OLYMPIC COLLEGE AD-HOC REPORT
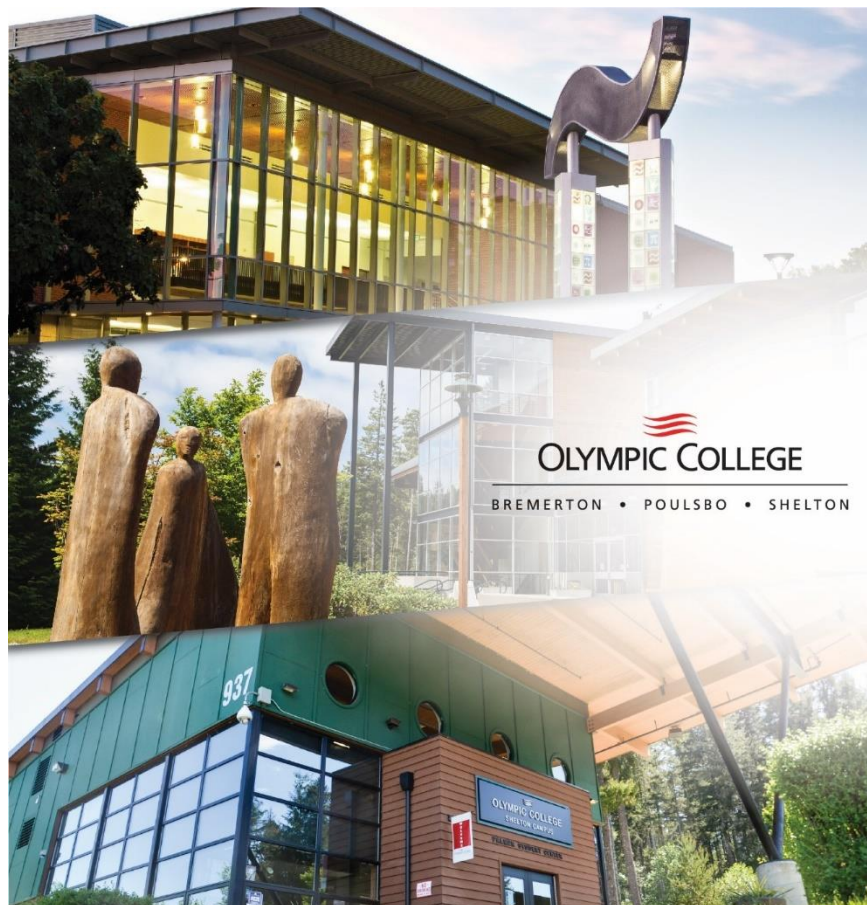

Prepared for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
March 2023

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Introduction

Olympic College (OC) submitted its Mid-Cycle Report with a peer evaluation visit in Fall 2021. NWCCU President, Sonny Ramaswamy, in his letter reaffirming accreditation to Olympic College President, Marty Cavalluzzi, dated February 18. 2022, included two recommendations for areas substantially in compliance but in need of improvement. The progress made on both recommendations is addressed here.

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Recommendation 1

Recommendation 1: Fall 2021 Mid-Cycle Review - Implement an effective, regular, and comprehensive system to evaluate the quality of learning at the course, program, and degree levels, as well as at the institutional level or within a general education curriculum, and use the results to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices that lead to enhancement of student learning achievements. (2020 Standard(s) 1.C.5;1.C.6;1.C.7)

OC has made positive progress on developing and implementing an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment at the course, program, degree, and institutional levels since it's Mid-Cycle visit in Fall 2021.

As part of the Guided Pathways mapping in 2021-22, transfer faculty mapped program outcomes or discipline-level core competencies to Core Abilities, OC's institutional outcomes, and developed plans to assess program learning outcomes and/or core abilities in 2022-23. In the assessment plans, faculty selected outcomes to assess and identified the specific courses, timing for assessment, assessment methods/activities, and measures of success.

To support the ongoing faculty assessment work, in Fall of 2022, the Vice President of Instruction (VPI) designated three faculty assessment leads for the large Divisions – Business & Technology (B&T); Math, Engineering, Science & Health (MESH); and Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH). Faculty assessment leads work closely with the other faculty in their areas to support the College's assessment work including Guided Pathways implementation (Appendix

A: Assessment Faculty Lead Responsibilities.) Faculty assessment leads compiled reports on the progress made on assessment data collection in their areas based on the 2022-23 plans.

Eleven SSH disciplines and programs are now assessing one institutional outcome this year. Additionally, some disciplines /programs (Communication Studies, English, Psychology, & World Languages) are also assessing course-level outcomes in key courses. Additionally, some disciplines (AEGS, Communication Studies, English, History, Human Services, & Psychology) are also collecting indirect data through student surveys. Film and Early Childhood Education are focused on assessing program-level outcomes through summative creative projects and ePortfolios, respectively. (See Appendices: B. SSH Fall 2022 Deliverables, C. SSH Winter 2023 Deliverables.)

Eight MESH disciplines and programs are now assessing program outcomes or discipline competencies/course outcomes in multiple courses. MESH faculty are also conducting an assessment pilot focusing on the Thinking Core Ability for Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Physics. (See Appendices D: MESH Fall 2022 Deliverables, E: MESH Winter 2023 Deliverables and F: MESH Core Ability Report Card.) Questions being explored with this MESH Thinking Core Ability pilot: Q1: Will the two-stage framework developed for core ability assessment "work well" for STEM disciplines/programs?

- Q2: How are non-STEM majors performing on the Quantitative Reasoning Thinking Core Ability/General Education Outcome?
- Q3: How are STEM majors performing on the Problem Solving Thinking Core Ability?

In 2020-21, professional-technical faculty completed course schedule maps and a few programs mapped courses to program outcomes. For 2022-23, the B&T faculty assessment lead developed an FAQ document as a framework or scaffold for conversations across programs (See Appendix G: B&T Program Assessment FAQ.) A program-level inventory is being compiled for Business & Information Technology and Workforce Development and Manufacturing & Trades (See Appendix G: B&T Guided Pathways Program-Level Assessment Inventory.) The goal of the inventory is to capture and update program status on a variety of characteristics:

- o A list of current program-level learning outcomes as they are published – with few exceptions, the initial focus is on degrees only – certificates are included when they are not part of a direct degree path
- o An informal assessment of the alignment between program outcomes and institutional core competencies (as of October, *related instruction* no longer is required or assessed; the list of Core Abilities plus DSJ is included at the top of each page)
- o The status or existence of focused program-level assessment tools including portfolios or capstone or internship courses
- o The status or existence of formal program assessment plans that lay out when and how program-level outcomes and institutional competencies are assessed within the program curriculum

For professional-technical programs, the college is working on standards and supports to help faculty pivot from the previous inclusion of related instruction competencies in all programs to full implementation of the Core Abilities, formerly applicable only in transfer pathways.

Assessment leads also worked with IAC to develop an Assessment Glossary, Process and Report template with instructions to be piloted this year (see Appendices D: Assessment Glossary, E: Assessment Cycle and F: Assessment Report). The assessment process promotes continuous improvement of student learning. As a part of a five-year Program/Discipline Review, faculty will use bi-annual cycles to track progress on learning outcomes assessment. The College acknowledges that some programs have additional specialized accreditation cycles and will coordinate with faculty in these programs to align reporting requirements.

The VPI reviewed the assessment cycle at the Winter All Faculty Meeting and followed with an email including the Assessment Glossary, Reporting Process Overview, and Report template.

Instructional Program/Discipline Assessment of Student Learning Cycles
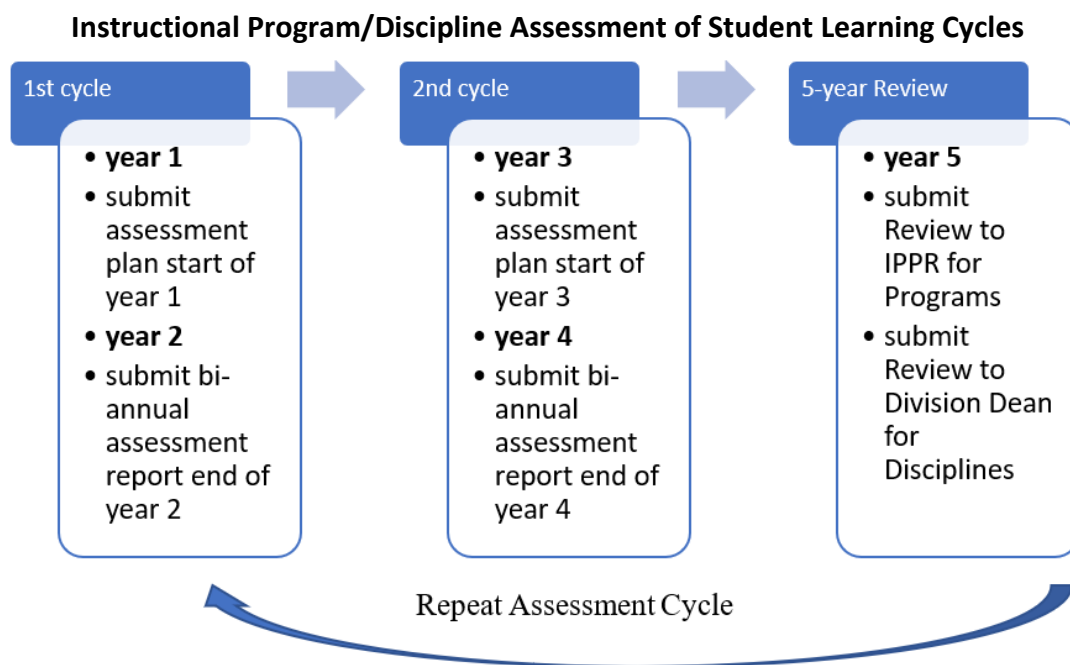
There are two components to the 2-year assessment cycle:
- Assessment Plan: The bi-annual assessment cycle we use at Olympic College to track progress on learning outcomes assessment starts with an assessment plan. The assessment plan outlines the timeframe, resources, standards, and methods for faculty-led assessment of aggregated student achievement of learning outcomes, including Core Abilities. The plan includes what data will be collected and by whom.

- The Assessment Report: Includes how the review of assessment data informs course, program, or other curriculum revision to improve student learning. The components of the bi-annual assessment cycle are illustrated in the following chart.

Every two years in the five-year review process, faculty will submit a brief report identifying progress since the previous report. These two-year cycle reports may include an update on new assessment inquiries and collection methods, evidence that has been gathered, who is involved in interpreting evidence, what actions are being taken, and what their next assessment steps are.
One year after the second cycle, the process culminates in a five-year review:
- Program Review for Instructional Programs within Instructional Program Planning and Review (IPPR) Committee
- Discipline Review within the Division for Instructional Disciplines

A component of this five-year Program/Discipline Review process includes assessment of the College's institutional outcomes, Core Abilities. As part of each two-year cycle, faculty may submit:
- direct indicators of student learning by assessing student achievement of Core Abilities or of outcomes at the program, discipline, or course level that align with Core Abilities
- indirect indicators of student learning by using evidence from program/discipline level assessment work to help us understand how educational experiences work together in support of student achievement of Core Abilities

For the assessment report, faculty will prepare a report that briefly summarizes their assessment process and results. Assessment work may be ongoing, continuing work from the previous year or not complete yet because they are waiting for additional spring quarter data. Reports should include:
1. Context for Assessment: description of the background/purpose/major goals, including the program- or discipline-level learning outcomes, course outcomes, or core abilities being assessed
2. Methods of Assessment: description of the assessment methods, how they were implemented, and the baseline measurement(s)/benchmark(s) or criteria of success
3. Results: summary of significant data, including patterns and trends
4. Analysis: interpretation of assessment results and major findings
5. Actions: description of how analysis will be used for program improvement, including current/future issues or concerns and next steps (programmatic, discipline, curricular, and assessment related)
6. Appendix: relevant assignments/rubrics, data tables/graphs, and other information or materials as appropriate

Beginning in 2020-21, IPPR updated the faculty questionnaire to begin capturing assessment evidence but with varying results. The assessment process cycle and report template should ensure more consistency in what is being collected.

Moving Forward

During Assessment Day on May 19, faculty will dive deeper into this work with a focus on Core Abilities assessment methods. Faculty will also use this day to meet in disciplines and programs to review their assessment data for reports that are due in June. The assessment process and report will continue to be modified based on feedback from faculty and review of assessment data.

Discipline review will begin in the Divisions in Fall 2023. As we build the 5-year discipline review cycle, faculty will be providing an assessment plan or report based on where they are in the cycle. Discipline review questionnaires, recommendations and assessment documents will be shared with IPPR to be reviewed as an information item at an IPPR meeting, added to the internal website, and included in the yearly summary report. This will create a central repository of data to address 1.C.5, 1.C.6, and 1.C.7.

The Chair of IPPR, Director of Institutional Research, and Deans/Associate Deans are discussing methods of supporting faculty in reviewing student success data annually to build toward the comprehensive 5-year review. This data could also be used by faculty to develop resource allocation requests. In a future state, there may be a dedicated person, similar to an assessment lead, that can support faculty in using and analyzing this data.

Recommendation 2

Recommendation 2: Fall 2021 Mid-Cycle Review - Define procedures for evaluating the alignment and integration of institutional planning and the allocation of resources for achieving the intended outcomes of programs and services with respect to accomplishment of core theme objectives. (2020 Standard(s) 1.B.1;1.B.3)

Olympic College (OC) is designing and implementing a systematic and cohesive structure for integrated planning across all levels and aspects of the institution. The structure is based on an ongoing cycle which ensures that each individual planning process can inform, and subsequently be informed, by the work of other planning processes. See Appendix G: Integrated Planning and Resource Allocation Framework. Over the longer term, Olympic College aspires to formally adopt a process, like the one being described, that is grounded both by the College's mission and our strategic plans.

Diagram 1: Alignment of Integrated Planning with Resource Allocation

Strategic Planning

The Governance Coordinating Council (GCC) serves as the College's major planning and policy body, with its work focusing on strategic planning, policy review, and the governance system itself. As laid out in their charter, GCC's scope of involvement in strategic planning is to participate in the development of the College's strategic plan, receive and review recommendations for priorities in plans, and review the attainment of strategic plan goals. GCC has established a Strategic Planning workgroup specifically tasked with managing the council's strategic planning responsibilities.

During the initial meetings of GCC, it was acknowledged that an external consultant/facilitator would be needed to help define and hone the planning process, meet with internal and external constituent groups to conduct environmental scans and needs assessments, and with the actual drafting of the strategic plan. Additionally, President Cavalluzzi has charged Adam Morris, Chief of Staff, with the administrative oversight and management of the college's planning efforts. This includes working with the contracted consultant/facilitator and GCC to ensure the planning process is comprehensive, inclusive, well communicated, and timely.

The consultant/facilitator will develop a comprehensive project plan that ensures broad internal and external participation and opportunities for input and is of a reasonable timeframe

to produce a well-informed strategic plan. The strategic plan should include up-to-date Mission, Vision, and Value Statements, as well as Priority Goals/Objectives/Areas of Focus for the College with high-level strategies and specific evaluation metrics identified to ensure goal attainment. The final strategic plan should also include sub-sections pertaining directly to the Poulsbo, Shelton, and PSNS campuses. Additionally, the project plan should anticipate the creation of area level strategic plans (Student Services, Instruction, IT, etc.) that support the attainment of the broader college-wide strategic plan. The Strategic Plan Scope of Work has been approved and requests will be solicited soon. The decision will be made by the end of Spring quarter and the work will occur in the 2023-24 academic year.

Resource Allocation

OC's governance structure as represented by the Budget and Finance Council (BFC) is currently responsible for budget and finance policy and for long-range fiscal planning. Their responsibilities include:
- Develop college-wide financial and budget policies
- Develop a long-range financial plan
- Develop assumptions and criteria for the annual budget process
- Receive and review annual budget allocation recommendations
- Convene college-wide forums for dialogue on budget and finance issues
- Develop a budget cycle timeline with annual assessment to facilitate data-informed decision making

Currently, the assignment of resources tends toward the pragmatic – based mostly on current institutional needs with an eye looking toward OC's long-term strategic plans. Resources are identified, prioritized, and allocated and budgets for the fiscal year are developed to include the approved resource plans. Resource plans originate within departments and are processed through the deans and vice presidents to prioritize the requests. Prioritized requests are reviewed and evaluated by the BFC. The final decision on approval of budget requests is the College President's and is contingent on legislative funding and OC-generated resources. Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors and BFC members are responsible for communication of the final decisions on resource plans and the resulting budget throughout their areas.

Moving Forward

The strategic plan will be developed in the 2023-24 academic year with broad input by community and campus stakeholders. The proposed integrated planning and resource allocation framework will be shared with constituents across campus for feedback in alignment with the development of the strategic plan.

Conclusion

Olympic College has made positive progress on developing and implementing an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment at the course, program, degree, and institutional levels. Incorporating annual assessments into existing 5-year program and discipline review cycles helps ensure that all areas will be addressed in a regular and systematic fashion.

Olympic College has developed a draft framework for integrated planning and resource allocation that centers the College mission. The framework will be further aligned with the final strategic plan expected by the end of the 2023-24 academic year.

Appendices

Appendices are available in the 2023 OC Ad Hoc Appendices folder.