Northwest Commission on College and University (NWCCU)
Annual Update for WSQA
Academic Year 2013-14
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College Name: Bellingham Technical College

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Accreditation recommendations to the College and year of recommendation	Actions taken by the college to address recommendations	Improvement results
Recommendation #1: The evaluators found that Bellingham Technical College has made significant progress on Recommendation 1 from the 2009 Regular Interim Evaluation Report toward the creation of common language to support measurable outcomes for all course syllabi and programs. However, the	The college formed an ad hoc assessment committee during the 2012-13 academic year, including three administrators and four faculty members. The committee reviewed assessment instruments for course and program outcomes. They also recommended adding a "Course Outcome Assessment" section to all syllabi in order to strengthen and document the assessments used to determine course outcome attainment while also providing faculty with flexibility to determine the most appropriate method for assessing student outcomes within each individual course. The new syllabus requirement was announced to faculty at the conclusion of this committee's work, and faculty were given a deadline of March 2014 to update all syllabi. The new course outcome assessment paragraphs have been added to course syllabi, and the process and results are reviewed annually by deans and the Vice President of Instruction.	

| evaluators did not find evidence that the campus has fully completed the assessment cycle by "closing the loop" to demonstrate that student learning has been achieved as stated. The evaluators recommend that the college continue to make progress in this area (2003 Policy 2.C and 2.C.2; 2010 Standard 4.A.3). | Faculty have implemented and communicated these course outcome assessments in a variety of ways. Professional technical program faculty design their curriculum around industry standards and with substantial input from advisory committee members. Faculty also align content and outcomes with similar programs at peer institutions. Student assignments and activities typically involve the use of authentic industry materials and all products generated from these activities are assessed to ensure that they meet acceptable industry standards. All outcomes and assessments are designed to ensure that students have mastered these skills. Explicitly identifying course outcome assessments on syllabi has assisted faculty in ensuring that these outcome assessments are clearly communicated to students. In addition to including these outcome assessments in their syllabi and referencing industry standard guides upon which the assessments are based, instructors have incorporated course outcome assessments into course materials such as grading rubrics, objective completion tables, testing guidelines and processes, and in course outlines. Students must show skills mastery through these assessment tools in order to successfully complete coursework.

Academic (general education) faculty design their courses around standard outcomes for transfer courses. Most of these courses are designated as "common courses' in the state community and technical college system. Designing courses with these common outcomes ensures seamless course credit transfer to state and many private four-year colleges and universities. These faculty use qualitative and quantitative standards common to their disciplines and input from peer instructors to create and update curriculum. The course outcome assessments are a foundation to assist in the organization of course content. Regular course reviews help ensure that curriculum not related to the outcomes is expunged or critical curriculum components are adjusted. In addition to including these course outcome assessments in their syllabi, faculty use the outcomes in course materials such as activity and grading rubrics, formative and summative assessment guides, and in assignment guidelines.

All faculty continuously assess student accomplishment of course learning outcomes, identifying consistent negative patterns of performance and adapting courses, course content, assessments or the outcomes themselves to meet the needs of the students as well as discipline/industry standards. In order to maintain this balance and to explore different teaching and learning | |

	strategies, faculty will seek input from a variety of sources to help address issues with course outcomes. Faculty may consult advisory committee representatives, administrators or peers in order to adjust course outcomes, content or delivery strategies to ensure that learning outcomes can be successfully met by students.	
Recommendation #2: The evaluators found that Bellingham Technical College has made significant progress on Recommendation 1 from the 2009 Regular Interim Evaluation Report toward the creation of common language to support measurable outcomes for all course syllabi and programs. However, the evaluators did not find evidence that the campus has fully completed the assessment cycle by "closing the loop" to demonstrate that student learning has been achieved as stated. The evaluators recommend that the college continue to make progress in this area (2003 Policy 2.C and 2.C.2; 2010 Standard 4.A.3).	The Accreditation Steering Committee reviewed internal and external Chapter One feedback during spring and summer 2012 and established an ad hoc indicator review committee to address this specific recommendation. The college also revisited and revised its core themes, objectives, and indicators at this time. The committee met regularly from spring 2012 through fall 2012 to further define, determine the most meaningful approach to measure progress across, and identify relevant data sources for each indicator. The college temporarily shifted gears from winter 2013 through summer 2013 to work on its parallel strategic planning process, which included revising strategic goals and developing a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with baselines and benchmarks for use during the 2013-18 cycle. During the 2013-14 academic year, the Accreditation Steering Committee revisited the documents from fall 2012 and revised BTC's core themes, objectives, and indicators again to more clearly align with the 2013-18 Strategic Plan and SKPIs. The Steering Committee also identified baseline data, set meaningful targets, and evaluated progress across each indicator.	This work has resulted in core themes, objectives and indicators that better reflect institutional priorities and initiatives. In addition, this work has led to strong cross-campus collaboration to determine the strength of each indicator's connection to the related core theme, and to clearly identify performance expectations for each indicator.