

Year Three Peer Evaluation Report

**Helena College University of Montana
Helena, MT**

March 19-21, 2014

A confidential report of findings for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

Table of Contents

Roster of Peer Evaluators	1
Introduction.....	2
Assessment of Self-Evaluation Report	2
Topics Addressed as an Addendum to the Report.....	3
Eligibility Requirements.....	5
Standard One: Mission, Core Themes, Expectations	
Report on Standard 1.A Mission	5
Report on Standard 1.B Core Themes	6
Standard Two: Resources and Capacity	
Report on Standard 2.A Governance.....	6
Report on Standard 2.B Human Resources	8
Report on Standard 2.C Education Resources	10
Report on Standard 2.D Student Support Resources.....	13
Report on Standard 2.E Library and Information Resources	17
Report on Standard 2.F Financial Resources.....	18
Report on Standard 2.G Physical and Technological Infrastructure	19
Summary.....	23
Commendations.....	23
Recommendations	23

Roster of Peer Evaluators

Mr. Martin Heilstedt (Chair)

Dean of Instruction – Military Program
Pierce College
Joint Base Lewis-McChord, WA

Dr. David Todd

Instructor/Accreditation Coordinator
Mt. Hood Community College
Gresham, OR

Dr. David Rector

Dean of Student Life
South Puget Sound Community College
Olympia, WA

Mr. Jonathan Gillen

Comptroller
Treasure Valley Community College
Ontario, OR

Dr. Lee Thornton

Director of Special Projects
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
Redmond, WA

Introduction

Helena College University of Montana is a comprehensive community college located in Helena, Montana. The College consists of two campuses: the Donaldson campus in which academic programs, most administrative functions, student support services, and continuing education services are located, and the Airport Campus, which is located two miles away and is home to the trades programs. It serves a large geographic area that consists of four counties, and has experienced an 84% increase enrollment during the ten year period between 2003 and 2013. It currently has an unduplicated annual enrollment of over 2,100 students.

The College was established in 1939 as the first vocational-technical institute in Montana under the joint oversight of the Helena School District and the Office of Public Instruction. In 1987, the state legislature moved oversight of the institution, as well as the other four vocational-technical centers in the state, to the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education (BOR). Following reorganization in 1997 of the separate two and four year units in the Montana University System, the resources and operations of the college were linked to those of the University of Montana in Missoula. Under a subsequent five year strategic plan adopted in 2006, general education course offerings were broadened and promoted to the community in response to a new, wider mission as a comprehensive community college. A new strategic plan was adopted in fall 2012 that identified six broad strategic goals that aligns its mission and core themes, and serves as the guide for resource allocation within the institution. On May 25, 2012, the BOR approved a name for change for the College in accordance with a naming convention for the five colleges of technology in the state that had been identified by the Office of Higher Education (OCHE), and on July 26, 2012, its new name as Helena College University of Montana became official.

A four person evaluation team representing the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) conducted a Year Three Review of Helena College University of Montana from March 19-21, 2014. This review was done in an off-site virtual format and consisted of phone interviews between members of the committee, employees of the institution representing leadership, faculty, staff, and student government, and other parties associated with but not employed by the College, such as members of the advisory council and the BOR. Team meetings were conducted via conference calls authorized by the Commission, with email communication used among its members when needed to address follow up issues or provide additional information to the group.

Assessment of Self-Evaluation Report

The evaluation team found the Year Three Self-Assessment report submitted by the College to be of generally high quality. It was well-organized and consistently structured. The writing was clear and coherent with a consistent voice. Each of the response sections addressed the standard component it was focused on without extraneous excursions, and with few exceptions dealt with the topic in a way that supported the work of the evaluators. Especially helpful to the evaluation team was having links to supporting and documenting sources closely associated with each response narrative. While in some cases the links proved to be slightly out of date, it was

possible to track down more current material, either through exploration of the electronic records of the college, or through a request, which was invariably quickly and cheerfully responded to by an appropriate member of the college staff and administration. For future reports to the Commission, the evaluation team suggests that the College address as needed any previous recommendations in one section of their report, rather than embedding them in the section of the report that addresses the related standard, as was done in this report.

Topics Addressed as an Addendum to the Report

The accreditation status of Helena College University of Montana was reaffirmed by the Commission in 2011. As part of that reaffirmation, the College was asked to address the status of recommendations 2, 3, and 4 of the Spring 2010 Comprehensive Evaluation Report and recommendations 1, 2, and 3 of the 2011 Year One Peer-Evaluation Report as part of their Year Three Self-Evaluation Report. The evaluation team was requested to give additional attention to and report on the status of these recommendations.

Recommendation 2010-2

“The committee recommends that the College develop data-informed processes to evaluate instructional and service needs of each campus, including ways to strengthen the relationship between campuses (Standards 1.B.4, 6.C.6).”

Helena College University of Montana has identified and implemented several measures to strengthen the relationship between its Donaldson and Airport Campuses. College leadership has invested in improvements in infrastructure, such as video-capable phones and Sharepoint, to provide additional and multiple ways for the two campuses to communicate. Committee membership is reviewed regularly to insure adequate and comparable representation from both campuses and meetings are scheduled for each campus on a rotating basis. Services to students at the Airport campus have been improved through regularly scheduled visits or on-demand scheduling as appropriate, and library staff is working on a proposal for creating an extension. The evaluation team was impressed with the College’s efforts to improve the communication between its two campuses.

Recommendation 2010-3

“The committee recommends that program assessment data be used to improve teaching and learning as well as delivery of services. Future program and College Strategic goals, as well as resource decisions, needs to be tied to emerging assessment results, in an ongoing and continuous fashion. Program learning outcomes should be closely tied to program assessments (Standards 2.B.2, 2.B.3, 6.C.7, Policy 2.2).”

In recognition of a need for a coordinated and centralized approach to the collection of data and its use in determining institutional effectiveness and continuous improvement, the College created the Office of Institutional Research and hired a full-time director.

Also created was the Strategic Planning and Assessment Task Force, and guides and schedules were published for program review and annual assessment. Remaining work includes the development of assessment processes that closely tie program outcomes and learning assessments. While that effort has begun it has not been completed.

Recommendation 2010-4

“The committee recommends that UM-Helena provide necessary resources to coordinate and support institutional and program research for assessment and planning processes (Standards 1.B.6, 6.B.7).”

In response to this recommendation and in recognition of the need for centralized data collection tied to assessment and continuous improvement, the College established the Office of Institutional Research in 2012 and hired a director of institutional research. College leadership also provided budgetary resources to support activities such as institutional research, training and support for various assessment activities, and data collection.

The evaluation team finds that the college has addressed in a timely and appropriate manner the concerns expressed by this recommendation.

Recommendation 2011-1

“The evaluation panel recommends that the College provide evidence that its mission statement and core themes have been adopted by its governing board (Eligibility Requirement 3).”

The mission statement of Helena College University of Montana was adopted by the BOR on May 20, 2011. The College’s core themes were approved by the BOR on September 19, 2011.

The evaluation team finds that the College has fulfilled the requirements of Eligibility Requirement 3.

Recommendation 2011-2

“The panel recommends that the College identify an acceptable level of mission fulfillment based upon fixed thresholds for desired outcomes (Standard 1.A.2).”

The College has identified an acceptable level of performance upon which mission fulfillment is based. Built upon a rubric that consists of thirty-two indicators of performance, each of which has multiple metrics and that are directly tied to specific core themes, mission fulfillment can be quantitatively derived. Sixty percent of all indicators under each core theme meeting or exceeding expectations has been established as the minimum acceptable level for mission fulfillment. The evaluation team finds that the College has addressed the concerns expressed by this recommendation.

Recommendation 2011-3

“The panel recommends that the College refine the desired outcomes for each indicator of achievement so that each provides assessable and verifiable measures of success (Standard 1.B.2).”

Helena College University of Montana has developed objectives for each of its core themes. Associated with each objective are multiple indicators of achievement and each of these has at least one assessable and verifiable metric attached to it. Most, but not all, of the metrics have had baseline and target levels of performance identified. Outcomes for each indicator are based on a period of performance that is tied to the seven-year accreditation cycle.

The evaluation team found that the College is substantially meeting the requirements of Standard 1.B.2, but recommends that the identification of baselines and targets for all metrics be completed.

Eligibility Requirements

As part of this three year evaluation of Helena College University of Montana the evaluation team reviewed accreditation Eligibility Requirements 2 through 21. The evaluation team found that the College meets the intent of these requirements.

Report on Standard 1.A Mission

The mission statement of Helena College University of Montana is well known to the campus and local communities and reflects its expanding role as a comprehensive community college:

“Helena College University of Montana, a comprehensive two-year college, provides access to and support of lifelong educational opportunities to our diverse community.”

The mission statement was reviewed and modified in 2010, taking into consideration input from the campus community and the College’s service area. The current mission statement was then developed and approved by the College Council in January 2011 and approved by the BOR in May of that year. (Standard 1.A.1)

The College has established an acceptable level of performance upon which mission fulfillment is based. Built upon a rubric that consists of thirty-two indicators of performance, each of which has multiple metrics and that are directly tied to specific core themes, mission fulfillment can be quantitatively derived. A minimum acceptable level of performance has been set as 60 percent or better of all indicators of achievement under each core theme meeting or exceeding expectations. However, baselines and targets for all of the metrics used to assess each indicator have not been identified. (Standard 1.A.2)

Concern

The evaluation committee recommends that the College complete the identification of baselines and targets for all metrics used to assess its indicators of achievement in support of determining extent of mission fulfillment. (Standard 1.A.2)

Report on Standard 1.B Core Themes

Helena College University of Montana has identified three core themes:

1. Provide access and support.
2. Demonstrate academic excellence.
3. Strengthen the community.

The core themes collectively reflect the mission of the institution as a comprehensive community college and do so by addressing the primary themes of providing access to quality academic offerings for the members of its community. (Standard 1.B.2)

Report on Standard 2.A Governance

Governance

Helena College University of Montana Helena College University of Montana has a clearly defined governance structure that is widely understood. There are five established bodies that collectively provide for input and participation by students, faculty, staff, and administrator. Those bodies are the Leadership Team, the College Council, the Faculty Senate, the Staff Senate, and the Student Senate. The Dean/CEO has recently established the College Advisory Council to provide a bridge between the College and the community so that its needs are better met. Membership of this council includes representatives from industry, non-profit organizations, the local economic development office and the state legislature. The College is an affiliate of the University of Montana – Missoula, which is governed by the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education (BOR). The Dean/CEO of the College reports to the president of the University, who in turn reports to the BOR. The division of authority between and among these entities is well established. Responsibility for operating consistent with accreditation standard organizationally rests with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, who is designate the Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) for the College. Due to a lengthy vacancy in this position, ALO responsibilities were temporarily reassigned to the Director of Institutional Research. With the hiring of a new Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, ALO duties and responsibilities have returned to that position. (Standards 2.A.1, 2.A.2 and 2.A.3)

Governing Board

The BOR is composed of seven members, each of whom is appointed to a seven year term by the governor of Montana and confirmed by the state Senate. The BOR has in place bylaws and policies that govern its operation, responsibilities, and membership and that provide for its acting

with one voice. Through its policies and procedures as listed in the BOR Policy Manual, and through its established committee structure, it provides oversight for the College, which includes regular review of the college mission, policies, and operations. The BOR evaluates itself on a regular basis through an annual retreat and periodic self-assessment. (Standards 2.A.4 – 2.A.8)

Leadership and Management

The College has an administrative structure typical of that found at institutions of its size. Those in administrative positions are qualified for their positions and possess the resources and support necessary to jointly guide the institution in fulfillment of its mission. The Dean/CEO is hired by and reports to the President of the University of Montana – Missoula. While the Dean/CEO has access to the BOR, attends all regularly scheduled board meetings, and presents on topics of interest, he does so subordinate to the President of the University. (Standards 2.A.9 – 2.A.11)

Policies and Procedures

Evidence that academic procedures are in place and are available to employees and students was apparent in sources noted in the self-evaluation report and in accessible materials. However, policies unique to Helena College University of Montana are not in place for all functional areas as defined within this standard. In many instances, a related policy adopted by the BOR provides umbrella guidance for the College, but during interviews conducted as part of this visit the need to continue the development of corresponding policies and procedures tailored to the needs of the institution was acknowledged.

The existence of a Credit Hour Policy as required by Title 34: Education CFR 668.8 was not addressed in the self-evaluation report, although materials describing the practices in place were made available to the evaluation team as part of the visit. These procedures are a part of the Academic Standards Curriculum Review (ASCR) Committee policy and process manual, which is currently under revision. The “policy-in-practice” represented by these materials appears to be in conformance with the requirements of CFR 668.8, with respect to the course credit assignment process, the review processes to ensure practice mirrors intent, and the mechanisms for ensuring variations conform to commonly accepted practices. A Montana University System (MUS) Board of Regents (BOR) policy (BOR309.1) governing short courses and workshops credit stipulates consistency with “the method used in the regular academic program”, and provides guidelines based on semester hour equivalency that match the requirements of CFR 668.8. However, it is not clear that a formal statement of course credit policy exists in MUS BOR policies, and no policy specific to Helena College University of Montana has been established to implement Department of Education regulations 600.2 and 600.24.

Library and information resource procedures are developed, communicated, and employed. A periodic review update cycle for those procedures has just been completed. No college-level policies governing library and information resources were found. The policy-in-place practices defined by procedure manuals and handbooks are widely communicated and employed.

The College has in place an effective transfer-of-credit policy and follows procedures that support the integrity of locally-delivered program while enhancing the mobility of students who

move between institutions. The efforts of college staff and faculty center on the Montana University System (MUS) Common Course Numbering (CCN) program for course equivalency documentation across Montana educational institutions. They expand to include considerable research and comparison of course outcomes and content when a course under review does not come from within the MUS, or does not coincide with locally-offered or required courses. Core policies on transfer-of-credit are BOR policies; policies specific to the College have not been developed, as MUS BOR policies are considered binding on MUS member institutions unless more restrictive or stringent policies are deemed necessary by an institution.

The College adheres to policies and statements regarding academic freedom adopted by the Montana University System Board of Regents in Policy 302. This declaration of support for academic freedom is memorialized in the Faculty Handbook and the Collective Bargaining Agreement negotiated with faculty. The College promotes an environment of free intellectual pursuit and discussion. Protections for that environment are established in the Collective Bargaining Agreement and relevant college policies and procedures. The college maintains an environment of academic rigor and integrity within this freedom of pursuit and discussion. Rights and expectations regarding rigor and integrity are documented in the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the Faculty Handbook, the standard course syllabus template and other publications of the college. Expectations of academic rigor and integrity extend to the student as well, and are clearly communicated in the college catalog, the college website, and course syllabi. (Standards 2.A.12 – 19)

Concerns

The evaluation team is concerned regarding the lack of a written, college specific credit policy as required by CFR 688.8. (Standard 2.A.12)

The evaluation team encourages the College to continue the development of policies and procedures specific to the institution. (Standard 2.A.12-19)

Report on Standard 2.B Human Resources

Helena College serves approximately 2100 students annually. The College employs 162 faculty members (121 part time and 41 full time) as well as 59 staff members (52 full time and 7 part-time). The College continues to work to hire qualified personnel for their organization. College job descriptions display adequately the minimum qualifications for the position, responsibilities of said position, as well as the application process and procedures. The College Human Resources office also has an intranet site available where they provide access to numerous different documents including recruitment and hiring authorizations, as well as performance management tools and payroll information. While the website does contain some valuable resources, the evaluation team did note that it was often difficult to determine which policies were applicable to the College and whether they could be found on the institution's site or the University of Montana Board of Regents' site. It was a concern of the team that employees could not easily determine the applicable Human Resources policies and procedures which could lead to employee confusion and apprehension. While that concern was noted, the Human Resources office should also be commended for their onboarding technique and documentation.

Human Resources has provided a detailed document outlining roles and responsibilities for staff, supervisors, and Human Resources on how to make a new employee successful within their organization. (Standard 2.B.1)

All staff are evaluated on an annual basis. Staff evaluations include a Performance Development Plan and Assessment (PDPA) which is created in collaboration between the staff and supervisor. The PDPA includes an annual assessment and a review of current staff goals in alignment with the College's Core Themes. Employees who have supervisory requirements also receive an assessment of management behaviors. Senior Administrators are evaluated based on a cohort of evaluators jointly selected by the administrator and the Dean, with these individuals providing anonymous evaluations based on scoring their performance in certain categories and through responses to open ended questions concerning the individual. Through review of documentation, the evaluator noted some inconsistencies in the completion of the employee evaluation documentation. Goals for employees were not always completed and there were instances where specific feedback was not provided. Additionally, non-supervisory staff evaluations including management behavior questions, which while being marked not applicable, could easily be removed from the evaluation and instead separate evaluation forms prepared for staff and supervisors. Evaluators are aware that the annual review process is being re-designed this coming summer and the evaluators would encourage the Human Resources to evaluate the content and design of current evaluation forms and documentation. (Standard 2.B.2)

The College makes every effort to make professional development funds available to staff, administration, and faculty. The College has a pooled professional development fund with approximately \$45,000 within it in the last fiscal year. These funds are requested via an application process that includes defined policies and a standard scoring matrix. A standing committee of members composed of faculty, classified, and professional staff, as well as the Director of HR and the Chair, review the requests and provide funding based on established criteria. The funding is utilized by all groups within the organization. In addition to these professional development funds, the College also nominates two faculty members to receive NISOD awards, which allow them to attend the annual conference in Austin, Texas and obtain additional training on best practices in instruction. (Standard 2.B.3)

The College feels they have a sufficient number of qualified faculty to meet the needs of their students. With a faculty to student ratio of 13:1 the College feels as though they are able to meet the educational needs of their students. Qualifications for faculty members are dependent on their instructional assignment. Faculty teaching general education coursework must possess a master's level degree with at least 9 credit hours in the appropriate discipline or subject area being taught. Faculty members working in workforce education must meet the applicable standards for their profession which may include certifications, work experience, and or completion of an associates or bachelor's degree. (Standard 2.B.4)

Faculty workload is outlined in the faculty collective bargaining agreement. That agreements states that faculty will provide effective instruction and evaluation of students, supervision of learning facilities, curriculum development, students advising, and will undertake in professional development. The typical workload of a full-time faculty member is between 30 and 34 credits in an academic year. (Standard 2.B.5) Faculty members receive evaluations as outlined in the

collective bargaining agreement. Non-tenured faculty members receive annual evaluations, whereas tenured faculty are evaluated every three years. Evaluations of adjunct faculty occur on an annual basis. The criteria and expectations for faculty members are explicitly outlined in the faculty collective bargaining agreement (Standard 2.B.6).

Report on Standard 2.C Education Resources

All evidence presented during the course of the review indicates that the College provides programs with appropriate content and rigor; degrees and programs are consistent with the mission of the College; the culmination of program studies is achievement of clearly identified student learning outcomes; the degrees and certificates are collegiate level and are designated consistently with program content appropriate to recognized fields of study. Evidence acquired during the review further indicates that not only does the College provide degrees and programs with this level of content, rigor, and quality, but takes considerable and evident pride in doing so. (Standard 2.C.1)

The College has an established and rigorous program for identifying expected learning outcomes at the course, program, and degree levels. Course student learning outcomes are provided in written form to enrolled students; description of student learning outcomes is a stipulated content item on the standardized course syllabus template. Publication of student learning outcomes at the degree, program and course level occurs in the College catalog. (Standard 2.C.2)

The College bases all credit and degrees, regardless of delivery location or modality, on documented student achievement, assessed by a variety of generally accepted means. The manner in which credit and degrees are awarded is consistent with institutional policies reflecting generally accepted learning outcomes, norms, or equivalencies in higher education. For Helena College, policy guidance is provided by Montana University System Board of Regents policy 301.5.3. (Standard 2.C.3)

All degree and certificate programs offered by the College exhibit coherent designs with breadth, depth, course sequencing, and learning synthesis appropriate to the discipline and program. The basic architecture of a combination of foundational knowledge, general education, technical skills, and discipline knowledge is tailored and focused to meet the personal development, career-preparation, or further degree needs that are the objectives of the program. Admission and graduation requirements are clearly defined and widely published, appearing in the College catalog and on the College website. (Standard 2.C.4)

Faculty with teaching responsibility exercise a major role in the design, approval, implementation, and revision of the curriculum. Well-defined procedures are in place, documented in the Helena College Curriculum Manual. Within these processes, the non-faculty roles come at the end of the process and are primarily procedural and technical in nature. The central role is assigned to the Academic Standards and Curriculum Review Committee (ASCR), which is a standing committee of the Faculty Senate. Teaching faculty play an active role in the selection of new faculty through membership on search committees, which develop their recommendations via a well-structured process that ensures consistency and equity. Faculty are

involved with division chairs in developing priority lists of faculty needs in their discipline areas as part of the position approval process prior to search committee consideration of candidates . Once a position has been approved for hiring, the search and recommendation stage places significant responsibility on the search committee and its faculty members. Committee recommendations are communicated directly to the Dean/CEO for final selection.

Collective responsibility for identifying student learning outcomes and fostering and assessing student achievement of those outcomes is actively carried out by faculty with teaching responsibilities. This engagement and responsibility extends through all phases of design, assessment, review, and revision. Ample evidence of this responsibility and engagement was observable in the report and the visit interviews. Faculty of the College work in close partnership with library and information services staff to integrate the use of the library and information resources are integrated into the learning process. (Standards 2.C.5 and 2.C.6)

The College provides three avenues for the awarding of credit for prior learning experiences. The appropriate method is determined by considering the type of prior learning, the needs of the student, and the type of credit sought. National exams such as AP or CLEP (for traditional transferable courses such as general education requirements), ACE Joint Service Transcripts (for technical coursework), or college-administered challenge exams (for program-specific coursework in a discipline) may be considered for the granting of credit. Limitations on the amount of such credit awarded and recording requirements for the credits are in conformance with this part of the standard. Procedures of the College are guided by MUS BOR Policy 301.5. (Standard 2.C.7)

Helena College accepts transfer credit in accordance with guidance provided by MUS BOR Policy 301.5.2, while exercising final judgment responsibility for acceptance to ensure the quality, relevance, and integrity of the College's degrees are preserved. Extensive MUS-wide equivalency efforts around the general education transferable core and the Common Course Numbering (CCN) transfer equivalencies program provide a trusted reference points for many course. For courses not falling within these groups, the College performs extensive analysis based on documentation provided by the student and augmented by research efforts of a subject-matter expert member of the faculty. The goal of the analysis is to provide quality assurance required for program integrity combined with the best fit possible of external coursework to program and degree requirements. The College has articulation agreements with a number of institutions with identifiable patterns of student transfers; expansion of the number and scope of articulation agreements is an active effort. (Standard 2.C.8)

The General Education component of transfer associate degree programs demonstrates an integrated course of study offering the breadth and depth of intellectual development appropriate to effective learning and a productive life of work, citizenship, and personal fulfillment. All programs conform to the Montana State University System core, which constitutes a minimum of 30 semester credits representing an integration of knowledge and methods in mathematics and natural sciences, social sciences, humanities and the fine arts. All applied associate degree and certificate programs incorporate a general education core with a minimum of three courses in communications, computation, and human relations. All such general education courses are

structured and taught to ensure integration of knowledge across disciplines, with broadly transferable student learning outcomes rather than discipline-specific content.

General education components of transfer associate degree programs offered by the College have specific and assessable student learning outcomes. These are aligned with the College's mission through a curricular mapping process. The process of defining program and degree learning outcomes is ongoing at the College; as these outcomes are developed, general education learning outcomes are aligned with them.

Related instruction components of all applied degrees and certificate programs of 30 or more semester credits have identifiable and assessable student learning outcomes. These course outcomes align with and support program goals. The related instruction components are taught by appropriately qualified members of the college faculty. (Standard 2.C.9)

Credit and non-credit continuing education programs offered by Helena College University of Montana are clearly related to the mission and all of the core themes of the College. The Continuing Education division's mission echoes the College's emphasis on supporting life-long education. The College ensures the quality of its continuing education programs from design through delivery. Student achievement is assessed by multiple means and the results are used to ensure continuous improvement of program quality. Program content is coordinated as appropriate with licensure bodies such as the Office of Public Instruction (for renewal units for public school teachers), advisory councils, and with academic faculty, with oversight by the ASCR and the Academic Leadership Team. (Standards 2.C.16 and 2.C.17)

Granting of credit for continuing education programs is offered as an option for programs which satisfy extensive review of their content and outcomes to determine equivalency with the content and outcomes of regular academic courses. Continuing education division staff members work closely with subject matter expert faculty in conducting such reviews, which may occur during program design or screening of existing programs in corresponding disciplines.

The Continuing Education division offers Continuing Education Units (CEUs) as needed to meet the workforce needs in the area or as individuals need to maintain licensure or credentials. The granting of CEUs is done in conformance with the guidance provided by MUS Board of Regents Policy 304.2. No policy local to the College appears to exist that might further guide the offering of CEUs. The institution provides students the opportunity to request CEUs for a course that has not had CEUs associated with it. Such courses are evaluated for suitability under the guidelines of the policy and granted where they satisfy those guidelines. It may be the responsibility of the student to petition a licensure or credentialing body to accept such CEUs as acceptance is not guaranteed by the College. (Standard 2.C.18)

The College maintains records that document the number of courses and the nature of learning obtained through non-credit instruction. These records are maintained in a separate system from the Banner system used for credit-based certificates, degrees, and programs. (Standard 2.C.19)

Compliment

During the period since the College expanded its scope of effort from providing vocational technical education to serving as a comprehensive community college, it has devoted considerable effort to ensuring that the content and rigor of its offerings rose to the challenge of this new level. Trust and reliability in the level of preparedness of its graduates is important to acceptance as a full partner in the higher education community, and the College shows evidence of taking this responsibility very seriously, and of working creatively and diligently to that end. (Standard 2.C.1)

Concerns

1. BOR 301.5 (E) stipulates:

“Campuses of the MUS and community colleges, shall provide military and veteran students with a means of evaluation of prior learning, shall develop policies to ensure appropriate granting of credit for military training and courses based on American Council of Education recommendations. Campuses of the MUS shall submit policies to the Commissioner of Higher Education for approval. The community colleges shall submit policies to the Commissioner of Higher Education for review.”

The evaluation team is concerned that, although college practice appears to conform to the intent of the BOR Policy, no related policy is evident in the Helena College University of Montana policies listed on the campus website nor was one provided to the evaluation team. (Standard 2.C.7)

2. A description of the possibilities and guidelines for granting of CEUs for a Continuing Education course is not described in great detail in the catalog and Continuing Education web pages. The evaluation team is concerned that students may not realize that such an option exists, or if they do, may not understand how to go about exercising it. (Standard 2.C.18)

Report on Standard 2.D Student Support Resources

Helena College University of Montana provides student services and programs that support the learning needs of students. Services are divided into various functional areas including admissions and records, financial aid, marketing and communications, veterans and disability services, TRiO program, advising and learning center, and bookstore. Adjustments to services are made based on various surveys such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE), and feedback from New Student Orientation. For example, as a result of the last SENSE, the College changed its advising process in May 2013 from group advising to one-on-one for both intake advising and quarterly academic advising. The assistant dean of student services also spends time every Wednesday in the Student Center talking with students about how processes and services are working and how they might continually improve. Data from the most recent SENSE showed an

increase in student satisfaction above the SENSE small college cohort average in a number of areas around advising, and receiving adequate financial aid information. In Spring 2013, the College instituted STARFISH, a student retention software package. STARFISH has enabled better communication between faculty, staff, and students in support of student success and progression. Students are notified if there are performance, attendance, and/or financial aid related concerns, and are able to schedule appointments with a tutor, faculty member, financial aid, or other support service. (Standard 2.D.1)

The College provides for the safety and security of their students and property. While it does not employ security personnel, the institution has a strong relationship with law enforcement in the community. There has been no indication of safety concerns from students or staff at either campus. The assistant dean for student services indicated that students often leave personal items unattended in the student center without anything being taken. Review of the annual crime statistics show no crimes of any kind for the past three years (2010-2012). Crime Statistics are distributed to students and staff annually via email, and are available on the college website. Related policies and procedures are on the website as well. Information on how to access this data is provided in the Student Handbook which is distributed at New Student Orientation. (Standard 2.D.2)

Helena College University of Montana is an open door institution, admitting students that meet minimum education requirements of a high school degree or GED. All degree seeking students are required to take the COMPASS assessment test in mathematics, reading, and writing. The ACT, SAT, and the Montana University Writing Assessment (MUSWA) are accepted for placement purposes as well. The Advising and Learning Center coordinates quarterly mandatory new student orientation sessions. Five sessions are offered in the fall semester, three in spring Semester and two in summer semester. Orientation includes sessions on career planning, academic skills, and financial literacy. Most sessions are 30 minutes, with the exception being a 50 minute financial literacy session. The college catalog is updated annually and available online. (Standard 2.D.3)

The college catalog provides current and accurate information as required. As noted in the self-evaluation report, the College does not have a formal policy for program elimination or significant change in requirements. A process was outlined in the study and consistent with information shared by staff. The College is encouraged to formalize the process in writing to insure consistency in its application. Information is clearly provided in the college catalog, and on the website, for all specialty programs requiring additional information on national and/or state legal requirements for licensure or entry, or unique requirements for employment and advancement. In addition to being found on the website, the catalog is distributed on a thumb drive to all students at New Student Orientation. (Standards 2.D.4, 2.D.5 and 2.D.6)

Education records are kept in a secure location. Student data is maintained on the college's student information system (Banner), and backed-up daily by the IT department at the University of Montana's Missoula campus. Financial aid records are kept in locked, fireproof file cabinets in an office with limited access. Policies for the release of student information are outlined in the college catalog, student handbook, and on the college website. (Standards 2.D.7)

Helena College University of Montana provides a variety of financial aid options for students including grants, loans, scholarships, and work-study student employment. General information on applying for financial aid, and disbursement of funds, is available in the college catalog and website. This information includes steps for completing the FAFSA. As with most two-year colleges, the institution's default rate has increased over the past few years. Most recently, the rate increased to 14.3%, which is up from the previous three years, but still within the range what many colleges are experiencing. The College has implemented a number of strategies to address the increase. Information sessions are provided on financial literacy and scholarships at each New Student Orientation. A financial aid staff member attends each first year experience course three different times during the semester to talk about financial literacy, scholarships, and work-study, and applying for aid for the next quarter. Mandatory face-to-face loan entrance counseling has been implemented. Grant and scholarship funds are not disbursed until the 15th day of the semester. The first half of a student's loan is also disbursed on the 15th day, and the other half is withheld until midterm to ensure the student hasn't dropped. The STARFISH data system implemented fall 2013 has improved communication between financial aid staff and the student. Financial aid is now able to determine earlier if a student changes their enrollment, and can inform the student of how it affects their aid. The use of STARFISH has helped spread out the workload for financial aid staff, so that peak periods are not quite as busy; and has increased faculty understanding of the role financial aid plays in a student's success. The financial aid office reconciles student's accounts monthly with the business office. (Standards 2.D.8 and 2.D.9)

The College provides, and evaluates, an effective program of academic advising to support student success. Academic advisors are assigned to all full-time, degree/certificate seeking students. Advising requirement and responsibilities are defined, published, and made available to students in the catalog and detailed on the website. All degree seeking students are required to meet with an academic advisor to review placement test results, career goals, and register for the first quarter, and develop an educational plan for their degree. Students placed in developmental English and math courses stay with an academic advisor for the first quarter or two. All other students are assigned a faculty advisor. In addition, all students must connect with their academic or faculty advisor in order to get their PIN number to register each quarter. Students are encouraged to meet regularly with their advisor to ensure they are on track for degree completion. Peer coaches were implemented last fall to assist students with questions about the registration process and general information. This has allowed academic advisors to focus on working with students needing more in-depth advising assistance. There was an indication of a need for more faculty advisor training. While knowledgeable in their area of study, some faculty need more training in the area of general education advising and best practices. In response to the issue of faculty advising training, mandatory advisor training was provided for all faculty in May 2013 to cover general advising techniques for working with students (communication, program plans, general education requirements, etc.). Another mandatory workshop on using STARFISH was provided in fall 2013. Four additional faculty advisor workshops have been offered throughout the current academic year. The academic advising staff is professional, enthusiastic, and well trained. The dean of student services has a strong background in advising, and the director of the advising, learning, and tutoring center has been with the College since 2012 as an academic advisor before filling the director position last October. Another staff member was recently hired as well. The STARFISH software has improved ongoing

communication between faculty, staff, and students to help ensure student success. With the improvements in advising services the College may need additional staff in the future to maintain the high level of academic advising, training, and support that has been established. (Standard 2.D.10)

Co-curricular activities are consistent with the College's mission statement. The institution provides a variety of opportunities to engage the campus community through the student government, clubs, veterans advisory council, and other institutional committees. Student government executive council indicated prior to this year a lack of communication with administration, and the communication that did occur felt top down with little, if any, explanation or conversation around decisions. Students serving on committees often felt their opinion did not matter. The executive council acknowledged that previous student governments were not as active as this year, and indicated improvements in communication with administration this year. In addition to the executive council's own efforts, this improvement was credited to the addition of a new advisor this year and the assistant dean of student services interactions with the group. Participation in student government has also increased over previous years. The College is encouraged to continue its efforts to increase the students' voice through student government. (Standard 2.D.11)

The College operates a café, coffee counter, and bookstore for students on the Donaldson campus through auxiliary services under the retail services manager. Students, faculty, and staff provide input directly to the manager and service staff. The retail services manager indicated students, faculty, and staff feel comfortable coming directly to them with both concerns and compliments. Input from students is also collected via student surveys. A previous survey resulted in establishing the coffee counter on campus. Another survey is scheduled for the end of the current semester to gather input on recent changes to services in the café. Currently there are no café, coffee counter, or bookstore services provided at the Airport Campus. The retail services manager and assistant dean of student services did develop a plan to provide limited services to the Airport campus. However, budget constraints have prevented the College from implementing the plan. The retail services manager is working on a short-term plan to provide limited bookstore services at the Airport Campus starting fall 2014, with the goal to provide the limited service at the beginning of each quarter until the long-term plan can be implemented. Student government members interviewed felt auxiliary services seeks student input, listens to their suggestions and tries to institute changes accordingly. The College does not have student housing or offer intercollegiate athletics. (Standards 2.D.12 and 2.D.13)

The College uses Moodle as its platform for online and hybrid courses, and requires use of the student's ID number and unique course numbers for enrollment into a distance education course. The College's authentication and password systems include a secure student verification process, as well as a secure process for password retrieval. The Acceptable Use Policy prohibits username and password sharing. (Standard 2.D.14)

Compliment

The evaluation team compliments Student Services for the work it has accomplished in the past two years to improve advising at the College.

Concern

The evaluation team is concerned that there is no formalized, systematic evaluation process to ensure an ongoing effective program of academic advising. (Standard 2.D.10)

Standard 2.E Library and Information Resources

The College has two campuses, the Donaldson campus and the Airport campus. The main library facility is located on the Donaldson campus. Library materials are provided to users at the Airport campus on demand. Book requests (holds) and deliveries are handled through a kiosk at the Airport campus. Space studies and facilities planning for both campuses are focusing on enhancing or enlarging the library spaces at both locations to meet needs for quiet and study space, and for a physical collection space at the Airport campus.

The Helena College University of Montana Library has adopted a mission statement that is consistent with the College mission and provides support for multiple core themes and objectives, particularly Core Theme 1- Objective 2, Core Theme 2- Objective 3, and Core Theme 3- Objective 2. The Library Operations Manual serves as an implementation guide for the library mission, and a complete update of the manual was completed early in 2014. Borrower guides, inter-library loan procedures, and other relevant sections describing access to library resources and facilities are made available through a variety of means, especially the library pages on the College website. The Collections Management Plan had its most recent update at the end of 2012. (Standard 2.E.1)

Usage statistics from a variety of sources, suggestions for acquisitions from faculty and staff, satisfaction and need surveys, and relationships developed through active participation in college committees and councils all contribute to informing the ongoing efforts to maximize the library's potential as a support for programs and services. Active priorities are collection development and website usability. Physical facilities will be the focus of an upcoming space study. The library staff has been active in enhancing the online collection through access to database services, online journals, and electronic books, as well as online search and access tools. Participation in local and regional library consortia has also played a part in the library's efforts to extend the scope and accessibility of the collection beyond the walls of the library and the limitations of operating hours. The e-book collection is extensive. Its relative underutilization makes it a focal point for efforts to enhance ease of use through new online discovery tools and emphasis on training students in how to access e-books. (Standards 2.E.2 and 2.E.4)

Training students in information literacy and working with faculty to incorporate library resources into courses are significant components of library staff efforts. Customization of student training materials to provide introductory, reinforcement, and assessment levels of training is planned to improve the effectiveness of information literacy training. (Standard 2.E.3)

Compliment

The evaluation team was impressed with the active involvement of the library staff in efforts to increase the accessibility and usefulness of library resources. Participation in inter-library consortia and working groups, adoption and adaptation of online resources and tools, and outreach to both students and faculty to enhance their information literacy all work together to enable the library to be a resource far larger than its physical manifestation would indicate. (Standard 2.E.1 – 2.E.4)

Report on Standard 2.F Financial Resources

Helena College University of Montana is a unit of the Montana University System which is a component unit of the government of the state of Montana. As such, all budget and financial activity is subject to the policies and procedures established by the Montana State Board of Regents (BOR). The BOR reviews the operating budget submitted by the College including a review of negative fund balance amounts. The College receives funding from two basic streams: tuition and fees and state appropriations. Long term debt is managed by the Debt Management Committee composed of fiscal officers from the four affiliate campuses. This debt management committee reviews at least annually the overall debt load of each of the participating institutions to ensure that the debt burden of the system is managed appropriately. (Standard 2.F.1)

The College prepares its budget on a biennial basis. The budget preparation includes gathering budget requests from each of the individual departments across the campus. The campus budget is then developed by the Budget Committee, which is composed of a team of individuals representing all facets of campus, from budget requests received and justifications submitted, with the final budget committee proposal forwarded to the Leadership Team for final review and approval. Over the past few years the College has worked to align the budget process with the strategic planning and goals of the campus. Participation with the budget process happens at both the budget committee level as well as the campus wide level where the Dean/CEO will often share with the staff information about the budget and conclusions reached at an annual meeting of all staff and faculty. The evaluation team noted through discussions with fiscal staff that the institution only budgets revenues that were earned in the prior year. Consequently, the College is always operating with prior year revenue results. (Standards 2.F.2 and 2.F.3)

Helena College University of Montana follows the policies and procedures established by the State Accounting Division, State of Montana, and where applicable, the Montana University System. These policies require the application of Generally Accepted Accounting Principles as well as adherence to the standards promulgated by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board. The College uses a Banner based accounting system, with the institution being required to transfer their financial data to the Montana University System, so that both the College and Montana University System's financial records are in congruence. The College utilizes both internal and external policies and practices (State of Montana and Montana University System) and through discussions with staff on the campus, the evaluation team noted that internal controls, policies, and procedures specific to day to day business services operation at the College are still in development. College fiscal staff is encouraged to continue the work of

preparing documents that outline daily work requirements as well as internal controls. (Standard 2.F.4)

The College has a facilities master plan in place addressing the long-range development of the campus which is currently in the process of being reviewed and revised. While a full revision of the plan may not occur, there will be, at a minimum, an amendment of the current document, providing an opportunity to identify the future capital needs of the institution. Capital project requests flow from the College to the State Board of Regents and the Legislature and are funded by a revenue stream separate from general state support which is tied to enrollment. The capital requests must include projected capital costs as well as costs of operation and anticipated sources of funding for those costs. The College continues to submit capital requests to the State legislature on an as needed basis with funding contingent on the availability of resources at the state level. (Standard 2.F.5)

Helena College University of Montana currently has two distinct auxiliary enterprises: a bookstore and food service. The proceeds from these functions are pledged to the repayment of the College's bond indebtedness and are not used for general operations. The bookstore has a positive profit and loss history. However, the food service auxiliary operation has a history of consistent net losses. In the past, the excess net income from the bookstore was utilized to offset the loss in the food service operation. However, it was determined that that choice placed significant strain on the auxiliary operations. A determination was made to have a portion of the Food Service Manager's compensation be paid from the General Fund, which has freed up excess funds to put towards the debt obligations of the institution. The evaluator noted no instances where auxiliary funding was transferred to general operations. Auxiliary funds are currently being reserved for its future departmental needs. (Standard 2.F.6)

The College is part of the University of Montana system and is listed as one of its affiliate campuses. The University of Montana system receives an annual audit by the State of Montana audit division. The University of Montana system had no findings noted and received an unqualified audit opinion on their financial statements. (Standard 2.F.7)

The College currently does not have an operating foundation. However, they are looking into the process of starting one. (Standard 2.F.8)

Complement

The evaluation team compliments the conservative and fiscally responsible budget preparation process that is utilized by the College.

Report on Standard 2.G Physical and Technological Infrastructure

Helena College University of Montana provides and maintains facilities that are able to support its mission of ensuring a quality learning environment for students, and an effective working environment for staff and faculty. The College has facilities on two locations within the City of Helena. The Donaldson campus has 89,256 square feet of space, allocated for administrative

offices, primary student support services, the library, retail services, and instructional space for general education and technical programs. The airport campus includes 88,801 feet of instructional space for trades programs as well as some administrative offices and support services. Between 2006 and 2011 both campuses underwent substantial renovation and expansion, representing an investment of \$10.5 million by the College and the State of Montana. These improvements included major architectural and mechanical upgrades as well as an expansion of the campus footprint by approximately 42,000 square feet. These upgrades have provided the institution with an opportunity to handle enrollment growth, as well as allowing the campus to expand program offerings and student support services.

As campus facilities have expanded, so has the need for additional staff. To meet this need, the College hired, a Director of Facilities and currently has 6.5 classified staff positions responsible for custodial and maintenance duties.

Security policies and procedures are maintained and overseen by the Assistant Dean of Fiscal and Plant. Due to the small size of the campus the College does not have a security force available. When necessary security and protective services are provided by the Helena Police Department. The College has a working Emergency Action Plan and Emergency Protocol Policy which are shared with employees via the campus website. Reference cards with succinct instructions on how to handle various crisis situations as well as fire evacuation plans are located in all classrooms. All administrative and instructional spaces are equipped with Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) telephones that can be used for emergency voice and text communications. Both campus buildings have a central alarm system that is monitored by campus personnel and a third-party operator after hours. General safety inspections are conducted at a departmental level once during each semester and are reviewed by the Safety Committee. Additionally, facilities include fire extinguishers, eye wash stations, showers, first aid kits, AED's, and other safety equipment that is regularly inventoried and inspected. Through discussion with campus staff the evaluation team learned that the College intermittently tests their emergency response capabilities. They perform fire drills on a quarterly basis and also run tests of their VOIP system and ability to communicate with staff and students. The College has also designed Emergency Response Teams. These teams consist of designated individuals across the campus who are tasked with knowing what to do in an emergency. For all campus personnel, the College provides periodic training on what to do in an emergency situation should one arise.

Based on current enrollment at the College the facilities at both campus locations are sufficient to meet the needs of the students, staff, and faculty. Instructional facilities are assigned based on course requirements and necessary physical and technological resources. The Donaldson campus currently is approaching maximum capacity for administrative and support offerings. If the campus wished to provide additional services it would need to expand and develop facilities located on land adjacent to the main campus facilities. (Standard 2.G.1)

Helena College University of Montana utilizes a Chemical Hygiene Plan to manage the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials. The plan is available to all employees who work in areas where chemicals are located and can be obtained from the Assistant Dean of Fiscal and Plant. All departments on campus are also required to regularly maintain appropriate Material Safety Data Sheets and keep them on hand and available as references for the proper

handling of all hazardous materials. The College is currently testing an O3 system for cleaning materials. This system would eliminate all cleaning chemicals on campus, and replace them with a water and ozone mixture that is 100% safe and non-hazardous to the environment. (Standard 2.G.2)

The institution completed a master plan in 2002 to support a funding request to the State Legislature. The original plan included an in-depth review of the needs of campus, with the expectation that the plan would be utilized as a guide for campus development for the following ten years. That ten year cycle has ended and the College is currently working on a new campus master plan. The College is working through the capital needs of their departments across the institution, with the goal of developing a plan that will reflect the mission, goals, and long range educational and financial objectives of the College. Through discussions with college staff it became apparent that the master planning process, as well as the plan itself, needs further updating and that a process should be put into place to review it on a periodic basis to ensure it aligns with the goals and initiatives of campus. It is the recommendation of the evaluation team that a new or amended master plan be completed and that a process be designed and implemented to ensure it is regularly reviewed by the Leadership Team and the campus community. (Standard 2.G.3)

The College maintains, acquires, and replaces instructional, administrative, and support facilities and equipment based on the annual budget that is approved by the Leadership Team. In addition to budget related requests, the College also has maintenance contracts with outside vendors to provide support for its facilities for plant, instructional, and administrative equipment. Repairs and maintenance of campus facilities are often performed by campus staff and faculty and in some cases may be integrated into program curriculum if applicable. In the last three years the institution has undertaken many energy efficiency projects with the goal of making the campus more efficient in its usage of utilities. The campus has implemented a new facilities management program, Maintenance Assist, which allows the campus to log and track facilities maintenance and improvements for both warranty support and future expense projections. (Standard 2.G.4)

Helena College University of Montana provides technology systems, infrastructure, and technical support that are adequate and appropriate to meet the needs of the students, staff, and faculty that it serves and supports. The campus has eight computer labs and kiosks located across campus. There is also high bandwidth wireless connectivity for students, staff, and faculty in all areas on both the Donaldson and Airport campuses. Additionally, the IT staff is responsible for a network system of Cisco components, including 25 switches and 28 servers, and a SAN back-up system. The college classrooms include DVD/VCR capability and all faculty are provided with laptops to assist in providing instruction to students. The IT department has also implemented a myriad of back-up and support systems in the event of a server failure. The IT department is in the process of placing a back-up server on the Airport campus to ensure operations will continue should servers on the main campus go down. They also have adequate back-up procedures, including the utilization of back-up tapes and a SAN that backs-up systems every two hours, with these backup systems being tested periodically to ensure they are working effectively. The IT infrastructure is locked in a room with access limited to only authorized staff. The room includes a chemical system to extinguish a fire should one occur

in the server room, as well as temperature warning features and a system component that will begin shutting down critical systems if the possibility of overheating occurs. (Standard 2.G.5)

Guidelines for acceptable use of electronic resources are made available to the campus community on the college website, in the student handbook, and in the academic catalog. The Director of IT services is working with the leadership on a comprehensive set of institutional policies and procedures to address IT security, acceptable use, and website standards, with the anticipated completion and implementation of these policies being the end of the current academic year.

The College and the Online Learning departments are primarily responsible for providing instruction and support to faculty, staff, students, and administrators on technology usage and support. IT staff members provide support via both face to face and on-line training opportunities. Printed resources have been developed and are available for usage on such programs as Moodle, Turn It in, and Joule. The IT department takes a very active role in educating students, with students receiving instruction on technology and web-based support services and tools including course registration, financial aid, tuition and fee payment, email, Starfish, and Moodle, through advising sessions and mandatory new student orientation. In addition to their work with students they also provide face to face training to departments as they roll out new software updates. The trainings primarily happen on a department by department basis but the IT staff is currently developing both synchronous and asynchronous trainings for the major software programs that are utilized by campus stakeholders. (Standard 2.G.6)

The Information Technology department with assistance from the Information Technology Committee is responsible for planning technology infrastructure. The mission of the IT Committee is to align planning and resource allocation for classroom technology with the mission and strategic goals of the College. The Committee is composed of a representative group of stakeholders (faculty, staff, and administration) from across the campus. The committee, along with the IT Director and the Dean/CEO of the campus, review campus needs throughout the year and evaluate software, hardware, and infrastructure needs based on budgeted resources and initiatives of the campus.

The committee is in the process of designing and administering a survey for students, faculty, and staff members to solicit widespread input on IT services, infrastructure, and technology needs. The College is also utilizing the CCSSE and SENSE survey as well as some campus specific surveys to gather the technology needs of the campus community. While the institution plans to utilize a survey, it will also use its two standing committees to solicit campus-wide representation and input related to its operations. (Standard 2.G.7)

The College has an informal technology replacement schedule that includes replacing all student computer lab workstations every three years. Additionally, faculty and staff workstations including laptops are replaced no more than every five years, with infrastructure such as switches and servers on a three to five year replacement plan and as based on the needs of the campus. (Standard 2.G.8)

Summary

Helena College University of Montana has embraced its role as a comprehensive community college. Its core themes of providing access and support, demonstrating academic excellence, and strengthening the community are connected and central to its strategic planning process and directly tied to the allocation of its resources. While not all metrics associate with its indicators of achievement have had baseline measures established, the College has made considerable progress toward developing a data driven process for measuring mission fulfillment and meeting its stated institutional goals of providing access to and support of lifelong educational opportunities to the diverse community in which it is located.

Commendations

Commendation 1: The College is commended for creating an on-boarding process for newly hired employees that makes them feel welcomed and knowledgeable about campus processes and procedures, and that is focused on their success at the institution.

Commendation 2: The College is commended for creating the College Advisory Council to better address the workforce and economic development needs of the region and meet the objectives of Core Theme 3: Strengthen the Community.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The Evaluation Team recommends that the College complete the identification of baselines and targets for all metrics used to assess its indicators of achievement in support of determining extent of mission fulfillment. (Standard 1.A.2)

Recommendation 2: The Evaluation Team recommends that the College complete and implement a Credit Hour Policy (Title 34: Education CFR 688.8). (Standard 2.A.12)

Recommendation 3: The Evaluation Team recommends that a new or amended Master Plan be completed and that a formal process be designed and implemented to ensure it is regularly reviewed by the Leadership Team and the campus community. (Standard 2.G.3)