



# Mid-Cycle Self-Evaluation Report

Prepared for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

Bellingham Technical College  
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# INTRODUCTION

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## **Institutional Overview**

Bellingham Technical College (BTC) is one of 34 colleges that are part of the Washington State Community and Technical College system. BTC is a state-supported technical college offering both two- and four-year degrees as well as a variety of certificates and coursework. The college provides professional technical educational programs, direct transfer programs with a workforce focus, basic education for adults, contract training, community programming, and continuing education. In 2016-17, the college launched its first Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree in Operations Management; BTC anticipates enrolling students in prerequisites and bridge courses for a second BAS degree in Engineering Technology during the 2017-18 academic year, with full launch of the program planned for Fall 2018.

The college is located in the Puget Sound region of Washington State near Bellingham Bay, in a suburban/rural area 100 miles north of Seattle and 25 miles south of the Canada-US border. BTC resides in a district of 2,210 square miles with a population of over 200,000. The majority of its students are local, but students across Washington and other states either commute or move to the area to enroll.

## **Changes Since the 2015 Year One Report**

While BTC's enrollments decreased across the 2010-11 through 2013-14 academic years, the college began to reverse this pattern, contrary to State trends, with 6% enrollment increases in both the 2014-15 and 2015-16 academic years. During the 2015-16 academic year, the college served a total of 2,292 full-time equivalent students (FTES) and an average of 3,039 students per quarter. Preliminary indications for 2016-17 suggest that enrollment levels have decreased slightly..

Workforce training continued to dominate the educational program mix at BTC in 2016-17, representing 70% of the college's educational mix. Student body characteristics also remained stable, with approximately half of degree-seeking students receiving some form of need-based financial aid. The BTC student average (mean) age was 31, and 18% of the population was comprised of students of color (which is slightly more than the service district average, according to US Census data). Roughly 7% of BTC's student population reported having a disability and 30% were first-generation students. Approximately 77% of BTC students were employed within nine months of graduation.

Since 2014-15, the college has continued its shift toward a participatory governance structure, forming a cross-constituency College Assembly that began meeting in October 2016. The College Assembly provides input, policy direction, general advice and recommendations to the administration team and the Board of Trustees. This group forms a deliberative body that sets the institutional agenda for the college and monitors the college's progress toward achieving its goals. Initial implementation of the new structure, including development and re-establishment of a variety of other governance and operating committees, continued throughout the 2016-17 academic year.

Eight key college committees have been developed or revitalized as part of the college's current participatory governance structure (see Appendix A), each with new operating guidelines and broad representation:

- Accreditation Steering Committee
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

- Facilities Planning Committee
- Instruction Council
- Planning and Resource Allocation Committee
- Safety Committee
- Student Access and Success Committee
- Technology Committee

Two of these newly established governance committees are particularly involved in the college's accreditation work: the Accreditation Steering Committee (ASC) and the Planning and Resource Allocation (PARA) Committee.

The ASC was first established in 2002 and transitioned from an operational committee to a governance committee during Spring 2017. The charge of the ASC is to organize college self-assessment, reporting, and evaluative site visit processes, guided by Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) standards for accreditation. This cross-constituency group also provides input, policy direction, and general advice to the College Assembly; serves as a campus-wide communication network for accreditation-related matters; and maintains consistency of major accreditation processes. The ASC includes sub-committees to represent each of BTC's core themes.

PARA began as an ad-hoc working group in the 2015-16 academic year and was restructured and re-established as one of the college's key governance groups in Winter 2017. This committee develops, implements, and assesses multi-year and annual institutional strategic planning and resource allocation processes. Similar to the ASC, the cross-constituency PARA Committee provides input, policy direction, and general advice to the College Assembly; serves as a campus-wide communication network centered on planning and resource allocation activities; and maintains consistency of major planning and resource allocation processes.

### **Accreditation Status and Response to Recommendations**

BTC completed a compressed four-year accreditation cycle (2011-2014) in Fall 2014. The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) notified BTC in February 2016 that the college had satisfied the Commission's expectations regarding all but one of the recommendations stemming from the Fall 2011 Year One and Fall 2014 Year Seven reports and visits. The college submitted an ad hoc report in March 2016 in response to the final recommendation (external fiscal audit), and NWCCU notified BTC in July 2016 that the college had satisfied expectations. See Appendix B for a summary of BTC's responses to recommendations by NWCCU and the current status of those recommendations.

BTC began its current seven-year cycle (2014-2021) in Fall 2014, and submitted its Year One Report in Fall 2015. No new recommendations resulted from the Year One Report.

# PART ONE: OVERVIEW OF INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT PLAN

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## Process of Assessing Mission Fulfillment

BTC assesses mission fulfillment in a variety of ways at the institutional, departmental, and program levels.

## Strategic Goal/Priority Assessment

The college’s strategic goals and priorities tie directly to BTC’s mission and core themes. Alignment between (a) the current core themes and objectives and (b) the college’s most applicable strategic goals and values is captured in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Alignment of Core Themes & Objectives with Strategic Goals & Values

Core Theme One: Student Success and Access		Strategic Goals
<p><b>Objective 1A:</b> Students achieve their educational and career goals.</p> <p><b>Objective 1B:</b> BTC meets strategic enrollment and retention goals.</p>	<p><b>Student Success:</b> Facilitate student success through practices, structure, and policies.</p> <p><b>Student Access:</b> Increase options and improve access for all students through educational pathways.</p>	
<p><b>Supporting Value:</b> Student-Centered</p>		
Core Theme Two: Continuous Improvement		Strategic Goals
<p><b>Objective 2A:</b> BTC promotes student learning by using effective instructional methods and creating positive learning environments.</p> <p><b>Objective 2B:</b> BTC is responsive to student needs and provides the resources necessary to promote student success.</p> <p><b>Objective 2C:</b> The college is fiscally sound, incorporates continuous improvement strategies, engages in data-driven decision-making, and both develops and uses best practices in its daily operations.</p>	<p><b>Excellence &amp; Innovation:</b> Promote excellence and innovation throughout the College.</p> <p><b>Campus Environment:</b> Create and maintain a welcoming campus that supports diversity, promotes a sense of community, provides an effective work and learning environment, and encourages respect for individuals.</p>	
<p><b>Supporting Values:</b> Responsive, Principled</p>		
Core Theme Three: College Visibility with Strong Community, Business, and Industry Relations		Strategic Goal
<p><b>Objective 3A.</b> The college develops and maintains strong external partnerships and support systems.</p> <p><b>Objective 3B:</b> BTC has a positive reputation and strong media presence.</p>	<p><b>College Visibility &amp; Resource Development:</b> Strengthen the visibility and support of the College, locally, regionally, and nationally.</p>	
<p><b>Supporting Value:</b> Collaborative</p>		

BTC assesses progress across its strategic goals and prioritized activities, and documents the results of this assessment in an annual State of the College Report. This report includes key strategic planning information, assessment results across each of the college’s strategic goals and prioritized activities, and a status update for each Key Performance Indicator (KPI; see below “Performance Indicator Assessment” section). The State of the College Report is produced through a collaborative process between the President’s Office, Institutional Effectiveness, and the campus community in order to capture and document progress to the greatest extent possible. The president shares highlights of this report with the Board of Trustees during its annual summer retreat, and with the campus community as part of the annual Opening Day meeting that takes place each September. Additionally, the report is posted to BTC’s Intranet site to allow full access to the document throughout the year.

Performance Indicator Assessment

The college has developed a meaningful set of institutional KPIs to evaluate progress across each of the five broad strategic goals. These KPIs include enrollment, transition, retention, degrees/certificates awarded, graduation, student satisfaction, employment, employer satisfaction, campus climate, and financial health. The annual State of the College Report includes a status update across each of these KPIs, and Institutional Effectiveness staff have developed a KPI dashboard that allows the campus community to both monitor progress across indicators and make data-informed decisions on an ongoing basis.

BTC has also identified a meaningful set of indicators to measure success across each of its three core themes: (1) Student Success and Access, (2) Continuous Improvement, and (3) College Visibility with Strong Community, Business, and Industry Relations. The core theme indicators include all ten institutional KPIs as well as several additional measures that inform the mission fulfilment assessment process. Tables 2, 3, and 4 below illustrate alignment between the core theme indicators and KPIs. See Appendix C for a full list of core theme indicators, including assessment methods for each indicator.

Table 2. Alignment between Core Theme One Indicators and Key Performance Indicators

Core Theme One: Student Success and Access	Key Performance Indicators
<p><b>Objective 1A:</b> Students achieve their educational and career goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition Rate: Adult Basic Education (ABE) to College-Level</li> <li>• Transition Rate: Developmental Education to College-Level</li> <li>• Course Success Rate</li> <li>• Graduation Rate</li> <li>• Employment Rate</li> <li>• Transfer Rate</li> <li>• Student Goal Achievement</li> </ul> <p><b>Objective 1B:</b> BTC meets strategic enrollment and retention goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FTE</li> <li>• Retention Rate</li> <li>• Racial/Ethnic Diversity</li> <li>• Socioeconomic Diversity</li> <li>• Gender Diversity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic Goal 1 - Student Success:</b> Facilitate student success through practices, structure, and policies.</p> <p><b>Strategic Goal 3 - Student Access:</b> Increase options and improve access for all students through educational pathways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrollment - Annual FTE</li> <li>• Transition Rates               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Adult Basic Education (ABE) to College-Level</li> <li>○ Developmental Education to College-Level</li> <li>○ Pre-Program to Program</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Retention Rate</li> <li>• Degrees/Certificates Awarded</li> <li>• Graduation Rate</li> <li>• Employment Rate</li> </ul>

Table 3. Alignment between Core Theme Two Indicators and Key Performance Indicators

Core Theme Two: Continuous Improvement	Key Performance Indicators
<p><b>Objective 2A:</b> BTC promotes student learning by using effective instructional methods and creating positive learning environments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Satisfaction – Teaching/Instruction</li> <li>• Student Satisfaction – Program Equipment and Instructional Spaces</li> <li>• Business/Industry Assessment of Program Equipment and Facilities</li> <li>• Student Performance Evaluation</li> <li>• Degree Program Evaluation</li> <li>• Workforce-Related Curricular Experiences</li> </ul> <p><b>Objective 2B:</b> BTC is responsive to student needs and provides the resources necessary to promote student success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Satisfaction – Support Services</li> <li>• Student Confidence</li> </ul> <p><b>Objective 2C:</b> The college is fiscally sound, incorporates continuous improvement strategies, engages in data-driven decision-making, and both develops and uses best practices in its daily operations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unrestricted Fund Balance</li> <li>• Facilities Assessment and Planning</li> <li>• Technology infrastructure</li> <li>• Institutional Assessment Cycle</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic Goal 2 - Excellence &amp; Innovation:</b> Promote excellence and innovation throughout the College.</p> <p><b>Strategic Goal 4 - College Resource Development</b> (portion of Strategic Goal 4): Strengthen support of the College locally, regionally, and nationally.</p> <p><b>Strategic Goal 5 - Campus Environment:</b> Create and maintain a welcoming campus that supports diversity, promotes a sense of community, provides an effective work and learning environment, and encourages respect for individuals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Satisfaction with Instructional Programs &amp; Support Services</li> <li>• Employer Satisfaction with Graduate Performance</li> <li>• Campus Climate</li> <li>• Financial Health</li> </ul>

Table 4. Alignment between Core Theme Three Indicators and Key Performance Indicators

Core Theme Three: College Visibility with Strong Community, Business, and Industry Relations	Key Performance Indicators
<p><b>Objective 3A.</b> The college develops and maintains strong external partnerships and support systems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donor Involvement and Support</li> <li>• Employer Involvement and Support</li> <li>• Educational Partner Involvement and Support</li> <li>• Student Performance Evaluation</li> <li>• Degree Program Evaluation</li> <li>• Workforce-Related Curricular Experiences</li> </ul> <p><b>Objective 3B:</b> BTC has a positive reputation and strong media presence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media Presence</li> <li>• Student Recommendations</li> <li>• Employer Feedback</li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategic Goal 4 - College Visibility &amp; Resource Development:</b> Strengthen the visibility and support of the College, locally, regionally, and nationally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Satisfaction with Instructional Programs &amp; Support Services</li> <li>• Employer Satisfaction with Graduate Performance</li> </ul>

BTC’s analysis of how and to what extent it is fulfilling its mission is guided by achievement across its indicators. The college has developed and continues to refine an evaluation framework, including three



categories of indicator accomplishment: 1) Target Met, 2) Acceptable Range, and 3) Target Not Met. BTC identifies an acceptable threshold for both theme and mission fulfillment as at least 80% of the total indicators meeting target or being in acceptable range. Table 5 includes definitions for each category.

Table 5. Indicator Status Evaluation Matrix

Category	Definition - Quantitative Indicators	Definition - Qualitative Indicators
Target met	Actual meets/exceeds target	Actual meets/exceeds target
Acceptable range	Actual is within 80% of target	Actual does not meet target, but area has strengthened
Target not met	Actual is not within 80% of target	Actual does not meet target and area has not strengthened

During Spring 2014, the Accreditation Steering Committee (ASC) reviewed and evaluated the data against expectations for each core theme indicator and identified the appropriate status (either target met, acceptable range, or target not met) for each indicator. These results were shared with the campus community during an Accreditation Feedback Breakfast in June 2014, and are available on the BTC Intranet site. In 2016-17, the ASC continued its evaluation of the current indicators to confirm their usefulness as measures of mission fulfillment.

#### Departmental/Program Assessment

BTC faculty and staff systematically gather, review, and use instructional program-level data through a long-standing process that involves annual reporting on student learning outcome (SLO) achievement and program effectiveness in relation to the institutional KPIs. As part of the college’s ongoing focus on development of effective SLOs and continuous improvement, an updated reporting process was piloted in the 2016-17 academic year, with input and collaboration from faculty members. Faculty participated in multiple workshops and full-day training events throughout the year with the goals of (1) revisiting and updating program and course SLOs, (2) reviewing and reflecting on a selected set of program and course SLO results, and (3) working towards “closing the loop” regarding their assessment of and planning for student learning achievement and program effectiveness.

The annual Student Learning Outcome and Program Effectiveness Reports are used to evaluate each professional technical program and general education area as compared to pre-determined standards. Each program’s Student Learning Outcomes Reports—including one for program-level SLOs (see Appendix D) and a second for course-level SLOs (see Appendix E)—identify measures and standards of success. The Program Effectiveness Reports not only include a range of program data (including enrollment, retention and completion rates, student and graduate satisfaction levels, and information on success of program graduates) that align with BTC’s KPIs, but also contain a separate section that asks faculty to reflect on what they had planned to do at the time of the previous report, what actually occurred since that time, and how they plan to continue or implement new improvements moving forward. Faculty and deans review the reports to assess and evaluate each instructional program.

Campus-wide programs and services are also evaluated and improved based on a range of input, including results of biannual student satisfaction surveys. The college plans to implement a pilot unit assessment model over the 2017-18 academic year, which will assure consistent evaluation processes for every college work unit.

### Enhanced Alignment between Assessment, Planning, and Resource Allocation

The college established a cross-constituency working group during the 2015-16 academic year to explore ways to improve alignment between BTC's resource allocation and strategic planning processes. This ad hoc group met throughout Winter and Spring quarters 2016 to review existing models (e.g., models used by other higher education institutions), develop an institutional effectiveness model and process for BTC, and gather campus-wide input about the draft model and process.

Figure 1 below provides a visual depiction of the model developed by the ad hoc workgroup. Development of BTC's *multi-year* strategic plan appears in the center of the model to illustrate that the college's vision, mission, core themes, goals, and values, and performance indicators should inform and guide the annual process. The *annual* process includes the following steps:

1. Identify campus-wide strategic priorities,
2. Develop unit-level work plans to accomplish the strategic priorities,
3. Allocate resources based on unit-level requests for additional resources to accomplish strategic priorities,
4. Implement unit-level work plans and resource allocations,
5. Assess and evaluate the results, and
6. Report (e.g., via the State of the College Report).

Figure 1. BTC's Draft Institutional Effectiveness Cycle



Since Spring 2016, the college has established a new participatory governance structure consisting of an overarching College Assembly and eight additional cross-constituency governance committees (see Introduction for a list of committees, and Appendix A for a brief description of each committee). The Planning and Resource Allocation (PARA) Committee, which is one of these new governance committees, will further develop the draft model and process described above and recommend a college-wide process to College Assembly during the 2017-18 academic year.

### **Validity of Core Themes and Objectives**

BTC originally identified its core themes and objectives in 2011 as part of its 2011-14 accreditation cycle. Since that time, the college has used a collaborative process to review and modify its core themes and objectives, as needed. This process has resulted in current core themes and objectives that are viewed as valid and effective in assisting the college to assess mission fulfillment.

As part of the current accreditation cycle (2014-2021), the college has revisited its core themes and objectives twice. First, in Winter and Spring 2015, BTC revisited its core themes, objectives, indicators, measurement approaches, and performance expectations. As part of this process, the ASC recommended that the college consider changing the title of Core Theme Two from “Excellence” to “Continuous Improvement” to more accurately represent the college’s focus on an ongoing, reflective assessment cycle, with benchmarking over time. The broader campus community was involved in the core theme, objective, and indicator revision process via a variety of formal and informal feedback opportunities such as core theme sub-committee working meetings and a campus feedback breakfast held in June 2015. The Board of Trustees approved the Core Theme Two revision in June 2015. Core Themes One (Student Success and Access) and Three (College Visibility with Strong Community, Business, & Industry Relations) remain unchanged from BTC’s Fall 2014 *Year Seven Comprehensive Self-Evaluation Report*.

Second, during Fall 2016 and Winter 2017, the ASC began to reevaluate the current core themes, objectives, indicators, and measurement approaches again to confirm their continued usefulness as measures of mission fulfillment. This process yielded a few minor suggestions for changes. Since BTC is currently in the process of developing a new multi-year strategic plan that will be finalized in 2017-18 and implemented beginning Fall 2018, the college anticipates reviewing the core themes and objectives again (including the ASC’s minor suggestions noted above) in 2017-18.

### **Sufficiency of Evidence for Core Themes and Indicators**

The college’s capacity to use evidence to identify, document, monitor, and evaluate the achievement of its goals has grown substantially over the last several years with the establishment of a dedicated Institutional Effectiveness department. Additionally, BTC’s recent move to a new participatory governance structure—with corresponding development of the PARA Committee and developing institutional assessment process—will further expand the college’s focus on using evidence to assess progress. These shifts have not only helped further develop a culture of evidence on BTC’s campus, but also puts the college in a stronger position to make data-informed decisions and improvements moving forward.

The college reviews and modifies its core themes and indicators on an ongoing, as-needed basis. As previously mentioned, BTC completed a thorough review of its core themes, objectives, indicators, measurement approaches, and performance expectations in Winter and Spring 2015. A primary component of this review was evaluating each indicator to ensure that it was associated with either (a) a well-developed data collection process that would yield valid performance evidence over at least two points in time across the seven-year accreditation cycle or (b) a potential data collection process that could be developed during the accreditation cycle. The college is currently in the process of reviewing its core theme indicators again, with a particular focus on sufficiency of evidence, and anticipates completing this process during the 2017-18 academic year.

BTC draws upon multiple sources and compares college data to relevant local, state, regional, and national benchmarks in order to monitor its internal and external environments. The college is continuing to refine and align its performance indicators (KPIs and core theme indicators) in light of the changing internal and external environmental landscape.

## PART TWO: REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLES OF ASSESSMENT PROCESS

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This section of the report includes two examples of how the college has operationalized its mission and core themes, as well as its methods of student learning outcomes assessment and continuous improvement. The examples are linked to Core Theme One: Student Success and Access and Core Theme Two: Continuous Improvement. Analysis of both examples provides insight into how BTC identifies objectives supportive of mission fulfillment and uses data to assess and improve outcomes.

### **Example One: Student Learning Outcomes Assessment**

This example is linked to the first objective under Core Theme Two: *BTC promotes student learning by using effective instructional methods and creating positive learning environments*. The indicator selected is #16, Student Performance Evaluation. Its associated measure is:

- % of degree courses integrating practices to evaluate student performance based on pre-identified learning outcomes

### **Meaningfulness and Number of Selected Indicators**

The college has a long-standing student learning outcomes (SLO) assessment process, and periodically reviews and updates this process. Over the past year, the SLO assessment process has been reviewed by an SLO Assessment subcommittee of the college's Instruction Council. This faculty-majority group worked closely with the college's Institutional Effectiveness department to provide input and recommendations for pilot implementation of an improved SLO assessment process to Instruction Council for use across all instructional programs. While core theme indicator 16 is meaningful and the associated assessment process is seen as sufficient, both the indicator and associated assessment process may change as SLO assessment and reporting processes continue to evolve at BTC.

### **Background**

Over the past 15 years, BTC has engaged in ongoing improvement efforts regarding its SLO assessment process, striving for continuous assessment of student accomplishment of program- and course-level learning outcomes. This process has evolved over the years to allow for identification of consistent negative patterns of performance and adapting courses, course content, assessments or the outcomes themselves to meet the learning needs of the students as well as discipline and industry standards. Efforts have included bringing in consultants to work with faculty to help review and improve program learning outcome statements, forming ad-hoc SLO assessment committees to review and improve SLO assessment processes, and improving faculty access to student achievement data. This work has led to multiple reviews of assessment instruments and processes for both course- and program-level outcomes.

Previous NWCCU recommendations have helped spur and guide this work. In 2009, peer reviewers for the college's 5-year Interim Report encouraged the college to ensure that common language was created and used to support measurable outcomes for all course syllabi and programs. In response to this recommendation, the college formed an ad hoc assessment committee during the 2012-13 academic year, and reviewed assessment instruments for course and program outcomes. This group recommended adding a "Course Outcome Assessment" section to all syllabi in order to strengthen and document the assessments used to determine student attainment of course SLOs 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.

In 2014, peer reviewers found that the college had made significant progress on the 2009 recommendation, but that more work on SLO assessment was needed to provide stronger assurance that student learning had been achieved as stated.

### **Current Status**

In response to the 2014 recommendation, the college established a Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Assessment subcommittee of the college's Instruction Council. This group began its work to identify and implement a more robust, structured approach to continuously assessing and improving student learning achievement in Spring 2016. The subcommittee reviewed the current assessment processes and other colleges' SLO assessment models. As a result of this work, the college implemented a pilot process for SLO assessment during the 2016-17 year.

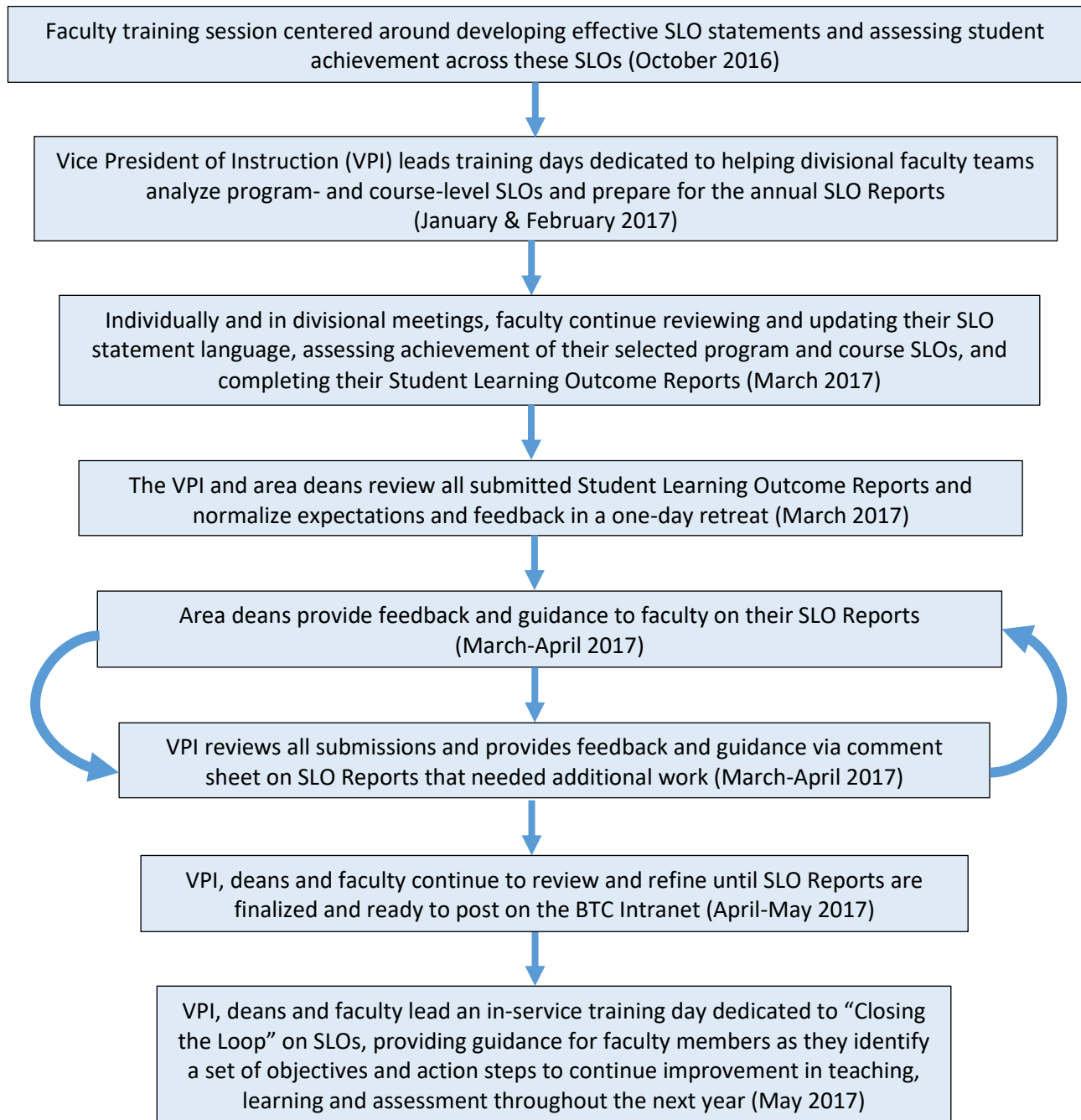
As part of this pilot process, faculty were asked to review and update their program-level SLO statements, and to assess and evaluate the results of two program-level SLOs (see Appendix D: Program Student Learning Outcomes Report Template). Each faculty member was also asked to select one course within their program, and to assess and evaluate two SLOs for the chosen course (see Appendix E: Course Student Learning Outcomes Report Template). Multiple faculty in-service training days throughout the 2016-17 academic year were dedicated to helping faculty develop effective SLO statements and to assess student SLO achievement (see Appendices F & G for handouts distributed as part of these trainings), and the deans documented expectations in a memo that went out to all faculty in February 2017 (see Appendix H).

Additionally, BTC's course syllabi template was updated to reflect a focus on SLOs and facilitate the development of specific, associated assessment measures (see Appendix I). In 2016-17, deans asked faculty to begin using the new template and provide specific assessment measures for each SLO. Faculty will continue to work on adapting existing syllabi to the new template and providing specific assessment measures over the next few years.

The Vice President of Instruction (VPI), deans and faculty formed and implemented a feedback loop to help faculty review, refine, and publish their completed learning outcomes statements and assessment results. After work on the SLO Reports was completed, the faculty participated in a "Closing the Loop" day-long in-service event, where they established a set of measurable, achievable objectives based on their analysis of data in their SLO and Program Effectiveness Reports. Construction of these objectives included action steps, connection to the SLO reports, and a chronological completion timeline. See Appendix J for the objectives template and Appendix K for the guidelines that were provided as part of the event. The timeline for this pilot SLO assessment process is summarized on the next page.



Figure 2. BTC's Pilot SLO Development & Assessment Process



**Data Collection, Analysis, Utilization and Communication**

Faculty take the lead in identifying, documenting, and evaluating all learning outcomes, and these outcomes are assessed through the annual Student Learning Outcomes Reports (see Appendices D and E). The updated, pilot process, which occurred in 2016-17, was intended to provide faculty with more support and guidance as they began the process of ensuring that all program and course SLOs are specific, measurable and effective. Faculty respond to several elements within the report, including (1) listing specific assessments for each program outcome and the standards for those assessments, (2) the

achievement levels of their students, (3) their analysis of these results, and (4) their plans for future improvements.

Faculty access SLO result data in a variety of ways, including but not limited to laboratory and course activity, assignment, examination and capstone documentation. Faculty documentation via Student Learning Outcomes Reports ensures that assessment is consistently applied to all degree programs and offerings, while the revised process provides assistance to faculty as they navigate assessment concepts and practices.

In order to ensure dissemination of these data and best practices, all Student Learning Outcome Reports are compiled and posted to the Instruction section of the college's Intranet site (accessible to all campus personnel). This site contains detailed information related to course syllabi, student learning outcomes, assessment tools and techniques, assessment results, improvements in teaching and learning, learning outcomes tracking, current assessment, and projects.

### **Lessons Learned**

While the college has worked steadily over a number of years to improve its assessment of SLO achievement, a number of previous lessons have informed the development of the current process.

#### Faculty Engagement and Support

In prior years, the college has taken a top-down approach to faculty training and requirements concerning the development of program and course SLOs. This led to a lack of engagement on the part of faculty in these training sessions and a high level of frustration about substantive change requirements imposed by administration without allowing for sufficient faculty time or support. For example, in the 2013-14 academic year, faculty were required to complete course syllabi revisions related to SLOs for every course within their programs in a matter of months. This requirement led to faculty overload and did not allow them to fully engage in thoughtful revision of each SLO. In the revised model, a subcommittee composed primarily of faculty led the review and revision of the current process. Additionally, faculty were asked to engage with a limited number of program- and course-level SLOs, which allowed time for more thoughtful engagement in the process.

#### Meaningful Reporting Processes

The annual Student Learning Outcomes Reports have been previously perceived by many faculty and administrators as a 'check the box' requirement, with little focus on follow-up to discuss issues and future plans. Faculty supervisors filed the reports as a requirement fulfilled, often without working with faculty to reflect on the results, continue improvement, or start new initiatives as a result of these reports. The 2016-17 process revisions were meant to allow for more meaningful SLO assessment, planning, alignment, and documentation by adding elements such as more formalized expectations for deans to review and provide feedback about SLO language, results, and plans based on those results. Additionally, in the revised pilot process, regular faculty trainings throughout the academic year helped both guide faculty in their revision of their SLOs and allowed them peer support for their assessment process included in the reports.

### **Example Two: Transitional Studies Program**

This example is linked to the first objective under Core Theme One: *Students achieve their educational and career goals*. The indicator selected is #1, Transition Rate: Adult Basic Education (ABE) to College-Level. Its associated measure is:

- % of first-time ABE students transitioning from ABE to college-level courses within 2 years (8 quarters)

### **Meaningfulness and Number of Selected Indicators**

National and State focus on strengthening educational and career pathways for those students who begin at basic skill levels has continued to increase in recent years. BTC's Transitional Studies department is required to provide integrated, contextualized education and training to help students transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs and enter careers. Given this focus, core theme indicator 1 is meaningful and the associated assessment process is seen as sufficient. Changes may, however, occur as the college continues to review these indicators and associated assessment processes.

### **Background**

In 2009, BTC's data indicated that only 13-16% of its basic skills students (including Adult Basic Education [ABE] and English Language Learners [ELL]) were transitioning from basic skills into college-level coursework, and only 1-2% of its Transitional Studies students were continuing on to attain a certificate or degree. The college data were not unusual given low national success at transitioning basic skill students, but BTC faculty and administration agreed that this low transition rate to college courses, and lack of progress of Transitional Studies students to a one-year college certificate or higher, needed to be addressed. Data collected by BTC's local Workforce Council showed that the unemployment rate of those with a GED/high school diploma or less was more than twice their incidence in the population.

These issues spurred the planning and implementation of a radical redesign of the college's traditional ABE and English Language Acquisition (ELA) program. Broad-based efforts supported intensive faculty professional development and resulted in the infusion of contextualization and metacognitive strategies (including the Reading Apprenticeship model, which helps faculty develop new ways to engage and support students as they read and interact with academic or technical, industry-specific materials) throughout all departmental curricula. Faculty proposed and developed a new high-structure, high-challenge Reading, Writing and Math Essentials course series and, for the first time, BTC's ABE and ELL students had access to a dedicated advisor who helped them focus on developing individualized educational transition plans. All Transitional Studies courses were updated to integrate career exploration and computer literacy elements into their curriculum, and the department developed and implemented both firm attendance policies and a grading system.

BTC's Transitional Studies program continues to build on this foundation, adding progressive course sequencing to move students more quickly to higher-level courses that model a more conventional, college-level instructional environment. The high-structure, high-challenge Essentials Math, Reading, and Writing courses now include a daily, integrated tutoring session to provide additional academic skills support. Transitional Studies math faculty members are collaborating with developmental and college-level math faculty in a BTC math redesign project, which involves using open source National Repository of Online Courses (NROC) Project resources to shift the design of all BTC math courses to a flipped-classroom model. Additionally, the Transitional Studies department has created a customized database for tracking key student information and facilitating proactive intervention for students who may be

struggling. The faculty also developed a Career Pathways class to help students understand and explore pathways to college-level coursework, and the department maintains dedicated tutoring services and a dedicated, part-time academic and career advisor for ELL students.

The department has developed and is continuing to refine a variety of contextualized, integrated pathways that lead to successful completion of workforce certifications and preparation for career advancement, including an updated GED preparatory program, a new HS 21+ Adult High School Diploma Completion program, Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) models, and new Career Pathways coursework. The department works closely with the college's rapidly growing youth reengagement program (IMPACT!) to connect students to educational pathways.

### **Data Collection, Use, Analysis and Communication**

Transitional Studies student performance is assessed using Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) testing prior to beginning coursework and after every 45 hours of instruction, or at the end of each term. The department also uses eCASAS, which has helped the department move from manual to electronic entry processes. Test data are now downloaded directly into WABERS+ (Washington Adult Basic Education Reporting Systems), which helps ensure data reliability. All CASAS testing data are stored in the secure WABERS+ database, as are student demographic data. Transitional Studies faculty and staff monitor CASAS gains on an ongoing basis. Those groups that are not performing at or above targets are continually evaluated to address issues and help mediate future low performance. This work is accomplished through quarterly report evaluations with all faculty and staff within the Transitional Studies department. Faculty and administrators meet to discuss data and recommendations, and develop and implement remediation strategies. This continuous improvement model of discussion, evaluation and action has been successful.

Student-level data are also collected via a variety of college-wide processes (e.g., admissions applications, registration forms, course transcripts), student surveys, and the public two-year college system's Management Information System (MIS), and are available through the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) department's Intranet site. Transitional Studies faculty and staff are able to easily access consistent, accurate student transition data, as well as student enrollment, satisfaction, retention, course success, completion, employment, and wage data. A series of interactive dashboards allows faculty and staff to view current and historical data, as well as to filter the data to answer their own research questions. The college's IE department continues to add new and enhance existing data reports and dashboards that are useful to the department.

Overall program performance is formally evaluated on an annual basis through the Program Effectiveness and Student Learning Outcomes reporting process. The Program Effectiveness Report includes annual headcount, FTES, course success, transition to developmental education or college-level courses, CASAS gains, concurrent enrollment in ABE Essentials and developmental education/college-level courses, and GED completions. Transitional Studies faculty and staff complete the Student Learning Outcomes Report process as described in Example One, and use all of these reports to help inform program improvements and planning.

As Table 6 below illustrates, the two-year transition rate from ABE Essentials to developmental education or college-level coursework has steadily increased over the past four years, from 30% in 2011-12 (reflecting the 2009-10 cohort) to 58% in 2015-16 (reflecting the 2013-14 cohort).

Table 6: Transitional Studies to Developmental Education/College-Level Courses

Course Category	2011-12 (2009-10 cohort)		2012-13 (2010-11 cohort)		2013-14 (2011-12 cohort)		2014-15 (2012-13 cohort)		2015-16 (2013-14 cohort)	
	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
ABE Essentials	30%	20	42%	174	52%	129	53%	155	58%	170

**Lessons Learned**

Through this work, BTC better understands that targeted advising for basic skills students is critical to student success and transition. In order for transition to college to become a more realistic goal for students, they need advising and/or coaching to help lead the way, have their FAFSA applications ready, and know who to go to when academic, personal or financial barriers interfere with their studies. At the same time, integration of these students into general college processes is also beneficial. For example, Transitional Studies students now participate in a streamlined assessment testing referral structure that is used for all BTC students. This enhanced and streamlined structure has been associated with an increased student placement rate into courses and programs designed to facilitate their transition to the next level of college work.

The college also discovered that increased student and instructor access to computers in the Transitional Studies classrooms had a greater impact on classroom and curriculum transformation than originally anticipated. This increased access led to a significant infusion of computer and information literacy elements into their curriculum, including use of specific modularized learning platforms and BTC’s online learning platform (Canvas). This shift in computer access also helped facilitate more diverse learning and student engagement opportunities, and better student preparation for the next level of courses, all of which now use Canvas as a learning platform.

With opportunities for high quality professional development and opportunities to implement research-based strategies, faculty began to see themselves as leaders on campus in instructional strategies. Today, Transitional Studies faculty lead college-wide efforts around implementation of the Reading Apprenticeship model, professional development activities, and data collection and analysis. They are also involved in statewide initiatives for improvement of programming for basic skills students.



## PART THREE: EVALUATIVE OVERVIEW/FUTURE PLANS

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The faculty, staff and leadership of Bellingham Technical College are committed to its unique and long-standing mission, vision and values. The college's strategic goals, core themes and objectives form the foundation for the college's continuous improvement efforts. Based on its mid-cycle self-evaluation, the college plans to continue improvement efforts across the following areas:

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

- In Spring 2017, BTC launched its planning process for development of the college's next multi-year Strategic Plan. Over the next year, the college will continue collaborative strategic planning processes involving campus constituents and external stakeholders as BTC creates and begins implementation of its new Strategic Plan in Fall 2018.
- The college plans to further align its strategic goals with its core themes, and key performance indicators (KPIs) with core theme indicators.
- With the formation of the Planning and Resource Allocation governance committee, BTC has taken its first steps towards better alignment and full integration of resource allocation and strategic planning processes. Over the next year, the college will continue processes to further develop its current model of planning and resource allocation.
- The college has developed an outline for unit-level planning and assessment, and will pilot and continuously improve these new processes based on committee and constituent feedback.
- BTC will need to operationalize—and identify appropriate data collection mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of—its revised KPIs, core theme indicators, and any additional performance indicators that come out of the unit-level planning and assessment work described above.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

- In the 2016-17 academic year, BTC implemented the recommendations of a faculty subcommittee regarding student learning outcomes (SLO) assessment and reporting processes. Lessons from this pilot process will be incorporated into the SLO review, revision and reporting cycle.
- Faculty, working in conjunction with administrators, will continue working on creating specific, measurable SLOs, defining effective assessment methods to measure student achievement across each SLO, and ensuring meaningful use of assessment results to improve the teaching and learning process.
- By 2022, all program and course learning outcomes will have been reviewed and updated through this new, incremental process.
- The college will build on current general education and professional technical program SLOs to identify institution-level SLOs.

### **Participatory Governance Model**

- While BTC has made strides towards a new participatory governance structure, with formation and implementation of a College Assembly and eight governance committees over the past year, much work remains to be done. The college will continue to solidify the operations of the Assembly and new committees over the next few years, developing an annual planning calendar and timeline to help guide the work of these teams.
- The college has begun creating assessment templates for use with the eight governance committees. BTC will continue developing and adapting forms such as these to ensure focus on documentation of committee information and action items and continuous improvement.
- Over the next few years, recalibration of operations will be needed as the college fully implements its new participatory governance model in order to avoid duplication of effort and to streamline processes and communications.

## Appendix A: BTC Governance Committees

### BTC Governance Committee List

Governance Committee Name	Description
<i>College Assembly (CA)</i>	<i>The College Assembly is a cross-constituency group that provides input, policy direction, general advice and recommendations to the Administration and Board of Trustees. It is a deliberative body that sets the institutional agenda for the college and monitors the college's progress toward achieving its goals. The College Assembly also serves as a communication network and a venue to maintain consistency of major college processes. The following committees provide governance-related input into the Assembly.</i>
Accreditation Steering Committee (ASC)	The charge of the ASC is to organize College self-assessment, reporting, and evaluative site visit processes, guided by Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) standards for accreditation.
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEIC)	DEIC develops, implements, and assesses/evaluates a diversity strategic plan informed by the BTC strategic plan, designed to promote and protect diversity, equity, and inclusion at BTC.
Facilities Planning Committee (FPC)	The charge of the FPC is to shepherd BTC's physical environment (e.g., buildings, facility infrastructure, and grounds) through both short- and long-range planning and development processes that align with BTC's strategic plan.
Instruction Council (IC)	The charge of the Instruction Council is to review instruction-related matters that affect student success and to make recommendations on those matters to the Vice President of Instruction and the President.
Planning and Resource Allocation Committee (PARA)	The charge of PARA is to develop, implement, and assess multi-year and annual institutional strategic planning and resource allocation processes. PARA also serves as a communication network and a venue to maintain consistency of major college planning and resource allocation processes.
Safety Committee	The Safety Committee serves to promote a safe and secure environment conducive to education by fostering a strong awareness of safety/security and reducing or eliminating crime, accidents, injuries, and illness throughout BTC.
Student Access and Success Committee (SAS)	The SAS team builds, implements, and assesses/evaluates a five-year strategic plan that is linked to the BTC institutional strategic plan to improve the recruitment, retention, graduation, and job placement of BTC students.
Technology Committee	The charge of the Technology Committee is to assist the College in developing policies and procedures to efficiently and effectively use and purchase information technology, stay abreast of state-of-art information technologies and coordinate the implementation of the Information Technology Plan.

## **Appendix B: Response to NWCCU Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1 (2014):** The evaluation committee recommends the institution continue to implement an effective and widely understood system of governance with clearly defined authority, roles and responsibilities; and implement decision-making structures and processes that make provision for the consideration of the views of faculty, staff, administrators and students on matters in which they have a direct and reasonable interest. (Standard 2.A.1)

**BTC Response & Update:** In 2015-16, the college continued to work towards collaborative development of a new participatory governance system. BTC President Dr. Kimberly Perry hosted conversations with campus constituents during Fall 2015 and Winter 2016 and formed a Decision-Making Task Force to recommend a governance model to the campus community. Two additional related ad hoc groups were created, including a Planning and Resource Allocation (PARA) task force and a BTC Hiring Policy task force. Based on broad constituency input, the college developed a *Decision-Making & Collegial Consultation Processes* handbook and finalized a new model of participatory governance, which was launched in Fall 2016. The new model was piloted during the 2016-17 academic year, and BTC will continue to assess the effectiveness of the structure during the 2017-18 academic year and forward.

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) notified BTC in February 2016 that the college had satisfied the Commission's expectations regarding this recommendation.

**Recommendation 2 (2014):** The evaluation committee recommends in the area of human resources, the institution employ qualified personnel to maintain and support the operational functions of the college. (Standard 2.B.1)

**BTC Response & Update:** In 2015-16, the college continued to support the reinstated role of Executive Director of Human Resources. Since January of 2015, the role has been filled by an employee qualified to maintain and support BTC's operational functions in the area of human resources, as evidenced by this employee's progressively responsible experiences in human resources and labor relations over the past 15 years.

NWCCU notified BTC in February 2016 that the college had satisfied the Commission's expectations regarding this recommendation.

**Recommendation 3 (2014):** The evaluation committee recommends for each year of operation, the college undergo an external financial audit and that the results from such audits, including findings and management letter recommendations, be considered in a timely, appropriate and comprehensive manner by the Board of Trustees. (Eligibility Requirement 19 and Standard 2.F.7)

**BTC Response & Update:** BTC took corrective action in response to Recommendation 3, undergoing a full financial audit of FY 2015 in Fall 2016, and of FY 2016 in Spring 2017. The 2015 and 2016 auditor's reports included no management letter or findings. The college anticipates undergoing an external audit of FY 17 in Fall 2017 and plans to continue these audits on a yearly basis.

In its July 2016 response to BTC's ad hoc report on Recommendation 3, NWCCU determined that the college had met expectations with regard to this recommendation.

**Recommendation 4 (2014):** The Evaluation committee recommends the institution move beyond the gathering of data and use the results of its evaluation, on a regular basis, to support its cycle of planning, practices, resource allocation, application of institutional capacity, and assessment of results to make changes, as necessary, for improvement and strategic planning. (Standard 5.B.2)

BTC Response & Update: Employee access to and engagement with college data resources continues to improve. The college now has a wide variety of online data dashboards and reports, and performs quarterly analyses (e.g., in the form of Student Enrollment and Success Reports) of relevant institutional data such as student enrollment, demographics, course success, transition, retention, satisfaction, completion, and employment. The dashboards allow faculty and staff to explore data by instructional program, student demographics, specific timeframe, etc. Institutional Effectiveness staff hosted a series of “BTC by the Numbers” data workshops during Summer and Fall 2016 that focused on the student enrollment, retention, and course success dashboards.

Additionally, the college convened an ad hoc, cross-constituency Planning and Resource Allocation (PARA) taskforce in 2015-16 to explore ways to increase alignment between the college’s strategic planning and resource allocation processes. The PARA ad hoc taskforce drafted an overall model, including a process and template for unit-level planning and assessment, during Spring 2016 and held campus forums to gather feedback. The new PARA Committee (a governance committee established in Winter 2017) will build upon this foundation to propose a model and process to the new College Assembly during the 2017-18 academic year.

NWCCU notified BTC in February 2016 that the college had satisfied the Commission’s expectations regarding this recommendation.

**Continued Recommendation 1 (2011):** Although the college has gathered significant data, the Evaluation Committee did not find sufficient evidence to support that the campus has fully completed the assessment cycle by “closing the loop” to demonstrate that student learning has been achieved as stated. The Evaluation Committee recommends the College continue to make progress in this area. (Standard 4.A.3)

BTC Response & Update: In Spring 2016, the college established a Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Assessment subcommittee of the college’s Instruction Council, with the goal of identifying and implementing a more effective and meaningful campus-wide approach for assessing and documenting the achievement of SLOs. This faculty-majority group has worked closely with the college’s Institutional Effectiveness department and will provide input and recommendations for pilot implementation of an improved SLO assessment process to Instruction Council for use across all instructional programs.

NWCCU notified BTC in February 2016 that the college had satisfied the Commission’s expectations regarding this recommendation.

**Continued Recommendation 2 (2011):** The College made several changes to their core themes since their first year visit, resulting in refined core themes that are clearer and better connected to their institution’s strategic plan. It was noted the College made a significant effort to connect goals to performance, outcomes and baselines. The evaluation team commends them on their successful efforts. However, the team did not find sufficient evidence that the College made adequate improvement connecting its mission–core themes and strategic planning—to the allocation of resources. The



evaluation committee recommends the college continue to make progress in this area. (Standards 1.A.2, 2.F.3)

BTC Response & Update: In 2015-16, the college formed an ad hoc Planning and Resource Allocation (PARA) working group to explore potential models to improve alignment between its mission (including core themes and strategic planning) and resource allocation processes. This taskforce researched possible models, developed a draft BTC model, and began sharing information and soliciting feedback on that model from the campus community. The college has since created a cross-constituency committee within BTC's new participatory governance structure to continue supporting the planning and resource allocation alignment process. One of the committee's initial responsibilities is to recommend, and implement, and assess a process model and related materials (based on the ad hoc group's work) to include a unit-level planning and assessment process, as well as stronger connections between strategic planning and resource allocation.

NWCCU notified BTC in February 2016 that the college had satisfied the Commission's expectations regarding this recommendation.

## Appendix C: Core Theme Indicator Assessment Approach

### CORE THEME ONE: STUDENT SUCCESS AND ACCESS

**Objective 1A: Students achieve their educational and career goals.**

#### Indicators, Definitions, and Desired Outcomes

#	Indicator	Definition	Desired Outcome
1	Transition Rate: Adult Basic Education (ABE) to College-Level	% of first-time ABE students transitioning from ABE to college-level courses within 2 years (8 quarters)	52% of students transition from ABE to college-level courses (45% baseline; 1% increase per year; 7% increase over seven years)
2	Transition Rate: Developmental Education to College-Level	% of first-time developmental education students transitioning from developmental to college-level courses within 2 years (8 quarters)	48% of students transition from developmental to college-level courses (41% baseline; 1% increase per year; 7% increase over seven years)
3	Course Success Rate	% of students earning grades of C or higher (or "P" for pass/no pass courses) compared across instructional delivery modes (face-to-face, hybrid, online)	80% of students are successful across all instructional delivery modes (face-to-face, hybrid, online)
4	Graduation Rate	% of program students who graduate from degree/certificate programs within 3 years (12 quarters)	50% of students graduate from programs
5	Employment Rate	% of degree/certificate students who are employed within 9 months of graduation	Degree/certificate students are employed at a rate higher than system average <u>or</u> at least 80% (whichever is higher)
6	Transfer Rate	% of transfer students who transfer to another college/university	Transfer intent students transfer to another college/university at a rate higher than baseline (baseline not yet available; 1% increase per year; 7% increase over seven years)
7	Student Goal Achievement	% of survey respondents (students) who are satisfied with self-identified academic and/or career goals	Students who feel they have made satisfactory progress toward their self-identified goals at BTC on an annual basis (baseline data not yet available; satisfaction levels in subsequent years will match or exceed baseline levels)

#### Rationale and Data Sources

- Indicators 1 and 2: Increasingly, employers require at least a one-year high demand certificate or two-year college degrees for employees. This underscores the importance of educating the region's academically underprepared and underserved populations. BTC's Operational Data

Store is used to track transition rates of both Adult Basic Education (ABE) and developmental education students moving into college-level coursework. These indicators are also part of the college's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

- Indicator 3: Course success rate is a key indicator of an institution's effectiveness. Effective face-to-face, hybrid, and distance education delivery modes provide access to high-demand college programs and courses. Delivering effective distance learning programs is increasingly important as student demand grows. BTC's Operational Data Store is used to track and compare course success rates across all instructional delivery modes, including face-to-face, hybrid, and online.
- Indicator 4: Completion is a key indicator of an institution's effectiveness, since high attrition rates indicate that students are not accomplishing their educational and career goals. BTC's Operational Data Store is used to track graduation rates among students enrolled in degree/certificate programs. This indicator is also one of the college's KPIs.
- Indicator 5: One of the most important indicators of success for a college with professional technical programs is its ability to successfully place students into the workforce. The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges publishes annual Academic Year Reports that are used to monitor graduate employment. This indicator is also one of the college's KPIs.
- Indicator 6: Transfer rates capturing students who intend to continue their educations will help the college assess whether or not those students are accomplishing their educational goals. BTC's Operational Data Store and the National Student Clearinghouse is used to track transfer rates among students enrolled.
- Indicator 7: Goal achievement is a key indicator of whether or not students are progressing and meeting their personal educational and/or career goals; these self-identified goals may or may not closely align closely with the goals set by the college to measure success.

**Objective 1B: BTC meets strategic enrollment and retention goals.**

Indicators, Definitions, and Desired Outcomes

#	Indicator	Definition	Desired Outcome
8	FTE	# of annual state FTE	FTE exceeds State Board allocation target
9	Retention Rate	% of degree-seeking students who are retained from one fall to next	70% of students are retained
10	Racial/Ethnic Diversity	% minority student enrollment (Asian/Pacific Islander, African American, Native American, Hispanic, Other) as compared to Whatcom County population	% of racial/ethnic minority student enrollment is greater than or equal to Whatcom County racial/ethnic minority population
11	Socio-economic Diversity	% low socioeconomic student completion rates in certificate and degree programs	Program completion rates for students who qualify for State Need Grant (200% of poverty level) are proportional to completion rates for other students in the certificate and degree-seeking population
12	Gender Diversity	% non-traditional enrollment by gender (males in traditionally female programs and females in traditionally male programs)	15% of enrollments are non-traditional by gender (8% baseline; 1% increase per year; 7% increase over seven years)

Rationale and Data Sources

- Indicator 8: Enrollment levels determine tuition revenues. BTC’s Operational Data Store is used to track enrollment levels. This indicator is also one of the college’s KPIs.
- Indicator 9: Maintaining high, steady retention rates is necessary to support student success and the college’s financial health. BTC’s Operational Data Store is used to track retention rates of degree-seeking students. This indicator is also one of the college’s KPIs.
- Indicator 10: An inclusive, safe and welcoming campus environment is a critical goal of the college and is necessary in order to foster a college community rich in diversity. Students and the community benefit from exposure to and interactions with diverse populations. BTC’s Operational Data Store and the US Census respectively provide data to identify racial/ethnic diversity levels at BTC and within Whatcom County.
- Indicator 11: Low socioeconomic status (SES) students (defined as those who are eligible for Washington’s State Need grant) tend to have disproportionately lower program completion levels than do non-SES peers. At the same time, state research shows that the obtainment of a one-year certificate or degree represents a “tipping point” out of poverty for these students. We use BTC’s Operational Data Store and Financial Aid records to determine low SES status and program completion rates for certificate and degree seeking students (fall quarter enrollments).
- Indicator 12: Some professions are disproportionately female or male dominated. Students benefit from a balanced placement in non-traditional fields. We use BTC’s Operational Data Store to track student enrollment (fall quarter enrollments), and BTC programs are identified as non-traditional by gender based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics compilation of traditionally male and female occupational fields.

**CORE THEME TWO: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

**Objective 2A: BTC promotes student learning by using effective instructional methods and creating positive learning environments.**

Indicators, Definitions, and Desired Outcomes

#	Indicator	Definition	Desired Outcome
13	Student Satisfaction – Teaching/Instruction	% of survey respondents (students) who are satisfied with the quality of teaching and instruction	% of students satisfied is higher than national average; results are used to inform improvement
14	Student Satisfaction – Program Equipment and Instructional Spaces	% of survey respondents (students) who are satisfied with quality of program equipment and instructional spaces	% of students satisfied is higher than national average; results are used to inform improvement
15	Business/Industry Assessment of Program Equipment and Facilities	% of Advisory Committees that assess classroom/lab facilities and contribute to annual equipment/facilities improvement plans	100% of Program Advisory Committees assess classroom and lab facilities of program and related courses annually
16	Student Performance Evaluation	% of degree courses integrating practices to evaluate student performance based on pre-identified learning outcomes	100% of degree courses integrate practices to evaluate student performance based on pre-identified learning outcomes

#	Indicator	Definition	Desired Outcome
17	Degree Program Evaluation	% of degree programs evaluated annually and implementing action improvement plans	100% of degree programs evaluated annually and implementing action plans
18	Workforce-Related Curricular Experiences	% of professional technical degree programs including internships/other business and industry-based experiences	80% of professional technical degree programs include internships or other business and industry-based experiences

#### Rationale & Data Sources

- Indicators 13 and 14: Assessing the quality of the college’s teaching and learning environment should include broad student input. The BTC Student Survey provides information on BTC student satisfaction with the quality of teaching and instruction (indicator 13) and program equipment (indicator 14). This is a college KPI, with data used to inform ongoing faculty/supervisor dialog and continuous quality assessment.
- Indicator 15: Business and industry input on training equipment and environments is critical for maintaining programs that meet workforce needs. Business and industry representatives serve on each advisory committee, tour each program annually and assess program equipment and facilities. Faculty use feedback to inform their annual program improvement plans.
- Indicator 16: Programs and courses maintain established learning outcomes, update them regularly, include them on course syllabi, evaluate students based on these learning outcomes, and assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of those outcomes. Learning outcomes are assessed on an annual basis as part of the college’s Student Learning Outcomes Report process.
- Indicator 17: Ongoing evaluation of program effectiveness is essential. Information for this indicator comes from the annual Program Effectiveness Reports.
- Indicator 18: Experience in real-world work environments fosters student success. Course syllabi reflect the integration of these experiences into the curriculum, and records from various offices and faculty provide additional information.

**Objective 2B: BTC is responsive to student needs and provides the resources necessary to promote student success.**

#### Indicators, Definitions, and Desired Outcomes

#	Indicator	Definition	Desired Outcome
19	Student Satisfaction – Support Services	% of survey respondents (students) who are satisfied with academic, financial and other student support services, as well as the college’s physical environment	% of students satisfied with support services is higher than national average; results are used to inform improvements
20	Student Confidence	% of survey respondents (students) who feel confident in their ability to access needed resources and succeed	70% of students feel confident in their ability to access needed resources and succeed in college



### Rationale and Data Sources

- Indicator 19: Providing effective student support is essential to support the college’s mission. The Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) results provide this information. This indicator is one of BTC’s KPIs, and data are part of the continuous quality assessment system for student services.
- Indicator 20: Assessing to what degree students are confident in their ability to succeed in college and are likely to independently access the college resources they need is a measure of student growth and a strong predictor of success. Data for indicator 20 will come from the SSI.

**Objective 2C. The college is fiscally sound, incorporates continuous improvement strategies, engages in data-driven decision-making, and both develops and uses best practices in its daily operations.**

### Indicators, Definitions, and Desired Outcomes

#	Indicator	Definition	Desired Outcome
21	Unrestricted Fund Balance	Dollar amount of unrestricted fund balance	BTC maintains an appropriate unrestricted fund balance (reserve) of at least 20% of the operating budget
22	Facilities Assessment and Planning	Description of facilities assessment and planning	BTC seeks campus-wide input, uses systematic processes, and engages in ongoing assessment for facilities planning
23	Technology infrastructure	Description of technology infrastructure and planning process	A technology infrastructure supports the college; the college’s comprehensive technology plan is developed through a campus-wide, collaborative process, is regularly evaluated and is implemented in a timely manner
24	Institutional Assessment Cycle	Description of BTC planning and assessment process	The college follows systematic and ongoing planning, assessment, and resource allocation cycle; creates, implements, evaluates/revises plans for BTC success

### Rationale and Data Sources

- Indicator 21: Given a pattern of fluctuating enrollments and state support, the college must maintain an adequate unrestricted fund balance, particularly in case of unexpected developments. A portion of this balance helps support strategic initiatives, capital projects, and grant expiration transitions. Financial records provide this information. This is a college KPI.
- Indicator 22: Well-planned facilities promote flexibility in utilization, foster formal and informal collaboration, and help create an atmosphere in which students, faculty, and staff can thrive. BTC’s Campus Master Plan and Facilities Condition Survey are used to assess progress.
- Indicator 23: A strong technology infrastructure is essential to providing an effective learning and working environment which helps facilitate high quality programs and support structures as well as student success. This infrastructure is especially important in providing flexible instructional modalities, including hybrid and online courses. The college’s technology plan—as well as future documentation of implementation of this plan—illustrates progress in this area.
- Indicator 24: BTC’s Strategic Plan, State of the College Report, Strategic Enrollment Plan, and Strategic Enrollment Plan Attainment Report illustrate BTC’s achievements in systematic and ongoing planning, assessment and resource allocation cycle. Results of these assessments lead to further planning and continuous improvement.

**CORE THEME THREE: COLLEGE VISIBILITY WITH  
STRONG COMMUNITY, BUSINESS, AND INDUSTRY RELATIONS**

**Objective 3A. The college develops and maintains strong external partnerships and support systems.**

Indicators, Definitions, and Desired Outcomes

#	Indicator	Definition	Desired Outcome
25	Donor Involvement and Support	The college and BTC Foundation engages with various business, community and industry organizations, maintaining and expanding a robust donor base	65% of BTC donors renew gifts on an annual basis; the % of new gifts will increase by at least 10% per year
26	Employer Involvement and Support	The college and BTC Foundation engages with business and industry employers and organizations in a variety of ways, including through advisory committees, career fairs, and work-based learning opportunities	At least 300 employers or workforce organizations serve on college committees, participate in projects or otherwise support college activities on an annual basis
27	Educational Partner Involvement and Support	The college engages with K-20 educational partners in a variety of ways, including through outreach activities, campus events, and work-based learning opportunities	At least 30 educational partners or organizations serve on college committees, participate in collaborative projects or otherwise support college initiatives and activities on an annual basis

Rationale and Data Sources

- Indicator 25, 26, 27: BTC’s connections with and support from a wide range of community, business and industry partners are critical to the college’s successful development and implementation of its educational programs and subsequent student success. BTC receives continuous feedback from students, industry, state and national partners. These strong relationships are crucial to the college’s viability. Creation of a system that tracks all relations and activities will provide information on the number and details of these external partnerships and allow for centralized assessment.

**Objective 3B: BTC has a positive reputation and strong media presence.**

Indicators, Definitions, and Desired Outcomes

#	Indicator	Definition	Desired Outcome
28	Media Presence	BTC marketing and media activities, press and other media coverage and reader sentiments are captured and assessed in a structured and consistent manner	Social media analytics reports show that the college is positively exposed in social media at an equal or higher level than comparable WA state institutions; annual press coverage comparisons show that positive BTC media coverage is equal to or exceeds that of comparable institutions

29	Student Recommendations	% of survey respondents (students) who would recommend BTC to others	80% of students would recommend BTC to others
30	Employer Feedback	% of survey respondents (employers) who would recommend BTC to others	80% of employers would recommend BTC to others

Rationale and Data Sources

- Indicator 28: BTC’s visibility is closely connected to its marketing and communication efforts, and a strong media presence positively impacts the college’s ability to strengthen existing or forge new relations with a variety of partners. A tracking system and reports that consistently capture media coverage and characteristics of that coverage will give BTC the ability to assess the strength of its media presence and reputation and identify challenges.
- Indicators 29 and 30: Student and workforce satisfaction is critical to BTC’s success and its image within the community; the level of student and employer satisfaction with their experiences at BTC and their willingness to recommend the college to others is critical for maintaining and increasing visibility and reputation. Many students report that one of the reasons that they come to BTC is because the college was recommended by a friend, family member, or other person. Student Satisfaction Inventory and Employer Survey results provide this information.

## Appendix D: Program Student Learning Outcomes Report Template

**YEAR: 2015-2016**

**DUE: 3/7/17**

**PROGRAM:** \_\_\_\_\_

A. Total headcount of students enrolled in program in 2015-2016 year:

B. Complete the following chart.

Column One	Column Two	Column Three	Column Four	Column Five
<b>PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>  (must be official version)	<b>SPECIFIC OUTCOME ASSESSMENTS WITH STANDARD</b>  (level of mastery)	<b>ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS</b>  (how many students met standard)	<b>ANALYSIS OF RESULTS</b>	<b>FUTURE PLANS</b>  (continuous quality improvement)

## Appendix E: Course Student Learning Outcomes Report Template

**YEAR: 2015-2016**

**DUE: 3/7/17**

**COURSE:** \_\_\_\_\_

- A. Number of students being evaluated: \_\_\_\_\_  
*For courses offered once per year, include all students enrolled in the course  
 For courses offered multiple times per year; select a representative sample of students from several sections to evaluate (40-60 students).*
- B. Complete the following chart.

Column One	Column Two	Column Three	Column Four	Column Five
<b>COURSE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES</b> (from BTC Course Master)	<b>SPECIFIC OUTCOME ASSESSMENTS WITH STANDARD</b> (level of mastery)	<b>ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDENTS</b> (how many students met standard)	<b>ANALYSIS OF RESULTS</b>	<b>FUTURE PLANS</b> (continuous quality improvement)

## Appendix F: Guidelines for Writing BTC Program SLOs

### **Guidelines for Writing Bellingham Technical College (BTC) Program Student Learning Outcome Statements (SLOS)**

Included in this document is a discussion of program student learning outcome statements. It is not meant to answer all questions, but to help lend clarity to completing the Student Learning Outcomes Reports. The document addresses the following questions:

- A. What are characteristics of effective program student learning outcome statements?
- B. How can faculty create their program student learning outcome statements?
- C. What form or structure should program student learning outcome statements take?
- D. What are mistakes to avoid when creating program student learning outcome statements?

An appendix provides examples of program student learning outcome statements from various disciplines. Please note that some of these statements are poorly written.

#### **A. What are characteristics of effective program student learning outcome statements?**

Program outcome statements answer the question "What will students know or be able to do after completing our program or taking courses." Unlike *course outcomes*, which specify what students will know or be able to do at the end of a course, program outcomes specify what students will be able to do, demonstrate, produce, or understand after completing *a series of courses* or *an entire program*.

A program's student learning outcome statements should:

1. *Be broader than the course outcomes found on most syllabi.* Program outcomes identify skills and knowledge fostered throughout a program, in many courses.
2. *Be observable and measurable* among students who successfully complete a program or courses in a department.
3. *Begin with action verbs.* In general, concrete verbs such as *produce, conduct, compose, translate, or formulate*. Avoid words like *appreciate, understand, or feel*.

4. *Include language that is clear to both faculty and students.* Many outcome statements include the terminology of the field; however, the intended audience is larger than faculty in the discipline.
5. *Include rigor.* While some outcomes may identify a student's factual and conceptual knowledge (e.g., *recognizing, summarizing, classifying, ranking, explaining*), at least some outcomes should also involve higher-level knowledge (e.g., meta-cognitive knowledge) and/or higher-level cognitive processes (such as *analyzing, evaluating, composing, synthesizing, creating*).

## **B. How can faculty create their program student learning outcome statements?**

The following resources and activities can help faculty create or revise their program student learning outcomes:

1. *Consult departmental resources.* Course syllabi and outlines, capstone assignments, course challenges, and textbooks are among the documents that may identify programmatic or departmental goals.
2. *Consult professional organizations.* Many program outcomes are based upon the recommendations, professional competencies, and outcomes developed by the discipline's professional association or accreditation organizations.
3. *Advisory Committees.* All programs with an advisory committee need to get affirmation from their members that the program student learning outcomes are appropriate and conform to industry expectations.
4. *Consult other college websites.* Read the outcome statements developed by programs similar to your own.
5. *Imagine the "ideal" graduate for your program.* What should the ideal student know, be able to do, or value? Specifically, what knowledge, skills, and values are the result of or fostered in courses within the program?
6. *Examine student work* such as portfolios or course projects to determine what successful students are able to demonstrate after completing your program.
7. *Administer exit interviews or surveys.* Ask graduates or students who are about to graduate what they have learned from courses in your program.

### C. What form or structure should program student learning outcome statements take?

Program student learning outcomes are available to students, to accreditors, and to the public via the college website. Consistency in presentation helps these audiences identify and compare programs and creates a uniform and professional image for the college. The following stylistic guidelines are recommended for BTC program student learning outcomes:

1. *Provide an overview of the program before listing program student learning outcomes.* This overview provides a context for the outcome statements.
2. *Consider immediately preceding the program student learning outcome statements with a phrase like:*  
  
After successfully completing this program, students will be able to:  
After successfully completing courses in this program, students will be able to:
3. *Begin each statement with an action verb and end each statement with a period.*
4. *Limit program student learning outcomes to 5-10 statements if possible.* Program student learning outcomes summarize what a successful student will know or be able to do upon completion of the program, but they don't list everything a student might learn. Focus on what's most important.

Figure 1 (below) illustrates these guidelines applied to the Program student learning outcome statements for an Accounting program at Best Technical College.

Figure 1: Sample Program Student Learning Outcome Statements

<p><b>Accounting</b></p> <p><b>Program Overview</b></p> <p>Best Technical College, offers transfer accounting courses, a two-year occupational degree, and a one-year occupational certificate in accounting. The Accounting Associate of Applied Science program is designed to provide students with knowledge in accounting, business, computers, and general education to become employed in entry-level accounting positions. The main goal of the program is to provide students with both the theory of accounting and practical experience to perform computerized accounting functions.</p>
--



After successfully completing this program, students will be able to:

- Apply fundamental accounting process to properly record ordinary business transactions.
- Prepare basic accounting and business reports for internal and external users.
- Apply accounting and/or business concepts in a variety of business situations and business structures including corporations, partnerships, and small businesses.
- Demonstrate proficiency in the use of a variety of business software applications.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the regulatory environment of business.
- Demonstrate proficiency in communication skills necessary in a business environment.

#### **D. What are mistakes to avoid when creating program student learning outcome statements?**

Mistakes to avoid when writing your program student learning outcome statements:

Mistake 1: *The outcome is impossible to measure.* Try to avoid terms such as *be exposed to, develop awareness in, become familiar with, gain appreciation for,* etc. When possible, select verbs that refer to abilities, knowledge, or actions that can be observed or measured. (See Appendix A for examples of measurable outcome statements.)

Mistake 2: *A single outcome statement includes several outcomes.* If it's possible for a student to demonstrate one outcome in a statement but not another, present the outcomes in separate statements.

Mistake 3: *The outcome is too narrow and specific.* Program outcomes should identify concepts and skills reinforced in courses *throughout* a program or department.

## **Appendix G: Guidelines for SLO Reports**

Faculty In-service  
February 24, 2017

*The guidelines are divided among three areas: Cohorts, Open Enrollment, Transitional Studies and General Education.*

### **Cohort Model Programs (e.g. Welding, Mechatronics, HVAC, Electrician, etc.) & Open Enrollment (e.g. BCIS, Engineering, IT)**

#### **Program Student Learning Outcomes Report:**

- List all of your Program Student Learning Outcomes in Column One
- Select two Program Student Learning Outcomes and complete Columns Two, Three, Four, and Five.

#### **Course Student Learning Outcomes Report:**

- Select one course in your program to evaluate
- List all of your Course Student Learning Outcomes for that course in Column one
- Select two Course Student Learning Outcomes and complete Columns Two, Three, Four, and Five.

#### **Transitional Studies**

Currently working on a model that address the unique characteristics of this area with the associate dean and VPI.

#### **General Education**

#### **Course Student Learning Outcomes Report:**

- Select one course in your discipline to evaluate
- List all of your Course Student Learning Outcomes for that course in Column One
- For all of your Course Student Learning Outcomes complete Column Two
- Select three Course Student Learning Outcomes and complete Columns Three, Four, and Five.

## Appendix H: Student Learning Outcomes Report Memo



To: Faculty  
From: Deans and Associate Deans  
Date: 2/10/17  
RE: Student Learning Outcomes Reports

This memo is to summarize changes to the Student Learning Outcomes reporting process and timeline as discussed in the 1/27/2017 in-service meeting. The changes noted below are intended to provide faculty with an opportunity to create meaningful reports and address continuous improvement.

1. Faculty will choose **only two** of their **program level outcomes** to review and analyze.
2. In addition to the two program level student learning outcomes, faculty will choose **one course and identify two course-level student learning outcomes** to review and analyze. The selected course should correlate to one of the two selected program level outcomes.
3. The **program outcomes** shown in the report need to be the official published outcomes, not just something close. **For this year only, program outcomes may be revised and approved without going to Instruction Council.** Please work with your dean regarding necessary revisions; program outcome revisions still need to be approved by Advisory Committees and the VPI. Approval from Advisory Committees may be facilitated via email.
4. The Program Outcomes and the Course Outcomes reports are **due March 7, 2017.**

### Below are some reminders:

1. Cohort Based Programs: Review the achievement of **all students in the program**, not just graduates. The data you collect should reflect the performance of all students who were in the program during the reporting period. Non-Cohort based programs should work with your dean to identify appropriate data-collection methods.
2. The **assessment of outcomes** should be a specific activity or set of activities, not just the passing of a class. In order to robustly engage with program review, we need to articulate what learning activities and demonstrations are being used to assess the presence and performance of each outcome within the program.
3. Again, **student achievement** covers all students, not just graduates.
4. The **analysis of results** requires a separate response for each outcome.
5. Similarly, the **future plans** requires a separate response for each outcome.

Please refer any questions to your dean or associate dean.

Thank you!

## Appendix I: BTC Syllabus Template Excerpt

**INSTRUCTOR NAME:** Click here to enter text.

**EMAIL:** Click here to enter text.

**OFFICE:** Click here to enter text.

**PHONE:** Click here to enter text.

**DEPT/COURSE #:** Click here to enter text.

**QTR/YEAR:** Click here to enter text.

**MEETING TIMES/DAYS:** Click here to enter text.

**CREDITS: ##**

**Theory Hours: ##**

**Guided Practice Hours: Field Based Experience  
## Hours: ##**

**COURSE TITLE:**

Click here to enter text.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Enter Text Here

**COURSE PREREQUISITE:**

Click here to enter text.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

At the end of this course, the student should be able to:

Learning Outcomes	Methods of Assessment
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

Enter Text Here

Insert or Copy/Paste Table Here

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

WEEK	LEARNING OUTCOMES	CHAPTER(S) TO HAVE READ	ASSIGNMENT DUE	PLANNED CLASS ACTIVITIES
1	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

WEEK	LEARNING OUTCOMES	CHAPTER(S) TO HAVE READ	ASSIGNMENT DUE	PLANNED CLASS ACTIVITIES
2	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
3	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
4	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
5	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
6	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
7	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
8	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
9	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
10	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
11	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

**METHODS OF INSTRUCTION: (check all that apply)**

- Lecture
- Lab
- Discussion
- Small Group Work
- Workplace Experience
- (Specify Other)
- (Specify Other)
- (Specify Other)

**REQUIRED STUDENT TEXT(S), SUPPLIES, AND MATERIALS:**

Enter Text Here

**STUDENT REQUIREMENTS/EXPECTATIONS:**

Enter Text Here

**ASSIGNMENTS, EVALUATION, AND GRADING STANDARDS:**

Insert or Copy/Paste Table Here  
 Insert or Copy/Paste Table Here  
 Enter Text Here

## Appendix J: Closing the Loop Objectives Template

Faculty: \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Date developed: 5/12/17

Dean: \_\_\_\_\_

**Objective One:** \_\_\_\_\_

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*Related Program, Course, and/or Effectiveness Report Outcome:* \_\_\_\_\_

---

Action Steps	Follow-up

---

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**Objective Two:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

*Related Program, Course, and/or Effectiveness Report Outcome:* \_\_\_\_\_

---

Action Steps	Follow-up

**Objective Three:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Related Program, Course, and/or Effectiveness Report Outcome:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Action Steps	Follow-up

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

## **Appendix K: Guidelines for Completing the Closing the Loop Objectives Process**

May 12, 2017 In-Service

1. Review your Program Learning Outcomes Reports, Course Learning Outcomes Reports and/or your Effectiveness Reports as submitted in Feb/March of 2017.
2. Select an outcome you assessed earlier this year, or choose an area from your Effectiveness Report, in which you want to improve during the next academic year.
3. Using the SMART method for writing improvement objectives, write an objective that is:
  - Specific- states exactly what you want to achieve
  - Measureable- has a quantitative (preferred) or qualitative measure
  - Attainable- is challenging but is also achievable
  - Relevant- meaningful and student centered
  - Time based-has a clear end date or timescale
4. Related Program, Course, and/or Effectiveness Report Outcome Section:
  - Identify which Program or Course Outcome (or area on the Effectiveness Report) your objective is related – write this outcome in the Closing the Loop document in this section. (See the example provided from the Electrician program)
5. Create 3-5 action steps that you will perform to achieve your improvement objective.
6. Leave the “Follow Up” column blank for now. You will fill this in as you work on each objective throughout next year.

*After completing the form (three objectives total), meet with your dean for review/approval. The Closing the Loop Objectives form must be approved by your dean no later than Tuesday May 30, 2017.*