



**Northwest Commission on College and University (NWCCU)**  
**Annual Update for WSQA**  
**Academic Year 2015-2016**  
**Due November 15, 2016**

College Name: Bellingham Technical College

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Accreditation recommendations to the College and year of recommendation	Actions taken by the college to address recommendations	Improvement results
<p><b>Recommendation 1 (2014):</b> 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)</p>	<p>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. Other ad hoc groups were created to help address areas of concern for BTC employees, including a BTC Hiring Policy task force and a Planning and Resource Allocation (PARA) task force. Campus efforts to increase transparency</p>	<p>As a result of this work, and based on broad constituent input, the college developed a <i>Decision-Making &amp; Collegial Consultation Processes</i> handbook and finalized a new model of participatory governance, which was launched in Fall 2016. Throughout the 2016-17 academic year, the new model will be piloted and assessed for continued improvement.</p> <p>The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) notified BTC in February 2016 that the college has satisfied the</p>

	<p>of processes and procedures included multiple trainings and forums to inform employees of current practices, changing procedures and college financial status reports. The frequency of formal faculty meetings increased, with deans holding regular interdepartmental and division meetings. BTC's Instruction Council was reconfigured to have majority faculty representation. Increased use of tools such as the Intranet, SharePoint, Infopath, and the Internal Function Booking Guide continued to help foster better communication across campus.</p>	<p>Commission's expectations regarding this recommendation.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2 (2014):</b> 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)</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Changes are already evident in this area, including increased consistency regarding application of BTC policies and procedures, collaborative development and finalization of Core Competencies for employees, and focused training in the areas of federal law compliance and supervision for college employees.</p> <p>NWCCU notified BTC in February 2016 that the college has satisfied the Commission's expectations regarding this recommendation.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3 (2014):</b> 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)</p>	<p>The college has taken corrective action in response to Recommendation 3, undergoing a full financial audit of the 2013-14 fiscal year in early 2015. A schedule of annual financial audits will continue. The audit of the colleges 2014-15 financial statements is scheduled to be completed in Fall 2016, with the audits of the 2015-16 financial statements anticipated to occur in spring or fall of 2017.</p>	<p>The 2015 auditor's report included no management letter or findings. 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 Recommendation 3 of the Fall 2014 Year Seven Peer-Evaluation Report.</p>

<p><b>Recommendation 4 (2014):</b> 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)</p>	<p>The college made strides in this area in the 2015-16 academic year, convening a cross-constituency Planning and Resource Allocation (PARA) taskforce to explore ways to increase alignment between the college’s strategic planning and resource allocation processes, as well as improve unit-level planning, assessment, and evaluation. BTC also formed a Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) Assessment sub-committee of Instruction Council to address instructional SLO assessment and reporting in a holistic manner.</p> <p>The college continued to develop and improve both standardized and tailored online data dashboards and perform quarterly and annual analyses (e.g., in the form of Student Enrollment and Success Reports) of relevant institutional data. Additionally, beginning in summer 2016, the college began offering quarterly “BTC by the Numbers” data workshops, each of which highlights a different topic (e.g., student enrollment and retention, course success, completion). The college conducted more in-depth studies of student achievement data in targeted instructional areas, such as general education. These additional specific and campus-wide data analysis capabilities help campus units assess their progress.</p> <p>In 2015-16, each instructional program completed the annual Program Effectiveness process, which includes faculty assessment of program-specific data aligned with college-level key performance indicators, and completion of program improvement plans.</p>	<p>Employee access to and engagement with college data resources continues to improve. The PARA group developed a draft implementation model, which included a process and template for unit-level planning, assessment, and evaluation. This new model will be piloted in 2016-17. Also In 2016-17, the SLO Assessment subcommittee will develop and recommend a campus-wide approach for assessing and documenting student learning within instructional courses, programs, and degrees.</p> <p>NWCCU notified BTC in February 2016 that the college has satisfied the Commission’s expectations regarding this recommendation.</p>
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<p><b>Continued Recommendation 1 (2011):</b>  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)</p>	<p>BTC has historically documented the achievement of student learning outcomes via Annual Student Learning Outcomes Reports for each instructional programs. In Spring 2016, the college also 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-led group works closely with BTC’s Institutional Effectiveness department and plans to accomplish the following goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• review current approaches to assessing and documenting the achievement of SLOs;</li> <li>• develop and recommend a campus-wide approach for assessing and documenting achievement of SLOs at the instructional course, program, and degree levels;</li> <li>• develop and recommend an SLO Assessment policy, procedure, and plan;</li> <li>• work with relevant stakeholders to implement broad structures/systems as needed;</li> <li>• work with individual faculty to support implementation of the approved process across campus; and</li> <li>• revisit/recommend revisions to the policy, procedure, and plan as needed.</li> </ul>	<p>Subcommittee work is providing input, policy direction, general advice, and recommendations to Instruction Council in the area of SLO assessment.</p> <p>NWCCU notified BTC in February 2016 that the college has satisfied the Commission’s expectations regarding this recommendation.</p>
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<p><b>Continued Recommendation 2 (2011):</b>  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)</p>	<p>In 2015-16, the college formed a Planning and Resource Allocation (PARA) task force to explore potential models to improve alignment between its mission and resource allocation process. This task force researched possible models, developed a draft BTC model, and began sharing information and soliciting feedback on that model from the campus community. This proposed model included the following annual process steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify campus-wide strategic priorities</li> <li>2. Develop unit-level work plans to accomplish the strategic priorities</li> <li>3. Allocate resources based on unit-level requests for additional resources to accomplish strategic priorities,</li> <li>4. Implement unit-level work plans and resource allocations</li> <li>5. Assess, evaluate the results</li> <li>6. Report</li> </ol> <p>Based on feedback, task force team members revised the model and will provide their recommendation to the PARA committee that will be established as part of BTC’s new participatory governance structure.</p>	<p>The college is creating a cross-constituency committee within BTC’s participatory governance structure to continue supporting the planning, budgeting and resource allocation process. The role of the committee will be to review and provide input to the planning, budget and resource allocation process. The committee will be responsible to review and take part in the budget process, both providing input into the process and communicating outwardly to campus on the process, inputs and outcomes.</p> <p>NWCCU notified BTC in February 2016 that the college has satisfied the Commission’s expectations regarding this recommendation.</p>
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