

Clatsop Community College

Astoria, Oregon

October 24 and 25, 2022

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Part I: Mission Fulfillment	3
Part II: Student Achievement.....	5
Part III: Programmatic Assessment.....	6
Part IV: Moving Forward.....	6
<i>Part V: Addendums (Where Applicable)</i>	<i>7</i>

Introduction

Founded in 1958, Clatsop Community College (CCC) offers Associate degrees and certificates for entry level professions, transferability, professional-technical training and careers and continuing education programs for the workforce and community. The college serves students of Clatsop County and accommodates students in the surrounding area which includes Washington and Tillamook Counties in Oregon and Pacific County in Washington. As one of 17 community colleges in the state of Oregon, CCC is governed by a seven-member Board of Education elected through county election procedures. The college is located near the mouth of the Columbia River in historic Astoria, Oregon. The College's campus is split between locations of Lexington Ave, MERTS, and South County Center. On an Astoria hillside sits the Lexington campus which provides state-of-the-art laboratories and classrooms, full-accessibility and student-centered learning spaces that include the library, bookstore, café, student club space, and fitness facilities. The MERTS (Marine and Environmental Research and Training Station) location is home to Oregon's Maritime Training College, fire science and industrial technology training facilities which emphasize hands-on learning. South County Center in Seaside, Oregon is the location for the small business and economic development services as well as various classes convenient to South County residents.

The on-site visit for Mid-Cycle Evaluation was conducted on October 24-25, 2022 at the Clatsop campus. The committee consisted of Dr. Gwendolyn Cash-James (Chair), Dean of Arts and Sciences at Spokane Community College, and Dr. Holly Smith, Dean of Arts and Humanities at Pierce College. Dr. Ron Larsen was the off-site liaison to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

The evaluation team was made to feel very welcome at Clatsop Community College. All those who attended meetings were extremely engaged in the conversations had, and the evaluation team genuinely appreciated their candor, their hospitality, and their enthusiasm.

Part I: Mission Fulfillment

In the report section on Mission Fulfillment, Clatsop Community College provided a profile of their students, identified their instructional areas, and provided some discussion of their Core Themes. They also provided some context for where their institution is at currently with key changes in important leadership positions. Of significance is the fact that their current Vice President of Instruction is now additionally serving as the Vice President of Student Services, effectively making him a Provost, without mid-level management reporting to him in student success and advising. There has been discussion of creating a position for a new Dean of Student Affairs, but due to apparent budget constraints, this has not yet happened. The College has also lost its Director of Student Access and Advising. The College hired an Accommodation Specialist in September and a new Director of Admission in July.

What was missing in the section on Mission Fulfillment and in subsequent conversations regarding the College's Strategic Planning and Mission Fulfillment processes and goals was any data regarding how the College was measuring achievement with regard to its Core Themes. In our conversations with College faculty and staff, it became apparent that the College has not yet taken significant action to utilize its existing data resources. The College currently contracts with institutional research services at Linn-Benton College. During the visit, we heard differing accounts about the usefulness of the data they receive from Linn-Benton College. In subsequent conversation and investigation, a picture began to emerge showing that the struggles with this data arise from both a lack of data literacy at Clatsop Community College and possibly from the disconnection of the staff at Linn-Benton from the institutional life and culture at Clatsop. This has led to delays in receiving data, the receipt of data that is not useful, and ultimately in some cases, to a burgeoning level of distrust in the validity of this data.

Mission Fulfillment is the primary goal of a college's strategic planning process. Clatsop Community College has struggled for several years with fully implementing a robust strategic planning process that is connected to its mission fulfillment and effectively utilizes data in its prioritization and decision making. Since the College's last Ad Hoc report, some progress has been made in developing elements of a data-evidenced strategic plan that were presented in the report. In addition, some faculty and staff met in September and October of 2022 to discuss plans to form a group to complete the development of the new strategic plan.

Members of the campus community indicated that they do not intend to continue working on the elements of the existing strategic plan (expiring 2023) because they have come to understand that it is not an effective plan and that most elements of it are not measurable. They have turned toward the development of a new strategic plan. This work is underway, but no timeline was provided for when it will be completed. For these reasons, the evaluation committee was unable to discern whether and how data will be used and disaggregated in the measurement of this plan's actions and its achievement of mission fulfillment.

It should be noted that confidence was very high amongst all campus constituents that the new plan will be developed to effectively use data to measure its success and to determine progress toward mission fulfillment.

The challenges the College faces with using data are manyfold. The fact that the College does not have staff dedicated to accreditation and institutional research specifically was noted by many, including board members. In addition to the staffing challenge and the difficulties then presented by the outsourcing of institutional research functions to Linn-Benton College that have already been identified, the College also struggles with its internal Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to manage its HR, Accounting, Budgeting, Registrar, and related data functions. The College is in the process of implementing a new ERP (Colleague), and the campus is extremely hopeful that this decision will not only help to streamline functionality in these areas but that it will also help to solve some of the College's data challenges. This implementation is scheduled to occur every soon, and great consideration has been taken to

ensure that the transition will have the least amount of impact on functionality under the direction of a new project manager.

In conversations across the campus, we repeatedly asked about how the College uses the student success and retention data they provided elsewhere in their report to make decisions, specifically the data regarding persistence and graduation since these would seem to be linked to their Core Themes and Mission. What we heard consistently is that the campus does not engage in much discussion over this data and that there is often resistance to calling out programs that have lower graduation and persistence rates. Conversations about graduation were focused on celebrating student success, but they found it challenging to address potential failings, including the relatively low number of students who complete programs. Staff who regularly interact with students individually perform heroic acts to help students stay in school or finish the credits needed for graduation, but this data is not examined or discussed systematically in a manner that informs sustainable interventions or decision-making.

Clatsop Community College holds a special place in the heart of its service district. This was obvious in talking with board members, faculty, and staff. They are highly responsive to the needs of the community and of their students based on relational aspects of their work. They should be lauded for this and for maintaining a culture of creativity and positivity in spite of the travails of recent years. In order for Clatsop to be prepared for its upcoming comprehensive visit, however, they still have significant work to do in their use of data as it relates to strategic planning and thus, mission fulfillment, and in particular, this use of disaggregated data to understand where equity gaps might exist amongst their diverse student population.

Part II: Student Achievement

Throughout the conversations with faculty and staff, it is clear to us that the college culture is focused on serving students and their needs. Across all groups, there is a sincere desire to help students achieve their goals within their community. Students are known by name and there is pride in their successes.

Assessment of student learning is a strength that could be built upon to extend to other areas of the college to address the student achievement standards that require disaggregated data to inform practices related to equitable student achievement. The data that has been acquired through the relationship with Linn Benton CC that speaks to graduation and persistence trends has not yet been widely shared or discussed at the college. The Vice President of Instruction and Student Services as well as other committees have spoken of a hope to connect this data to the upcoming Strategic Plan with more data visualization that is more readily available to the college community.

There is also a desire to address student attrition with adjustments to the advising model and structure. Conversations throughout the day indicate that the current ERP has impacted student achievement through registration and financial aid processes namely. There is great

hope at the college that a new system will remove barriers for students and free up triage labor to more effectively address student needs systemically.

The current relationship with Linn-Benton may not provide the accountability for the data collection and analysis needed to show progress within standards 1D1-1D4. Establishing a clear structure and schedule for data reports and equity conversations related to student achievement will be particularly important as the student data system transitions to a new software. Based on conversations, data has come up for discussion at Cabinet in the past, and other committees and constituents have an interest in engaging more in data discussions on behalf of students. There was discussion over the course of the visit about supporting the college to become more data driven in their decision making and developing a culture of data inquiry that is more widespread.

Part III: Programmatic Assessment

The college has a clear process for reviewing instructional programs and departments that faculty across the disciplines shared was effective in leading to programmatic change and improvements in student learning. The college community easily discussed how their program assessment roles up to the budget process and informs future allocations of resources.

Student learning assessment was also reviewed and discussed with teams of faculty and instructional staff. It is apparent that faculty utilize their learning assessment process to routinely review and improve student learning. The instructional council reviews and maintains the curriculum for the college and updates curriculum in response to the needs of a field as well as state changes in the course content and numbering. Program and learning outcomes are clearly communicated in the catalog.

It is less clear how non-instructional units assess their programs and connect that work to the strategic planning and budget allocation processes.

Building upon the strengths of the local/department level review work, programmatic assessment work can be utilized to inform the strategic plan and broader resource allocation.

PART IV: Moving Forward

The College's report identifies plans that are being implemented prior to the comprehensive visit, including the conversations about a new Strategic Plan, the integration of Future Ready Oregon funding into the College's planning and programming, the implementation of the new ERP, and the addition of new funds to help with the awarding of Credit for Prior Learning. The Strategic Plan and the implementation of the new ERP are discussed elsewhere in this document. Given their strategic role in the College's future planning, the evaluation team shares the College's hopes that these activities are successful and sustainable. With regard to the new funding for Future Ready Oregon and Credit for Prior Learning, the College appears to

be well-poised to not only engage in this work but to position itself for other alternative funding streams in the future.

PART V: Addendums (Where Applicable)

Recommendation [1]: 2021 Fall Ad Hoc Report with Visit; “Review and revise its institutional planning processes to ensure that data collectively support mission fulfillment and effective strategic decision-making (2020 Standards 1.B.1, 1.B.3, 1.B.4).”

Clatsop Community College provided documentation regarding some data points they had attached to their current strategic plan that expires in 2023. They have made some improvement here in considering how data can be used to measure mission fulfillment as it is outlined in the plan. However, the work is not complete, and the timelines they provided for addressing this issue in previous reports and visits have not been met. Current leadership at the College believe that the old plan is essentially unworkable and have begun thinking about creating a new plan. They do not intend to continue work on the previous plan, per our conversations. These conversations have only just begun. The Strategic Planning Committee plans to provide a 2023-2028 Strategic Plan to the Board of Education by June 13, 2023, but this was not shared with the committee until after the visit had been completed.