
Indicator 1.1 – The community is aware of Highline's programs, offerings and services.	**2011**	**Benchmark**
Measure 1.1A	Rate of community members' awareness of College's transfer, workforce, and basic skills mission elements as reported in Community Perception Survey	**88%**	80% (internal)

Objective 2 – The College initiates community connections to understand community needs		Met (83%)
Indicator 2.1 – The college actively offers a variety of programs and makes connections with external organizations.	**2011**	**Benchmark**
Measure 2.1A	Rates of agreement that the College is meeting the community's educational needs as reported in the Community Perception Survey	47%	Pending

Indicator 2.2 – Participation rates of traditional-aged students reflect meaningful community connections and confidence in the quality of college offerings.						2011-12	Benchmark
Measure 2.2A	Overall participation rate from high schools within the service district (ERDC)					57%	50% (WA)
		African/ Black	Asian/ Pacific Isl	Hispanic/ Latino	Caucasian/ White	Native American	Benchmark
Measure 2.2B	Participation rate of traditional-aged, degree-seeking students by ethnic group (vs. district; 2011-12)	11% (12%)	25% (19%)	2% (19%)	41% (45%)	1% (1%)	Students of color within 5% (internal)

Objective 3 – Highline Community College contributes to meeting community needs			Met (100%)
Indicator 3.1 – The College serves as public center for regional economic development efforts in job creation.		2011-12	Benchmark
Measure 3.1A	Number of local jobs created by Small Business Development Center (SBDC)	Pending (March)	40 (internal)
Measure 3.1B	Regional economic impact (in thousands of dollars) of SBDC	Pending (March)	750 (internal)
Indicator 3.2 – The College meets regional workforce development needs.			Benchmark
Measure 3.2A	Post-completion employment rate of workforce education programs	77%	74% (WA)

Core Theme #4

Model sustainability in human resources, operations, and teaching and learning.

Objective 1 – The College recruits, retains, and develops a highly qualified workforce			Met (100%)
Indicator 1.1 –Staff and faculty actively pursue continuing professional development opportunities.		2011-12	Benchmark
Measure 1.1A	Rate of agreement that employees have opportunities at work to learn and grow professionally (biennial survey item 5).	75%	75%
Indicator 1.2 – Current employees indicate satisfaction with working environment and campus climate.			
Measure 1.2A	Rate of job satisfaction and positive campus climate (biennial survey items 7, 8, 20)	91%	75% (internal)
Indicator 1.3 – Employees are retained by the College.			
Measure 1.3A	Short-term (2-year) attrition rate of full-time employees	5%	8% (internal)

Objective 2 – The College demonstrates good stewardship of financial resources while ensuring sufficient resources will be available in the future		Met (100%)	
Indicator 2.1 – The College maintains sufficient financial resources to both maintain programs and to remain strategic in times of financial downturn.		**2011-12**	**Benchmark**
Measure 2.1A	Percent of general operations budget maintained as operating reserves	**10%**	10% (internal)
Indicator 2.2 –The College maintains strong internal controls over assets and ensures compliance to college and state procedures.			
Measure 2.2A	Number of annual audit findings	0	0 (internal)
Indicator 2.3 – The College ensures continuing alignment of fiscal resources to meet current operating needs.			
Measure 2.3A	Percent of instruction-related expenses relative to general operating expenses (direct instruction + library + student svcs)	**67%**	67% (WA)

Objective 3 – The College demonstrates stewardship of environmental resources		Met (100%)	
Indicator 3.1 – The College encourages awareness and use of 'green' practices in its working environments.		**2011-12**	**Benchmark**
Measure 3.1 A	Percent reduction in annual waste stream (landfill tonnage) from baseline	**20%**	5% below baseline
Measure 3.1B	Percent reduction in annual total energy consumption (electricity and fossil fuels combined) from baseline	**3-5% (74,000p MBTUs)**	2% below baseline

Adaptation and Sustainability (Standard 5.B)

As discussed in Chapter 3 (Standard 3.A.2), at Highline, final responsibility for mission fulfillment and stewardship of institution-level planning rests with Executive Staff, with oversight from the Board of Trustees. Within that structure, the college has succeeded in fulfilling its mission, pro-actively addressing areas of shortcoming, and promoting a data-informed culture of continuous improvement.

A remaining question is whether we can sustain these accomplishments. Our ability to adapt is particularly well illustrated, we believe, by our successful response to recent economic shifts. That outcome is representative of how well we regularly monitor our internal and external environments, plan our adaptations, and effectively respond to ensure our ongoing relevancy, productivity, viability, and sustainability.

Over the past four years, our capacity for adaptation has been tested at every turn. In that time frame, we successfully dealt with a $5 million budget cut which occurred at the same time as a 20% increase in enrollment. Our adaptation was facilitated by our existing budget processes and enrollment-management tools — both of which had been developed for the explicit purpose of being responsive to internal and external factors, while also sustaining the viability of the college. Through a particularly difficult time, they worked.

In 2008-09, in the early days of the Great Recession, the president and Executive Staff identified four priorities for "serving the community and sustaining resources" through the anticipated downturn in state support. These priorities — local economic development, district communications, student achievement, and resource development — mirror many aspects of our core themes and, in the process, illustrate our values.

With those priorities in mind, the president and Executive Staff developed an overarching approach to managing the economic downturn — an approach we now refer to as the "glide path." Simply put, the "glide path" looks strategically at different revenue streams and their projected trend lines, with the overall goal of

mitigating cuts in the state allocation. It has allowed the college to maintain and even grow certain programs while protecting core functions from draconian budget slashing.

Early on in the economic downturn, when the first significant cuts in state funding occurred, the college opted to make immediate, large reductions in expenditures. These initial cuts included shuttering the campus daycare center, vacating a leased classroom building in Federal Way, reducing our ESL service levels, and closing a handful of specialized units, including an early college program off campus. Though deeply painful to make, these early choices were critical in re-balancing the operating budget and positioning the college to sustain the additional waves of expected state cutbacks, while protecting as many core functions as possible.

At the same time, because a weak economy tends to predict that large numbers of unemployed people will seek out retraining, we anticipated a significant, if temporary, increase in enrollment. That increase did occur, and in response we intentionally grew our schedule to serve the new influx of students, increasing our reliance on adjunct faculty beyond our historical averages. Throughout the ensuing four years, Executive Staff closely monitored enrollment, then budgeted year-by-year based on conservative estimates of tuition income. Meantime, the college continued to make smaller, measured cuts as we managed the crisis, implementing the majority of them through employee attrition and by cutting weaker programs, while sustaining core services. As tuition grew, the increased enrollment afforded us a partial offset to cuts in state budget allocations.

However, we also knew that the enrollment numbers would not remain at such high levels. Thus, the college deliberately chose to continue to budget tuition revenue based on 2009 figures. By budgeting at sustainable enrollment levels, the college has averted the need for any additional, drastic budget reductions as the enrollment boom winds down. In short, we have been able to adapt in such a way that we have sustained our relevance, productivity, and viability.

Now at the end of the glide path, we are now turning our attention to making the most of what we have, rebuilding where possible. We have sustained our improvement-oriented initiatives. We are committed to revisiting our part-time to full-time faculty ratio, which grew as we postponed hiring tenure-track faculty during the huge state budget cuts of the last years. We also plan to close middle-management gaps, filling positions which were allowed to remain vacant. Working with community partners, we have begun to explore new professional-technical program opportunities. In other words, we are again adapting to ensure our long term ability to fulfill our mission.

With our budget- and enrollment-monitoring tools, mission-fulfillment indicators, and ongoing improvement processes, we can continue to sustain the institution, its resources, and its services, going forward.

Conclusion

Highline's *Year Seven Comprehensive Self-Evaluation Report* attempts to reveal, on paper, the thoughtful path that leads us to realize our mission. We trust that the text elucidates our resources and capacity, our institutional planning processes, and our conception of mission fulfillment. For those of us at the college, it gives us a measurable view of the ongoing work we do, the progress we have made, and our goals for the future.

We moved into the current year's self-evaluation with careful attention to the feedback from our earlier peer evaluators. As we complete our first evaluation cycle under the revised standards of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, we look forward to revisiting our Chapter One self-evaluation in a fresh, more informed light next year.

We believe that our core themes are meaningful, measurable, and reflective of our values. They provide guidance and clarity for our mission fulfillment. Derived from strong data sets, our benchmarks are reasonable in light of past achievement but also have aspirational dimensions. The metrics and indicators allow us to measure our achievements and deficits meaningfully.

Going forward, the campus community will remain an active partner in the processes of planning and executing the activities that drive successful mission fulfillment. We are confident that our ongoing adherence to our core themes — as guides and measures of our success — will allow us to maintain our robust, energetic campus culture as we work, together, to deliver high-quality educational services to our diverse student body, helping our community members reach their goals.

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