Chemeketa Community College

Year Three NWCCU Mid-Cycle Self-Evaluation Report

Chemeketa Community College

Year Three NWCCU Mid-Cycle Self-Evaluation Report

Submitted to
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

March 2018

Chemeketa Community College prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, protected veteran status, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, whistleblowing, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local law in any area, activity or operation of the College. The College also prohibits retaliation against an individual for engaging in activity protected under this policy, and interfering with rights or privileges granted under federal, state or local laws.

Under College policies, equal opportunity for employment, admission, and participation in the College's programs, services, and activities will be extended to all persons, and the College will promote equal opportunity and treatment through application of its policies and other College efforts designed for that purpose.

Persons having questions or concerns about: Title IX, which includes gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, interpersonal violence, and stalking, contact the Title IX coordinator at 503.365.4723, 4000 Lancaster Dr. NE, Salem, OR 97305, or http://go.chemeketa.edu/titleix. Individuals may also contact the U..S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), 810 3rd Avenue #750, Seattle, WA 98104, 206.607.1600.

Equal Employment Opportunity or Affirmative Action should contact the Affirmative Action Officer at 503.399.2537, 4000 Lancaster Dr NE, Salem OR 97305

To request this publication in an alternative format, please call 503.399.5192.

Year Three NWCCU Mid-Cycle Self-Evaluation Report

Introduction

Assessment drives continuous improvement toward mission fulfillment at Chemeketa Community College. A variety of assessments work collectively to advance college initiatives, monitor results, and identify improvements to promote student learning and foster sustainability.

The college's Institutional Assessment Plan outlines these activities and how they work individually and cooperatively to move the college in the direction of mission fulfillment (Appendix A: Institutional Assessment Plan). To be effective, assessment must be part of an integrated, collaborative, and reflective continuous improvement cycle (Figure 1). The college uses results as it plans, implements, assesses, and revises its activities at the institutional, program, and course level. Chemeketa is building a culture where qualitative and quantitative evidence informs decisions in that process. The following report describes this work at both macro and micro levels, and responds to the questions posed in the NWCCU Guidelines for the Mid-Cycle Evaluation.

Part One: Overview of Institutional Assessment

Chemeketa monitors its progress toward mission fulfillment through the framework of its **core themes** and **core theme objectives** (Appendix B: Core Theme Objectives).

Chemeketa's **core themes** were developed through an institution-wide collaborative process when the college revised its mission following its Year Seven NWCCU self-study and evaluation, as described in our 2016 NWCCU Year One report. The mission and core themes were approved by Chemeketa's Board of Education in Fall 2015.

Mission:
- **Chemeketa provides opportunities for students to explore, learn, and succeed through quality educational experiences and workforce training.**

Core Themes:
- **Academic Quality**—Quality programs, instruction, and support services are provided to students
- **Access**—A broad range of educational opportunities and workforce training is provided to students in pursuit of their goals
- **Community Collaborations**—Instruction, training, and workforce development are provided through collaboration with education partners, businesses, and community groups
- **Student Success**—Students progress and complete their educational goals

To further define the core themes, the college Board and leadership teams developed **core theme objectives.** These objectives frame institutional assessment and planning and guide the work of the college.

Institutional Assessment: Core Theme Measures

Chemeketa developed **core theme measures** to assess progress toward fulfilling the core theme objectives (Appendix C: Core Theme Measures). The college's institutional, program, and course level assessments and planning tools work in tandem with the core theme measures to drive continuous improvement.

The core theme measures include specific indicators and targets. Mission fulfillment is defined as achievement or significant progress towards at least 75% of the targets for each core theme at the end of the accreditation cycle.

The Planning Committee[1] worked with the Executive Team[2] and units across the institution to develop specific indicators for each core theme objective, building on the framework laid out in the Year One report. An initial set of measures was completed in Winter 2017, and work is ongoing to refine and improve them. The measures are written at the "macro" (or institutional) level and are representative in nature. The data they generate provide a snapshot of the overall "health" of the organization and give Chemeketa's stakeholders critical information regarding progress toward and achievement of the college's core theme objectives and, ultimately, mission fulfillment.

Core theme measure results inform college planning. Results are reviewed annually, or more often as data is available, by the Executive Team and the college Board. The college's four chartered councils are charged with reviewing data associated with at least one core theme and its measures as outlined here:

- Academic Quality—Academic Standards Council
- Access—Diversity Advisory Council
- Community Collaborations—President's Advisory Council
- Student Success—Student Success and Completion Advisory Council

Additionally, the Director of Institutional Research reports quarterly to the Executive Team, President's Advisory Council, and the Board regarding select core theme measure updates (such as student and employee demographics, enrollment, and completion data) for review and discussion (Appendix D: Core Theme Measures Reviewed Quarterly and Sample Presentation). Key areas of focus identified in these discussions are sent back to the appropriate departments or committees for further consideration.

Institutional Planning: Strategic Plan and Other Plans

While the core theme measures assess the results of Chemeketa's work to improve student success, the **strategic plan** outlines the work itself (Appendix E: Strategic Plan). Guided by the core themes, core theme objectives, and core theme measure results, the strategic plan charts a seven-year view of Chemeketa's path forward in the direction of its mission.

To develop the strategic plan, the Executive Team and the college Board meet each summer to review the core theme objectives, measures, and results, as well as sustainability indicators

---

1   The Planning Committee includes the Dean of Curriculum, Instruction, and Accreditation/ Accreditation Liaison Officer, Director of Planning and Lean Development, and Director of Institutional Research. They meet monthly with the Vice President of Governance and Associate Vice President/Chief Information Officer, and all five meet quarterly with the college President and Vice President of Instruction and Student Services.
2   The Executive Team consists of the college President, Vice and Associate Vice Presidents, Executive Deans, Director of Human Resources, Director of Marketing, and Diversity Officer.

described below and other external factors likely to impact the college. From there, they outline with the Director of Planning and Lean Development both long (seven-year) and short term (one-year) high-level strategic initiatives and lower-level operational initiatives to actualize the core themes and objectives. The plan is posted on the college's intranet (Dashboard) and updated every quarter by the Executive Team. Strategic initiatives are developed for each core theme.

Specific institutional-level plans work in tandem with the core themes and objectives, the strategic plan, and the core theme measures, including the Master Academic Plan, Facilities Master Plan, and the Academic Technology Strategic Plan. These plans detail the department and division actions needed to carry out strategic initiatives to impact student success. Core theme measures monitor their results.

Assessment and Planning: Program and Course Levels

The continuous improvement driven by institutional assessment and planning is mirrored at the program and course levels. At the program level, academic and service areas make plans, assess results, and adjust direction through the interconnected processes of **program review, assessment plans, assessment results** reporting and analysis, and **annual plans.** Academic programs use these processes to refine their student learning outcomes (SLO) assessments. At the course level, faculty develop courses and course materials, and they list SLO assessments and course content in standardized course outlines. Faculty plan courses accordingly, assess student learning, and use results to make improvements.

Assessments and revisions made at each level of the college inform and impact work at other levels. Strategic plan initiatives impact institutional, program, and course assessment and planning across the college, as do program review recommendations, annual plans, and course assessments and revisions (Appendix F: Strategic Planning and Organization Structure).

Institutional Assessment and Planning Communication: The Placemat

To foster college-wide awareness and engagement with planning, assessment, and results, the Executive Team in Summer 2017 envisioned one document that could function as an abbreviated snapshot of the strategic plan and select core theme measures and results. This one-page, two-sided **"Placemat"** demonstrates the cooperative relationship between assessment and planning at Chemeketa (Appendix G: Placemat). It lays out the core themes, core theme objectives, select core theme measures and results, and the year's strategic initiatives from the strategic plan.

The document was introduced to administrators and the Board in Fall 2017 and revised in response to feedback. Deans and directors introduced the document to their respective programs and disciplines with the intention that they would address initiatives in their annual plans, due October 31. Selected five-year targets for the measures were completed in late Fall 2017, based on 2016–17 college data and national benchmarks when available. In the spirit of continuous improvement, many of the targets are aspirational rather than easily attainable. The college intends to document progress towards these goals.

The Placemat is proving an effective communication tool that advances conversation, data awareness, and innovation in the direction of mission fulfillment. Its initial roll-out to administrators, staff, and faculty generated extensive feedback and discussion. Given its success fostering mission-driven activity, the Executive Team plans to update the Placemat each summer and to distribute it each fall. The Planning Committee additionally plans to

use this layout as a template for refining the core theme measures document to improve its readability.

Sustainability

The college financial management team continuously monitors institutional sustainability by means of assessment and planning tools that are regularly reviewed by the Executive Team, college Board, and budget committee. They include Financial Guidelines, an annual Budget Principles and Financial Environment document developed each fall, a planning budget and assessment calendar to ensure alignment between planning processes and budgeting, short term and long term (five-year) budget projections produced at least once a quarter, and the annual comprehensive audited financial report. The college is required by law to develop a balanced budget by the end of each fiscal year, and to receive an independent audit annually. The financial management team reports to the college Board the status of the general fund and investments monthly and reports the status of non-general funds quarterly. Budget documents and guidelines appear on the [financial management pages](#) of the public college website (Appendix H: Financial Guidelines and Appendix I: Sample Budget Status Report).

Fiscal sustainability is paid significant attention in planning and budgeting college-wide. Programs work with supervisors to develop budget proposals each fall in response to the institutional, program, and course level plans and assessments. These proposals are reviewed and prioritized at the divisional, interdivisional, and then Executive Team level. The Team uses the core themes, objectives, measures, and strategic initiatives as well as budget reports, budget projections, and the financial guidelines as it works to finalize recommendations. Long term funding is considered when evaluating new initiatives and projects or changes in current practice (Appendix J: Criteria for Program Reduction, Consolidation, or Addition). The end result of this process is the development of a proposed institutional budget to present to a fourteen-member external budget committee in the spring.

These processes allow the college to anticipate and plan for changes in the financial landscape. Throughout the recent period of economic downturn, they proved successful in helping Chemeketa maintain strong financial stability. Unlike many peer community colleges, Chemeketa was able to minimize employee reductions throughout the recession, and tuition remained the lowest in the state of Oregon. Careful monitoring of financial indicators has alerted the college financial management team, Executive Team, and college Board of a downward trend in revenues as enrollment declines. College administration is fully engaged in mitigating these shortfalls and evaluating expenditures in order to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the college.

Final Section One Questions:
- Are the core themes and objectives still valid?

The core themes and objectives are valid and guide the college's planning, work, and assessment. The Planning Committee, Executive Team and college Board review and adjust them each summer as they revise and update the college's strategic plan using assessment results. This process was completed most recently in Summer 2017.

- Is the institution satisfied that the core themes and indicators selected are providing sufficient evidence to assess mission fulfillment and sustainability? If not, what changes are you contemplating?

The core themes and objectives articulate the college's focus on student success, and financial monitoring systems provide sufficient evidence to assess sustainability. The Planning Committee continues to refine the core theme measures completed in Winter 2017. They seek to determine those measures that best illustrate the status of work operationalizing the core theme objectives and provide the most useful information to drive further progress. This is addressed further in Part Three.

Part Two: Operationalizing Mission and Core Themes Regarding Student Learning

Two representative examples : Developmental Writing and Medical Assisting

All four Chemeketa core themes and their objectives impact student learning. The following core themes, objectives, and indicators (measures) directly address student learning at the program and course level:

Academic Quality

Objective A: Academic programs and service areas participate in regular continuous improvement processes to ensure high quality.

- *Indicators: Program Review, Assessment Plans, and Annual Plans; SLO Assessment;*

Objective D: Courses and programs align with academic and industry standards (for career technical programs)

- *Indicators: Advisory Committee engagement*

Student Success

Objective B—Students successfully complete courses.

Objective C—Students are retained and progress to the next level of coursework. Objective D—Students achieve their educational intent.

- *Indicators: Rates of Completion, Progression, and Certification Pass Rates (as applicable)*

The two representative examples discussed in this section, Developmental Writing and Medical Assisting, demonstrate how these objectives, indicators, and associated activities and results drive continuous improvement of academic programs and student learning at Chemeketa.

Mirroring the institutional continuous improvement cycle, program faculty and administrators **plan, implement, assess,** and **revise** approaches to improve student learning and success, using assessment results to drive changes. In each case, the following activities further this work and help to "close the loop" on student learning assessment:

- Program assessment and planning through **Program Reviews** (which include **Assessment Plans**) conducted every six years, and **Annual Plans** submitted to deans each fall assist programs with continuous improvement to ensure academic quality. These help faculty and administrators document status, formulate plans, and track progress (Appendix K: Program Review Guidelines, Appendix L: Assessment Plan Guidelines, and Appendix M: Annual Plan Template).
- **Program-wide SLO assessment systems** help faculty identify opportunities for program improvement as does Career Technical program **advisory committee engagement** through regular meetings with faculty and other activities.

Review of **completion, progression,** and **certification pass rates** (where applicable) keeps programs aware of students' rates of success and leads to continued planning and assessment.

Program-wide SLO assessment and reporting were set as an expectation for all academic programs following Chemeketa's 2015 Year Seven NWCCU Accreditation visit, which resulted in a recommendation for accurate, adequate assessment documentation of program and general education outcomes (Appendix N: Statement of Program Assessment Expectations). All certificate and degree programs have outcomes listed in the college catalog. Select general education programs/disciplines have elected to develop more specific outcomes for their programs that align with their state-determined degree outcomes. The college also

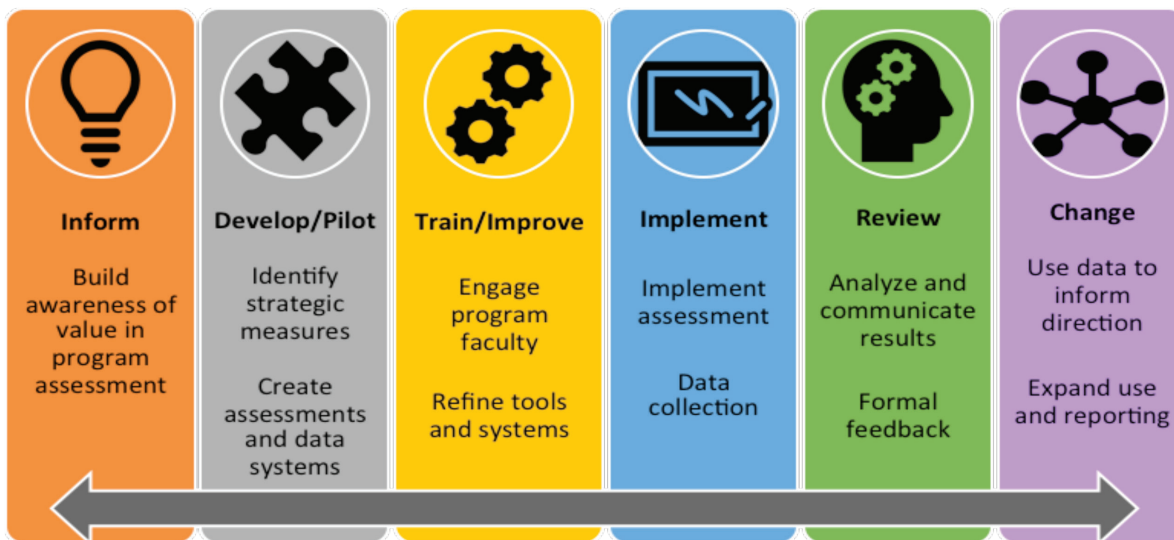## Steps to Program Assessment

Figure 2: Steps to Developing Program Outcomes Assessment

directs Academic Development programs to develop and assess program outcomes. These outcomes reside in assessment plans, Assessment reporting forms, on the college intranet, and in archived unit plans (annual planning documents that predated the current Annual Plans).

While faculty consistently assess student learning, developing transformative program-level assessment systems takes care and time. Figure 2 illustrates steps programs typically work through as they develop program-wide SLO assessment.

Reporting, reviewing, and using assessment data for programmatic change requires that programs have developed awareness, approaches, and processes for program assessment. Chemeketa programs are at various points on this pathway - some in beginning stages, some in later stages, and many in middle stages. This is evident in the percentages of reporting documented in the college's SLO assessment records (Appendix O: Reported Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Results). Faculty engagement, administrative involvement, and the program review process typically play the biggest roles in programs moving forward on these steps.

Example 1: Developmental Writing

Developmental Writing illustrates Chemeketa's continuous improvement systems at work to impact student learning in developmental and general education programs.

Developmental Writing: Core Theme Objectives, Indicators, Outcomes

Academic Quality Objective A: Regular continuous improvement processes
- Qualitative indicators: Program Review, Assessment Plan, and Annual Plan completed
- Quantitative indicators: SLO assessment results (Appendix P: Tables 1-3)

Student Success Objectives B and C: Completion and progression
- Quantitative indicators: Completion Rates (Appendix P: Table 4)
- Quantitative indicators: Progression data (Appendix P: Tables 5-8)

Plan

In 2010, amid departmental changes and an institutional shift from focusing on enrollment to a greater focus on progression and completion goals, the Developmental Writing program set about exploring how to improve student success in its courses. The program hired new full-time faculty and was moved from the English program to the Developmental Education department at this time. Faculty identified a need to transition away from isolated sentence skill and paragraph development to a holistic approach to teaching writing in the context of academic readings and writing projects. Research was pointing in this direction: academically underprepared students benefit most when learning with college-level assignments and texts, using appropriate scaffolding and support.

The program developed a multi-pronged approach to effect these changes. The program's ongoing project has been to understand, improve and revise efforts to improve student writing, critical thinking, and success in both Developmental Writing courses and subsequent general education courses.

Implement

Faculty implemented the following research-based best practices in an effort to improve student results:
- *Placement:* An [alternative written placement test](#) was developed for incoming students to supplement the college's standardized test (previously Compass and now Accuplacer) in an effort to improve appropriate placement.

- *Alignment/contextualization with other programs/courses:* Faculty worked with programs their students came from (e.g. ESOL), were in (e.g. Career Technical programs), or were hoping to enter (e.g. college-level writing) to develop smoother, better aligned student experiences and skill development. Projects included meeting with English faculty to better understand subsequent Writing course outcomes, adding Writing 90 (WR090) to the English program's Writing Minimum Passing Standards Grid, and aligning career technical education (CTE) curricula with associated required Developmental Writing courses (Appendix Q: Writing Minimum Passing Standards Grid).
- *Creation of Writing Consultancy:* Workshops and individual consultation were made available to Developmental Writing students regarding a range of topics for targeted study and support.
- *Creation of an Online Developmental Writing Hub:* With a large proportion of part-time faculty, this tool proved beneficial for sharing common assignments, program documents, meeting minutes, and other important items with faculty teaching Developmental Writing.
- *Professional Development:* These activities were geared toward learning about concepts related to Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), Integrated Reading and Writing, and Accelerated Learning Programs (ALP), and beginning to pilot these models or concepts in Developmental Writing courses.
- *Co-requisite Pilot Projects:* One pilot involved an ALP model where WR080 and WR090 were co-requisites; another involved a concurrent WR090 and WR115 course, completed this last academic year. These projects were grant-funded. Results from the most recent project are under review, and the program hopes to use these to inform broader practice.
- *Creation of a Common Final Assessment for WR080 and WR090:* The creation of these exams enabled faculty to build cohesion among full- and part-time faculty, to gather data on student performance, and to create a content focal point for students to work toward through the term.

Assess

Academic Quality Objective A: Regular continuous improvement processes

- *Qualitative indicators: Program Review, Assessment Plan, and Annual Plan*

The Developmental Writing program became part of the Reading and Study Skills program after its program review was completed in 2013–14. The Developmental Writing team elected to conduct its own program review in 2016–17 in order to look at its collective implemented activities and explore results. Had student completion rates changed? How were students faring in subsequent courses? The review would give them the opportunity to examine what was changing and what they might work on next.

They found that students had improved completion rates in Developmental Writing courses, increasing in WR090 from 63.8% in 2009–10 to 74.1% in 2016-17 (Appendix P: Table 4). Students in online courses were less likely to complete their courses, averaging 69% in 2014-16. The review also looked at subsequent success for its students who entered college-level courses while or after completing WR090, and found that those who successfully completed Developmental Writing courses they placed into were faring well at the college. Of students who successfully completed WR090 in 2013-14, 81% passed subsequent writing courses through 2016. It also found that of the students who had successfully completed WR090 in Fall

2015, 83% successfully completed concurrent or subsequent college-level general education courses through Winter 2016 (Appendix P: Tables 5-8).

Given the completion rate improvements, and specifically for those who successfully completed Developmental Writing courses they placed into, the program determined its next focus would be strategies to enroll and retain students placed into Developmental Writing courses. The program outlined next steps in its Program Review recommendations and assessment plan. These were updated in this fall's annual plan, where faculty outlined work to continue in this direction. Key themes:

- Continuing to support student success in terms of writing skill development: updating program outcomes, aligning standards with other programs, offering Writing Consultancy support, and exploring co-enrollment course results for program improvement opportunities.
- Promoting collaboration and professional development related to student success: AVID strategies for engaging and retaining students in the classroom, Guided Pathways, and contextualized courses with content area courses as support.
- Addressing lower achievement rates in online WR 090 courses through targeted interventions: online orientation, assessment of comfort with online learning, and entry-level assignments to gauge likelihood of online success.

Academic Quality Objective A: Regular continuous improvement processes
- SLO Assessment (Appendix R: Developmental Writing Assessment Plan)

Faculty knew from research and Developmental Education colleagues that a common final assessment would be a useful best practice to create for the program as they were exploring the programmatic changes described above. Over the course of 2012–2014, they created rubrics, writing prompts, and questions for a Common Final Assessment and Faculty Questionnaire, and full-time faculty piloted these tools in 2014–15. They began program-wide implementation in 2015–16. The Common Final Assessment is scored with a rubric that assesses skills spelled out in both the course and program outcomes. The Faculty Questionnaire asks not only for results from this assessment but also seeks to learn why unsuccessful students were not successful.

Results for WR090 - the program's highest enrollment course - show the following:
- Students who pass the course have a high likelihood of passing the Common Final Assessment (ranging from 91–100%) demonstrating a strong correspondence between outcomes measured in the Assessment and grading practices in the program (Appendix P: Table 1).
- A majority of students who pass the course receive one of the two top scores (4 and 5) in both English Conventions and Organization, factors aligned with Developmental Writing Program Outcomes (Appendix P: Table 1).
- Faculty questionnaire responses demonstrate a high correspondence between attendance, time management/turning work in and passing the course (which corresponds highly with passing the Common Final Assessment, as stated) (Appendix P: Table 2).
- As the program continues to use this assessment, increasing numbers of faculty/ sections participate and report results, with 100% participation Fall 2017. The increased percentage of faculty participation appears to align with increased alignment between Common Final Assessment grades and course grades (Appendix P: Table 3).

Revise

Both qualitative and quantitative assessment results point the program in the direction of improving student support to improve retention and engagement in their Developmental Writing courses. The 2017–18 annual planning form reflects an emphasis on such projects, and the program continues to explore results to determine fruitful improvements.

Projects include:

- Alignment—Continue to pursue alignment for both Gen Education-bound students and CTE-bound students by aligning with WR115 and relevant CTE programs. This may involve updating course curricula, course outcomes, course documents, and assessments.
- Part-Time Faculty Connections—Establish a clear, resolute guideline for meeting attendance and program participation to promote professional development and faculty support
- Consultancy—Continue to evaluate, revise, and offer this program to support students
- Co-Requisites—Evaluate the performance of these classes and continue to investigate models which best suit students and resources (Learning Communities, Co-Requisites, etc.)
- Outcomes—Institute outcomes for each pathway students follow in the program: WR080/090 (transfer degree focus), WR088/089 (CTE focus), and WR091 (grammar support) to clarify focus to faculty teaching these
- Common Assessment and Data Gathering—Evaluate and adjust assessments and data questions annually

These assessments additionally contributed to a subsequent proposal to commence a college-wide general education writing prerequisite. An Academic Standards Advisory Council subcommittee was charged with exploring whether a global writing prerequisite would be advisable at Chemeketa. The subcommittee members reviewed data developed for the Developmental Writing Program Review and follow-up data, and concluded that students would benefit from such a prerequisite (Appendix S: Writing Prerequisite Proposal). Students who enroll in Developmental Writing courses they place into appear to see more success than their peers when they take college-level courses. At the same time, there are logistical challenges in such an approach that might reduce access for students. As of this writing, discussions and research continue regarding this proposal.

Example 2: Medical Assisting

Medical Assisting offers Chemeketa's constituents a quality, accessible, affordable career technical program leading to certification needed for successful employment. Having recently revised its structure after several decades, the program offers an example of how the college's assessment processes inform program design and improvement at Chemeketa.

Medical Assisting: Core Theme Objectives, Indicators, Outcomes

Academic Quality Objective A: regular continuous improvement processes

- *Qualitative indicators: Program Review, Assessment Plan and Annual Plan completed*
- *Quantitative indicators: SLO assessment results (Appendix T: Table 1-2)*

Academic Quality Objective D: Courses and programs align with academic and industry standards.

- *Qualitative indicator: Advisory Committee engagement*

Student Success Objectives B and C: Completion and Progression

- *Quantitative indicators: Completion Rates (Appendix T: Table 3)*
- *Quantitative indicators: Progression data (Appendix T: Table 4)*

Student Success Objective D: Students attain their educational intent

- *Quantitative measure: Certification Pass Rates (Appendix T: Table 5)*

Plan

Medical Assisting has been part of Chemeketa's offerings since the college's inception. For many years, the limited-entry program centered around three terms of classroom and clinical training, preparing students to work in several capacities in healthcare settings that call for physician and medical office support. The program added a two-year degree option in 1985 to include a year of general education credits. It has always enjoyed strong industry support and has an active advisory committee that is well connected with faculty and administrators and that meets twice yearly.

While completion and certification pass rates were high, by the early 2000s the program's expense - for both students and the college - as a small two-year program with one cohort a year had become an issue. When the college slated the program to be cut in the recession, the advisory committee recommended instead a redesign to meet the regional need for a shorter-term Medical Assisting certificate focused on patient care. The college Board voted to suspend the program in 2009 with the plan to reshape it to address cost, length of program, and focus.

Implement

Faculty, administrators, and the advisory committee redesigned the program to be fully self-supporting and to provide short-term training with a patient-care focus. The program reopened in 2012, funded in part with a federal grant. It was now a three-term program with the first term consisting of general education credits. Students could begin these courses before applying for spots in the cohort for the second and third terms of the program. The program was designed to qualify students to sit for the National Center for Competency Testing (NCCT) Medical Assistant Certification (NCMA) exam and Phlebotomy Technician Exam (NCPT). The program ran one cohort each year in this format for two years.

Seeing that the redesign was proving successful, the college expanded the program in 2014 from one to two cohorts a year and hired a full-time faculty member. She worked with part-time faculty and administrators to further refine the program. They standardized their second term practical exam that aligned with program outcomes. They also changed the application process from a first-come-first-served system to a point system prioritizing students who had completed prerequisites and general education credits. The number of applications to the program increased from 27, 29, and 41 for the first three cohorts to 58, 75 and higher for subsequent cohorts.

Assess

Academic Quality Objective A: regular continuous improvement processes

- *Qualitative indicators: Program Review, Assessment Plan, and Annual Plan*

The Medical Assisting program review began two and a half years after the program's reconfiguration. The program had implemented several major refinements as described above, and the review process allowed the team to reflect on their progress and review their indicator results - from exam scores to progression and completion - to determine their next best steps for student success.

Several themes emerged from the process:

- Two major changes in 2014-15 appeared to make a difference in program indicator results: the new application process that prioritized prepared students and implementation of the standardized mid-program Final Patient Assessment. Progression, completion, and certification pass rates improved and stabilized after these changes; the average completion rate climbed from 82% to 88% (Appendix T: Tables 4-7).

- Certification exam scores appeared to improve and stabilize as the program made other adjustments in the classroom: adopting a preferred textbook, using online NCCT test review software, and adding essay questions to classroom assessments to improve critical thinking (Appendix T: Tables 2 and 3; 5 and 6). Between 2015 and 2016, average Medical Assistant exam scores increased from 78.18 to 83.12 and average Phlebotomy Technician exam scores increased from 78.90 to 82.78.

- Completion rates were not as high as the program desired for a limited enrollment program, averaging 85% for the first six cohorts. The team decided to explore other possible improvements that could lead to improved completion rates.

- Few lab spaces and a high teacher-to-student ratio (15:1) were resulting in crowded lab settings.

- Students, and particularly a growing Hispanic population at the college and in the program, needed better familiarity with medical terminology when they begin the second term of the program. This challenge was apparent both in the classroom and in evaluations from clinicians. Faculty wondered if adding a Medical Terminology prerequisite might help these students better succeed.

- The NCCT certification exam results and clinical site evaluations both indicated that students should become more familiar with systems and protocols surrounding Electronic Medical Records

Academic Quality Objective A: Regular continuous improvement processes

- *SLO Assessment (Appendix U: Medical Assisting Assessment Plan)*

The Final Patient Assessment is a practical assessment given at the end of the second term that faculty formalized early in the program's reintroduction. The assessment breaks down program outcomes into specific competencies needed for safe, effective practice. The coursework during the second term of the program builds these competencies each week until students take the final assessment. Students get two chances to pass the assessment, and if they do not, they do not move on to the third term of the program where they will be working with patients in a health care setting.

In the four cohorts since 2015, when the program began its point-system application, only one or two students have not passed this assessment in each cohort, with an average pass rate of 95% (Appendix T: Table 1).

NCCT Medical Assistant Certification Exam assesses whether students have achieved the knowledge base needed to be effective medical assistants. These competencies align with

the program outcomes, broken down into specific content competencies. Student results on these exams have gradually climbed as the program has made refinements described above, improving five overall points between Fall 2015 and Summer 2017; similar improvements have also occurred on the optional NCCT **Phlebotomy Technician Certification Exam** many of the students take, increasing four overall points in the same time period (Appendix T: Table 3). The descriptions below refer to SLO assessment results depicted in Appendix T: Table 2:

- Fall 2015–Winter 2016 (green column) These are the initial results from the program's transition to a point-based application process. The program's focus is no longer on office procedures, and students' overall lower scores on that topic reflect this. The program was exploring textbooks that would cover more basic office procedure knowledge at that time and these scores confirmed the need. Scores improved ten points when the program changed the textbook.

- Spring–Summer 2016 (orange column) These results were the first after the program had adopted a new textbook and additionally incorporated online test preparation into students' work. Scores increased in all nine competency categories, and most notably in the office competency scores.

- Fall 2016–Winter 2017 (yellow column) These results followed the program's move to include more essay questions in weekly assessments to improve students' critical thinking skills related to the curriculum content. Scores increased in six of the nine competency categories texted.

- Spring–Summer 2017 (blue column) The results show that the exam score averages were holding steady, given the changes described above.

Revise

The program review recommendations were placed into the program's annual planning form. In addition to these specific changes, the program determined from both its program review and assessment results that it would like to improve the likelihood that students who begin the Medical Assisting program would complete it and to help students increase scores on the certification exam. Current projects relate to the assessment results:

- Address crowded lab situation by hiring a part-time faculty member to move the lab teacher-to-student ratio from 1–15 to 1–10 (completed)

- Explore other textbook options that address Electronic Medical Records (in progress)

- Add a Medical Terminology course to the first term of the program (completed)

- Adjust the application process so that students must complete the entire first term of the program before applying for the second and third term. This project is geared towards improving program completion rates (completed)

- Review results of these projects after several cohorts to determine their effectiveness

Part Three: Next Steps Preparing for Year Seven

Chemeketa follows a comprehensive institutional assessment plan, a set of measures to gauge progress toward mission fulfillment, a strategic planning process that incorporates assessment results, and program-level assessment processes that collectively drive continuous improvement. Sustainability is monitored closely through multiple measures and processes. All are regularly reviewed by the college leaders and Board, and actions are planned based on results.

Next steps before Year Seven:

Core Theme Measures

- **Refine measures.** Extensive work went into developing the core theme measures to reflect the core themes and core theme objectives. The next step is to refine measures to aid the college in more concretely determining the extent of its progress toward mission fulfillment. New data availability also may create the opportunity for improved measures.

- **Improve core theme measures document.** In developing the Placemat Summer-Fall 2017 to communicate institutional plans and progress, the college leadership team devised a format that is proving highly accessible to the college community, generating productive conversation and activity. A similar format will be used for a more comprehensive Core Theme Measures document to expand its usefulness as a communication tool.

Student Learning Assessment

- **Continue progress toward useful SLO assessment results.** By Year Seven, more academic areas will have program assessment data they are using for continuous improvement. Summarizing that progress will be a next step for the Year Seven report. As an illustration, the English program implemented a new program-wide assessment last spring in its gateway Writing 115 Introduction to Composition course, a project begun in 2015 (Appendix V: WR115 Common Assessment). Faculty will have an initial set of data to review in the fall during program planning.

- **Consider assessment in light of state initiatives.** The college applied in February to join the first of several cohorts of Oregon community colleges implementing Guided Pathways. Community colleges across Oregon are also pursuing a Unified Standard Transfer Agreement (USTA) in response to state legislation requiring improved transferability between community colleges and universities. Both discussions will likely impact the statewide general education outcomes established in 2010 and thus the future shape of SLO assessment at Chemeketa. Instructional and executive deans are exploring next steps for working with faculty to determine useful approaches to macro-level assessment, including the idea of developing common institutional outcomes through Pathways work.

- **Identify institutional measures of student learning assessment.** While program reviews, assessment reporting, and annual plans show programs progressing in program-level assessment of student learning, it is difficult to determine a measure to indicate the extent of this progress institution-wide. This is due in part to the diversity of approaches to this work. General education disciplines are guided by statewide Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer degree outcomes; some programs/disciplines have developed more specific Chemeketa outcomes that align with these statewide outcomes. In each case, programs assess their outcomes in different ways that are appropriate to their particular programs.

Data improvements

- **Improve familiarity and access to data.** The college is improving its data systems so that faculty, staff, and administrators will have better access to information, and improved ability to examine details that will help identify opportunities for continuous improvement. College leaders have worked this academic year to increase college-wide familiarity with available data and how it could be used to make meaningful changes for student success.

- **Improve assessment data collection systems**. The college is looking for a better tool to collect, aggregate and distribute assessment data. At this time, the process is manual, time consuming, and difficult to manage.

- **Improve collection/distribution of assessment results.** Steady encouragement and troubleshooting are needed to move the college from the idea to the reality of having institutionally-documented program-wide assessment results to use for effective change. Faculty may be wary of reporting detailed results, personnel changes may lead to unreported data, and programs may not effectively utilize the data. Discussions are underway regarding how to systematically improve assessment results queries, rates of reporting, and distribution of results. The system needs to be collaborative between faculty and deans, flexible enough to accommodate different assessment reporting approaches, and structured enough to be able to provide institutional-level reporting.

The commitment to continuous improvement at Chemeketa continues with initiatives to identify effective data tools, develop and refine assessments, review assessment results, and expand the use of data institution-wide to help us discover productive opportunities to move toward mission fulfillment.